A study on the role of the Interpreter when Assessing the Oral Interpreting Quality

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Abstract:

The oral interpretation quality assessment (OIQA) has long attracted the researchers' attention. Organizers, speakers, and interpreters of a conference have different expectations for the outcomes of the oral interpretation. Among various approaches of the OIQA, such as the principles of "faithfulness, expressiveness, elegance", "correctness, smooth, quickness" and "flexibility", or other influencing factors, e.g., the speaker's voice, speed and tone, the "invisibility" of the interpreter becomes more and more important in OIQA. By reviewing the history of the research of OIQA, this article examines the related theories and practices and put forth the concept of "invisibility" of the interpreter as an effective approaches to assess QIO. The article noticed that the "invisibility" of the interpreter runs through both the process and the outcome in assessing QIO. The article also put forth the practical ideas to embrace this "invisibility" to achieve high performance in OIQA.

Key words: interpreter, assessment, oral interpreting quality, invisibility

Introduction

Oral interpreting is the process during which the interpreter translates the source language into the target language only a few seconds after the speaker or when the speaker pauses for interpretation to boost mutual understanding, which is especially important in bringing new technologies and strengthening international exchanges and cooperation. There are some definitions of oral interpreting. Interpreting act is "orally rephrasing a communication expressed in one language, the source language (SL), and in another

language, the target language(TL)" (De Groot, 1997: 25). "Interpreting can be defined most broadly as interlingua, intercultural oral or signed mediation, enabling communication between individuals or groups who do not share, or do not choose to use the same language(s)" (Pochhacker and Shlesinger, 2002: 2-3).

With the world becoming more and more interacting, interpreters play a more indispensable role as a bridge to breech the obstacles in languages as well as cultures. International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) was established in 1953, which is the only international association in conference interpretation, focusing on supervising and confirming the quality of oral interpreters and formulating training affairs and the best practices. It gives the definition of a conference interpreter: A conference interpreter is a qualified specialist in bilingual or multilingual communication. He/she makes this communication possible between delegates of different linguistic communities at conferences, meetings, negotiating or visits, where more than one working language is used by comprehending the concepts of the speaker's message and conveying them orally in another language, either in consecutive, simultaneous or whispering. Besides carrying out a thorough preparation of the subject and terminology, a conference interpreter must possess a wide general knowledge in order to deal with matters under discussion. Conference interpreters are, moreover, bound to respect the code of professional ethics, including the strictest professional secrecy (AIIC, 1994). From the definition we can see the importance of a qualified oral interpreter.

In a bid to improve the oral interpreting quality for later use of training oral interpreters, selecting the qualified interpreters and carrying on researches on oral interpreting, the assessment of oral interpreting quality comes into being. There are a handful of ways of assessing whether in theoretical study of in empirical study. The interpretative theory was put forward by the Paris School with Seleskovitch and Lederer forerunning the study. Gile was in favor of no absolute standard for assessing the oral interpreting quality because of different expectations from the organizer, the user, the interpreter, the audience, the technicians and the equipment. Moser-Mercer held three models of oral interpreting quality assessment according to different purposes: evaluation, measurement and judgment. There are some principles that can be regarded as the assessment of oral interpreting quality,

for instance, "faithfulness, expressiveness, elegance", "comprehensiveness, correctness, smooth", and "flexibility". However, one effective and direct way to assess oral interpreting quality, the author believes, is to check the interpreter's "invisibility". This "invisibility" is different from Lawrence Venuti's opinion on the translator's invisibility which emphasizes the importance of foreignization as a skill of translation. The "invisibility" in this thesis focuses on both the process and result of interpretation, which means that a qualified interpreter is ignored until the end of the conference. "Invisibility" is an overall effect and a lot of techniques need integrating to reach the goal. This thesis tries to solve the problems including the definition of oral interpreting, oral interpreter, oral interpreting quality, especially the "invisibility", the reason why the "invisibility" can be considered as an assessment of oral interpreting quality, and how to improve the "invisibility".

The History of Oral Interpreting Quality Assessment

AIIC describes interpreting quality standards as follows: "While there may be minor individual differences among the standards each interpreter sets for himself, we all share common standards of what we consider to be professional interpretation. These standards can be summarized as follows: what our listeners receive through their earphones should produce the same effect on them as the original speech does on the speaker's audience. It should have the same cognitive content and be presented with equal clarity and precision in the same type of language. Its language and oratory quality should be at least on the same level as that of the original speech, if not better, given that we are professional communicators, while many speakers are not, and sometimes even have to express themselves in languages other than their own."

