

On the Enhancement of Listening Comprehension of the Interpretation-Learning Students

Xiaofeng Li

Changchun University of Science and Technology

Abstract

Interpreting training has become increasingly popular with the soaring market demand for cross-cultural communication. A tremendous amount of interpreters are in great need yet the current situation of interpreting teaching in China is far from satisfactory to live up to the market expectation. To train the students into qualified interpreters, teachers should help to improve their listening, speaking abilities, short-term memory and note-taking skills as well as the multi-cultural awareness. Listening comprehension is a tough task that the interpreting students are faced with due to the high-level and great varieties of the listening material with a large quantity of terminologies. In this essay, ways of enhancing the interpreting students listening comprehension are probed into to be of assistance to the cultivation of more qualified interpreters.

Keywords

Interpreting class, listening comprehension.

Based on Liuheping's opinion, professional interpreting trainings focus on equipping students with professional interpreting skills and developing their operational capabilities. Based on Baker's theory, interpretation process includes three stages: Listening comprehension, Deverbalization, and Delivery. The listening part, in the phase of reception and comprehension of the interpretation process, involves the receptive technique as well as great language competence. To ensure the successful understanding and transferring of the two languages, the interpreter should have a good knowledge of linguistics, grammar and terminology.

Listening in interpretation is more difficult and complicated than ordinary language-listening in that the interpreter should focus on the underlying connotation of the content of the source language and analyze the internal logic relations of the sentences within a fleeting period of time.

Due to the impromptu feature of interpretation, which means that interpreting information is supposed to be understood at the very moment when it is uttered, the interpreter should be equipped with the skills of short-term memory and note-taking to avoid the missing of message that vanishes without a trace. There are several ways of enhancing the students' listening comprehension in interpretation class.

First, the interpreting students should be input the concept of listening for the meaning instead of the detailed or word-to-word information. In class, the teacher can choose the appropriate-level and proper-length listening material for the students to listen to once for the main idea. The students have to disregard the memorization of the message in a detailed way due to the limitation of time. Then the questions about the content will be raised and the task of discussion will be required by the teacher. In this way students are forced to present the answers in their own words for the reason that word-to-word memorization of the context is unachievable within such elapsing time. The purpose of the exercise is to steer the students' attention from language form to implied connotation.

Second, not only standard language material but also the real-situation auditory material should be provided to the students. Usually the normal and standard language recordings, which the students are presented so often that they have been accustomed to the clear sound surroundings of them, serve as a main source for the students to improve listening ability as well as pronunciation and intonation. However, the source language information is always mingled with noises of the audience, and the

speaker may have a strong accent and variations in pronunciation, sometimes using mistaken words in real-life interpretation. Thus the recordings or videos of real-situation interpretation should be assigned to the students to follow and present the main idea so that they can be more familiar with the unsatisfactory listening surroundings to improve comprehension, remove nervousness, and improve confidence under various circumstances in interpretation.

Third, the students' good habits of listening should be cultivated. An enormous amount of intensive and extensive listening should be practiced by the students to accumulate sufficient hours of attentive listening, which is a necessity in listening comprehension enhancement, since quantity breeds quality. The students should form the habit of exposing themselves in the foreign language listening surroundings as much as possible to enhance their competence and techniques in mastering the language. Effective listening is recommended to the students in the way that the focus should be the source language message instead of concentration on other disturbing elements such as the noises, or the unexpected situation in the process of listening. In addition, the importance of good mental quality should be emphasized to the students. Keeping calm and sober is the essential quality of an interpreter when unexpected situation happens or failure to catch the speaker's message promptly or accurately occurs. The teacher should let the students fill in the gaps while listening, ignore the missing of the information, and deduce the unknown message from the known one, which means that they should infer the coming, missed or unclear points based on the what they have understood.

Four, the teacher should help build the students' confidence on listening comprehension in interpretation. The interpreting material is usually not easy for the students to follow and understand, thus the sense of frustration and discourage may be experienced by the students when encountering difficulties. The teacher's encouragement and inspiration are of vital importance to the students who lose heart, which involve the quotation of the famous proverbs and sayings, the citation of the successful listening ability improvement from one's own experience. The basic concept that difficulty is bound to be met on the way of practice of listening ability and undoubtedly can be overcome through unremitting effort should be input to the students' mind so that help them foster a persistent and determined attitude in doing everything, which is of vital importance to be a qualified interpreter.

In all, the progress of the interpreting students' listening comprehension involves receptive techniques as well as great language competence. With the strategies recommended above, not only the students' confidence and mental quality will be strengthened, but also the listening ability in interpretation will be enhanced.

References

- [1] Seleskovitch.D. *Interpreter Pour Traduire*[M].Paris: Didier Erudition.1984
- [2] Zhong Shukong. *A Practical Handbook of Interpretation*[M].Chifta Foreign Translation Publishing Company,1984