

Interpreting... In Depth

What Every Student Should Be Aware Of

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Introduction

Interpreting work is truly challenging to a new comer in this field; however, it becomes an enjoyable game when you know how to play it.

It goes without saying that interpreting is different from translation in three major ways: (1) Interpreting is performed under the pressure of time. The interpreter must make his rendition immediately or after the speaker delivers his speech or part of it; (2) in Interpreting the interpreter totally works on his own; he cannot consult friends, dictionaries, or references books; (3) the main focus in interpreting is on the content of the message rather than on its wording.

A person cannot be skillful in interpreting without a prior knowledge of the theoretical aspect of interpreting which goes side by side with the practice.

This paper is an attempt to help the new interpreters to nurture, guide and develop his/her linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge and skills to be well-prepared in the actual work, since most students complain lacking of the theoretical guide to the wide world of interpreting.

It investigates the different linguistic and extra linguistic aspects involved in the process of Interpreting by attempting to shed light on the history of Interpreting, the types of knowledge and skills interpreters are presumed to acquire, interpreter's tools of the trade and interpreter's training.

Bearing in mind, while reading the current paper, that the process of learning... experiencing... learning is certainly an on-going process each interpreter goes through once s/he chooses interpreting either as a part-time or as a full-time career.

1. Interpreting Theories

1.1 Translation- Types

In 1959, Roman Jakobson cited in Ilyas (1989:28) distinguished three ways of interpreting a verbal sign: it may be translated into other signs of the same language, into another language, or into another, non-verbal systems of symbols. These three types of translation are to be differently labeled:

1. **Intralingual Translation** (or rewording): It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. That is, the intralingual translation of a word uses either another, more or less synonymous, word or resorts to a circumlocution. This can be seen in paraphrasing a certain poem as well as the different interpretations of the Glorious Quran.

2. **Interlingual Translation** (or translation proper): It is an interpretation of Source Language (S.L. the language of the original text being translated) verbal signs by means of some other equivalent signs in the Target Language (T.L. a language other than one's native language that is being learned).

3. **Intersemiotic Translation** (or transmutation): It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non- verbal sign system. In U.S. Navy, for instance, a verbal sign can be interpreted by a non- verbal message by using a certain specific flag.

On the level of interlingual translation, translation can be classified into written translation and oral translation.

1.2 Interpreting or Interpretation?

Generally speaking, language interpreting or interpretation is "the intellectual activity of facilitating oral communication between two or more users of different languages" (Wikipedia, 2007).

Functionally, interpreting and interpretation are the descriptive words for the activity. That is, there is an important distinction that should be observed to avoid confusion. In professional practice, interpreting denotes the act of facilitating communication from one language form into its equivalent, or approximate equivalent, in another language form. The word 'interpreting' is commonly used in the profession and in the translation studies field to avoid the other meanings of the word 'interpretation'.

Interpretation, on the other hand, denotes the actual product of this work, that is, the message as thus rendered into speech, writing, non-manual signals, or other language form.

The word 'interpreter' refers to the person who converts a thought or expression of a source language in "real time". Thus interpreter's function is to convey every semantic element (tone and register) and every intention and feeling of the message that the source-language speaker is directing to the target-language listeners. The aim of this is to allow listeners to get the message in a way that is as close as possible to the experience of those who understand the original, or source, language (Ibid).

1.3 The history of interpreting

Interpreting profession is a very old one. It came into existence when the first contacts were established between human groups speaking different languages.

In ancient Egypt, there are a number of references to interpreters who were present and their services were employed when it was dialing with the great conquests and the Roman Empire (Shahat: 2008).

Later, when the languages in which the Bible and other religious writings were written had become "dead languages", there was a type of interpreting going on day by day in the churches, synagogues, and other places of worship. The religious texts were in the original

language and frequently a simultaneous reading, often in a louder voice, was given at the same time in the local language understood by the congregation.

In addition, history tells us that rival rulers could not hold talks without the aid of interpreters. These forerunners of the political interpreting were frequently people from noble birth or people on whom the highest honours were subsequently bestowed (Ibid).

In the early Middle Ages, it was well- known that at some courts the profession of interpreting was hereditary, and its exponents were honoured and sometimes feared for the knowledge they had in the course of their profession.

At some point in the history, one grateful Turkish Sultan did erect a mosque to his interpreter (ibid).

On the other hand, a French lawyer once wrote several pages about the problem of languages at the beginning of the 16th Century. He wrote "... the best method of facilitating mutual understanding between Christians and Moslems is to have a certain number of wise and faithful interpreters, who speak the language of both parties, and who can explain to the one what the other desires to convey"(ibid).

In Europe after the Reformation, the French Language replaced the Latin in diplomatic circles. At the peace conference, however, which concluded the World War 1, it became apparent that the sole use of the French Language at diplomatic gatherings of this sort was out of date. Many American and British statesmen of the time preferred to speak in English, and many of the representatives of smaller countries in Europe were unable to express themselves in French (Ibid).

Consequently, this was probably the first large international gathering at which conference interpreting in consecutive form first became an official and integral part of the proceedings.

English, in a result, has become more and more widely spoken in the years since those peace talks at the conclusion of the World War1.

However, there is still a great need for interpreters all around the world and at all levels in hundreds of languages (ibid).

1.4 Interpreting vs. Translating

It would be useful to mention the differences between translating and interpreting. Interpreters and translators enable the cross- cultural communication necessary in today's society by converting one language into another. However, those language specialists do more than simply translate words: they relay concepts and ideas between languages.

