

# FEATURES OF ORAL TRANSLATION IN VARIOUS TERRITORIAL, LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

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## **Abstract**

In the modern world, interlingual and intercultural communication is constantly expanding and becoming more complex due to the development of information technologies, contradictory trends in globalization, and the intensification of information exchange. These trends create a demand for translation specialists who solve the problems of organizing intercultural contacts, designing the translation process, information exchange, and processing in a changing socio-cultural context. In essence, translators and interpreters are the means of communication that allow the information exchange between people representing different cultures to be carried out in the most reliable, undistorted, timely, and local manner possible. The training of specialists in the field of translation and intercultural communication includes the formation of linguistic knowledge and practical skills in the analysis and application of linguistic means, which are necessary for professional activity. Translation, as a science, in the course of its development, faces more and more problems related to the creation of mutually understandable communication mechanisms between different cultures, languages, and environments and implies the development of a constantly developing set of translation tools. Trying to answer the question "How to translate?" researchers focus on various objects of translation, which often require the use of various tools. The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that when performing translations, the translator is faced with the difficult task of identifying individual elements of foreign and native language systems and finding an accurate translation of the realities of one culture into the language of another culture. Particular attention is paid to the problems of choosing a methodological toolkit for oral translation. The purpose of the research is to present the types of oral translation, as well as the territorial, linguistic, and cultural features of translation.

**Keywords:** interpretation, experience, interpretation, types of translation, translation skills.

**ԲԱՆԱՎՈՐ ԹԱՐԳՄԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ  
ԱՌԱՆՁՆԱՀԱՏԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ՏԱՐԱԾՔԱՅԻՆ,  
ԼԵԶՎԱԿԱՆ ԵՎ ՄՇԱԿՈՒԹԱՅԻՆ ՏԱՐԲԵՐ  
ՀԱՄԱՏՆՔՍՏԵՐՈՒՄ**

**ՍԻՐԱՆՈՒՇ ԴՈՒՈՅԱՆ**

ՀՀ ՊՆ պաշտպանական ազգային հետազոտական համալսարանի  
օտար լեզուների խմբի ավագ դասախոս  
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**Համառոտագիր**

Ժամանակակից աշխարհում միջլեզվային և միջմշակութային հաղորդակցության ոլորտը անընդհատ ընդլայնվում և բարդանում է՝ կապված տեղեկատվական տեխնոլոգիաների զարգացման, գլոբալացման հակասական միտումների և տեղեկատվության փոխանակման արագացման հետ: Սույն միտումներն առաջացնում են թարգմանիչ մասնագետների պահանջարկ, ովքեր լուծում են միջմշակութային շփումների կազմակերպման, թարգմանության, տեղեկատվության փոխանակման և մշակման գործընթացի նախագծման խնդիրները փոփոխվող սոցիալ-մշակութային համատեքստում: Ըստ էության՝ գրավոր և բանավոր թարգմանություն իրականացնողները այն հաղորդչամիջոցն են, ովքեր թույլ են տալիս տարբեր մշակույթներ ներկայացնող անձանց միջև տեղեկատվության փոխանակումը իրականացնել առավելագույն հավաստի, չխեղաթյուրված, ժամանակին և տեղական ինքնատիպություններին հնարավորինս համահունչ կերպով: Մասնագետների պատրաստումը թարգմանության և միջմշակութային հաղորդակցության ոլորտում ներառում է լեզվական գիտելիքների ձևավորում և լեզվական միջոցների վերլուծության ու կիրառման գործնական հմտություններ, որոնք անհրաժեշտ են մասնագիտական գործունեության համար: Թարգմանչությունը, որպես գիտություն, իր զարգացման ընթացքում առերեսվում է ավելի ու ավելի շատ խնդիրների, որոնք վերաբերում են տարբեր մշակույթների, լեզուների և միջավայրերի միջև փոխադարձ հասկանալի հաղորդակցական մեխանիզմների ստեղծմանը ու հրնթացս զարացող թարգմանչական գործիքակազմի մշակում են ենթադրում: Փորձելով պատասխանել «Ինչպես թարգմանել» հարցին՝ հետազոտողները կենտրոնանում են թարգմանության տարբեր օբյեկտների վրա, որոնք հաճախ պահանջում են տարատեսակ գործիքակազմի կիրառություն: Սույն թեմայի արդիականությունը պայմանավորված է նրանով, որ թարգմանություններ կատարելիս թարգմանիչը բախվում է օտար և մայրենի լեզուների համակարգերի առանձին տարրերի նույնականացման, մեկ մշակույթի ռեալիաները այլ մշակույթի լեզվով ձգձգիտ թարգմանելու բարդ խնդրին: Առանձնահատուկ ուշադրություն է

