

Cultural Aspect in President's Speech

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ABSTRACT: Political speeches, especially in the process of globalization, play an important role in aiding or obstructing world peace. This is particularly valid for in all relations. Inappropriate renditions (in translation) of political speeches might thus influence on the lives of million people. Important as they are, political speeches place extra stress on simultaneous interpreters, possibly affecting their choice of strategies and overall performance. Although research on interpreting strategies is relatively small, a generally agreed upon point is that interpreters perform better into their mother tongue. The aim of this article is to assess this hypothesis by identifying strategies and culture adopted by different professional interpreters of the historical speech delivered by United States ex- president Donald Trump.

KEYWORD: political speech, intercultural communication, political discourse, repetition, political stances, target and source language.

Intercultural communication has been made possible through interpreting.

Misunderstandings, writes Faiq , “are said to derive from incompatibilities in processing of media which carry them: languages [6; 1]. Yet misunderstandings are not only the products of linguistic incompatibilities but of cultural ones as well.” In a world of globalization, increased refugee and immigrant flows, political conflicts and clashes between cultures, interpreting should be a leading area of investigation in order to increase cultural understanding. Yet, this is largely not the case. Moreover, interpreting for political leaders at times of international crises, such as the times we are witnessing now, constitutes an extremely challenging interpreting assignment, even for professional interpreters. Inadequate interpreter performance in such highly sensitive contexts might influence the lives of millions of people all over the world, causing more cultural misunderstandings and possibly obstructing the cause of world peace.

Research on simultaneous interpreting has been devoted to the cognitive aspects of interpreters' performance such as mental overload and the effect of increased input rate and working environment on the interpreters' performance. Less attention has been given to investigation of the interpreters' strategies and trying to understand how interpreters deal with difficulties in their tasks, particularly in the context of political speeches. In the light of what is stated above, the aim of this thesis is to identify the most common strategies used by interpreters when faced with cultural difficulties in the context of political speeches.

6	ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by “Global Research Network LLC” under Volume: 2 Issue: 8 in October-2021 https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR
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This article sheds light on the importance of understanding of political discourse. It also focuses on the importance of acquiring cultural knowledge, in order to ensure a maximum level of understanding between people of different languages and cultures.

In translation studies, scholars have approached translation from many different perspectives, such as post colonialism, gender studies, and ideological consideration. Such perspectives view translation as a cultural practice. This same approach has been adopted in interpreting studies.

Anderson in his research “ Perspectives on the role of interpreter” was one of the first scholars who emphasized the importance of the social situation in which the interpreting task occurs. Anderson argues that interpreting “occurs in social-situations amenable to sociological analysis” [1; 209]. Such settings, Anderson believes, influence the interpreter’s performance.

Other scholars looked at extending some of the concepts that have come to occupy a central role in translation studies to the field of interpreting. Shlesinger, for example, discussed the possibility of extending the theory of “norms” which was first proposed by Toury in 1980, to interpreting. Few scholars have touched upon Shlesinger’s suggestion. Schjoldager is one of the scholars who revisited the concept of “norms” in interpreting [14; 44]. Schjoldager believes that “as a behavioural activity, interpreting must also be governed by norms” [14; 302]. She also emphasizes that the concept of norms is worthy of the attention of the interpreting studies scholars.

The strongest call for looking at interpreting as a cultural practice came with Cronin’s interpreting studies. He appeals for a “cultural turn” in interpreting studies. Cronin views interpreters as, “those that cross linguistic and cultural boundaries; depending on the identity of the interpreter and the nature of the context, interpreters cross boundaries of gender, class, nationality, or ethnicity” Cronin pinpointed the fact that interpreting scholars have neglected the theoretical developments in translation studies. He further believes that a “cultural turn” in interpreting studies and similar to what has already been developed in translation studies “would encourage scholars to explicitly address questions of power and issues such as class, gender, race in interpreting situations” [5; 389-397] . Diriker ran a study that has aimed at exploring the relation between the presence and the performance of simultaneous interpreters, and between the sociocultural contexts of their interpreting assignment. Diriker hoped that his study “can help to trigger an interest in exploring SI [simultaneous interpreting] as situated action”

Discourse stands for public and organized ways of speaking about constituted subjects (i.e., politics, medicine, science, society) in a specific historical period . Regarding political discourse, Chilton points out that there are two broad strands for the concept of politic [4; 86].

If one considers the definitions, implicit and explicit, found both in the traditional study of politics and in discourse studies of politics, there are two broad strands. Prime identified some of the common linguistic features of American political discourse, particularly speeches. According to Prime, “There are several readily recognizable techniques employed by all politicians, regardless of platform or ideology, when delivering speeches.” Repetition is the first feature of American political speeches. Repetition is a widely used technique in political speeches. Politicians often repeat words or even phrases to emphasize certain points. Prime believes that “repetition can make a sentence or phrase "catchy," or more memorable, creating a rhythm for the words which can stick with the listener as much or more than the actual words spoken do.”. The second feature of American political speeches is that they are generally delivered in the first-person plural, rather than singular. Prime explains the effect of using the first-person plural on the audience as follows:

A listener hearing "we" or "us" is free to interpret the usage as inclusive even if it is not. ... This inclusivity fosters a sense that the candidate is speaking for the listener as well as himself and presupposes the listener's agreement with the ideas espoused in a way that subtly brooks no argument [11; 1-2].