Interpreters and translators are often discussed together because they share some common traits. For example, both must be fluent in at least two languages: a native (or active) language and a secondary (or passive) language. A small number of interpreters and translators are fluent in two or more passive languages. Their active language is the one that they know best and into which they interpret or translate, and their passive language is one for which they have nearly perfect knowledge.

Although some people do both, interpreting and translation are different professions. Interpreting deals with spoken words while translation deals with written words. This truism entails a number of differences between translating and interpreting (Saman, 1997:57-61):

1. ***Precedence***: The art of the translator is an ancient one, even if not quite as old as that of the interpreter, for the art of the interpreter precedes that of the translator in that the former processes what is said while the latter processes what is written. The spoken word came very much earlier than the written one (Shahat, 2008).

2. ***Time Span***: Interpreting usually occurs in real time, in the presence- physical, televised, or telephonic- of the parties for whom the interpreter renders an interpretation. That is, the interpreter's job is to facilitate the immediate communication between the speaker and

the listeners, so interpreting needs to be delivered in only a few seconds after the speaker speaks. Therefore, there is no time for careful refining of wording, though accuracy is a must. Translation, on the other hand, is the transference of meaning from text to text (written or recorded), with the translator having time and access to resources (dictionaries, glossaries, experts, reference books) to produce a faithful, true, and accurate document. Then, the translator may re-write the same passage several times to improve on the wording and the syntax (Saman, 1997: 57-61).

3. **Processing Capacity:** Interpreting requires a greater processing capacity than that of translating; for an interpreter has to process in two hours ten times as many words as does the translator in one working day. That is, the average speed of spoken language is about 150 words per minute, one hour of interpreting amounts to approximately 9.000 words. In about two hours, which is the time of a conference session or a meeting, the interpreter utters about 20.000 words. On the other hand, translators are required (according to U.N. standards) to translate six to eight pages, or 2.000 to 3.000 words per day (ibid).

4. **The Human Factor:** In interpreting the nature of work and the human factor play a more important role than they do in translation. That is, the speed at which interpreters must process and the information they hear expose them to a greater degree of mental stress and fatigue (ibid).

5. **Audience Interaction:** In case of translator's job, he works with a piece of paper in front of him. That is, he deals with a written text which is permanent and static setting, immovable in its form, fixed time and whose readers are varied, many and generally unknown to the translator. Interpreting, in contrast, takes place on the spot in real time when all participants of the communication event are present and interact with each other. The spoken word is intended for persons physically present. The interpreter, therefore, can easily adapt his rendition to fit the implicit knowledge of his audience which he either

knows beforehand, or can judge in light of their verbal or non-verbal reactions (ibid). In other words, the translator in his job is perhaps ideally of an introvert temperament, while the interpreter is perhaps ideally an extrovert. Similarly, the translator is to be liken to the solicitor and the interpreter to the barrister. The one carries out most of his work within the confines of his office, while the other appears before the public in an assembly hall or a court- house (Shahat, 2008).

6. **Directionality**: while interpreters often work into and from both languages, translators generally work one way. When he translates a document or a book, he works from the Source Language to the Target Language throughout that document or book. Interpreting is a two-way activity: S.L. T.L., then TL.... S.L. The interpreter renders the speaker's S.L. message into the hearer's T.L. Then he renders his hearer's T.L. answer into the original speaker's S.L. This means that there is no distinction between the SL and the T.L. for the interpreter. Both languages become SL and T.L. respectively in the course of meeting (Saman, 1997: 57-61).

7. **Linguistic Skill**: Translators convert written materials from one language into another. They must have excellent writing and analytical abilities. And because the documents that they translate must be as flawless as possible, they also need good editing skills. That is why professional translators almost always work in only one direction, translating only into their native language. Even bilingual individuals rarely can express themselves in a given subject equally well in two languages. And many excellent translators are far from being bilingual- they may not be, and need not be, fluent speakers of the Source Language (Shahat, 2008).

Interpreters, on the other hand, have to be able to translate in both directions, without the use of any dictionaries on the spot. They also require good public speaking skills and pleasant vocal quality since the target language is delivered in spoken mode. Sometimes, interpreters also need to add dramatic tone in interpretation story telling if that is what the speaker originally does (ibid).

In conclusion, the key skills of the translator are the ability to understand the Source Language and the culture of the country where the text originated, and using a good library of dictionaries and references materials, renders that material into the Target Language. Translators receive extensive practice with representative texts in various subject areas, learn to compile and manage glossaries of relevant terminology (ibid).

8. ***Equivalence and Sense***: The standard of accuracy is different in interpretation than that in translation. Translators have time to consider and revise each word and sentence before delivering their product to the client. While interpreters try to achieve total accuracy at all times because in interpretation the linguistic form, style and equivalence of words and expressions are of lesser importance since the interpreter is mainly concerned with the ideas and the message-meaning carried by the linguistic code (Saman, 1997: 57-61). Thus, he enjoys a relative freedom and flexibility in the rendition of the Target Language which may not generally be allowed to the translators. In other words, the interpreter may express shades of meaning by varying the tone of his voice, he may paraphrase when he does not find the exact word, he may repeat, correct or add to what he has just said, if he sees that was not properly understood (ibid). To convert a thought or an idea carried by the source language message into an exact if not identical corresponding thought in the target language, the interpreter focuses on the ideas expressed by the utterance(s) rather than on the wording used by the speaker, without attempting to find permanent linguistic equivalents. He concentrates on the appropriate wording to convey the sense of the utterance(s), which is its meaning at a given point of time in a given context of situation regardless of what the original wording may mean in a different situation (ibid).

