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Strategies for simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages

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Eqikkaaneq

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Abstrakt

I Grønland bruges der 3 forskellige sprog, nemlig grønlandsk, dansk og engelsk, og når man taler om grammatik har de forskellige korrekte sætningsopbygninger. På grønlandsk er det subjekt først, objekt næst og verbum til sidst, men rækkefølgen både på dansk og engelsk er subjekt, verbum og objekt som den sidste. Det er på grund af forskellen, at hvilke tolkestrategier der bruges af tolke der er tema i dette projekt. I undersøgelsen kan man kigge nærmere på hvilke simultant tolkningsstrategier der findes og undersøgelser af andre har været inkluderet i opgaven for at se et andet perspektiv. For at finde frem til hvilke simultant tolkningsstrategier der er mest brugt, har jeg sendt spørgsmålene til tolke for at have resultater i min analyse.

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Introduction

“One of the most striking and challenging phenomena in simultaneous interpreting is the interpreters’ persistent perception that it is fundamentally ‘difficult’. (...) Moreover, errors and omissions are found not only in the students’ interpreting exercises, but also in the work of seasoned professionals.” (Gile, 1995, p. 157)

Simultaneous interpretation is a challenge, where both students and professionals might come across an issue while working. Even when the reasons could be different from interpreter to interpreter, it is agreed that simultaneous interpretation is mentally demanding and can be difficult from time to time. When simultaneous interpretation and word order difference comes into play, certain strategies must have been favoured and I intent to find out which ones are the preferred strategies.

I believe most of the interpreters will likely have same strategy, on how to gain more knowledge at the very beginning of their profession. However, I think that the interpreters might have developed or at least find a strategy based on personal preference.

Statement of intent

I want to discover what strategies are being used for simultaneous interpreting between SOV and SVO languages. I will find answers as to what interpreters do, before and during their interpretation, perhaps even what they do afterwards, and see if they do specific actions to help themselves. Find out what advice they can give to new beginners, for simultaneous interpreting. I will compare strategies from theories for simultaneous interpreting, and the answers I will be getting from interpreters, and of course compare the answers from the interpreters themselves. Do interpreters follow the theory to the letter for simultaneous interpreting? Or have they adjusted the strategies and have found their own style of doing the simultaneous interpretation between SOV and SVO languages?

Method

The research method I will be using is qualitative. My plan is sending open ended questions to interpreters who have SOV word order as their first language, or to interpreters who have experiences in simultaneous interpreting between SOV and SVO languages. My goals are finding interpreters from Greenland and from another country. The qualitative research method will give me a chance to get more in-dept answers from interpreters, where they have a chance to write their experiences, opinions, and knowledge. It will not give me a large amount of data to research, but on the other hand I will be targeting a specific kind of branch of profession, and I need detailed answers for my project. There is a risk of getting short answers or I might send the questions to a translator by mistake, or even to an interpreter that does not have a profession in simultaneous interpretation, but that is a risk I am willing to take.

Which Theories & research are going to be mentioned?

As a start, I will introduce what word order is. Next, the difference between consecutive and simultaneous interpretation and in this section, there will be Danish quotations. For the third, I will introduce the interpreting strategies and application of strategies, I have also decided to include research called "*Interpreting into an SOV Language: Memory and the Position of the*

Verb.” while it is not completely the same as my research, it does point to a strategy in simultaneous interpretation, even when it is not explicitly stated. And lastly, what the clients of simultaneous interpretation, thinks that are important points when interpreting, and of course, my own questions and the answers that I have gotten from interpreters.

What is a word order?

“Word order is a linguistic concept that refers to how syntactic elements are arranged in a sentence in different languages. Specifically, it deals with the relative position of the three prominent syntactic roles in a sentence: subject (S), verb (V), and object (O). The three syntactic roles can be ordered in six different arrangements: *SVO*, *SOV*, *VSO*, *VOS*, *OVS*, *OSV*.” (Rejwan & Caciularu, 2021, p. 162)

As stated above, word order is how subject, object and verb (SOV) are placed in certain languages. There are many arrangements as there are numerous languages on this earth, however I will be more focused on SOV and SVO, since those are the main arrangements of word order that is being used in Greenland by interpreters and the population.

“The subject precedes the object if both are present, so the standard word order in Greenlandic sentences is SOV; that is subject object verb” (Lybech, 2022, p. 127) see also appendix 1, p. 23 for more.

Greenlandic language has the word order of SOV, where if one were to be grammatically correct, the rule of the thumb is, a verb will be last in a sentence. Even when I have stated that I want to contact interpreters from other countries who also has the same word order, I have decided to focus on the word order in Greenlandic. The reason for this decision is essentially, they have the same structure, and the main research is to see how interpreters use strategies while working.

“In general, the word order of Danish is the same as English: Subject + Verb + Object.” (Dr. Wagner & Anders, 1997 - 2023) see also appendix 2, p. 24 for more.

Both Danish and English have the same word order (SVO), in this case a verb is placed in the middle whereas in Greenlandic the verb is placed last. This shows that one can not just simply simultaneous interpret word for word when there is a difference in word order, this might indicate that certain strategies could be preferred by simultaneous interpreters.

Consecutive versus simultaneous interpretation

We will now look at the difference between consecutive and simultaneous interpretation, here are informative and straight to the point quotations in Danish.

“Ved **konsekutiv tolkning** foregår tolkningen »efterfølgende«, dvs. at tolken først hører den tekst, der skal tolkes, hvorefter han gengiver indholdet af den på målsproget.” (Baaring, 2001, p. 16)

The quote above is about how consecutive interpretation is, here it is explained that the interpreter will first listen to few sentences and then say the words in the target language. The scenario is often a dialogue or questions and answers between two people, with an interpreter ideally in the middle between two people, as a middle ground for two different languages.

