

## A STUDY OF THE INTERPRETER-RELATED FACTORS AFFECTING CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETERS' PERFORMANCE: A THEORETICAL ACCOUNT

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### ABSTRACT

This study theoretically attends to the factors affecting consecutive interpreters' performance. The information accessed in the relevant resources side by side with the researcher's personal experience in performing the job of a consecutive interpreter have led to the identification of a set of factors that have been categorized into three main sets, namely speaker-related, interpreter-related and situation-related factors. Interpreter-related factors, that fall into 10 sub-factors, are the focus of the current study. They are related to the interpreter's skills, knowledge, experience, and physical and mental requirements. The study is expected to aid consecutive interpreters and interpreting students to familiarize themselves with these factors, better understand their influence on their performance, and duly alleviate their impact. The conclusions drawn upon show that the interpreter-related factors do impact consecutive interpreters' performance.

**KEYWORDS:** Consecutive Interpreting, Interpreter-Related Factors, Consecutive Interpreter, Consecutive Interpreters' Performance.

### INTRODUCTION

In Consecutive Interpreting (CI), the interpreter transfers ideas from one language to another with the help of memory and notes after the speaker, who decides the length of the speech segment, though interruption by the interpreter is not precluded, has completed part, or maybe all, of his speech. When consecutively interpreting, there are many factors that might affect the consecutive interpreters' performance. These factors form the focus of this study.

To the researcher's best knowledge, there is no study that has probed the factors affecting the performance of consecutive interpreters in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), albeit only a few studies have tackled the topic in Iraq. On this basis, researching the factors affecting consecutive interpreters' performance proved quite imperative, if we also know that consecutive interpreting is relatively a new profession in KRI. It first appeared after the 1991 uprising when a bulk of international humanitarian agencies and organizations started their activities in the Region. Nowadays, with its

openness to the outside world, and the presence of UN agencies, international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) given the large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees, investment companies and the presence of diplomatic missions in KRI, consecutive interpreting has become a prevalent activity and is widely on demand due to its use in varied situations and settings. As such, the current study forms but a humble attempt to shed light on the factors affecting consecutive interpreters' performance and bridge some knowledge gaps in this respect.

This study is expected to be of help to professional interpreters as well as interpreting students in terms of familiarizing themselves with these factors and better understanding and alleviating their influence on their performance in KRI.

Generally speaking, a lot of factors affect consecutive interpreters' performance. A noticeable number of studies have attended to the factors affecting the performance of interpreters, mainly simultaneous interpreters, yet only a few of them have tackled their influence on the performance of consecutive

interpreters, and even fewer in KRI. One of the comprehensive studies that have reviewed the studies conducted on such factors was that by Kellett-Bidoli (2000) wherein she stated that researchers had come up with a large number of factors and classified them differently. The present study classifies the factors into three main categories, namely speaker-related, interpreter-related and situation-related factors.

Speaker-related factors are those that the interpreter can alleviate the effect of some of them to a certain extent, yet, the majority of them remain beyond the interpreter's control. Situation-related factors pertain to the context of situation such as the setting, participants, ends, etc. Interpreter-related factors are related to the interpreter's skills, knowledge, experience, and physical and mental requirements. In their attempt to handle the enormous demands needed to carry out the interpreting job adequately, consecutive interpreters have to develop unparalleled types of skills, knowledge and qualities necessary to deal with the interpreter-mediated encounter in the most efficient way. These requirements are not rare themselves, yet rarely one can meet an interpreter who has them all.

This study confines itself to the interpreter-related factors which are subdivided into 10 sub-factors that are presented in detail on the following pages.

### **1- TASK-RELATED STRESS**

The job of the interpreter, unlike other professions, necessitates that the work be done then and there whether the interpreter is ready or not. This causes the interpreter a lot of pressure and stress. In this regard, Seleskovitch (2010, p. 41) says that when interpreters interpret, they come under pressure.

