**University of Khenchla**

**Department of English**

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**Translation (Ramdane)**

**Interpretation vs Translation**

**Introduction :**

When studying interpreting and translation (I/T) at University, students often meet with a lot

of difficulties such as how to remember what has been said, how to express an idea clearly

and quickly in the target language, how translate from the source language (SL) into the

target language (TL) and so on. In order to help students become better interpreters and

translators and enjoy the subject, the theory of interpreting and translation is introduced.

It is important for prospective interpreters/translators to understand the process of I/T, to

identify the problems in doing I/T and then to find efficient and feasible solutions. These

issues are also the main content of this short course.

Interpreting and translation are two closely related linguistic disciplines. Yet they are rarely performed by the same people. The difference in skills, training, aptitude and even language knowledge are so substantial that few people can do both successfully on a professional level.

On the surface, the difference between interpreting and translation is only the difference in the medium: the interpreter translates orally, while a translator interprets written text. Both interpreting and translation presuppose a certain love of language and deep knowledge of more than one language.

**1-Definition**

**1.1 What is translation?**

Translation is rendering a written text into another language in the way that the author

intended the text.

Translators are concerned with the written word. They render written texts from one

language into another. Translators are required to undertake assignments, which range from

simple items, such as birth certificates and driving licenses, to more complex written

material, such as articles in specialized professional journals, business contracts and legal

documents.

**1.2 What is interpreting?**

Interpreting is rendering information and ideas from one language into another language by

means of speaking. Interpreters are concerned with the spoken word. They convey orally

whether to an individual or a group the meaning of the spoken word, from one language to

another.

**2-The Difference between Translation and Interpretation** **:**

The key difference between translation and interpretation lies within the choice of communication channel. Simply put, translation deals with written communication, while interpreting is all about the spoken word

Translators work on written documents, including books, essays, legal documents, medical records, websites, instruction manuals, subtitles for film or TV, or any other form of information in written form. Interpreters, on the other hand, are involved in projects that require live translation; for example conferences and business meetings, medical appointments and legal proceedings

Both translators and interpreters have a deep linguistic and cultural knowledge of their working languages, as well as the ability to communicate clearly and succinctly. It is, however, important to highlight the distinctive features of these two professions

Translators generally work from their home computers, and tend to specialize in a particular field. Good translators have excellent written skills and are usually perfectionists by nature, paying particular attention to the style of the source documents, as well as the accuracy and significance of the terms used within their translations

Unlike translators, interpreters do not provide a word-for-word translation; instead, they transpose spoken messages from one language into another, instantly and accurately. Interpreters work in real-time situations, in direct contact with both the speaker and the audience. They rely primarily on their linguistic expertise acquired through training and experience - a sentence in one language may be rendered an entirely different way in another. Good interpreters are endowed with very quick reflexes, as well as a good memory and speaking voice. An interpreter is often more than an on-demand translator, however - they also act as a facilitator between speaker and listener, both linguistically and diplomatically

**3- Modes of Interpreting :**

There are two main modes of interpreting: consecutive and simultaneous interpreting.

**3-1 Consecutive Interpreting :**

**3-1-1 Unilateral :** a) Sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph interpretation

b) The whole speech, which may last five, ten minutes, up to half an hour

or one hour.

**3-1-2 Bilateral:** c) Liaison interpreting

In a consecutive interpreting situation, an interpreter gives a rendering of lengthy passages of

speech after a party has finished speaking. S/he must give a structured and accurate rendering

of the meaning of the statement with no major distortions of meaning, changes to the logical

order of the statement or serious omissions of detail.

Consecutive interpreting is often used in the following situations:

* Escorting a non-English speaking group within a large gathering of English speakers at a

trade fair or exposition.

* Conferences where smaller working parties meet in room which lack telephonic

interpreting facilities. In this case, interpreters often sit alongside speakers and interpret

at intervals.

The qualities required of a consecutive interpreter are:

a) Proficiency in two languages and two cultures

b) Quickness of speech and mind

c) Good techniques in memorizing verbal utterances and converting them rapidly,

accurately and completely into another language

d) Power of Concentration

e) High moral standards

f) Sense of responsibility

g) High level of education and culture

h) Familiarity with a number of specific terms and situations, e.g. health, education,

legal, social welfare areas, etc.

i) Remaining impartial and not taking sides.

j) Being able to take notes of segments of discourse if required

k) Being able to work under stressful conditions.