Considering the crucial role of oral interpreting in the international context, specialists from the west and China have studied the oral interpreting quality assessment in the course of history for later use of carrying on researches on oral interpreting, training oral interpreters, and selecting the qualified interpreters. Meanwhile, the readers can find the important role the oral interpreters play and the effect of "invisibility" as an assessment of oral interpreting quality.

The Theory of Oral Interpreting Quality Assessment

There are many theories focusing on oral interpreting quality assessment. In the west, people know that "the most outstanding ones are put forward by Moser-Mercer, Marquant, Gile, Angelelli, Seleskovitch, Lederer and Eugene Nida" (Cai, 2004: 3).

Moser-Mercer came up with three models of assessment of oral interpreting quality for different purposes: judgment, evaluation and measurement. For the training purpose, it is better to use the model of judgment to assess the trainees' level, which is not only helpful for the students to see their weaknesses and progress but also conducive for the teachers to follow the students' actual pace and find new ways for better teaching. For the purpose of understanding the interpreter's qualification, evaluation of the interpreters in the conference naturally is suitable. For the purpose of research, measurement is appropriate because of its accuracy. Marquant put forward the dynamic evaluation model of case-based teaching which concentrating on observing interpreter's behavior in accordance with relatively agreed standard of oral interpreting quality assessment to prove a certain ability. Gile held that there was no absolute standard for assessing the oral interpreting quality because of different expectations from the organizer, the user, the interpreter, the audience, the technicians and the equipment. Angelelli believed that the standard of oral interpreting quality assessment varies because of different nature in one-way communicational interpreting like lectures or speeches, and two-way communicational interpreting like discussion or negotiation. Seleskovitch and Lederer raised the interpretive theory which emphasizes "the progress from understanding the source language to get rid of the form of the source language to express the content and feelings in target language according to your understanding of the source language"(Seleskovitch, 1978: 2). Eugene Nida put forward the principle of "functional equivalence" (Nida, 1993: 25).

Chinese scholars focus on several principles which can be seen as assessments of oral interpreting quality, among which the most outstanding ones are put forward by Li Yueran, Qian Wei, Yang Chengshu, Hu Gengshen, Bao Gang and Yanfu.

Li Yueran came up with "correctness, smooth, quickness" (Li, 1983: 6) as an assessment. Qian Wei pointed that "the intent of the source language and the effect in communicative environment and communicative response are main references in grasping flexibility"(Qian, 1996: 4). Yang Chengshu studied the concept of "quantification and qualification"(Yang, 2000: 37) as an oral interpreting quality assessment. Hu Gengshen put forward the model of CREDIT which includes on-the-spot, self-assessment, questionnaire and interviews, recording test, back interpretation, designed experiment, proficiency examination and modeling, trying to quantize the process of assessment. (Hu, 2004: 37). Bao Gang favored the standard of "comprehensiveness, correctness, and smooth" (Bao, 2011: 18). Yan Fu, an influential translator in China, held the idea of "faithfulness, expressiveness, elegance"(Yan, 2012: 5) in translation. While in oral interpreting, people attach more importance to faithfulness and expressiveness.

The Practice of Oral Interpreting Quality Assessment

Quality assessment can be used in business interpretation. The quality assessment mostly used in business interpretation is "position-oriented as the sender, the client, the interpreter and the receiver are not supposed to have the same perspectives" (Gile, 1995: 34-37). "A passionate speech interpreted very convincingly may be highly appreciated by the Sender but resented by a Receiver who happens to be the Client, and fast delivery of a rather coarse translation may result in satisfactory quality assessment by a translation company which pays for the work, but in poor quality assessment by the readers of the target-language text"(Gile, 1995: 33). Other scholars agree with Gile. Seleskovitch pointed out that interpretation should always be judged from the perspective of the listener and never as an end in itself. Defean le Feal pointed out that our ultimate goal must obviously be to satisfy our audience. Thiery stressed the need for situation analysis on the part of the interpreter, who must always consider who is talking to whom, to what purpose and with what possible effect.