“I konsekutiv tolkning kan tolken dog uden besvær rette fejl, idet han selv bestemmer, hvordan han vil disponere sin gengivelse.” (Baaring, 2001, p. 20)

Another interesting statement above is that in consecutive interpretation, the interpreter has a chance to clear a mistake or rephrase a sentence without difficulty. The interpreter also has a chance to ask the speaker to repeat themselves if needed and therefore, have more time to rephrase a sentence while interpreting.

“Ved **simultantolkning** foregår tolkningen samtidig med at udgangsteksten høres (altså simultant). Tolken påbegynder sin gengivelse umiddelbart efter, at taleren har påbegyndt sin tale. Talen holdes uden pauser, og tolken følger i sin gengivelse taleren med nogle få sekunders afstand.” (Baaring, 2001, p. 16)

In simultaneous interpretation, once the speaker starts the interpreter must start as well, with only few seconds behind, with no pause. The interpreter will work until the person who speaks is finished. An example could be a conference, in this scenario the interpreter must translate the spoken language into a target language, the real time interpreting could take few minutes or even an hour.

“Når der benyttes simultantolkning, holdes talen uden pauser til tolkningen, og tolken har ingen mulighed for at få taleren til at standse op, så der kan blive tid til at rette fejl.” (Baaring, 2001, p. 20)

One of the main differences between consecutive and simultaneous interpretation is, there is no chance to rephrase or correct a mistake in simultaneous interpretation. The reason is, the interpreter must always be on standby for the next word or sentence, throughout the entire event. That is in contrast to consecutive interpretation, where the interpreter might be able to ask the speaker to repeat a sentence if needed.

Simultaneous interpreting strategies

“The most common categorization distinguishes between comprehension, production, overall and emergency strategies.” (Riccardi, 2005, p. 765)

Comprehension strategy includes anticipation of words, in this it is required that the interpreter has a good knowledge on both language and the subject to work. There is also selection of which information to interpret, here the interpreter might choose the most crucial information and do not include small details that might not be important. Waiting is another strategy under comprehension, in this case the interpreter will wait and listen for more information before interpreting.

Production strategy, here the interpreter will summarize information and filter the details and therefore, avoid possible repetitions. Under this strategy, there is also elaboration, where the interpreter might add something to make the delivery of the interpretation more understandable or logical. Prosody is also in this strategy where patterns, pauses and intonation comes into play in interpreting strategy.

Emergency strategy is where the interpreter resorts to only interpret strictly necessary information. Here the interpreter will exclude expressions, repetitions or finer details that are unimportant to include. A parallel reformulation is also mentioned, it is when the interpreter starts to include elements that were not in the original source language, and that is to avoid long pauses or to make up for not understanding the speech, and to avoid not finishing the sentences.

In overall strategy there is *Décalage*, meaning a gap, this is where the interpreter put more work into listening and processing, thus creating a delay in interpreting. Monitoring is also under overall strategy, here the interpreter monitors the anticipated delivery of speech, and their performance. The interpreter might correct themselves if they have made an error, or simply move on if they think it might create a confusion and therefore not worth the effort. To

see more of the categories, see the figure of appendix 3, p. 25 which was taken from Kotait's piece, based on Riccardi's categorization.

Research by others

In research titled "*Conceptual Processing in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Cognitive Model of Mental Operations in the Interpretation of Three Speeches by President El-Sisi*", strategies were discussed along with mental operation when an interpreter works.

"The discussion also describes the processing strategies and tactics used by the interpreter to cope with the problem triggers and causes of cognitive saturation. (...) The analysis also shows that certain processing strategies are linked to certain types of mental operations. For instance, cognitive-overload operations are noticed to be connected to décalage and stalling, as well as to transcoding and going word-for word, depending on the interpreter's method of choice. Also, operations using prior knowledge, whether extra-linguistic, context or discourse, are noticed to be connected with tactics such as addition and expansion, inferencing missing information, or anticipation." (Kotait, 2019, pp. 489-490)

The interpreters use strategies to counter problems or challenges they face in certain scenarios. As it can be seen above, the strategies used by interpreters who might become overloaded with information, are of overall strategy or going word for word tactic. And when the interpreter uses their knowledge and anticipation, in terms of language or subject, the comprehension strategy will most likely be their choice, or the production strategy where they add more information to make the interpretation more understandable to the audience. There is no answer, as to only one specific strategy is the preferred choice in the research above. This could be interpreted as, how the interpreter will attempt to overcome challenges in general, has something do to with how they resort to a certain strategy when they simultaneous interpret.

There has been another research titled "*Interpreting into an SOV Language: Memory and the Position of the Verb.*", while it is not quite same as my research, they have hypothesized that interpreters, will try to deliver the verb earlier than original source when they interpret from SVO to SOV language.

"In an SOV language, the verb is placed at the end of the clause structure. In simultaneous interpreting from an SVO language into an SOV language, the verb therefore has to be stored

in memory. The longer the middle field, the more effort is required to keep the verb stored. Given the additional cognitive load in interpreting, we hypothesized that interpreters would generally try to deliver the verb sooner than original speakers, keeping the middle field short and the memory effort as low as possible. Corpus data from EPICG and a collection of German transcriptions made specifically for this study supported this hypothesis for the two target languages involved (German and Dutch from French source speeches).” (Collard, Defrancq, & Przybyl, 2023)

Their hypothesis was proven to be true or at least supported by the results of the study. This indicates that certain simultaneous interpreting strategy or strategies must have been favoured by interpreters. In this case, this points to excluding details in favour of delivering the more crucial information to the listeners. It could mean that the interpreters used production strategy, here there will be summarization of information and excluding of details. It could also be emergency strategy, where only strictly necessary information is interpreted to avoid repetition and without including finer details, in effort to keep the memory overload as low as possible. In my research, it will be found out which strategies are being used by interpreters who work as simultaneous interpreters as their profession.