Consequently, the interpreter tries to grasp the sense of utterances rather than the meanings of the words and propositions that carry that sense. That is why, for the interpreter, language is not an end in itself but a means to an end which is the communication of ideas, facts,

experiences, and information. Therefore, the interpreter must transcend language in order to fully comprehend the message as it is intended by the speaker. It is the comprehension of what the speaker intends to say which leads to the comprehension of the sense of the message. Thus, the interpreter is a process of exegesis and explanation and the interpreter retains only the sense of the original message regardless of its form, and renders the sense into the target language. That is why the industry expects interpreters to be more than 80% accurate and that the interpreting is an approximate version of the original. Translations should be over 99% accurate, by contrast (ibid).

9. *Concern for Receptors:* To show the difference between interpreting and translation we have to focus on another major difference arises when we compare the translation of literature with interpreting. The interpreter cannot but think of his hearers, all the time. For instance, in consecutive interpretation, he is face to face with them, and in simultaneous interpreting he is in constant contact with them through his microphone and their earphones. While the translator of literature is generally not concerned with his readers for the simple reason that the author of the original literary text is usually not concerned with who his public are. A poet or a novelist writes for himself more than writing for specific readers (ibid).

1.5 Shared Attention during Interpreting

Interpreting profession involves the skill of shared attention. In human information processing, one of the most interesting questions is whether a number of sensory inputs can be processed at the same time, or whether the only way to cope with more than one input is to switch rapidly from one input to the other (Lambert, 2004). In normal conversation, unlike simultaneous interpretation, the vocalization of one speaker usually precludes that of another and, as a consequence, people rarely talk at the same time. Miller (1963) cited in (Lambert, 2004) suggests that this turn-taking phenomenon may be a universal

of language behaviour, but that the reciprocity between talking and listening

“is not a necessary consequence of an auditory or physiological inability to speak and hear simultaneously; [...] perhaps there is some limit imposed by agility and attention, perhaps some critical component of the speech apparatus must be actively involved in the process of understanding speech.”

Earlier studies on attention show that consciousness, or attention, could only be directed to a single activity at a time. Conscious attention to two simultaneously performed tasks were possible only if they were coordinated into a single higher-order activity; or attended to in rapid alternation; or that at least one of the two tasks were being carried out automatically, without conscious control (ibid).

In most experiments on selective listening, subjects are usually asked to attend to one of two verbal messages by shadowing it, and to ignore the other.

In several studies, subjects were required to perform two simultaneous tasks. Allport et al. (1972) cited in Lambert (2004) stated experiments in which subjects performed two tasks concurrently without any reduction in performance in either task. Their subjects were asked to attend to and repeat back continuous speech at the same time as taking in complex, unrelated visual scenes, or even while sight reading piano music. Allport *et al.* indicate that when the messages or tasks to be performed are highly *dissimilar*, both tasks could be performed simultaneously. The main difference between Allport *et al.*'s study and other experimental paradigms (e.g. Moray in 1969) is that shadowing was one of the concurrent tasks, in other words, one verbal input was externally generated.

To explain this effect, Allport *et al.* (1972: 226) cited in Lambert (2004) suggest

“that the difficulty derives not from exceeding the limited capacity of a single general purpose central processor, but more simply from the difficulty of keeping separate (*i.e.*, of not confusing or confounding) two closely similar but unrelated messages.”

In addition, Shaffer (1975) cited in Lambert (2004) found that a very skilled copy-typist could successfully type high speed from a visual text while doing another verbal task, such as shadow prose or recite, without any impairment of performance. However, since she had great difficulty combining auditory typing with shadowing, Shaffer suggested that interference was greater when *response* units rather than *stimulus* units were similar.

There was, however, another experiment carried out by Spelke, Hirst and Neisser (1976) cited in Lambert (2004): They had two subjects read short stories while writing lists of words in dictation. After several weeks of practice, they were able to write words, discover relations among dictated words, and categorize words for meaning while reading for comprehension at normal speed. At the beginning of the experiment,

when the subjects failed to notice sentences and categories in the dictated lines, it appeared that they were copying the words without processing them to any extent. In this sense, writing might be called ‘automatic.’ But as the demands of the experiment changed, and after the subjects had been given additional practice, they gradually learned to analyze the dictated words semantically as well as detect simple sentential relationships between them. Finally, both subjects succeeded in categorizing dictated words with no loss of reading speed or comprehension, and, according to the authors’ definition, writing was no longer ‘automatic.’ In a limited sense, they had

achieved a true division of attention in that they were able to extract meaning simultaneously

from what they read and from what they heard.

In other words, A multi-channel processor could deal with two or more tasks at once provided that there is no competition between the tasks (*i.e.*, that the tasks are dissimilar) for the use of one channel, and that subordinate channels have been established through sufficient practice. When, in his experiments involving skilled typists,

subjects were unable to combine auditory typing with shadowing, reading aloud or reciting, Shaffer (1975) suggested three hypotheses to account for this inability, namely the pacing factor in auditory typing, the similarity of codes in the auditory tasks, and finally the possibility that the vocal output in the competing task was masking the auditory typing text.(Ibid)

Other researchers offered the following hypotheses: Brooks (1968) found that concurrent vocal activity may be the source of conflict. Crowder (1970) claimed that although there may be some special advantages in receiving auditory input over a channel as familiar as one's own voice, this active vocalization may in fact make special demands on the subject, demands which are not present during passive or covert vocalization. Finally, Jaffe *et al.* (1967) pointed out the difficulty of speaking and listening simultaneously in that, although subjects may be able to attend to two voices simultaneously, they will encounter greater difficulty when one of the two voices is their own. (Ibid)

In conclusion, In any discussion pertaining to simultaneous listening and speaking, the automaticity factor cannot be overlooked. A general rule appears to be that once a skill is highly learned, it gradually requires less conscious attention or little allocation of mental effort. Furthermore, highly skilled tasks seem to become automated and thereby not susceptible to disruption because attention is withdrawn (Norman 1976). With sufficient practice, responses can

become 'pre-attentive' or are referred to as 'automatisms' (Neisser 1967) cited in Lambert (2004).

