



WESTERN AND EASTERN SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETERS: PAST AND PRESENT

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ABSTRACT

Simultaneous interpreting (SI) is a real-time method where an interpreter listens to a speaker in one language and translates what the speaker is saying in another language almost simultaneously. It requires huge effort, intense concentration, understanding and fast speed, relying hugely on technology like soundproof booths, microphones, and headphones. Simultaneous interpreting is an ideal choice for large UN meetings, international conferences and summits, and live broadcasts where understanding everyone and immediate communication are crucial. Examining importance and development of simultaneous interpreting in both Western and Eastern contexts is the main aim of this research, highlighting their historical and present-day evolution. The study also aims to mention key differences and similarities in professional role, training systems, and simultaneous interpreters using technological advancements in these two regions. By searching about roles of simultaneous interpreting in modern global communication, this article highlights its importance in international meetings, diplomacy, and cross-cultural dialogue.

Simultaneous interpreting serves as a crucial bridge between world languages, enabling real-time communication across linguistic barriers. Its significance and role cannot be overstated in, especially, today's globalized world, where effective cross-cultural dialogue is essential in diplomacy, education, business, and social equity. Unlike consecutive interpreting, where the translator listens first, then translates into another language, simultaneous interpreters listen to the speaker and translates at the same time which requires focus, rapid lexical retrieval, deep knowledge. Interpreters must anticipate speaker's message, manage language differences, and maintain accuracy under strict time pressure which emphasizes controlled multitasking, where even a small mistake can affect the quality of interpretation. Due to these challenges, interpreters exchange their seats for 20-30 minutes to avoid cognitive overload and fatigue. While the importance of SI remains the same, its application and emphasis differ between Western (North America and Europe) and Eastern (Asia and the Middle East) countries, influenced by historical and cultural contexts.

Simultaneous interpretation has a rich history of interpreting which is vital in today's global communication while understanding its significance helps learners appropriate

it in international stage. This form of interpretation enables real-time language translation, great experience and time to reach its high level. The origins of interpretation may back to ancient Egypt, when the need for interpreters increased as communication evolved beyond simple gestures. In the past, especially, during ancient civilizations, Greeks and Romans, interpreters were employed in various fields, from trade to military affairs, as they played crucial role in facilitating communication. At that time, the first interpreters were Egyptians, known as "dragomen", they were provided language interpretation between the rulers of Egypt and its neighbors, Nubia. The improvement of simultaneous interpreting occurred after World War I, during the Paris Peace Conference. At that time, the event brought many different languages spoken countries together to create a lasting peace after the war, this situation required high demand of simultaneous interpreters to help delegates communicate quickly and accurately while discussing urgent political and territorial issues. Furthermore, French was no longer only dominant diplomatic language at that time, English also had become equally important, which made communication in different languages complicated. Consecutive interpreting is also important, but it is too slow during long negotiations and large conferences which causes stress, and more demand for more efficient simultaneous interpreting.

In many Eastern countries, including Asia and the Middle East, interpreting developed through strong traditional diplomacy and multilingualism. In the past, interpreters were trained apprenticeship, possessing deep cultural knowledge and maintaining strong loyalty to their state. But today, Eastern nations use and already adopted to Western style of interpretation training models. Modern simultaneous interpreting developed in the 20th century, however, even today, in 21st century challenges still occur in the information space of humanity. Thanks to mass information, the role of translation is steadily increasing. Today, as more job opportunities are increasing, need for translation still is in demand of humankind, which covers almost all spheres of human activity. In both West and East, simultaneous interpretation facilitates international commerce, enabling real-time discussions and accurate exchange of ideas in corporate, legal, and technical environments. They increasingly use Remote Simultaneous Interpretation tools to provide services for virtual conferences, adapting to modern working models.

Simultaneous interpreters can be categorized by their profession, working environment, or maybe their interests. Conference interpreters work at international meetings and summits, while court interpreters assist within legal settings, where accuracy is crucial. Below, you will be given some types of interpreters which is essential to differentiate and learn about them if you are interested in it:

Despite development and role of simultaneous interpreters, they still face challenges, including mental fatigue, stress, time pressure, and fear of making mistakes. Furthermore, the increasing of artificial intelligence tools may cause pressure as they may replace peoples' jobs. Although AI technologies are developing, they currently lack sensibility, contextual understanding and judgement for high-level interpreting. As a result, human interpreters may remain their essential role, especially in diplomatic and legal fields.

Simultaneous interpreting plays an essential role in connecting people who speak different languages and come from different cultural backgrounds. It allows communication to

happen smoothly and instantly, especially in diplomacy, international organizations, business, and global conferences. Although the main purpose of simultaneous interpreting is universal, its historical development, professional standards, and cultural expectations differ between Western and Eastern countries. Understanding these similarities and differences helps us recognize the complexity and responsibility of the interpreter's work. Interpreters are not only language specialists but also cultural mediators who ensure accurate and respectful communication. Despite challenges such as mental fatigue, stress, and technological changes, the profession continues to evolve and adapt. In today's increasingly globalized and interconnected world, simultaneous interpreting remains a crucial instrument for international cooperation, mutual understanding, and peaceful dialogue between nations. Its importance is expected to grow further as global interaction continues to expand.

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