“Understanding the differences in the performance between novice and professional interpreters is of crucial importance to our study, since there are significant differences between these two groups in the application of conscious strategies, such as those which are analysed in our study (omissions, additions, and self-corrections).” (Ziobro-Strzepak, 2019, p. 153)

According to the quote above, there is a clear difference between new beginners and experienced interpreters when they choose a strategy. As stated, the strategies were of adding more information or words, excluding certain details and self correcting while interpreting. These points were another indication to two strategies, which are production and emergency strategy, in these strategies there is also adding more words while excluding details as well.

“According to numerous surveys conducted by Pöchhacker (2002), Shlesinger (1994), Niska (1999), and Kalina (2005), ‘completeness’ of interpretation is not the most important factor for the users of interpreting services. Surveys indicate that ‘essential information’ is enough and frequently a ‘pleasant voice’ compensates for certain flaws in the performance. This is in contradiction to the assumptions of cognitive models which assume striving for non-omission.” (Ziobro-Strzepak, 2019, p. 154)

After all of these about facts, research, and theories of strategies in simultaneous interpretation, the clients of interpreters do not mind if the words, or sentences are not interpreted exactly as the source language. They believe that some mistakes are fine if the main information is delivered. Another thing that was pointed out was, that a pleasant voice could compensate flaws made by the interpreter. Based on the quote, this could mean that comprehension strategy could be the preferred strategy by listeners, in this strategy there is a use of knowledge, a little delay in interpreting caused by effort to listen more and selection of which information to deliver. Overall strategy could also be it, here the efforts are put into listening, anticipation of delivery of speech and their performance, the interpreter might simply move on if there is a mistake, to avoid creating a confusion to the listeners.

Questions and Answers

Out of twenty interpreters which I had sent questions to, I have received five, four of these answers are detailed. I have made eight questions, and I have decided to collect the answers as a list under each question, that means for one question, there are five answers under it with a characterization to differentiate the answers by interpreters with a selected alphabet. To see the questions with the answers, please see appendix 4, from page 26 to 31.

Backgrounds of interpreters

The interpreters who contributed to this project with their experience, knowledge, and their opinion, have had an education in a university, had experience in consecutive, translation, and simultaneous interpretation. They are highly educated, and experienced interpreters in their own profession. Although most of them have learned simultaneous interpretation outside of their education, these claims can be seen on the quotations underneath.

“The training I received was focused on dialogue interpreting while I have almost exclusively performed simultaneous interpretation in my professional enterprise. In terms of simultaneous interpreting, I am self-taught having learnt on the job.”. Appendix 4, p. 26 by a.

“The interpretations are in dialogue. That means, I have to listen to what the doctor/patient are saying and understand it, before I interpret it. Is not simultaneously. I have that job for

almost 2 years before I started at the university under translation and interpretation.”.

Appendix 4, p. 26 by d.

Preparations before interpreting

Before simultaneous interpretation between SOV and SVO, the preparations mentioned by the interpreters were reading the materials sent by the organizers or clients, studying the terms or the subject and taking notes seems to be the preferred method of preparation.

“I always have a dialog with whoever requested interpreting to get as much as information as I can get about the subject I am about to interpret. I make sure to get materials e.g. power points, speech etc. Which helps me get the idea of what the speaker will say during the interpreting. I do not translate the materials since it will take too much of my time, I prepare myself mentally.”. Appendix 4, p. 26 by e.

However, there are times where the interpreters do not have a chance to prepare themselves. The reason for that is, sometimes they are required to simultaneous interpret without any materials or when they are informed just few minutes before the start, without prior knowledge that they are the person who is going to work.

“But sometimes, unfortunately, we don’t have the time to prepare us. We don’t get the materials or we just find out, that we are going to a task 5 min. before start. So, you have to be willing to adapt yourself instantly.”. Appendix 4, p. 26 by d.

That means as an interpreter, you also have to be able to adapt to unexpected situations in everyday life, and remain calm and professional, if one is to stay as a simultaneous interpreter.

During the simultaneous interpretation

During the simultaneous interpretation, three out of five interpreters mentioned that having something on hand helps. Such as writing down names and numbers, sometimes simply holding something to fidget with might help to concentrate.

“In the beginning, I always had a piece or a block of paper to scribble names, numbers, abbreviations and so forth on, but as I have gained experience I rely less on writing information down.”. Appendix 4, p. 27 by a.

“I listen, and you have to rule out any outside noise and really concentrate on what the person are saying while you transform it the target language. I love holding a pen, it gives me comfort, but its also practical, for taking notes of the numbers or names ect.”. Appendix 4, p. 27 by d.

Some of the interpreters walk around to help with focus, and observe the person who is speaking, to really match and deliver their way of speaking to the audience. However, there are also situations where the interpreter must be in a same room, without materials to help the interpreter e.g. a separate room for the interpreters mentioned as translation box or booth that is soundproof with headset and microphone. In that case, interpreters had to get closer to the speaker to hear better and possibly avoid mishearing words.

“Sometimes when not being in a booth, I need to get closer to the person I am interpreting to hear better,”. Appendix 4, p. 27 by b.

“I walk around or have anything to fidget which helps me focus, I also keep an eye on the speaker’s behaviour and that is to match their way of speaking.”. Appendix 4, p. 27 by e.

Immersing even with a difficulty

There must have been days, where interpreters are having a difficulty with immersing themselves, in their work as a simultaneous interpreter. Three of the interpreters have answered the question differently.

“Immersion is more often broken trying to interpret a speaker’s/presenter’s poorly put together sentences, but even so you do as well as you are able.”. Appendix 4, p. 28 by a.

