

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the responsibilities of interpreters in navigating cultural differences, emphasizing the need for cultural competence, and examining the impact of culture on language itself. It also delves into the strategies that interpreters employ to handle cultural challenges, while adhering to ethical considerations. Real-life case studies highlight the real-world implications of cultural misunderstandings in interpreting and provide valuable lessons for both professionals and aspiring interpreters.

In an age of advancing technology, the article addresses the role of modern tools, such as machine translation, and their limitations in preserving cultural nuances during interpretation. It concludes by underscoring the significance of cultural aspects in simultaneous interpreting and the responsibility of interpreters in fostering effective cross-cultural communication. As our world grows increasingly interconnected, the ability to decode the cultural intricacies behind words becomes more critical than ever in ensuring successful communication across diverse languages and cultures.

Keywords: culture, communication, cross-cultural communication, etiquette and protocol, idiomatic expressions, cultural nuances, language and cultural competence.

Cultural aspects play a crucial role in simultaneous interpreting, as interpreters are not just transmitting words between languages but also bridging cultural gaps and facilitating effective communication across different cultural contexts. According to the results of researchers on this field, this paper analyzes such cultural aspects as: cultural sensitivity, idiomatic expressions and cultural references, etiquette and protocol, taboos and sensitive topics, non-verbal communication, contextual understanding, adaptation and flexibility. Further, we will see them one by one in detail.

Cultural Sensitivity. Interpreters must be sensitive to cultural nuances, customs, and expectations that influence communication. They need to be aware of cultural differences in communication styles, non-verbal cues, and appropriate language use.

Adapting the interpretation to respect cultural norms and expectations helps ensure effective cross-cultural communication.

Idiomatic Expressions and Cultural References. Language is deeply intertwined with culture, and interpreters often encounter idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and cultural references that may not have direct equivalents in the target language. Interpreters must navigate these linguistic and cultural challenges, considering the cultural connotations and finding suitable ways to convey the intended meaning in the target language.

Etiquette and Protocol. Interpreters working in diplomatic or formal settings need to be well-versed in cultural etiquette and protocol. They must understand the appropriate forms of address, levels of formality, and hierarchical structures within different cultural contexts. Adhering to cultural norms helps maintain the respect and professionalism necessary for successful communication.

Taboos and Sensitive Topics. Different cultures have varying sensitivities and taboos regarding certain topics, such as religion, politics, or social issues. Interpreters must be aware of these sensitivities and exercise cultural sensitivity when handling such subjects. They may need to find culturally appropriate ways to convey sensitive information or navigate potential conflicts that arise due to cultural differences.

Non-Verbal Communication. Non-verbal communication, including gestures, facial expressions, and body language, can vary across cultures. Interpreters must be attuned to these non-verbal cues and consider their cultural implications when conveying the speaker's message. Accurately interpreting and conveying non-verbal communication enhances the overall understanding and cultural sensitivity of the interpretation.

Contextual Understanding. Cultural aspects are closely tied to the broader contextual understanding of a communication event. Interpreters need to grasp the social, historical, and political context in which the speech or conversation is taking place. Understanding the cultural background and context helps interpreters provide accurate and culturally appropriate interpretations.

Adaptation and Flexibility. Cultural aspects in simultaneous interpreting often require interpreters to adapt their language use, tone, and style to suit the cultural expectations of the target audience. They must be flexible and responsive, adjusting their interpretation to ensure effective cross-cultural communication and promote understanding.

Language and Cultural Competence. Interpreters need a strong command of both the source and target languages, as well as a deep understanding of the cultural nuances embedded within them. Cultural competence allows interpreters to accurately convey not only the words but also the cultural meanings and implications behind them.

Bridging Cultural Gaps. Interpreters act as cultural mediators, bridging the gaps between different cultural perspectives and facilitating understanding. They play a vital role in helping individuals from different cultural backgrounds communicate effectively, fostering cross-cultural understanding, and promoting cultural exchange.

By considering and incorporating these cultural aspects, interpreters can provide interpretations that not only convey the linguistic content accurately but also navigate the cultural intricacies, ensuring successful cross-cultural communication in simultaneous interpreting settings.

CONCLUSION

Culture is intertwined with language in intricate ways, influencing idioms, metaphors, and non-verbal cues. It is in the idiosyncrasies of each culture that we find both the beauty and complexity of communication. In recognizing these cultural nuances, interpreters become cultural diplomats, fostering a deeper understanding between people who speak different languages.

To conclude this exploration of the cultural aspects of simultaneous interpreting, it reiterates the critical role of interpreters in facilitating effective cross-cultural communication. The ability to decode the cultural intricacies behind words is now more important than ever in a world where boundaries blur, and interactions become increasingly global. Simultaneous interpreters are not just language facilitators; they are cultural mediators and ambassadors of understanding in an interconnected world. Their contribution to building bridges between languages and cultures should be celebrated, supported, and continuously refined, as they stand at the forefront of promoting a more harmonious and empathetic global community.

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