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Simultaneous Interpreting of Selected Sermons Preached at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław: An Analysis of Selected Interpreting Strategies

1. Introduction

Simultaneous interpreting, as well as other types of interpretations, is commonly practised worldwide in various sacred places (churches, religious institutes) due to the migration of people or missionary activity of clergy (bishops, priests, fathers). As part of a pastoral service, clergy usually preach the Gospel or a guest sermon in their native language, which requires interpretation by a simultaneous interpreter into the target language. A simultaneous interpreter is responsible for interpreting the word of God faithfully so that the believers can understand the message of the clergyman. The interpreter may encounter problems not only related to the terminology of a particular religion, but also find it difficult to cope with pragmatic factors, especially when interpreting passages of scripture, hagiography or preachers' speeches. Simultaneous interpreters in those religious settings are usually volunteers or members of parishes, religious groups, scholars or theologians with linguistic competence in at least two languages (foreign and native).

2. Interpreting in Religious Contexts

Although interpreting in a religious context is one of the earliest documented types of interpreting (after diplomacy and politics), it has become a focus of research only in the last two decades (Hild, 2017). Since then, researchers from various parts of the world have presented case studies of both ancient and contemporary interpreting practices in diverse contexts, such as religious gatherings, conferences, and communities in Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist settings (Downie, 2023). Following Francine Kaufmann's work published in 2005, numerous studies on consecutive and sign language interpreting (as well as translation) practices in various religions have emerged, including studies on sign language activities in a U.S. church (Owen, 2014), interpreting practices in Islam (Salawu, 2009), and Buddhism (St. André, 2010).

In terms of types of interpreting in religious settings, the most common modes identified in the reference literature include conference interpreting (especially consecutive and simultaneous interpreting), as well as dialogue interpreting and sentence-by-sentence interpreting (Da Silva et al., 2018). Rebecca Tipton and Olgierda Furmanek (2016) identify four types of faith-related interpreting based on purpose, canonical rigor, and context: missionary interpreting, liturgical interpreting, pilgrimage interpreting, and interpreting for formation. These types, which can apply to various faiths and denominations, may involve different interpreting modes. However, as Adelina Hild (2017, pp. 177–178) notes, most research on interlingual mediation in religious contexts centers on scripture interpretation, likely due to scholars' close connections with the Bible translation community. However, interpreting sermons and other forms of religious discourse has received comparatively less attention.

Over the centuries, scholars, interpreters, and translators have worked closely to ensure that translations or interpretations of the Bible (and other sacred scriptures) maintain their theological, doctrinal, and spiritual essence across languages. Sermons, prayers, and discussions are integral parts of religious practices and convey nuanced, context-specific messages. These discourses can be challenging to interpret due to the layers of meaning, cultural references, and religious terms they may contain. Thus, occasionally, academics and practitioners are asked to instruct the religious community on how to perform interpretation successfully.

Brian Harris (2009) shared on his blog that, due to the lack of a specialist in simultaneous interpreting at a Canadian parish, he was asked to conduct a workshop for a branch of the Worldwide Church of God. He found that the participants, already experts in religious terminology, only needed “tricks” for simultaneous interpreting. Similarly, Olgierda Furmanek and Mateusz Zimny coordinated interpretation efforts at World Youth Day in Kraków in 2016, leading a team of 40 volunteers in 10 languages to convey Pope Francis's messages (Furmanek, Ślusarczyk SVD 2017). Furmanek, a professor and specialist in religious interpretation, also developed the Religious Simultaneous Interpreting Course, covering theory, practice, and intercultural mediation.

Interpretation is crucial for understanding religious teachings and allowing global participation in events like prayers, meetings, and sermons. Simultaneous interpreting in religious communities has gained interest over the past two decades, driven by various publications on different religions. While there are few scholarly sources on Baptist church interpreting, it is often performed by church members familiar with the religion's principles and terminology.

3. Defining “Interpreting Strategy”

Over the years, scholars have defined “interpreting strategy” in various ways, often referring to it as “strategic behaviour” in the interpreting process. It primarily denotes an interpreter's conscious or unconscious plan to resolve problems and achieve accurate interpretation in the target language. Sylvia Kalina (2015) reviewed the

literature on interpreting strategies and found that terms like “strategies”, “tactics”, “techniques”, and “skills” are often used interchangeably. As Ewa Gumul (2021, p. 92) noted, it is difficult to settle on a single term, as all these concepts involve individual decisions made by the interpreter depending on the context and how they process the text.