“But One of the important lessons I have learned is that you cannot translate everything and at some point something will be lost, and if you are having trouble interpreting or cannot find the right term, just skip it and start fresh.”. Appendix 4, p. 28 by b.

“You have to push it through. And set your emotions aside. You have to keep going, even if you don’t understand what the person are saying. Rule out the noise, your own thoughts, trying to give a service. You have to give it your best.”. Appendix 4, p. 28 by d.

As mentioned above by one of the interpreters, the poorly put sentences could break immersion in simultaneous interpreting. As an interpreter, when facing difficulties in interpreting it is better to skip certain terms you can not immediately interpret and start fresh. And lastly you must put emotions aside and focus on work, by pushing it through and doing the best you can at the situation.

With or without a partner?

Most of the interpreters that I have gotten answers from, prefer to have a partner if the simultaneous interpretation last longer than one hour. For some, it depends on what the subject is or how many people are going to be participating in one session.

“It depends on how long the interpreting is and what the subject is. I prefer to do it alone if the interpreting lasts less than 1 or 2 hours, but if it lasts longer then I prefer to have a partner.”. Appendix 4, p. 28 by e.

“The quality of output I deliver is significantly reduced after about 50 minutes when interpreting simultaneously. I can sustain a high quality of output for about 30 minutes, depending on subject matter. So for interpreting sessions lasting over an hour, I have a strong preference for working with a partner. Having a partner is also beneficial when there is a word or some specific terminology that you are blanking.”. Appendix 4, p. 28 by a.

One of the advantages in having a partner in a simultaneous interpretation is, if you are unsure about a term or subject, they might be able to aid you by sharing their knowledge with you. In contrast to interpreting alone, there is no one to turn to if you are confused or need a little help, in a situation where you do not know certain words yet.

On improving skills

I have asked the interpreters how they have honed their skills in simultaneous interpreting between SOV and SVO. One of the interpreters mentioned to play and practice with the verb to become better.

“Over the years of interpreting, I would say, for improving your skills in simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages, play and practice with the verb. As everyone

says languages are very flexible. (...) Specifically for the verb in my opinion, because you can place the verb by playing with sentences like and have the same meaning:

“regarding the ball and passing ball on to others, it is very important to do so”

“it is very important to pass the ball to others”

or

“Jacob punched Peter”

“Peter got punched by Jacob”

There are many many ways to say the same thing.”. Appendix 4, p. 29 by b.

Having a curiosity is greatly valued in case of improving skills, this includes taking notes of terms, reading, or listening to news or various subjects to increase your knowledge. However not everything is about just learning words, there is also of controlling feelings when interpreting and having patience with oneself.

“Having more patience with my self. And ALWAYS keeping the curiosity on everything. Always, taking notes of terms. Reading or listening to the news, watching documentary. Being able to adapt yourself to circumstances”. Appendix 4, p. 29 by d.

“I have learnt that it is okay to wait a few words to start speaking just as long as I get the point and interpret the message correct. (...) My skills improved when I realized that sentence structures do not mean as much as in translating text under simultaneous interpreting.”. Appendix 4, p. 29 by e.

As quoted above if you wait few seconds, to know the main point of the sentence, it is okay to be a little behind when interpreting if you get the main point delivered. It is also mentioned, that when you do not focus too much on the sentence structure in certain situations, the way you interpret may flow better and therefore improve your skills along the way.

“The biggest hurdle for beginners is usually not knowing or being unfamiliar with terminology and abbreviations. When I just started I was lucky to have experienced partners who were able to take over at any time when I became overwhelmed or lost. And who were willing and able to talk with me about the issues that I was experiencing. I also found that over-preparing helped me a lot in the beginning.”. Appendix 4, p. 29 by a.

Independent improvements are not the only way to go, it is also okay to rely on the more experienced interpreters. Here the professional interpreters might share their knowledge and help beginners where they are able. It is also worth to note that to improve, one must use available resources, either through self study or reach out to interpreters who has been in the profession for years. That way, there is learning through study and practical knowledge shared by other simultaneous interpreters.

Advice to the beginners

Four out of five interpreters recommend preparing, that includes researching the subject, reading the materials that were supplied by the person who wants a service of interpretation, and speaking with the person who wants interpreting.

“Prepare thoroughly, but at the same time do not be dispirited if it seems like an uphill battle at the start. Simultaneous interpreting is a very specific and resource demanding skill.”.

Appendix 4, p. 30 by a.

“Be confident, practice, read what you are interpreting ahead of time.”. Appendix 4, p. 30 by c.

“Give yourself the best terms for yourself. Preparations; reading the materials, taking notes. Being easy on yourself. Be aware of your responsibilities; what are the expectation for you as an interpreter? And how can you meet the expectations. And be patient. A good interpreter are always 3-4 words behind. Always find the easiest way to interpret the source language. Find synonyms, so it comes easy while you are interpreting.”. Appendix 4, p. 30 by d.

“Get as much as information about the subject, have a dialog with the person who requested interpreting, that way you’ll have a feeling how their way of speaking is, which will help you mentally prepare before you start. (...) You will always be a few sentences behind because of the sentence structures. Be confident. Talk how you would normally talk, don’t think about all the rules. The theoretical part and the practical part are very different in real life.”.

Appendix 4, p. 30 by e.

“It’s okay to skip sentences when having trouble if they just going to disturb the upcoming and possibly more important sentences to interpret. Relax and focus on the overall messages and less on the specific stuff.”. Appendix 4, p. 30 by b.

Although there are similarities in their advice, there are also differences. Such as one of the interpreters wrote, to remember the expectations of an interpreter, the responsibilities and think on how to meet those expectations. While another said not to think about the rules, because theoretical and the practical parts are very different in doing the interpretation. It was also said that it is okay to skip sentences if, it is going to disturb the flow of interpretation. To relax and put more focus into the main and the more important part of the message, rather than focus on the details that might not be as important.