2. Interpreting Environments

2.1 Interpreting Settings

Every interpreter should know that interpreting work may occur anywhere, anytime, in a formal way or in an informal way, between individuals or between an individual and a group, through a face-to-face communication or through an electronic device (telephone, skype, walky-talky radio). Thus interpreters work in many and varied environments:

1. **Formal Settings:** e.g. courts, tribunals, conferences (national & international), customs' Headquarters, security agencies' Headquarters, in the company of VIPs, dignitaries and statesmen.
2. **Informal Settings:** e.g. schools, doctors' clinics\surgeries, hospitals, accountants' offices, real estate agencies, tax offices, housing offices, employment agencies, and community health services (Shahat, 2008).

2.2 Interpreting process

Interpreters, unlike translators, employ mainly their short term memory. The interpreter trains himself to place his language knowledge in a cache located in the short term memory ready for him\her to simply click...drag and drop on his tongue (ibid). This process takes place in his\her mind instantly the moment the speaker has finished his point. Files that include vocabularies, expressions, idioms, phrases, syntax and a variety of antonyms and synonyms, jargons, acronyms etc. are stored there at the interpreter's command. In handling the above, the interpreter employs two powers (ibid):

1. **Retention:** It is the ability of retaining information for a while in your short term memory.

2. **Retrieval:** It is the ability to retrieve such information instantly from short term memory when required. The speed of seeing a letter appearing on your personal computer (PC) screen once you click it on the keyboard is like the interpreter's speed in retrieving a piece of information from his\her memory.

Man usually retains everything in pictures similar to video-tape or a DVD. When hearing few words that represent an idea, interpreter's brain forms a picture of this idea, then looks for an equivalent one from the language cache to draw the same picture but dressed in a different language and keeps it ready for the interpreter in the short term memory until required (ibid).

Usually the interpreter is not concerned with the exact collocations, the perfect semantics or syntax. But the interpreter dresses up the message into a quick attire of the T.L. to serve the moment. The interpreter has the confidence to believe in the slogan 'first time right', while the translator usually tries many times to check and double check to produce what in his opinion "a perfect translation".

Generally speaking, the interpreter uses effective tools to produce effective rendition, namely paralinguistic features; his voice production, the way he moves his body, the way he modulates his voice, his accentuation and attenuation, loudness, pitch, etc. All these elements help dress the picture (message) in a different and acceptable form. This is because the interpreter has to grab the attention of the audience regardless of the fact that his rendition of a language is perfect or not. After all, it is said that an interpreter is 65% performer and 35% cultural linguist (ibid).

An interpreter is able to coin expressions or paraphrase an uncommon idiom on-the-go. He\she is able to convert acronyms to their original long titles or names instantly. He\she does not have time

to look them up in the dictionary or glossary. If he\she makes mistakes he\she has all the tricks of the trade as well as the professionalism to be able to cover them up, forget them and keep going with the same confidence. There is no time to ponder over his\her mistakes (ibid).

Generally, interpreters are able to use the above mentioned genres of interpreting all at once in one session. That is why training interpreters takes few years, and to become on-top-of-the-heap interpreters will have to practice daily for many years (ibid).

In conclusion, we can sum up the steps of interpreting process as follows:

1. Anticipate what is going to come to activate vocabulary and terminology base,
2. Active listening,
3. Process unit of meaning,
4. Monitored delivery under pressure.

2.3 Interpreting Strategies

The basic interpreting strategies are (Hung, 2006):

1. Parroting: repeating everything that is heard; simultaneous listening/speaking; hearing and delivering.
2. Pendulum: paying attention to the source and to one's self in the process of interpreting.
3. Shadowing: keeping the same unit of meaning, but paraphrasing by expressing meaning in a different way.
4. Public Speaking: delivery of interpretation.

3. Interpreter's knowledge, skills and qualities

3.1 Necessary Skills for the Interpreter

1. *Language and its usage*

- a. The interpreter should keep on improving his linguistic knowledge of both the Source Language and the Target Language through reading and/or listening to discourse genres available from different sources of information, like books, the Internet, television, radio, etc.
 - b. The interpreter should search for an appropriate, accurate, and natural way of using both the source language and the target language by asking and observing how native speakers are using their language in real-life situations (Morin, 2005).
2. The interpreter should agree with the speaker on how to interpret on stage: statement by statement or giving a summary after the talk. If the interpreter is to interpret statement by statement, he must use the first-person personal pronoun "I" to refer to the speaker; when giving a summary after a talk, particularly in a debate or a discussion, the interpreter must use the third-person personal pronoun "he" or "she" or "speaker's name" (ibid).

3. *Personal qualities* such as nervous resistance, readiness of speech.

4. *Intellectual gifts* such as power of concentration, excellent memory and extracting key information.

5. *Moral attributes* such as self-command and a sense of responsibility.

6. *Communication skills* such as public speaking abilities.

7. General erudition and intimate familiarity with both *cultures*:

It is no exaggeration to say that the value of an interpreter depends to a great extent on the degree of his culture. The interpreter, whether working on national or international level, is regularly in contact with

the great political, economic, juridical and social problems of the hour. That is because the common assumption of people is that if a person speaks English, he has the capacity of understanding every detail of all fields of knowledge, which is of course untrue. Accordingly, the interpreter must make an effort to familiarize himself with different fields of knowledge in order to enrich and prepare himself to becoming a well-prepared interpreter to counterbalance such an assumption (ibid).