Hella Kirchhoff ([1976] 2002) defined “strategies” as decisions made in specific situations, such as segmentation, anticipation, and data reduction. Franz Pöchhacker (2004) distinguished between process-oriented strategies, which help cope with stressful inputs, and product-oriented strategies aimed at effective communication. Daniel Gile (1995) saw “strategy” as planned actions with specific goals, such as preparing for conferences, while “tactics” were more reactive decisions to address challenges during the interpretation process. Gile identified three main types of “tactics” in simultaneous interpreting: comprehension tactics (used when comprehension problems arise under time pressure), preventive tactics (used when an interpreter anticipates a problem), and reformulation tactics.

Roderick Jones (1998) approached the term “technique” practically, focusing on how interpreters prepare for conference interpreting, manage difficult speakers, and apply strategies like generalization, anticipation, and reformulation. Robin Setton (1999, p. 50) used the terms “skill” and “strategy” interchangeably, explaining that in interpreting training, skills are often defined as strategies to overcome language-specific challenges, particularly differences in word order.

The article focuses on significant input- and output-handling strategies, which are related to psycho-affective management strategies (Walczyński, 2019). The interpreters’ reactions during the interpretation process are linked to how they comprehend and process the source text. Interpreters must employ strategies that enhance and simplify their work under stress and time constraints. The most common strategies include compression, explicitation, parallel reformulation, omission, and repairing. For the purpose of this article, the focus is on three strategies: compression, explicitation, and repairing, with examples drawn from the research material.

4. Simultaneous Interpreting at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław¹

Simultaneous interpretation at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław began in 1989 when Ruth Kowalczyk founded *English at the Baptists*, inspired by English camps run by Western Christians. Despite challenges, she secured permits and became the school’s first principal. Foreign teachers staying in Wrocław led to the introduction of interpretation in the early 1990s, allowing English-speaking visitors to engage in church life. In 2012, the International Church of Wrocław was founded, holding English services, which reduced the need for interpretation at Polish services, now offered occasionally.

¹ The information was gathered by the author through interviews with the simultaneous interpreter, Kamil Staniec, during the collection of the research material (2020–2021).



Photograph 1. Interior of the church, view from the ground floor
(Photo by Maria Kozan, 11.10.2020)

Currently, simultaneous interpretation between Polish and English is handled by a single interpreter, Kamil Staniec, who interprets sermons, prayers, and praise requests. Staniec has led simultaneous interpreting at the church for several years. Outside this role, he is a senior researcher in telecommunications, a professor at the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, and Vice-Rector for Education at Wrocław University of Science and Technology. His family ties to the Baptist and Pentecostal churches gave him opportunities to develop his interpreting skills during services. Staniec enhanced his language skills at the International Faculty of Engineering, Łódź University of Technology, where English was the language of instruction. This developed his expertise in both biblical and technical fields, which he applies in church and his professional work. Though lacking a conference interpreting degree, his experience in consecutive and simultaneous interpretation comes from years of practice and self-education.

The interpreter's booth, located on the first floor, offers a clear view of the podium, screen, and congregation. It is equipped with a mixer, headset with microphone, lamp, scripture, notes, and water. Congregants can borrow headphones to follow the interpretation. The interpreter mainly uses *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1984). Scripture passages displayed on screen are not always interpreted, but when quoted, the interpreter may read directly from the Bible or provide a verbatim interpretation.



Photograph 2. Simultaneous interpreter at work (Photo by Maria Kozan, 18.10.2020)

During services, when not interpreting biblical passages, Staniec has been observed searching for words in the *Oxford Dictionary* on his phone, using WhatsApp, browsing scripture, or sketching on paper. While this behaviour might seem like a form of stress relief—though he did not acknowledge it as such—it ultimately reflects his commitment to delivering high-quality interpretation.

While observing the interpreter², particularly during recorded audio, the author noted involuntary behaviors likely serving as stress relief or pauses to gather thoughts. These included throat clearing, silent panting, repetition of words or phrases, extended pauses (about five seconds), and occasional disruptions like slamming a bottle. The interpreter's posture also varied, with nodding, shifting position, crossing and uncrossing legs, tapping fingers, and repeatedly folding pages when faced with a rapid accumulation of sentences.

² The observer's paradox, coined by William Labov (1972), refers to how the presence of an observer can influence the phenomenon being studied. In sociolinguistics, this poses a challenge in collecting natural speech data. While confirming the paradox in this study is difficult, an interesting situation arose early on. During the first church visit, unclear English interpretation was initially blamed on faulty headphones but later traced to the interpreter's style and involuntary sounds. These issues were most noticeable in the first sermon but lessened in later ones, likely due to simpler content and the interpreter's growing comfort.

