

УДК 81'25

Стаття надійшла до редакції [Article received /
Стаття поступила в редакцію] – 28.05.2018 р.

Перевірено на плагіат [Checked for plagiarism / Проверено на плагиат] – 29.05.2018 р.

Оригінальність тексту [The originality of the text / Оригинальность текста] – 98.37 %

<http://doi.org/10.17721/2663-6530.2018.34.15>

ДОМІНУЮЧА КОНЦЕНТРАЦІЯ В УСНОМУ ПЕРЕКЛАДІ: ТЕМАТИЧНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

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Стаття викладає експериментальний підхід до тренування домінуючої концентрації під час занять зі студентами-магістрами другого року навчання, які хоч і опанували усі основні теоретико-практичні навички усного перекладу, проте не здобули повний контроль перекладацького процесу, який формується в результаті ретельних тренувань. Останні дадуть змогу магістрам другого року навчання підекладацького відділення свідомо керувати процесом усного перекладу та всіма компонентами їхнього психологочного стану, які супроводжують синхронний переклад у кабінах. Автор пропонує інноваційні вправи, засновані на багаторічному досвіді усного перекладача. Дані вправи навчають студентів концентрувати увагу одразу на кількох когнітивних тригерах одночасно, що посилює стресостійкість усних перекладачів, допомагає їм вчасно звільнити оперативну пам'ять, переключати увагу й, завдяки цьому, втрачати мінімум інформації. У статті вперше запроваджується термін «домінуюча концентрація» на позначення здібності перекладача перемикатися з одного когнітивного акту на інший за необхідності. Домінуюча концентрація забезпечує швидше відновлення уваги, що в свою чергу призводить до менших втрат прецизійної інформації під час перемикання. Насамкінець, автор викладає свій погляд на те, як поєднати теорію й практику усного перекладу в царині тренування розподілу уваги й домінуючої концентрації.

(Current issues in translation studies)

Interpreter's concentration dominance: case study (in English)

[Dominatorjucha koncentracija v usnomu perekładi: tematyczne doslidzhennj]

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Ключові слова: усний переклад, синхронний переклад, розподіл уваги, домінуюча концентрація, когнітивний акт, когнітивний тригер, переміщення концентрації.

INTERPRETER'S CONCENTRATION DOMINANCE: CASE STUDY

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The paper introduces an experimental approach towards concentration dominance training in classes for second-year master students who although gained all necessary theoretical and practical skills in simultaneous interpreting, are still to refine the most subtle points in keeping the interpretation process under full control. That means the second-year master students of translation department are to be able to consciously keep the process of interpreting and everything, which is happening to their psychological state in booths under full-fledged control. The author offers a range of innovative exercises based upon his own many-year interpreter's practice. The offered exercises train the students to focus upon several cognitive triggers at the same time, which in fact enables an interpreter to be more stress-resilient, to timely empty short-term memory, to shift concentration more smoothly and consequently lose less information. The paper also offers the term of interpreter's concentration dominance, based upon the ability to switch from one different cognitive act to another one whenever necessary. It guarantees that an interpreter regains concentration in less time, making sure that during concentration shift period less precise information is lost. Finally, the author gives his perspective of what is to be done in bringing interpreting theory and practice closer in the sphere of split attention training and concentration dominance practice.

Key words: interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, split attention, concentration dominance, cognitive act, cognitive trigger, concentration shift.

(Актуальні питання перекладознавства [Актуальные вопросы переводоведения])

Домінуюча концентрація в усному перекладі: тематичне дослідження (Англійською)

[Доминирующая концентрация в устном переводе: тематическое исследование (Наангл.яз.)]

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ДОМИНИРУЮЩАЯ КОНЦЕНТРАЦИЯ В УСТНОМ ПЕРЕВОДЕ: ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ

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Статья излагает экспериментальный подход к тренировке доминирующей концентрации во время занятий со студентами-магистрами второго года обучения, хотя и овладевшими всеми основными теоретико-практическими навыками устного перевода, однако не обретшими полный контроль над переводческим процессом, который формируется в результате тщательных тренировок. Последние позволяют магистрам второго года обучения переводческого отделения сознательно управлять процессом устного перевода и всеми компонентами их психологического состояния, сопровождающими синхронный перевод в кабинах. Автор предлагает инновационные упражнения, основанные на многолетнем опыте переводчика. Даные упражнения учат студентов концентрировать внимание сразу на нескольких когнитивных триггерах одновременно, что усиливает стрессоустойчивость устных переводчиков, помогает им вовремя высвобождать оперативную память, переключать внимание и, благодаря этому, терять минимум информации. В статье впервые вводится термин «доминирующая концентрация» для обозначения способности переводчика переключаться с одной когнитивного акта на другой при необходимости. Доминирующая концентрация обеспечивает быстрое восстановление внимание, что в свою очередь приводит к меньшим потерям прецизионной информации во время переключения. Наконец, автор излагает свой взгляд на то, как совместить теорию и практику устного перевода в сфере тренировки распределения внимания и доминирующей концентрации.