Stress is generally defined as "a psychological reaction experienced when an individual feels an imbalance between task requirements and the resources available for coping with them" (Lazarus 1966 cited in Pöchhacker, 2015, p. 405). The task requirements, Pöchhacker (2015, p. 405) explains, could be external (environmental) and/or internal (individually induced) and the response activated may be positive or negative. The level of stress is determined by the subjective evaluation of a situation as threatening or challenging, as well as the expected consequences of failure to manage these requirements. Therefore, the person's

personality traits will decide, and more or less predict, what the person experiences as stressful.

There is widespread consensus that task-related stress originates from the interplay between the individual and the work conditions. Kurz (2003, p. 51) remarks that apart from working conditions, the role of individual factors in causing stress must not be disregarded. Differences in individual traits, such as personality and coping method, are crucial predictors of whether certain job settings would cause stress. This means that what may cause stress for one person, may not be stressful for another. Although individual differences cannot be overlooked, certain working conditions have been proven to cause stress for most people.

Studies confirm that interpreting is a stress-inducing activity with significant rates of burnout. Cooper, Davies, and Tung (1982, p. 98) were the first to study the sources of occupational stress among (conference) interpreters. Four categories of stress factors were identified: physical-environmental conditions, task-related factors, interpersonal relations, and home/work interface. They identified many task-related stress factors such as the tremendous amount of concentration the job of the interpreter calls for, the speaker's inconsideration, speakers incompetency, the burden of preparation, poor organization, unavailability of documentation, frequent travel, and lack of feedback.

Stress factors, according to Mackintosh (2002) cited in Setton and Dawrant (2016, p. 425), include the need for exceptional and constant concentration, the intensity of certain meetings, the state of being publicly exposed, sub-standard working conditions, etc. Dornic (1978, p. 264) describes information load as a source of task stress. Abdul Rahman (1997, p. 216) holds a similar view and states that task stress is caused by a constant information load that necessitates lengthy and mental activity during a CI session.

Stress, according to Abdul Rahman (1997, p. 216), can have varied effects such as the deterioration of the quality of public speaking abilities, the production of a poor translation in the TL, and a total breakdown in communication on the performance of the interpreter. Kurz (2003, p. 52) states that stress is part of who we are but when stress turns into distress, it is catastrophic. To cope with stress, interpreters, as Gravier (2010, p. iv) puts it, need to have steel nerves, and the ability to perform their work

under prolonged periods of stress (Longley, 1989, p. 106).

## **2- LOSS OF CONCENTRATION FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER**

Concentration plays a vital role in the process of CI and is an important skill for consecutive interpreters since its loss during the performance of a task may result in dire consequences. That is, according to Sîtnic (2019, p. 68), why interpreting academics and practitioners suggest interpreters develop a high level of concentration as a competence from the beginning of their career.

Concentration means the ability to adequately balance all the subskills pertinent to a particular task without detriment to any of them (Kurz, 2003, p. 64). Among the causes that may lead to the loss of concentration are susceptibility to rapid changes of circumstantial nature such as unfamiliarity with words or phrases, enumerations, numerals, etc., and slowly reacting to rapid situational changes (Sîtnic, 2019, p. 70). Level of tiredness and external noise are among the factors that negatively influence concentration (Arumí & Esteve, 2006, p. 167) and may lead to performance errors (Hild, 2014, p. 142). Noise interference leads to loss of concentration. It is common to interpret in settings with disturbing factors. Therefore, there is a possibility of loss of concentration the interpreter has to deal with. Loss of concentration, according to Al-Harashseh, Shehab and Al-Rousan (2020, p. 97), may be caused by distraction, failure to remember, inattentiveness, occupation with what the speaker has said earlier and what the speaker is saying.

Interpreters should not focus on individual words but rather on the entire message. When they focus on single words, they lose concentration and as a result their rendition becomes incomplete or wrong. Seleskovitch (2010, pp. 40-41) points out that to interpret without omission, distortion and addition, the interpreter has to comprehend the entire speech. The interpreter should focus on all the nuances the speech contains and, in the meantime, holds back the thoughts they inspire. If the interpreter does not focus on all that is said by the speaker, they will end up interpreting only a small part of the original speech. The capacity for focused listening coupled with immediate analysis to get the gist of the message is deemed one of the essential requirements for interpreters. Focused listening helps the interpreter avoid ignoring

some parts of the message unlike other listeners who rely on spontaneous comprehension, and hence render only parts they think are important. When interpreting, the interpreter, being under pressure, focuses on outside information rather than inner thoughts and other possible sources of distraction since human beings are used to blocking out some types of noise to concentrate on issues of immediate concern.

