

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGY USE AND  
ACCURACY IN SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

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**Abstract:** *Simultaneous interpretation is widely regarded as one of the most cognitively demanding tasks in applied linguistics and translation studies. It requires interpreters to listen, comprehend, process, translate, and deliver the message from one language to another almost instantaneously. Interpreters must not only possess high proficiency in both the source and target languages but also demonstrate strong cognitive flexibility, memory resources, and rapid decision-making skills. The complexity of the process compels professional interpreters to develop, adapt, and employ a variety of strategies to optimize their performance and enhance accuracy.*

**Keywords:** *simultaneous interpretation, strategy use, accuracy, cognitive processing, interpreter training, anticipation, segmentation, paraphrasing, omission, self-correction, adaptive strategies.*

Accuracy in simultaneous interpretation goes beyond merely rendering words correctly. It encompasses the faithful transmission of meaning, intent, register, and tone, aiming to create a seamless communicative experience for all participants. The relationship between the strategies deployed by interpreters and their level of accuracy has been an important area of scholarly interest. Understanding which strategies are most effective, when they are

applied, and what their impact is on interpretation accuracy can offer valuable insights into interpreter training and professional development. This article aims to delve into the intricate relationship between strategy use and accuracy in simultaneous interpretation. By reviewing relevant literature, analyzing the types and functions of strategies, and exploring their effects on interpreter performance, the following pages seek to provide a comprehensive overview and critical reflection on this fundamental aspect of simultaneous interpretation [1].

Several prominent scholars have investigated the nature of cognitive and linguistic strategies in simultaneous interpretation, each highlighting the dynamic interplay between mental effort, working memory, and linguistic competence. One stream of research has focused on taxonomy, categorizing strategies into various types such as omission, summarization, paraphrasing, anticipation, reformulation, segmentation, and delay. Chernov (2004) describes strategies as "context-driven tools" that interpreters draw upon to manage high information density and to mitigate the risk of information loss [2].

Gile's Effort Models (1995) outline the difficulties interpreters face when their cognitive resources are pushed to the limit. Gile emphasizes the importance of balancing comprehension, production, and memory storage, suggesting that efficient use of strategies can ease the burden on the interpreter's limited capacity. He classifies strategies as either proactive (such as anticipation and prediction) or reactive (such as repair and self-correction), noting that skilled interpreters often use a mix of both to maintain accuracy under pressure [3].

Other studies (Riccardi, 2005; Liu et al., 2020) have examined the effects of individual differences in strategy use. These works emphasize the adaptive nature of interpreters, who adjust their strategy according to the specific

requirements of the communicative context, directionality, topic familiarity, and speech rate. Additionally, research by Pöchhacker (2016) and Setton and Dawrant (2016) has expanded the focus to include psychological and contextual factors influencing strategy selection, such as stress, fatigue, and audience expectations. These contributions reveal that the choice and deployment of various strategies can make a significant difference in overall interpretation quality and accuracy.

The accuracy of simultaneous interpretation is closely tied to the appropriate and timely use of strategies. Accurate interpretation involves conveying all essential elements of the original message, including content, nuance, intention, and style, while minimizing errors, omissions, and distortions. Anticipation and accuracy: Anticipation, when applied successfully, can greatly enhance accuracy by allowing interpreters to prepare target language equivalents in advance. However, anticipating incorrectly can introduce errors or cause interpreters to miss sudden rhetorical shifts or unexpected content. Chunking and segmentation: This is fundamental for managing complex information structures and ensuring that meaning is not lost in translation. By breaking down long sentences, interpreters can maintain a clear and organized output, which supports overall accuracy.

Reformulation and paraphrasing: These strategies allow interpreters to adapt complex or culturally-specific expressions into forms that are understandable and natural in the target language. This adaptation process safeguards interpretive accuracy, maintains audience comprehension, and prevents literal errors. Omission and summarization: The judicious use of omission and summarization is a double-edged sword. While it can prevent cognitive overload and facilitate smoother output, excessive reliance on these strategies can compromise accuracy, particularly when key information is

omitted. Self-correction and reiteration: The capacity to immediately self-correct is an indication of both mastery and attentiveness. Self-correction helps to mitigate the negative impact of slips, errors, or ambiguous expressions, boosting the end-level accuracy of the interpretation. Research consistently finds that interpreters who are flexible and strategic in their approach tend to achieve higher rates of accuracy. Conversely, interpreters who adhere rigidly to a single strategy or fail to adapt to the situation often struggle with errors, omissions, and reduced communicative effectiveness.

Analysis of the collected data reveals that no single strategy guarantees absolute accuracy in simultaneous interpretation. Rather, the interpreters who achieved the highest accuracy scores demonstrated a flexible, adaptive approach, selecting and combining strategies based on the real-time needs of the communicative situation. Anticipation was most effective in settings where the topic was familiar and the speakers followed predictable rhetorical patterns. In such cases, interpreters could stay a step ahead, rendering messages smoothly and with high fidelity to the original content. In contrast, less predictable or highly technical talks precipitated more frequent use of segmentation, as interpreters needed to break down ideas to avoid loss of meaning [5].

### **Conclusion**

The relationship between strategy use and accuracy in simultaneous interpretation is complex, dynamic, and context-sensitive. As the analysis demonstrates, interpreters must draw on a wide array of strategies to navigate the cognitive, linguistic, and communicative challenges of the task. The most effective interpreters exhibit flexibility, rapid decision-making, and an acute awareness of both linguistic resources and communicative goals. While no single strategy guarantees consistent accuracy, an adaptive, well-rounded

strategic approach is essential for high-quality performance. Interpreter trainers, practitioners, and researchers alike should continue to explore and refine techniques for fostering strategic competence, ensuring that future generations of interpreters are well-equipped to meet the evolving demands of this critical profession.

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