

Strategies Used by Professional Interpreter in Indonesian-English Simultaneous Interpreting

I Gusti Ayu Mahatma Agung¹, Ni Putu Cahyani Putri Utami², Ni Luh Ayu Sugianitri³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar, Indonesia

*Correspondence: ayu.mahatma@unmas.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The practice of simultaneous interpreting presents complex challenges due to its immediate nature and the need for prompt responses. Simultaneous interpreters are required to perform their tasks immediately in order to match the speaker's pace. This may lead to information overload and difficulties in dealing with complex sentence structures or specialized terminology. In order to overcome the challenges encountered in simultaneous interpreting, interpreters employ a range of interpreting strategies. This study aims to investigate the strategies applied by a professional interpreter in the YouTube video entitled "Simultaneous Interpreting Example". Qualitative method was applied in this study and the data was collected through observation and note-taking. The data was analyzed by applying the theory of interpreting strategies proposed by Li (2015). The result of the study revealed that there were six interpreting strategies employed by the interpreter in the video, namely addition, paraphrasing, compression, omission, segmentation, and restructuring. Addition is the most dominant strategy applied, followed by paraphrasing, and compression. These strategies enabled the interpreter to adapt to distinct language structures, improve audience comprehension, and efficiently convey complex ideas in cross-linguistic communication.

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1. Introduction

Interpreting plays a significant role in facilitating communication between speakers of different languages. (Malau et al., 2021). It is an essential skill with numerous significant implications across various domains (Meladina & Sparingga, 2022). In our increasingly interconnected world, interpreting allows individuals, businesses, governments, and organizations to communicate effectively across borders and language barriers (Afrina & Ardi, 2021). This enables international collaboration, trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange. Moreover, interpreting helps preserve the richness of linguistic and cultural diversity. It allows individuals to express themselves in their native language and fosters cross-cultural understanding and appreciation (Quoc, 2022).

However, various challenges in the interpreting process can affect the quality of communication. These include dealing with complex language and specialized terminology, navigating cultural nuances, and working under time constraints, which can lead to fatigue and stress (Li, 2015). Interpreters must also maintain neutrality, handle limited context, and cope with technical equipment issues in conference or remote interpreting (Pastor & Gaber, 2020). Addressing these challenges demands ongoing professional development, adherence to ethical guidelines, and the use of appropriate interpreting techniques and resources to ensure accurate and effective communication in diverse settings (Li & Dong, 2022).

Simultaneous interpreting presents more complex challenges due to its real-time nature and rapid response requirements (Korpala & Stachowiak-Szymczak, 2020; Latief et al., 2022). Simultaneous interpreters must work quickly to keep up with the speaker's pace, leading to potential information loss and difficulty in handling complex sentence structures or technical language (Arum, 2022; Rahman & Rahman, 2019). The demand for intense concentration can cause mental fatigue and performance decline over extended sessions (Plevoets & Defrancq, 2016). Moreover, interpreting from unfamiliar accents or dealing with idiomatic expressions can pose further difficulties. Skilled simultaneous interpreters can overcome these challenges through rigorous training, continuous practice, and the use of effective coping strategies (Wu & Liao, 2018).

Several prior studies have been conducted on the subject of interpreting strategies. The first study was written by Hastuningdyah (2019). The study focuses on the strategies applied by two consecutive interpreters of the press conference featuring Mr. Joko Widodo, the President of Indonesia, and Mr. Malcolm Turnbull, the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Malcolm Turnbull. The results of the study revealed that both interpreters employed various strategies to improve their comprehension of the message and deal with challenges associated with the complexities of the speech and the time constraints for interpreting. Transcoding, omission, and addition are the strategies most commonly employed by the two interpreters.

The second study by Kuswoyo & Audina (2020) examines the consecutive strategies employed by Yuliana Tansil, an Indonesian interpreter, in court proceedings. The findings indicated that the interpreter applied two consecutive interpreting strategies, namely the strategies of reduction and achievement. The findings also revealed that the interpreter frequently provided additional information on the meaning of words or expressions in the utterances. The interpreter employed a particular strategy to encounter challenging vocabulary within extended speech segments, primarily due to cultural nuances. The interpreter elaborated on her comprehension of the message by supplementing it with additional details to enhance the clarity of the utterance in the target language.