Ключевые слова: устный перевод, синхронный перевод, распределение внимания, доминирующая концентрация, когнитивный акт, когнитивный триггер, переключения концентрации.

(Current issues in translation studies)

Interpreter's concentration dominance: case study (in English)
[Dominatorjucha koncentracija v usnomu perekładi: tematyczne doslidzhennj]

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1. INTRODUCTION. Split attention or divided attention or split memory is the ability of an interpreter to focus or concentrate his/her attention on different cognitive processes / cognitive tasks at the same time (Amparo Ivars, 2013; Agmieszka Chmiel, 2010) without losing less than 20 % of precise information. (I intentionally used 20 % of information to remind that interpreting output is successful if less than 20 % of precise information is lost). This is the way interpreters can manage information they receive from a speaker. They are factually engaged in several cognitive activities and, what is more important, they have to cope with each of the activities equally well. In general, these activities are information perception, information processing and information rendering into a target language. Here, it is very important to underline the words “in general”, because this triad of cognitive activities can be mixed with other ones, which are pertinent to an individual due to his/her psychological peculiarities. All these cognitive processes take away interpreter’s concentration and impedes a fluent and flawless interpreting process (Pochhacker, 2004).

An interpreter should know how to handle his/her own concentration direction, which means control the percentage of concentration given to each of the cognitive process. (Ingrid Kurz, 2002)

The notion of three-track memory (Hromosova, 1972) means that interpreters stores info they instantly get from a speaker in a short-term memory, process this info through the experience in a long-term memory and retrieves this linguistic experience in translation. This theory states that three cognitive activities are of equal importance and must be focused upon in the same way at the same moment of utterance. Is it really possible? I am totally convinced that such concentration is impossible due to the fact that a human brain can give a 100% concentration to only one single activity, either speaking, or information processing, or rendering into a target language. Giving concentration on several activities at the same time with the same power and to the same extent is impossible. If a 70% concentration goes to information perception, then the rest 30% goes to information processing and information rendering in either equal or non-equal proportions. An interpreter has to split his/her attention (Lambert, 2004) on dual or multiple distractors and processes to make this or that process dominate over others (Barbara Mocer-Mercer, 1978). While perceiving information the process of listening and perception has to dominate, all others must remain secondary, when rendering information listening process must be automatic and take less cognitive effort, when processing information rendering must take a secondary role. What is complicated about this scheme, is that it never happens in ideal conditions, because simultaneous interpreting encompasses three activities, and the time span between these activities is very short. In a single second one activity changes into

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another one – one dominated into another one. I aim to show how to control concentration dominance, demonstrate the exercises to split concentration and to make each of these three activities dominate over others to keep interpreting process under control.

1. Simultaneous Interpreting Modules. I offer two simultaneous interpreting variation modules. The first is an integral part of the Translation Master's program consisting of 120 credits ECTS with 30 credits of Simultaneous Interpreting Disciplines. The second one is the full-fledged independent Master's Program consisting of 90 credits ECTS for Simultaneous Interpreting Disciplines.

The initial disciplines of the Fundamentals of Simultaneous Interpreting start in the fourth year of the Bachelor's course offering 6 credits ECTS for simultaneous interpreting classes. Then students can understand whether their psychological composition fits to be simultaneous interpreting. For that reason, master's program contains two above-mentioned options.

The 90-credit Interpreting Master's Course has 7 Modules that consist of 3 blocks of training classes and starts with an introductory lecture:

Modern Interpreting Studies. Community Interpreting. Introductory Lecture.	
Module 1.	Initial Training. Needs Analysis.
	Welcoming Phrases. Clichés.
	Utterance Speech Training.
Module 2.	Equipment demonstration. Master-class.
	Transition Phrases.
	Listening Training and Repetition Training.
Module 3.	Professional vs Non-Professional Obstacles.
	Formal Speech Clichés.
	Listening and Split Attention Training
Module 4.	Formal Address. Link Words.
	Concentration Types. Concentration Training.
	Instant Attention Training.
Module 5.	Concentration Dominance Training.
	Short-term Memory Training.

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	Shadowing
Module 6.	Anticipation Training.
	Reaction Analysis.
	Video Interpreting.
	Split Attention Analysis.
Module 7.	Interpreter's Stress Management
	Real-Time Interpreting Session.
Final Module	Q&A Session. Examination.

