

AL-FARABI KAZAKH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
International Relations Department
Chair of Diplomatic Translation
Translation business in the field of international and legal relations
Practice of Simultaneous Interpretation
2021-2022 academic year spring semester

Lecture

Module 1: General Principles in Training Translators and Interpreters

Lecture 5: Compression and Decompression in Simultaneous Interpretation

Plan of the lecture

1. Introduction
2. Strategies in Simultaneous Interpretation: Compression and Decompression
3. Conclusion
4. References

Aspects of the lecture

1. Definitions of compression and decompression in SI
2. Communicative situation in SI
3. Unjustified and justified decompression
4. SDR conditioned decompression

Goals of the lecture

1. Explain the aim of using compression and decompression in SI
2. Introduce types of decompression in SI
3. Familiarize with SDR conditioned decompression
4. Identify effectiveness of using compression and decompression in different language combinations

Basic concepts

5. Compression, decompression, strategy, Unjustified and justified decompression, SDR conditioned decompression, expansion, addition, omission, denotative and connotative meaning and etc.

The mere term “decompression” might seem innovative and, at the same time, unhappy. First of all, it has been introduced into scientific discourse quite recently. Moreover, according to my

observations, it is mainly used in Russian Translatology and is practically out of use in Western Translatology. This can be explained by the fact that the English term “decompression” is widely used in the field of technology in the meanings that have nothing to do with SI. Apparently, the application of the English term “decompression” in scientific writing on SI might cause misunderstanding and unnecessary associations with the fields irrelevant to the subject matter. It is not surprising that when there is the need to name the mechanism opposed to compression, not the word “decompression” is used but the word “expansion”. See, e.g., (Chernov, 1987:156) where the Russian term «экспансия» (expansion) is employed.

Still, it is hardly possible to ouster the term “decompression” from the scientific discourse now, at least, from the Russian scientific discourse. It is too well established to be replaced by any of its synonyms. Accordingly, a definition of “decompression” would help both define the crux of the matter precisely and avoid any misunderstanding among translation scholars. It is noteworthy that decompression (expansion) is assigned the status of an interpreting strategy in many studies. Valentina Donato places it among reformulation strategies (Donato, 2003:107), Konstantina Liontou reckons it among target-text conditioned strategies (Liontou, 2011:41) while Alessandra Riccardi mentions it among production strategies (Riccardi, 2005:765). The terminology differs while the idea behind it remains the same: (we use) decompression while producing the TT based on interpreter’s decision. In this connection I would disagree that the term “strategy” can be applied to decompression. In my opinion, translation strategy is a general program of the translator’s activity worked out on the basis of the general approach to translation in a specific communicative situation (CST) determined by the particular parameters of the situation and the translation goal and, in its turn, determining the character of the translator’s professional behavior (Sdobnikov, 2011:1450). Decompression can hardly be viewed as a general program of the translator’s/interpreter’s activity. It is rather an operation performed by the interpreter to solve a specific task in specific circumstances.

Follow-up questions

1. Describe main features of compression in SI
2. Speak about types of decompression in SI
3. Describe interpretation situation when translator use decompression during SI
6. What are the basic peculiarities of SDR conditioned decompression

References

1. Chernov G. (1987). *Fundamentals of Simultaneous Interpreting*. Moscow, Vysshaya Shkola.
2. Riccardi A. (2005). "On the Evolution of Interpreting Strategies in Simultaneous Interpreting", *Meta: Translator' Journal*, 50, 2, 753-767.
3. Sdobnikov V. (2011). "Translation Strategy Revised: The Communicative-Functional Approach", *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 4/10, 1444-1453
4. Shiryayev A. (1979). *Simultaneous Interpreting*, Moscow, Voenizdat.