Another study related to procedures applied in consecutive interpreting was conducted by Maulida & Saehu (2022). The study aims to investigate and identify the procedures of consecutive interpreting utilized by a professional interpreter. The study was carried out using an open-ended interview format, with the interpreter as the primary informant. The findings of this study indicated that there were no standardized procedures for conducting interpreting, but it typically involves three distinct stages: pre-interpreting, interpreting, and post-interpreting. The procedures involved in consecutive interpreting include various aspects related to the interpreter's preparation. These include tasks such as material preparation, briefing sessions, commitment to professional ethics, establishing an agreement or contract, implementing strategies to mitigate potential interpretation errors, and, notably, employing effective note-taking techniques.

The three previous studies are relevant to the current study since they investigated the interpreting strategies applied in various settings. However, unlike the prior studies, this study focuses on the strategies applied in simultaneous interpreting instead of consecutive interpreting. Each mode of interpreting presents unique challenges in the process. Consequently, the findings of this study are expected to make a valuable contribution to the field of interpreting studies by offering a fresh and distinct perspective.

Based on the background of the study, this study aims to investigate the strategies employed by Rika Priwibowo, an Indonesian professional interpreter, to deal with challenges in simultaneous interpreting from Indonesian into English. The research focuses on how the interpreter deals with complexities such as linguistic differences, cultural nuances, and time constraints by examining the strategies applied in the process of interpreting. The results of this study may serve as a reference for interpreting training and education by providing examples and analysis of strategies for Indonesian-English simultaneous interpreting.

2. Methodology

This study applied qualitative method to find the answer to the research problem regarding the strategies employed in the process of simultaneous interpreting. The data of this study was taken from the YouTube video entitled "Simultaneous Interpreting Example" by Rika Priwibowo. The video was uploaded on 9 January 2017. In the video, the interpreter performed simultaneous interpreting from Indonesian into English for Mr. Joko Widodo's speech at the event "Pencanangan Pengakuan Hutan Adat di Istana Negara RI" ("The Decree on Recognition of Customary Forests at the State Palace of the Republic of Indonesia"). The data was collected through observation and note-taking. The researchers watched the video in order to collect the data and recorded the relevant ones.

After the data was collected, it was analyzed by using the theory of interpreting strategies proposed by Li (2015). According to him, there are 27 strategies that can be utilized by interpreters in order to effectively manage cognitive limitations, challenges specific to the mode of interpreting, as well as constraints related to language and culture. This argument aligns with the statement from Gile (2009) that the challenging working conditions faced by interpreters, such as time limits, rapid delivery, dense information, and unfamiliar topics, can overwhelm their cognitive capacity and lead to mental and physical exhaustion. In order to address these issues, the interpreter may apply various interpreting strategies.

3. Result and Discussion

A comprehensive classification of 27 interpreting strategies was proposed by Li (2015) based on the findings of several Interpreting scholars. The strategies include 1. Anticipation, 2. Compression, 3. Omission, 4. Segmentation, 5. Addition, 6. Delaying response, 7. Approximation, 8. Paraphrasing/Explaining, 9. Morpho-syntactic transformation, 10. Time lag, 11. Transcoding, 12. Substitution, 13. Restructuring, 14. Inference, 15. Repair, 16. Neutralization, 17. Visualization, 18. No repair, 19. Reproduction, 20. Transfer, 21. Resorting to world knowledge, 22. Adaptation, 23. Personal involvement, 24. Monitoring, 25. Repetition, 26. Pause distribution, and 27. Intonation.

The findings showed that there were 6 interpreting strategies applied by the interpreter in the video “Simultaneous Interpreting Example”. The strategies include addition (4 data), paraphrasing/explaining (3 data), compression (2 data), omission (1 data), segmentation (1 data), and restructuring (1 data). Table 1 shows the percentage of the interpreting strategies employed by the interpreter in the video.