Quality assessment can be used in technology interpretation. Technology interpretation, different from other types of oral interpreting including business interpretation,

telephone interpretation, foreign affairs interpretation and oral interpreting contests, attaches more emphasis on a strong logicality, a clear idea, a correct interpretation, a professional expression and an intense specialty. As Xu Shuchun puts it, "Correctness is the soul of technology interpretation". Therefore, the quality assessment in technology interpretation takes many standards like fidelity, fluency and speed of delivery, linguistic acceptability, flexibility, and clarity into consideration, while correctness is the key.

Quality assessment can be used in telephone interpretation. Telephone interpretation is an emerging type of oral interpreting with considerable advantages like lower costs, flexibility and convenience and high efficiency. However, telephone interpretation is still undergoing skeptical opinions because of not only the missing of some non-verbal or verbal messages but also the stringent requirement of a quiet environment. As most of other kinds of oral interpreting, fidelity, clarity, logic cohesion, flexibility, fluency and speed can be regarded as the assessments of telephone interpreting quality.

Quality assessment can be used in oral interpreting contests. Currently, the main world-wide oral interpreting contests include the first national oral interpreting contest held by Translators Association of China and the High Education Press, oral interpreting of cross-strait contest held by Xiamen University and Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and a national interpreting contest called "Higher Education Press Cup". The main regional contests include Shanghai interpreter Talent Competition and Guangdong College English interpreters Contest. Zhong Weihe put forward the knowledge structure of an oral interpreter, that is, "KI=KL+EK+S (P+PA)"(Zhong, 2003: 4). KI=Knowledge Required for an Interpreter; KL=Knowledge for Language; EK=Encyclopedic Knowledge; S(P+PA)=Professional Skills and Artistic Presentation Skills. Besides, P which stands for psychology also comes to people's attention. In this perspective, the proportion given to the structure should be 40% for KL, 20% for EK, 30% for S and 10% for P. In the evaluation list of oral interpreting held by Bao Gang, 50% is for the content, 15% for the key information interpretation, 18% for expression, 9% for communicational effect and 8% for the other aspects. What's more, in Xiamen University's opinion, 30% is for the comprehensiveness of information interpretation, 30% for correctness, 10% for expression, 10% for fluency, 10% for clarity, and 10% for stain capacity.

These standards of oral interpreting quality assessment show what is important in interpretation. However, the examiner would focus on these grading principles, the audiences who care more about a thorough understanding will not. Whether the audiences notice the existence of the oral interpreter is the most direct and effective way to check the interpreter's capacity.

There are various situations where oral interpreting is needed and even in one situation, the standard of oral interpreting quality assessment varies. As long as an oral interpreting is necessary, then the interpreter is indispensable unless you would like to use a machine to roughly convey the information. From what we have discussed above about the history of oral interpreting quality assessment in theory and practice, we know some important standards of being a good interpreter and how the others will inspect us for our interpretation through "faithfulness, expressiveness, elegance" "correctness, smooth, quickness" "flexibility" and so on. However, the audience pays little attention to inspect the interpreters for the skills they have used. What they want is to understand fully the content of what the speaker says. What the organizers want is that the speakers and the listeners reach a mutual understanding. What the interpreters want is to fully convey the speaker's meaning to the listeners without making the listeners feel confused. So what is the most effective and direct way to assess the oral interpreting quality? The author of the thesis believes that if the audiences do not realize the existence of the oral interpreter during the full length of a conference, then we can say that the interpreter behaves too well to be noticed because the audiences cannot find any mistakes of the interpreter and they understand the full contents.

"Invisibility": the Interpreter's role and an important criterion of oral interpreting quality assessment

Oral interpreting is playing a more and more important role in this international context with more and more cross-cultural exchanges taking place around the world. The assessment of oral interpreting quality is indispensable for further improvement in mutual understanding. The most direct and effective way, the author believes, is not to check whether the oral interpreter has perfectly abided by the principles of "faithfulness,

expressiveness, elegance" or "flexibility" or "correctness, comprehensiveness, quickness" because the audiences would not like to concentrate on these principles to see whether the oral interpreter is qualified, and that what matters the most is whether they can get the same understanding as the native speakers. Briefly speaking, if the audiences' concentration is on the full conference without distraction because of the oral interpreter's improper interpretation, we would like to say that this oral interpreter is qualified for giving the audiences a clear understanding. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the interpreter's "invisibility" from the perspectives of linguistic factors, non-linguistic factors and some practical techniques in oral interpreting.