Concentration Dominance Training is the second part of the Module 5. It has 15 hours of practical training classes with second-year master students.

Second-year master students are the audience of special difficulty due to their previous experience in the subject and the stiff skills they got during 5 years in high school (In Ukraine students take 4 years of bachelor's course and 2 years of master's). If anything went wrong in the previous years, it would take much more time to polish concertation gain and shift stages (Sergiy Skrylnyk, 2016), because concentration dominance is, in my opinion, the most important aspect to train. It trains the skill to keep the stressful situations under control, swiftly change from one cognitive activity into another one and to retain the information through the whole information flow.

1. Concentration Dominance. I define concentration dominance in simultaneous interpreting as the ability of an interpreter to make one cognitive activity dominate over the other one in order to perceive, process and render the information at an opportune moment. It means that a certain cognitive activity takes more short-term memory at a certain moment. For example, an interpreter has to finish the phrase in a target language and a speaker starts a new sentence. In this case, an interpreter must make a listening process dominate over processing and speaking to give a full amount of cognitive effort to the listening process. It reminds of muting up the sound and removing all useless noises if we want to hear and understand our interlocutor. In a noisy room, when two people stand far from each other, they cannot hear each other due to the noise waves between them. The same situation occurs when an interpreter needs to hear the speaker's new sentence, but at the same time he has to finish the previous one. The interpreter's task is to make the listening process dominate over the speaking and information rendering processes.

1. Concentration Dominance Practice. I practice several easy exercises to train the students to concentrate on one single cognitive process or to make one of them dominate. Although the exercises I offer, might seem easy or even simplistic, the results are

substantial.

1. Repeat and Catch up. The exercise consists in repeating the string of words BUT after the speaker says the fifth word to quickly catch up with the rest of the words which the speaker utters very quickly.

- Nineteen fourteen, nineteen thirty-nine, ninety forty-one, nineteen-forty-five, **nineteen ninety-one**, six, seven, ten, thirteen, twenty, two hundred, one thousand.
- Book, page, text, paragraph, **word**, mouse, flower, phone, card, pen, thing.
- Good morning, good day, good afternoon, good evening, good night, car, mid-day, vehicle, wheel, tyre, lubricant.

The student should wait until the speaker utters the words “nineteen ninety one” in the first example and “word” in the second example, repeat all the words and quickly catch up with the speaker. Every time the speed should vary to make the cognitive effort more complicated.

It is very important that the words are logically irrelevant but they should belong to the same grammatical category or be phonologically similar. It makes the student’s cognitive effort more difficult due to the fact that the student often confuses the initial word and the fifth word and has combine logically incompatible lexemes.

The most difficult thing about this exercise is that the students have to switch from listening to speaking on the fifth, sixth and seventh word, which makes these words usually lost. As well as in a real interpreting process, the biggest information loss happens on the final words of the sentence on the transition from different cognitive activities.

This exercise lasts for 5 minutes than it is utterly important to take a 45-second break and continue the same exercise for another 5 minutes, I usually practice this kind of exercise for 30 minutes.

I will depict the student’s progress in classes in a month-period of time having 3 classes a week. The diagram shows the percentage of information loss on the fifth, sixth and seventh word, which stand right on the concentration dominance switch. The first column of the category shows (blue) means the progress in the first 10 minutes of a class, the second one shows the second 10 minutes of a class and the thirds one shows the last 10 minutes of a class. What is important to underline is that if the words are absolutely logically irrelevant, the information loss is smaller than when the words sound alike, look alike or have the same or close grammatical category.

As it is clear from the diagram, the first week is the most variable and unstable. The first ten minute-period is always characterized by the concentration-gain moment when the students get used to the circumstances, the flow of the exercise the equipment

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they work with. The information loss reaches 30 percent, which means that the students lose every third word in the fifth, sixth and seventh word in the string of words. The result is not satisfactory. In the second 10-minute period the students adapt to the circumstances which stood in their way in the previous ten-minute period, they understand the logic of the exercise. They eventually start concentrating on the right words to switch their concentration dominance. The information loss in the second ten-minute period of the first week reaches 23 percent, which is not satisfactory as well. The third ten-minute period of the first week is the most difficult one. The speaker makes the speed faster, which makes the students more stressful. The information loss reaches 36 percent.

