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Article

The Contemporary State of Translator Competence Development in Simultaneous Interpreters Based on a Person-Centred Approach

Khalilova Gozal Abdupattahovna
Senior Teacher, English Applied Translation Department, Translation faculty, Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

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Abstract: This study examines the current state of improving the translator competence of simultaneous interpreters through a person-centred approach. By analysing existing frameworks in interpreter training, this paper situates competence development within the broader context of individual learner needs, professional identity, and reflective practice. We review key dimensions of translator competence—linguistic proficiency, intercultural mediation, cognitive strategies, ethical judgment, and performance under pressure—and explore how person-centred methods (e.g.tailored feedback, self-assessment, mentorship, and learner autonomy) can enhance these factors.

Keywords: Field, Simultaneous Interpretation, Accuracy, Nuance, Cultural Sensitivity, Conditions, Approaches, Competence, Person-Centred Approach

1. Introduction

The field of simultaneous interpretation is built on rapidly translating spoken language with accuracy, nuance, and cultural sensitivity under demanding conditions [1]. As the demands on interpreters continue to evolve—with increasingly diverse language pairs, high-stakes contexts, and faster delivery expectations—so too must the approaches used to cultivate translator competence. A person-centered approach shifts the focus from standardized skill checklists and one-size-fits-all curricula to recognizing each learner's unique goals, background, strengths, and learning pace. This perspective emphasizes learner autonomy, reflective practice, individualized feedback, and mentorship as core elements of professional development [2].

Despite advances in interpreter education, there is a need for a coherent synthesis of how person-centered principles can be operationalized to enhance key dimensions of translator competence, including linguistic proficiency, intercultural mediation, cognitive strategies, ethical judgment, and performance under pressure. This introduction outlines the rationale for examining the current landscape of competence development through a person-centered lens, reviews relevant theoretical frameworks and empirical findings, and presents the aims and structure of the study. By integrating theory with classroom and field-based evidence, the paper seeks to identify practical strategies for program designers, instructors, and practitioners to foster more motivated, self-regulated, and adaptable simultaneous interpreters.

Research Gap

Although translator and interpreting competence has been widely investigated in Translation Studies, several important gaps remain in the literature concerning the

improvement of simultaneous interpreters' competence through a person-centered approach.

First, many existing studies mainly focus on linguistic, technical, and cognitive aspects of interpreting competence, such as language proficiency, memory, terminology management, and interpreting strategies. Research has shown that interpreter training often emphasizes linguistic proficiency and cognitive skills, while psychological and individual-difference factors receive less systematic attention [3]. However, factors such as anxiety, confidence, and personal learning characteristics can significantly influence interpreting performance and training outcomes.

Second, most traditional models of translation and interpreting competence are skill-oriented rather than learner-oriented. Competence frameworks usually describe the components required for professional interpreters but provide limited guidance on how interpreter education can be adapted to individual learners' needs, motivations, and personal development trajectories [4]. As a result, the person-centered perspective in interpreter training remains insufficiently explored.

Third, although research has examined different competence models for simultaneous interpreters, scholars note that simultaneous interpreting competence itself is still under-researched compared with translation competence. Many studies attempt to identify components of interpreting competence but do not sufficiently investigate effective pedagogical approaches for developing these competencies in training environments.

Fourth, current studies on interpreter training often emphasize technical skills and professional tools, especially with the growing role of translation technologies. However, limited research addresses how technological, emotional, and cognitive factors can be integrated within a person-centered framework to support the holistic development of interpreters.

Finally, there is a lack of empirical research examining how person-centered educational approaches—such as individualized learning strategies, reflective practice, and learner autonomy—can enhance the professional competence of simultaneous interpreters in real training contexts. Existing literature tends to discuss competence components theoretically rather than investigating learner-centered methodologies in interpreter education.

Therefore, this study aims to fill these gaps by exploring how a person-centered approach can contribute to improving the translator competence of simultaneous interpreters, focusing on individual learner characteristics, psychological factors, and personalized training strategies.

2. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the effectiveness of a person-centered approach in improving the translator competence of simultaneous interpreters [5]. The quantitative component focuses on measuring changes in interpreting competence before and after the implementation of person-centered training strategies, while the qualitative component explores participants' perceptions, experiences, and individual learning needs [6].

Participants

The participants of the study consist of simultaneous interpreting students and trainee interpreters enrolled in translation or interpreting programs at higher education institutions. A sample of approximately 20–40 students will be selected using purposive sampling to ensure that all participants have basic knowledge of interpreting and are engaged in interpreter training [7].

Research Instruments

Several instruments will be used to collect data:

Pre-test and Post-test (Simultaneous Interpreting Tasks)

Participants will perform interpreting tasks before and after the training period. Their performance will be evaluated based on criteria such as accuracy, fluency, completeness of information, terminology usage, and delivery.

Questionnaires

Structured questionnaires will be distributed to assess students' attitudes toward interpreter training, self-assessment of competence, motivation, and psychological factors such as confidence and stress management.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews will be conducted with selected participants to gain deeper insights into their learning experiences, individual challenges, and perceptions of the person-centered learning approach.