Jean Herbert is a professional conference interpreter who divided oral interpreting process into comprehension, conversion and expression for the first time, which did not dig into the oral interpreters' mind and thinking. Then, Julius Wirl put forward that the nature of translation was the separation of sense from its linguistic form, that is, in another word, deverbalization in 1958. There are many models in interpreting process including Moser-Mercer's simultaneous interpreting processing model and Lerderer's eight-mental-operation model for simultaneous interpreting. The models all believed that the oral interpreter's subject knowledge, contextual knowledge and encyclopedic knowledge are paramountly important in information processing in oral interpreting. From the oral interpreting process, we know that both linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors matter in achieving the interpreter's "invisibility".

The linguistic and non-linguistic factors of the invisibility

The most widely acknowledged method divides the oral interpreting process into "comprehension", which converts language sign to the content of the source language, "memorization", which converts the content to memory, and "re-expression", which converts memory to expression. Linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors interact in the three stages. Firstly, let's focus on the linguistic factors.

Linguistic factors play a rudimental role in oral interpreting without which even the perfect non-linguistic factors could not find their place. To enhance "invisibility", what the interpreter should not forget the most is linguistic factors.

The ability of understanding is the fundamental ability in oral interpreting. A correct understanding is critical, which influences the proceeding stages. If the interpreter could not understand what the speaker says, how could he interpret correctly? The closer level between the oral interpreter's mother tongue and the second language, the greater possibility for him to become a qualified oral interpreter. It needs the interpreter's persistent practices. On the one hand, we should listen to the materials without referring to the text and other people so that we can use our stored knowledge to understand the new knowledge independently. On the other hand, it is better for us to use the materials provided by the local people, including the local radio, television and movies.

Another important linguistic factor is the oral interpreter's ability of correct, smooth and quick expression. A poor understanding could not make a qualified oral interpreter. However, a good understanding but a poor expression does the same. It can be divided into four abilities in details consisting of the grasp of vocabulary, grammar and frequently-used phrases in both languages, the understanding of the cultures in two different countries and languages, the ability of standard pronunciation and the ability of making speeches in a confident and smooth manner.

Quick and appropriate creativity is also a linguistic factor in oral interpreting. Generally speaking, the oral interpreters have consolidated their knowledge of frequently used words and phrases, which is often suitable for some topics. Some problems related to these fields could be easily solved through their current knowledge base. However, for the spontaneous speeches as well as some unfamiliar fields, not only should the oral interpreter make sufficient preparation, but also make use of his creativity to encounter unfamiliar situations. More or less, the oral interpreters will confront new ideas his current knowledge could not deal with. Under this circumstance, creativity is the only way. The oral interpreters should keep in mind these new ideas and search your brain for relevant and similar words or phrases.

Linguistic factor is fundamental to the oral interpreters without which other skills are nothing but castles in the air and the efforts to be "invisible" will be in vain.

On the other hand, it is certain that one could improve his oral interpreting ability through years' of bilingual training and exercises. However, because of oral interpreting's immediate and on-spot feature, apart from linguistic factors like bilingual ability, non-linguistic factors also attract people's attention.

Bradley divided non-linguistic factors into ten aspects in two parts: behaviors related to the body include postures, moves, gestures, expressions and eyes contacts and behaviors related to the voice include tone, volume, tone quality, diapason and speed. Any mistakes in these aspects will easily make the oral interpreters "visible" to the audiences, thus damaging the goal of mutual understanding at worst. The interpreters should reduce unnecessary postures and moves which can affect the stability of the audiences' mood. If the interpreter moves frequently, the audiences will be distracted and feel unrest. Besides, the interpreters should reduce the frequency and strength of gestures so that they will not be assumed as dimming the speaker. Furthermore, one's expressions can affect the others'. Therefore, the interpreter should keep an optimistic mood during the work so as to make the audiences feel relaxed. Eyes contact is not necessary. However, if the oral interpreter could eye-contact with the audiences without interrupting his interpretation, it will help enhance confidence, adjust himself in accordance with the reaction from the audiences and so on. Tone is an effective way to reflect feelings. A rising tone represents doubt or surprise while a downing tone represents confidence and firmness. An appropriate tone is conducive to the audiences' understanding. Diapason is the interval between a high voice and a low one. The same high level of voice will make the audiences boring and find the conference has ended after a sleep and this is not what we call the interpreter's "invisibility". Cadence is a worldly acknowledged symbol for successful verbal activities. Moreover, the interpreter should hold a proper volume. Too high or too low will make the audiences feel irritated or sleepy respectively. Also, the speed varies in accordance with different situations and different fields of topics and audiences. At last, the tone quality, which is on large part born from nature, is about whether you voice is undesirable or pleasant. A pleasant one makes the audience feel safe and trustworthy.