How much is remembered?

Most of the interpreters do not remember the details in simultaneous interpreting, there is not much time to digress the information before interpreting it. Even as an interpreter, when you concentrate on listening and try to accurately translate the sentences, for most, details disappear along with the words that are being said aloud by the interpreters themselves.

“I remember very little. Only snippets. In the ear, out the mouth, and forgotten.”. Appendix 4, p. 31 by a.

“I interpret all the details under interpreting, but forget everything right after I finish. Everything goes so fast that I don’t get to process what was being said.”. Appendix 4, p. 31 by e.

“I remember with my body. So, I won’t remember what day it was, but I’ll remember what the subject it was, because it takes a lot of preparation to do a task. But the times where I go to a task 5 min. before its starting, I digest the information I just got, right after the task is over. So I’ll often be more froggy after that kind of task.”. Appendix 4, p. 31 by d.

However, it is possible to remember the subject due to preparation before doing the interpretation. But during and after the simultaneous interpretation, the details are more often than not forgotten.

Comparison

I will now compare the strategies, theories and research made by others with the answers that I have received. I will also compare the answers from the interpreters, for even when they

have similar or even overall give the same message within their answers, they each have a different insight.

Starting with strategies, after reading the answers by the interpreters, two of the strategies stand out the most. One is comprehension strategy, here the knowledge of subject and language stood out, along with interpreting the most crucial information to the listeners. Relating to this as we saw before from the answers, the subject of doing research, reading the materials, and learning the terminology are one of the words that surfaced a lot in their answers. This indicates that one of the preferred strategies is comprehension, not only did this requires to have some knowledge, but also using the tactic of selecting the more important parts of the sentence to interpret and forego the expressions, or small details that will not impact the message if they are left out. Another I would like to mention is overall strategy, in this you must focus more on listening, and processing the information being spoken by the speaker thus creating a delay. What is included in this strategy is omission of words, this tactic is more to avoid possible confusion, and that is a conscious decision made by the interpreter. This is because it might interrupt the flow of simultaneous interpretation and therefore, it is not worth it to include every word in interpretation. These that were within the overall strategy were also stated by some of the interpreters. Because of these statements and answers, it is safe to say that in simultaneous interpretation between SOV and SVO, the comprehension and overall strategies are being used more than the other two strategies. The ones that did not fit in with the answers by the interpreters are, production and emergency strategy, while production strategy might have similarities with others, because of the tactic of summarizing the information in interpreting, there is also elaboration and pattern that comes into play. In emergency strategy, what is being interpreted are the only necessary information, however there is also adding words that are not in the source language, this is more to avoid long pauses and to make up with not knowing or understanding the message.

In the research of “*Conceptual Processing in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Cognitive Model of Mental Operations in the Interpretation of Three Speeches by President El-Sisi*”, it was said that when interpreters are in cognitive-overload situations, they might turn to tactics such as *décalage*. That is actually included in overall strategy, which is again, one of the more popular strategies according to the answers. And when interpreters use their prior knowledge there is a high chance of using tactics such as anticipation or use reasoning even with missing information.

In “*Interpreting into an SOV Language: Memory and the Position of the Verb.*”, it was stated that the verb must be stored in memory, essentially the verb is important in simultaneous interpreting. Even if there was an indication that the strategies used were production and emergency strategies, it was not directly stated. However, it was recommended by one of the interpreters to practise and play with the verb, to improve one’s skills in simultaneous interpretation. This requires listening, processing information and decision making of how to impart the message spoken by the speaker, with more or less details. This is another point to overall strategy or even comprehension strategy since it requires to use knowledge of language and subject to deliver information and possible exclude details that are not important.

There is also research for difference in strategy between novice and professional interpreters, tactics mention was of self-corrections, omissions, and additions. In this case, beginners might not interpret certain word because they have not gotten used to specific terminologies yet, while the professionals might decide to not include certain words because they deem them insignificant. It is also here where having a partner with an experienced interpreter can be advantage, as said by some of the interpreters, they can be there to help with terminologies, guide or even take over if the session become too intense for a beginner.

In case of clients of simultaneous interpreters, which was research done by others. It was found out that certain flaws made by interpreter were fine, as long as the essential information was delivered and if the interpreter has a pleasant voice. These results were consistent with answers given by the interpreters in relating to giving some advice to beginners. The main points were to relax, being confident, talking like you normally talk and focus on delivering the overall messages of the information.

While there are similarities in the answers of interpreters, there are also differences. For example, in the preparation part, it is largely agreed to research the subject, read the materials that were supplied by the person who wants an interpretation, and taking notes of terms is a must. There are also those who have a dialogue with the upcoming speaker, and those who wants to understand the general information of the subject, since it is not always the case that the speakers follow their materials to the letter.

There are also different answers the interpreters have given, when dealing with a challenge or difficulty while simultaneously interpreting. One had said that poorly put together sentences might interrupt the immersion in interpreting, and when that happens, they try to do well as

Strategies for simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages

much as they can. Another would close their eyes and sort of wonder in their mind and try to hear better. One of the interpreters has stated that they would put the emotions aside, keep going even when there is a difficulty in understanding the speaker, rule out the background noise and try to give the best service in that kind of situation.

One of the more contrast answers by the interpreters when asked of what advice they would like to impart to beginners were, that one of them stated to be aware of responsibilities as an interpreter, the expectations and how to think on how to meet those expectations. However, another interpreter's two pieces of advice were not to think too much on the rules, and that theoretical and practical parts are much more different in real life situations. They might have answered with a different meaning behind their statements, but it was one of the more difference of opinions given by interpreters.

Conclusion

After looking at the research by others, strategies for simultaneous interpretation and the answers by the interpreters, the strategies that are most popular for simultaneous interpreting between SOV and SVO are comprehension and overall strategy.