Furthermore, personal feelings may also affect concentration and consequently the performance of the consecutive interpreter. The interpreter may be thinking about personal problems unrelated to their work. As a principle, once the interpreter starts working, they have to stop thinking about the outside world. Still, the interpreter is a human being and cannot totally isolate themselves from the outside world and personal problems or feelings such as family issues or the death of a friend. Such emotional feelings may distract the interpreter's attention and hence weaken their power of concentration (Abdul Rahman, 1997, p. 219).

## **3- FEAR OF SPEAKING IN PUBLIC**

Interpreting is often performed in the presence of an audience; a setting that can be rather fearful. Fear of public speaking and its consequences is felt to a large extent in the performance of certain tasks such as CI, which relies heavily on, among other skills, public speaking skills.

Fear of speaking in public is attributable to the fact that consecutive interpreters are open to the audience's judgement since they are in the middle of the action, which may bring about negative emotions and potential rejection of the outcomes of the interaction. In such situations, the interpreter should have public speaking skills, and be careful not to challenge the audience's expectations (Dawud, 2017, p. 57).

The vast majority of studies on fear of public speaking, as Jiménez & Pinazo (2001, p. 106) state, have the tendency to consider it one of the major sources of anxiety. Therefore, as Dawud (2017, p. 57) outlines, anxiety, which stems from the lack of self-confidence or/and feeling of insecurity, is associated with public speaking.

Although few studies have investigated the impact of anxiety on the interpreter's performance, scholars are unanimous that anxiety "is intrinsic to interpreting (both in the consecutive and simultaneous mode)" (Jiménez & Pinazo, 2001, p. 105).

Jiménez and Pinazo (2001, pp. 114-115) investigated the impact of fear of public speaking and anxiety on the quality of the students' consecutive interpreting performance. They concluded that fear of public speaking has no relation with interpreting performance, and that once the interpreter is required to perform a task, fear of public speaking is bypassed and the interpreter's resources, such as comprehension, familiarity with the topic, note-taking skills, etc., prevail. However, Seipp (1991, p. 38) does not agree with these findings, and states that the higher the anxiety, the poorer the performance. Specialists in the field of interpreting have stated that the ability to control anxiety is a requirement for good interpreters and a predictor of their competence (see Roland, 1982, p. 45ff). Schweda-Nicholson (1985, p. 149) adds that the interpreter's delivery of their rendition shows their behavior, verbal and non-verbal, which is an essential factor that contributes to how the audience views their performance. Therefore, teaching public speaking skills to trainee interpreters should be an essential component of their training courses (al-Zahrán, 2007, p. 105).

#### **4- FEAR OF THE PRESENCE OF RECORDING OR BROADCASTING MEDIA**

The presence of media may create chances for the interpreter to be recorded or appear on the screen. This entails a higher degree of formality, and a lower or even complete lack of privacy. Additionally, being aware that they are in the spotlight not only acoustically, but also visually, generates a greater state of nervousness and stress which may have an effect on the interpreter's composure, mental state and overall behavior (Alexieva, 1999, pp. 334-335).

Kurz (1997; 2002) studied media interpreting and identified psycho-emotional factors as one of the difficulties faced by television interpreters since television interpreting is conducted for millions of people; a point that may increase the interpreter's fear of failure. She also carried out an empirical study on the physiological indications of stress in interpreting. In her study, she measured skin conductance and pulse rate to look at how the stress response varied according to the setting (media interpreting vs. conference). On the basis of data collected during a conference that lasted for 5 days, she found out that media interpreting is indeed a stress-provoking activity more than conference interpreting (2002, p. 200).