դարձվում բանավոր թարգմանության մեթոդական գործիքակազմի ընտրության խնդիրներին: Հետազոտության նպատակն է ներկայացնել բանավոր թարգմանության տեսակները, թարգմանության տարածքային, լեզվական և մշակութային առանձնահատկությունները:

**Բանավոր թարգմանություն, փորձառություն, մեկնաբանություն, թարգմանության տեսակներ, թարգմանության հմտություններ:**

### **Introduction**

To understand the linguistic, cultural, and territorial features of interpreting, it is necessary to refer to the key characteristics of the oral and written forms of translation. At first glance, the difference between oral and written translations lies in their form: an interpreter (oral translator) performs an oral translation, while a translator (written) performs a written translation in the form of a written text. Here it is important to emphasize the difference between the two types of translation, based on the concepts and etymology given to the words expressing them in English. If translating in English primarily means “to transform into one’s own or another language”, then to interpret means “to explain or interpret the meaning or to present in understandable terms” (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 2003; Lew, 2019). In other words, if the goal of written translation is to convey thoughts from the source language to the target language as clearly as possible, then the goal of oral translation is to interpret thoughts from the source language into the target language in a limited time and under the influence of external environmental and communicative heterogeneous factors. Both oral and written translations assume appropriate manifestations of linguistic thinking and deep knowledge of more than one language. However, there are differences between the professional skills of an oral and a written translator. The key skill of a skilled written translator lies in the ability to write well and express oneself clearly in the target language. This is a reason why professional translators work in one direction, translating the target language only into their native language. Meanwhile, translators fluent in two or even more languages are rarely able to speak equally on a given topic in these languages. Many excellent translators are far from being bilingual; they cannot and do not even need to be as fluent in the target language as a native speaker (when translating the language of the source text). The secret of a translator’s skill lies in the ability to understand the language of the source text, to imagine the culture of the country where the text originated, and to use good literature (dictionaries, reference materials) to transform the given material into a text in the target language.

### **Theoretical and Methodological Bases**

Written translation is a skill that requires the most precision, but not all written translators can do oral translations well. An important prerequisite for interpreting is a developed memory, mastery of the art of rhetoric, as well as an excellent knowledge of the language. For interpreters and translators, excellent knowledge of the language and developed research skills are mandatory. Both oral and written translators must be well-rounded individuals, but a translator can

specialize in a narrow professional field (for example, physics, military science, literature, and even more narrowly in terms of genre, for example, prose or poetry). A written translator can be less sociable than an interpreter. High-quality interpreters easily navigate in various fields and have developed within themselves the second I-image of an “original translator” (Cholodová, 2016).

Let's consider a few questions to get a better idea of the types and forms of oral interpretation. The qualities required to be an interpreter are:

- Precognition
- Listening skills
- Comprehension of the message (in terms of information grouped by semantic units)
- Ability to separate words
- Concentration (ability to perform tasks)
- Memory
- Flexibility
- Quick orientation
- Language knowledge by levels: high, medium, and low levels
- Dialect sensitivity (variations of regional languages)
- Strategies for solving problems correctly
- Ability to reproduce materials
- Ability to express oneself clearly

The first steps in the translation process are (Nicholson, 1995):

- First of all, understand how the translation should be done: with the help of existing dictionaries or a terminology glossary established in the given field.
- Active listening
- It is imperative to preserve meaning during translation
- Manage the stress that arises when reproducing material under the observation of others, especially when some members of the audience have some knowledge of the target (reproduced) language.
- Manage the stress that is caused by the fact that, unlike translation with a headset, when translating material, the translator hears his voice, which is a disturbing situation in itself.

The main methods of translation are:

- Direct translation
- Consecutive
- Simultaneous
- Mutual understanding
- Escorted

Direct translation is the oral translation of written material in a fast manner while reading it in turn. The translator's goal when translating the material is to accurately reproduce the original. Some translators find this version of translation to be quite difficult than other forms since it is difficult to focus not on the words, but on the meaning, which must be preserved.

Reading is one of the most important elements in translation since a correct understanding of the material is considered a prerequisite at the beginning. As a result, the translator is obliged to translate the document quickly and not leave anything out. Consecutive translation is the process of oral translation, in which the translator, after carefully listening to a certain part of the material, immediately begins to translate. The clarity of the thoughts expressed by the speaker (the person whose thoughts are being translated) is important. The speaker should also enable the interpreter to distinguish the structural elements of the thought he is conveying: tone of voice, pauses, etc. According to many professional interpreters, however illogical it may seem, consecutive interpretation is more difficult and stressful than simultaneous interpretation since in the second case the interpreter is isolated from the audience, quickly reproduces the message and moves on, and, unlike the first case, does not have to memorize the entire expressed thought, which in some cases can be quite long if the speaker does not maintain “discipline” in speaking, and the interpreter is quite timid about interrupting him. In general, it can be argued that, using the terminology of the field of information technology, the total memory capacity of the human brain is important in consecutive interpretation, and in the case of simultaneous interpretation, the operational memory (Naumenko, 2019).

