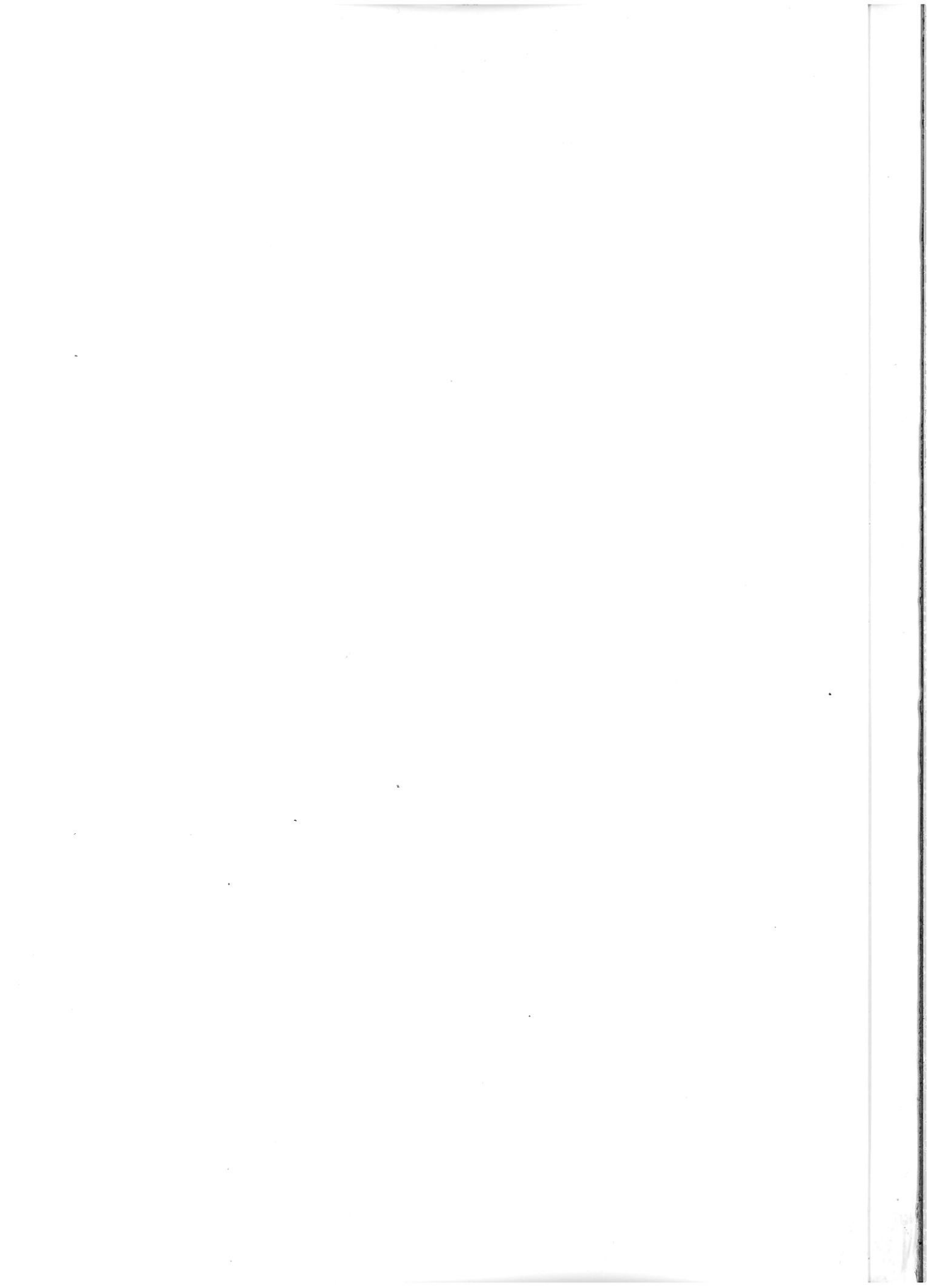


# Consecutive Interpreting from English

Carol J. Patrie

THE EFFECTIVE INTERPRETING SERIES



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Carol J. Patrie



San Diego, California

## The Effective Interpreting Series: Consecutive Interpreting from English

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Rosetta Stone image © Copyright The British Museum. The Rosetta Stone appears throughout the series as a symbol of translation's importance to mankind. The basalt slab was discovered in July 1799 in the small Egyptian village of Rosette on the western delta of the Nile. The stone's inscription in hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek languages led to a crucial breakthrough in research regarding Egyptian hieroglyphs. This key to "translating silent images" into a living language symbolizes the importance of accurate transmissions of messages from one language into another.

The Rosetta Stone now resides in the British Museum in London.

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To my brothers,  
Stan and Bob, with love.

## Acknowledgments

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I thank all those involved in filming the video, especially Yoon Lee. The editing of this video makes it unique and I am excited about the fine work accomplished by Dan Veltri and Joseph Josselyn.

The entire staff of DawnSignPress is a constant source of support for me on a daily basis and I am aware of their positive influence on my work, from customer service, pre-production, production, and editing to marketing, sales, and shipping.

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I know that I am especially blessed to have Joe Dannis' support. I believe that fate introduced us in the early 1970s so that one day we could together produce these exceptional materials that benefit interpreters and interpreter educators worldwide. Ultimately, when interpreters are well trained, communication can flow easily between people who find themselves on opposite sides of a language barrier.

I am especially grateful for the tremendous amount of positive feedback on previous volumes in *The Effective Interpreting Series* from teachers, students, and interpreters. I hope you will continue to enjoy the series and continue to provide us with valuable feedback.

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# Preface

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When I became a professional interpreter in 1968, interpreter education was rare. Since that time, interpreter education has made great strides. Soon after my first year of professional interpreting in 1968, I began attempting to teach interpreting. From that time until now, I have been building a store of ideas and materials related to teaching interpretation. I am pleased to share with you my 35 years of experience. I am one of the developers of the Master of Arts in Interpretation at Gallaudet University, where I taught interpretation. More recently I have focused on developing interpreter education materials. I am the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Effective Interpreting Professional Education Series of Language Matters, Inc., where I have implemented a series of graduate and undergraduate courses on interpretation and teaching interpretation. See [www.language-matters.com](http://www.language-matters.com) for additional information on courses covering the topics addressed in *The Effective Interpreting Series*.

The exercises presented in this book resulted from my desire to develop materials that practicing and future interpreters can use in or out of the classroom while studying consecutive interpretation. This book can be used independently of any other book in *The Effective Interpreting Series*, or it can be used as one of the sequence of five books that provide a systematic approach to developing skills in simultaneous interpreting from English.

In my experience I have found that one of the greatest challenges in interpreter education for signed or spoken language is a lack of materials for use in the classroom. An even more severe problem is overcoming the lack of study materials that practicing and future interpreters can use on their own, either as a refresher or for continuing professional development. There is a growing demand for mentorship in both signed and spoken language interpretation. These materials can help optimize these contacts. Consecutive interpreting is a very complex skill that requires hours and hours of appropriate practice. Often interpreters want but cannot find effective ways to improve their skills. It is my hope that by providing materials for developing consecutive interpreting skills from English to any other language practicing and future interpreters will find developing consecutive interpretation skills to be rewarding and effective.

Successful interpreters rely on many skills in their everyday work. The development of these skills is not intuitive or automatic. The skills needed

during the consecutive interpreting process must be developed through a careful sequence of learning activities. Isolating specific skills and learning them one at a time is the best approach to learning complex new skills. Learning new skills one at a time allows mastery of individual skills and a feeling of success. Gaining control over components of the consecutive interpretation process can assist in developing eventual success in simultaneous interpreting because some skills are common to both processes. The skills that make up the consecutive and simultaneous interpreting processes are generally not used in isolation and must be synthesized correctly in order to render an interpretation.

Interpreter education consists of teaching and learning component skills that are interactive and interdependent. The learning process for interpretation should begin with strengthening skills in your first language (L1) and move in a carefully structured sequence from intralingual skill development to interlingual development. The first three volumes in *The Effective Interpreting Series* dealt with English skills development, cognitive processing, and translation skills. This volume provides practice materials designed to develop consecutive interpreting skills from English to any other language.

## Description of the Materials

*The Effective Interpreting Series: Consecutive Interpreting*, consists of a teacher's guide, a student book, and a videotext. Ideally, these materials follow *Cognitive Processing Skills in English*, *English Skills Development*, and *Translating from English*. The teacher's guide includes all of the information in the student book plus instructions for the teacher. Both the teacher's guide and the student book refer to the exercises on the videotext. In the upper right corner of the videotext you will see the unit and exercise number. For example, Ex. 1.2 means the second exercise in Unit 1. The following topics are included in this volume: intralingual exercises, sources of error, listening, note-taking, analysis, memory, reformulation, and monitoring and correction. The exercise materials progress from easy to more difficult within each unit and as you move through the text. Some exercises provide a review of concepts presented in previous volumes of *The Effective Interpreting Series*, but are presented in the context of consecutive interpreting skill development.

All video materials are examples of spontaneous spoken English and none of the samples was rehearsed or scripted. The exercises at the beginning of the videotext use short utterances. The speakers paused at the end of each utterance naturally. The exercises progress in difficulty, and the longer utterances are segmented at carefully selected points in the discourse to allow time for consecutive interpretation. Whenever possible the pauses are placed at boundaries of idea units.

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# *How to Use This Book*

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## **Goal of This Book and Videotext**

The goal of this book is to provide you with a systematically arranged set of experiences that develop skill in consecutive interpreting using English monologic source materials. The book does not attempt to provide a complete review of the literature on consecutive interpretation, but rather selects key aspects of the consecutive interpreting process, presents relevant theoretical aspects of the process, and offers exercises that relate to those points. Consecutive interpreting is sometimes abbreviated CI. Similarly, simultaneous interpreting is sometimes abbreviated SI. Consecutive interpretation skills have two real-world applications. First, consecutive interpretation skills are an important step in the development of simultaneous interpretation skills. Although we do not have definitive data that suggest that success in CI predicts success in SI, consecutive interpreting tends to have less cognitive demands on the interpreter than simultaneous, yet still demands accurate message transfer. This makes consecutive interpreting an indispensable bridge to simultaneous interpreting. Second, consecutive interpretation skills are professional skills. Consecutive interpreting can be used in medical or legal situations or other situations that demand high levels of accuracy. Consecutive interpreting is used to interpret conversations or lectures. Consecutive interpreting can be used in any setting provided that the interpreter has sufficient skill.

This book is specially designed to provide practice in consecutive interpreting skills that ensure that the message is correctly analyzed, transferred, and reformulated in the target language. The first two instructional units guide you through a review of the skills from earlier materials in this series, *Cognitive Processing Skills in English* and *English Skills Development*. Units 3 through 6 echo skills presented in *Translating from English*. Although translation and consecutive interpreting share some cognitive abilities, there are important distinctions between these two skills and the processes that underlie each. Certain topics from *Translating from English* have been adapted here to serve as stepping stones to consecutive interpreting. The topics are analysis, transfer, and restructuring. Topics new to this volume are note-taking, self-monitoring, and self-correction. The exercises in this book allow intensive

practice in the components of consecutive interpreting. You will be able to synthesize all of the stages in the consecutive interpreting process by practicing with warm and cold source material. These study materials stand apart from existing materials because they include videotaped source texts that are carefully segmented and keyed to this book. The book contains exercises that are designed to help you routinize the subskills needed for effective consecutive interpreting.

In each unit, a brief introduction provides theoretical background information on the unit's topic and discusses the relevance of that information to consecutive interpretation. Seven units follow the introductory material, each with a series of exercises specifically designed to apply the theoretical concepts discussed in that unit. In turn, each exercise has three parts. First, you respond to the exercise material and record your answers. This allows you to create a product. Next, answer the study questions. Answering the study questions allows you to examine your product and consider theoretical aspects of your work. The third aspect of each exercise is the follow-up. The follow-up allows you to evaluate the communicative impact of your interpretation and make plans for improvement.

All of the exercises (recording, answering the study questions, and follow-up) in each unit may be completed as out-of-classroom work or as independent work during class time, if appropriate equipment is available. This book provides complete directions for each exercise. The directions guide you to the correct location on the accompanying videotext. In the upper right corner of the videotext you will see the unit and exercise number. For example, Ex. 1.2 means the second exercise in Unit 1. The exercise materials progress from easy to more difficult within each unit and as you move through the text.

Each exercise has study questions and a follow-up. The study questions help provide focus and insight into your responses to the exercises. The follow-up is a form of self-assessment and is fully explained on pages 4–7. The exercises and follow-up allow you to take responsibility for creating work (product) and to analyze and develop strategies for improvement related to the processes you use to create the product. At the end of each unit there is a progress tracking sheet. Use the progress tracking sheet to note the date you completed the exercises, to make notes regarding your progress, and also to record any questions you may have about the exercise. More detail on the tracking sheet is provided on pages 7–9.

The spoken English on the accompanying videotext is unscripted and unrehearsed and provides examples of spontaneously spoken English. Interpreters benefit from work with English as spontaneously spoken because this is the form of English they will work with most often. In the exercises, the spoken material is transcribed to make English available in written form. Although English that is spoken and later transcribed is different in form than English that is initially created in a written format, the transcript of the spoken English simply provides a more accessible way to analyze and discuss aspects of the source message.

## What You Need before Beginning the Exercises

You need specific equipment in order to get the maximum benefit from these exercises. Here is what you will need in addition to the videotext and book: a VHS VCR with a remote control that will allow you to pause the video, a TV monitor, a video camera, a supply of blank videotapes on which you can record your interpretations, an audio recorder, blank audiotapes, and a quiet place to work.

If you are working into a signed language, having easy access to a video camera enhances the study process. If you are working into a signed language, it is best to have your work videotaped in picture-in-picture format so that the source and the target languages are available on the same videotape. If you do not have picture-in-picture capability, a video camera focusing on you (and the speaker if possible) while you are interpreting will allow you to record the auditory source language and visual target simultaneously. This is not ideal but will allow you to have source and target on the same videotape. Spoken language interpreters working without a camera will need a tape recorder to record the spoken consecutive interpretation. Be sure that your tape recorder is close enough to the video source so that your audiotape records the sound from the English source tape.

## When and Where You Should Plan to Do the Exercises

Each exercise can be done on your own. If you are using these materials in a classroom environment, you should plan to do the exercises on your own time and discuss your interpretations during class time. Where you do the exercises will depend on your instructor and the equipment available in your interpreter education program. For example, if your instructional program has a language lab that will permit you to work independently and record your work, then you can do many of the exercises independently while on campus or in class. Your teacher may introduce the exercises and go over your results with you.

If you are a practicing interpreter and want to work on your skills for professional development you will still need all of the equipment listed previously and may proceed at your own pace. You may wish to form a study group to have a forum to discuss your skill development work, both product and process.

## How Many Times Should You Do the Exercises

You can benefit from doing each exercise at least twice. When you do the exercise the first time, the material and skills may be new and unfamiliar. When you do the exercise the second time, the material will be "warm," or familiar, because you have read and heard it once and have tried the exercise once. If you are already a simultaneous interpreter you may still find some of the exercises difficult because focusing attention on specific component skills

is a challenge that is different than the cognitive challenge of simultaneous interpreting. The skills you practice will become more familiar and automatic. Automaticity improves control of the processes you use to create the product.

## More about the Five-Step Follow-up

The purpose of the follow-up is to introduce and strengthen the concepts of self-assessment and insight into the process of consecutive interpreting. Interpreters who have accurate self-assessment skills can enjoy lifelong learning and continuing education opportunities in a wide variety of settings, even if a teacher or mentor is not available. Self-assessment skills lead to accountability in interpretation because they allow you to analyze both the process and the product of your work. Accountability means that you make conscious decisions about both the processes involved and the products achieved in your work, increasing the ability to faithfully interpret the original message. Accountability also means that you take responsibility when the interpretation is not faithful to the message and correct it. A graduate of the Master of Arts in Interpretation at Gallaudet who became very familiar with the follow-up suggests that the impact of self-assessment available through the follow-up is unparalleled (Fleetwood, 1998, personal communication). The five-step follow-up is presented after the study questions in most of the exercises and is explained below.

## Directions for the Five-Step Follow-up

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

Examples:

Maintained composure

Clear pronunciation

Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. The examples used in these directions are based on English as the target language.

### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe only the portion of the interpretation you would like to analyze and revise. For example, if you are working into spoken English, write only the phrase (or phrases) that needs revision. If you are working into a signed language, use capital letters and gloss only the portion you would like to revise. Glossing is a system that allows linguists to note the features of a sign language utterance so that the utterance can be studied carefully. For our purposes we will not be using a full system of glossing. Instead, use capital letters

to write the name of the sign to which you are referring. A brief description of glossing is provided in the terminology section of this book.

“John lost his keys.”

## **Step 2 Revision**

Write a revised interpretation that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

“John found his keys.”

## **Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible types of errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select from one of five error types listed below for each error you identify. This error taxonomy is adapted from the eight areas discussed by Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the names of the error type after the “interpretation rendered” in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one error type for each error.

1. **Literal translation** (example: interpretation follows source language syntax too closely)
2. **Inadequate language proficiency**
  - a. Source language (example: comprehension problems)
  - b. Target language (example: difficulty expressing the message in TL syntax)
3. **Omission** (example: main points or other important features left out of TL rendition)
4. **Addition** (example: information included in TL that was not in SL and is not warranted by context)
5. **Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements** (example: intonation patterns are omitted or skewed, illocutionary force is omitted or skewed)

For example, “John lost his keys” (2a) indicates that the error is due to language proficiency problems in the source language because the interpreter misunderstood the lexical item for “lost.”

## **Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the errors according to how they impact the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

In *English Skills Development*, *Cognitive Processing Skills in English*, and *Translating from English* the emphasis of the five-step follow-up was on finding the reasons for the errors. According to Kussmaul (1995), finding reasons

for errors is appropriate for language learning, but in consecutive interpreting it is more relevant to determine the *communicative function* of the error. What is the impact of the errors on the communicative function? For example, does the error distort the message or is there a “sufficient degree of precision”? In this study set you will select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function.

It is important to put the concept of error analysis in context. Interpreters are relied upon and trusted to accurately convey information between participants. When an interpreter falters the consequences can be grave. A series of examples follows.

Whitaker (2002) described a series of errors made by President Carter’s interpreter during a visit to Poland. “Instead of saying that Carter had just left the United States to travel to Poland, the interpreter said Carter had ‘abandoned’ his country. Then Carter said the Constitution of Poland was worthy of being revered internationally. But his interpreter said the Polish document was worthy of ‘ridicule’. Things got worse as Carter said he had desires for the future of the fine Polish people and his interpreter said Carter had ‘carnal desire’ for Poles.” Whitaker explains, “On this hapless occasion, precisely the sorts of tensions it may be assumed that Carter’s visit had been intended to lessen were instantly significantly increased . . . thanks to the presidential interpreter’s missing the mark in one big blundering way after another” (p. 47). These errors were serious enough that they could have triggered an ongoing set of crises and misunderstandings.

Here is a sample rating scale developed along the lines of Kussmaul’s (1995) approach that considers the consequences of the errors on the participants.

Select the number that best describes the probable impact of the error and write that number next to the “interpretation rendered” in Step 1.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

This step helps us become aware of the impact of an interpretation on the audience. A flawless interpretation has an impact on an audience and so does an interpretation containing errors. In general, in the field of interpretation we study errors and error types in order to improve performance of subsequent interpretations.

As you rate the effect of the error on communication, keep in mind that the earlier in the process the error occurs, the more serious it will be. For example, if the interpreter does not comprehend the message it is impossible to render an accurate interpretation of that message. An error in the comprehension stage would be very serious. Errors in the transfer process generally fall into the quite serious category. For example, if the interpreter understands

the source language message but does not know how to transfer that message into the target language the resulting error is likely to be quite serious. Reformulation errors in the category of pronunciation or register are generally not as serious, but can be. For example, when a mispronunciation or wrong word choice skews the message, it could be a serious error.

### **Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the type of error and its probable impact on the interpretations, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work. For example, you can decide to focus on comprehension and review the material until you are certain you have fully understood the message, or you can rerecord your interpretation to create an improved product. Additionally, if you find that the errors are due to language proficiency issues related to cognitive processing, you can review the study approaches in *The Effective Interpreting Series: Cognitive Processing Skills in English*. You can use the source material in this book as new material for cognitive processing practice. Likewise, you can review the activities and exercises and in *English Skills Development* for additional support in English. You can use the source material in this text and practice lexical substitution, paraphrasing, or other intralingual exercises.

If you find difficulties in transferring the message across language boundaries, you may wish to study the concepts presented in *Translating from English*. If you need new source material for translation practice, you may use any of the source materials in the other three volumes of *The Effective Interpreting Series*.

By carefully doing each follow-up, you will learn the importance of the many components of the interpreting process and see that each component is needed for a successful interpretation. Separating interpreting into its component parts and processes allows you to understand where to focus your efforts for improvement and builds automaticity. More importantly, the follow-up helps you to see which parts of the process are under your control and which are not. For example, background noise may be a part of the communicative event over which you do not have control, but you may be able to build cognitive strategies that allow you to avoid being distracted by the noise.

The follow-up should be completed as soon as possible after finishing the exercises. You will be able to explain your reasoning more easily when the follow-up process is done soon after the exercises. The follow-up is further explained on pages 56–58. Examples are given using a hypothetical student named Pat who has just completed the first exercise in Unit 2. Unit 1 does not include the five-step follow-up.

## **Progress Tracking Sheet**

A progress tracking sheet is at the end of each unit. This sheet is designed to help you keep track of which exercises you have completed and your

performance on these exercises. After completing the exercise, answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress. The sample chart that follows provides examples of how to note your progress using the quantitative or qualitative approach.

A quantitative approach uses a point scale. Assigning points to linguistic exercises is arbitrary, but in academic environments you may find the point system more common than the qualitative approach. Each of the two trials on the performance and each study question and follow-up step can be assigned a point value. A zero indicates that the question was not answered and a 5 indicates a full and complete response. Add the scores in each column (not row) and divide by the number of exercises to get a percentage for first performance, second performance, study questions, and follow-up. It is important to have separate percentages for each of these columns because the scores in the study question and follow-up columns represent different skills than the skills in the performance columns. The two performance columns provide space for performance scores. The columns for study questions and follow-up deal with how you answered questions about your work. A second trial on the same material is considered practice on warm or familiar material and should be weighted less than the "cold" or first attempt to interpret the selection.

Here is an example of a scale you can use to assign points to your work. Excellent (no serious errors) = 5 points, good (some errors, but not serious) = 4 points, fair (many errors, some serious) = 3 points, not satisfactory = 2 (many errors, most are serious), poor = 1 point (missed the point of the exercise—must redo).

A qualitative approach is well suited to those who are studying the material in an independent fashion or those who do not want to attach numbers and percentages to their work. In a qualitative approach you describe your response to your work rather than assigning numbers. Write down enough information to remind yourself of your level of achievement in the performance of the exercises, study questions, and follow-up.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 1 Quantitative	1/30						
Qualitative							
Exercise 2 Quantitative	2/3	3	5	4			4
Qualitative		This was difficult because I do not know about sailing.	The questions help me focus.	Helps to know how to evaluate my work.	Practice this again.		Felt I had a better grasp on the process.
Exercise 3 Quantitative	2/8	3	5	4			4
Qualitative		I got tired and made more mistakes.	Felt I understood the questions.	Still need to improve on Step 4 of the process.	Important for me to practice building endurance this week.		Need to practice this again.
Quantitative Totals		6	10	8			8

## Assumptions

This book is based on the assumption that consecutive interpreting can be separated into its components for study purposes and that doing so builds a strong cognitive and procedural foundation for beginning simultaneous interpreting. Neither consecutive interpreting nor simultaneous interpreting is actually a linear sequence of skills that are performed one at a time. Rather, each is a complex series of interacting skills and processes, with simultaneous interpreting being even more complex and interactive than consecutive. It can be overwhelming and ineffective to try to master all the skills and processes in either interpreting process at once. Most research on the cognitive aspects of interpretation has been done on simultaneous interpreting, not consecutive interpreting, but some aspects of this research can be applied to consecutive interpreting in order to help us better understand the processes common to both types of interpreting.

Frauenfelder and Schriefers (1997) suggest that it is possible and even desirable to isolate specific tasks within the interpreting process. It is more effective to learn how to master the components and then learn to synthesize the skills and processes during the consecutive interpreting process. When control of the subprocesses underlying consecutive interpreting is developed and available, then there is a much higher chance that the control needed for simultaneous interpreting skills will be strongly grounded. When more advanced skills do not have a firm base, more effortful processing is required during the interpretation process (Gile, 1995). When more effortful processing is needed, then the likelihood of fatigue is increased. Increased fatigue leads to a corresponding increase in errors in interpretation.

DeGroot (2000) discusses the importance of acquiring skill in the components of interpretation while in training. You must be able to manage the discreet components of the consecutive process before combining them into the larger process of consecutive interpreting. A componential approach involves studying the processes within consecutive interpreting and then synthesizing those processes.

If novice interpreters practice the total task of simultaneous interpreting, without first practicing consecutive, problems such as frustration, panic, and overload are likely. (Schneider, 1985, in Degroot, 2000). De Groot (2000) says, "Not only has it been shown that component training does transfer to performance on the whole task, but also that under some sets of circumstances component training may even be more effective than whole-task training" (p. 54).