While there has been no sentence or words such as “I use comprehension strategy when I simultaneous interpret between SOV and SVO languages”, but when you do look at the answers and compare them to interpreting strategies, you start to see words that kept being repeated that are within those two strategies. Words such as reading materials, taking notes, studying terminology and subjects, basically get as much as information you can get, equals knowledge in language and subjects. Those are one of the main cores of the comprehension strategy.

There are also words being repeated like listening, focusing on the person who is speaking, skipping unfamiliar words or small details, waiting a little before starting to interpret, relaxing and focusing on the overall message. Those fit into the overall strategy.

Some have given advice to remember the responsibilities of interpreter, what is expected and to be patient. While some do not put focus on the difference of word order and advised not to think about theory and rules. This shows while there is an agreement on how to prepare and how new beginners can become better, there are also difference in their mindset when they simultaneous interpret. Therefore, I can now say that there is no right answer for the number One strategy, for simultaneous interpretation between SOV and SVO. Because just like any other ordinary people, interpreters are not machines that can just choose a strategy and stick with it for the rest of their life, or even the session of interpretation. Interpreters need to be adaptable for the challenges they face, and that is why some interpreters can jump from strategy to strategy to adjust and improve upon their skills.

The last thing I would like to mention, is that my hypothesis was correct, in a way. The interpreters more or less gave the same message in their answers, for their very first strategy in the beginning of their profession and on how to become better as a simultaneous interpreter. That is through being curious, studying terminology and subjects or reading materials given by the person who wants an interpreter. However, they each have their preference on how they deal with challenges they face in simultaneous interpretation.

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Appendix

1) (Lybech, 2022) Greenlandic word order SOV

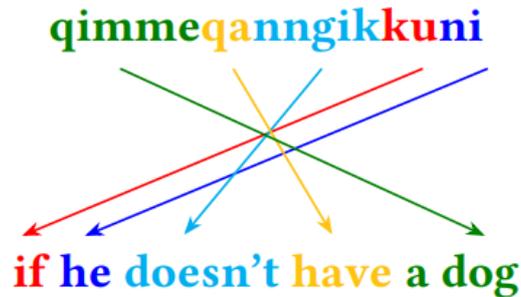


Figure 1.1: A Greenlandic word and the corresponding English sentence. Each coloured segment in the Greenlandic word is a morpheme, that corresponds to a word in the English sentence, as indicated by the arrows and matching colours. As you can see, the *order* of morphemes within a Greenlandic word is (almost) the exact opposite of the word order in English.

which is split in the following way:

inuusutto	o	qqis	su	usaa	laa	rallar	la	nga
young	is	again	one who	act like	a bit	for a while	let	me

If you think the ‘translation’ of the individual bits does not quite make sense, then try reading it in reversed order; that is, from right to left. The word means something like: “*Let me just for a while behave like I’m young again*” – a word I found on a friend’s Facebook page, so this is an actual word and not just a contrived example – and *within* a Greenlandic word, the order of these ‘building blocks’ is almost exactly the reverse of the word order in the corresponding English sentence.

2) (Dr. Wagner & Anders, 1997 - 2023) Danish and English word order SVO

In general, the word order of Danish is the same as English: Subject + Verb + Object. However, the word order is slightly different from English when something other than the subject of the verb begins the sentence. In declarative sentences, the main verb is always in the second position (but not necessarily the second word!). For example, if a sentence begins with an adverb or an object, the verb will be the second element in the sentence, and the subject will come after the verb. Then any other forms of verbs (such as participles or infinitives) will come after the subject.

<i>Adverb or Object</i>	<i>Main Verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>(Participle / Infinitive)</i>	<i>Translation</i>
I morgen	tager	jeg	til Danmark	I'm going to Denmark tomorrow.
I butikken	køber	jeg	brød	I buy bread in the store.

In sentences that begin with a subordinate clause, the second (independent) clause will have inversion of the verb and subject. The subordinate clause is the first element in the sentence, so the verb must be second, and the subject is third.

<i>Subordinate Clause</i>	<i>Main Verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Rest of Sentence</i>	<i>Translation</i>
Da jeg var ung	boede	jeg	i Danmark.	When I was young, I lived in Denmark.
Nu hvor hun er kommet	kan	vi	begynde	Now that she's arrived we can begin.