Many translators believe that simultaneous translation is one of the most difficult forms since it is not easy to maintain all the provisions of the translation at the same time. The meaning here is that the translator must translate simultaneously with the speaker without interruption. Such translations are mainly performed at international conferences and conventions. For example, during trials, if it is necessary to turn to an interpreter, the latter is also obliged to perform simultaneous translation. However, all questions and accusations addressed to the accused must be translated into a language understandable to the latter. Translation takes place via a camera or microphone (Naumenko, 2019).

Types of interpreting are:

- Thematic interpreting (medical, judicial, etc.)
- Press conference interpreting
- Public interpreting
- Telephone conversation interpreting
- Group interpreting

Thematic interpreting is a consecutive interpretation, during which a transition is made from one language to another. Here it is important to master thematic (medical, other) terminology and have the appropriate knowledge in the field of conversation. For example, doctors testify that they often need highly qualified specialists, since the number of people who do not speak English is increasing. Such specialists work in various medical institutions: hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, polyclinics, forensic psychiatric facilities, etc. Medical interpreting is performed both consecutively and simultaneously. Judicial interpreting is a consecutive interpretation, in which mainly judicial terms are used. It is often necessary to perform simultaneous interpretation. During such

interpretations, one must have the appropriate knowledge of the legal field and be informed about jurisprudence. These specified conditions are observed by the translator since he translates from one language into another. However, the translator is not allowed to make any wording changes in the existing laws during the translation, as this would change the main meaning of the legal acts.

Press conference interpretation is a simultaneous speech at official and international conferences. It requires appropriate skills and is usually translated into one or three languages. However, the translator usually translates into one language. Such interpreters are usually provided with a separate and quiet room. To ensure communication, both parties are given headphones.

Public interpretation is consecutive and simultaneous interpretation from one language to another in a public setting. This type of interpretation focuses on facilitating communication between individuals who speak different languages, usually in a non-professional setting. It often includes interpretation in various sectoral settings, such as social services (relations between immigrants and social workers), education (parent-teacher meetings), and public services (interaction with government agencies). The role of a public interpreter is to fill the language gap and ensure that all parties can communicate effectively, especially in situations where one or more individuals do not speak the same language. Unlike other forms of interpreting, community interpreting usually deals with practical, everyday situations that require cultural sensitivity and an understanding of the cultural features of the community.

Group interpreting is the sequential and simultaneous interpretation of one language into another among small groups. Being a group interpreter requires knowledge of the language and cultural specifics (Delistathi, 2017).

## Research Methods

• Taking into account the above-mentioned types of translation, we have developed a translation methodology based on the following main strategies:

- Parrot strategy: repeat everything you hear, orally and in writing.
- Pendulum strategy: pay attention to the source and only one person.
- Shadow dubbing, that is, a modification of expressions and meaning, while maintaining the meaning.

- Public speaking: interpretation.

• Based on the strategic directions of the above-presented methodology of oral translation, we have classified the most important skills for translation, including:

- Reading comprehension
- Sensitivity to information memorization
- Word transformation
- Use of synonyms
- Reading
- Comprehension
- Memory

- Public speaking
  - Pace
  - Pronunciation
  - Correct presentation
  - Correct delivery
  - Correct reproduction of materials
  - Problem-solving strategies
  - Flexibility (ATA French Language Division).

## Results

Effective interpreting requires several skills to ensure that communication between speakers of different languages is seamless. One of the key skills is pre-reading, which allows interpreters to anticipate what is coming up in a conversation and be prepared for the flow of information. In addition, interpreters must be adept at using synonyms and paraphrasing to express ideas without changing the meaning, even when a direct translation is not possible. Speed of speech is also a very important skill, as interpreters must be able to process and deliver information in real-time without losing the accuracy of the information. This requires a large memory and the ability to quickly connect ideas, ensuring that the main idea or meaning is accurately conveyed, even if the exact words differ between languages. Text composition is also essential, as interpreters must maintain clarity of speech and the ability to convey ideas coherently, presenting ideas logically for the listener. They often rely on problem-solving strategies to overcome challenges such as: such as ambiguous phrases or unexpected topics and must be able to detach from the written word to understand the main meaning in context. Public speaking skills, including pace, clear pronunciation, and correct delivery/presentation, are also of great importance. Finally, interpreters must be flexible, adapting their approach as necessary to accommodate different contexts, tones, and conversational styles while maintaining professionalism and accuracy. The above-mentioned diverse skills are put to use together to ensure that interpreters can provide high-quality, effective language support in a variety of settings (Torop, 2002).