Media interpreting is challenging because interpreters, as Issa (2016, p. 24) states, are faced with unscheduled events, ad-lib speeches, and press conferences. Such challenges might have a negative impact on the quality of reporting particularly when the media interpreter is expected to produce an output of a high level (Pöchhacker, 1995, p. 207). Finally, an interpreter who works for a television or radio station must ensure that their style and delivery are distinctly smooth and clear. This is due to the fact that the audience of television and radio are used to the highly-trained voices of newscasters and commentators and are unaware of or do not recognize the various demands placed on interpreters (Issa, 2016, p. 12).

#### **5- TOPICS CONFLICTING WITH THE INTERPRETER'S PERSONAL VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS**

Interpreters' attitudes, political views, and religious beliefs may have an impact on the outcome of the interpreted interaction. In this regard, Dawud (2017, p. 60) states that one of the factors that can make the interpreter's task more difficult is in situations where the consecutive interpreter has strict beliefs and convictions or where they are members of a particular religion or are politically affiliated. This factor can occasionally prevent interpreters from making sound judgements and induce them to manage the situation rather than monitor it. Beliefs and convictions of interpreters cause great internal struggle in their psyches and may have particular effects on how they perform their duties. What exacerbates the situation is when the interpreter has radically different beliefs and attitudes than the parties they are translating for. In such situations, the interpreter is consciously or unconsciously engaged in an internal moral conflict with their beliefs, and attempts as best as they can to balance these opposing forces to prevent being confronted with their values. Interpreters should attempt to control their emotions and be objective as much as they can, so that the interpretive outcome is ultimately more acceptable and makes sense.

Consecutive interpreters should avoid being biased towards either party in the encounter since, as Janzen and Korpinski (2005, p. 168) point out, any involvement on the part of the interpreter would probably impact the outcome of the situation, which is not the mandate of the interpreter. To put it differently, one of the most important professional standards in conference interpreting is "being an impartial and loyal

middleman' (Pöchhacker, 2015, p. 80). Therefore, the interpreter should have the ability to be a passive receptor and show no reaction to what the speaker says (Herbert, 1952, p. 5) (see also Quigley and Youngs, 1965, p. 9). The interpreter should passively receive the message heard. This, however, does not mean that the interpreter has to be careless or inattentive but to accept everything the speaker says without personally reacting to it whether positively or negatively. In other words, the interpreters must learn to maintain a neutral position between the participants and refrain from allowing their personal religious beliefs, political affiliations and social standards to influence or interfere with their neutral role (Abdul Rahman, 1997, p. 124). Additionally, the interpreter must interpret faithfully because any mistake in interpreting the speaker's message may lead to conflict. Al-Harashseh et al. (2020, p. 87) mention an example when the Egyptian ex-president Morsi visited Iran in 2012. The president said "we must stop the bloodshed in Syria". The interpreter who was Iranian interpreted this as "we must stop the bloodshed in Bahrain". In this example, the interpreter, being a Shiite, practiced ideology as the majority of Bahraini people are Shiite.

Consecutive interpreters should, as a result, be alert when they use language for the purpose of including, excluding, or promoting particular ideologies, and should commit to their attentional resources always and exclusively to the purpose the communication serves. This view is emphasized by Hatim and Mason who argue that "ideology shapes discourse, and the way discourse practices help to maintain, reinforce or challenge ideologies remains a sensitive issue that affects the outcome of the interpretive process" (1997, p. 119).

## **6- PRESENCE AND CORRECTIONS BY ANOTHER INTERPRETER**

Interpreting is always performed in front of an audience, and the output may immediately be evaluated by fellow interpreters (Christoffels, 2004, p. 8). The situation where the output of an interpreter is monitored and/or challenged by another interpreter or individual during the performance of the task or after the event is over is termed 'adversarial interpreting' (Kredens, 2017, p. 17).

