

The Inspiration of Effort Model to the Practice Teaching of Simultaneous Translation with Shorthand Typing

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Abstract : With the rapid development of science and technology and global integration today, modern information technology plays an irreplaceable role in education. The course of simultaneous translation with shorthand typing came into being, which combines English listening, English-Chinese translation and computer input. It is an English translation training course of a trinity of “listening + translating + recording”. While the author draws inspiration from Daniel Gile’s effort model, the process of translation and shorthand is expressed as listening comprehension, short-term memory and shorthand, translation output, and coordination of the tasks. The author explored training methods to reduce the difficulty of the task, so as to improve students’ task processing ability relatively, and to enhance students’ comprehensive ability of translation.

Keywords : Effort Model; Simultaneous Translation; Shorthand; Practice Teaching

1. Introduction to simultaneous translation with shorthand typing course

Simultaneous translation with shorthand typing course for English, translation and business English majors, combines English listening comprehension, English-Chinese translation, computer input together. The teaching contents covers a wide range of topics, such as current affairs and politics, economy and trade, cultural exchanges, education, military, science and other fields of social life. It is a comprehensive practical course that trains students’ English listening ability, Chinese and English typing ability, oral and written translation ability, as well as political, economic, cultural and other professional knowledge in one.

The course provides training on basic typing skills in Chinese and English, carrying out trainings of audio-typing and simultaneous translation with audio-typing from words, sentences to texts, to achieve and improve students’ English listening level, keyboard input speed and simultaneous translation ability. This can consolidate and expand students’ knowledge, and enable students to achieve the teaching purpose of “listening while typing and translating”, completing various audio-typing tasks and simultaneous interpreting shorthand tasks in English situations independently or in cooperation.

2. Introduction to effort model

Daniel Gile proposed the effort model of interpreting, also known as the Mental Allocation Model. He expressed the process of simultaneous translation with $SI = L + M + P + C$ formula, that is, simultaneous translation = listening comprehension + short-term memory + translation output + coordination. According to the effort model, the premise for the smooth progress of interpretation activities is that the

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total ability required by the interpreter to deal with various tasks must be less than or equal to the overall processing ability of each task. The more tasks the interpreter needs to allocate his/her energy to, the greater the pressure on information processing and the output of the target language. (Chen, 2012) In interpreting activities, the above processes are carried out simultaneously, so interpreters need to multitask listening, translating and speaking at the same time. Only when each single task is handled smoothly can the interpreter ensure the successful completion of the simultaneous translation task. This is basically consistent with the task processing mode of simultaneous translation with audio-typing, that is listening, translating and recording. Inspired by this, the author expresses the process of simultaneous translation with shorthand as four tasks: listening comprehension, short-term memory and shorthand, translation output, and coordination, exploring more effective teaching and training mode to improve students' comprehensive ability in translation.

3. Common difficulties in simultaneous translation with shorthand typing

According to the effort model, it can be found that whether students have difficulties in any one of listening comprehension, short-term memory and shorthand, translation output, or coordination, simultaneous translation cannot be completed successfully, or there may be mistakes.

In the listening comprehension, as long as there are speakers who speak too fast, whose pronunciation is not clear or with accents, or speech content information is too dense, or has grammatical errors and so on, these problems will cause obstacles to the interpreter's understanding, which puts forward a higher request to the student's listening comprehension ability.

In short-term memory and shorthand, if there are unfamiliar proper nouns, numbers, abbreviations, etc., although they themselves do not need too much processing power, they disappeared before the students could deal with them, for the short pronunciation and fleeting. Students who are not familiar with computer document operation are also unable to type out the sentences they hear quickly.

In the translation output, if the speaker's information is too dense, or the content too broad or new and so on, students are required to have strong translation ability, and can continue to learn, accumulate, and cope with the changing topics.

In the coordination of the above three tasks, any of the above situations will become the difficulty of coordination.

Among these four tasks, listening comprehension and computer shorthand ability are the foundation and influence each other. If the students cannot identify the words they listen to, nor understand the content, they can't correctly put the words on the computer even if they can skillfully use the computer system. Similarly, if the students can understand what they heard, but unfamiliar with computer document operation, they also cannot type out the words they heard quickly. At the same time, students must also have a certain ability of interpretation, in order to be able to translate what they heard in time. Once a student encounters difficulty in any of the three tasks, he needs to allocate more time and energy to deal with them, thus leaving less time and energy for other tasks. As a result, the demand for processing capacity may be greater than the processing capacity available, which may lead to students' failure in completing tasks, mistranslation, omission, or even simultaneous translation failure.

4. Practice teaching of simultaneous translation with shorthand typing based on effort model

In order to ensure that the simultaneous translation with shorthand typing smoothly, to avoid problems, we must reduce the difficulty of the task, in order to improve the students' task processing ability.

First of all, language is a tool for human communication and a carrier of thinking, while vocabulary is the foundation of language. One of the biggest obstacles for Chinese students to learn English well is not that they do not have enough vocabulary and sentence patterns, but that they do not have enough active vocabulary and sentence patterns. Vocabulary and sentence patterns stored in active areas of memory can still be readily available under high stress, so less processing power is consumed. The words and sentence patterns stored in the passive part of memory are not easy to obtain, require more processing power, or are impossible to remember at all. The author found a phenomenon in the simultaneous translation with shorthand typing teaching, that students are easy to repeatedly use simple sentence patterns, which is for this reason. Therefore, in teaching and training, it is necessary to strengthen the sound stimulation of students' vocabulary, gradually shorten and even avoid the process of language conversion, so as

to process directly from sound to meaning, and reduce the required processing. Also pay attention to strengthen the active stimulation of the language, let the students to type and translate more. Through the active use, the students would deepen the impression of vocabulary and sentence patterns, so that they are in active areas of memory and refluxing without thinking while translating simultaneously of shorthand typing, with the minimum consumption of processing power.

Secondly, listening training should pay special attention to strengthen the familiarity of different accents. Traditional English listening teaching only focuses on training students to respond to and understand the standard accent, but in practice, many speakers who are not native speakers speak in English, there will be a variety of accents. If students are not familiar with an accent, they will be forced to devote more time and energy to listening comprehension, resulting in inadequate processing ability allocated for shorthand or translation tasks. Therefore, only by familiarizing yourself with as many accents as possible can you minimize problems.

5. Conclusion

Simultaneous translation with shorthand typing is not a simple and mechanical task, but need to master all aspects of professional knowledge, to allocate the processing ability of each task scientifically and reasonably. For English, translation and business English majors, it is also a practical skill. The effort model provides a theoretical basis for the simultaneous translation of shorthand. According to this mode, teachers train students step by step so as to improve students' comprehensive translation ability and have more professional advantages and competitiveness.

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