3) (Kotait, 2019) Interpreting strategies

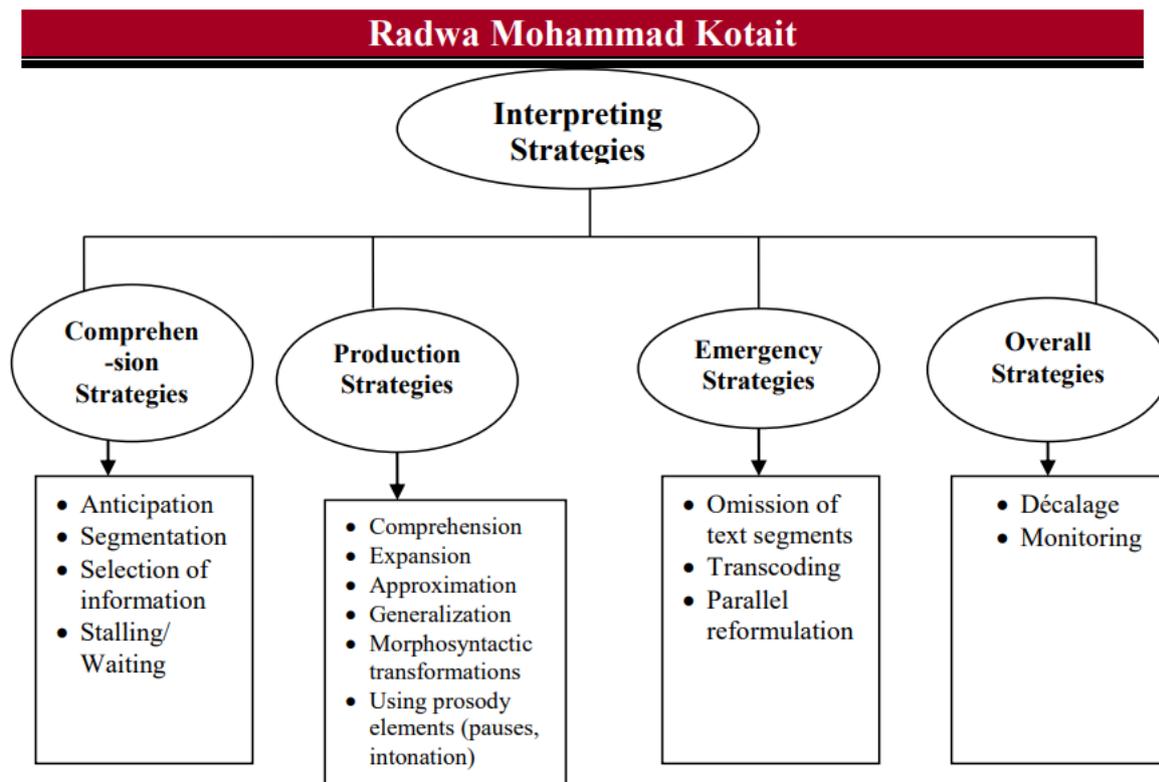


Figure 4. Summary of Riccardi's (2005) categorization of interpreting strategies

4) Questions to interpreters and answers

1. Firstly, tell me about your background as an interpreter.

a) I have a bachelor's degree in translation and interpreting from the University of Greenland. The training I received was focused on dialogue interpreting while I have almost exclusively performed simultaneous interpretation in my professional enterprise. In terms of simultaneous interpreting, I am self-taught having learnt on the job.

b) Educated in Interpreting and Translation in ilimmarfik.

c) I am an Inuit woman, I have interpreted Inuvialuktun for many years.

d) I started as a hospital interpreter right after I finished high school. I was uneducated as many other hospital interpreters. So our job was, to interpret between the doctor and a patient. The doctor is most of the time a danish doctor, but I have also experienced having a swedish doctor and a nurse. The interpretations are in dialogue. That means, I have to listen to what the doctor/patient are saying and understand it, before I interpret it. Is not simultaneously. I have that job for almost 2 years before I started at the university under translation and interpretation. Under my studies, I worked as a student in the municipality, under the translation department. Worked there on and off until a finished my BA and got a job there. After 3 years, it was time for me to try different fields, so I applied to the department of translation under the government.

e) I have a bachelor degree in translation and interpreting, I have worked in Kommuneqarfik Sermersooq since December 2020.

2. How do you prepare yourself before you start simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages?

a) If reading materials have been provided, I read them. In my preparation, I focus on cursory reading; trying to identify specific terminology and abbreviations with which I am unfamiliar and subsequently studying them. I have different strategies for different interpreting events. If there is public speaking, I focus on the presentations as especially inexperienced presenters (at least in my experience) tend to follow their presentations quite closely. In terms of speeches, I try to get the general gist of the sentiment as most speakers tend to not follow a written speech to the letter and may also have made alterations to their speech after sending a copy of it to the interpreter. Generally speaking, I prefer to have an understanding of the general gist of a presentation/speech as presenters/speakers do not always follow written materials to the letter.

b) I do not specifically prepare for the differences in subject and verb order. I prepare for the subject, as in the field of the matter that I'm interpreting from.

c) I do not do a lot of simultaneous interpreting.

d) I always read the materials that are sent to us, so we can tell, what we are going to interpret. Read them though, taking notes, finding the terms or the words in the target language. And if its possible sitting with the colleague I am interpreting with, going through the slides or the materials that are sent to us. Going to the place 30 min. Before the start, get my mind in to it. And concentrate on what is about to happen. But sometimes, unfortunately, we don't have the time to prepare us. We don't get the materials or we just find out, that we are going to a task 5 min. before start. So, you have to be willing to adapt yourself instantly.

e) I always have a dialog with whoever requested interpreting to get as much as information as I can get about the subject I am about to interpret. I make sure to get materials e.g. power points, speech etc. Which helps me get the idea of what the speaker will say during the interpreting. I do not translate the materials since it will take too much of my time, I prepare myself mentally.

3. Do you do anything specific, physically, or otherwise while doing simultaneous interpreting?

a) In the beginning, I always had a piece or a block of paper to scribble names, numbers, abbreviations and so forth on, but as I have gained experience I rely less on writing information down. In the past few years, I will only write down information which I have difficulty retaining or have not encountered before. Other specifics I do while doing simultaneous interpreting is making sure that I and my partner have a glass of water.

b) Sometimes when not being in a booth, I need to get closer to the person I am interpreting to hear better, but there are other solutions that ay work better, like enhancing microphones and headphones.

c) I do not have a lot of experience with simultaneous interpreting.

d) I listen, and you have to rule out any outside noise and really concentrate on what the person are saying while you transform it the target language. I love holding a pen, it gives me comfort, but its also practical, for taking notes of the numbers or names ect. And sometimes, we won't be in a translation box, that are soundproof, so you have to stand up and locate yourself to be able to hear clearly.

e) I walk around or have anything to fidget which helps me focus, I also keep an eye on the speaker's behaviour and that is to match their way of speaking.