Apart from these ten aspects in two parts, there are other non-linguistic factors from different perspectives. A better grape of these factors will improve the interpreters' behaviors so as to become "invisible".

The first one is physical factor. Auditory sense is one of the most crucial physical factors. Generally speaking, the sensitivity of the two ears is different. For the majority of the people, those who use their right hands more have a better sensitivity in their right ears. Therefore, it is better to arrange the oral interpreter at the left of the speaker. The second one is psychological factor. Because of the uncommon nature of oral interpreting like specialty and promptness, the interpreter should bear the burden and be accustomed to constant pressure. The on-spot performance is obviously influenced by one's psychological mood. Psychologists believe that the more nervous one is, the narrower scope one will pay attention to. In the oral interpreting context, the more psychological pressure the interpreter feels, the worse are his memory and interpretation. Sufficient preparation and professional practices pave the way for a good psychological state. The third one is about memory. oral interpreting has a strict requirement for memory which can be divided into sensory memory which is also called instant memory acquires the sensible information with the sensory antenna and store it within a couple of seconds, short-term memory which can be prolonged without referring to the notes can be prolonged and long-term memory which can store the information for a few days or many decades as your knowledge base. These three memory systems are all important in oral interpreting, especially the short-term memory. The fourth non-linguistic factor is about emotion. The oral interpreter should control his emotions and be objective. Cross-cultural difference is another non-linguistic factor the interpreters should pay attention to. Language is the carrier of the culture. For the oral interpreters, they interpret not only the languages but, more importantly, the cultures, which needs the interpreter to be familiar with the cultural backgrounds, customs, values and etiquettes of both sides. The last non-linguistic factor is the audience. As a part of oral interpreting activity together with the speaker and the interpreter, the type of this end user of the conference affects the specific way of interpretation. Therefore, the interpreter should select proper strategies in accordance with the features and needs of the audience, take the audience's ability in understanding into consideration, and adjust interpretation in time so as to realize mutual understanding.

Non-linguistic factor is also what the oral interpreters should pay attention. A better grasp of the behaviors related to the body and the voice in ten specific aspects as well as the above discussed six aspects include physique, psychology, memory, emotion, cultural difference and the audience, the audience would be more likely able to focus on the interpretation instead of the interpreter, thus the "invisibility" of the oral interpreter is due to come because of his perfect performance.

Comparisons between an "Invisible" Interpreter and a "Visible" One

With more and more interaction among different countries around the world, oral interpreting, as a bridge to breech language and cultural gaps, gains more popularity. Everywhere, from the government level like the press conference and diplomatic relations to business level like business exchanges and negotiations to personal level like interpretation training and practices, oral interpreting can be seen. Therefore, a handful of examples emerge. However, not all of them are that satisfying. If you are "invisible"during the whole process, you have behaved very well. If you are "visible", then there must be something wrong with you interpretation. We can see the reason, the comparisons between an "invisible" interpreter and a "visible" one and ways to enhance "invisibility" in the following part of the thesis.

Zhong Weihe (2003) has put forward the knowledge structure of an oral interpreter, which is KI=KL+EK+S (P+PA). According to the structure, the reason why there exist the "invisible" interpreter and the "visible" one lies in the proficiency in knowledge for language, encyclopedic knowledge, professional skills and artistic presentation skills. What's more, psychology is also a key factor due to the high-pressure nature of the oral interpreting.

Followings are the examples illustrating the difference between "invisible" interpreters and "visible" ones:

Case 1：Mr. Jack: Miss Wang, your dress is very beautiful.