As we can see, the tendency during the next three weeks changes. Every next week in the first ten-minute period the information loss becomes smaller (25, 21 and 15 percent information loss) as well as in the second ten-minute period. The third ten-minute period is worth special attention. As it is clear from the diagram the third ten-minute period is different in the first, second weeks and the third and fourth weeks. If during the first two weeks the information loss in the last period exceeds the first and the second ten-minute period, during the last two weeks the information loss during the third period is smaller. This very period shows the main tendency, because it means that the concentration shift happens smoother and the students can control the concentration dominance and catch the fifth, sixth and seventh words in the string of logically irrelevant but phonetically and grammatically similar words. The minimum recommended number of hours for this exercise is 30 per semester.

3.1.2. Repeat and Lag behind. Another exercise which I practice consists in repeating short, non-connected sentences three times in a row lagging 3 words then 4 words then 6 words behind.

- I do appreciate your cordial welcome.
- Distinguished guests.
- Your excellency President of Turkey.
- My ideas deal with the offer I came up with.
- I hope he will join the team of workers.
- I am utterly convinced that the reason for it is substantial.

The student has to wait until the speaker utters the third word and only then repeat the sentences. After 10 minutes the students are offered another level: they have to lag 4 words behind then 6 words behind. Every time the speed should be changed from a slow one to a faster one not to give the students a chance to adapt to the flow of utterance.

The main idea of the exercise is to train the students to control the transition from

listening to repeating counting the number of words at the same time. It means that the students apply four cognitive efforts: listening, counting, repeating, processing. The transition between these efforts should be kept under control. At the initial stages listening and counting dominate, then these cognitive processes should be secondary and muffled up, so that repeating and processing cognitive processes start dominating.

After 30 hours of this exercise the students automatically count the number of words and what is more important they can single out the right word to start their interpreting with, which is a crucial interpreter's skill. For example, in a sentence like:

Many months of extra hard work had passed, and the North Bridge builders could see the first inspiring results.

In the sentence, the initial interpreter's word makes the success of the interpreting. In Ukrainian, for example, such complex-sentence syntax is not natural. We usually say this idea in one sentence or using a subordinate sentence in a compound sentence. In order to reconstruct the syntax an interpreter has to wait until the speaker says the word "builders" to understand the way to construct the syntax. For this, it is necessary to retain the information stored in the message before the word "builders". While an interpreter listens to the speaker, he has to concentrate upon two main things: finding the right word and information processing. When the right word is found, the previous processes are muffled to become secondary, but speaking and rendering come to the frontline.

3.1.3. Count and Listen. Another exercise consists in creating artificial obstacles right where interpreters must change from one cognitive process to another one.

I ask the students to read the any text or to count the numbers from 1 to 200 or count down from 200 to 1 and listen to the speaker at the same time. Simultaneously, the students have to put down all the precise information onto the notes.

The activity creates additional artificial noises and redundant information, which the students have to get over and neglect. The start understanding how to prioritize a definite cognitive process. Writing and speaking figures take too much cognitive effort. Their task is to concentrate upon listening and professing precise information.

I devote 10 hours to this kind of exercise. After this period of time, the students understand that speaking and physical writing should be unconscious and automatic (secondary) but listening and processing precise information must be made a primary cognitive process.

Simultaneous interpreting is a constant process of concentration dominance variations, which resemble cosine waves depicting the way each cognitive process dominates over the other ones at certain moments. I have practiced these exercises for 8 years. They show good results and train the students to be ready for another crucial interpreter's skill:

split attention.

1. Concluding Remarks. My study of Concentration Stages and split attention practice allowed me to come up with the notion of Concentration Dominance which means the process of interpreting prioritizing of different cognitive activities. Three-stage process of interpreting requires instant online ability to switch from one cognitive activity to another one understanding when and how each of the processes can be made primary and which of them can be made secondary. A human brain cannot give a full-fledged cognitive effort to all the cognitive processes at the same time, for that reason a crucial interpreter's skill to be trained in classes is concentration dominance. My 8-year experiment allowed to me to come up with a range of exercises, very easy, but practical ones to make the transition between the cognitive processes run smoother. They are: repeat and catch up, repeat and lag behind, count and listen. The experiment proved successful.

1. Where next? There are a plethora of cognitive aspects to be analyzed and processed. I would focus primarily on split attention, stress management and speech smoothness in simultaneous interpreting.

Another crucial aspect peculiar for Ukraine is interpreting training in the groups of bilingual students. Every cognitive process becomes even more difficult to overcome if an interpreter has an intermediary language which interferes with a source language. This aspect requires a separate substantial approach. The approach means eliminating the consequences of language negative interference on all the language levels. Every exercise should contain this aspect. There is a big perspective to analyze interpreting studies and build up interpreting theory based upon a definite language pair or the languages involved, which mean elaborating nationally marked interpreting studies.

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