This book contains structured practice in the skills that precede and comprise consecutive interpreting skills. If you are beyond the beginning stages of an interpreter education program or are already a practicing interpreter, you can benefit from practicing consecutive interpreting skills, either as a refresher or for professional skill maintenance. This book provides you with meaningful and well-organized exercises to develop your consecutive interpreting skills by enhancing your cognitive processing strategies.

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# *Introduction to Consecutive Interpreting*

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Mikkelsen (1983, p.6) says, "Consecutive interpreting is a procedure by which the interpreter listens to a message and concurrently reorganizes the information by means of a highly personalized note-taking system that enables him/her to cast off the external linguistic structure of the message and then transfer its essence to another linguistic structure that is intelligible to his/her audience." Sometimes consecutive interpreters do work without notes when the utterances are short. In consecutive interpreting the interpreter has the option of using note-taking when necessary and appropriate. The exception to this may be when the interpreter is working from ASL to English. Signed language interpreters who use both a signed and a spoken mode will not be able to effectively take notes while watching signing.

Ilg and Lambert (1996) provide a concise introduction to some of the remarkably accomplished interpreters who used and taught consecutive interpreting but left no written record of their methods or teaching strategies. Most interpreters who worked prior to World War II were self-taught and used consecutive interpreting. Some of these interpreters trained other people who later wrote important works that influenced the field. For example, Marie-France Skuncke taught at the still-famous school for interpreters in Geneva, Switzerland, Ecole de Traduction et d'Interpretation. She was one of the interpreters who began working at the Nuremberg trials and was also Danica Seleskovitch's teacher.

Seleskovitch later became an influential teacher of interpreting, writing works on the topic that are still used today. "She was one of the first educators to define the need to teach and practice consecutive interpretation prior to simultaneous interpretation, believing it to be the foundation for all accurate interpretation work" (Russell, 2002, p. 35).

Among the interpreters mentioned in the historical review by Ilg and Lambert is Georges Lafrance, who interpreted a full hour-long, uninterrupted speech using consecutive interpreting and "earned more applause for his tour de force than the speaker himself." (Ilg and Lambert, 1996, p. 70). This performance is notable because the interpretation began after the speaker had completed the hour-long presentation.

This introduction provides an overall orientation to consecutive interpreting in signed and spoken languages, its history, uses, relevance to signed language

interpreting, and some theoretical information that will help prepare you for the exercises that follow.

## Consecutive Interpreting in Sign Language Interpreting

Consecutive interpreting was commonly used prior to the 1940s in the spoken language interpreting community (Gonzalez et al., 1991). After World War II, due to the needs of the court systems in Europe and advances in technology, simultaneous interpreting became more widely used than consecutive interpreting.

In the field of sign language interpreting in North America, consecutive interpreting has had an equally important but unacknowledged place in practice and training (Patrie, 1989b). Historically, sign language interpreter training programs may not have included consecutive interpreting as a course or skill, simply because its value in training was not realized. Many early educators were familiar with consecutive interpreting since most of the original instructors in interpreter education programs had deaf parents and used consecutive interpreting while interpreting for their parents. Later, in the 1960s, these same people became the first professional interpreters. Still later in the 1970s they became the first interpreter educators when interpreter education programs began to spring up nationwide. Legislation to benefit deaf people's access to communication led directly to the establishment of many programs, but the programs, although they reflected the best efforts of the day, often did not meet the growing need for qualified interpreters. The experienced interpreters who suddenly found themselves teaching interpretation often did not have the benefit of curriculum or textbooks and were pioneers in sign language interpreter education.

Because of the newness of the field and the lack of connection to spoken language interpreter education, each sign language interpreting program developed its own system of graduating students, most of whom were poorly prepared to enter the profession of interpreting. As the profession of interpreter educator evolved, consecutive interpretation was still not included in the interpreter education curriculum. This oversight was primarily due to the increasing pressure to graduate simultaneous interpreters who were employment-ready, a challenge for a discipline that was in its infancy. Most programs focused on simultaneous interpreting, without building the component skills first. Russell (2002, p. 41) states, "Despite literature that suggests that consecutive interpretation strategies must be learned prior to learning how to provide simultaneous interpretation only two out of the six interpreter training programs in Canada devote coursework to consecutive interpreting and use it not only as a foundation skill upon which to build simultaneous interpretation skills, but as a valuable work place approach to interpretation."

Since the 1970s consecutive interpreting has become integrated into more curricula. Today the demands on interpreter education programs are higher than ever in terms of accountability. In recent years there has been a slow but

steady shift to the realization that time spent on consecutive interpreting in the interpreter education curriculum is crucial to the success of its graduates and is time well spent.

If interpreters are trained to use consecutive interpreting in situations that demand the highest accuracy, then the interpreters will have the confidence and the skill to use consecutive interpreting appropriately. In general, users of signed language interpreting services have come to expect only simultaneous interpreting services. This expectation results from the widespread and nearly exclusive use of simultaneous interpreting. "Despite the significant body of literature from spoken language interpreting which suggests that consecutive interpretation allows for a greater degree of accuracy, the predominant practice of ASL/English interpreters is to provide simultaneous interpreting" (Russell, 2002, p. 41). Often simultaneous interpreting has a detrimentally short processing time. In some settings consecutive interpreting would better serve all participants. Cokely's (1992) findings on simultaneous interpreting in ASL suggest that when interpreters have greater processing time, and therefore larger amounts of the source message, overall errors are reduced. Interpreters need to have both skills readily available and must also know which settings would benefit from the use of consecutive rather than simultaneous interpreting.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Consecutive Interpreting

### *What Is Consecutive Interpretation?*

Consecutive interpretation is one type of language transfer. The interpretation is rendered after the source message has stopped. The source message does not resume until the interpretation has stopped. The length of the interpretation depends on the length of the source message. It can vary from a single utterance to an entire speech.

### *What Are the Differences between Consecutive Interpreting and Simultaneous Interpreting?*

Gile (2001, p.3) describes the differences between consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting by making the following five comparisons.

1. In the production effort, the interpreter can devote more attention to the target language output in consecutive interpreting than in simultaneous interpreting.

Simultaneous interpreting involves processing two languages at once in "working memory." During simultaneous interpreting the interpreter must attend to inhibiting the effect of interference from the source language, while producing the target language output. In consecutive interpreting there is much less likelihood of interference of the source language. The consecutive interpreting process allows

the interpreter to take notes and then produce the target language output. In consecutive interpreting the interpreter can devote greater attention to monitoring target language output than is possible during simultaneous interpreting.

2. Target speech occurs under heavier time pressure in simultaneous interpreting than in consecutive interpreting.

This variable is especially relevant when the source text is very dense or rapid material. In consecutive interpreting, the interpreter can pace himself or herself while the simultaneous interpreter must keep producing target language speech, going at the speaker's pace.

3. During consecutive interpreting the interpreter must decide what to write down and how to write it.

The processes associated with note-taking are only found in consecutive interpreting, not simultaneous interpreting.

4. The note-taking process and the slowness of writing during consecutive interpreting create a demand on working memory that does not exist in simultaneous interpreting.

Learning the specific strategies for note-taking can reduce the cognitive load imposed by the note-taking process during consecutive interpreting.

5. Consecutive interpreting requires more long-term memory involvement than simultaneous interpreting.

Mead (1994) says that simultaneous interpreting is often thought of as the ultimate linguistic skill and that many people are unaware of the existence of consecutive interpreting. However, the "uninitiated" audience is likely to be most impressed by a well-rendered consecutive interpreting performance. Interpreters who have performed both simultaneous interpreting and consecutive interpreting know that the skills involved in each are not easily separable. There may be observable differences between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting but there "is not a clear cut division between skills required for SI [simultaneous interpreting] and those called for in CI [consecutive interpreting]" (p. 26). Because there may be considerable overlap between the two processes, it is wise to keep in mind that the main goal of the consecutive interpreting exercises in this book is to better prepare you for simultaneous interpreting.

### ***How Often Is Consecutive Interpreting Used?***

When Seleskovitch (1978b) wrote on the topic of consecutive interpreting, she suggested that it was used only about 10% of the time. Today it is difficult to get an accurate percentage of instances where consecutive interpreting is used.

### ***In Which Settings Is Consecutive Interpreting Used?***

Although it may be more common for spoken language interpreters than signed language interpreters to use consecutive interpretation, there are some situations where consecutive interpretation is the most appropriate mode regardless of language pairs. One example is a setting like a medical or legal interview in which an interpretation error could have grave impact on the participants. Consecutive interpreting is also used in diplomatic or escort interpreting (Bowen and Bowen, 1984). Russell (2002, p. 53) suggests that consecutive interpreting is sometimes used when the information is technical or complicated or when the language used relies on metaphors or illustrations.

### ***Who Should Use Consecutive Interpreting?***

Interpreters can use consecutive interpreting as a professional tool or as a developmental tool. Students can use it as a stepping stone to simultaneous interpreting skills. There are limited data that support the notion that strong skills in consecutive interpreting lead to strong skills in simultaneous interpreting but anecdotal reports indicate that this may be the case. Any interpreter who wants to reduce the risk of error, and knows how to use consecutive interpreting, can use this important tool provided he or she has sufficiently developed memory and interpretation skills to handle the task.

### ***What Are the Advantages of Using Consecutive Interpreting?***

The main advantage of consecutive interpreting is that it allows for greater accuracy than simultaneous interpreting. Mikkelson (1991) notes that consecutive interpreting allows the interpreter to include information that is crucial to the message but that might be omitted during the pressures of simultaneous interpreting. Examples include vocal intonation, pauses, and repetitions. Russell (2002) reviewed the literature on consecutive interpreting and found that "consecutive interpreting results in much greater accuracy in the transmission of the message" (p.53).

Another advantage of consecutive interpreting is additional time for reformulation and expression, without ongoing input of the source language. However, this is an advantage that can be lost if the text is long and memory is poor or even average. Another advantage of consecutive interpreting is increased accuracy. Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995) say that consecutive interpreting is more reliable than simultaneous interpreting for extremely technical discussions. This may be true, but only if the interpreter knows how to use consecutive interpreting approaches correctly and has actually practiced using these methods.

Even though many interpreter education programs do not directly or systematically address the development of consecutive interpreting skills, there is enough anecdotal evidence to suggest that it is a valuable developmental stage in learning simultaneous interpreting.

### ***What Is the Difference between Consecutive Interpreting in Spoken and Signed Languages?***

The main difference is that signed language consecutive interpreting involves both a spoken and a signed mode while spoken language interpreting only involves a spoken mode. Further, in spoken languages, consecutive interpreting is usually accompanied by note-taking. In signed language interpreting from a signed language to a spoken language it is not feasible for the interpreter to take notes while watching the signed message. However, it is possible for the signed language interpreter to take notes when the source language is a spoken language.

### ***What Is Note-Taking in Consecutive Interpreting?***

Note-taking is one of the main features that distinguishes consecutive interpreting from simultaneous interpreting. Ilg and Lambert's (1996) review of consecutive interpreting shows a wide range of approaches and opinions regarding note-taking in consecutive interpreting. At one end of the continuum are detailed note-taking systems the interpreter uses while listening to the original source message and refers to while rendering the interpretation. At the opposite end of the continuum is the notion held by Seleskovich and others at the Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs, which suggests that note-taking is not central or beneficial to the process of consecutive interpreting, and that recall of the message happens automatically if the message was understood. For spoken language interpreters note-taking skills play a role in professional consecutive interpretation, but for signed language interpreters, note-taking may only play a role in training. For more information on note-taking in consecutive interpreting see *An Introduction to Basic Note-Taking Skills for Consecutive Interpretation* by Nancy Schweda Nicholson (1993). A special note-taking system for legal situations is described in *Fundamentals of Court Interpretation* by Gonzalez et al. (1991). More information about note-taking appears in Unit 3 in this book.

### ***When Should Consecutive Interpreting Skills Be Developed?***

If you are a novice interpreter, consecutive interpreting skills should be developed before moving on to simultaneous interpreting because the cognitive demands related to the processes of consecutive interpreting are generally less than those associated with simultaneous interpreting. Ilg and Lambert (1996) say that it is logical to introduce consecutive interpreting only after more basic tasks such as written translation, paraphrasing, sight translation, and other intralingual skills have been introduced and that simultaneous interpreting should follow consecutive interpreting because simultaneous is the most cognitively demanding skill in the hierarchy of interpreting subskills and skills.

“There is agreement among authors that consecutive interpreting, whether working from memory or notes, makes it easier to break down the interpret-

ing process and examine the skills required—not just the skills of the various fluencies but also the considerable intellectual qualities required to cope with the process successfully” (Russell, 2002, p. 54).

Lambert (1988) suggests that exercises in interpreter training should be presented in a systematic approach aligned with human information processing. In her schema of training, less demanding exercises are presented before consecutive and simultaneous interpreting.

Gile (2001, p.4) describes several advantages of learning consecutive interpreting while in interpreter training. Consecutive has the following advantages for students.

1. Separating listening and reformulation removes the heavy burden of time constraints that usually occur in reformulation and allows time to focus on “translating” the message attending to fidelity, linguistic choices, and the reformulation process in a way that the pressures of simultaneous do not permit.
2. Separating listening and reformulation allows more independent focus on listening and reformulation, leading to a more efficient use of time than in simultaneous interpreting.
3. Consecutive interpreting allows a more careful focus on the listening component in order to detect any missing information. This increased opportunity for the listening effort leads to a deeper analysis of the message that provides a foundation for a faithful interpretation.
4. Consecutive interpreting allows a greater focus on target language production for two reasons. There is less interference from the source language and from time pressure. The focus on target language allows more precision in selecting appropriate terms and grammatical constructions in the target language. The separation afforded in consecutive interpreting allows a better opportunity to diagnose weaknesses in target language reformulation strategies.
5. Separating listening and reformulating “makes it easier to control target-speech fidelity.” This kind of correction takes longer in simultaneous interpreting and is a more complex process.

## Terminology

Terms and concepts associated with consecutive interpreting that you will need to successfully use the book are summarized below.

### *An Interpretation*

Following Bell’s distinctions, an interpretation is the *product* of the process of interpreting, or the target text. An interpretation should accurately reproduce the grammatical and lexical features as well as the style and content of the source text.

## ***Consecutive Interpreting***

According to Gonzalez et al. (1991, p. 379), "In consecutive interpreting the interpreter waits until the speaker has finished the source language message before rendering the message into the target language. The duration of the source language may be anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes."

## ***Gloss or Glosses***

Glosses provide a convenient way to use one language to reference another. Specifically, a gloss is a symbol or group of symbols in one language representing the core meaning of a particular symbol or symbol group from another language. Glosses do not represent translations or interpretations and, thus, do not represent natural language use.

Students working between ASL and English will use written English words to represent the meanings of ASL signs. A complete glossing system will include nonmanual signals as well as information that indicates which sign is meant. In this book, you do not need to fill in the nonmanual signals unless you are already familiar with such a system. It is very important to realize that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between ASL signs and glosses used to represent the signs.

"When people see an English word used as a gloss, many become confused about the difference among the gloss, the ASL sign that it references, and the English word as it is used in natural interaction. This confusion sometimes leads people who have little familiarity with ASL to think that ASL is a form of English. It is not. The glosses are an invented convention to allow us to make a note about which sign we intend to use in our interpretation" (Fleetwood, 2001).

Linguists use glosses when they study ASL and need to transcribe the signs they are looking at into a written form. A gloss is usually written in capital letters. For example, the ASL gloss for the English word "bike" is BIKE. This does not mean that there is always a one-to-one correspondence between ASL signs and English words. BIKE could also be used as the gloss for the English word "bicycle." The English word "run" with its various meanings has many possible glosses in ASL, including DRIP, UNRAVEL, and COMPETE.

It is not necessary to develop a complete and complicated glossing system in order to do the exercises in this book. Write the gloss for your English to ASL interpretation as best you can. Do so while remembering that a gloss is simply a reference to a core meaning. It is not intended as a natural translation or interpretation.

## ***Interpreting***

Interpreting is the *process* or activity involved in transferring a message from one language to another in real time. The message is usually spoken rather than written. A feature that distinguishes translation from interpretation is that the interpreter is part of the communication dynamic. Seleskovitch (1978a) sug-

gests that the very presence of the interpreter within the communicative event is the major difference between interpretation and translation. According to Gonzalez, et al. (1991), interpreting is the oral form of the translation process. "Interpreters must instantaneously arrive at a target language equivalent, while at the same time searching for further input" (Gonzalez et al., 1991, p. 295).

### ***Long Consecutive***

Long consecutive interpretation is the term used to describe interpretation of more lengthy passages such as several paragraphs or possibly an entire speech.

### ***Process and Product in Consecutive Interpreting***

It is vital that you understand the difference between process and product and the role each plays in your education and training as an interpreter. The process of interpretation is largely invisible. The process is what goes on in your head as you listen, analyze, and transfer the meaning from one language to another. The product, the message rendered in the target language, is the observable result of the process.

The only way to gain control over the product is to develop insight into and control over the process. The processes associated with interpreting cannot be recorded or observed by another person. Only via retrospection can the interpreter gain insight into his or her own process. This insight can lead to changed strategies and better control of the interpreting process. By spending time developing consecutive interpreting skills before simultaneous interpreting skills you can gain deeper insight into the choices that guide you during processing incoming information. Gile (1995) suggests that while learning interpreting skills it is important to focus on "principles, methods and procedures" (p.10). He goes on to say that examining the reasoning behind decisions related to the interpreting process is only part of an effective training strategy. Gile goes on to say that later on in interpreter training programs additional emphasis must be placed on the product, but only after the underlying processes are established. The shift from a focus on process to a focus on product occurs with the development of consecutive interpreting skills. The exercises in *Consecutive Interpreting from English* focus on examining the product of your work and the effect of errors on the communicative function of your interpretation.

The product is the observable part of your work. It is the message in the target language that the audience receives from the sender via your interpretation. The product can be recorded for future analysis, while the process cannot. Seal (1999, p. 14) has summarized the results of a recent study of sign language interpreters who wished to improve their skills. In that report, she emphasizes the importance of analyzing one's own work: "Self-analysis, the zenith of any professional development activity, is highly facilitated when we step back and take a look at ourselves. Routine videotaping and observing videotaped performances for strengths and weaknesses and for changes over

time, are quite possibly the most valuable, yet least frequently accomplished activity we can engage in." For sign language interpreters, videotaping allows you to review the product. Spoken language interpreters can review their work on audiotape.

### ***Short Consecutive***

Short consecutive interpretation is the term used to describe interpretation of short segments of discourse such as a sentence or a few sentences.

### ***Simultaneous Interpreting***

Gonzalez et al. (1991, p. 359) say that simultaneous interpreting is the process wherein the interpreter speaks at the same time as the source language speaker. In this process the source language is rendered into the target language while the source is ongoing. The term "simultaneous interpreting" is really a misnomer because there is always at least a slight delay between the time the original message is spoken and when the interpretation is delivered.

### ***Source Language***

"The source language is the language in which the original author of a message formulated it, and the point of departure for translation" (Nida and Tabor, 1982, p. 206). This is the language you are translating or interpreting *from*.

### ***Target Language***

"The target language is the language into which the message is being translated or interpreted" (Gonzalez et al., 1991, p. 296). This is the language you are working into. This is sometimes called the receptor language.

### ***Translating***

According to Bell (1991, p.13), translating is the *process* of or activity involved in transferring a message from one language to another. An important characteristic of translation is that the source and target messages can be reexamined, whether they are in print or on videotape.

## **Competencies in Consecutive Interpreting**

Whether you are working on consecutive interpreting skills as a developmental tool or as a professional tool, there are specific competencies that must be in place before beginning consecutive interpreting (Gonzalez et al., 1991, p. 346; Roberts, 1995, p.37). Some of these competencies are described below. The competencies fall into six broad categories: linguistic, cognitive, methodological, cultural and content, and interpersonal competencies. The interpreter must be linguistically adept, cognitively able to manage several tasks at once, and knowledgeable about both cultures and the content of the material and have interpersonal skills that facilitate natural interaction among the participants in the communicative setting.

## Linguistic Competencies

Interpreters must have a high level of language proficiency that allows understanding of the source language and its nuances as well as the ability to express oneself correctly, fluently, clearly, and with poise in the target language (Roberts, 1995). Some important linguistic competencies are described below.

### *Word Recognition Skills*

One example of linguistic competence is word recognition skills. DeGroot (2000) addresses the importance of word recognition skills as an area that may have been overlooked in interpreter training. Well-developed word recognition skills can become nearly automatic, which saves cognitive energy for more complex tasks. DeGroot suggests, "The solution is to automatize word recognition as much as possible through training. When the stage of maximal automaticity of word recognition is reached, all resources can be directed to those components of the task that defy automatization" (p.55). Automatized processes are those that have become nearly automatic and do not require as much effort as nonautomatized processes. An example of a process that can become automatic is word recognition. When you read a new word for the first time, you use different skills than you when you read a word that you already know. The same is true when you see a new sign in sign language for the first time.

Although the line of reasoning is easy to follow and can be applied to various aspects of the interpretation process, DeGroot's (2000) comments are especially relevant to fingerspelled word recognition in signed language interpreting. Fingerspelled word recognition requires rapid processing of serially presented information that differs from the recognition process used for recognizing signs. Failure to recognize fingerspelled words in context on the first try is the single greatest difficulty for signed language interpreters (Patrie, 1989a). Word recognition failures, whether the words are fingerspelled or signed, are likely to account for a large percentage of errors in signed language interpreting from ASL to English and for complete breakdowns in the interpreting process. These errors are due to a lack of specific training on fingerspelled word recognition and a lack of training in ASL comprehension, either of which could lead to problems in automaticity. The importance of word recognition skills extends to correctly recognizing signs in context for signed language interpreters and recognizing spoken words in context for spoken language interpreters.

DeGroot (2000) goes on to explain that auditory word recognition could also improve from direct training because the spoken signal can often be accompanied by interfering noises from the environment or poor speech patterns. Spoken words vanish as they are spoken and cannot be reinspected as a printed word can. DeGroot suggests that when direct training on word recognition is automatized then more cognitive resources are left for two other important aspects of interpreting. The two other aspects are (1) parts of the

process that cannot be automatized (figuring out which meaning is intended) and (2) temporary storage of information. These two aspects compete with each other for cognitive processing allocations. When more effort is needed for one, there is less resource for the other. So it makes good sense to automatize whatever subprocesses you can.

### ***Transfer Competence***

Transfer competence is a form of linguistic competence that allows the interpreter to understand the message in one language and express it in another. Roberts (1992) suggests that transfer competence involves more than understanding the gist of the original message: "Transfer competence includes the ability to understand the articulation of meaning in the source language discourse and the ability to render the meaning of the source language discourse in the target language accurately. Transfer competence also includes the ability to transfer a message from a source language into a target language without undue influence of the source language as well as the ability to transfer a message from a source language into a target language appropriately from the point of view of style."

### ***Discourse Competence***

Another important aspect of linguistic competence is discourse competence. According to Widdowson (1978), discourse competence is important. It is "the ability to combine ideas into a coherent and cohesive set." This competence includes the ability to formulate a complete idea using appropriate pronouns and connectors. When an interpreter has this competency the interpretation sounds natural and cohesive in the target language.

### ***Cognitive Flexibility***

Cognitive flexibility allows you to effectively and rapidly manage memory, acuity, repetition, and other skills that need to happen with precision during the interpreting process. Competence in cognitive flexibility assumes that all of the other linguistic competencies are in place and that the interpreter can rapidly access the competencies as needed during the interpretation process. For specific skill building exercises in comprehension, memory, acuity and discrimination, immediate repetition, delayed repetition, number repetition word level pattern inference, phrase level pattern inference, and multitasking please see *The Effective Interpreting Series: Cognitive Processing Skills in English*.

Control of attention is one aspect of cognitive flexibility. After practicing the subcomponents of the interpreting process, you need to develop control of attention. Gile (1995) describes this control as the "coordination effort." Gile suggests that the coordination effort is one of the components of the interpreting process. De Groot (2000) summarizes related research that shows that the coordination effort can and should be treated separately in interpreter training.

DeGroot (2000) explains that Gopher et al. (1989) studied attention strategies of subjects who trained to play a complex computer game. Some subjects practiced playing the game without specific instruction while other subjects had training in devoting attention to specific components of the game. Those who had training in devoting attention to specific components eventually played the game better than those who simply practiced the entire game without instruction regarding how to focus their attention on the component tasks. A later work by Gopher (1992) points out that attention control can be shifted to tasks other than the one on which the training occurred. De Groot (2000) suggests that Gopher's work in training control of attention points to strategies that may be advantageous in simultaneous interpreting.

### ***Methodological Competence***

Methodological competence is the competence that allows the interpreter to know which tools or methods to use in solving the myriad of linguistic problems that arise with every interpreting situation. Roberts (1995) suggests that there are two subcategories within methodological competence. The first is knowing which mode (consecutive or simultaneous) to use in a specific setting. The other subcategory is the ability to find pertinent lexical and terminological data (or appropriate vocabulary) and to use them correctly.

### ***Cultural and Subject Matter Competencies***

#### **• Bicultural competence**

Roberts (1995) says that bicultural competence is a "deep knowledge and appreciation of the cultures underlying the working languages, is based on the concept that language is a reflection of culture and that true understanding of a message involves mastery of the language in which it is expressed and an understanding of the culture associated with the language. Bicultural competence includes knowledge of the basic beliefs, values, experiences and behaviors characteristic of source language speakers and target language speakers." Bicultural competence includes sociolinguistic competence.

