

عنوان المحاضرة: أساسيات الترجمة الفورية

المادة الدراسية: الترجمة الفورية

المرحلة الدراسية: الرابعة

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جامعة الموصل

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القسم: الترجمة

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Nuremberg trials (1945–1946) are considered to be the official birthdate of simultaneous interpretation, however, simultaneous interpretation was invented as early as in 1926. A patent was received by an IBM employee Alan Gordon Finlay and was used sporadically before the Second World War. Finlay played an essential role in the design and development of SI equipment together with Edward Filene, the American businessman and philanthropist.

What is Simultaneous Interpreting?

Simultaneous interpreting is a form of oral translation in which the interpreter renders a speaker's message into a target language in real time, concurrently with the ongoing speech. Unlike consecutive interpreting, where the speaker pauses to allow translation, simultaneous interpreters process auditory input, analyze cognitive context, make immediate linguistic reformulations, and produce target speech almost instantly, typically working with a delay of only a few seconds (*décalage*). This complex cognitive task requires exceptional listening comprehension, short-term working memory allocation, and continuous focus, making it essential for international conferences, diplomatic

summits, and live multilateral events where smooth, uninterrupted communication is critical.

What are the difficulties & Challenges?

Simultaneous interpreting is widely recognized as one of the most demanding human cognitive activities due to the continuous management of multiple real-time processes. The primary challenges stem from Gile's Effort Model, which shows that performance deteriorates whenever total cognitive demand exceeds available working memory capacity.

Cognitive Overload & Multitasking

- **Triangular Processing:** The interpreter must simultaneously listen to/comprehend input (L), retain/store information in short-term

memory (M), and formulate/articulate output (P) in a second language.

- Coordination Effort (C): Managing focus between input, internal mental reformulation, and monitoring self-output creates extreme cognitive strain, frequently leading to mental fatigue after 20–30 minutes.

Linguistic & Structural Asymmetries

- Syntactic Differences: Languages with divergent word order (e.g., German/Japanese placing verbs at the end versus English/Arabic placing them earlier) force interpreters to wait or anticipate structural resolution before delivering accurate target clauses.
- Idioms & Cultural Specifics: Real-time reformulation of dialectal tropes, metaphors,

and localized figures of speech without interrupting speech flow requires rapid retrieval strategies.

Delivery & Environmental Variables

- Managing *Décalage*: Operating within a tight 2-to-5-second temporal lag requires continuous calibration—staying too close risks literal transfer, while lagging too far back overloads working memory.
- Delivery Stressors: High speech rates, unfamiliar regional accents, dense technical jargon, unpredictable spontaneous delivery, and suboptimal audio acoustic setups sharply escalate processing difficulty.

Methods & Strategies?

To manage continuous cognitive strain and prevent working memory saturation, simultaneous interpreters rely on structured strategies across three distinct operational phases:

1. On-Line Coping Tactics (In the Booth)

When real-time processing capacity limits are tested, interpreters deploy specific tactics to maintain continuous delivery:

- **Syntactic Restructuring (Segmentation/Salami Technique):** Breaking down long, complex source sentences into shorter, independent target clauses. This prevents working memory overload when dealing with asymmetrical word orders (e.g., SOV to SVO).
- **Anticipation:** Using semantic context, macro-structure, and domain knowledge to predict upcoming verbs, nouns, or arguments before the speaker utters them.

- **Compression & Summarization:** Eliminating redundant qualifiers, filler words, or non-essential modifiers to save output time without losing core propositional content.
- **Generalization (Hypernymy):** Substituting a specific, high-register term with a broader class term when exact equivalent retrieval is delayed (e.g., using *vehicle* instead of *combine harvester*).
- **Calibrating *Décalage*:** Strategically expanding or shrinking the time lag between speaker input and interpreter output. Extending lag buys time to observe syntactic resolution; shrinking lag clears short-term memory during high-density delivery.
- **Booth Mate Collaboration:** Utilizing the passive co-interpreter to jot down numbers, proper names, or terminology on a shared notepad.

2. Pre-Process Preparation

- **Glossary Building:** Compiling targeted bilingual glossaries covering specialized

nomenclature and regional acronyms prior to the event.

- **Speaker Alignment:** Reviewing past recordings of the speaker to internalize cadence, accent, rhetorical tropes, and favorite idioms.
- **Document Analysis:** Studying background briefs, slide decks, and drafts to establish mental scripts and contextual frameworks.

3. Cognitive Self-Regulation & Training

- **Dual-Tasking Exercises:** Practicing shadowing while performing secondary motor or mental tasks to build coordination and attention-splitting capacity.
- **Controlled Omission:** Intentionally shedding non-essential stylistic elements during extreme speech rates to preserve core logical relationships.