From the interpreter's perspective, the role is both valuable to the church and highly demanding, requiring intense concentration and carrying significant responsibility. This is particularly true given that a typical sermon lasts around 30 minutes or longer. However, the interpreter's strong command of English and expertise in religious terminology have undoubtedly enhanced the quality of the interpreted sermons.

5. Characteristics of Analysed Material

The research material for this article comprises ten selected sermons delivered at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław, located at ul. Kłodnicka 2. Services at this church are held three times on Sundays: at 11 am in Polish, at 2 pm in Russian, and at 5 pm in English, welcoming both members and visitors interested in exploring faith.

The research was conducted in 2020/2021. Ten English-language sermons were recorded using a dictaphone and later transcribed into a Word file. Table 1 below presents the sermon dates, titles, preachers, durations, and total word counts in Polish and English. The selection of preachers and sermons was entirely random. However, upon reviewing the material, the author decided to focus on ten sermons, as this was deemed sufficient for the study.

Regarding sermon length, the first two were the longest, exceeding 50 minutes, as they were considered "special". The first was delivered by Lech Bekesza, a guest preacher from Canada, who returned to his hometown of Wrocław to share his life testimony and speak alongside Piotr Zakrzewski. The second sermon by Artur Śmieja served as a mission statement on life, faith, and marriage.

| No. | Date | Title of the service | Preacher | Sermon duration | Total word count EN | Total word count PL |
|-----|------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| S1 | 18.10.2020 | W stronę praktyki | Lech Bekesza and Piotr Zakrzewski | 55:47 | 6634 | 6768 |
| S2 | 25.10.2020 | W stronę inspiracji | Artur Śmieja | 51:20 | 6097 | 6505 |
| S3 | 04.07.2021 | Nowe stare przemyślenia (5 rozdział Księgi Nehemiasza) | Mariusz Chabasiński | 23:33 | 2225 | 3022 |
| S4 | 11.07.2021 | Nowe stare przemyślenia (6–7 rozdział Księgi Nehemiasza) | Jan Drożyński | 22:20 | 2151 | 2570 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|------------|---|---------------------|-------|------|------|
| S5 | 25.07.2021 | Nowe stare przymierze (10–12 rozdziały Księgi Nehemiasza) | Piotr Zakrzewski | 35:54 | 4415 | 4090 |
| S6 | 05.09.2021 | Pieśń łaski (Psalm 40) | Mariusz Chabasiński | 38:28 | 3414 | 3276 |
| S7 | 20.09.2021 | Czy wystarczy? (Psalm 26) | Ryszard Tyśnicki | 26:20 | 2972 | 2851 |
| S8 | 10.10.2021 | Dar Bożej łaski (2 List Pawła do Tymoteusza 1:6–8) | Michał Domagała | 36:10 | 4388 | 4384 |
| S9 | 24.10.2021 | Życie naśladowcy (2 List Pawła do Tymoteusza 2:1–7) | Piotr Zakrzewski | 25:54 | 3035 | 2866 |
| S10 | 5.12.2021 | Dobry wzór II (2 List Pawła do Tymoteusza 3:10–17) | Jan Drożyński | 26:40 | 3070 | 3022 |

Table 1. General information about the study material

In the context of sermons at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław, it is important to note that preachers are divided into those who prepare their sermons in advance and read them during the service, and those who improvise. The simultaneous interpreter mentioned³ that, in the past, preachers would often send him their Polish sermons in advance (via email or placed in the pigeon-hole on the day of the service), allowing him to familiarise himself with the topic, scripture passages, and terminology. At that time, he typically provided sight translation. However, current preachers are not accustomed to sharing their sermons, so the interpreter must now be prepared for any scenario.

He emphasised that preachers who read their sermons are easier to interpret, as their sentences tend to be lexically and semantically simpler than those of improvisational sermons, which often include anecdotes, confusion, or repeated phrases. Among the recorded research material, most preachers (Mariusz Chabasiński, Piotr Zakrzewski, Ryszard Tyśnicki, and Michał Domagała) had prepared their sermons in advance, which were mostly read aloud or served as a foundation to which additional remarks were added (as with Michał Domagała). In contrast, three preachers (Lech Bekesza, Artur Śmieja, and Jan Drożyński) improvised, using scripture as a reference for their points.