#### **• Subject matter competencies**

Gile (1995) calls content competency extralinguistic knowledge. This refers to the knowledge that the interpreter has about the subject. Sometimes this knowledge is based on the topic alone and is not specifically related to the culture. In other cases, the information is culture specific. In either case, the more familiar the interpreter is with the subject the better. An example of a culturally based topic is telecommunication devices for the deaf. Sometimes the topic is not related to the culture of either the source language or the target language. For example, the subject of physics is not related to a specific culture, but may be discussed by members of various cultures.

However, it is possible that if the interpreter is too familiar or is too intimately connected to the subject or the participants, the interpreter's effectiveness

will decrease. This could happen if the interpreter's extensive prior knowledge of the topic influences the interpretation. For example, if the topic is auto mechanics and the interpreter is well versed in this topic, there is a temptation for the interpreter to add information that the speaker did not say or to clarify points that were not made clear by the speaker. The interpreter should know something about the topic he or she is interpreting, but should not add facts that the speaker did not include.

#### • **Non-language-based personal competencies**

Non-language-based competencies describe an individual's suitability for working as a professional interpreter. One must have overall suitability for the profession, which includes stamina, curiosity, maturity, mental agility, adaptability, tolerance for ambiguity, and a tolerance for a wide variety of personalities and situations. Another important personal competency is having a strong command of the nonlinguistic intricacies of interpretation. Examples of nonlinguistic competencies include culturally appropriate use of personal space, eye contact, seating arrangements, and protocol for various cultures and types of meetings. While all of the competencies are important, interpersonal competencies should be stressed throughout training. A deficiency in any of the competencies discussed may lead to a skewed interpretation. It is possible that cognitive competencies and linguistic competencies can be improved and refined where necessary. Sometimes the personality of the person who wants to be an interpreter is simply not a fit for the demands of the profession and this fact can override qualifications in other areas.

It is essential that intralingual proficiency, cognitive manipulation, and translation competencies are mastered prior to beginning the study of consecutive interpreting. Sometimes the component skills (linguistic, methodological, and interpersonal) are present, but synthesis of them is lacking. Unless the components are addressed individually and then intentionally synthesized it will be difficult to determine whether skewed interpretations are the result of a lack of mastery of the component skills or the lack of synthesis of the skills. Some of the skills are used in more than one essential process. For example, developing automaticity in language processing depends on linguistic skill and cognitive skill. One way to begin to synthesize the component competencies is to study models of interpretation that show how competencies fit together into the larger process of interpretation.

## **Some Constraints in Consecutive Interpreting**

It is tempting to think that the additional time in consecutive interpretation makes the process easier than simultaneous interpretation. This is usually not the case unless the utterances are short. Some interpreters say that consecutive interpreting presents an even greater challenge than simultaneous interpreting due to the increased demands on memory (Bonnichsen and Isbell, 2001). It is difficult to compare the two types of interpreting directly because

there are many differences in terms of cognitive demands. Although it may appear at first that consecutive interpretation is more time consuming than simultaneous interpretation, it may be more economical in some instances. Seleskovitch (1978b) points out that consecutive interpreting can actually save time because the “thinking” time afforded to participants during the time the message is rendered into the other language provides time to clarify and distill points of information.

### ***Models of Interpretation***

Models of interpretation are theoretical ideas about how the interpreting process may be explained. Some models of interpretation have boxes, squares, and arrows to represent the possible stages in the process and relationships among the stages. Other models are more general in approach and describe the main stages in the process. In looking at either a detailed or a global model, it is important to remember that each model represents a theoretical opinion about what happens in the interpretation process. Models can be useful when studying interpretation because models help break down a complex process into smaller pieces that can be studied and mastered. No data have been reported that support the notion that studying a model of interpretation actually improves interpreting performance, although it may. Whether you are a beginning or advancing interpreter, it is important to be able to manage the parts of the process before attempting to synthesize, or combine, the parts in the interpretation process.

Moser-Mercer (1997) suggests that even though most researchers agree that interpretation is a multistage process, they do not agree on the names of the stages or the contents of the stages. Moser-Mercer concludes that “A powerful model of the interpreting process must be broad enough to include aspects that reflect the complex, time constrained multitasking environment of simultaneous interpreting that involves a high degree of cognitive processing” (p. 194). For detailed information on the models Moser-Mercer refers to, please see the chapter by Moser-Mercer in Danks et al. (1997). Models of interpretation describe the ideal path that the interpretation process can follow. Some models of interpretation attempt to describe what happens in the interpreter’s mind during interpretation (process) while other models describe the observable portion of the interpretation (product).

### ***Effort Model of Interpretation (Gile, 1995)***

Gile (1995) suggests that since interpreting is fundamentally so difficult, studying models may help the interpreter select and develop effective interpreting strategies. Gile’s Effort Model is one that he has developed over time and is based on his own research and research in cognitive psychology. The model has two basic principles.

- “Interpretation requires mental energy that is only available in limited supply.”

- “Interpretation takes up almost all of this mental energy, and sometimes requires more than is available, at which times performance deteriorates” (p.161).

Gile (1995) explains that some mental operations are nonautomatic and require attention, while automatic operations do not. “Non automatic operations take processing capacity from a limited available supply.” This understanding led to the development of a model that acknowledges that there are certain cognitive requirements and capacity limitations during the interpreting process. Gile (2001) says that simultaneous interpreting consists of “concurrent operations, each of which requires processing capacity (PC), and the amount of PC required is often as much as—or even more than the interpreter has available at the same time it is needed” (p.2).

### ***A Model of Consecutive Interpretation***

The processes in consecutive interpreting are similar to but not exactly the same as those in simultaneous interpreting. Consecutive interpreting characteristically has pauses in the source message during which the interpretation is rendered. The source message in simultaneous interpreting does not have pauses. Other models for consecutive interpreting may exist, but for clarity's sake only one is presented here.

The components of Gile's Model of Consecutive Interpretation (2001) follow. Gile explains that the Consecutive Interpreting Model occurs in two phases. The first phase of the model is listening.

#### ***Listening Phase***

##### **• Listening effort**

This phase includes the effort directed toward comprehension. Comprehension is a nonautomatic process for interpreters. Because it is nonautomatic, it is subject to capacity restrictions and saturation. For example, if a person is speaking rapidly about a technical topic, then greater demands are placed on the interpreter's listening and analysis effort.

##### **• Production effort (note-taking effort)**

In this phase of the model, the interpreter creates a written set of notes. The purpose of taking notes is to help the interpreter remember the message. The interpreter refers to these notes later in the process. Note-taking techniques need to be fully developed to provide a consistent advantage for the interpreter in terms of reducing memory load constraints. Interpreters working to and from signed languages will have limited use for note-taking. If the signed language interpreter is working from a spoken to a signed language, it is physically possible that the interpreter could take notes and refer to the notes when rendering the signed interpretation. When working from a signed to a spoken language, it is less likely that the interpreter will be able to take notes due to the physical constraints of simultaneously watching the signed source message and taking notes.

- **Short-term memory effort**

During the interpreting process working memory or short-term memory and long-term memory are necessary and interact continuously. Both of the cognitive operations that deal with short- and long-term memory occur continuously during interpreting and are nonautomatic. The information that is processed, even if it is familiar, is probably never exactly the same as a prior exposure to it. For example, when a speaker gives a speech twice on the same topic it will not be *exactly* the same speech and will be processed using various short- and long-term memory mechanisms.

“In consecutive interpreting the Memory Effort is similar to that used in simultaneous interpreting. However in consecutive, it is associated with the time between the moment information is heard and the moment it is written down or between the moment it is heard and the moment the interpreter decides not to write it down, or between the moment it is heard and the moment it disappears from memory” (p.179).

### ***Reformulation Phase***

In phase two of this model, Gile explains that the interpreter does not have to share processing capacity between varieties of tasks like listening, analysis, and note-taking. “There are no problems arising from an accumulation of tasks under the pressure of time resulting in capacity requirement peaks. The capacity requirements for the first stage of the model are greater than those in the second stage of the model. The second phase of the model includes three efforts” (Gile, 2001, p. 2).

- **Note-reading effort**

Some processing capacity (PC) is required to read and decipher one’s own notes. In order to reduce the PC needed to decipher one’s own notes, it is important to practice note-taking and reading one’s own notes in advance of the consecutive interpreting event.

Long-term memory effort allows for retrieving information from long-term memory. Interpreters often rely on visual memory, either in the arrangement of their notes to reflect aspects of the source message or by tapping visual memory storage mechanisms to help them sequence the order of events in the speech. This is especially true of signed language interpreters who receive a signed message via visual mechanisms.

- **Production effort (producing the message in the target language)**

This effort relates to the product of the interpretation. “In simultaneous interpretation, it is defined as the set of operations extending from the mental representation of the message to be delivered to speech planning and the performance of the speech plan. In consecutive interpretation, there are two kinds of production. During the first phase the interpreter listens to the speech and produces notes: during the second phase, he or she produces the target language speech” (Gile, 2001, p. 2).

Gile (2001) describes a major difference between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. In CI speech comprehension and full production in the target language are separated. The interpreter is then spared short-term memory pressures and the pressures of requirements associated with delivering the message in the target language. The second phase of CI is characterized by greater time and capacity available for speech production. In the first phase, even though the interpreter is driven by the speaker's pace, taking notes is generally easier than rendering the same information simultaneously into spoken language.

Gile (2001, p.2) describes the differences between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting this way: "In *simultaneous*, two languages are processed at the same time in working memory (roughly, the cognitive resources engaged in short-term processing of information just received). This requires devoting some attention to inhibiting the influence of the source language when producing the target language speech in order to avoid interference. In consecutive this constraint is much weaker, or even non-existent, depending on the way the notes are taken (even if notes are taken in the source language, they are generally single words, rather than full sentence structures, hence the likelihood of less interference). Moreover, while speaking, the interpreter can devote more attention to monitoring his/her output in consecutive than in simultaneous as part of the Production Effort."

"In simultaneous, *target-speech production occurs under heavier time pressure* than in consecutive, where the interpreter can pace him/herself. This is particularly important for speech segments with high information density, where the pressure in simultaneous is particularly high. In consecutive, it is also high during the listening phase and therefore affects Note Production, but loses its urgency during the reformulation phase" (Gile, 2001, p. 2).

Being aware of the aspects and phases of consecutive interpretation can help you focus your available capacities on the tasks that need your immediate attention during the process. Gile explains that when the requirements of the tasks exceed your current capacity, problems are triggered that can lead to failures in interpretation.

This introduction addresses some of the competencies that interpreters must have and Gile's model of consecutive interpreting. Another important feature stressed in this unit and in the units that follow is that the more practice you have in the subskills of consecutive interpreting the more *routinized* those skills become. When subskills are strongly routinized, then you have more attention to devote to other aspects of the interpreting process that cannot be routinized.

For a comprehensive bibliography on consecutive interpreting see Ilg and Lambert (1996).

## udy Questions

1. Write a short well-organized essay explaining the similarities and differences between consecutive and simultaneous interpretation. Be sure your essay has an introduction and conclusion.





4. List the components of Gile's 2001 model of consecutive interpretation. Be sure you understand and can explain all components.

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5. List the five broad categories of competencies that interpreters should possess.

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# UNIT

# 1

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## *Intralingual Exercises*

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When skills are developed *within* a language, these skills are called *intralingual*. When the skills are mastered and effectively used, then language competence is present. In developing mastery of intralingual skills, it is best to begin in one's first language (L1). The importance of developing and refining skills in L1 is often overlooked in interpreter education. Some may think that being able to read, speak, and understand in L1 is enough and that it is only necessary to study a second language (L2), while overlooking development of first language skills. Roberts (1995) says, "Language competency, which covers the ability to manipulate with ease and accuracy the *two* languages involved in the interpreting process, is a prerequisite for successful interpreting of a message, for the message is mediated through language" (p. 1; emphasis added). She further subdivides the idea of language competency by saying language competency includes the "ability to understand the source language in all its nuances and the ability to express oneself correctly, fluently, clearly and with poise in the target language" (p. 2).

It is clear that intralingual skills must be well developed in both languages used in the interpretation process. When intralingual skills are well developed, the amount of effort needed for processing information is less. Since simultaneous interpreting is a very difficult task, it is best to reduce the amount of effort needed by mastering the component skills before combining them into the more cognitively complex skills needed for simultaneous interpretation.

Moser-Mercer (1994) suggests that competence in monolingual exercises, or exercises within one language, can be a predictor for determining success in interpreter training (p.43). Arjona (1984) says, "The complexity of the communication

process in which a translation or interpretation practitioner must function requires nothing less than superior mastery of the language systems involved. Anything less jeopardizes the standards of performance which of necessity must be professionally assured" (p. 3). Arjona suggests that the goal of interpreter training programs is to allow graduates to function with a "minimum competency, proficiency and mastery level needed to perform successfully in real life situations" (p.3). She explains that the term "minimum competency" does not mean rock bottom. She uses minimum competency to mean being able to meet the minimum requirement for mastering the task. She goes on to say that candidates for graduation from an interpreter education program must be able to "routinely translate or interpret the message accurately and appropriately, thus bridging the communication gap in a meaningful manner" (p.6). This means that each individual graduating from a program must be able to perform well against standards for entry to the profession.

Schweda Nicholson (1990a) suggests that intralingual exercises are a good way to begin developing consecutive skills. The exercises in this unit all focus on intralingual skills and are based on ideas presented by Schweda Nicholson.

In consecutive interpreting the interpreter may need to engage the participants via eye contact in order to show that the participants are being listened to (or attended to in the case of signing participants). In simultaneous interpreting the interpreter is less likely to interact via eye contact with the participants due to the nature of the constraints of the task of simultaneous interpreting.

The exercises in this unit include full directions and require that you work in small groups. In each exercise there is a specific intralingual task for you to perform. After you complete the exercise, answer the study questions as soon as possible. You may need input from your group members in order to answer some of the questions. There is no five-step follow-up for any of the exercises in this unit.

## **INTRALINGUAL EXERCISES**

### **EXERCISE 1.1**

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#### **Monologue**

#### **SHORT CONSECUTIVE**

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This exercise provides practice in relaying information in consecutive fashion without the burden of message transfer between two languages. All of the intralingual exercises are conducted in one language so the "interpretation" consists of the "interpreter" retelling the information to the listener in English. This builds confidence in relaying verbal information from one person to another in real time. Even in intralingual exercises, the interpreter must convey the information as fully and faithfully as possible without reacting to the

content of the message, the personalities of the participants, or their own performance. The information in the source text should be preserved as fully as possible, including affect and intonation. The length of the source text will be a single utterance containing one or two idea units.

## Directions

There is no videotext associated with this exercise. You will need your own blank videotape on which to record your own work for all of the exercises in this unit. Work in groups of three. Person "A" will give a short 2- to 3-minute autobiography that is no longer than 3 minutes total. The speaker should pause after each idea unit. The interpreter will listen to A. When A pauses the interpreter will retell the information as completely as possible to the third person. This is an intralingual exercise and does not involve interpreting. The person filling the role of the interpreter is conveying the information in the same language as the speaker who delivered it. The interpreter should have eye contact with A while A is speaking and with C while speaking to C. This is a short monologic exercise so C should simply listen to the message as the interpreter delivers it and should not attempt to respond directly to A.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
Speaker	Interpreter	Listener

The interpreter can ask the speaker to pause or repeat as needed. The exercise should be videotaped so that the interpreter can observe the interpretation after it is completed. Discussion of the interpretation should begin with comments from the interpreter and then proceed to comments from the listener and speaker in turn. The criteria for determining adequacy of the performance include the following:

Completeness of message—is the message preserved?

Audible—is the message loud enough?

Intelligible—is the interpreter's speech clear and well pronounced?

Intonation—does the interpreter's intonation pattern convey the same impact as that of the original speaker?

Neutral—does the interpreter react to the message or the participants?

## Study Questions

1. Discuss your reactions to the message. Review the videotape of your work. Were your reactions observable visibly or audibly?

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2. Were you able to establish and maintain appropriate eye contact while listening and while interpreting?

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3. Was your interpretation intelligible and loud enough?

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4. What were your reactions to the interpreting process? Does the recorded version of your interpretation reveal your reactions either visibly or audibly?

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5. What could you do to improve your performance?

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This exercise can be repeated by using other topics and by increasing the length of the overall text. The length of utterances should be kept short.

## EXERCISE 1.2

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### **Monologic**

#### SHORT CONSECUTIVE WITH CONTEXTUALIZED INFORMATION

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This exercise gives practice in relaying information in consecutive fashion without the burden of message transfer between two languages but is more difficult than the first exercise because the message contains contextualized information such as numbers and names. All of the intralingual exercises are conducted in one language so the interpretation is not really an interpretation

in this case. The interpreter must convey the information as fully and faithfully as possible without reacting to the content of the message or the personalities of the participants. The information in the source text should be preserved as fully as possible, including affect and intonation. The length of the source text is 3 to 4 minutes.

## Directions

There is no videotext associated with this exercise. You will work in groups of three. Person A will give a short 2- to 3-minute autobiography that is no longer than 4 minutes. This autobiography should contain contextualized information. Examples of contextualized information include numbers such as dates and phone numbers and proper names. The interpreter will listen to A and make notes to help recall of numbers and names but should not write down other information. When A pauses, the interpreter may refer to his or her notes and will relay the information as completely as possible to the third person (C). The interpreter may ask A to pause or repeat as needed. This is a short monologic exercise so C should simply listen to the message as the interpreter delivers it.

The exercise should be videotaped so that the interpreter can observe the interpretation after it is completed. Discussion of the interpretation should begin with comments from the interpreter and then proceed to comments from the listener and speaker in turn. The criteria for determining adequacy of the performance include the following:

Completeness of message—is the message preserved?

Audible—is the message loud enough?

Intelligible—is the interpreter's speech clear and well pronounced?

Intonation—does the interpreter's intonation pattern convey the same impact as that of the original speaker?

Neutral—does the interpreter react to the message or the participants?

## Study Questions

1. Discuss your reactions to the message. Were your reactions observable visibly or audibly?

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2. Were you able to establish and maintain appropriate eye contact while listening and while interpreting?

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3. Was your interpretation intelligible and loud enough?

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4. What were your reactions to the interpreting process? Does the recorded version of your interpretation reveal your reactions either visibly or audibly?

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5. What could you do to improve your performance?

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### EXERCISE 1.3

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## Dialogue

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### reactions

This exercise requires three people. Persons A and C will converse for 3 to 4 minutes and B will interpret between them. Remember that this exercise is done entirely in English so B is not really interpreting. In this exercise B will

practice listening to the message and restating it as if A and C could not understand each other. A and C must remember to pause to allow B to interpret the message. The participants who are “conversing” should remember not to respond directly to the other person in the conversation, but to wait for the interpretation to be completed. The interpreter may ask the participants to pause or repeat as needed.

The exercise should be videotaped so that the interpreter can observe the interpretation after it is completed. Discussion of the interpretation should begin with comments from the interpreter and then proceed to comments from the other participants. The criteria for determining adequacy of the performance include the following:

Completeness of message—is the message preserved?

Audible—is the message loud enough?

Intelligible—is the interpreter’s speech clear and well pronounced?

Intonation—does the interpreter’s intonation pattern convey the same impact as that of the original speaker?

Neutral—does the interpreter react to the message or the participants?

## Study Questions

1. Discuss your reactions to the message. Were your reactions observable visibly or audibly?

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2. Were you able to establish and maintain appropriate eye contact while listening and while interpreting?

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3. Was your interpretation intelligible and loud enough?

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- 4. What were your reactions to the interpreting process? Does the recorded version of your interpretation reveal your reactions either visibly or audibly?

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- 5. What could you do to improve your performance?

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You can increase the difficulty of these exercises by increasing the length or by adding names and numbers to the information. These exercises also provide a way to practice the interpersonal dynamics that consecutive interpreting requires without the pressure of actually interpreting.

In the units that follow you will find a combination of short and long consecutive interpreting exercises but not dialogic exercises. Dialogic or interactive interpreting is a valuable skill that successful interpreters use, but it is not addressed in this text.

### Progress Tracking Sheet

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times) and answering the study questions, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress. There is no five-step follow-up for this unit.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 1.1 Quantitative						
Qualitative						
Exercise 1.2 Quantitative						
Qualitative						
Exercise 1.3 Quantitative						
Qualitative						
Quantitative Totals						



# UNIT

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# 2

## *Errors in Interpretation*

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Now that you are familiar with the basic terminology and processes related to consecutive interpreting, it is important to discuss the types of errors, where in the message they occur, and the effects of errors on the message. Errors in the interpreting process cannot be observed directly, but can be inferred by examining the product. Effective management of cognitive processes can reduce errors during interpreting.

By studying the types of errors that occur during interpreting we can make inferences about what part of the interpreting process is weak or missing. Although it might seem like a negative approach, error analysis is a well-respected and well-documented way to observe various types of cognitive processes. The goal of error analysis is to improve interpreting processes and, therefore, the product.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) describe an important study of interpreter error categories. Ten years of data collection on simultaneous interpreting in legal settings formed the basis for this study. These error categories can be applied to consecutive interpreting. This study delineates eight broad areas of errors. They are literal translations; inadequate language proficiency; errors in register conservation; distortion; omission; added information; protocol; procedure and ethics; and nonconservation of paralinguistic elements. When you analyze your interpreting using this system of categorizing errors you can identify the performance areas you want to modify.

## Error Categories

### *Literal Translation*

The first error category Gonzalez et al. (1991) describe is literal translation. This means that the interpreter does not preserve the ideas but focuses on substituting words from the target language for words in the source language. This substitution approach creates grammatical errors in the target language. The example below is from one of the transcripts that Gonzalez et al. (1991) studied (p.282). It shows how literal translation can distort the message. As the authors point out, a single error like this is not too grave, but if it is repeated and combined with errors of this and other types, the message of the speaker will be skewed. An example of this type of error is presented below.

Interpreter: I work in the package of lemons.

Should be: I'm a lemon packer.

Although Gonzalez's examples pertain to Spanish–English interpretation, we can generalize these types of errors to other language pairs. In interpreting from English to ASL, using ASL signs in English syntax creates a literal approach that often distorts the message. Whenever the word order of your interpretation follows the word order patterns of the source language instead of the target language, it is likely that the message will be skewed. (Word order in transliterating between English and ASL is acknowledged as a separate issue, the complexities of which are outside the scope of this work.) Literal translation errors can be due to inadequate language proficiency or to inadequate preparation in interpreting procedures.

### *Inadequate Language Proficiency*

The Gonzalez et al. (1991) data support the notion that inadequate language proficiency in the source language, target language, or both is the most frequent source of interpreter error. "General lack of language fluency makes it impossible for an interpreter to comprehend text well enough to convert ideas fully and faithfully at the requisite speed into the TL without reliance on glossaries and dictionaries and without faltering and communication breakdowns" (p.282). Inadequate language proficiency can lead to a variety of types of errors. Some of the error types explained below are due to language proficiency problems and some are due to weaknesses in the interpretation process. Inadequate language proficiency can create problems in all other areas within the interpreting process. Language proficiency in the source and target languages is an essential *prerequisite* to the development of interpreting skills.

- **Inadequate language proficiency as seen in processing problems**

These authors say that problems in language proficiency lead to four problems in processing that can interfere with interpreting. One problem is the

lack of ability to correctly predict language patterns. For example, in English a common pattern for opening a speech is “Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.” We generally do not hear “Good evening, gentlemen and ladies.” In addition to usual patterns of how sentences and expressions are constructed, language patterns are also revealed in intonation patterns. Interpreters need to know that the intonation of the speaker indicates that a list is to be given next or that the speech is about to conclude. When the speaker says, “The following reasons tell us why...” the interpreter mentally prepares for a list. Likewise, a phrase like “In conclusion” lets the interpreter know that the speaker is about to conclude remarks. This allows the interpreter to prepare for a summary statement. When the interpreter realizes this, he or she can mentally reinspect the content of the speech to access memory related to the points made so far.

A second processing problem is cognitive processing errors. This type of error can be attributed to weaknesses in such skills as comprehension, memory, acuity and discrimination, repetition, number processing, and multitasking.

The third processing problem described by Gonzalez et al. (1991) is inadequate attention span in the weaker language due to a misuse of effort at the comprehension and memory storage stage of the interpreting process. It is a common experience to feel fatigue in listening to and trying to comprehend a language in which you are not completely fluent. When intralingual abilities in the weaker language improve, then less attention and effort are required to listen, comprehend, and remember. Inadequate attention span will lead to errors in interpretation because the interpreter cannot fully attend to the message and correctly remember information that requires a proportionately greater share of cognitive effort. A weakness in attention span in the weaker language could affect comprehension of the source message if the source language is the weaker language. Alternatively, if the target language is the weaker language then weaknesses in attention span will lead to errors in monitoring and self-correction.

The fourth processing problem described by Gonzalez et al. (1991) is interference between languages. This means that sounds, words, grammatical patterns, and other features from one language are incorrectly used in the other language. Gonzalez et al. (1991) suggest that there are two main categories of errors in language proficiency: grammatical errors and vocabulary errors.