The listed translation skills are demonstrated during the interpretation methods of intermittent and simultaneous (simultaneous) interpretation. Interpretation generally occurs in sequential (intermittent) and simultaneous (synchronous) forms. During simultaneous interpretation, the speaker speaks, and the interpreter waits until 2–3 words are uttered and immediately begins to translate (since there is still a small pause during simultaneous (synchronous) interpretation, the term “simultaneous interpretation” cannot be considered completely accurate). Notes (taking notes) are not allowed during oral interpretation and the interpreter is not able to use the prepared text in all cases.

Simultaneous (synchronous) interpretation was first performed during the First World War, during the Nuremberg Trials. It is used during multilingual briefings, conferences, and meetings. It is usually used during conferences of

international organizations, and simultaneous interpretation requires special equipment (interpretation booths, headsets, etc.). This is a difficult and problematic job. Simultaneous interpretation is mostly performed by pairs of interpreters, taking turns every 15–20 minutes. If we consider that all types of oral interpretation are laborious and energy-intensive, simultaneous interpretation is even more problematic. Another secret of the skill of a simultaneous interpreter is decisiveness (the ability to make a decision) since there is simply no time to do the heavy lifting (think of more worthy versions of the translation) or to match expressions (idioms) to equivalent expressions in the given language. Any delay may lead to missing a few words (and possibly a thought) the speaker has already said (Nicholson, 1995).

During punctuated interpreting, the speaker pauses every 5 minutes (usually at the end of each paragraph or complete thought or concept), and then a translator translates step by step to show what was said in the target language. The key skill in punctuated interpreting is note-taking, as few translators can memorize an entire paragraph without forgetting a single word. However, the notes taken by a translator are significantly different from those taken by a stenographer, since writing down words in the source language complicates the translator's work when he or she has to translate those words into the "target" language. Many professionals develop their notation system, which allows them to record not words but the speaker's thoughts in a language-independent manner. As a result, the translator's output (i.e., the translation) is more idiomatic and less dependent on the target language, in other words, it is linguistically limited. This means that the translation should not be taken literally, but rather the concept should be translated, i.e. the key ideas and concepts (Lew, 2019).

Let us also emphasize that during "pause" or "sequential" translation, the speaker speaks with pause, allowing the translator to formulate his thoughts as best as possible. The goal is to convey the message, that is, to convey the idea or message. How is this done? By working with concepts. The translator must know the material of the conversation to translate it. The speaker, in turn, must try never to speak in incomplete sentences or that lack meaning and verbs. The interpreter should have an idea (if at all possible, that is, if possible, he should be helped to form an idea) of what direction the conversation will take and or what point in the conversation the speaker is targeting (Cholodová, 2016).

In other words, a translator converts words into meanings and then converts those meanings into words in another language. Therefore, to make a good translation, a translator is required to have the following key qualities:

- The presence of relevant knowledge is the main prerequisite for accurately translating the material.
- Basic education and spiritual affinity between the two cultures.
- Extensive vocabulary knowledge in both languages.
- The ability to formulate one's thoughts clearly and concisely in both languages.
- Excellent note-taking technique when performing simultaneous



(simultaneous) translation.

- Good listening skills.
- Awareness of the importance of the 5 “Ws” (“What”, “When”, “Who”, “Where”, “Why”).
- Good Voice, Eye-contact, Gestures, Attitude = VEGA!
- Excellent public speaking skills (Naumenko, 2019).

### Conclusions

Translation support plays a crucial role in ensuring clear and effective communication. Acting as a bridge between two or more languages or cultures, this support helps interlocutors to overcome spatial, cultural, and linguistic barriers to communication more effectively. Therefore, the art of translation consists not only of translating words, but also of the translator’s proper time management, having some information in advance, and planning for further actions. The following factors are of particular importance:

- Advance information regarding the material to be translated:
  - List of delegation members, their full names, and organization names (without abbreviations).
  - Slides to be used during the speech (if prepared in advance, they can be bilingual).
  - Prepared speeches or announcements to be read aloud.
  - List of the technical terms, abbreviations, jargon words, and expressions that may be used during the upcoming speech/discussion.
  - Reference information, such as drafts, photocopies of drawings, or direct handwritten notes. The more extensive the information the translator has about the material to be translated, the better the translation will be perceived.
- The nature of the meeting and the environmental/territorial characteristics: technical, formal diplomatic, formal/informal working groups, heterogeneous cultural communication environment, territorial limitations of translation, etc.
- The temporal and functional coordination of the meeting should take into account the time allocated for translation and the necessary logistical support for the translator.

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