Piotr Zakrzewski was one of the most challenging preachers to interpret, as his speeches contained numerous compound sentences and many adjectives and adverbs of similar meaning that lacked direct equivalents in English. On the other hand, Ryszard Tyśnicki was one of the easiest to interpret, as his statements were

³ Personal communication during the material gathering phase.

structured logically and coherently, using simple sentences with straightforward vocabulary.

The sermons in this church follow typical public speaking patterns, using the indicative mood, rhetorical questions, and scripture paraphrasing. After reviewing several interpretations, the author found the interpreter conveyed the content accurately with minor errors (e.g., pronunciation or unfinished sentences in shorter sermons). However, in longer sermons, errors increased, likely due to fatigue and the cognitive load of maintaining accuracy, especially with two preachers. This suggests that sermon length and intensity may affect interpreter performance, leading to lapses in concentration or delivery during more demanding parts.

6. Analysis Method

To enhance the reliability and validity of the research results, methodological triangulation was employed, incorporating the following procedures: interviews with the simultaneous interpreter after each service regarding the difficulties encountered in interpreting the sermon of a particular preacher (i.e., what was easy to interpret, what was difficult, and why); participant observation and documentation of the interpreter's behaviour, as well as real-time events (e.g., disturbances caused by the interpreter's daughter in the booth); and an analysis of the interpretations of individual sermons, focusing on the interpreting strategies used and, indirectly, on the grammatical, syntactic, and pronunciation errors made.

The analysis of the interpretations followed these steps: (1) recording ten selected sermons in English; (2) transcribing them into both Polish and English; (3) listening to all sermons in both languages in detail; (4) comparing the original Polish sermons with their English interpretations; (5) evaluating the accuracy of the interpretations based on the selected interpreting strategies; and (6) drawing partial conclusions for each strategy and summarising the findings for the entire research.

The research material is presented in the tables in the following sections, which show examples of the simultaneous interpreting strategies used by the interpreter. These tables are divided into three columns, each depicting a different status of the analysed material. The first column on the left presents fragments of the literal transcription of the original sermon (in Polish), analysed according to the selected strategy. The middle column contains the English translation of the sermon, prepared by the author to familiarise readers with the sermon's content, as the analysed target versions may diverge slightly from the source texts. The third column on the right includes the transcribed interpretation, based on the source material provided by the simultaneous interpreter.

It is worth noting that some examples include additional markings. Sentences added, omitted, or corrected by the interpreter are highlighted as follows: underlined text indicates a compression or explication strategy, while italicised text denotes a repairing strategy. The author found a significant number of examples for each strategy in the research material and decided to reduce the

number of examples included in order to facilitate a more focused analysis and conclusion.

7. Analysis

As the material originates from a diploma thesis that examined the following interpreting strategies – compression, explicitation, parallel reformulation, omission, transcoding/sound reproduction, and repairing – the examples have been condensed to six, focusing on a selection of three strategies: compression, explicitation, and repairing. Examples for each of these strategies are provided, derived from the respective sermons and subsequently annotated.

7.1. The Use of the Strategy of Compression

The compression strategy involves condensing information by focusing on the main idea while omitting less critical details. It is particularly effective for interpreting improvised speeches, which often feature pauses, verbal accents, and redundancy (Déjean Le Féal, 1982). As George Armitage Miller (1951, p. 103) explains, redundancy benefits communication by enabling the receiver to infer missing information. The interdependence of language units allows parts of a message to be lost or distorted without disrupting understanding, as the receiver can rely on surrounding context to fill in the gaps. Ghelly V. Chernov (1994) describes compression as a lexical-semantic reduction of syllables, words, and semantic elements, making it essential for managing fast-paced speech. Bistra Alexieva (1983) identifies three types of compression:

- compression dependent upon the linguistic context and the specific features of the TL text as an oral text, of which examples are: omission, substitution and encapsulation caused by the presence or absence of anaphora,
- compression dependent upon the spoken medium of SI, i.e. omissions of utterances describing the speech act itself, omission of semantic components, clusters of components or whole predications indicated by prosodic features,
- compression dependent upon the role of the elements of the communicative situation., i.e. the role of the elements of the communicative situation as indicators of omitted portions of the SL text, and the channel capacity of the receiver of the TL text. (Tryuk 2010, p. 190)
- Scholars debate compression's overlap with omission, as it can be unclear whether missing content results from intentional condensation or cognitive overload (Gile, 1995). The following section presents examples of how this strategy was applied in simultaneous interpreting.