#### • **Grammatical errors**

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say that this broad category of errors includes verb conjugation, verb tense agreement, and errors in preserving numbers. Errors in verb conjugation can skew the meaning of the message. Errors in verb tense can alter the sense and can affect the credibility of the speaker. When numbers are not correctly preserved in the interpretation the message can be drastically altered.

The following example from Gonzalez et al. (1991) shows the negative impact that tense errors can have on the message (p. 283).

Interpreter: Maybe I had a relative there. . . .

(Does this refer to a time in the past before another time in the past or to the present?)

Should be: Maybe if I had had a relative there. . . .

### • Lexical errors

Errors at the lexical or word level are due to a weak or inadequate access to a wide variety of synonyms and other intralingual skills. Gonzalez et al. (1991) say, "Accurate interpreting results from a combination of lexical precision and highly developed performance skills" (p. 284). The results of a national exam for court interpreters show that in 1989 nearly 40% of those who failed did so because of weaknesses in vocabulary. Weaknesses in target language vocabulary can be overcome by accurate paraphrasing skills. With accurate and rapid paraphrasing skills the interpreter can explain the topic or term in different words even when they do not know the specific term in the target language.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) point out that lexical weaknesses cause errors and can lead to a total breakdown in the interpretation process. This means that in legal settings important parts of the testimony may not be interpreted correctly or at all. In still other cases, interpreters invent terminology in order to keep going. "Language deficient interpreters, like second language learners, rely on false cognates or invent words in order to express the meaning for which they have no lexicon available" (p. 285). This is the case for spoken and signed language interpreters alike. In either case the results can be disastrous because the meaning is lost.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) provide the following examples (p.284) of lexical errors related to poor command of language.

Interpreter: Nowendays [sic] a lot of people reappear dead.

Should be: Nowadays a lot of people turn up dead.

Interpreter: They came to recruit her.

Should be: They came to kidnap her.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) describe the effect of this type of interpreter error. "It becomes very obvious when interpreters cannot deal with particular realms of language. They begin to paraphrase, define, invent, omit, guess and very often lead the testimony into a web of confusion" (p. 284).

### ***Errors in Register Conservation***

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say that register refers to the level of formality of speech. This category is especially important in the courtroom where there may be a variety of types of speech from very formal to very informal. Register conservation is important in other settings as well. For example, if the interpreter has command of only a very informal register, the interpreter's work will only be accurate in that register and skewed in all other registers.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) point out that the problem includes being able to correctly understand a full range of registers and then being able to find the appropriate expression in the target language while preserving the register. The authors give an example from the results of a national test for interpreters. The idiom “scared to death” was correctly interpreted by only 28% of the 222 people who took the test in 1988. Some of the incorrect interpretations included the following utterances (p.286).

She is afraid of death.

She can't sleep at night.

She is very afraid of her death.

In all of these examples, the meaning is not preserved and the impact of the testimony is lost.

### ***Distortion***

The next category of interpreter error that Gonzalez et al. (1991) discuss is distortion. When a message is distorted, either the overall message or part of the meaning is lost. The authors say that these errors are quite prevalent among developing interpreters and probably occur because the interpreter does not understand the importance of preserving the entire message. Gonzalez et al. (1991) suggest three possible reasons for distortion: deficient language skills, memory, or interpreting skills. They say that distortion is most likely to happen when the message is very short (under 15 words) or if it contains technical language, emotional intensity, hedges, particles, false starts, unfinished sentences, and incoherent language. Here are some of Gonzalez et al.'s examples (p.287).

Interpreter: He had received some threats; all the time they were after him until he was killed.

Should be: They threatened him, they pursued him until they killed him.

(The correct rendition conserves the elements of fear, violence, and aggression that the interpreted version omitted.)

Two examples capture the impact of distortion.

Interpreter: I just felt a little punched.

Should be: I just felt the great blow.

(The word “little” conveys the opposite effect of the word “great” and distorts the meaning.)

Interpreter: I lost my eyesight.

Should be: I lost my eye in combat.

(The transformation of the loss of an eye to the loss of eyesight severely confuses the testimony and reduces the effect.)

## ***Omission***

Another common error in Gonzalez et al.'s (1991) taxonomy of errors is information that is deleted or left out. When experienced interpreters leave out information it tends to be due to fatigue. In less experienced interpreters, omissions tend to be due to failure to comprehend, inability to express a concept in the target language, or other language-based problems. Processing or memory problems can lead to omissions.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say that omissions can confuse witnesses in legal settings. This confusion arises because the interpreter omits part of the witnesses' response and then the question is repeated to the witness. The witness thinks that elaboration is requested, not repetition, and confusion increases. Although Gonzalez et al. studied legal situations, the same confusions arise when interpreters omit information in other settings. Here are some examples of omissions from the data Gonzalez et al. collected. The underlined portions indicate omissions (p. 288).

Interpreter: She said that when they came in she got nervous, that she was very nervous. She asked what's happening and when she asked that and got in front of them, they put her aside.

Should be: Well, when they entered, she says she got scared and became very nervous. When she asked them what was happening and faced them, they took her aside and beat her up.

Interpreter: Well, they didn't kill him, they threw him in there.

Should be: Well, they didn't kill him, they threw him in there alive.

## ***Additions***

According to Gonzalez et al. (1991), additions can occur for several reasons. When the interpreter does not understand the source message, he or she may use several possible meanings to express the concept. Sometimes interpreters use silence inappropriately by adding repetitions and fillers that are not part of the message in hopes of clarifying the interpretation. Added information and repetition can change a concise and compelling answer into a rambling and weak response. The users of the interpreting service will not know that the original answer was concise and compelling. Gonzalez et al. cite Berk-Seligson (1987), who demonstrated that "powerless" speech is characterized by lengthened responses. A response that is perceived as powerless can disadvantage the participants, even if the actual response was concise and powerful. Using additions and fillers during silence not only weakens and distorts the interpretation, but also prevents the interpreter from using the silence as a brief rest period.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say the developing interpreter tends to add information when he or she does not remember the source message. As a result, information is added that may or may not bear any relationship to the source

message. In an effort to “keep going” sometimes interpreters invent information rather than keep silent or ask for clarification.

Here is an example from Gonzalez et al. (1991, p. 289). The underlined portions indicate additions.

Interpreter: I believed that they killed, and it was an injustice what they did to her.

Should be: . . . that they killed her unjustly.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say, “This not only lengthens the speaker’s response, but shifts it into another attitude posture, which does not replicate stylistically the speaker’s intention.” The interpretation and what the interpretation should be convey different information and attitudes about certainty. The added information skews the message.

### ***Protocol, Procedure, and Ethics***

This part of Gonzalez et al.’s (1991) taxonomy addresses the importance of protocol, procedures, and ethics in the interpreting situation. Errors in any of these three areas can be as damaging to the message as any of the previous categories. One aspect of this part of the taxonomy is the importance of the interpreter being faithful to the message even when the message includes profanities. A second aspect of this category is the necessity to correct errors, especially when the interpretation becomes part of a formal record. Some interpreters working in legal settings have not been trained to correct the court record, causing confusion and harm when some potentially damaging errors remain. Other people in the legal (and other) setting often do not know the interpreter’s role, so the interpreter must be able to explain his or her role in a concise and effective manner. Sometimes interpreters themselves do not understand their own role and converse with participants when they should not. Conversing with a witness while waiting for a trial to begin may provide the interpreter with additional information that may later bias the interpretation or lead to mistakes. The matters of ethics, procedures, protocol, and confidentiality are all extremely important. Interpreter education should address these issues in more detail than is allowed by the scope of this book.

### ***Nonconservation of Paralinguistic Elements, Hedges, and Fillers***

The final category of the taxonomy is nonconservation of paralinguistic elements, hedges, and fillers. These include repetitions of words or phrases, incomplete sentences, and words like “um,” “uh,” and “ah.” Gonzalez et al. (1991) say that this kind of error occurs in the work of developing and new interpreters. Filtering out this kind of speech changes the impact of the testimony. Here is an example (p. 291).

Interpreter: Well, uh, because it is that way. Let’s put it this way. . . .

Should be: Well, uh, I don't know how to say it. It's that when...no, of course it was that way, but how can I tell you: Let's see, let's see, let's put it this way. . . .

Adding or subtracting fillers and hedges can change the impact of the message. Interpreters must be aware of the importance of preserving the message in its entirety, including these paralinguistic elements.

## **determining the Seriousness of the Error**

The point in the interpreting process when the error occurs often determines the level of seriousness of the error. Using a three-phase model helps us understand the effect of errors. The three phases are comprehension, transfer, and reformulation. If the error occurs in comprehension, the first phase of the interpretation process, it is a more serious error than if it occurs later in the process. Errors in comprehension prevent the interpreter from understanding the message well enough to move on to another phase of the process. If the error occurs in the transfer phase, it indicates that the interpreter understood but has weaknesses in transferring the message from the source language to the target language. Errors in reformulation indicate that the interpreter understood and could transfer the message, but made errors in expression that could include pronunciation errors or other errors that are less likely to have a negative impact on the communication event. It is possible that errors in reformulation could be serious if the interpreter's pronunciation completely distorts the word.

In summary, being aware of the types and causes and effects of errors that can occur in interpreting further refines your interpreting skill. The data summarized here refer to errors in simultaneous interpreting. If these error types appear as you are developing consecutive interpreting skills, then this is an ideal time to address these error types so that they will be less likely to show up in simultaneous interpreting. As you work through the exercises in this book you will analyze your interpretations for accuracy. When you find an inaccuracy in your work you can refer back to this unit to determine the type of error and then to determine the effect of the error.

The exercises in this unit and in the remaining units are based on the videotext. The monologues are unrehearsed examples of spoken English. Some speakers prepared their remarks in advance and some spoke extemporaneously. All of the speakers are native speakers of English. One speaker is originally from England and her accent reflects that. None of the speakers read their presentations. Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995) stress the importance of practicing with authentic spoken materials. Unrehearsed spoken materials have naturally occurring hesitations, pauses, and repetitions.

There are three exercises for you to consecutively interpret in this unit. The first selection appeared in *Translating from English* and may be familiar to you. If you have already translated the first selection, your familiarity with the selection will assist you in rendering the consecutive interpretation. The

second exercise is short but contains material that has not appeared elsewhere in the series. The third selection is longer than the second and is new to the series.

## Describing an Audience

For these exercises you will be asked to describe the audience to whom you will render the interpretation because interpretation does not occur in a vacuum. The interpretation process, by definition, includes at least two people who do not share the same language who wish to communicate and do so through an interpreter. Via the interpretation process, communication can occur but it depends on the interpreter's linguistic and interpretation skills and also on the interpreter's ability to correctly identify the linguistic and communicative needs of the people in the communicative event. Listening to and analyzing the linguistic message is only part of what interpreters must prepare themselves to do. It is necessary for the interpreter to have information about the target audience. The information about the target audience, even if it is not complete, must be analyzed in order to formulate an interpretation that is relevant to the recipients. The target audience must be analyzed in terms of its composition and information need. Then the interpreter can listen to the message with the needs of the target audience in mind. In addition to the actual content and arrangement of the linguistic information, cultural information must be considered. If the interpretation is created without regard to audience needs and cultural context, then the interpretation will not be as accurate as it could be.

Below is a list of factors that can affect audience composition. A selection from among these can create hypothetical audiences for you to "face" when you are practicing consecutive interpreting skills. Based on the hypothetical audience composition, you can determine how to present the information.

1. The size of the group
  - Large—over 50 people
  - Medium—25 to 49 people
  - Small—under 25
  - Interview setting—3 or 4 participants
2. Language used by the audience members and which register of that language is most appropriate for the setting and participants

An important variable for signed language interpreters is often the "mix" of audience members, regardless of which type of signed language is used.

  - All deaf members (implies signed language as the primary language)
  - All hearing members (implies spoken language as the primary language)

- Mix of hearing and deaf (implies that both signed and spoken languages are used)
  - Unknown—i.e., sometimes you do not know the hearing status of any of the audience members. This variable is made more complex by adding various types of sign language users. For example, some deaf people prefer ASL while others prefer signing that is structured similarly to English syntax.
3. Background knowledge and culture of the target audience
- For example, a lecture on Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, a well-known name in Deaf culture, is likely to include information relevant to that culture. If the audience members are culturally Deaf, they are likely to have some background knowledge of Gallaudet

More generally, at conferences we often assume those in attendance know the jargon and related background information relevant to that conference topic. There are many other factors and variables that can affect the description of the target audience. Only some are mentioned here to encourage you to be sensitive to the composition and needs of the target audience when you are interpreting. When you are learning to interpret you should imagine a target audience and describe its composition and probable needs.

## RRORS IN INTERPRETATION EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 2.1

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## Newspaper Layout

AMBER LEWNES

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### Directions

This selection is approximately 7 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation; if not, pause your video recorder. After you have completed the interpretation of the segment, press play and continue with the next segment in the selection. If you are working into a signed language, you should videotape your responses. If you are working into a spoken language you may audiotape your interpretation. In this exercise, you are rendering an accurate interpretation for an audience that you describe. Write down the description of the situation where the interpretation takes place and the nature and needs of the target audience. Strive to create an intelligible interpretation that is loud enough (or visible enough), preserves the message, illocutionary force, and does not con-

tain fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own work. Although you will monitor your interpretation while you create it, you will analyze your interpretation after it is completed.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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### Study Questions

1. List the possible types of errors discussed in this unit. Write one paragraph describing why it is useful to study types of errors.

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2. If there were omissions in your interpretation what were the causes?

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3. During the interpretation process, were you aware of any processing problems such as predicting language patterns or remembering what you heard? Describe what the problems were. Refer to the transcript and underline any portions of the text where you feel these types of errors occurred.

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- 4. During the interpretation process, were you aware of any processing problems such as lapses of attention and interference between two languages? Describe any processing problems you noticed. Refer to the transcript and circle any portions of the text where you feel these types of errors occurred.

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- 5. Why do errors in comprehension tend to be more serious than errors in reformulation or expression? Compare source and target messages for errors in comprehension. If you find errors in comprehension mark a "C" on the transcript in the corresponding location and render a corrected interpretation.

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**Transcript for Newspaper Layout, Amber Lewnes**

- 1 My name is Amber Lewnes and I'm gonna teach you how to make
- 2 a newspaper. // The first thing you do is get layout pages. // This is a
- 3 minimodel of what the paper will actually look like. // First you figure
- 4 out how much advertising space will be going into the paper for that
- 5 issue. // Each staff writer goes around to local businesses and asks if

6 they would like to advertise and figures out how much space they  
7 want advertised in the paper. // Then this space is drawn up and saved  
8 for each advertiser. //

9 Once that is done, stories are assigned to each staff writer and the  
10 editor draws out how big the stories will be onto the pages as they fit  
11 according to the ad—the advertising. // So pretty much everything is  
12 based around the advertising. //

13 Then the spaces for the photographs are made and these spaces are  
14 then—the sizes are told to the photographers, who will then make a  
15 photo to fit the space. //

16 Once all the stories have been assigned and the pages have  
17 been drawn out, the writers go to work and research their topics. //  
18 When they're done they turn in a rough copy to the editor, who then  
19 reads it over and edits and makes any changes that they see fit or sees  
20 if there's any inaccuracies in the story. // Once that is done, the writer  
21 writes it up on the computer and puts it into a program called  
22 Pagemaker to be printed out to eventually be pasted onto the  
23 newspaper. //

24 Once the story is actually in the paper the editor will go in and  
25 design the story in the computer to fit the space that is allotted. //  
26 Once that is done, the print—pages are printed up and they're pasted  
27 onto a large sheet of paper that's the actual size of the newspaper. //  
28 The spaces are left for the photos, which will be added later. //

29 Once photographers take their photos they bring 'em to the editor  
30 and the editor cuts them and pastes them on the page. // Then they  
31 take tape called line tape which is a little black line and it outlines  
32 each photo so that it'll look—make the picture look more spaced out  
33 and separate from the story when it's actually printed. // After that is  
34 done, captions are written for underneath the pictures, and those are  
35 pasted onto the pages as well. //

36 Then, finally, the advertisers send in their ads which are then also  
 37 to be pasted onto each page. // After that is done, these rough pages  
 38 are sent to the printer to be printed in mass publication to be  
 39 distributed to the school or to the city or wherever the newspaper is  
 40 intended for. // And that's how you make a newspaper. //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3- minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation, you will analyze only this portion of your work. Sample answers are included for this instance of the five-step follow-up to help familiarize you with the process. The examples are based on ASL as the target language but the passage can be interpreted into any language.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

For example, if you are working into spoken English, write the phrase (or phrases) that needs revision. If you are working into a signed language, use capital letters and gloss only the portion you would like to revise.

*This is Pat's interpretation of the second sentence in the transcript.*

The first thing you do is get layout pages.

FIRST MUST PAPER PUT FLAT

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

FIRST, GET L-A-Y-O-U-T P-A-G-E-S, MUST.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language

3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

Pat now goes back to Step 1 and writes (2a) after the gloss of the interpretation. This indicates that Pat has decided that the error is due to inadequate proficiency in the source language. Pat did not understand the meaning of "layout pages."

FIRST MUST PAPER PUT FLAT (2a)

#### Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number of the effect after the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

Pat selects (4) and writes it after the error type selected in Step 1. The effect of the error is severe. The jargon that is used in the field of newspaper publishing is relevant and important in this context and its absence skews the message.

Example:

FIRST MUST PAPER PUT FLAT (2a) 4

#### Step 5 Action Plan

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work

*I plan to redo this interpretation. I was nervous and that affected*

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*my ability to realize that "layout pages" was jargon. Since*

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*I misunderstood it in English, my interpretation could*

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*not be accurate.*

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Week 3 (face to face)

EXERCISE 2.2

Captown Sound

OVERTON CAVANAUGH



Directions

This selection is approximately 2 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation; if not, pause your video recorder. If you are working into a signed language, you should videotape your responses. If you are working into a spoken language you may audiotape your interpretation. In this exercise, focus on rendering an accurate interpretation. Strive to create an intelligible interpretation that is loud enough (or visible enough), preserves the message and illocutionary force, and does not contain fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own work. Although you will monitor your interpretation while you create it, you will analyze your interpretation after it is completed. The speaker is in Washington, DC, and uses the term "Capitol City" to refer to where he is located.

1 - make my voice loud  
2 - Conveyed message correctly

to keep the same feelings effect

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

Four horizontal lines for writing the context and participants.

Study Questions

- 1. Did your proficiency in the source language affect your ability to interpret this passage? If yes, give an example. Did your proficiency in the target language affect your ability to interpret this passage? If yes, give an example.

Handwritten answer: Source language. Below are three horizontal lines for further writing.

- 2. During the interpretation process, were you aware of any processing problems such as predicting language patterns or remembering what you heard? Refer to the transcript and underline any portions of the text where you feel these types of errors occurred.

not really -

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CP → W - W  
de

- 3. During the interpretation process, were you aware of any processing problems such as lapses of attention and interference between two languages? Refer to the transcript and circle any portions of the text where you feel these types of errors occurred.

no

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- \* 4. Compare source and target messages to examine your interpretation for examples of literal translation. If you find examples of literal translation, put parentheses around the corresponding sections of the transcript.

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- \* 5. Compare source and target messages to examine your interpretation for errors in comprehension. If you find errors in comprehension mark a "C" on the transcript in the corresponding location and render a corrected interpretation.

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## Transcript for *Captown Sound*, Overton Cavanaugh

- 1 Hi, my name is Overton Cavanaugh. And I would like to talk about  
 2 some of my fondest moments. One of them is that coming up as  
 3 a kid, growing up as a child, my mother used to always sing. //
- 4 And in turn, my brothers and I, we picked up her style. //
- 5 I'm the third eldest of eight children. //
- 6 Anyway, we used to have contests, the boys against the girls  
 7 and the whole neighborhood would come and watch us, watch  
 8 us sing. //
- 9 We sort of had this uh, what you call the Motown sound but  
 10 we called it the Captown. Capitol city? You know? Get it? //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is

adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

#### **Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

#### **Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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## EXERCISE 2.3

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### My Big Move

LORRAINE OLDHAM

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### Directions

This selection is approximately 3 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation; if not, pause your video recorder. If you are working into a signed language, you should videotape your responses. If you are working into a spoken language you may audiotape your interpretation. In this exercise, focus on rendering an accurate interpretation. Strive to create an intelligible interpretation that is loud enough (or visible enough), preserves the message and illocutionary force, and does not contain fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own work. Although you will monitor your interpretation while you create it, you will analyze your interpretation after it is completed. Answer the study questions and complete the follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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### Study Questions

1. Did your proficiency in the source language affect your ability to interpret this passage? If yes, explain why. Did your proficiency in the target language affect your ability to interpret this passage? If yes, explain why.

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2. During the interpretation process, were you aware of any processing problems such as predicting language patterns or remembering what you heard? Refer to the transcript and underline any portions of the text where you feel these types of errors occurred.

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3. During the interpretation process, were you aware of any processing problems such as lapses of attention and interference between two languages? Refer to the transcript and circle any portions of the text where you feel these types of errors occurred.

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4. Compare source and target messages to examine your interpretation for examples of literal translation. If you find examples of literal translation, put parentheses around the corresponding sections of the transcript.

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5. Compare source and target messages to examine your interpretation for errors in comprehension. If you find errors in comprehension mark a "C" on the transcript in the corresponding location and render a corrected interpretation.

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## Transcript for *My Big Move*, Lorraine Oldham

1 Hi. I'm Lorraine Oldham and I'd like to tell you about a recent  
2 experience that I've had that I have learned an awful lot from. // Umm,  
3 I was recently divorced and—almost after 30 years of marriage—and  
4 it came as a shock to me when everything fell apart. // I had to move  
5 from the east coast to the west coast once again. // My daughter and I  
6 made a decision that it would be best for us to return to our family  
7 and friends that we had for so long in San Diego, California. //

8 Uh, the decision was a long and hard one, but when I finally got  
9 into the program and decided that I was going to do it, the  
10 momentum just carried me through. // My daughter went ahead of me  
11 and I took a month after she left to make all the preparations for the  
12 move. // And the scary part for me was the fact that I realized that I  
13 had to drive cross-country, three—3,200 miles between Boston and  
14 San Diego totally by myself. // And I postponed it as long as I could  
15 because I was very frightened. // And once I got into the car and started  
16 my journey, I realized that it was the best decision that I could have  
17 ever made. // As frightening as it was, I realized that this experience  
18 was going to take me through life and I was very glad that I did it. //  
19 And now I'm here in San Diego and I am successful and I am going  
20 forward and my life finally has meaning again. Thank you. //

### Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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**Step 1 Interpretation Rendered**

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation

2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**Progress Tracking Sheet**

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times), answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 2.1 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 2.2 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 2.3 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Quantitative Totals							



# UNIT

# 3

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## *The Listening Phase*

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In this unit the term “listening” is used to refer to the perception of the English source message. The same principles apply whether the source message is spoken or signed. The first phase in Gile’s model of consecutive interpreting includes listening to and analyzing the message, which in turn leads to comprehension of the message. Comprehension of source material is an essential skill that underlies all other skills in the interpretation process. According to Gile (1995), comprehension is based on two critical features. One is knowledge of words in a language and the other is knowledge of the grammar of a language. These two features are not enough to ensure comprehension. The context in which the words and grammar are used must be taken into consideration.

The comprehension process generally begins with a message. When this message is sent to a receiver and understood by that receiver, basic communication is thought to have occurred. This description is much too simple, because as Gile points out, each listener’s prior knowledge and knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, culture, and context will influence understanding. The more information or extralinguistic knowledge (ELK) a person has, the more likely he or she is to be able to understand the message as intended by the sender. The process of communication via an interpreter is much more complicated than when two people who share the same language are communicating with each other. During interpretation the source language message is sent to and received by the interpreter. The interpreter must understand the meaning of the source language message and then translate the message and give that message expression in another language, called the target language.

The person who receives the interpreted message ideally understands the message as intended by the original sender of the message, but there is no fool-proof way to measure this understanding.

Gile (1995) devotes an entire chapter to the importance of comprehension in the interpretation process in his book entitled *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*. He stresses that the interpreter's need for extralinguistic knowledge never levels off, but rather increases. Next, he stresses the importance of "deliberate and sustained analysis" (p. 85) as a way to improve comprehension. The process of sustained analysis is an ongoing process of listening intently and checking probable meanings with the current context to see whether these make sense and whether these probable meanings are likely to be the meanings intended by the speaker. Another important point that Gile makes is that the type of understanding or comprehension that the interpreter must use is not the same as that used by a layperson. The interpreter must constantly listen and analyze the incoming message.

Jones (1998, p.41) explains how important analysis is for the interpreter. "The better their understanding and analysis, the better placed they are to express themselves freely, using their own words while respecting the content of the original. Provided the same ideas are expressed and relationships between them are consistent, the interpreter can invert the order of two sentences, merge two of the speaker's sentences into one or on the contrary divide one long sentence into a number of shorter ones." All of the manipulations suggested by Jones require that the interpreter fully understand the message first.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say, "To be able to process the SL message accurately, the interpreter must be able to listen effectively and attend to meaning" (p. 380). According to Weaver (1972, in Gonzalez, 1991), there are at least three important types of processing that are related to listening. (1) identifying the meaning units in the message, (2) identifying the speaker's intent, and (3) calling appropriate extralinguistic knowledge or context into play to help frame the information.