8. *Personality:*

The interpreter is more of an extrovert; he is not timid or bashful. He is more of a PR man, the one who can interact easily with people from all walks of life. He is soldiered on with some psychological insight into the nature of man's behavior. He should be light-hearted with sunny personality (Shahat, 2008).

9. *Psychological Readiness:*

- a. The interpreter must have an I-can-do-it feeling. He must trust his own linguistic and non-linguistic abilities by saying to himself: *"Go and Just Do It! No one is perfect at first"* This inner force will strongly encourage him to walk up on stage with full self-confidence.
- b. The interpreter should assume that nobody else in the audience knows English and/or Arabic. This is to avoid a feeling that somebody on the floor will identify the mistakes he may make. This is also to increase self-confidence and to decrease anxiety (Morin, 2005).
- c. He must not bring any psychological burden with him that might interfere with his work. He must refuse to do the job if he has a psychological problem or a bad mood on that day (ibid).

10. *Subject-matter:*

The first part of an interpreter's work begins before arriving at the jobsite. The interpreter must become familiar with the subject matter that the speaker will discuss, a task that may involve a research to create a list of common words and phrases associated with the topic. A professionally trained interpreter with subject-specific knowledge is a vital element in the success of any important international communication project. The interpreter must be familiar with the subject matter that is being communicated in order to correctly cover the nuances of technical speech and render it accurately into another language. This is why making sure that the interpreter is knowledgeable in the subject matter of the conference or the workshop they are interpreting at is just as important as making sure that s/he is an experienced interpreter (ibid).

11. Ability to express thoughts clearly and concisely in both languages.

12. Excellent note-taking for consecutive interpreting.

13. At least 2-3 years of booth experience for simultaneous interpreting.

14. The interpreter should put down some particular points during a discussion, especially if the speaker is flooded with comments and questions from different people attending the meeting (ibid).

15. The interpreter should sit or stand close to the speaker so as to interpret what the first speakers say if it's an event (e.g. opening ceremony of a new project) where several speakers are invited to deliver their speeches, or comments may be made or questions asked by individuals from the audience (ibid).

16. The interpreter should ask the speaker to repeat an important point if the interpreter has missed it. He does not have to feel that the speaker or the audience may think he is stupid if he asks for clarification or repetition (ibid).

17. Apart from a hand phone on a teleconference or a telephone meeting, the speaker-phone button on an office telephone must be pressed when interpreting so both the speaker and the interpreter can clearly hear the comments, questions, and answers from the speaker at the other end. The interpreter should stop the speaker at the other end when he speaks too fast. This usually happens when the speaker at the other end does not realize that interpreting is in progress. The interpreter should remind the remote speaker to adapt to the pace of the speaker on his side (ibid).

18. The interpreter should keep an eye contact with the audience or with an individual when sitting or standing in front of them.

19. The interpreter should speak up to ensure that the message is clearly heard and understood by the audience.

20. The interpreter should ask the speaker to raise the volume of his voice when he speaks too softly. This is to avoid asking for repetition of unclear words or missing the point when the environment is polluted by external noises.

21. The interpreter should not look at the written version of the speech if the speaker provides him with one, because this will interfere with his concentration. He has to put it aside right away and concentrate on the verbal message, because the process of listening to and interpreting incoming messages in the Short Term Memory is faster than reading. In addition, some good speakers usually do some improvisation and adaptations while delivering their speeches because of new information received from previous speakers or new ideas occurring to them spontaneously (ibid).

22. *Anticipation* (Hung, 2006).

23. *Listening skills*: The interpreter should listen to the speaker with full concentration while performing his job (ibid).

24. *Understanding of a message* (units of meaning) (ibid).

25. *Detachment from words*.

26. *Split attention* (multi- tasking abilities)
27. *Flexibility*.
28. *Quickness*
29. *Sensitivity to language registers* (levels) (i.e. the ability to produce coherent speech using the appropriate register):
 - High register
 - Middle register
 - Low register
30. *Sensitivity to dialects* (regional variations of language).
31. *Problem- solving strategies*.
32. *Paraphrasing* (ibid).

3.2 Tools of the Trade (Logistical Preparation)

The following steps should be taken into consideration by the interpreter (ibid):

1. The interpreter should have a pen and a small notebook with him to put down certain points during a session of discussion if the audience is given a chance to comment and raise questions (in a discussion situation).
2. The interpreter should carry his own small tape-recorder or cell phone/recorder with him at all times to record his actual interpreting work for his own performance assessment. Remember, interpreting work is not always in a very well-organized formal situation. It may take place anywhere and anytime. This small extra work may improve his performance and bring the interpreter up to a more professional level. Make sure to let the speaker and the organizer know of this recording by asking their permission to do it for personal improvement, rather than for commercial or political purposes.

3. The interpreter should ask the speaker if he has a hard copy of the talk and review it before going on stage. This will help the interpreter to find out new terms which he needs to clarify with the speaker or a friend to avoid misinterpreting. If the speaker is invited to deliver a speech without written notes, the interpreter should ask the speaker to brief him on the main points.
4. The interpreter should negotiate the price when the other parties need his interpreting service for the benefit of their businesses. Ask experienced colleagues how much they charge for an hour or a day service and under what conditions.
5. The interpreter should have some spare business cards on him in case someone is impressed by his performance and may need his expertise one day. The interpreter can also promote himself to potential clients during a break.