Interpreter: 杰克先生称赞您的裙子很漂亮。

Miss Wang: 不，这衣服很便宜。

Interpreter 1: No, it's very cheap.

Interpreter 2: Thank you.

The interpreter 1 pays too much attention on word-by-word interpretation while ignoring different cultures between China and Western countries. The Chinese show modesty in responding to compliment to be polite. However, people in Western countries show their appreciation in responding to compliment to be polite. The interpreter 1 may damage the effect of communication through his interpretation, leaving the impression of impoliteness while "thank you" is more suitable.

Case 2：Foreign Side: Thanks a lot. That's a great help.

Chinese Side: 这是我们应该做的。

Interpreter 1: It's our duty to do it.

Interpreter 2: With pleasure.

"这是我们应该做的"is a suitable way for the Chinese to be modest and polite. However, the interpreter 1 ignores the differences in cultures. The foreigner would interpret "It's our duty to do it" this way: I have no choice but to do so since it's my duty. Otherwise, I would not like to come with you. And that would hurt the mutual understanding. Therefore, "It's my pleasure" or "with pleasure" is more appropriate in responding to the foreigners appreciation.

Case 3：Chinese Host: 饭菜不周，请多包涵。

Interpreter 1: Please endure these poorly prepared dishes.

Interpreter 2: I hope you will enjoy the dishes we fully prepared.

The interpreter 1 will probably make the foreign guests confused: Am I not qualified to take the delicious food? Why do you treat me with the poorly prepared food? The interpreter 2 grasp the different cultures and does a good job.

Case 4：Speaker: I heard he would deliver a performance this evening. I hope that he will break a leg.

Interpreter 1: What's your meaning in breaking a leg?

Interpreter 2:我听说他今晚要演出，希望他能成功。

The interpreter does not possess sufficient knowledge to grasp the meaning of the slang. By asking the speaker, the interpreter 1 not only wastes more time but also makes the audiences realize that he is not proficient. Everyone would look at him. He is "visible". By contrast, the interpreter 2 has done a good job. Thus, he is "invisible".

Case 5：Chinese Speaker:我们需要加强"三讲教育"。

Interpreter 1: We need to enhance the "three emphasis" education.

Interpreter 2: We need to enhance the "three emphasis" education concentrating on theoretical study, political awareness and good conduct.

"三讲教育"is a typical expression in Chinese. However, the former interpretation does not make it clear for the foreigners who will look at the interpreter for his further explanation. Thus, the interpreter 1 becomes "visible" without letting the foreigners fully understand. The interpreter 2 has perfectly illustrated the contents of "three emphasis" education.

Case 6：Speaker: 考虑到当前存货有限，希望贵公司尽早做出决定。

Interpreter1: We don't have much in stock currently, so you'd better hurry up.

Interpreter2: At present, we would advise you to act quickly on account of a limited supply available.

The Chinese is a rather formal business expression. The interpreter1 does interpret the meaning of the source language, however, it is unprofessional. "Don't have much in stock" leaves the impression of the company's inability. "You'd better" is rather imperative, which may make the buyers feel uncomfortable. And "hurry up" is quite informal. However, the

latter one is suitable both in business language and appropriate for understanding between different cultures.

Case 7：Chinese Speaker: 两年来我们的合作非常愉快。现在,你们就拿些我们合资企业的产品让大家看看吧。

Interpreter 1: We have been cooperating very well in the past two years. I wonder if you could show us some latest products of the joint-venture.

Interpreter 2: We have been cooperating very well in the past two years. Now, let's have a look at some of our latest products.

The interpreter 1 will make the foreign partner feel that the Chinese side is not confident in their ability to show the latest products.

Suggested approaches to enhance the "Invisibility"

Oral interpreting is a very complex process where the oral interpreter needs to grasp an extended encyclopedic knowledge from economy to politics to military and so on as well as the understanding of different cultures so that the above mistakes can be avoided. It is often said that the oral interpreter knows something of everything. As the old saying goes, the oral interpreter is "Jack of all trades".

Oral interpreting leaves the interpreter little time for consideration. No matter how professional the interpreter is, he may encounter some situations where it is hard to think of a proper word or phrase. Under this circumstance, adding some words or phrases like as long as, as well as, by that time, we all know that, that is to say may give the interpreter more time to think.