When working from L2 into L1 it is especially important to focus your listening (or visual comprehension) on the incoming message. Abbott et al. (1981) note that "when people listen to a message in a language other than their native tongue, it takes them longer to process the information, they are more likely to make mistakes in comprehension, it is more difficult to predict outcome, and their memory is more heavily taxed and therefore works less efficiently" (Gonzalez et al., 1991, p.381).

## in Idea Identification

An indication of careful listening and accurate analysis is the ability to find and state the main idea of a text. The term "main idea" refers to the central premise around which the rest of the ideas, sometimes called supporting ideas, are expanded. If the main idea is altered or deleted, the meaning of the text changes. The main idea contains important information. Supporting ideas

add information to the main idea and make it clearer and stronger. The supporting ideas or details are less important to the overall theme than the main idea. If supporting ideas are omitted, the overall main idea is not changed substantially. When main ideas and supporting ideas are included in an interpretation it is important that they maintain the same relative weights with respect to each other.

You may remember reading classes where you learned to find the main idea. The goal of finding the main idea is usually to improve or check on comprehension. Cunningham and Moore (1986) searched the literature on main idea comprehension and found that there are many terms that refer to the concept of main idea. Some of the terms associated with main idea include outstanding point, master idea, big idea, controlling idea, significant idea, and central theme. Even among professionals in the field of reading for comprehension, there is not much agreement as to how to define the main idea. Despite disagreements regarding the definition of the term, it is true that there are ideas in any passage or text that are more important than other ideas or are more central to the overall theme.

Cunningham and Moore (1986) suggest that one of the factors that determine what a person selects as the main idea is what captures their attention. These authors deal primarily with finding the main idea in written materials, rather than spoken, but the same principles apply to both spoken material and written material. Cunningham and Moore say, "The reader's purposes for reading as well as the writer's presentation of information serve to regulate the reader's attention" (p. 10). If we expand the concept of "the reader" to include the interpreter, we can see that the interpreter's purpose in listening is to extract as much meaning as possible from the passage and convey it into the target language. The interpreter is not listening to gain information for his or her own personal use and so may focus more on the speaker's purpose. However, Cunningham and Moore point out that the writer or speaker's purpose may not always be easy to find. For example, a speaker may say that they will address topic "X" and speak about topic "Y" instead. Alternatively, sometimes the speaker is disorganized or may not actually have a clear point to make.

Interpreters need to be able to distinguish main from supporting ideas in order to prioritize the important points and to make quick decisions about which points are main ideas and which points support the main idea. In order to be able to identify the main idea, you must sort the ideas by level of importance and then by topic. This is accomplished by using a specific type of analytical thinking called hierarchical thinking. A hierarchy is a rank ordering or arranging of things by importance. In a well-organized speech or talk, the main idea usually is expressed early in the speech or text. The main idea can be summarized into a topic sentence. Sometimes the topic sentence is further abbreviated into a title. The main idea is sometimes stated early in the speech and then referred to again and again until the topic is changed. Once the main idea is stated, then it becomes implicit or understood in the ideas that follow it. Ideas presented after the main idea can be points that clarify or support the main idea.

To render a faithful interpretation, the interpreter must quickly grasp the important parts of the speaker's message and sort out the main ideas from the supporting ideas. This usually happens without benefit of discussion of this distinction with the speaker. In the speaker's mind and perhaps in the speaker's notes, some points are more important than other points. If the interpreter attributes equal weight to all of the speaker's points, the message may be skewed and certainly will not match the speaker's original message.

Sometimes, the speaker speaks very rapidly or is reading from a prepared speech. In these cases, the interpreter cannot always ask the speaker to pause or repeat information. When this happens, it is even more important for the interpreter to select the most important points. The ideal interpretation includes all the main points and all of the supporting points, in the order originally presented. In real-world practice, this is not always possible. In situations where the interpreter is unable to slow the pace of the speaker's comments, it is necessary for the interpreter to identify main and supporting points.

This skill of finding the main idea is one that can be emphasized in interpreter education. For example, Van Dam (1989) describes a process she calls "hop, skip and jump." By this she means that when the interpreter cannot keep up with the pace of the speaker, the interpreter must "hop" and "skip" over some of the details and "jump" to the next main point. In order to do this, the interpreter must be able to discern which points are central and which are supporting.

## Key Word

Another aspect of main idea identification is key word identification. "The key word in a passage is the one that labels the most important single concept in a passage" (Cunningham and Moore, 1986). According to Larson (1984, p.177), "Key words are used over and over in the text and are crucial to the theme or topic under discussion. Key words are most often words which represent an essential or basic concept of the text and are often thematic." Key words point to the main idea. Learning to identify key words is an effective way to improve comprehension.

## Summarizing

Another indication of effective listening and analysis is the ability to summarize accurately. Summarization skills are valuable for the interpreter in training as well as for the working interpreter. A summary includes the main points of the speech or talks and generally does not include the details. If you can quickly and accurately grasp what the talk is about, then you will have an easier time following the speaker and the various lines of reasoning that the speaker might use. Summarization skills show that you can get the "big picture" of what the speech is about and not get confused with the details and miss the point of the speech.

According to Tommola (1995), the process of summarizing is so important that it is often used as an aptitude test for candidates entering interpretation programs because it reveals the ability to use “macroprocessing.” Macroprocessing is a way of getting the big picture about what is most important. Tommola suggests that being able to use macroprocessing or finding main ideas and being aware of the relationships between them demonstrates the absence of effortful processing. Being able to recall the gist of the information leads to finding the rest of the relevant information in memory. An accurate and concise summary can “trigger” the memory of other related details in your memory. This kind of trigger may last only a short time, since interpreters generally are not trying to create long-term memories based on what they heard. Rather, they are relying heavily on working memory to process what they are hearing while they are working.

During the interpretation process, there is a constant sorting of information. The interpreter must determine if the information is very important or less important. The interpreter makes this decision based on what they know about the topic and what they know about the audience. The interpreter constantly sorts information into categories or topics, decides which points are most important, and uses those points to create a summary.

## EXERCISES IN LISTENING



### EXERCISE 3.1

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## Shoveling Snow

LESLIE RACH

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### Directions

It will take approximately 2 minutes to listen to the selection. Find a quiet place to work where you will not be interrupted while working on this exercise. Find this selection on your tape. Adjust the volume as necessary and be sure you can see the TV monitor clearly. Begin by allowing yourself time to focus on the speaker's face. Listen to the selection. Focus your attention on listening, comprehending what you hear, remembering, and finding the main point of the selection. Do not write while listening. You do not need to video or audio record your answers to study questions 1 through 4, but you do need to record your consecutive interpretation on video or audiotape for study question 5. There is no follow-up for this exercise.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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**Study Questions**

1. List as many details as you can remember about the selection after listening to it once. Listen to the videotape again while reading the transcript and circle any details that you may have missed.

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2. Write a single sentence that states the main idea of the selection.

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3. According to Weaver (1972), calling appropriate extralinguistic knowledge or context into play helps frame the information. How does your extralinguistic knowledge help you frame the information presented in this selection?

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4. Summarize this selection in the space provided.

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5. Consecutively interpret this passage. If you are working into a spoken language, use an audio recorder to record your interpretation. If you are working into a signed language, use a video recorder. The tape has pauses that are indicated by a beep tone. Press the pause button on your VCR if you need to give yourself additional time to render the consecutive interpretation.

## Transcript for *Shoveling Snow*, Leslie Rach

- 1 There's a teenage boy taking a snow shovel off of the garage wall. //
- 2 Working in snow that is about three feet deep he starts to clear a
- 3 path. // Now we see that he's cleared the whole driveway and he can
- 4 walk back and forth. //



### EXERCISE 3.2

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## Sailing

CHRIS LEWNES

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### Directions

It will take approximately 12 minutes to listen to the selection. Find a quiet place to work where you will not be interrupted while working on this exercise. Find this selection on your tape. Adjust the volume as necessary and be sure you can see the TV monitor clearly. Begin by allowing yourself time to focus on the speaker's face. Listen to Chris Lewnes's short talk on sailing. Focus your attention on listening, comprehending what you hear, remembering, and finding the main point of the selection. Do not write while listening. You do not need to video or audio record your answers to study questions 1 through 4, but you do need to record your consecutive interpretation on video or audiotape for study question 5. After you complete the study questions do the follow-up.



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3. To increase your extralinguistic knowledge, look on a map to locate San Diego and Catalina Island. Look up sailing techniques and terminology and write the new information in the space provided.

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4. What is the speaker's intent? Write a single sentence that expresses the main idea of the selection.

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5. Consecutively interpret this passage. If you are working into a spoken language, use an audio recorder to record your interpretation. If you are working into a signed language, use a video recorder. The tape has pauses that are indicated by a beep tone. Press the pause button on your VCR if you need to give yourself additional time to render the consecutive interpretation.

### Transcript for *Sailing*, Chris Lewnes

- 1 Hello. My name is Chris Lewnes. // Today I'd like to talk about my
- 2 favorite hobby. That's sailing. // Sailing to me is more than just trying
- 3 to get from one place to another. // I'd like to describe the basic
- 4 configuration of generally the small boats that I like to sail. //

5        They're configured as a sloop, which is one mast; // a ketch, two  
6        masts; a yawl, also two masts; // however, the aft mast is behind the  
7        steering wheel; // and a schooner—a schooner has two masts but the  
8        aft mast is larger than the forward mast. //

9        My boat is configured as a sloop, a single mast with a foresail and a  
10       mainsail. // In sailing, it's not always point-to-point to get from one place  
11       to another. // One has to be aware of the wind, and the direction from  
12       which the wind is coming. // In order to get your boat to sail the way  
13       you want it to sail you have to be aware of the wind and aware of how  
14       to trim the sails to get the benefit from the wind to move your boat. //

15       The best point of sail for a sailboat is with the wind on the beam—  
16       90 degrees to the sail. // One can sail all day beautifully that way. //  
17       The most difficult way to sail is to get to a point that is upwind; // In  
18       other words, if there's an island you'd like to go to here off San Diego,  
19       I like to go to Catalina. // Generally speaking, because of the prevailing  
20       wind, // Catalina is directly into the wind from where I want to go. // I  
21       can't sail directly there. // So I have to do what's called "tacking." // I've  
22       got to sail my boat as efficiently as I can upwind, which is about 35  
23       degrees to the wind. // I can only get within 35 degrees of the  
24       prevailing wind. // So I'll sail as close as I can, or 35 degrees on a  
25       course for as long as I think necessary, // and then I'll have to turn to  
26       put the boat on the other "tack" as we call it, // with the wind 35  
27       degrees on the other side of the boat. // Therefore, the course would  
28       look like a zigzag back and forth to my destination. //

29       Now, depending upon my skill and the layout of the boat I can  
30       perhaps get there quicker than somebody else. // Of course, if  
31       somebody else has a better boat and his skills are better, he's gonna  
32       beat me there. // That's part of the challenge and the fun of sailing. //  
33       Now, we call that sailing uphill. // Of course, just like everything else if  
34       you go uphill there's gonna be a reward coming downhill. // Coming

35 back from Catalina, if the wind is the same then it's a beautiful "run"  
 36 back to San Diego. A run is with the wind at our back. // So I'll put  
 37 the sails all the way out, gather as much wind as I can and float  
 38 effersly—effortlessly back to San Diego. // That's the ideal condition. //  
 39 Of course, having skills and being experienced and knowing how to  
 40 sail enables one to sail in virtually all types of weather, // knowing that,  
 41 uh, how much your boat can handle; how much wind you can handle; //  
 42 where to put the sails; how much sail to expose, // how much sail to  
 43 take in during heavy weather; // are all things that one should know to  
 44 make sailing pleasurable, safe, and a long-time enjoyable hobby. //

**Five-Step Follow-up**

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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**Step 1 Interpretation Rendered**

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate

2 = Consequence of errors is severe

1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**EXERCISE 3.3**

**Planning Children's Liturgy**

PAM CRISOSTOMO

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**Directions**

This selection is approximately 20 minutes long. You need a quiet place to work where you will not be interrupted and where you can record your responses to this selection on audio- or videotape. Play the selection while listening carefully and focus on remembering what you heard and block out any distractions. Answer the study questions. The fifth study question asks you to consecutively interpret this passage. If you are working into a spoken language you may record your interpretation on audiotape or videotape. If you are working into a signed language you must record your responses on videotape. Speak loudly enough so that your recorder will record the speaker's voice and your voice.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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3. To increase your extralinguistic knowledge, pick a religion you would like to know some basic facts about such as Buddhism, Judaism, or another religion and write these facts in the space below.

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4. What is the speaker's intent?

Write a single sentence that states the main idea of the selection.

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5. Consecutively interpret this passage. If you are working into a spoken language, use an audio recorder to record your interpretation. If you are working into a signed language, use a video recorder. The tape has pauses that are indicated by a beep tone. Press the pause button on your VCR if you need to give yourself additional time to render the consecutive interpretation.

## anscript for *Planning Children's Liturgy, Pam Crisostomo*

1 My name is Pam Crisostomo and I've been a catechist for the last four  
2 years // and this summer, um, I was also a teacher for Sund—um, the  
3 su—the summer school at St. Gregory the Great and, um, what I'm  
4 gonna talk about is, um, making a lesson plan for teaching lessons. //  
5 And, um, this is ch—during Mass we have this thing called Children's  
6 Liturgy of the Word, // and basically it's a session where the children  
7 can understand more of what is being said in the gospel readings from  
8 the Bible during Mass. // Um, I'm Roman Catholic and so this is  
9 celebrating the Catholic Mass. //

10 Um, so, first of all what I need to do in order to prepare, um, a  
11 lesson of this sort is get all of my materials ready; // and so I make sure  
12 I have, um, the readings down and I make sure I have a planning  
13 sheet and, uh, any materials—any other, like, materials that I might  
14 use: um, colored paper or things of that sort. //

15 Um, next I make sure, um, praying is a very integral part of this  
16 process. // I, I ask for God's guidance and I, I ask for the Holy Spirit in  
17 order to help me make sure that I am teaching the children what is—  
18 what is really, um, said in the Gospel readings or in the readings from  
19 the Bible. //

20 And so next I, um, read over the materials quickly, trying to figure  
21 out one big major theme that, that, um, resounds in each of the  
22 readings // so that the children can use—use these—use these readings  
23 or this key word or symbol in order to remember, um, the overall of  
24 the whole day or the whole lesson that I've prepared. // So I read over it  
25 pretty quickly, trying look for key words that's repeated in both maybe  
26 the first and second reading and maybe even in the Gospel reading. //

27 Um, so I do that and then after that I, um, I fill out my planning  
28 sheet so I essentially have the theme and then I know the readings. //

29 And I figure out something—something that's applicable to everyday  
30 life; maybe a real-life application. // Um, we were talking about  
31 discrimination. I was talking—I brought up the question of the Olympics  
32 and wondering if anybody'd seen the Olympics // and I was—asked the  
33 children whether or not, um, God would discriminate against people  
34 who had, like, the color blue on their flags, and things of that sort. //  
35 Things to get the children to think about, um, a real-life situation so it's  
36 not all so far away like 40 A.D., things—things of that sort. //

37 And then, so, um, I make sure I have my focus questions, I make  
38 sure I have a symbol, and then I—I type out intentions because it's  
39 my belief that all kids should participate and I really enjoy it. // And so  
40 I make sure all the kids have, um, um, try—I try to include all the  
41 kids in all aspects of the lesson I teach. // Um, so I have—during my  
42 class I have, um, children who turn off the lights and children who  
43 blow out the candles and children who are passer-outers or kids who  
44 are readers, // and so I make sure to have intentions written out so if,  
45 um, nobody has anybody to pray for I whip out my intentions and I  
46 have, like six or seven readers who go up and read. //

47 And so, that's essentially my preparation. So I make sure I read the  
48 readings and make sure I have the symbol ready. // Um, for example,  
49 last Sunday the word “key” was in—in both the first reading and in  
50 the Gospel, and it was kinda like key—your key to heaven is faith. //  
51 So, uh, on colored paper I cut out, um, probably, about 50 keys. So,  
52 and I wrote the word “faith” on each of those keys; and so whenever  
53 they saw the symbol of the key they would remember that, um, your  
54 key into heaven is essentially faith. // And also, this—the Gospel  
55 reading was about how Jesus made Peter, um, he called Peter a rock  
56 and essentially he was the foundation for the Church. // And so, out of  
57 my big backyard I picked up a big rock and on it I wrote the word—I  
58 wrote the name “Peter” in big—with big magic marker. // So there's a

59 huge boulder, essentially, on, like, the table, um, with the word—with  
60 the name “Peter” on it so the kids would remember. // Actually, I didn’t  
61 write it on there, I had, um, a volunteer write the word “Peter” on  
62 there so all the kids had—had something to do during the Mass. //

63       So now that I’ve prepared for everything, um, I get to Mass about  
64 20 minutes before it starts and it’s kinda funny because all the kids  
65 probably arrive about 5 minutes before it starts. // So I need volunteers  
66 to take up—I need two candle-bearers and I need a person to take up  
67 my lectionary. // And so I have three kids, and each of them, um, go  
68 up and they process in with Father Jim, or whoever is going to be the  
69 presiding, um, priest at that Mass. // And so I make sure they—they  
70 know what to do. They put the candles in the back and then they  
71 put the lectionary on the altar. //

72       And after that I go sit down and, um, and then as soon as the  
73 Liturgy of the Word starts for the—for the adults, um, Father Jim calls  
74 me up as a catechist and he calls all the kids up ages 5 to 11. // And so  
75 then I go and—I go up and, um, my candle-bearers process out in  
76 front of me and I’m holding the lectionary up and the lectionary’s very  
77 sacred ‘cause it’s God’s word. // So I have probably about 30 kids, ages  
78 5 to 11, following me out the door. // So then we go out the door and  
79 then I have—I have a key, so I make sure I unlock the door and the  
80 kids go in. //

81       And then, and then so I introduce myself and, um, I start out with  
82 my focus questions. Asking, y’know, maybe about the Olympics.  
83 Who’s seen the Olympics on TV, // or, um, as in the case with the keys,  
84 like who—whoever has had parents who’s locked their keys in their  
85 car and so we talk about things that—that are pretty real-world to  
86 them so that they understand what I’m talking about // and so, I mean  
87 it’s—it’s kind of funny, ‘cause I had—like my kids would ask—would  
88 tell me stories—would spend, like, 10 minutes, like talking about,

89 “Oh, when my mother locked her keys in the car I had to like, crawl  
90 through the window” and such and such. // So get ‘em warmed up to  
91 me. And then, so after I have my focus questions done, um, we begin  
92 with our prayer. // And then—and then pretty quickly I go through,  
93 um, the first reading, the responsorial psalm, and then, um, the  
94 Alleluia, which is the gospel acclamation and then we do the gospel. //

95 And even before that I tell them to remember the key words—the  
96 key word for the day was “key,” and also listen to the word “rock,” for  
97 Peter. // And then, so I have that, and then as soon as—the readings go  
98 by really quickly and then I have questions about the readings so then  
99 we do questions about the readings. //

100 And then more applications, like I always ask, like, who has  
101 brothers and sisters, and, um, who fights with their brothers and  
102 sisters; and we talk about, like, how to improve on that, // and we talk  
103 about keys and how the key to—the keys to heaven, um—your key  
104 into heaven is really your faith and the reason that Jesus made Peter  
105 the rock was because Peter had so much faith and essentially he was  
106 given the keys into heaven. //

107 And, after that, um, um,—during this whole time Father Jim is  
108 giving his homily, so this is the—this is the part—the Children’s  
109 Liturgy of the Word is, um, taking place of the older peoples’—  
100 Children Li—um, the older peoples’ Liturgy of the Word. // And then  
101 so after that, um, we do the Children’s Creed, which is kinda like the  
102 Nicene Creed, but written for children so that they understand what  
103 they’re saying. // And then we do our prayers of the faithful and then,  
104 um, I have—usually the kids volunteer—they want to pray for their  
105 pets or they want to pray for their sick grandmother or they want to  
106 pray that, like, their flower grows tomorrow, and simple things like  
107 that, like that kids want to pray for. // And then I have my intentions  
108 and usually, um, something like, um, so that all the children are safe

109 during this vacation and so that they may spend quality times with  
110 their parents or, may God help us have more patience with our  
111 younger brothers and sisters so we don't fight. And so, um, we have  
112 things like that. //

113 And then after that, um, I have my candle-blow-outers blow out  
114 the candles and hit the lights and then we're back right in time for,  
115 um, for—for the celebration of the Eucharist, and then we do Mass  
116 as usual. So that's the end of my lesson plan. //

### Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation

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#### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

- 1. Literal translation
- 2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
- 3. Omission
- 4. Addition
- 5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

5 = No negative consequences to participants

4 = Consequence of errors is minimal

3 = Consequence of errors is moderate

2 = Consequence of errors is severe

1 = Consequence of errors is grave

### **Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

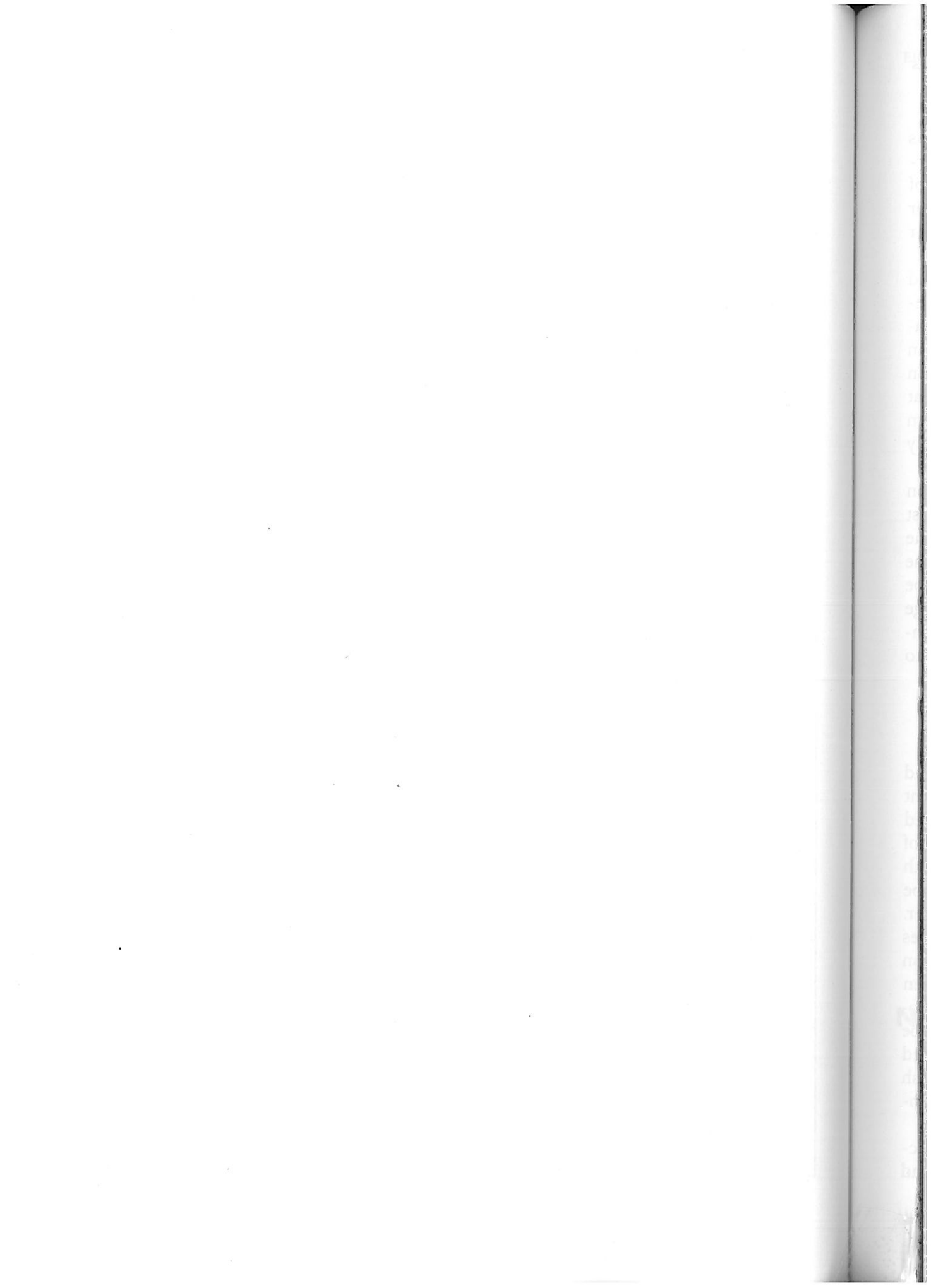
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## **Progress Tracking Sheet**

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times), answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 3.1 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 3.2 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 3.3 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Quantitative Totals							



# UNIT

# 4

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## *Note-Taking and Analysis*

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**I**n this unit we explore note-taking and analysis as they relate to consecutive interpreting. These topics are considered together because during the note-taking process, you must constantly analyze the incoming message and note the most salient points to help improve your memory processes during interpretation. During consecutive interpreting the interpreter has the opportunity to make notes and may refer to those notes while rendering the interpretation. Both consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting require that you understand the message, analyze it, transfer it into the target language mentally, and, finally, reformulate the message in the target language.

When you take notes during consecutive interpreting you can take notes in the target language or in the source language or in some combination of both. However, if the target language is a signed language, it is not possible to take notes in the target language and signed language interpreters tend to make notes in the source (spoken) language.