3.3 Ethics of Interpreting

Every person who practices interpreting should have the following basic principles (Shahat, 2008):

1. **Professional Conduct:** Interpreters shall at all time act in accordance with the standards of conduct and decorum appropriate to the aims of their profession and the standards prescribed by their Associations and governing Bodies.
2. **Confidentiality:** Professional interpreters shall not disclose information acquired during the course of their assignments in any form.
3. **Professional Competence:** Professional interpreters shall undertake only the work which they are competent to perform in the language areas for which they are accredited or recognized.
4. **Impartiality and Objectivity:** Professional interpreters shall observe impartiality and objectivity in all professional contacts.

5. **Accuracy and Honesty:** Professional interpreters shall take all reasonable care to be accurate and honest.

6. **Employment:** Professional interpreters shall be responsible for the quality of their work, whether as freelance practitioners or employed practitioners of International Translators (I/T) agencies and other employers.

7. **Punctuality:** It is vital that professional interpreters shall be punctual at all time as all parties, in an interpreting situation, rely on them.

4. Interpreter's Practice and Work- field

4.1 The Need for Training

As the profession of interpreting is emerging nowadays as a member of a distinct and fairly clear cut profession within the ranks of other professionals, training comes in as an imperative step in the making of a professional interpreter.

It is the training that helps to remold and sharpen qualities and skills that already part of the interpreter's make-up temperament. An interpreter has to have training to master the craft as this very craft dictates that a text translated or a speech interpreted should ideally make the same impression on a native speaker of the target language who is conversant with the subject-matter of the original as the original did on the native speaker of the source language.

For this reason we can see that the interpreter has to have an intensive and multi-faceted training to reach such a fine standard that a professional of any discipline can be confidently assured that his views and research are accurately converted into other languages for the benefits of the rest of the world.

This realization leads to the conclusion that training for interpreters needs to be vocational in character and inter-disciplinary;

that is why various diploma and degree courses have been established at newer universities and colleges, combining contextual studies and linguistic skills for better professional interpreters (Ibid).

The following issues should be tackled in relation to interpreter's training:

1. Suitability of Students:

Before undertaking interpreting as a profession, an interpreter has to possess certain qualities, besides the requisite temperament, to be able to cope with tasks which the job requires. The educational establishment must guide, nurture and develop these particular qualities. To do so the prospective students' selection needs to be based on specific criteria to determine their suitability for the course. They should have an interest in language studies, near native competence in both: the source and target languages, knowledge of the cultures of the countries where the languages are spoken, a good memory, interest in current local and international affairs, plus an appropriate personality. With the proper training, a student with such qualities should make a good professional interpreter (or translator) (Shahat, 2008).

2. Educational Institution:

In the field of training, an educational institution may pave the way for the would-be interpreters to acquire professional education not divorced from practice. To do so, the choice of the academic staff should meet the requirements (see 5.Resources and Materials, p23). This coupled with the availability of sophisticated teaching aids and materials, plus teaching methodologies comparable to those practiced in other advanced countries. In addition, an educational institution may also provide the opportunity for the student to be in touch with the community through field practice, and the golden opportunity for student-exchange with overseas institution. (Ibid)

3. Community:

The community, unfortunately, still thinks that interpreting (or translating) is a job and not a profession. This perception needs to change so that the training of students can proceed to a professional standard. The community needs to be educated enough to understand the importance of the role of an interpreter and to learn about who can interpret and who cannot. We have seen the complexities inherent to interpreting and how professional training is needed to handle these complexities. This fact has to be taught to the community groups for as long as the community makes no distinction between the qualified interpreter and the amateur helper the efforts of educational institutions will be in vain. To work this out, the professionals can hold lecturers and seminars for the community groups and arrange visits and discussions on campus that could help keep the community abreast of the art of interpreting, this way the community can be educated about interpreting to make use of the professionals' skills. (Ibid)

4. Business Sector:

The business world, on the other hand, is not any further advanced on this question, for the business sector still thinks that a bilingual person is automatically an interpreter (or translator), a view that leaves a lot out of account. Language competence is the starting and not the end point for interpreters. Only when the knowledge of at least two languages is sufficiently developed can one begin to train for the skills of interpreting. This is an issue that has to be tackled, for the business sector has to be known that their erroneous perception can only contribute to inhibiting the progress of professionalism in the field that is vital to the development of their business worldwide (ibid).

Students of interpreting have to have extensive field practice to narrow the gap between theory and practice and here comes the business sector role. It needs to provide the opportunity for the students to undertake field practice in their establishments.

Such an arrangement will be of course under the supervision of the educational establishment. Such triangular co-operation is needed so that both the community and business sector can be aware that training in this field is a matter of language competence and a matter of quality issues. (Ibid)

5. Resources and Materials:

As training has to deal gently and expertly with such skills and qualities, an interpreter needs to rely on resources and materials ranging from the written to the audio/visual. The lack of such materials is felt by students and lecturers alike, who complain of the lack of co-operation of the community and business sector. Perhaps their co-operation in this field will go hand in hand with a change in their attitude towards the need for training.

Materials for such professional training should include literature on theory and practice of interpreting, written literature on linguistics and contextual studies. In addition to that, reference books, language labs, audio-visual equipment, such as interpreting booths need to be more available to the students. The materials which the students need to use must be current and have certain immediacy; great use is to be made of newspapers, magazines, company reports, government papers, etc.

Such resources, we are talking about, would not and should not replace the human element: the trainer himself. A trainer should have qualities that go beyond those of an interpreter. A trainer should be fluent- in the written and spoken forms- in both languages. His feeling for and appreciation of different styles, tones and moods of each language. All that should be of high quality. Experience in public speaking, interpersonal relationships and psychology are also essential requisites in a trainer. He should also follow closely the latest trends in the field locally and internationally. It is also highly recommended for and advantageous to the trainer in his profession to have spent a good number of years in each country of the source and target

languages, not only to learn the language but to live it in every respect, otherwise he/she will be a bookish kind of trainer and that is not good enough. These are but a few of the skills and qualities a trainer should possess.(Ibid)

The importance of refresher courses and of periodical visits to the countries of languages other than his/her native language should also be stressed for both student and trainer/lecturer in order to enrich and refresh this element of professionalism in themselves.