1) Note-taking skills of a very high order

**Liaison Interpreting**

This form of interpreting is normally used by interpreters who work in and out of

two languages, one of which must Vietnamese. These interpreters typically interpret between

clients and professionals, who lack an understanding of each other’s language and culture.

Dialogues are often between:

• Doctors and patients

• Solicitors and clients

• Foreign investors and Vietnamese partners

• Officers of government authorities and clients

• Bank managers and clients...

**What professional liaison interpreters do ?**

What professional liaison interpreters do:

1. Familiarize themselves in advance with the likely content of the interview.

2. Evaluate whether the complexity of the interview is within their competence.

3. Obtain correct information on location, time and participants.

4. Make contact with the party requesting the interview in order to arrange

introductions between all participants and, if possible, arrange pre-interview

consultation.

5. Provide advice to the person conducting the interview on cultural

implications/background of client.

6. Explain the interpreter's role in the interview to all participants.

7. Select appropriate interpreting mode (in almost all liaison interpreting situations,

the dialogue-interpreting mode is chosen) and ensure participants understand mode

to be used.

8. Arrange appropriate physical elements, e.g. tables, chairs, sound control, etc., to

facilitate communication.

9. Render into A-language all that B-language speaker says, and vice versa.

10. Seek clarification, when necessary of terminology used to ensure accuracy and

clarity.

11. Clarify specific role and responsibilities where more than one interpreter is present

in an interview.

12. Arrange de-briefing, where possible, to clarify questions of cultural difference, or

failure to establish intended level of communication.

13. Control length of questions and answers to maintain adequate level of

communication and ensure full understanding by either parties.

14. Consult with individuals for additional information, e.g. cultural background,

religious aspects, etc.

**3-2 Simultaneous Interpreting** **:**

This type includes:

a) Sight translation: a written SL text is read aloud as if written in the TL text;

b) Whispered interpretation: e.g. at a meeting without interpreting equipment or in

court;

c) Electronic hook-up: e.g. at a conference with microphones and headsets and booths

for interpreters.

Simultaneous interpreters do not wait for a speaker to finish a segment and pause before beginning to interpret but follow the speaker and interpret what the speaker is saying.

Advantages of simultaneous interpreting are that it saves a great deal of time and is less disruptive than other forms of interpreting. It is commonly practiced at international

conferences and forums. However, it is expensive to pay for electronic equipment and

simultaneous interpreters.

**4- A Good Interpreter’ s Skills and Qualities :**

Good interpretation is more than just having a good grasp of language. Recognise that to be a good interpreter, the following 6 attributes are a must:

### 4-1 Be an extremely good listener

Interpreters need to pick up on every word, every intent and every meaning. They must make sense of a message composed in one language while simultaneously constructing and articulating the same message in another tongue.

### 4-2 Have excellent sensory, motor and cognitive skills

All of these skills need to work in unison to ensure that not only language, but all nuances and idioms are picked up on and relayed in a comprehensible way, all in the blink of an eye!

### 4-3 Have an extensive vocabulary of multiple languages

Because interpreters are working in real-time, they can rarely consult a trusted dictionary or reference materials. Therefore, good interpreters will have to have a very good knowledge of the subject-matter and the language and abbreviations or jargon associated with the subject.

### 4-4 Be culturally aware

Just as specialist subject knowledge is very important, interpreters must also be aware of the culture of the languages they are interpreting from and into. If a political reference is made in one language, for example, a good interpreter will be ready to transform this into a comparable statement that the target audience can understand.

### 4-5 Cope with stress and self-control when dealing with difficult speakers

Not everyone speaks with precision and clarity and of course accents can be difficult to discern. Interpreters therefore need to keep their cool and remain relaxed, even in seemingly tough situations.

### 4-6 Show emotional resilience

Legal and medical interpreters are often involved in cases that are high-profile or difficult to witness, such as murder trials, emergency medical situations or even deaths. In such instances, they have to show high levels of resilience and control with the people they are there to represent.