In simultaneous interpreting note-taking is not possible because the source message is ongoing. Some interpreters find consecutive interpreting more difficult because of the amount of time that passes between hearing the source message and rendering the interpretation. "Although consecutive is more time consuming than simultaneous interpretation, consecutive interpretation allows for more precision and is therefore often the preferred method in highly sensitive meetings where a slip of the tongue could lead to disaster" (Mikkelsen, 1983, p. 5). Taking notes can help relieve the burden on memory, but you must know how to take notes effectively during the interpreting process.

Analysis allows you to understand the meaning of the source message as best you can with your current resources and skill level. You must understand the source message before you can interpret. The most basic level of analysis occurs when you consider the source language text to get the gist or overall meaning. The text can be viewed as a whole, a grouping of ideas or sentences, and grouping of words.

The source text has a communicative function and all the words and phrases that make up the text must be considered within the cultural framework and function of the text. Snell-Hornby (1995) writes, "For the translator, the text is not purely a linguistic phenomenon, but must also be seen in terms of its communicative function, as a unit embedded in a given situation and as part of a broader sociocultural background" (p.69). She explains that the point of analysis at this level is to trace the "web of relationships" between individual items determined by their position and role in the text, not simply the meanings of the words.

As we analyze individual expressions or sentences, we must maintain an awareness of the overall context of the source text. At the same time we must be aware that "there are some expressions that have functions only in the source language community and will have no communicative purpose in the target language community" (Kusssmaul, 1995). This means that there may be some parts of the source text that we could translate into the target language but these passages would have no real meaning or function in the target language. For example, English descriptions of sound or music are unlikely to have real relevance to profoundly deaf ASL users.

## Note-Taking

Gonzalez et al. (1991) say that professionals often use notes in their work and that people in everyday life make notes to remind them of things they want to do or need to remember. These authors state that researchers have studied the effect of note-taking on memory. There is no consensus on the value of note-taking. Some of the studies suggest that note-taking may interfere with listening, while other studies suggest the opposite. This difference may be due, in part, to the speed of delivery and the effectiveness of the note-taker. Howe (1970) found that the fewer the notes, the better the recall. Jones (1998) says note-taking is a strategy that can reduce the cognitive load on memory during consecutive interpreting. If you are working from a spoken language, you will be able to practice note-taking and use note-taking in professional settings. If you are working from a signed language, you will not be able to effectively watch the signed source message and take notes. Signed language interpreters can benefit from practicing note-taking with English source materials because the process of taking notes is training for the memory processes related to interpreting—organizing and focusing.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) point out that there are actually two main functions associated with note-taking. One is the process of taking the notes and

the other is the process of reviewing the notes. Mikkelson (1983) suggests that “the act of taking notes (deciding what to write and how to place it on the page) appears to aid in the analysis and processing of the information and the interpreter is more likely to remember something that s/he has acted upon him/her self” (p.6). In this view the note-taking process helps to store the information in memory. In contrast, Dunkel (1985) says that the main cognitive benefit comes from reviewing the notes rather than from taking the notes. In this view the notes serve as an “external memory storage device.”

One of the important questions to consider is in which language should the interpreter make notes, the source or the target language? This is an important question because it focuses on *when* the translation takes place. If notes are written in the target language, message transfer occurs at that point. If notes are written in the source language, the interpreter transfers the message from source to target language when reading the notes. “Most experts agree that the notes should be taken in the target languages, so that translation problems are already resolved by the time the oral rendition is given. Of course some concepts may be rendered much more succinctly in the source language or in a third language so it is not unusual for interpreters to incorporate several languages into their notes” (Mikkelson, 1983, p.6). Mikkelson points out that another reason to take notes in the source language is to minimize fatigue. “A tired interpreter may wish to spread out the mental effort over the entire process instead of doing all the hard work during the first stage” (p.6).

When a speech contains numbers or names it is even more important to use note-taking to reduce the load on memory. When numbers and names are noted, the interpreter can continue to focus on the overall meaning of the message and refer to the written details later during the rendering of the interpretation.

Notes can help the interpreter reproduce the content of the speech, so the notes should indicate which points are most important and which are supporting. In order to make the determination about which points are main and which are supporting, the interpreter must analyze the message. Because the process of creating the notes helps to clarify the structure of the source message and serves as an external memory source, it is probable that the benefits of note-taking, organizing, focus, and enhancing memory are interacting and reinforcing each other continuously.

## Note-Taking Strategies

Jean-Francois Rozan (1956) was the first to document a note-taking system that conference interpreters use. In his method, the source language is represented with symbols that can be converted into the target language. “It is important to remember that the notes are an aid to memory, not an end in themselves; interpreters concentrate on attending to and analyzing the source language message as they hear it, and try to keep the notes to a minimum.

Very few words of the original message are written down, because interpreters focus on ideas, not words" (Gonzalez et al., 1991). Seleskovitch and Lederer (1995) stress that technical terms, numbers, and names should be written but that the notes should always reflect what the interpreter has understood, not just what the interpreter has heard.

Interpreters write single words and some symbols that represent entire concepts. Most authors agree that even though note-taking systems may be studied while in training, "there are as many different note taking systems as there are interpreters" (Weber, 1984, pp. 36–37, in Gonzalez et al., 1991, p. 388) and that each interpreter's system is unique. Bowen and Bowen (1984) agree that note-taking should be a personal, nonprescriptive system.

Gonzalez et al. (1991) summarize the Rozan (1956) method. First, ideas are abstracted from the source language. Then the ideas are noted on the page. Main ideas are usually near the margin and supporting ideas are indented. Notes move down the page to represent the order in which they occurred.

Main idea

Supporting idea

Supporting idea

Next main idea.

Supporting idea

In addition to spacing on the page, abbreviations, symbols, and lines are used in note-taking. Notes can use abbreviations such as etc., Dr., and abbreviations from science such as H<sub>2</sub>O or Q/A. Symbols from mathematics and science, such as =, +, <, >, @, #, \$, %, arrows, punctuation marks, and Greek letters, are used in note-taking.

Jones (1998) says it is important to be able to take notes quickly on a writing surface that is convenient and easy to hold, such as a stenographer's note pad. Notes should be taken only on one surface of the note pad rather than trying to switch from front to back of the page. Notes must be easily legible and unambiguous. For example, abbreviations must refer to a single lexical item and symbols should not be invented on the spot because it will be too hard to remember what the new symbol means when rendering the message.

Some interpreter training programs provide direct instruction on note-taking. In practice, each interpreter develops his or her own system of note-taking that allows quick and efficient noting of the details that will most help the interpreter when rendering the message into the target language. For more details on note-taking in consecutive interpreting, see Ilg and Lambert (1996).

While there is much to be said about methods of note-taking, it is important to keep in mind that the ultimate goal is an accurate interpretation. Merlini (1996) says, "correct comprehension of the source text is vital for the transfer of meaning from one language to another" (p.33). Taking time to learn and practice note-taking can improve your analysis skills and improve your overall performance in CI. Seleskovitch (1995) says that experienced in-

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interpreters who are skilled in taking notes during CI do not focus on the method of note-taking but rather on the meaning of the passage.

The skills that come into play in note-taking will also aid in the development of strong analysis skills because the note-taking process requires that you find the logical coherence in the message. Even if you spend only a short time developing your note-taking skills, the note-taking process makes analysis explicit and visible in the form of notes. This is a good training experience for those who have simultaneous interpreting as a goal. Rapid and accurate analysis skills can ensure a more reliable and faithful interpretation.

## The Analysis Stage

During the consecutive interpreting process analysis and note-taking are closely interwoven. Unit 2 discussed analysis in the context of listening, while this unit focuses on a different aspect of analysis. Analysis allows you to understand the source text as best you can with your current resources and skill level. Analysis can and should occur at different levels in the overall discourse (what is the gist of the message?), the grammatical level (are the sentences active or passive?), and the lexical level (do I know what the words mean?). Taking time to consciously analyze the message is important because the less distortion of the meaning of the source message, the less distortion there will be in the target message. The only way to know whether your analysis has been accurate is to look at the product, or the interpretation.

Awareness of relationships between idea units helps you to analyze and remember the message long enough to interpret it. Each of these relationships is summarized below. Nida and Tabor (1982) say that you must not deal only at the level of “kernels” or idea units, but must also work “back up” to the point where you see the relevance of these kernels to the entire discourse. They suggest that there are three types of relations between idea units that you should keep in mind. They are (1) temporal, (2) spatial, and (3) logical.

## Temporal Relationships

Temporal relationships describe the relationships between events as they occur in time. When you are aware of the importance of temporal relationships, your analysis of the message can be more accurate. Nida and Tabor (1982) point out that temporal relations permit you to include the notion of several events that happen at the same time or events that span a long period of time. This aspect of the interpreting process becomes especially important when working into languages that structure time-based events differently than the source language. Directions are an example of a type of discourse that relies on careful understanding of temporal events. Driving directions require that the sequence of events be presented in a specific order. Directions for cooking can require that certain ingredients be added before others. In either of these examples, if the temporal order is not preserved, the message

will be skewed in the target language. When taking notes for CI you can show the temporal relationship between events by listing them, using arrows that show a sequence of events, or develop your own method for showing how events relate to each other.

## Spatial Relationships

Spatial relationships allow for two different possibilities. Nida and Tabor (1982) say that “One is between objects such as a house and a tree, and the other is the spatial relationship between the viewer and other objects. Spatial relationships point out the importance of the point of view that the text follows.” In other words, who is speaking and where that speaker is in relation to the things being talked about. Spatial relations are especially important in visual languages like American Sign Language (ASL). In ASL it is important to establish the location of the objects and people referred to in the signing space. The signer must establish whether the objects being referred to are in view or not and must be consistent in referring to those objects and their relative locations in space.

A valuable tool for developing skill in preserving spatial relationships is visualization. Visualization skills allow you to imagine in your mind’s eye where people are in relation to each other or to objects. For example, a text may refer to a person speaking to a woman and giving her a pen. The text may not reveal which person is to the right and which is to the left or if they are facing each other. If you are working into a visual language, you must establish the people and objects in locations in space and then refer back to them systematically and consistently. If you do not know the actual location of the objects or people you must create a visualization and use it as a point of reference until the actors or objects shift location. Use hypothesis testing to establish locations until you find evidence of actual locations.

Visualization skills play an important role during transfer for spoken language interpreters as well as signed language interpreters. If you can envision where the people and objects are located in your mind’s eye, then you can work from the visualization into the target language. Taking notes can strengthen visualization skills. The notes visually show relationships between actors and objects through the use of symbols. You can follow prescribed conventions for note-taking while in training or develop your own methods for indicating people, objects, and relative locations.

## Logical Relations

Logical relations are the third type of relationship between idea units that Nida and Tabor (1982) discuss. Logical relations refer to “cause and effect or condition and consequence.” Languages may differ in how they arrange cause and effect clauses such as the if–then clause in English. During interpretation you must keep temporal, spatial, and logical relationships in mind as you

work. Taking notes can help you remember the logical relations between causes and conditions.

As you work through the exercises in this unit remember to take brief notes and give the highest priority to writing numbers and names when they occur. Taking notes while you listen to the source message helps you analyze the message for meaning and remember it better so that you will be able to transfer and reformulate the message.

## EXERCISES IN NOTE-TAKING AND ANALYSIS



### EXERCISE 4.1

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## Flat Tire

LESLIE RACH

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### Directions

This selection is approximately 1 minute long. Find this selection on your tape and listen to it. You will wait until the end of the selection to render an interpretation. While there will still be beep tones and pauses, use this time to complete your notes for the previous idea, or prepare to listen to the next utterance. Take brief notes as you listen. If you are working into a spoken language you may take notes in either the source or the target language. If you are working into a signed language take notes in the source language. Write only the minimum amount of cues to help you remember the message. While writing, visualize the relative locations of the actors and objects in the text. At the end of the entire selection refer to your notes and render the consecutive interpretation. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. If you are working into a spoken language you can audio- or videotape your interpretation. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions. There is no follow-up for this exercise.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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### Study Questions

1. Analyze the source message and be sure you have understood the text completely. Write the gist of the passage in one sentence. Write down any questions you have about the passage or words you want to look up.

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2. Examine the transcript and underline examples of spatial relationships. Are these relationships preserved in your interpretation? Refer to the transcript and put parentheses around any examples of temporal relations. Are these relations preserved in your interpretation?

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3. Refer to the notes you took while listening. See if you can remember the entire passage by referring to your notes. Could you have less detail in your notes and still remember the message?

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4. While you were listening to the source message and writing, were you aware of the visualization you were creating? What does an 8-year-old girl look like? Did you picture braided pig tails? What color is the bike and what kind of bike is it? Is the bike to the right or left of the girl? What does the pump look like? Is it a portable pump or is she at a gas station? How did the visualization affect your interpretation? What would happen if you committed to any one of these details in your interpretation and later found that they were incorrect?

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5. What are the logical relations in this text? Does your interpretation preserve the message and the logical relations?

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### Transcript for *Flat Tire*, Leslie Rach

- 1 There is a young girl with pig tails and glasses, she looks to be about
- 2 8 years old, pushing her bike with the front tire flattened. // On her
- 3 knees she pumps up the front tire using an air pump. // With the tire
- 4 repaired she rides off. //

#### EXERCISE 4.2

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### Directions to My Office

JANET PERKIN

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#### Directions

This selection is approximately 4 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape and listen to it. You will wait until the end of the selection to render an interpretation. While there will still be beep tones and pauses, use this time to com-

plete your notes for the previous idea, or prepare to listen to the next utterance. Take brief notes as you listen. If you are working into a spoken language you may take notes in either the source or the target language. If you are working into a signed language take notes in the source language. Write a minimum amount of cues to help you remember the message. While writing, visualize the relative locations of the actors and objects in the text. At the end of the entire selection refer to your notes and render the consecutive interpretation. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. If you are working into a spoken language you can audio- or videotape your interpretation. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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### Study Questions

1. Analyze the source message to be sure you have understood the text completely. Write the gist of the passage in one or two sentences. Write down any questions you have about the passage or words you want to look up.

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2. Examine the transcript and underline examples of spatial relationships. Are these relationships preserved in your interpretation? Refer to the transcript and put parentheses around any examples of temporal relations. Are these relations preserved in your interpretation?

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3. Check the notes you took while listening. See if you can still remember the entire passage by referring to your notes. Could you have less detail in your notes and still remember the message?

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4. While you were listening to the source message and writing, were you aware of the visualization you were creating? If you are familiar with San Diego, you may visualize the actual scenes she is referring to. If you have not seen San Diego, describe how you envision Balboa Park and the cinemas near her office.

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5. What are the temporal relations in this text? Does your interpretation preserve the message?

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### Transcript for *Directions to My Office, Janet Perkin*

- 1 Hi. My name is Janet Perkin, and I'm going to give you directions on  
2 how to get to my office from San Diego downtown. // Leaving San  
3 Diego, you take the 163 Freeway north. // And you will then be  
4 traveling through Balboa Park; you'll see trees on either side of the

5 road. // Further north you will pass by Highway 8. Keep continuing  
 6 north. Eventually 163 Freeway will run into Highway 15. // As you  
 7 travel north on Highway 15 you'll pass the areas of Mira Mesa, and  
 8 then Carmel Mountain Ranch. // You'll see a sign for Poway and just  
 9 north of there you'll see a sign for Rancho Bernardo. // Take the  
 10 Rancho Bernardo exit. // Go to your right and you'll come to a gas  
 11 station where there'll be a traffic light. // You're going to take an  
 12 immediate right up the hill, past several banks until you get to the  
 13 next stop light, where you'll turn right again. // Go up the small hill  
 14 there until you see the Mann theater, which is a cinema. // Drive into  
 15 their parking lot and get out of your car. // You will see our office  
 16 building adjacent to the cinema. I'll be looking out to meet you there. //

### re-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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#### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

5 = No negative consequences to participants

4 = Consequence of errors is minimal

3 = Consequence of errors is moderate

2 = Consequence of errors is severe

1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**EXERCISE 4.3**

**Preparing Chicken Fajitas**

ELLA PERKIN



**reactions**

This selection is approximately 6 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape and listen to it. Because this is a long selection, it is broken up into sections by paragraph. Each paragraph has beep tones and pauses. Use this time

to complete you notes for the previous idea, or prepare to listen to the next utterance. Take brief notes as you listen. If you are working into a spoken language you may take notes in either the source or the target language. If you are working into a signed language take notes in the source language. Write a minimum amount of cues to help you remember the message. While writing, visualize the relative locations of the actors and objects in the text. You will hear a special series of beep tones at the end of each paragraph that will signal you to pause the videotape. Refer to your notes and render the consecutive interpretation of the preceding paragraph. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. If you are working into a spoken language you can audio- or videotape your interpretation. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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### Transcript for *Preparing Fajitas*, Ella Perkin

1 Hi. My name is Ella Perkin and I'm going to give you directions on  
 2 how to make chicken fajitas. // I'm one of those people who likes to  
 3 cook things in the microwave, and if you're one of those people who  
 4 don't know how to cook, this is a very easy thing to make. //

RENDER THE INTERPRETATION

5 First you need to go to the grocery store and buy some boneless,  
 6 skinless chicken, // some tort—flour tortillas, salsa, one green pepper,  
 7 one red pepper, and an onion. // Then you take the chicken and cut  
 8 it on a cutting board into small pieces. // And cook it in a big wok  
 9 pan. // You should cook it and make sure it's thoroughly cooked  
 10 because if it's a little raw in the middle you could get very sick. //

RENDER THE INTERPRETATION

11 When the chicken is thoroughly cooked you take it out of the pan  
12 and put it onto a plate. // And now you want to cut the vegetables. But  
13 before you cut the vegetables you want to make sure that you wash off  
14 the cutting board and the knife so that, again, you don't get sick from  
15 the raw chicken that was just on there. //

RENDER THE INTERPRETATION

16 You cut the green pepper and you want to make sure that you take the  
17 core out of the green pepper and cut it into small pieces. // And cut  
18 the onion into small pieces. And when you cut the onion you might  
19 start crying. // Then you cut the red pepper and it's just like the green  
20 pepper—you cut the core out and then you slice it into pieces and  
21 then cut it the opposite way into small squares. //

RENDER THE INTERPRETATION

22 Now you need to add some oil into the pan before you cook the  
23 vegetables because the vegetables don't have any fat in them like the  
24 chicken does, so if you don't put oil into the pan they will stick  
25 to the bottom of the pan. // Then you—now you put the vegetables  
26 into the pan and cook them for a few minutes 'til they are slightly  
27 crisp and brown. // Now you can add the chicken back into the pan.  
28 And also I forgot to mention earlier that you also need to buy a  
29 packet of chicken fajita spice mix at the grocery store. // You add that  
30 into the pan with the chicken and the vegetables and 1 cup of water. //

RENDER THE INTERPRETATION

31 And you put this now onto a lower heat and mix it for a few minutes  
32 and the water will thicken up into a nice thick sauce. // You will now  
33 take the tortillas and just pop them in the microwave for a minute. //  
34 And now take the fajita mixture, put it into a bowl and you can just  
35 have a little nice buffet and this (should serve) five to six people, and  
36 it makes a nice dinner. //

RENDER THE INTERPRETATION

## Study Questions

1. Analyze the source message to be sure you have understood the text completely. Write the gist of the passage in one or two sentences. Write down any questions you have about the passage or words you want to look up. Define the following words.

Fajitas

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Salsa

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Tortilla

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Wok

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2. Examine the transcript and underline examples of spatial relationships. Are these relationships preserved in your interpretation? What would happen if the temporal (time sequence) relationships were not kept in the proper relationship to each other?

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3. Refer to the notes you took while listening. See if you can remember the entire passage by referring to your notes. Could you have less detail in your notes and still remember the message?

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4. While you were listening to the source message and writing, were you aware of the visualization you were creating? If you have made fajitas before your visualization will assist you. If you have not made fajitas before, you still can visualize going to the store. Are you envisioning the grocery store you usually go to? Do you envision your own cookware? What does it look like? Do you envision putting the food out in your own kitchen? Where is the stove located, and where would you put the food for the buffet? What would happen if you committed to any one of these details in your interpretation and later found that they were incorrect?

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5. What are the temporal relations in this text? Does your interpretation preserve the message and the temporal relations?

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### re-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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**Step 1 Interpretation Rendered**

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the "interpretation rendered" in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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## Progress Tracking Sheet

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times), answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 4.1 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 4.2 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 4.3 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Quantitative Totals							

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## *Memory*

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**M**emory is important in all phases of the interpreting process. Once you have listened intently to the message, you must remember it. It is vital that you remember the incoming message long enough to analyze and process it into the target language accurately. If you are working in CI you must remember what the message meant and then remember what your notes meant. Later, when you render the interpretation, you must remember what you said and compare that with the source message. If you decide to make a correction to your interpretation, you must remember your repair and your original rendition in addition to the source message.

Schweda Nicholson (1996) wrote a critical review of the recent literature dealing with the role of memory in interpretation. She reviews a number of theories including those of Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968), who proposed a model of human memory that indicates that sensory information, once perceived, is held in short-term memory for recall and is lost if not rehearsed soon after it arrives. The rapidity of the simultaneous interpreting process does not allow time to rehearse information and as a result interpreters generally do not recall what they interpret. In contrast, Ilg and Lambert (1996) reported that recall in consecutive interpreting is better than in simultaneous interpreting. The difference in recall is due to the opportunity to take notes in CI. "CI seems to represent a deeper form of processing due to such factors as additional rehearsal time, longer exposure to the information, visual cues provided by the notes and the aural feedback when rendering the consecutive delivery" (Ilg and Lambert, 1996, p. 84). These authors attribute the recall advantage of CI over SI in part to the fact that the consecutive interpreter can process information in silence.

Schweda Nicholson (1996) provides a summary of short-term memory, which is also known as working memory. The duration of working memory is thought to be only 250 milliseconds. According to Baddeley (1990), there are three parts to working memory. The first is the central executive, which controls working memory. The second is the visuospatial sketchpad, which is the place where mental images are probably created and stored. The third part is the articulatory loop, which can retain limited amounts of information. The articulatory loop is a phonological (sound-based) system that allows you to remember small amounts of information. These three aspects of working memory combine to allow interpreters to use visualization and other strategies to assist in the interpretation process.

In addition to working or short-term memory, there is long-term memory. Schweda Nicholson points out that long-term memory has two broad categories, procedural memory and propositional memory. Procedural memory is used to perform actions such as typing or rollerblading after learning the individual actions within each skill. Once the entire set of actions has been integrated into the larger skill, it is no longer necessary to consciously focus on the performance of each action in the process. Propositional memory is the memory that allows a person to remember concepts rather than performance-based operations.

Schweda Nicholson describes the relevance of procedural memory to interpretation. This is the kind of memory that is evoked without conscious awareness. This means that even though the process of simultaneous interpretation is very complex and demanding, some aspects of it can become less effortful with practice. Even though memory is an important part of the interpretation process, simultaneous interpreters are generally not responsible for remembering the content of messages that they have interpreted after they are finished interpreting. Consecutive interpreters must remember the message well enough to deliver it after the source message has stopped. Experienced interpreters tend to shift quickly and efficiently between working memory and longer term memory stores, without conscious realization. Schweda Nicholson emphasizes that there is a constant interplay between working and long-term memory during the interpretation process. Interpreters can quickly access what they know about a topic and tap into memory stores related to that knowledge to help them process the incoming message.

## oring Information

Gonzalez et al. (1991) describe methods for improving retention capacity. One of the most well-known ways is by "chunking," or organizing information into units that are easier to remember. Chunking involves "dividing a message into meaningful units, possibly changing the sequence of ideas, to render it more understandable" (p. 383). This means that the interpreter does not need to remember each individual word in a sentence. Instead, the interpreter remembers the meaning of phrases or idea units. By remembering idea units instead of words, the interpreter has fewer individual units to remem-

ber and the burden on memory is reduced. Gonzalez et al. explain that the chunking process is dependent on careful listening strategies along with the nature of the source language message and its delivery. Factors that affect listening effectiveness are density, rate, and coherence.

When information is encoded in long-term memory (LTM), it tends to be encoded semantically or based on meaning. Information that is stored in LTM tends to be information that you perceived, found some meaning in, and had somehow applied to your life. In contrast, when information is stored in short-term memory it tends to be encoded based on the analysis of the sounds of the words (Baddeley, 1976). This means that when interpreters attend to the underlying message rather than just the words, memory function is enhanced. When you work with the exercises in this unit listen for the meaning expressed by the speakers, not just their words.

## Retrieving Information

Once information is stored, the next step is retrieving the information, or remembering. Gonzalez et al. (1991) say that the more pathways there are to items stored in memory, the more likely it is that you will be able to access the information you need to retrieve. "Memory is like a cross-referenced index card file: the more ways one has to index items or the more associations one has with items, the more pathways that lead to an item, the more likely the individual will be able to take one and find what he or she is looking for" (p. 384). Gonzalez et al. say this is why it is important for interpreters to analyze messages carefully and organize them into meaningful units by forming connections to items previously stored in memory, rather than focusing on individual words. These authors say that successful storage and retrieval of information in memory depends on whether the person wants to remember the information or if they know it will be useful to them. For example, if you really want to know how to arrive at a certain destination you will listen carefully, perhaps take notes, and possibly envision the route in your mind. If you are not responsible for the details associated with arriving at the specified location you may not attend to the details and thus not store or remember the information. You are more likely to remember information you will use or want to remember.