On the other hand, as computerized techniques are now invading all branches of industry and service, the trainer/lecturer will be expected to have more than nodding acquaintance of them. (Ibid)

4.2 Interpreter's Performance Assessment

Interpreting is a very complex task that combines several abilities beyond language competence in order to enable delivery of an effective professional interpretation in a given setting.

Generally speaking, an individual's interpretation performance level depends on (Interagency Language Roundtable ILR, 2008):

1. Command of two working languages.
2. Ability to choose an appropriate expression.
3. Familiarity with the cultural context of both languages.
4. Knowledge of terminology in specialized field.
5. Observance of protocols applicable to different settings and
6. Mastery of modes applicable to these settings.

To evaluate interpreter's performance, the skill level descriptions that follow characterize interpreting performance in three bands: Professional Performance (Levels 3 to 5), Limited Performance (Levels 2 and 2+), and Minimal Performance (Levels 1 and 1+). It is

at the Professional Performance Level 3, as described below, that all necessary skills align to enable a reasonable accurate, reliable, and trustworthy interpretation. Above Level 3, an individual's competence and expertise combine to produce increasingly accurate and reliable interpreting in a variety of settings. Below Level 3, the Limited Performance Levels (2+ and 2) are characterized by weaknesses in some of the requisite skills. For this reason, individuals performing at these levels are not able to deliver a professional interpretation but may nevertheless be able to assist with transferring some limited information. The Minimal and Memorized Performance Levels (1+ to 0+) are characterized by weaknesses in all of the requisite skills. Interpretation is not possible at these levels. Each level implies control of all functions at the lower levels. The "plus level" designation is used to describe performance which substantially exceeds the next lower skill level but for any reason does not fully meet the criteria for the next higher level (ibid).

The descriptions of these skill levels are (ibid):

Level 5 (Master Professional Performance):

Able to excel consistently at interpreting in the mode (simultaneous, consecutive, and sight) required by the setting and provide accurate renditions of informal, formal, and highly formal discourse. Conveys the meaning of the speaker faithfully and accurately, including all details and nuances, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source language, without omissions, additions or embellishments. Demonstrates superior command of the skills required for interpretation, including mastery of both working languages and their cultural context, and wide-ranging expertise in specialized fields. Outstanding delivery, with pleasant voice quality and without hesitations, unnecessary repetitions, and corrections. Exemplifies the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Level 4+ (Advanced Professional Performance Plus):

Able to interpret in the mode (simultaneous, consecutive, and sight) required by the setting and provide accurate renditions of informal, formal, and most highly formal discourse. Conveys the meaning of the speaker faithfully and accurately, including virtually all details and nuances, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source language, without omissions, additions or embellishments. Demonstrates mastery of the skills required for interpretation, including command of both working languages and their cultural context, expertise in a number of specialized fields, and ability to prepare other specialized topics rapidly and routinely. Excellent delivery, with pleasant voice quality and rare hesitations, repetitions or corrections. Performance reflects the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Level 4 (Advanced Professional Performance):

Able to interpret in the mode (simultaneous, consecutive, and sight) required by the setting and provide almost completely accurate renditions of complex, colloquial, and idiomatic speech as well as formal and some highly formal discourse. Conveys the meaning of the speaker faithfully, including most if not all details and nuances, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source language, without omissions, additions or embellishments. Demonstrates mastery of the skills required for interpretation, including command of both working languages and their cultural context, expertise in some specialized fields, and ability to prepare new specialized topics rapidly and routinely. Very good delivery, with pleasant voice quality and only occasional hesitations, repetitions or corrections. Performance reflects the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Level 3+ (Professional Performance Plus):

Able to interpret accurately and consistently in the mode (simultaneous, consecutive, and sight) required by the setting and

provide generally accurate renditions of complex, colloquial and formal speech, conveying most details and nuances. Expression will generally reflect target language conventions. Demonstrates competence in the skills required for interpretation, including command of both working languages, their cultural context, and terminology in those specialized fields in which the interpreter has developed expertise. Good delivery, with pleasant voice quality, and few hesitations, repetitions, or corrections. Performance reflects high standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Level 3 (Professional Performance):

Able to interpret consistently in the mode (simultaneous, consecutive, and sight) required by the setting, provide renditions of informal as well as some colloquial and formal speech with adequate accuracy, and normally meet unpredictable complications successfully. Can convey many nuances, cultural allusions, and idioms, though expression may not always reflect target language conventions. Adequate delivery, with pleasant voice quality. Hesitations, repetitions or corrections may be noticeable but do not hinder successful communication of the message. Can handle some specialized subject matter with preparation. Performance reflects high standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Level 2+ (Limited Working Performance Plus):

Able to transfer information, not always accurately and completely, during routine, everyday, repetitive exchanges in informal settings, but unable to perform adequately in the standard interpretation modes. May falter, stammer, or pause, and often resort to summarizing speech content. Idiomatic or cultural expressions may not be rendered appropriately in most instances. Language may be stilted or awkward.

Level 2 (Limited Working Performance):

Unable to transfer information reliably in most instances. May communicate some meaning when exchanges are short, involve subject matter that is routine or discourse that is repetitive or

predictable, but may typically require repetition or clarification. Expression in the target language is frequently faulty.

Level 1+ (Minimal Performance Plus):

Unable to transfer information reliably, even if familiar with the subject matter.

