

The "Golden Rules" of Simultaneous

- Remember you are communicating
- Make best possible use of the technical facilities
- Ensure you hear speaker + yourself clearly
- Never attempt to interpret something you have not heard or understood
- Maximise concentration
- Do not be distracted by focusing attention on individual problematic words
- Cultivate split attention, with active analytical listening to the speaker plus critical monitoring of your own output
- Use short, simple sentences
- Be grammatical
- Make sense in every single sentence
- Always finish your sentence

The Technique of Simultaneous Interpreting

- 1) When to start speaking?
- 2) Reformulation
- 3) The Salami technique
- 4) Efficient reformulation
- 5) Simplification
- 6) Generalisation
- 7) Omission + Fast speakers
- 8) Summarisation + Recapitulation
- 9) Explanation
- 10) Anticipation
- 11) What if I make a mistake
- 12) What if the speakers makes a mistake
- 13) Avoiding committing yourself
- 14) Metaphors + Sayings
- 15) Using ' Pat Phrases"
- 16) Intonation, Stress + Pauses
- 17) Numbers
- 18) Retour
- 19) Relay
- 20) Concluding remarks

When to Start Speaking ?

- 1) Say something fairly quickly → reassurance
- 2) Start interpreting "ASAP"
 - ie. When you have enough to finish your sentence
 - =
 - a) Never leave sentence unfinished
 - b) Natural delivery
 - c) Sentences short

Example :

"Britain, despite the ruling of the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, has decided to maintain its position on the treatment of prison inmates"

Step one : Wait !

Otherwise = "Britain ..." Pause / Forget ... Collapse !

So : Active waiting

Until you "get enough to finish" (cf. above)

Step two

Original :

"Britain, despite the ruling of the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, has decided to maintain its position on the treatment of prison inmates"

Interpreter (in his mind):

"The Court of Human Rights has made a ruling."

Once the speaker says "Human Rights", interpreter can start, because he can finish.

Step Three

Interpreter starts, as above :

But by time interpreter has said "Human Rights" speaker will have added " in Strasbourg" .

So interpreter can then add this information.

Step Four

Speaker continues with "has decided to maintain"

So : interpreter can tackle main clause ,

Subject of which is "Britain..."

Original

"Britain, despite the ruling of the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, has decided to maintain its position on the treatment of prison inmates"

Interpreter

"The Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg has made a ruling. Despite this, Britain has decided to maintain... etc

N.B. :

Starting with "enough to finish sentence" :

⇒ never start with words or phrases like "despite" or "given that" or "thanks to " etc...

We must know where we are going !

What Distance to Keep from Speaker ?

Three "rules"

- a) Continue as you started
i.e. always be able to finish sentences you start
- b) Be flexible
Speed up/ slow down, depending on content /style/rhythm of speaker
- c) End as close to speaker as possible
'Sense' the end approaching

N. B. :

"Starting when you can finish"
+
Keeping distance from speaker
=
Re-wording the speaker's input

⇒ Reformulation

→ The Key Technique

cf. above example

Reformulation

1) A sign interpreter is doing job properly

"Word-for-word" translation ("lexical equivalence")
= intellectual laziness

If interpreter analyses + understands before re-expressing, then he/she must, by definition, use reformulation.

2) Makes "word-for-word" translation impossible

What's wrong with "word-for-word"?

-Special danger in simultaneous

{ speaker's words still ringing in our ears as we speak! }

i) We start sentences we cannot finish

ii) We produce 'calque'

= speaking the source language, using words in target language

eg. "propositions in the ambit of the political orientations established by the conference at the level of ministers"

Instead of "proposals based on guidelines from the ministerial conference"

So beware : "automatic pilot"

Can mean communication breakdown

i + ii = iii) We fail in communication task

"Stylistic" reformulation important :

Requires : Mastery of target language

Rationale : Cumulative impact of simultaneous
Poor expression = widening communication gap

Regardless of source language

Target language output must be consistently authentic
Eg. Some languages use passive a lot, others not, some use
verbs where others use nouns, etc...

iv) Stylistic reformulation (as opposed to "word-for-word")

a) Convincing, easy to listen to, maximises comfort (of
audience) + communication

b) Makes life easier for interpreters

Reformulation : How to do it ? !