Here is a list of factors that Gonzalez et al. (1991) say affect how people store and retrieve information.

- If you want to remember something you are more likely to remember it.
- If the new fact is similar in some way to something you already know, you are more likely to remember it.
- If you use the information in some way you are more likely to remember it.
- You are more likely to remember the items at the beginning and end of a list or a text than the information in the middle of a text (Baddeley, 1976).

- Too much stress can reduce your ability to remember (Yerkes and Dodson, 1908).
- Moderate levels of stress can improve memory (Loftus, 1980).
- Irrelevant stimuli can distract you and interfere with storage and recall of information.

If an interpreter's memory skills are well developed, there is a much higher chance that the resulting interpretation will be accurate than if memory skills are weak or poorly developed. Developing and practicing specific processing skills such as auditory memory, note-taking, repetition, and other skills may lead to increased effectiveness in the interpretation process. Practice in specific skills can lead to more automatic and less effortful processing. While the type of working memory processes required for interpretation could never be fully automatic, it is worthwhile to reduce the amount of effort required through meaningful practice.

## EXERCISES IN MEMORY

### EXERCISE 5.1

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## The Phone Call

LESLIE RACH

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### Directions

This selection is approximately 1 minute long. Find this selection on your tape. Render the consecutive interpretation of each sentence. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation; if not, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. You may use either audio or video recording if you are working into a spoken language. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions. There is no follow-up for this exercise.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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## Transcript for *The Phone Call*, Leslie Rach

- 1 There is a woman looking in a directory or phone book for a
- 2 number. // After she finds the number, she places the call. // Next
- 3 we see her smiling chatting on the phone. //

### Study Questions

1. Did you recall the sentences as one idea unit or did you chunk them into smaller units? List the idea units.

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2. Did you remember the information based on what you already know about using a looking up a number and using a phone? Did your prior experiences affect how you remembered and interpreted this passage? For example, how thick was the phone book? Did you envision a specific color for the phone? A specific type of phone? Do you envision the woman?

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3. How stressful was it to remember while interpreting this passage? Circle the answer that most closely describes your reaction and say why. Did your interpretation show your level of stress?

Not very stressful      Stressful      Moderately stressful      Very stressful

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4. Did irrelevant stimuli distract you and interfere with storage and recall of information? If so, describe the distractions.

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- 5. Compare your interpretation with the source message. Does the interpretation preserve the overall message? Compare each idea unit in the source message and compare it with the idea units in the interpretation. Are they equivalent? Are the ideas presented in the same order as the original? If not, why not? If not, does the change of order affect the meaning?

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**EXERCISE 5.2**

**Bathing the Dog**

LESLIE RACH

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**Directions**

This selection is approximately 3 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation; if not, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. You may use either audio or video recording if you are working into a spoken language. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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## Study Questions

1. Describe the approach you used to recall the message units. Did you use visualization, auditory recall of the words, or some other approach? List the idea units.

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2. Did you remember the information based on what you already know about bathing a dog? What did you envision the dog looking like? How did your visualization of the dog and the pool affect your interpretation?

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3. How stressful was it to remember this passage? Circle the answer that most closely describes your reaction and say why. Did your interpretation show your level of stress?

Not very stressful      Stressful      Moderately stressful      Very stressful

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4. Did irrelevant stimuli distract you and interfere with storage and recall of information? If so describe the distractions.

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5. Compare your interpretation with the source message. Does the interpretation preserve the overall message? Compare each idea unit in the source message and compare it with the idea units in the interpretation. Are they equivalent? Are the ideas presented in the same order as the original? If not, why not? If not, does the change of order affect the meaning?

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## anscript for *Bathing the Dog*, Leslie Rach

1 First there is a shaggy dog that's covered with mud. // Seems the  
 2 brother and sister see the dog covered with mud and get a brilliant  
 3 idea. // They get out the family swimming pool, quite a small pool. //  
 4 Then the brother and sister try with all their might to pull the dog  
 5 and push the dog into the swimming pool where he'll have his  
 6 bath. // Now we see the boy hosing off the dog in the pool while the  
 7 sister tries to hold him in place. //

8 Next, the boy is still working to scrub down the dog while the  
 9 sister unloads a whole box of soap, detergent onto the dog. //

10 Now the boy is hosing off the dog and the girl is sitting up by the  
 11 dog's head holding him still. // Finally the dog is hosed off and is out of  
 12 the pool and is being dried off with a towel. // Now we see the dog  
 13 giving a good shake and getting both the girl and the boy completely  
 14 drenched. // Now we see the dog clean and dry and the brother and  
 15 sister are drenched. //

## ve-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order

to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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**Step 1 Interpretation Rendered**

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

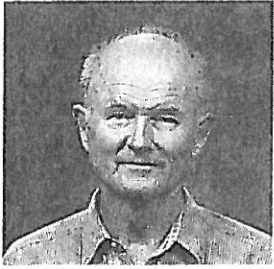
Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**EXERCISE 5.3**

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**Big Grandma**

DAVID BURNIGHT

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**Directions**

This selection is approximately 7 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation; if not, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. You may use either audio or video recording if you are working into a spoken language. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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**Study Questions**

1. Did you recall the message in each idea unit as series of words or did you remember the meaning of the sentence?

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2. Did you remember the information based on prior experiences with a grandparent or older woman you know? How did your memories affect how you remembered and interpreted this passage? For example, what did the woman that you envisioned look like? What was she wearing? Where was she sitting or standing? What did her hair look like?

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3. How stressful was it to remember this passage? Circle the answer that most closely describes your reaction and say why. Did your interpretation show your level of stress?

Not very stressful      Stressful      Moderately stressful      Very stressful

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4. Did irrelevant stimuli distract you and interfere with storage and recall of information? If so describe the distractions. Briefly describe how working with a longer passage affected your ability to remember the meaning.

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5. Compare your interpretation with the source message. Does the interpretation preserve the message? Compare each idea unit in the source message and compare it with the idea units in the interpretation. Are they equivalent? Are the ideas presented in the same order as the original? If not, why not? If not, does the change of order affect the meaning?

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### ranscript for **Big Grandma, David Burnight**

- 1 Hi, my name is David Burnight. I would like to tell you a little bit  
2 about my "Big Grandma." // Some of my favorite memories are about  
3 Big Grandma. I called her Big Grandma because I also had a little  
4 grandma. // Big Grandma wasn't fat, she was just big. // She grew up  
5 in Illinois of pioneer settler stock, and she just had big bones,

6 and was a big woman. // When my mother was 13 Grandpa died,  
7 and so Grandma took over and went to work and raised all three  
8 children herself. //

9 When I came along Grandma was living about half the time with  
10 our family and half the time with her son, so I always considered her  
11 a member of our family. // She would wash dishes and do the ironing,  
12 and help my mother a lot, and I enjoyed Big Grandma. //

13 We had a cabin up in the mountains and would go up every June  
14 and Grandma would go with us; // and after the sweeping and dusting  
15 and bringing down the cobwebs was done, Grandma would go for  
16 hikes with me. // She was an old lady, but she was a sturdy old lady. //  
17 She always took along a big walking stick, and she told me that it was  
18 to kill rattlesnakes with. // She had grown up in a place where the  
19 horses grazing on the prairie in Illinois were sometimes bitten by  
20 rattlesnakes which would lie in the prairie clover. // And so Grandma  
21 hated rattlesnakes and whenever she would see one she would kill it. //  
22 And as a matter of fact, when we'd find one on our hikes on the trail,  
23 Grandma would beat its head off with her walking stick. //

24 I think one of the funniest things that happened was one day  
25 when my dog Laddie cornered a skunk underneath our cabin. // Wow,  
26 what a smell that was! // But Grandma was not even concerned. //  
27 That was the day we discovered that Grandma had lost her sense  
28 of smell. // And, as a matter of fact now we understood why she'd  
29 been complaining lately that food just didn't taste as good as it used  
30 to, because when your sense of smell goes you lose your sense  
31 of taste, too. //

32 Grandma had been born in 1860 and she told me that when  
33 she was 5 years old her father took her down to the railway crossing  
34 to see Lincoln—President Lincoln's funeral train go by. // To have that  
35 kind of living contact with our nation's history always thrilled me

36 when I thought about it. // Grandma lived to be almost 102, and on  
37 her 100th birthday President Eisenhower sent her a birthday card. //  
38 Of course, he sent birthday cards to every 100-year-old person, but  
39 we always thought that it was very special because Grandma was very  
40 special to us. //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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### Step 2 Revisions

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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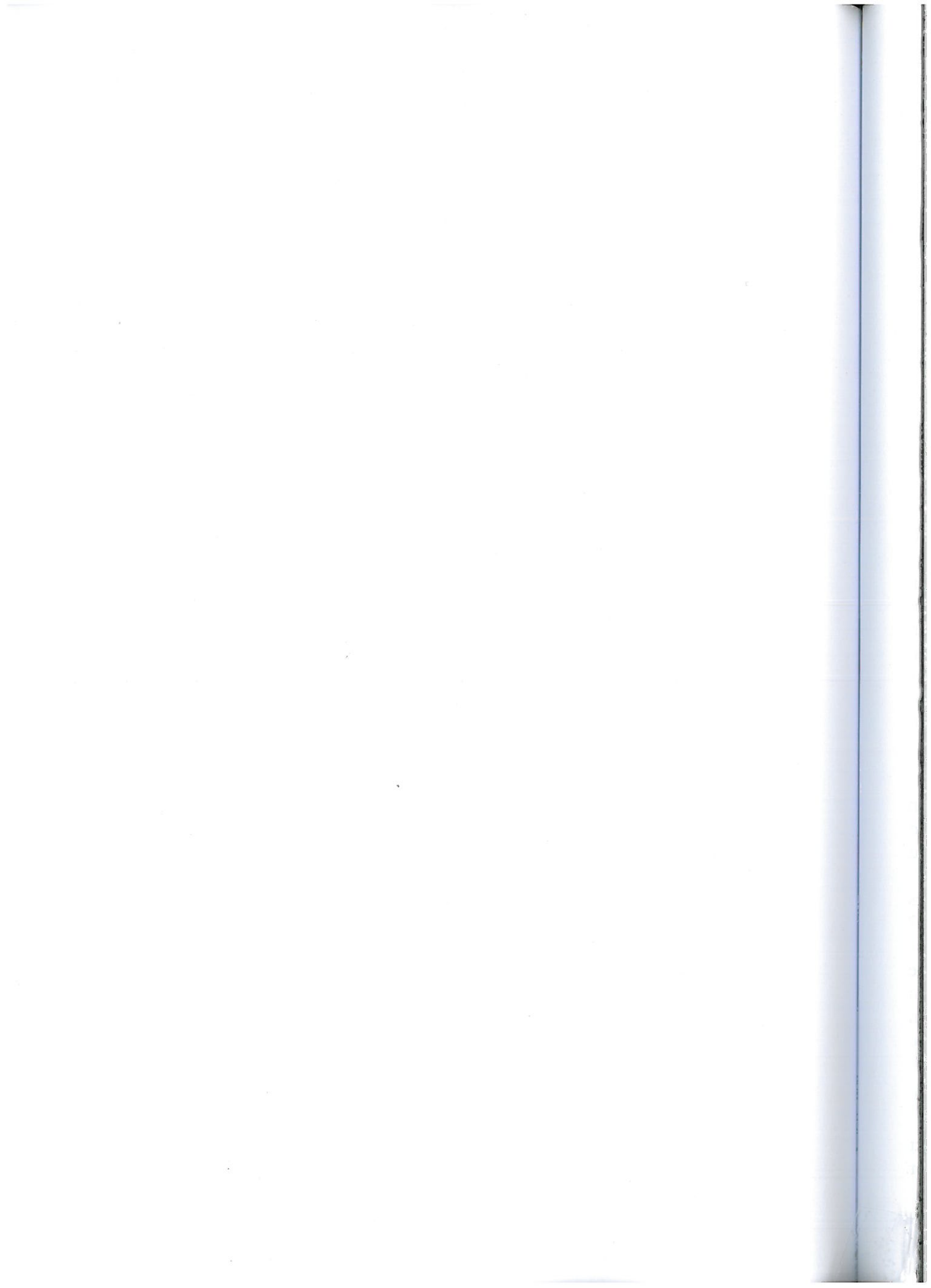
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**Progress Tracking Sheet**

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times), answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 5.1 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 5.2 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 5.3 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Quantitative Totals							



# UNIT

# 6

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## *Reformulation*

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**R**eformulation is the visible or audible result of the interpretation process. Reformulation allows the message to take form in the target language. The interpreted message must conform to the target language syntax. It must also preserve the illocutionary force or impact which allows the listener to know whether the source language utterance is a question, an insult, a command, or other type of utterance. Reformulation allows you to focus on creating a product as the result of the processes you have used so far in consecutive interpreting.

In consecutive interpreting the reformulation process will depend, in part, on how the source message is produced. If the entire speech is given and then you render the interpretation, you will need to work with the entire text in mind. If the speech is given one sentence at a time or one idea at a time, then you can only work with as much information as has been revealed. If you have taken notes you will refer to your notes during the reformulation process. Gile (1995) explains that people have verbal habits or ways of expressing ourselves and that these usual approaches to expression are superseded by the fact that the “interpreter must follow the path of the source language speaker” (p.166).

The following sections deal with specific aspects of reformulation that you should be aware of as you develop your skills. First, we consider the broader aspects of reformulation: finding the gist of the overall message, reformulating the location of actors and objects, reformulating specific concepts and relationships. Next we consider the importance of preserving the illocutionary force of the message. Some methods of reformulation including ideas for reformulation at the word level, modulation, and adaptation are addressed.

## **Finding the Gist**

Being able to find the gist or overall idea of the message of the sentence or entire text is a way to help you begin to correctly reformulate the message in the target language. You need to know what the speaker is talking about generally or have some hypothesis about the topic in order to begin formulating an approach to the interpretation. The speaker may state the topic and provide information that supports the stated topic. At other times the speaker may state a topic and not address it. Sometimes the speaker does not state the topic and you may need to infer the topic in order to understand the text as a whole. You can use hypothesis testing to help you formulate an idea that can guide you in finding the gist. Regardless of whether the speaker states the topic, you must still have an overall idea of what the message is about, whether you are dealing with a sentence or a passage.

## **Reformulating the Location of Actors and Objects**

As part of the reformulation process you need to establish a location for each of the actors and objects. For example, is one person to the right of the other? Is the car in front of the truck? What is the relevance of the location for these actors and objects? While assigning a physical location to actors is necessary in signed languages, both signed and spoken language interpreters can benefit from creating a visualization that locates the actors in relation to each other. Spoken language interpreters may not need to state the relationships between objects or actors explicitly, but it is helpful to have a mental image of what is occurring in the message. Be sure to visualize before you begin your interpretation and keep the same mental image so your interpretation will be consistent.

## **Reformulating Specific Concepts and Relationships**

Visualizing the location of actors and objects and assigning a mental location to each of the actors and objects includes visualizing their relationships to each other. The relationships between actors and objects must be preserved in the interpretation.

You can ask yourself some questions to help clarify the pertinent concepts and relationships. Who or what is doing the acting or initiating the action? Who or what is receiving the action? What is the action? What is the probable cause of the action? What is the reaction? What is the importance of the reaction? Does it lead to another probable action? Sometimes this information is explicit and easy to find in the source text and sometimes it is not. When the concepts and relationships in the source message are explicit it will be easier for you to preserve them in the target language.

## **Reformulating Illocutionary Force**

The arrangement of information at the grammatical level of the source text lets us know whether the text is a statement, question, rhetorical question, or

exclamation and is called illocutionary force. These various types of utterances have specific functions in communication. The interpretation must reflect the same discourse function as the source message. For example, if the source text is a question and you convey it as a statement then the function of the statement is not held constant and the effect of the interpretation will be different from that of the source text. You must know how to construct the appropriate syntactic arrangement in the target language in order to create an equivalent impact on the target language audience.

## Reformulating at the Word Level

Once you have considered the overall meaning of the source message, you can begin to develop specific word selection techniques. Some source language words will have equivalent lexical items in the target language. In those instances, it will be relatively easy to select the appropriate target language word. This does not mean that you can always use a word replacement technique. You must keep the intent and context of the overall message in mind while you interpret. Bell (1991) wrote about translation methods and suggested several methods of choosing lexical equivalents that can also apply to interpretation.

One method of choosing lexical equivalents is *borrowing*. This means using or borrowing a word directly from the source text and using it in the target text. For example, the word “computer” is used in French, even though it is an English word. The word “computer” will be recognizable in spoken French as the word “computer.” This method has application if the source and target language are both spoken or if both languages are signed.

A second method of choosing lexical equivalents is *modulation*. This represents a shift in the point of view. It is the difference between asking, “is this seat taken?” and “is this seat available?” Another example is seen in the fact that “no vacancy” and “full” convey the same concept from opposite viewpoints. The source can convey one point of view while the interpretation conveys a different point of view. It is important that the change in point of view does not change the meaning.

A third method is *adaptation*. This means selecting a culturally equivalent target language response. Bell (1991) suggests that in French people say “*bon appetit*” before eating a meal, but in English the equivalent may be silence (p. 71). Speakers of American English may say nothing or may say something like “dig in” or “let’s eat” at the beginning of a meal.

Bell (1991) explains that when a word or concept has more than one possible translation, you automatically eliminate one possibility in favor of another. Suppose that the source language has only one way to express “joy” while the target language has a variety of ways to express the concept of joy. You must select one from the range of possible choices in the target language. The word that you select has a slightly different meaning than the ones that you reject. This is the point at which the risk of error begins to play a role in

interpretation. He reminds us that it is important to be aware of all of the possible choices in the target language and to know the ramifications of selecting one word over other choices. This is only possible when you have strong target language skills.

The reformulation process naturally includes the possibility of some loss of meaning in the target language. Some loss is inevitable in interpretation due to the differences in cultures and the limitations of one language to fully convey the cultural constructs of another language. Ideally, linguistic and cultural competence in the two languages you are using, along with clear reasons for the choices you make in the consecutive interpreting process, can minimize loss.

## EXERCISES IN REFORMULATION

### EXERCISE 6.1

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### Three Introductions

OVERTON CAVANAUGH, JAIME CORONADO,  
AVA MORROW

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### Directions

This selection is approximately 5 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation. If you need more time, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. You may use either audio or video recording if you are working into a spoken language. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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### Study Questions

1. What is the gist of each introduction?
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2. Review your interpretation and compare it to the source text to determine whether the location of actors and objects has been appropriately rendered in the target language.

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3. Does your interpretation maintain the illocutionary force of the original? If not, how is the message affected?

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4. What techniques did you use at the word level in reformulating the message?

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5. Find two examples in your interpretation that show that you maintained the relationships expressed in the source message. Write those examples in the space provided. Use glossing if you are working into a signed language.

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**anscript for Introduction, Overton Cavanaugh**

- 1 Hi, my name is Overton Cavanaugh. I've been born and raised in
- 2 Washington, DC. I've been employed at Gallaudet for 5 years. //

**anscript for Introduction, Jaime Coronado**

- 1 Hi. My name is Jaime Coronado. // And I am originally from Chicago,
- 2 Illinois. // For the past 14 years, I have been living in Washington, DC,
- 3 as a sign lang—and working as a sign language interpreter. // I went to
- 4 Waubensee Community College in Sugar Grove, Illinois, and trained
- 5 as an interpreter there, then moved out here those 14 years ago. //
- 6 Right now, presently, I'm working at the United States Capitol. // I
- 7 work for the Congressional Special Services. // I am an official employee
- 8 of the United States Senate. // My responsibilities include interpreting for
- 9 members of Congress, the United States Senate, and their constituents. //

**anscript for Introduction, Ava Morrow**

- 1 My name is Ava Morrow. I began my career at Gallaudet University
- 2 17 years ago. // In 1980, I received a Bachelor's of Science degree in
- 3 Biology from Morgan State University in Baltimore. // I began working
- 4 at Gallaudet in the Biology Department as a laboratory technician. // It
- 5 wasn't very long before my friend and supervisor, Dr. Ann Davidson,
- 6 recommended that I go back to school to get a Master's degree. //
- 7 Therefore, in 1987 I graduated from Howard University with a

- 8 Master's degree in Microbiology. // At that time I joined the faculty at
- 9 Gallaudet. // I am now an assistant professor of science in the Biology
- 10 Department at Gallaudet and currently working on my Ph.D. degree
- 11 in Microbiology at Howard University. //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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### Step 2 Revisions

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected. Here is a sample rating scale developed along the lines of Kussmaul's (1995) approach that considers the consequences of the errors on the participants.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**EXERCISE 6.2**

**Autobiography**

HELEN CHANG

**Directions**

This selection is approximately 4 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation. If you need more time, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. You may use either audio or video recording if you are working into a spoken language. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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**Study Questions**

1. What is the gist of this selection?

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2. Review your interpretation and compare it to the source text to determine whether the location of actors and objects has been appropriately rendered in the target language.

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3. Does your interpretation maintain the illocutionary force of the original? If not, how is the message affected?

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4. What techniques did you use at the word level in reformulating the message?

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5. Does your interpretation preserve the relationships and concepts? If not, how is the message affected?

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## Transcript for *Autobiography, Helen Chang*

1 Hello. My name is Helen Chang. I'm a freelance interpreter in the DC  
2 area and have been doing this type of work for almost 8 years. // I  
3 hold certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, um,  
4 both CI and CT. // My parents are both from the People's Republic of  
5 China. They both came from the Province of Fukien and came to the  
6 United States in order to do graduate work. // My mother started out  
7 at Princeton Theological Seminary and then went on to Johns Hopkins  
8 University. // My father started first at Michigan State University and  
9 later went on to Texas A&M University, where he started a doctorate  
10 but never quite finished. //

11 I, of course, was born in Texas, while my father was a student, but  
12 only lived there for about 2 months. // Grew up in Pennsylvania, which  
13 I now claim as my home state, and, of course, now live in Virginia. //

14 My formal education is not exactly in interpreting. // I have a  
15 Bachelor's degree in English from Penn State University and a Master's  
16 in library science from the University of Michigan. // I also have  
17 completed all but the dissertation in library science at the University  
18 of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. // For better or for worse, that degree  
19 will probably never be completed. But as always, education is always a  
20 beneficial thing. // And I found that my varied background has been of  
21 great help in the interpreting field. //

### Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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**Step 1 Interpretation Rendered**

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up.

Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected. Here is a sample rating scale developed along the lines of Kussmaul's (1995) approach that considers the consequences of the errors on the participants.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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EXERCISE 6.3

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**Fusion Cooking**

ARLENE FONG CRAIG

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**Directions**

This selection is approximately 9 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation. If you need more time, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, videotape your consecutive interpretation. You may use either audio or video recording if you are working into a spoken language. After you complete the interpretation, answer the study questions and follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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**Study Questions**

1. What is the gist of this selection?

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2. Review your interpretation and compare it to the source text to determine whether the location of actors and objects has been appropriately rendered in the target language.

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3. Does your interpretation maintain the illocutionary force of the original? If not, how is the message affected?

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4. What techniques did you use at the word level in reformulating the message?

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5. Does your interpretation preserve the relationships and concepts? If not, how is the message affected?