Level 1 (Minimal Performance):

Unable to transfer more than isolated short phrases.

Level 0+ (Memorized Performance):

Unable to transfer more than isolated words.

Level 0 (No Performance):

No functional ability to transfer information from one language to another.

4.3 Interpreter at Work

Interpreters should put these significant points into their consideration (Bls, 2004):

- About 22 percent of interpreters (and translators) are self-employed.
- Work is often sporadic, and many of these workers are part time.
- In addition to needing fluency in at least two languages, many interpreters (and translators) need a bachelor's degree. Many also complete job-specific training programs.
- Job outlook varies by specialty.

1. Experience

Experience is an essential part of a successful career in interpreting. In fact many agencies or companies use only the services

of people who have worked in the field for 3-5 years or who have a degree in translation studies or both.

People seeking to enter interpreting job should begin by getting experience whatever way they can- even if it means doing informal or unpaid work.

Volunteer opportunities are available through community organizations, hospitals, and sporting events, such as marathons, that involve international competitors.

Paid or unpaid internships and apprenticeships are other ways for interpreters to get started. Escort interpreting may offer an opportunity for inexperienced candidates to work alongside a more seasoned interpreter. Interpreters might also find it easier to break into areas with particularly high demand for language services, such as court or medical interpreting.

Whatever path of entry they pursue; new interpreters should establish mentoring relationships to build their skills, confidence, and professional networks. Mentoring may be formal, such as through a professional association or informal with a coworker or an acquaintance who has experience as an interpreter. (Ibid)

2. Employment

Interpreters are employed in a variety of industries, reflecting the diversity of employment options in the field. About 33% worked in public and private educational institutions, such as schools, colleges, and universities. About 12% worked in health care and social assistance, many of whom worked for hospitals. Another 10% worked in other areas of government, such ministries and local courts. Other employers of interpreters (and translators) include publishing companies, telephone companies, air-lines, and interpreting and translating agencies.

About 22% of interpreters (and translators) are self-employed. Many who freelance in the occupation work only part time, relying on

other sources of income to supplement earnings from interpreting (or translation). (Ibid)

3. Earnings

Earnings depend on language, subject matter, skill, experience, education, certification, and type of employer. Salaries of interpreters can vary widely. Interpreters, for instance, who know languages for which there is a greater demand, or which relatively few people can translate, often have higher earnings as do those with specialized expertise. Limited information suggests that highly skilled interpreters, for instance high-level conference interpreters, working full time can earn more than 100.000\$ annually.

For those who are not salaried, earnings may fluctuate, depending on the availability of work. Freelance interpreters usually earn an hourly rate (whereas translators who freelance typically earn a rate per word or per hour). (Ibid)

Conclusions

The present study has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Interpreting is not a matter of craft only; rather, it is being aware of the theoretical aspects of interpreting as the core stone for understanding interpreting process, and consequently performing interpreting perfectly.

2. Unlike translation, interpreting process depends on a much larger number and variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors. By linguistic factors we mean the differences between the source language and the target language on lexical and syntactic levels. Extralinguistic factors, on the other hand, mean that the interpreter must be familiar with the cultures of the societies that speak his working languages.

3. Despite its crucial importance, linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge is not enough to qualify an interpreter. It is only a prerequisite that must be complemented by certain personal and psychological qualities such as power of concentration, fluency of speech, noise and stress resistance, etc. and the technical skills of analysis.

4. What qualifies an interpreter is the acquisition of the technique of interpreting. Developing a good technique is a major condition for the interpreter to be able to understand a message and then render it into another language immediately/after the original speaker.

5. Interpreting is not a word-for-word transfer of meaning from the Source Language into the Target Language. The main focus is on thoughts conveyed by the Source Language message, rather than on its wording. It involves understanding the speaker's thought as conveyed by the Source Language verbal message, transferring that Source Language verbal message into an equivalent thought, and finally restructuring it in the form of a verbal message in the Target Language.

6. The interpreter must bear in mind that speakers in the interpreting situations have something in common: (1) they want to convey information. In this case the referential function of language is the strongest. Consequently, the linguistic meaning is predominant. (2) They also want to express their feelings and attitudes towards the issues discussed there, and to elicit certain responses from the hearers. In this case the emotive function also plays a very important role. Thus, the extralinguistic meaning becomes predominant. For this reason, one of the major aspects of the interpreter work is to correctly assess the role of these two types of meaning (linguistic and extralinguistic) in order to be able to determine the prominence of one or the other type of meaning according to the context of situation.

7. Occasionally, the interpreter may need to elaborate his interpretation to a level more explicit than the original message for reasons related to the differences between the S.L. and the T.L., and

between the cultural background of the speakers and hearers. On the one hand, this may lead to a longer T.L message and may sometimes end up in a too redundant repetition, or, on the other hand, may lead to a short, ambiguous T.L. message to avoid repetition and to improve the quality of the original message. That is why the interpreter must be aware of the context of situation in which an utterance is spoken. To do so, he must have a good command of the T.L. resources which will enable him to adopt restructuring strategies. For this reason, the interpreter needs more than one strategy or approach to the interpretation of different utterances. He must adopt an amalgam of both the formal and functional approaches.

8. There has never been a time in the history of Man when interpreting has been more necessary. Since the interpreter is an essential agent acting as a mediator across the language barrier in a vast number of fields, the demand for cultivated professional interpreters has increased. Hence, professional training has become of vital importance indeed. Interpreting can be fine and well paid profession. But in order to be amongst the top practitioners, an interpreter needs to study and practice long and hard and not to run before s/he can walk, for it is unlikely that those who are not amongst the top will be able to survive in the field years to come.

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