Moreover, speakers use the third-person plural sometimes to generate sympathy from their audience. Prime explains how in certain cases, politicians use the first-person singular: politicians will utilize the first-person singular emphatically, often to highlight differences between their own respective political stances or character traits and those of opponents without specifically referring to those opponents ... The use of "I," especially when it marks a shift away from a trend of plural pronouns, indicates that the listener is to take what follows as something of individual importance to the speaker, perhaps even something unique."

The following example from Trump speech, illustrates the previous point: "In a series of tweets in July, Trump told "'Progressive' Democrat Congresswomen, who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe," to "go back" to those countries. "Why don't they go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came," Trump tweeted. In the last decade, there has been an increasing interest in the subject of political discourse, especially with the development of ideological and rhetorical criticism of political speeches. The development of technology and mass media made it possible for politicians to reach a large number of people, therefore exposing the public to a range of political messages in a variety of forms. However, research on the translation/interpreting of political texts remains scarce. In fact, Romagnuolo points out that "Currently, translation studies seems to be more concerned with the politics and the politicization of translation than with the translation of political texts[12; 1] . Similarly, little or no attention has been paid to investigating simultaneously interpreted political discourse in any of its forms. In her research on non-cognitive constraints and interpreter strategies in political interviews, Baker concludes that " although less common than court or community interpreting, 'political' interpreting as a genre deserves to be studied more closely in view of its importance in shaping cultural images and aiding or obstructing the cause of world peace"[3; 124]. Newmark defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression." Thus culture is a system of habits, beliefs, morals, law, religion, customs, and behavior [10; 94]. In the relation between language and culture, Faiq (Cultural asserts that "language and culture represent the two sides of the same coin." In other words, language and culture are intertwined and can not be separated from one another [7; 35]. Aziz explains this relation as follows:

The vocabulary of a language derives its meaning to a large extent from its culture. Meaning is therefore the basic link between culture and language; it is also the central field of translation[2; 25]. In the act of intercultural communication which is done partly through translation, Faiq believes that, "the two fundamental components of translation are culture and language." In the process of achieving their main goal, interpreters and translators are most often faced with both cultural and linguistic difficulties. However cultural difficulties are more problematic for them than linguistic difficulties [7; 26]. Newmark points out that "frequently where there is cultural focus, there is a translation problem due to the cultural 'gap' or 'distance' between the source and target languages"[10; 94].

The seriousness of the context of president's speech places extra stress on the interpreters. On one hand they are interpreting for one of the world's most important leaders, whose words are considered very crucial in determining political situations. On the other hand, the interpreters are interpreting live on national and international television channels, which means that they are going to be watched

and monitored by millions of viewers. All this makes the interpreters' task extremely intimidating and puts them under an extra amount of stress, which therefore encourages literal translation.

The interpreters' overall poor linguistic performance raises a question about the validation of the standard practice within the interpretation profession, for simultaneous interpreters to work into their mother tongue.

The nature of this interpreting assignment and the seriousness of the speech as mentioned earlier, often encouraged the interpreters to render lexical terms with a series of synonyms.

The choice of such a strategy is most often adopted in order to convey the whole aspect of the meaning of the lexical item. However, opting for a strategy of repetition of synonyms very often affects the fluency and the rhetorical features of the speech. Research on interpreting in general is relatively small. In addition, interpreting political speeches for political leaders at times of great international crises is a very important interpreting assignment that deserves to be paid more attention.

In light of these issues, interpreting for political leaders in such highly sensitive contexts places simultaneous interpreters under high levels of stress, which may influence their choice of strategies and their overall performance.

The aim of this article is to study and analyze the interpreters' choice of strategies in such a highly sensitive context. In the absence of any literature on the subject of interpreters' strategies in political speeches, with the exception of Baker's research on interpreters' strategies in political interviews, this thesis aims at drawing more attention to this area of research. Trump's speech is analyzed and twenty one examples were chosen for analysis [3; 111-129].

The chosen examples are believed to have posed cultural difficulties for the three interpreters who carried out the interpretations.

In conclusion we would like to say that the president of the state, both in America and elsewhere, is one of the most visible and representative individuals in the country. They represent a moral and ethical pillar, and they are perceived as a moral and ethical role model for citizens. All these "ideal attributes" are expressed in their speeches at national commemorations, where on the stage they play the role of the leader of the nation. It is obvious that the function of these speeches is to use the symbolic power of language to influence the citizens and to establish authority. The material analyzed makes it obvious that presidents try to evoke patriotic feelings with the concepts that nation is family, our homeland is our home; we are on the same boat and we should work as a collective, hand in hand, and take care of each other, as a truly healthy family would.

Presidents are ascribed the role of an authority. They highlight the problems and solutions, and know what is right and wrong. In this regard, their discourse can be interpreted as paternalistic or omniscient.

However, their practices are largely received ambivalently or polyvalently. On the one hand they are defined by the fact that the president is pretty much always still a member of a particular party;

The most controversy has surrounded the current president, who even in his election campaign made use of a different form of communication with the public, which he is continuing during his presidency. His attitude has eroded the established considerations of what is and how someone should be president. The practices, behavior, and speeches of President Donald Trump is thus generally accepted ambivalently. Primarily this concerns the issue of the president's role, which today is somewhere between "leader of the nation," "ordinary citizen," and "celebrity." This is also

why the question of the real power and effect of presidential speeches or speech acts has remained central.

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