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## Transcript for *Fusion Cooking*, Arlene Fong Craig

- 1 Hello. I'm Arlene Fong Craig. There's been a lot of talk lately about  
2 "fusion cooking." // But in my opinion, fusion cooking has been  
3 happening ever since immigration started. // Any time a people or a  
4 culture moves across boundaries, they take other aspects of their  
5 culture with them. They keep some things, they discard others, and  
6 they still transform others, other items. //
- 7 So this is my recipe for fusion Chinese–American roast turkey. You  
8 need a 22- to 25-pound turkey, eviscerated, cleaned, and patted dry. //

9 You'll need, for the marinade, five parts low-sodium soy sauce, four  
10 parts of liquor, preferably a good bourbon or Scotch, because the  
11 smoky, peaty flavor really blends well with the other flavors of the  
12 turkey and the ingredients. // You'll need three parts of mashed or  
13 minced garlic and ginger, two parts honey, and one part Asian sesame  
14 oil maybe one or two glogs of that. // Combine all of those ingredients  
15 and be sure that you thoroughly coat the turkey, both inside and out. //

16 You'll need to put the turkey in a roasting pan or some other  
17 container that is nonreactive, perhaps stainless steel, glass, or a  
18 ceramic such as Corningware. // You'll need to marinate the turkey in  
19 the refrigerator for at least 24 hours on each side, or if you cannot do  
20 that, a half a day on each side. //

21 When you're ready to roast the turkey, take it out of the  
22 refrigerator about an hour beforehand. // And preheat the oven about  
23 30 minutes before you're ready to start, to 500. You'll need a very hot  
24 oven in order to sear the bird and to seal in the juices. //

25 When you're ready to start roasting, place the turkey breast-side  
26 down in a nonstick roasting rack, they make Teflon roasting racks,  
27 will serve the best, and cover the turkey with an aluminum foil tent. //  
28 You can crimp the edges and just loosely cover the back of the bird.  
29 And be sure to protect the wing tips and the drumstick ends, also with  
30 aluminum foil. //

31 Roast the turkey, undisturbed, for about 20 minutes—I guarantee  
32 it won't burn—and then after 20 minutes, reduce the temperature to  
33 350 degrees. // You'll need to baste the turkey every 15–20 minutes  
34 regularly during the cooking time. //

35 After about 2 hours for about a 25-pound turkey—Oh, I beg your  
36 pardon, I forgot: You need, after about an hour, you can remove the  
37 aluminum foil tent, and perhaps, the protection from the wing tips  
38 and the drumsticks. // Continue basting, and after about 2 hours, take

39 the turkey out of the oven and flip it over to the breast side. // And the  
40 method I've found most useful, after a lot of burned fingers and  
41 burned hands, is to take two old but very clean wash cloths, wrap  
42 them around your hands, and just insert your hands into the cavity,  
43 cavities of the bird and flip it over. // And that's really the best and the  
44 safest way to turn the turkey over in a whole piece. Be sure to baste it  
45 before you put it back into the oven, and to put the tent over the  
46 breast, and to protect the wing tips again. //

47 Continue basting, and after about 2 hours, give it a test. This is 4  
48 hours total cooking time. // And if the juices run clear from the thigh,  
49 and if, when you press the meat, it does not spring back, then you  
50 know the turkey is done. If you like your turkey better more well done,  
51 you can leave it in a little longer, but continue to baste the bird. //

52 As my husband would say, I like my poultry "just done." And he'll  
53 say, "Here bird, jump up on the table!" And that's when I know it's  
54 ready! //

55 Be sure you let the turkey rest for 30 minutes for a bird this size  
56 before you start carving. In this way, the juices will shrink back into  
57 the bird, and the meat will keep its integrity when you begin carving.  
58 // So, there you have it: Fusion Chinese-American roast turkey! //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency

- a. Source language
- b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

#### **Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected. Here is a sample rating scale developed along the lines of Kussmaul's (1995) approach that considers the consequences of the errors on the participants.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

#### **Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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## **Progress Tracking Sheet**

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times), answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Notes and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 6.1 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 6.2 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Exercise 6.3 Quantitative							
Qualitative							
Quantitative Totals							

# UNIT

# 7

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## *Monitoring and Correction*

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This unit focuses on how interpreters monitor their own interpretations and make corrections to target language utterances. In simultaneous interpreting the interpreter listens to new information in the source language while simultaneously processing previously presented information, rendering still other parts of the message into the target language, and checking the target message for accuracy in terms of content and pronunciation. These steps happen in consecutive interpreting but they do not happen simultaneously. In consecutive interpreting the interpreter can mentally reinspect the interpretation without the interference of an ongoing message that must be processed. This “luxury” may also be viewed as a disadvantage because it requires that the interpreter remember the source and target versions of the message after some delay. The elapsed time can enhance the possibility of forgetting information from either the source or the target message. Regardless of the advantages and disadvantages of the consecutive interpreting process, the interpreter is still required to achieve the highest level of accuracy possible and make corrections to the interpretation when necessary. Exercises in this unit focus on the monitoring and correction process. In order to know what to correct you must closely monitor your own interpretations. By learning to monitor your work in consecutive interpretation you can determine what corrections are necessary.

Moser (1978) says that the simultaneous interpreter must process his or her own output (interpretation) in addition to processing the input (source message) and that the capacity needed to process the incoming message should not use up all of the interpreter’s available capacity. The same require-

ments apply to the consecutive interpreter. When the interpreter is struggling to comprehend the message, then more capacity is used at the earlier phases of the process and less is left for later stages such as reformulation and monitoring. Sometimes the interpreter can catch and correct an error, but that correction may reduce the capacity to accurately process ongoing incoming information.

Memory plays a role in monitoring and correction because you must remember your interpretation and compare that to the source message. Monitoring skills include listening and attending to your own output in the target language, checking the target message output to make sure it agrees with the meaning in the source language. You must also check the target language output for sense and cohesion.

If you determine that you need to correct a portion of the interpretation, this process also depends on accurate memory skills. Using self-correction skills in real time means that you provide a corrected target language output immediately after monitoring the interpretation. If you detect an error in the interpretation, the correction may be in the area of meaning or in form. A meaning error would convey information that was not in the source message. The most common error types are omitting information and adding information. An error in form would include stating a question as a statement or a command or using inappropriate syntax.

## Factors in Self-Monitoring

There are several factors to check when learning to monitor and correct your own interpretations. Learning this self-monitoring in combination with consecutive interpreting allows you to detect and correct errors without the pressures of simultaneity. The factors to check are intelligibility, volume, message accuracy, illocutionary force, use of fillers and repetitions, and comments on your own performance. By taking responsibility for these factors you will be able to monitor and correct your interpretations.

### *Intelligibility*

This factor focuses on clear diction and pronunciation of words (or expression of signs) and phrases in the target language. Phrases must be delivered in syntax that is appropriate to the target language. Would a user of the target language easily understand your interpretation? The target audience should not have to struggle to understand the message in the target language or further “interpret” it. Intelligibility does not include evaluating the accuracy of message transfer.

### *Volume*

The interpretation must be loud enough for the intended audience to hear if you are working into a spoken language. If you are working into a signed lan-

guage, your signs must be large enough to be easily discernible by the audience watching your interpretation.

### ***Message Accuracy***

The message conveyed in the target language must match the source language message in meaning, content, and intent. Cultural adjustments may be necessary to convey ideas appropriately in the target language. You must also take into account the composition of the target audience and their linguistic needs as well as cultural background. In order to make decisions about message equivalence you must be able to understand the message in the source language, transfer the message, and reformulate it in the target language. Language fluency in both the source and the target language is necessary in order for you to be able to make judgments about equivalence.

### ***Illocutionary Force***

Your interpretation should convey the illocutionary force of the source message. If the source message is a question seeking information, then the interpretation should have the same effect and elicit information from the target language listener. If the source language message contains a rhetorical question, then your interpretation should reflect that, although the form was a question, it does not necessarily seek information from the target audience. Likewise, statements should be rendered as statements and strong declarations in the source language should convey the same impact in the target language.

### ***Fillers and Repetitions***

Sometimes interpreters use fillers such as “um,” “ah,” and “hmm” or other verbalizations that are not part of the source message. Fillers are additions to the message and skew the message somewhat. Adding fillers like “um” and “ahh” shows uncertainty. The target audience may assume that the speaker rather than the interpreter generates the uncertainty. Sometimes interpreters use fillers as a way to allow more time to process a message into the target language. At other times, interpreters may use fillers in response to silence on the part of the speaker. This often indicates that the interpreter is not comfortable with silence and wishes to continue verbalizing in order to keep the attention of the target language audience. Adding vocalizations like fillers can have the opposite effect of silence. If the speaker is using silence to allow time for reflection or to increase impact, then the interpreter must be confident enough to allow the silence to occur in the interpretation.

Interpreters occasionally use repetitions to attempt to repair interpretations that are not satisfactory. This can happen when the interpreter does not initially allow enough time to fully understand or process the message. When the interpreter repeats the message the target audience is likely to think that the speaker is repeating the message, when the speaker may have delivered the message only once. Then the target audience infers that the speaker is

repeating the message out of either disorganization or perhaps attempting to overstate a point when in fact neither may be true. This is an example of how the interpreter can change the impact of the message by simply repeating it. Neither the speaker nor the target audience will be aware that the interpreter, not the speaker, generated the repetition. You should avoid fillers and repetitions in interpretations unless they are part of the source.

## Comments on Your Own Interpretation

Comments on your own interpretation are really another form of addition. These comments add something to the message that was not delivered by the speaker. It is common to hear interpreters or interpretation students commenting on their own interpretations, usually in unfavorable ways. But what is really going on when interpreters comment on their own work? There are very few studies that address this area. The comments interpreters make while working can reveal information about the interpreting process as well as attitudes about performance. Vik-Tuovinen (2000) studied two simultaneous interpreters' comments to each other during an interpreting assignment. The comments fell into two different categories, linguistic and extralinguistic. Linguistic comments are about the source text while extralinguistic comments are about the procedures in interpreting or the speakers. The comments reveal how interpreters solve problems and how they prioritize problems.

## EXERCISES IN MONITORING AND CORRECTION

### EXERCISE 7.1

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### Directions to My Office

RICHARD SOMERVILLE (WARM MATERIAL)

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### Directions

This selection is approximately 6 minutes long. If you translated this selection in *Translating from English*, it will be warm or familiar material to you. You will already know the translation and will add the processes of CI. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation. If not, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, you should videotape your responses. If you are working into a spoken language you may audiotape your interpretation. In this exercise, focus on checking your interpretation as you create it. Strive to create an intelligible interpretation that is loud enough (or visible enough), preserves the message and

illocutionary force, and does not contain fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own work. Although you will monitor your interpretation while you create it, you will evaluate and make corrections after the interpretation is completed.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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## Study Questions

1. Review your interpretation and rate its intelligibility on the scale provided below.

Completely intelligible                      Intelligible                      Not intelligible

Describe why you chose the rating you did.

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2. Rate your volume.

- Loud enough/large enough signs                      • Average loudness/visibility
- Too soft/ small signs

Describe why you chose the rating you did.

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3. Compare source and target messages to determine whether the message is preserved in your interpretation. Circle any portions of the source text for which you would like to improve the interpretation or about which you have questions.

4. Does your interpretation match the illocutionary force of the source text?

Yes                      No

Defend your answer with examples.

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- 5. Does your interpretation include fillers and repetitions? Does it include comments on your own interpretation? Describe the effect on the interpretation of using fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own interpretation.

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### **Transcript for *Directions to My Office, Richard Somerville***

1 My name is Richard Somerville. I'm going to give you directions to my  
2 office from the San Diego Airport. // When you land at the airport and  
3 rent a car, ask for directions to Interstate 5. // Everybody knows how  
4 to get to I-5 and get on I-5 going north. // After about 15 minutes look  
5 for the exit La Jolla Village Drive and take that exit. // When you get  
6 off the freeway, turn left. // You'll be going west towards the ocean;  
7 you'll cross back over the freeway. // And then keep on going on La  
8 Jolla Village Drive until you see the campus on your right. // You'll go  
9 up a hill, and when it finally levels out look for a sign to the left for  
10 the Steven Birch Aquarium Museum, which is part of Scripps  
11 Institution of Oceanography where I work. // Don't take that left turn,  
12 there's a light there, but go ahead until the next light, which is La Jolla  
13 Shores Drive. // You'll at this point be on Torrey Pines Road, and turn  
14 left onto La Jolla Shores Drive. // You'll be leaving the campus on your  
15 right. Follow La Jolla Shores Drive for about a half a mile. // It will  
16 snake down through an S-curve until the road runs parallel to the

17 ocean, and you'll see the Pacific in front of you. // As soon as you  
18 come out of the S-curve, which will be just after some tennis courts,  
19 look to your left for a gray building called Nierenberg Hall. // There's a  
20 very prominent sign, "Nierenberg Hall," on the building itself. // Turn  
21 left off La Jolla Shores Drive into the parking lot and park there, and  
22 then remember to get a parking permit: find my office. // Take the  
23 elevator to the fourth floor; the building is a long rectangle. // Go to  
24 the southwest corner of the fourth floor—that's the top floor—look for  
25 room number 430, and you'll find in that room Carolyn Baxter, my  
26 administrative assistant. // Ask her for a parking permit, go back down  
27 put the permit on your car, go back up to the office, and then I'll have  
28 a cup of coffee ready for you. Thanks. //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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**Step 2 Revisions**

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

- 1. Literal translation
- 2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
- 3. Omission
- 4. Addition
- 5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**EXERCISE 7.2**

**My Hobby**  
 JANET PERKIN



**Directions**

This selection is approximately 9 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation. If not, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, you should videotape your responses. If you are working into a spoken language you may audiotape your interpretation. In this exercise, focus on checking your interpretation as you create it. Strive to create an intelligible interpretation that is loud enough (or visible enough), preserves the message and illocutionary force, and does not contain fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own work. Although you will monitor your interpretation while you create it, you will evaluate and make corrections after the interpretation is completed. Answer the study questions and complete the follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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## Study Questions

1. Review your interpretation and rate its intelligibility on the scale provided below.

Completely intelligible      Intelligible      Not intelligible

Describe why you chose the rating you did.

---

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2. Rate your volume.

- Loud enough/large enough signs      • Average loudness/visibility
- Too soft/ small signs

Describe why you chose the rating you did.

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3. Compare source and target messages to determine whether the message is preserved in your interpretation. Circle any portions of the source text for which you would like to improve the interpretation or those you have questions about.

4. Does your interpretation match the illocutionary force of the source text?

Yes      No

Defend your answer with examples.

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5. Does your interpretation include fillers and repetitions? Does it include comments on your own interpretation? Describe the effect on the interpretation of using fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own interpretation.

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### Transcript for *My Hobby*, Janet Perkin

- 1 Hi. My name is Janet Perkin and I'm going to tell you about my  
2 hobby, which is antique collecting. // I think this first started when I  
3 visited my grandparents' house, which was a 17th century farmhouse  
4 in, um, on the outskirts of Sheffield. // And we used to visit there  
5 every Sunday, and I'm going to tell you what the inside of the house  
6 was like compared with what we live in today. // First of all, the  
7 kitchen itself had no electricity. // They had to cook on a black, leaded  
8 stove, uh, with the heat of coal from the fire. // This was kep—kept  
9 gleaming all the time by my grandmother, who polished it regularly. //  
10 There was a huge pine table in the kitchen with an old red settle  
11 where the farm workers used to come and sit and have their breakfast  
12 and lunch. // Also, there was an old stone sink there—we had no  
13 running water. They had to go into the garden and draw water from  
14 the well. // At nighttime we all had to use a paraffin lamp to heat—to  
15 light the room and then a candle we used to take to the bedroom. //  
16 In the bedroom we had beautiful pottery jug and water—a water jug  
17 to wash with, instead of having the bathroom. //  
18 Later on when my grandparents died I attended the auction. Uh,  
19 where, unfortunately, everything was auctioned to the general public  
20 and so many of the things were lost to the family. // There's many

21 things I wish I would've been able to have, like the old monk's bench,  
22 which was in fact a—a bench which also made into a table. A very  
23 rare piece of furniture. // I *did* manage to collect an old green platter  
24 and a gold Noritake coffee set, which I still have today. //

25 Later on in life I did inherit other pieces from members of the  
26 family, such as a grandfather clock from my mother-in-law which had  
27 been in the family many, many years. And we still have it today. //

28 When I was in my late twenties I got the real antique bug and I  
29 used to attend many estate sales, auctions, even garage sales. // And  
30 throughout the years I've collected a wonderful collection of Victorian,  
31 uh, furniture. In fact if you were to enter my living room today you  
32 would see a beautiful mahogany sideboard, and on that you would see  
33 a beautiful Victorian silver, uh, tea set, coffee pot, and then also in the  
34 room you would see a beautiful chaise lounge—for reclining on. //  
35 And it's a beautiful room with lots of prints, botanical prints that were  
36 popular in Victorian times. //

37 Now, my family room, which is very, very different, reminds a lot  
38 of people of a British pub. // Because you'll see a big fireplace, red  
39 brick, with a big oak beam across. Now, on the fireplace there are  
40 many, many horse brasses, uh, which are brass lu—uh, good luck  
41 charms used on the old farm horses years and years ago. // These  
42 adorn the mantelpiece with many brass candlesticks, miner's lamps  
43 from the old coal mines and also brass rail lamps. // Now, also in the  
44 family room you will find a huge oak table very similar to the one in  
45 my grandmother's kitchen. Here is where our family meets every  
46 Sunday evening. // We try and keep the same tradition that we had in  
47 my grandmother's time of meeting on Sunday evening and having a  
48 family meal together. // In fact, you'll also find a beautiful Welsh  
49 dresser there with many, many pieces of blue and white china. //  
50 Now today, my children just don't appreciate many of my

51 antiques, but I hope that one day they will, because, uh, these are  
 52 things that have been treasured through members of the family and  
 53 through my life, and I hope one day they'll come to love antiques  
 54 just as I do. //

## Five-Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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### Step 2 Revisions

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
- 3 = Consequence of errors is moderate
- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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**EXERCISE 7.3**

**How to Make Cheesecake**

LORRAINE OLDHAM

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**Directions**

This selection is approximately 5 minutes long. Find this selection on your tape. When you hear the beep tone, render the interpretation. You may find that the pause on the tape allows sufficient time to render your interpretation. If not, pause your videotape. If you are working into a signed language, you should videotape your responses. If you are working into a spoken language you may audiotape your interpretation. In this exercise, focus on monitoring your interpretation while you render it. Strive to create an intelligible interpretation that is loud enough (or visible enough), preserves the message and illocutionary force, and does not contain fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own work. Although you will monitor your interpretation while you create it, you will evaluate and make corrections after the interpretation is completed. Answer the study questions and complete the follow-up.

Describe the context and participants for this interpretation.

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**Study Questions**

- Review your interpretation and rate its intelligibility on the scale provided below.

Completely intelligible                      Intelligible                      Not intelligible

Describe why you chose the rating you did.

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2. Rate your volume.

- Loud enough/large enough signs      • Average loudness/visibility
- Too soft/ small signs

Describe why you chose the rating you did.

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3. Compare source and target messages to determine whether the message is preserved in your interpretation. Circle any portions of the source text for which you would like to improve the interpretation or those you have questions about.

4. Does your interpretation match the illocutionary force of the source text?  
Yes          No

Defend your answer with examples.

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5. Does your interpretation include fillers and repetitions? Does it include comments on your own interpretation? Describe the effect on the interpretation of using fillers, repetitions, and comments on your own interpretation.

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## Transcript for *How to Make Cheesecake*, Lorraine Oldham

1 Hi. I'm Lorraine Oldham and I would like to share with you a very  
2 favorite recipe that I have for cheesecake. It's one that I used when  
3 I started my cheesecake business several years ago. // And, um, it is a  
4 creamy-textured cheesecake. One of the things that I recommend is to  
5 preheat the oven to about 400 degrees first, and make sure you use a,  
6 uh, a pan—a glass pan of water— // to put under the bottom tray of  
7 your oven first. // And what that does is basically release enough  
8 moisture for your cheesecake, and it will help it avoid cracking while  
9 it bakes. // What you need to do is have 2 pounds 4 ounces of cream  
10 cheese at room temperature and blend it with about 1 1/4 cups of  
11 sugar 'til it's nice and smooth. // An electric mixer really works best. //  
12 Once you do that you're going to add about a cup of sour cream, a  
13 teaspoon of vanilla, and add to that also about a half a cup of half and  
14 half. // And blend these ingredients one at a time until it really creates  
15 a smooth mixture. // Then you're finally gonna blend in five egg yolks  
16 at room temperature. And you're just going to beat them slightly, just  
17 as each one of them falls into the mixing bowl. // And you don't want  
18 to overbeat the eggs, because it will create too much air in your batter. //  
19 Once this is all mixed, you just take it and put it into your prepared  
20 crust that has already been prepared in a springform pan. // And I  
21 usually use a 9- or a 10-inch springform pan for this much batter. //  
22 Basically, my preference is a shortbread crust, and it's one that I  
23 prefer over graham cracker. // It is much more time-consuming and  
24 it uses some really rich ingredients, including butter and eggs again  
25 but it really gives this cheesecake the best overall taste. // And if you  
26 really want to impress your company for a—with a wonderful  
27 cheesecake for dinner, I recommend you try this recipe.  
28 Bon appetit! //

## Step Follow-up

Review your entire interpretation. Select a 1- to 3-minute portion of your interpretation to analyze and improve using the five-step follow-up. In order to obtain 1 to 3 minutes of your actual interpretation, you may need 4 or 5 minutes of your recording because the source message alternates with the interpretation. You will analyze only this portion of your work.

List at least one positive aspect of your interpretation.

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### Step 1 Interpretation Rendered

Transcribe the portions of the interpretation you would like to improve.

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### Step 2 Revisions

Write a revised interpretation for each error identified in Step 1 that better preserves the meaning of the original source message.

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**Step 3 Determine Error Types**

Although there are many possible reasons for errors in interpretation, in this analysis you will select one of the five types listed below. This taxonomy is adapted from Gonzalez et al. (1991). Determine which error type applies for each error you identified and transcribed in Steps 1 and 2 of the follow-up. Write the number of the error type after the interpretation rendered in Step 1. Although more than one error type may apply, choose only one type for each error.

1. Literal translation
2. Inadequate language proficiency
  - a. Source language
  - b. Target language
3. Omission
4. Addition
5. Nonconservation of paralinguistic elements

**Step 4 Effect of Error on Communicative Function**

Once the error type has been determined, rate the error according to how it impacts the communication, keeping in mind that not all errors are equally serious.

Select from the five choices below in determining the effect of errors on the communicative function and write the number next to the interpretation rendered in Step 1 and after the error type you selected.

- 5 = No negative consequences to participants
- 4 = Consequence of errors is minimal
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- 2 = Consequence of errors is severe
- 1 = Consequence of errors is grave

**Step 5 Action Plan**

Once you have determined the reason for error in the interpreting process and its impact on the communicative function, write down what action you plan to take to improve your work.

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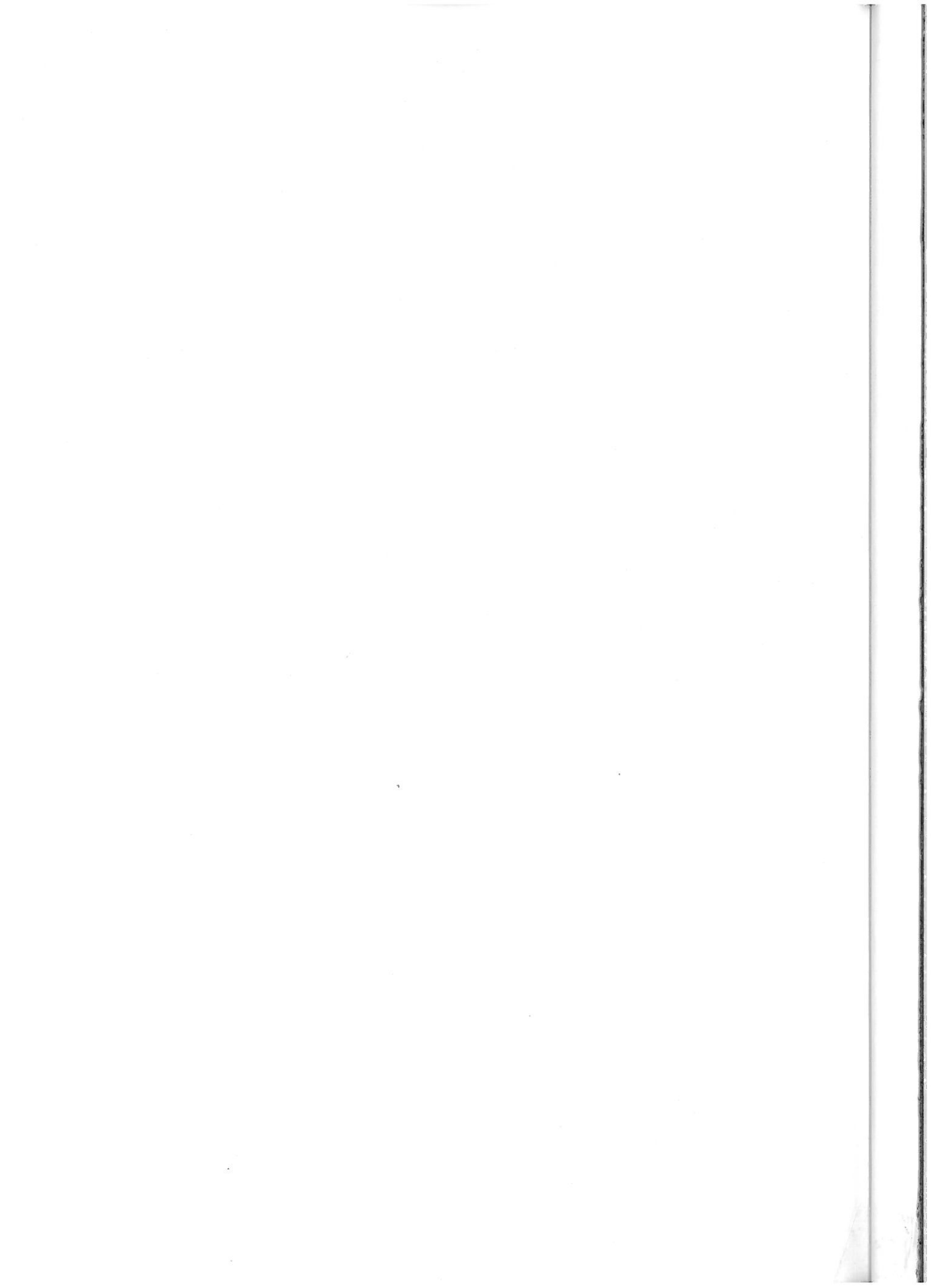
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## Progress Tracking Sheet

Use this sheet to track your progress with the exercises you have completed. After performing each exercise (one or two times), answering the study questions, and doing the follow-up, fill in the tracking sheet. Note the date that you completed the exercise and give an indication of your level of accomplishment. You can use either a quantitative or a qualitative approach to track your progress.

Exercise Number	Date	First Performance	Study Questions	Follow-up Activity	Questions and Reminders	Date	Second Performance
Exercise 7.1 Quantitative Qualitative							
Exercise 7.2 Quantitative Qualitative							
Exercise 7.3 Quantitative Qualitative							
Quantitative Totals							



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