THE ROLE OF SHADOWING IN TRAINING SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETERS

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Abstract. *Simultaneous interpreting is one of the most complex forms of linguistic mediation. It requires interpreters to listen to a speech in one language and produce its equivalent in another language almost at the same time. Because of the cognitive complexity involved in this process, interpreter training programs employ a variety of pedagogical techniques to develop the necessary skills. One of the most widely used exercises in interpreter training is shadowing. Shadowing is a technique in which students repeat a speech in the same language almost simultaneously with the speaker. This exercise helps trainees develop listening comprehension, attention control, speech coordination, and memory capacity.*

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of shadowing in the training of simultaneous interpreters. The study discusses the theoretical background of shadowing, its cognitive benefits, and its practical applications in interpreter education. The findings indicate that shadowing plays a significant role in improving interpreters' ability to process information quickly, maintain concentration, and coordinate listening and speaking tasks. As a preparatory exercise, shadowing helps students develop the fundamental skills required for professional simultaneous interpreting.

Keywords: *simultaneous interpreting, interpreter training, shadowing technique, cognitive processing, interpreting pedagogy, bilingual competence.*

Introduction. In the era of globalization, communication between speakers of different languages has become increasingly common.

International conferences, diplomatic meetings, and academic events often involve participants who do not share a common language. In such situations, simultaneous interpreting plays a vital role in ensuring effective communication.

Simultaneous interpreting is considered one of the most challenging forms of interpreting because it requires the interpreter to perform multiple tasks at the same time. The interpreter must listen to the source speech, analyze its meaning, retain information in memory, and produce an equivalent message in the target language without significant delay. This process requires exceptional linguistic competence, cognitive flexibility, and concentration.

Due to the complexity of simultaneous interpreting, interpreter training programs include a range of exercises designed to develop the necessary skills. Among these exercises, shadowing has become one of the most important techniques used in interpreter education. Shadowing involves repeating a speech immediately after hearing it in the same language. Although this exercise does not involve translation, it helps trainees develop essential cognitive and linguistic abilities.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the role of shadowing in training simultaneous interpreters. The study explores the theoretical foundations of the technique, its cognitive benefits, and its application in interpreter training programs.

Research in interpreting studies has identified several cognitive processes involved in simultaneous interpreting. One of the most influential theoretical frameworks is the Effort Model developed by Daniel Gile. According to this model, simultaneous interpreting consists of several efforts, including listening and analysis, memory operations, speech production, and coordination of these tasks.

Because interpreters must perform all these tasks simultaneously, their cognitive resources are often under significant pressure. Training exercises such as shadowing help students learn how to manage these cognitive demands.

Another important theoretical perspective is the Interpretive Theory of Translation proposed by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer. This theory emphasizes that interpreting involves understanding the meaning of the message rather than simply repeating words. Before interpreters can translate speech effectively, they must first develop strong listening and comprehension skills.

Shadowing exercises help develop these skills by training students to focus on speech perception and auditory processing. By repeating the speech immediately after hearing it, students learn to maintain concentration and process linguistic information rapidly.

Shadowing is a training technique in which a learner listens to a speech and repeats it aloud with minimal delay. The learner attempts to follow the speaker as closely as possible, reproducing the speech in the same language.

The concept of shadowing was originally introduced in psycholinguistic research as a method for studying speech perception and auditory processing. Later, it was adopted by interpreter training programs as a practical exercise for developing simultaneous interpreting skills.

In interpreter education, shadowing is used as a preparatory activity before students begin practicing simultaneous interpreting. It allows students to become accustomed to listening and speaking simultaneously, which is a fundamental requirement of simultaneous interpreting.

Shadowing exercises can vary in difficulty. Beginners often start with slow and clearly articulated speeches, while advanced students practice with

faster and more complex materials such as news broadcasts or conference speeches.

Shadowing contributes to the development of several cognitive abilities that are essential for simultaneous interpreting.

One of the main benefits of shadowing is the improvement of listening comprehension. Students learn to focus on the speaker's voice and process information in real time. This helps them develop the ability to understand speech quickly and accurately.

Another important benefit is the development of "attention control". During shadowing, students must concentrate on the speaker while simultaneously producing speech. This requires them to manage their attention effectively and avoid distractions.

Shadowing also improves "short-term memory capacity". Because students must retain parts of the speech while repeating them, they learn to hold information in memory for short periods of time.

In addition, shadowing helps students develop "speech coordination". Simultaneous interpreting requires interpreters to coordinate listening and speaking activities, and shadowing provides valuable practice for this skill.

Types of shadowing exercises. Interpreter training programs often use different types of shadowing exercises to develop various skills.

One common form is "phonemic shadowing", in which students repeat the speech exactly as they hear it. This exercise focuses on pronunciation and auditory perception.

Another type is "phrase shadowing", where students repeat phrases rather than individual words. This helps them understand larger units of meaning.

Some training programs also use “selective shadowing”, in which students repeat only certain parts of the speech while ignoring others. This exercise helps students develop attention management and information selection skills.

Advanced students may practice “shadowing with paraphrasing”, where they repeat the message using slightly different words. This exercise prepares them for the reformulation process required in simultaneous interpreting.

Shadowing is widely used in interpreter training programs around the world. Many universities and interpreting schools incorporate shadowing exercises into their curricula.

These exercises are typically introduced in the early stages of training. At this stage, students focus on developing listening and speaking coordination without the additional difficulty of translating between languages.

As students progress, shadowing exercises become more complex and are combined with other interpreting tasks. For example, students may first shadow a speech and then attempt to interpret it into another language.

Shadowing also helps students build confidence and fluency. By practicing with authentic speech materials, students become more comfortable with different speaking styles, accents, and speech speeds.

Although shadowing is a valuable training technique, it also has certain limitations. One limitation is that shadowing does not involve translation. Therefore, it does not directly develop the ability to transfer meaning between languages.

Another limitation is that excessive reliance on shadowing may encourage students to focus on form rather than meaning. In simultaneous

interpreting, interpreters must prioritize understanding the message rather than simply repeating words.

For this reason, shadowing should be used in combination with other training methods such as note-taking, memory exercises, and actual interpreting practice.

Conclusion. Shadowing is an important pedagogical tool in the training of simultaneous interpreters. By requiring students to listen and speak at the same time, it helps them develop essential cognitive and linguistic skills.

The analysis presented in this paper demonstrates that shadowing improves listening comprehension, attention control, short-term memory, and speech coordination. These abilities form the foundation for effective simultaneous interpreting.

Although shadowing does not replace actual interpreting practice, it serves as an important preparatory exercise that helps students develop the skills necessary for professional interpreting. For this reason, shadowing continues to play a significant role in interpreter training programs around the world.

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