Case 8：我方愿意同美方共同努力，排除各种障碍，以把一个稳定、健康的中美关系带入下一个世纪。

Interpreter: We are prepared to work together with the U.S. side to remove all kinds of obstacles in a bid to bring a stable and sound Sino-U.S. relationship into the next century.

Generally speaking, the word "to" alone can show purpose. However, the oral interpreter can win more time to think by use of "so as to" to lessen intense pressure.

Sometimes, the oral interpreter may fail to memorize some information. If permitted, he should ask for the speaker. If not, some flexible strategies are needed and obscuring some words is effective.

Case 9：已有 38 个城市开放居民个人赴港旅游，可以告诉大家，到今年"五一"将再增加5个城市。

Interpreter: We have opened 38 cities to be covered by the individual visit schemes involving Hong Kong. I would like to tell you that starting from May 1st this year, more cities will be added to the scheme of individual travel to Hong Kong.

The oral interpreter fails to grasp the number "5" and use the word "more" to replace it. Although it is not that correct, the overall direction is right. If it is not permitted to ask the speaker, this is better than stop or make up a number.

What's more, Chinese tends to repeat words while English inclines to use pronouns. In oral interpreting, the interpreter applies the skill of repetition in large quantity which goes with the Chinese and lessens the interpreter's psychological burden of time.

Case 10：因此我们要加强基础设施建设，加强农村巨大市场的开发。

Interpreter: Therefore, we need to increase and step up the construction of infrastructure and to explore and open up the large market in the rural areas.

Though the words "increase and step up" and "explore and open up" means the same, it gives the interpreter more time for the interpretation of the left parts of the sentences.

Further more, compared with written translation, oral interpreting uses relatively simple words and structures in order to present the meaning as precise as possible in such a short time.

Case 11：我将在最后一年守职而不废，处义而不回，永远和人民在一起。

Interpreter: In my last year in office, I will be unswerving in carrying out my duties and will remain true to my conviction. I will always be with the people.

The interpreter uses simple words and structure to make the hard perceiving Chinese easy to understand.

We can see some commonly used skills including the skills of adding some words, being obscure, repetition in verbs, prepositions, conjunctions and making complexity brief which are conducive to a better oral interpreting so that the "invisibility" can be achieved.

Conclusion

There are lots of principles consisting "faithfulness, expressiveness, elegance" put forward by Yan Fu, "correctness, smooth, quickness" by Li Yueran, and "flexibility" by Qian Wei. Meanwhile, there are different entities including the organizer, the speaker, the interpreter and the audience which makes the standards of oral interpreting quality vary further. However, the author believes that the most direct and effective way of oral interpreting quality assessment is to check the interpreter's invisibility. If the audiences ignore the existence of the interpreter, the interpreter has behaved perfect because a fully mutual understanding has achieved.

Oral interpreting is an activity full of pressure. For the consecutive interpreters, they need to sit with the speaker and face thousands of audiences some of whom are quite familiar with the target language, which makes it a challenge for the consecutive interpreters. It is their job to make the interpretation appropriate. However, if they make some mistakes, some audiences who can understand both the source and target language will shake heads, frown or even scold the interpreters. All of these will put a lot of pressure on the consecutive interpreter. The simultaneous interpreters, despite their sitting in a booth and no need to face the numerous audiences, need to interpreter what the speaker says almost simultaneously so that they have much fewer time to consider than the consecutive interpreters, which makes the job intensified with tension. Therefore,we can see that psychology exerts an important effect on oral interpreting. Being a little nervous can help the oral interpreter concentrate,

however, being too nervous can distract them.So, the purpose of this thesis is to understand the crucial role the interpreter plays, especially the "invisibility" of the interpreter as an oral interpreting quality assessment and try to enhance this "invisibility" comprehensively to improve the oral interpreting quality for later use of training oral interpreters, assessing the interpreters and carrying on researches on oral interpreting.

Through reviewing the history of oral interpreting quality assessments in history and practice, readers can better grasp the role the interpreter plays and the basic understanding of the "invisibility" of the oral interpreter. Then, the author focuses on ways to achieve "invisibility" through linguistic and non-linguistic factors. At last, through examples, readers can see what will happen if the interpreter becomes "visible" because of mistakes made during the conference, thus clearly distinguishing an "invisible" interpreter from a "visible" one and knowing how to enhance the "invisibility".

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