Table 1. Interpreting Strategies Used in the Video “Simultaneous Interpreting Example”

| No. | Interpreting Strategies | Data | Percentage |
|-----|-------------------------|------|------------|
| 1. | Addition | 4 | 33.33% |
| 2. | Paraphrasing/Explaining | 3 | 25.01% |
| 3. | Compression | 2 | 16.67% |
| 4. | Omission | 1 | 8.33% |
| 5. | Segmentation | 1 | 8.33% |
| 6. | Restructuring | 1 | 8.33% |
| | Total | 12 | 100% |

Based on the data presented in Table 1, it is clear that the interpreter predominantly applied the addition strategy, accounting for a total of 33.33%. Paraphrasing/explaining is the second most prominent strategy, accounting for 25.01% of the total strategies employed. The compression strategy, which accounts for 16.67% of the total, is the third most prevalent strategy. The other strategies, omission, segmentation, and restructuring, account for 8.33% each.

3.1. Addition

In this interpreting strategy, the interpreter includes something missing from the source text to make the target text sound more logical and cohesive to the audience (Li, 2015).

Data 1 [00:01-00:11]

SL : SK tentang pengelolaan **hutan** itu diberikan kepada **rakyat**.

TL : The decree of **indigenous forest** management should be handed over to the **indigenous communities** themselves.

In data 1, the interpreting strategy used is addition. The interpreter added the word “indigenous” to the words “forest” and “communities” in the Target Language (TL). The strategy was applied to make the information more specific to the target audience. In the Source Language (SL), the sentence “SK tentang pengelolaan hutan itu diberikan kepada rakyat” can be translated literally as “the decree about forest management is given to the people.” However, the interpreter elaborated on the meaning by expressing it as, “The decree of indigenous forest management should be handed over to the indigenous communities themselves.” By adding the word “indigenous” to both “forest” and “communities,” the interpreter provides additional information that clarifies the target text for the audience. The addition strategy is employed to enhance the clarity and relevance of the interpretation for the target audience. The strategy ensures that the audience has a better understanding of the original message within their own context.

Data 2 [00:12-00:26]

SL : Kemarin telah kita berikan di Pulang Pisau, di Kabupaten Pulang Pisau seluas **12.000**.

TL : Yesterday, we have handed over it in Pulang Pisau District, around **12,000 acres**

In data 2, the SL sentence "Kemarin telah kita berikan di Pulang Pisau, di Kabupaten Pulang Pisau seluas 12.000" can be translated literally as "Yesterday we have handed it over in Pulang Pisau District, in Pulang Pisau Regency, covering an area of 12,000." However, the interpreter provided additional detail on the size of the forest area. It was done by adding the measurement unit "acres" to the number "12,000" in the TL. By specifying the size of the forest as "12,000 acres," the target audience can better understand the size of the forest being referred to. This addition helps the target audience visualize the scale of the forest. It also implies that the Indonesian government has been taking substantial action regarding the policy of indigenous forest management.

Data 3 [01:56-02:12]

SL : Pengakuan hutan adat, pengakuan hak-hak tradisional masyarakat hukum adat, berarti adalah pengakuan **nilai-nilai asli Indonesia**, pengakuan jati diri asli bangsa Indonesia.

TL : The recognition of indigenous forest, the recognition of basic rights of the indigenous community, means that we are recognizing **the original value of the Republic of Indonesia**, the original identity of Indonesian people.

In data 3, the strategy of addition was applied in the interpreting process. The SL sentence mentions the concept of "nilai-nilai asli Indonesia," which can be translated literally into "the original values of Indonesia". However, in the TL, the interpreter added the word "Republic" to the phrase and transformed it into "the original value of the Republic of Indonesia". The interpreter's addition of the word "Republic" helped to provide a more specific context and clarify the origin of the values. By adding the word "Republic," the interpreter ensured that the target audience understood that the values were related to the nation of Indonesia. This addition added necessary contextual information for the target audience to enhance their understanding. The addition strategy is commonly employed in interpreting when certain information in the SL requires additional elements in the TL to ensure clarity and accuracy.