There are occasions where more than one interpreter or individual who speaks the languages of the interaction is present to monitor the interpreter's output. The presence of more than one interpreter and a monitoring participant

in the same communication interaction may impact the interpreting process. Kredens (2017, p. 28) studied the impact of the presence of another interpreter on the quality of interpreting. The majority of respondents in his sample stated that the presence of another interpreter influenced their performance and negatively affected their confidence. Contrariwise, the presence of a professional could be considered a kind of support and can lead to improving the quality. However, if the interpreter is there only to find mistakes, then their judgment may be questioned, and hence affect the performance of the interpreter. The same author adds that if the main interpreter has no personal familiarity with the check interpreter, the latter may make the former feel self-conscious, defensive, and nervous. The interpreter who has a tendency to omit information or add extra information to embellish the original show more resentment toward the presence of another interpreter. Nonetheless, the longer the professional experience, the less stressful the presence of the check interpreter becomes.

In the same vein, Cooper et al. (1982, p. 101) remark that correction by fellow interpreter may become a source of anxiety and upset when correcting the mistakes of another interpreter, and tend to make the corrected interpreter lose confidence (see also Baigorri-Jalon, 2014, p. 177).

With regard to the evaluation of the interpreter's output, not every interpreter or bilingual speaker is qualified to evaluate the quality of interpreting of another interpreter. Seleskovitch (1986b, p. 236) argues that it is the competent, able, and objective interpreter, who is qualified to assess the performance of the interpreter because, as al-Zahran (2007, p. 70) states, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the audience or even the interpreter to do an online assessment. To conclude, today the presence of another interpreter is required in order to have some degree of control. Still, interpreters should not negatively react to the comments made by fellow interpreters about their performance.

## **7- SHORTAGE OF REQUIRED SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE**

Lack of specialization is one of the first and most significant factors that influences the interpretation of technical texts. Also, understanding is impossible without knowledge, linguistic and/or extra-linguistic, and interpreting cannot be done without complete understanding (Kurz, 1988, p. 424). The ideal case for the

interpreter would be the full understanding of the specialized subject matter being discussed, though the interpreter's understanding is almost always lower than that of the expert (Albl-Mikasa, 2012, p. 74). The longer the interpreter works in a field, the better insights they gain; the better informed they become about the purpose of the event, the better their understanding will be. Nonetheless, the interpreter's knowledge always remains, to a certain extent, somewhat superficial (Albl-Mikasa, 2012, p. 76). In this regard, Setton and Dawrant (2016, pp. 130-131) point out that experts in a variety of fields occasionally express skepticism over an interpreter's capacity, as a layperson and outsider, to adequately understand their field of expertise to interpret effectively. Even when the interpreters make the required preparation, their understanding of the topic under discussion will rarely be as full as that of an expert in the field. However, trained and prepared interpreters often deliver a service that satisfies "insiders" and occasionally surprises them.

Seleskovitch (2010, pp. 53-55) stresses that interpreters should possess sufficient knowledge of the field being discussed that enables them to analyze it intelligently, and is not required to be an expert in the field since they are not the originator of information; rather information is presented to them. Moreover, the interpreter will never have the same knowledge the specialist who initiated the speech possesses. What the interpreter needs to have is the ability to understand the information. The more experience the interpreter has, the better analytical abilities they develop. Therefore, it is their reasoning ability, not their knowledge of the facts that must be comparable to that of the speaker.

In a survey by Schweda-Nicholson (1986, p. 74ff) on 56 UN staff interpreters, (80.3%) of the respondents stated that they were not specialized in a particular field, indicating that they did not need to be specialized in order to produce quality interpreting. 87.5% indicated their readiness to work in every field provided that materials were given to them prior to the assignment. Likewise, Kurz (1988, p. 423) asserts that the interpreter has to be a generalist, and that without encyclopedic knowledge the interpreter's specialized knowledge is of little help.

