

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 2: Interpretation Strategies**

**Lecture 6: Silent pauses and Disfluencies in Simultaneous Interpretation**

**Plan of the lecture**

1. Introduction
2. Pauses and interruptions as elements of linguistic production and in SI
3. Conclusion
4. References

**Aspects of the lecture**

1. Pauses as traces of cognitive activity
2. Pauses in communication
3. Disfluencies

**Goals of the lecture**

1. Explain differences between silent and filled pauses
2. Explaining pauses from cognitive perspective
3. Describe pauses and speech reception
4. Classify pauses and interruptions in SI

**Basic concepts**

Silent pauses, disfluencies, language codification, structural organization, elocution speed and etc.

Pöchhacker (1994: 205) closely examined this subject questioning TT autonomy.

In his view, particular features like the presence of both speaker and interpreter, the same communicative situation, traces and intrusions of the ST in the interpreter's delivery speak in favour of an interdependence between the two texts. An implicit confirmation comes from Riccardi (1999: 161), who states that in SI language and text serve interpretation, having no autonomous purpose.

So far, the ST-TT relationship has been analysed merely with regard to the verbal component of the text, namely through error grids based on the principle of informative equivalence between ST and TT (Barik 1969; Gerver 1974;

#### Pauses as traces of cognitive activity

In the 1950s Goldman-Eisler found that the distribution of pauses in speech was not accidental, and she distinguished breathing pauses from hesitation pauses.

On the basis of her first studies Goldman-Eisler (1958) concluded that the first lexical item after a silent pause is more difficult to predict than any lexical item uttered in a fluent context. Silent pauses of this kind are produced in order to gain time during the process of linguistic production. In a later work by the author (1961) the incidence of pauses is related to the cognitive effort required by the linguistic activity carried out. In this context she demonstrates that the number of pauses diminishes with the progressive automatisisation of the task.

Maclay & Osgood (1959 in Martin 1967) link up with Goldman-Eisler's early studies and propose a first classification of pauses and three types of interruptions, stressing their different functions. Silent pauses, filled pauses and repeats are used to take time for the choices required during language codification, whereas false starts are devices to correct what has been said immediately before. A later study by Tannenbaum, Williams & Hillier (1965) confirmed Goldman-Eisler's (1958) findings about the low predictability of lexical words after a pause, but found that the word before a pause is equally difficult to predict. The explanation therefore lies in the different types of pauses analysed in the two studies. Goldman-Eisler (1958) concentrated on silent pauses, whereas Tannenbaum et al. (1965) examined different types of occurrences and came to the following conclusion: silent and filled pauses are devices to take time before an increase of information, while repeats and false starts are produced to temporise before a correction. Therefore the less predictable word is located after silent and filled pauses but before repeats and false starts. This leads to the conclusion that an integrated perspective considering the type of non-fluency, its duration and localisation has to be applied.

#### **Follow-up questions**

1. Give the classification of non-fluencies
2. Describe types of silent pauses
3. Describe types of interruptions

4. What is the double role of pauses in SI?

**References**

1. Riccardi A. (1997): "Lingua di conferenza", in Nuovi orientamenti negli studi sull'interpretazione. Ed. by L. Gran & A. Riccardi, Padova, CLEUP, pp. 59-74.
2. Riccardi A. (1999): "Interpretazione simultanea: strategie generali e specifiche", in Interpretazione simultanea e consecutiva: problemi teorici e metodologie didattiche. Ed. by C. Falbo, M. Russo & F. Straniero Sergio, Milano, Hoepli, pp. 161-174.
3. Barik H.C. (1969): A study of Simultaneous Interpretation, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, University of North Carolina.