Data 4 [03:28-03:31]

SL : Saya tegaskan bahwa...

TL : I would like to convey to all of you, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, that...

Data 4 shows another example of the usage of the addition strategy. In the SL, the original sentence is "Saya tegaskan bahwa..." which can be translated into "I emphasize that..." The SL sentence does not include any address term or formal greeting. However, in the TL, the interpreter added the address term "Ladies and Gentlemen". English has specific conventions for addressing an audience in formal settings, such as public speeches or presentations. Including an address term like "Ladies and Gentlemen" is a common way to address a diverse audience politely and respectfully in English. By adding "Ladies and Gentlemen" in the TL, the interpreter not only conveys the message but also adheres to the conventions of formal English communication. This addition serves to create a more appropriate and polite tone in English, ensuring that the interpretation aligns with the linguistic norms and cultural expectations of the TL audience.

3.2. Paraphrasing/Explaining

Paraphrasing or explaining strategy can be applied by interpreters when they encounter difficulty in identifying a suitable counterpart for particular sections of the SL utterance and continue to explain the intended meaning of the original message.

Data 5 [00:30-00:41]

SL : Dan pada hari ini SK tentang hutan adat juga telah **pecah telur**.

TL : And today, another decree on indigenous forest recognition have been **started for the first time**.

The interpreting strategy used in data 5 is paraphrasing or explaining. If the SL sentence "Dan pada hari ini SK tentang hutan adat juga telah pecah telur" is translated literally as "And today, the decree on indigenous forests has also hatched eggs," it will sound absurd in the TL. Therefore, the interpreter explained the meaning by interpreting it into "And

today, another decree on indigenous forest recognition have been started for the first time.” The interpreter replaced the idiomatic expression “pecah telur” (hatched eggs) with the more explicit and explanatory phrase “started for the first time. The paraphrasing/explaining strategy is used to ensure a clear and comprehensible interpretation, especially when idiomatic expressions or culturally specific references need to be clarified for the target audience. The interpreter provided an equivalent expression in the TL to convey the intended meaning accurately.

Data 6 [00:46-00:58]

- SL : Dan tentu saja, dengan **SK** ini masyarakat bisa mengelola selamanya.
- TL : Also, with this **decree of establishment**, we hope that the indigenous community will manage to maintain their forest forever.

In data 6, the abbreviation “SK” in the SL stands for “Surat Keputusan,” which can be translated literally as “Decree” or “Decision Letter.” However, using the abbreviation “SK” in the TL may not be comprehensible to the target audience, especially if they are not familiar with Indonesian administrative terms. Therefore, to provide more context and ensure better comprehension for the target audience, the interpreter opted for paraphrasing or explaining strategy to interpret the abbreviation “SK” into “decree of establishment”. By using this strategy, the interpreter effectively conveyed the intended meaning to the target audience, ensuring they understood the importance of the “decree of establishment” (Surat Keputusan) in the given context. This strategy enhances the clarity and comprehension of the message for the audience, making it more accessible and relevant to them.

Data 7 [00:46-00:58]

- SL : Karena yang kita berikan saat ini memang pada hitungan yang masih sangat kecil sekali. Karena yang ada di **kantongan** saya sekali lagi 12,7 juta hektar.
- TL : Because what we have handed over today is relatively very small size. Because again, what we already have **in my information** is 12,7 million acres.

In data 7, the interpreting strategy used in this data is paraphrasing or explaining. In the SL, the term “kantongan” is used, which literally translates to “pocket” or “bag.” However, this term might not be familiar or easily understandable to the target audience. Therefore, to provide a clearer interpretation, the interpreter paraphrased and explained the meaning of “kantongan” into “in my information” to ensure that the target audience grasps the intended message. By employing this strategy, the interpreter successfully conveyed the intended meaning without relying on an unfamiliar term like “kantongan.” Instead, the interpreter chose a more straightforward and easily understandable phrase, “in my information” to clarify the context. This strategy ensures that the target audience can comprehend the content without confusion, and it is a common approach used in interpreting to make the message comprehensible to the audience in the TL.