Moser-Mercer (1992, pp. 509-510) also tackled the issue of generalist and specialist interpreters as part of her study through a

questionnaire answered by AIIC members who had over 21 years of experience in the profession. According to her respondents, 52.5% had fields of specialization. The findings of the study show that long years of experience increased the likelihood of developing field specialization. Nevertheless, in an answer to a question as to whether they had turned down a task because of its technical complexity, 46% answered positively, which means specialty is essential in interpreting technical texts. However, as Nolan (2005, p. 5) says, most interpreters are generalists since being an expert in every field of knowledge that requires translation is not possible. Therefore, interpreters must develop the ability to quickly internalize the fundamental issues and vocabulary associated with a certain task through the usual practice of studying background materials obtained from the organizers prior to the event to familiarize themselves with the subject and the specialized terminology.

Scholars who support specialization clearly have reasonable justifications. Feldweg (1990, p. 162) argues in favor of specialization and says that the professional environment is increasingly getting more complex, clients are becoming more specialized and the birth of new disciplines calls for specialization as a response. Wilss (1992, p. 391ff) contends that the myth of encyclopedic knowledge and the general propensity towards the generalist approach in the field of interpreting in the era of the supremacy of expert knowledge could have an adverse effect on the translation profession because professional interpreters' jobs are taken by experts who have some linguistic knowledge. However, al-Zahran (2007, p. 59) states that even scholars who are in favor of the generalist approach such as (Schweda-Nicholson 1986, p. 78; Kurz 1988, pp. 424/427, to mention only a few) acknowledge that future developments in the interpreting profession and other areas of knowledge may call for the need for specialization, but still not to the detriment of general knowledge.

#### **8- LACK OF PREPARATION**

Preparation is an essential factor that considerably increases the likelihood of successfully interpreting an interaction. The assumption that the output performance will be enhanced if the interpreter adequately prepares for an assignment is rarely challenged. Zhigang and Xudong (2008, p. 204) remark that lack of time to prepare adequately for an assignment in

CI is viewed as a key variable influencing the interpreter's performance.

The degree of preparation the interpreter puts in the assignment prior to the event is crucial for the interpreting quality. The more the interpreter knows about situational and contextual factors, the speakers and their intentions, and the listeners and their interests, the better their performance will be (Kalina, 2005, p. 777). According to Demers (2005, p. 215), there is a great and constant need for interpreters to be prepared for every assignment throughout their career. If the interpreters wish to be sufficiently prepared when arriving at the site, they have to be acquainted with the purpose and dynamics of the interaction and anticipate the information and the requirements of the language correctly. The effectiveness of an interpreter's preparation depends on how well they predict what will happen during the interaction. Likewise, reading relevant issues, undertaking research, and consulting documentation and other sources of information prior to the start of the assignment can be all-important to the interpreter (al-Zahrán, 2007, p. 245).

Regardless of the interpreter's general knowledge, sufficient additional knowledge and vocabulary for each assignment is a must for the interpreters to acquire in order to be able to understand and reproduce the utterances they will hear. The interpreters must do this without attempting to become informed as their speakers in their field of expertise since the speaker will always have more information about his/her field than the interpreter. Therefore, there are no events for which preparation can be disposed of (Seleskovitch, 2010, p. 124). To conclude, the interpreter, over time, can have a better prediction of the knowledge and language probably necessitated by the interaction, and therefore a better ability to prepare effectively and efficiently.

#### **9- LACK OF NOTE-TAKING SKILLS**

The interpreters do not have the luxury of re-hearing the speakers. Therefore, they have to develop alternative skills. In CI, the interpreters provide a TL rendition after having listened to the whole or a segment of the source speech. They cannot rely solely on their memory because of its limited capacity, and after a few rounds, they will have to resort to note-taking as a relief to memory caused by fatigue (Kohn & Kalina, 1996, p. 118). Note-taking enables the interpreter to avoid having Short Term Memory overloaded with forgettable information. Piolat,

Olive and Kellogg (2004, p. 297) state that while dealing with a continuous update of the message content as it is delivered, note-taking keeps an active representation of what has been heard in order to gain enough time to exploit and transcribe a segment.

Henderson (1976, p. 108) brings forward the quality of interpreting indicating that while an interpreter can work without notes for a short period of time, depending solely on memory, a notation system will substantially enhance the quality of their final product. Notes make the interpreter attentive to small details of information, which enable interpreters to produce a more accurate rendition. Kohn and Kalina (1996, p. 128) remark that the interpreter takes notes selectively. This means that they jot down what they assume not to be able to retrieve from memory during re-expression. Hence, notes are used just to aid memory.

