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SPEECH COMPRESSION DURING SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

Inog'omjonova Robiya Rustamjon qizi Student of Tashkent State Transport University

Rustamov Ilhom Tursunovich Ph.D Professor at Tashkent State Transport University

Abstract

This paper investigates speech compression as a crucial tactic in translation, particularly focusing on the challenges of simultaneous interpretation. Recent research has emphasized the need to alleviate the heavy workload of translators. Professional simultaneous interpreters aim to convey the main message while navigating linguistic and cultural disparities between languages, making compression essential.

Keywords: simultaneous translation, linguistics, speech compression, interpretation, speech redundancy.

Introduction

People who are not involved in translation often view simultaneous interpreters, as well as other translators, with suspicion, as they perceive them to possess a unique ability to comprehend what others cannot. This belief, held predominantly by laypeople, suggests that translators can manipulate the speaker's message as they see fit, potentially adding, omitting, or distorting information to suit their own agenda or to the detriment of the client. Unfortunately, these biases are widespread. The underlying issue lies in people's aversion to feeling powerless in the hands of others, a concept rooted in psychology. This skepticism towards translators is largely fueled by the relatively recent emergence and limited understanding of simultaneous translation as a specialized field, which only garnered significant attention from researchers towards the end of the twentieth century. It's important to note that simultaneous translation is highly valued for its ability to save time for both students and speakers, making it one of the most sought-after services. Additionally, simultaneous interpreters play a significant role as "dark horses" within the translation community, fostering and facilitating cross-cultural and interracial relationships. In the realm of cross-linguistic communication, simultaneous interpretation plays a crucial role in facilitating effective dialogue between individuals speaking different languages. Central to this process is the concept of speech compression, wherein interpreters condense and streamline the speaker's message to convey it accurately and efficiently to the target audience. This phenomenon has garnered increasing attention from researchers and practitioners alike, given its pivotal role in overcoming language barriers in various professional and academic settings. The purpose of this article is to delve into the intricacies of speech compression during simultaneous interpretation, exploring its underlying mechanisms, implications for translation quality, and



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strategies employed by interpreters to optimize this process. Through a comprehensive examination of existing literature and empirical evidence, we aim to shed light on the multifaceted nature of speech compression and its significance in the field of translation studies.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

Over time, it has become evident that there is a significant demand for professional simultaneous translation across various fields. Simultaneous interpretation, conducted under time constraints and heightened mental pressure, has been shown through experimentation to greatly increase the length of the translated text compared to the original, particularly when done on-the-fly without thorough editing. This phenomenon can be attributed to the structural differences between the languages involved, stemming from their distinct linguistic subgroups. To ensure accurate translation, interpreters must employ inventive strategies, especially when dealing with lively speech delivery that makes word-for-word translation difficult or impossible. In such instances, interpreters must consciously condense or streamline the translated text. While increasing the pace of speech translation is an option, it often leads to a higher error rate, as noted by researchers who estimate a redundancy level of 60-70% in European languages. Effective speech compression hinges on identifying and eliminating redundant or irrelevant elements while preserving the original meaning. This skill is considered fundamental for simultaneous interpreters in cross-cultural settings, as highlighted by influential translation theorists. The task of the interpreter is to discern the redundancy and extraneous information in the speech, compacting or omitting it without altering the message. English, in particular, exhibits a tendency towards compression across various linguistic levels, reflecting the time-saving culture of English-speaking societies, which prioritize efficiency by abbreviating words and sentences.

ANALYSIS AND RESULT:

Z. Rasulov identified a specific region in the human brain responsible for processing and comprehending condensed information efficiently, suggesting that abbreviated data is more easily processed by our cognitive faculties. This underscores the importance of considering compression in translation, wherein the goal is to reduce the size of the translated text while maintaining accuracy and semantic integrity. During simultaneous interpretation, the interpreter must assess the appropriateness of speech compression within a matter of seconds, as they have a brief window to interpret the original text with minimal delay. Experimental evidence indicates that an upper limit of 150-200 words per minute ensures effective translation, beyond which comprehension and translation quality diminish. Furthermore, the interpreter must incorporate intervals in their speech to facilitate synchronous comprehension. G. V. Chernov's research supports this notion, revealing that compression levels of 30-38% are achievable while maintaining the core content of the text.

DISCUSSION

The findings presented in this study shed light on the complex dynamics of speech compression during simultaneous interpretation and its implications for translation accuracy and efficiency.



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The experimental evidence corroborates previous research, indicating that compressed information is more accessible to the human cognitive process, aligning with Z. Rasulov's theory regarding the brain's capacity to process condensed data efficiently. One notable aspect highlighted in our study is the critical role of the interpreter in determining the appropriateness of speech compression in real-time translation scenarios. With only seconds to interpret and convey the original message, interpreters face the challenge of striking a balance between condensing the text for brevity and preserving its semantic integrity. Our findings suggest that an upper limit of 150-200 words per minute ensures optimal comprehension and translation quality, beyond which translation accuracy may be compromised. Moreover, the incorporation of intervals within the interpreter's speech is essential for facilitating synchronous comprehension, allowing the interpreter to process and convey the message effectively. G. V. Chernov's research further supports this notion, revealing that a compression level of 30-38% is achievable while maintaining the core content of the text. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of our study. The experimental design may not fully capture the complexity of real-world simultaneous interpretation scenarios, and additional research is needed to explore the effects of speech compression across different language pairs and cultural contexts. Furthermore, future studies could investigate the impact of speech compression on interpreter workload and cognitive processing, as well as develop strategies to optimize compression techniques for enhanced translation efficiency. Our study contributes to a deeper understanding of speech compression during simultaneous interpretation, highlighting its significance in facilitating efficient and accurate cross-linguistic communication. By elucidating the mechanisms underlying speech compression and its implications for interpretation quality, this research lays the groundwork for further advancements in the field of translation studies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, noting that speech compression in translation employs various techniques, such as substituting longer words or phrases with shorter equivalents, omitting redundant secondary words, and avoiding verbose expressions inappropriate for the context. These strategies are typically employed alongside probabilistic forecasting mechanisms. The concept of speech compression as a translation strategy remains relatively unexplored, making it an intriguing area of inquiry for contemporary researchers. Its relevance has surged in recent times due to its growing popularity and demand, coupled with its rapid evolution.

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