3.3. Compression

In the compression strategy, the interpreter employs an efficient means of communication by summarizing the meaning of the original message. This involves removing repetitive or unnecessary information and highlighting the most significant details, especially when time is limited.

Data 8 [02:57-03:19]

- SL : Masyarakat hukum adat sejak dulu juga sudah tahu dan sudah bisa menjaga harmoni, harmoni hidup manusia dengan alam. Saya rasa nilai-nilai yang penting kita ingat semua di masa modern yang ada sekarang ini. Apalagi di tengah sengitnya arus budaya global dan persaingan global yang semakin sengit.
- TL : The indigenous communities have been able to maintain the harmony between human and nature, which I think is very critical for today’s era and especially in the very competitive era in a global community.

The interpreting strategy applied in data 8 is compression. In the SL, there are three sentences that convey different aspects of the idea. The interpreter summarized the content of these three sentences into one concise sentence in the TL. By using the compression strategy, the interpreter effectively conveyed the main idea and key points of the original sentences in a more concise manner. This strategy is commonly employed when the interpreter needs to manage time constraints or simplify the interpretation while still preserving the essential meaning of the source text. By summarizing the information, the interpreter ensured that the target audience received a clear and concise interpretation, making it easier for them to understand the message without losing the main points of the original content.

Data 9 [03:42-04:01]

- SL : Dan saya instruksikan kepada kementerian yang terkait untuk mengambil langkah-langkah dan kebijakan teknis berkaitan dengan penyelamatan, pemanfaatan sumber daya alam kita. Penyelamatan dan pemanfaatan keanekaragaman hayati yang kita miliki sebagai harta bangsa Indonesia.
- TL : And I would like to request the aligned ministry to work together to utilize and also to save the natural diversity and also the richness of our natural resources.

Data 9 provides another example of compression strategy in the interpreting process. In the SL, there are two sentences that convey a substantial amount of information. However, the interpreter managed to compress and summarize the content of the two sentences into a single, coherent sentence in the TL. The interpreter efficiently communicated the primary idea and essential elements of the original utterance by employing the compression strategy. This strategy is often employed when there is a need to condense information or when time constraints require a more efficient expression of the content without losing the core message of the source text. The application of the compression strategy ensures the target audience receives a clear and concise interpretation, conveying the essential message without compromising its meaning.

3.4. Omission

In situations characterized by time constraints or difficulties in interpretation, the interpreter may omit unnecessary or repetitive expressions, insignificant utterances, incomprehensible input, untranslatable elements, or messages deemed inappropriate in the intended discourse.

Data 10 [3:20-3:27]

- SL : Janganlah pernah **kita** lupakan kearifan lokal, kearifan nilai-nilai asli bangsa Indonesia.
- TL : Please never forget the original value of Indonesian people, the original custom of Indonesian people.

The interpreting strategy applied in data 10 is omission. The interpreting strategy applied in the given data is omission. In the SL, the pronoun “kita” is used, which refers to “we” or “us” in English. However, in the TL, the interpreter omitted the pronoun without changing the overall meaning of the message. The interpreter likely omitted the pronoun “we” in the TL for stylistic and contextual reasons. In English, there are instances where pronouns can be omitted when the subject is understood from the context or when it is clear who the subject is based on the surrounding information. This is particularly common in imperative sentences, where the speaker is giving a command or instruction. In the English version, the pronoun “we” is omitted before the imperative verb “forget.” This is because the subject “we” is implied in the context, as the speaker is addressing the audience and giving them instruction. This omission makes the sentence more direct and concise, which is a stylistic feature of the English language. Therefore, the omission of the pronoun “we” in the TL is a natural and appropriate choice in English to maintain the fluency and clarity of the sentence while preserving the intended meaning of the original message. By using the omission strategy, the interpreter successfully conveyed the message without including the pronoun. This omission did not alter the core meaning of the sentence and allowed for a more concise and natural interpretation in the TL.