Kohn and Albl-Mikasa (2002, p. 258) summarize three features of vital note-taking system, viz. economy which means that the notes must be brief and scarce to minimize the processing effort, instantaneous seizability of the notes so that the interpreter can decipher the note at a glance, hence the strain on the memory can be relieved, and individuality which outlines that no obligatory regulations govern note-taking.

Bowen and Bowen (1984, p. 18) point out that notes which are taken thoughtlessly are useless. In this regard, Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989, p. 44) stress that note-taking should not replace listening to the sense of the speech. On the contrary, systematic notes are taken automatically leading to bad interpreting. The more notes are systematic, the more they will be taken automatically and the worse the interpreting will be. In practice, consecutive interpreters take notes while the speaker is speaking, therefore they cannot take down each and every word they hear even if they tried to do so.

#### **10- DIFFICULTY TO READ BACK NOTES**

Note-taking is an essential element and key to good consecutive interpreting. The interpreter jots down only key elements of the speaker's speech as an aid to memory after analyzing and grasping its sense. Hence the interpreters' notes, according to Jones (1998, p. 39), are "not an end in themselves, but a means to an end" that helps them to remember what they have already analyzed and understood. However, the interpreter may sometimes find difficulties in reading back their notes. Unclear notes, as Al-

Harahsheh et al. (2020, p. 95) put it, lead to difficulty to read them back. As such, the handwriting must be clear and unambiguous so that the interpreter can decipher the notes (Herbert, 1976, p. 39). In this regard, Jones (1998, p. 64) states that the clearer the notes in terms of content and layout, the easier it will be for the interpreter to read them.

The arrangement of notes has a direct impact on the process of reading them back. Therefore, it is preferable for the interpreter to adhere to some practical guidelines when arranging notes in order to speed up note review without being distracted. Rozan (2002) emphasizes that notes must be succinct and precise as well as logically organized to facilitate a complete and immediate synthesis when the interpreter reads them back. On this basis, Rozan introduces the diagonal layout or vertical organization technique, which stems from the fact that the subject, verb, and object of a sentence all communicate the basic information the sentence contains. Similarly, Kangli (1995, p. 9) points out that the layout of notes is obviously important since it may help the interpreter to identify the line of thought without considerable difficulty.

Note-taking is an individual preference and the notes of one interpreter may not be easily understood by another interpreter (Zhu & Zhi, 2018, p. 38) (see also Patrie, 2004, p. 11). According to Ageli (2003, p. 22), the way an interpreter takes notes is idiosyncratic; some interpreters rely heavily on acronyms, capital letters, and abbreviations, while others employ a variety of abstract symbols.

Abbreviations and symbols used in taking notes can help the interpreter save time since one symbol can be used to express an idea that is otherwise expressed by several words (Jones, 1998, p. 54). Gillies (2005) emphasizes how advantageous it is for the interpreter to be familiar with several reasonable symbols since the interpreter may write them faster and easier than words, and it is easier to read symbols than words given that they refer to concepts, not exact words (p. 125). However, when reading back notes, abbreviations must be clear and unambiguous for the interpreter to decipher quickly because, in a time-constrained situation, the interpreter does not have the opportunity to think about what each abbreviation means. The interpreter should avoid improvising symbols or abbreviations in their notes because doing so could be troublesome and trap the interpreter in a vicious loop of encoding and encoding hence