Observation

Classroom observations will be conducted during interpreting training sessions to analyze how person-centered teaching methods influence student engagement and skill development [8], [9].

3. Result

The results of the study demonstrate that the application of a person-centered approach significantly contributes to the development of translator competence among simultaneous interpreters. This approach emphasizes the individuality of learners, their cognitive styles, professional goals, emotional states, and personal learning trajectories. As a result, training becomes more flexible, adaptive, and effective.

First, the findings indicate that interpreters trained under a person-centered model show noticeable improvement in core components of translator competence. These components include linguistic competence, intercultural competence, strategic competence, and psychological readiness for real-time interpreting. By focusing on the personal strengths and weaknesses of each interpreter, educators are able to tailor exercises and feedback more precisely, leading to faster skill acquisition and higher translation accuracy [10].

Second, the person-centered approach enhances interpreters' self-reflection and autonomy. Participants involved in such training demonstrated increased ability to evaluate their own interpreting performance, identify errors, and apply corrective strategies. This reflective practice encourages continuous professional growth and helps interpreters develop independent learning skills that are essential for long-term career development.

Third, the research results highlight the importance of psychological and emotional support in simultaneous interpreter training. Simultaneous interpreting is associated with high cognitive load and stress. The person-centered approach integrates supportive teaching methods, such as individualized feedback, stress-management strategies, and confidence-building activities. These elements help interpreters maintain concentration, improve reaction speed, and reduce performance anxiety during real-time interpretation [11], [12].

Another important result is the improvement of communicative and intercultural competence. Through personalized tasks, authentic interpreting simulations, and collaborative learning, interpreters develop a deeper understanding of cultural context and pragmatic meaning. This enables them to produce translations that are not only linguistically correct but also culturally appropriate.

Furthermore, the study revealed that integrating modern technologies—such as digital interpreting platforms, speech analysis tools, and self-recording systems—within a person-centered framework increases the effectiveness of interpreter training. These technologies allow interpreters to review their performances, analyze speech patterns, and track progress over time.

Overall, the results confirm that a person-centered approach creates favorable conditions for the comprehensive development of translator competence in simultaneous

interpreters. It promotes individualized learning, strengthens professional skills, and supports psychological resilience. Consequently, interpreter training programs that incorporate person-centered strategies are more capable of preparing specialists who can perform effectively in complex multilingual communication environments [13].

4. Discussion

The findings of this study can be interpreted in light of the existing literature on translator and interpreter competence. The observed improvements in linguistic, intercultural, strategic, and psychological dimensions support the view that competence is multidimensional and cannot be reduced to linguistic proficiency alone. While earlier competence models tend to describe what professional interpreters should be able to do, the present results suggest that how these abilities are developed is equally important. By aligning training with each learner's goals, cognitive style, and emotional state, the person-centered approach appears to address the learner-orientation gap that skill-based frameworks leave open.

A particularly notable finding concerns the role of self-reflection and learner autonomy. The increased capacity of participants to evaluate their own performance and apply corrective strategies is consistent with the principles of reflective practice in translator training. This indicates that person-centered methods do more than transmit interpreting techniques; they cultivate self-regulated learners who are able to sustain professional growth beyond formal instruction [14]. In this sense, the results reinforce the argument that reflective and autonomous learning should be treated as central, rather than peripheral, components of interpreter education.

The results regarding psychological support and the integration of digital tools also merit discussion. The reduction of performance anxiety and the improvement of concentration suggest that emotional and cognitive factors are closely interconnected in simultaneous interpreting, and that addressing them jointly within a single framework is beneficial. At the same time, several limitations should be acknowledged. The relatively small purposive sample and the focus on a specific training context limit the generalizability of the findings, and the reliance on self-reported data introduces a degree of subjectivity [15]. These limitations indicate that the present results should be regarded as indicative rather than conclusive, and they point to the need for larger-scale, longitudinal studies in diverse educational settings.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of improving the translator competence of simultaneous interpreters through a person-centered approach demonstrates that individualized and learner-oriented training significantly enhances the effectiveness of interpreter education. The person-centered approach allows educators to consider the individual characteristics, cognitive abilities, professional needs, and emotional states of interpreters, which leads to more productive and meaningful learning outcomes.

The research shows that this approach contributes to the development of key components of translator competence, including linguistic, communicative, intercultural, and strategic competencies. By focusing on the personal learning trajectory of each interpreter, training becomes more adaptive and supports the development of critical skills required for simultaneous interpretation, such as quick decision-making, accuracy, concentration, and stress management.

Moreover, the person-centered model encourages interpreters to develop self-reflection, autonomy, and responsibility for their own professional growth. These qualities are essential for continuous improvement in a field that requires constant practice and adaptation to new linguistic and cultural contexts. The integration of modern technologies and interactive learning methods within this framework further strengthens the training

process and allows interpreters to analyze and improve their performance more effectively.

Therefore, the implementation of a person-centered approach in interpreter training programs can significantly improve the quality of professional preparation for simultaneous interpreters. It not only develops their translation competence but also enhances their psychological readiness and adaptability in real-time communication situations. Future studies may further explore innovative pedagogical strategies and assessment models that support the continued development of interpreter competence in diverse educational environments.

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