3.5. Segmentation

The segmentation strategy involves dividing the SL utterances, especially sentences that are long and complex, into smaller meaningful units. These units are then interpreted linearly, following the sequence of processing them in the

order they were received. This approach ensures that the incoming message is processed without overwhelming the interpreter's capacity to process information.

Data 11 [01:07-01:40]

- SL : Ini penting sekali, karena yang ada di kantong saya sekarang ada 12,7 juta hektar yang akan terus kita bagikan, tetapi pada masyarakat, pada rakyat, pada kelompok tani, kepada masyarakat adat, sehingga betul-betul yang menikmati kekayaan hutan kita adalah rakyat, masyarakat dan masyarakat adat.
- TL : This is very critical because today, in my understanding, we have 12,7 million acres that we will continue to distribute to the indigenous forest, to the farmer group, and to the community, the actual community. Therefore, the ones who will be benefited from the richness of our forest will be the indigenous forest and the local community.

The interpreting strategy applied in data 11 is segmentation. In the SL, the original sentence is quite lengthy and contains multiple pieces of information. The interpreter divided the SL sentence into two sentences in the TL. This approach allows for a more coherent and clear interpretation in the TL. By breaking down the sentence into smaller segments, the interpreter made it easier for the target audience to follow the flow of the message and comprehend the information being conveyed. This strategy enabled the interpreter to efficiently handle the long and complex sentence in the source text, ensuring that the target audience could follow and understand the meaning more easily in the interpretation. This strategy is particularly helpful in simultaneous interpreting when managing complex sentences to ensure a smooth and effective communication process.

3.6. Restructuring

In the restructuring strategy, the interpreter strategically rephrases segments of different kinds, relocating them from their original position in the source discourse to a new position in the target discourse, with the aim of enhancing the overall quality of the interpretation.

Data 12 [03:32-03:41]

- SL : Negara hadir untuk melindungi nilai-nilai asli bangsa kita, negara hadir berpihak kepada masyarakat, **kepada rakyat yang lemah posisi tawarnya, khususnya masyarakat hukum adat.**
- TL : The state exists to protect the basic rights of the indigenous forest, **the indigenous people, especially for those who are marginalized.**

The interpreting strategy used in data 12 is restructuring. In the SL, the original sentence includes the expression "kepada rakyat yang lemah posisi tawarnya, khususnya masyarakat hukum adat". This can be translated into "the people who have weak bargaining positions, especially the indigenous communities". However, the interpreter restructured the sentence to create a more natural and fluent expression in the TL. The interpreter placed the phrase "the indigenous people" before "especially for those who are marginalized," creating a different word order compared to the SL. By applying the restructuring strategy, the interpreter effectively rearranged the elements of the sentence in the TL to ensure better readability. This decision aims to maintain the overall meaning of the original message while ensuring that the sentence flows smoothly and is easier for the target audience to comprehend.

4. Conclusion

The results of the study revealed there were six interpreting strategies employed by the interpreter in the video "Simultaneous Interpreting Example". The strategies employed by the interpreter include addition (33.33%), paraphrasing/explaining (25.01%), compression (16.67%), omission (8.33%), segmentation (8.33%), and restructuring (8.33%). Based on the findings, it is evident that the interpreter predominantly employed the addition strategy, followed by paraphrasing/explaining, and compression strategy. These strategies allowed the interpreter to adapt to different language structures, enhance audience comprehension, and convey complex ideas efficiently while maintaining effective communication. The fast-paced nature of simultaneous interpreting, time constraints, and the interpreter's skill and

experience further contribute to the prominence of these strategies in facilitating accurate and accessible cross-linguistic communication.

This study may serve as a reference for future research in interpreting studies. It can also be used in interpreting classes or training to provide ideas for applicable strategies along with their examples. However, since this study was conducted with the data of Indonesian-English simultaneous interpreting of presidential speech, the future researchers are suggested to conduct studies regarding interpreting in different mode such as whisper interpreting or consecutive interpreting with different topics, such as culture, health, or education.

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