4. When you simultaneous interpret, how do you immerse yourself, even when you are having a difficulty to do so?

a) I do not need to find the subject matter interesting to perform simultaneous interpreting. Immersion is more often broken trying to interpret a speaker's/presenter's poorly put together sentences, but even so you do as well as you are able.

b) Sometimes I close my eyes, and kinda wonder on my mind and try to hear better. But One of the important lessons I have learned is that you cannot translate everything and at some point something will be lost, and if you are having trouble interpreting or cannot find the right term, just skip it and start fresh. Don't feel like you have failed, because as stated before, at some point something will be lost, and this might as well be just that.

c) Please refer to answers 2 and 3.

d) You have to push it through. And set your emotions aside. You have to keep going, even if you don't understand what the person are saying. Rule out the noise, your own thoughts, trying to give a service. You have to give it your best. And it sucks sometimes when the circumstances are "against" you. Like, when you don't get the materials that you need, the locations aren't fit for interpretation (too noisy, too distant ect.)

e)

5. Do you prefer to have a partner, or would you rather do the simultaneous interpreting alone? If you prefer the one or the other, why?

a) Simultaneous interpreting is concentration-intensive. Some people can interpret all day and not feel the toll. That is not true of myself. The quality of output I deliver is significantly reduced after about 50 minutes when interpreting simultaneously. I can sustain a high quality of output for about 30 minutes, depending on subject matter. So for interpreting sessions lasting over an hour, I have a strong preference for working with a partner. Having a partner is also beneficial when there is a word or some specific terminology that you are blanking.

b) For short session up to 40 minutes to an hour I would prefer to be alone, but longer than that I would much prefer to have a partner.

c) Please refer to the answers above.

d) It depends on the task. If it is a meeting of little group of people and its only for an hour sure I prefer being alone, but if its a forum for UN, I would love to have a partner.

e) It depends on how long the interpreting is and what the subject is. I prefer to do it alone if the interpreting lasts less than 1 or 2 hours, but if it lasts longer then I prefer to have a partner.

6. Think back to when you very first started your carrier as an interpreter, how or what have you done to improve upon your skills in simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages?

a) The biggest hurdle for beginners is usually not knowing or being unfamiliar with terminology and abbreviations. When I just started I was lucky to have experienced partners who were able to take over at any time when I became overwhelmed or lost. And who were willing and able to talk with me about the issues that I was experiencing. I also found that over-preparing helped me a lot in the beginning. Writing lots of terminology lists and practicing spoken prima vista translation of any reading materials.

b) Over the years of interpreting, I would say, for improving your skills in simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages, play and practice with the verb. As everyone says languages are very flexible. Even though English is a SVO languages, in spoken language, there is a lot of wiggle room for playing with the placement of the order of the subject, object and verb. Specifically for the verb in my opinion, because you can place the verb by playing with sentences like and have the same meaning:

“regarding the ball and passing ball on to others, it is very important to do so”

“it is very important to pass the ball to others”

or

“Jacob punched Peter”

“Peter got punched by Jacob”

There are many many ways to say the same thing.

c) Please refer to the answers above.

d) When I started, I often was hard on myself. Im a perfectionist. So I could be frustrated for a long time after an interpretation. So I have learned to set my feelings aside. And do my best. Having more patience with my self. And ALWAYS keeping the curiosity on everything.

Always, taking notes of terms. Reading or listening to the news, watching documentary.

Being able to adapt yourself to circumstances.

e) I have learnt that it is okay to wait a few words to start speaking just as long as I get the point and interpret the message correct. I have listened to my coworkers while they simultaneous interpret to improve my creativity to interpret some of the most used sayings in my workplace.

My skills improved when I realized that sentence structures do not mean as much as in translating text under simultaneous interpreting.

7. In case of simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages, what advice would you like to give to beginner interpreters?

a) Prepare thoroughly, but at the same time do not be disparaged if it seems like an uphill battle at the start. Simultaneous interpreting is a very specific and resource demanding skill. When I first started I would get a kind of high immediately after interpreting, but then after about half an hour I would crash and feel almost hungover. I have colleagues who have decided to never do simultaneous interpreting, and I can understand that decision. But even though it is not easy, simultaneous interpreting is a skill which can be learnt. In my case, I would say it took about a year, or probably closer to two, before I felt proficient as a simultaneous interpreter. I no longer get the high or the subsequent crash from interpreting, but when I have been interpreting for a couple of days I do still feel the drain.

b) It's okay to skip sentences when having trouble if they just going to disturb the upcoming and possibly more important sentences to interpret.

Relax and focus on the overall messages and less on the specific stuff.

c) Be confident, practice, read what you are interpreting ahead of time.

d) Give yourself the best terms for yourself. Preparations; reading the materials, taking notes. Being easy on yourself. Be aware of your responsibilities; what are the expectation for you as an interpreter? And how can you meet the expectations. And be patient. A good interpreter are always 3-4 words behind. Always find the easiest way to interpret the source language. Find synonyms, so it comes easy while you are interpreting.

e) Get as much as information about the subject, have a dialog with the person who requested interpreting, that way you'll have a feeling how their way of speaking is, which will help you

mentally prepare before you start. Research the subject. Once you have enough information, the sentence structures won't be a problem. You will always be a few sentences behind because of the sentence structures. Be confident. Talk how you would normally talk, don't think about all the rules. The theoretical part and the practical part are very different in real life.

8. Lastly, the last time when you did simultaneous interpreting between SOV & SVO languages, how much detail do you remember?

- a) I remember very little. Only snippets. In the ear, out the mouth, and forgotten.
- b)
- c) Sorry, please refer to answers above.
- d) I remember with my body. So, I won't remember what day it was, but I'll remember what the subject it was, because it takes a lot of preparation to do a task. But the times where I go to a task 5 min. before its starting, I digest the information I just got, right after the task is over. So I'll often be more froggy after that kind of task.
- e) I interpret all the details under interpreting, but forget everything right after I finish. Everything goes so fast that I don't get to process what was being said.