1) Should be a matter of course

if we "only start when we have enough time to finish ! "

2) Don't rush to follow speaker's structure/syntax

even-if seems "unproblematic"

- ie. - his syntax allows you to start + finish sentences
- no lexical/conceptual difficulties

Why ? because "things can change"

- Interpreter must cultivate autonomy
 - by starting sentence differently, even if not strictly necessary

ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR STUDENT PRACTICE
(not an end in itself for professional interpreters).

3) It becomes second nature

If you can use target language in rich and varied way

= listen to and read : current affairs
 popular technical publications
 well written general literature
 (history, novels, etc...)

Aim = broaden vocabulary
 Improve style

N. B. : Without mastery of target language reformulation capacity is limited.

The "Salami Technique"

= chopping up long sentences (+ linking appropriately)

eg. " Japan, in the light of the ruling of the international panel, and following to non-payment of compensation by American steel-exporters, which the US authorities have not forced them to pay, despite their legal obligations and the assurances they have given, has decided to act unilaterally, which they are perfectly entitled to do in the case of non-compliance with an international panel ruling - and that is the case here - by imposing punitive duties on the import of the certain flat products, although long ones should remain unaffected, at least for the immediate future. "

! ! !

= 1 long sentence

What to do ? → **Chop it up !**

So : = When to start speaking ?

Not with "Japan" :

Wait !

Start a sentence you can finish!

eg. : "The international panel has made its ruling"
+ continue with short sentences

eg. :

1. The international panel has made its ruling.
2. Compensation has not been paid by the US steel exporters.
3. The US authorities have not obliged them to pay the compensation, despite legal obligations and assurances given.
4. So, Japan, has decided to act unilaterally.
5. They are within their rights, since the panel ruling has not been respected.
6. They will impose (punitive) duties on imports of some flat products.
7. Long products should not be immediately affected.

= 7 sentences out of one !

- 5 have only one clause
- The other 2 are not too long or complicated.
- Links have been streamlined/simplified.
- The message has been made more 'digestible'

Reformulation = Efficient speech

Cf. "streamlining" in salami example

Pressure = need to create 'space' (i.e. time)
"Every second counts"

So : constantly using techniques for 'keeping up'.

Our aim = be succinct !

{Into En OK. Into Chinese ?}

How ? (some examples)

1) Back referencing

eg. "on the Belgian question concerning + lengthy sentence"
becomes "on the Belgian question"

{Be aware of 'gaps' or deliberate repetition}

"the International Trade Tribunal"
becomes "the Tribunal"

Principle : shared cognitive knowledge
Within meeting : see above
Or more general : eg

↓

"The US President's speech in Montreal on the future
of Pan-American relations."

Becomes :

"The (US President's) Montreal speech."

References to documents can also be abbreviated.

2) Seek economy of expression everywhere

a) Drop words like 'really' or 'actually'
(keep them for really slow speakers)

b) Drop "if you see what I mean" etc..

3) Avoid unnecessary repetition

eg. "This proposal needs to be carefully studied, examined and analysed"

Simplify!

(unless eg. Chinese style requires it ?) ↑

cf. "Innovating with a new initiative"

Simplify !

4) Choose shortest forms of expression in target language

eg. : "As far as China's response is concerned "
becomes "On China's response"

cf. " we must do this in co-operation with one another"
= " we must act together"

Always have an eye for the shortcut! (to save time)

eg. "the co-ordination meeting to exchange our impressions following the Beijing Conference"

= " the debriefing on Beijing"

5) "No frills" interpretation

ie. Down with verbosity!

eg. "You will have the opportunity of putting direct oral questions to the Minister with a view to his informing you of the situation currently prevailing in the negotiations."

= "You will be able to ask the Minister questions on the state of the negotiations."