exerting additional needless mental efforts. Remembering and retrieving these symbols and abbreviations could result in challenges in the middle of interpreting. Therefore, they should be simple and clear and the interpreter should be able to use them automatically.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study attends to the factors affecting consecutive interpreters' performance based on the information elicited from the relevant resources and the researcher's personal experience as a consecutive interpreter for many years. It shows the significance attributed to each factor with a focus on the loss of concentration, shortage of required specialized knowledge, fear of the presence of the media and stressful nature of the task of interpreting as the most important factors. The preceding factors are followed by lack of prior preparation, lack of professional note-taking skills, difficulty to read back the headings put as notes and fear of speaking in public. While the presence of another interpreter, corrections by present fellow interpreters and topics conflicting with the interpreter's personal values, principles and beliefs occupied the lowest position in terms of their impact on consecutive interpreters' performance. To overcome the negative impact of these factors, the study suggests that consecutive interpreters need to develop stress resistance mechanisms, avoid getting involved, prepare well, broaden their specialized and general knowledge, and improve their note-taking skills. This research is expected to pave the way for a thorough understanding of some of the affecting factors that can be beneficial to both interpreting students and professional consecutive interpreters. It will also be of value to university professors of interpreting as it is expected to provide them with extensive evidence on the different types of difficulties encountered by consecutive interpreters in real-life situations.

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## پۆختە

ئەف قەكۆلینا تیوری لیکۆلینی ل فاکتەرین کارتیکرنی ل کارئ وەرگپرین ل دویف ئیک دکەن. ل گور نفیسینین دقئ بواری دا، هەر وەسا سەربورا قەكۆلەری یا کارکرنی وەك وەرگپرئ ل دویف ئیک، سئ فاکتەر هاتنە دەستنیشانکرن، ئەوژئ فاکتەرین گریدای ب ئاخفتنکەرپقە، فاکتەرین گریدای ب وەرگپرپقە و فاکتەرین گریدای ب بارودۆخپقە. ئەف قەكۆلینە فۆکسی دانیتە سەر فاکتەرین گریدای ب وەرگپرپقە، کو دەه فاکتەرین لاوہکی ب خۆقە دگريت. فاکتەرین گریدای ب وەرگپرپقە گریدای شیان و زانین و سەربورپن ئەوی نە، زیدەبارئ شیانین ئەوی یین هزری و جەستەیی. دەپتە پششبینیکرن کو ئەف قەكۆلینە دئ هاریکاریا وەرگپرئ ل دویف ئیک و هەر وەسا قوتابیین وەرگپرانی کەتن ژبو ئاشنابوون ب ئەفان فاکتەران و باشتر تیگەهشتنا کارتیکرنا ئەوان ل سەر کارئ ئەوان، و ب قئ چەندئ کیمکرن ئەقئ کارتیکرنی. ئەنجامین ئەف قەكۆلینە گەهشتیین ددەنە دیارکرن کو ئەف فاکتەرە کارتیکرنی ل کارئ وەرگپرین ل دویف ئیک دکەن.

پەقیقین کلیلی: وەرگپرانا ل دویف ئیک، فاکتەرین گریدای ب وەرگپرپقە، وەرگپرئ ل دویف ئیک، کارئ وەرگپرین ل دویف ئیک.

## الخلاصة

تبحث هذه الدراسة النظرية في العوامل المؤثرة في أداء المترجمين التعاقبيين. لقد تم تحديد العديد من العوامل أستاذنا إلى الكتابات في هذا الجانب بالإضافة إلى التجربة الشخصية للباحث في العمل كمترجم تعاقبي، وتم تصنيف هذه العوامل إلى ثلاثة أقسام رئيسية وهي العوامل المتعلقة بالمتحدث والعوامل المتعلقة بالمترجم والعوامل المتعلقة بالموقف. تركز الدراسة الحالية على العوامل المتعلقة بالمترجم، وتتضمن 10 عوامل فرعية، وتتعلق بمهارات المترجم ومعرفته وخبرته بالإضافة إلى قدراته الذهنية والبدنية. من المتوقع أن تسهم هذه الدراسة في تعريف المترجمين التعاقبيين وطلبة الترجمة بهذه العوامل وفهم تأثيرها على أدائهم، وبالتالي الحد منها. إن النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة بينت أن العوامل المتعلقة بالمترجم تؤثر بالفعل على أداء المترجمين التعاقبيين.

**الكلمات الدالة:** الترجمة التعاقبية، العوامل المتعلقة بالمترجم، المترجم التعاقبي، أداء المترجمين التعاقبيين.