| Source text | | English translation of the source text | Target text |
|-------------|--|--|---|
| 1. | Czyli w Marka i Łukasza jest tak: „Jeżeli mąż rozwodzi się z żoną, popełnia cudzołóstwo; jeżeli żona rozwodzi się z mężem, popełnia cudzołóstwo.” [S1] | So in Mark and Luke it reads: “If a husband divorces his wife, he commits adultery; if a wife divorces her husband, she commits adultery.” | So, with Mark, it is that “If you two divorce each other, they commit adultery.” |
| 2. | W kontekście tego, że ja uczę często i rozmawiam z ludźmi, to jest problem, dlatego że cały czas muszę przedstawiać ludzi na tę stronę, bo nie słyszę, co do mnie mówią. [S1] | In the context that I teach often and talk to people, this is a problem because I have to switch people to this side all the time as I cannot hear what they are saying to me. | In the context of me teaching quite a lot and talking to people quite a lot, it’s just quite problematic because I need to put people on this side. |
| 3. | ...ale bez względu na wiek, sytuację, okoliczności, jest on zawsze sprzeczny z Bożym słowem. [S1] | ...but no matter the age, the situation, the circumstances, it is always contrary to God’s word. | But despite circumstances, it’s always against God’s scripture. |
| 4. | No i w końcu, kiedy przyszedł Nehemiasz i pociągnął ludzi do tego, żeby wreszcie odbudować Jerozolimę. Ta konieczność odbudowy murów i konieczność pracy, którą musieli wykonać, a która nie przynosiła żadnych korzyści materialnych. [S3] | And finally when Nehemiah came and drew the people to finally rebuild Jerusalem. This need to rebuild the walls and the need for the work that they had to do, which had no material benefit. | And when Nehemiah came and encouraged people to rebuild the city, the necessity of the work that I had to do and which brought them no profit. |
| 5. | Tu chodziło około procenta miesięcznie, czyli 12% rocznie, co patrząc na sąsiadujące kraje, które przynajmniej 25% odsetki żądały od ludzi, którzy je oddawali było zdecydowanie mniejszą kwotą, a mimo wszystko to i tak było zbyt wiele dla najbiedniejszych. [S3] | It was about one percent per month, or 12% per year, which, if you look at the neighbouring countries, which demanded at least 25% interest from the people who gave it away, was a much smaller amount, and yet it was still too much for the poorest people. | It was like 10% and comparing that to out of 10% of usury which was prevalent among neighboring nations. So, this 10% was definitely less, but yet it was still too much for the poorest. |
| 6. | I kochani, chcielibyśmy, tak już ostatnie/ostanie słowa tutaj wypowiadając, chcielibyśmy zachęcić Was, ja chciałbym zachęcić Was do tego, żeby zastanowić się nad tym. I chciałbym zrobić to praktycznie. [S8] | And, my dears, we would like, with my last/last words here, to encourage you, I would like to encourage you, to think about this. And I would like to do it practically. | In <i>concluding</i> , we would like to encourage you/I’d like to encourage you to think in a practical way. |

Table 2. Examples of the compression strategy

The strategy of compression was one of the most commonly used interpreting strategies by the simultaneous interpreter, as each sermon contained a lot of information, which was sometimes delivered quite quickly. Therefore, the interpreter had to condense and generalise the content. The sentences omitted by the interpreter have been underlined, illustrating where this strategy was employed. The interpreter frequently condensed superfluous words, thoughts, side topics, and colloquialisms deemed less important for maintaining the speech’s flow.

However, the use of compression was not without its drawbacks. In several instances, the interpreter focused on minor details at the expense of conveying the main idea (as seen in example no. 2). This resulted in grammatical inaccuracies, such as subject changes (no. 4) and numerical mistakes (no. 5). Moreover, by combining thoughts from two separate sentences into one (no. 6), the interpreter likely aimed to streamline the interpretation but inadvertently altered the intended meaning of the input. The interpreter also occasionally repeated certain words within a single utterance (no. 2) or modified specific terms (no. 3), which may have led to confusion for the audience. These examples underscore the challenges inherent in the compression strategy, where the delicate balance between brevity and accuracy can sometimes be disrupted.

According to Alexieva's distinction of compression strategy in interpretation (1983), the examples can be classified as follows: examples no. 1, 3, and 5 are compressions dependent upon the linguistic context, specifically omissions that result from simplifying the original text to fit the spoken medium. Examples no. 2 and 6 are compressions dependent upon the spoken medium, as prosodic cues help omit unnecessary details or repetitions to maintain the fluency of the interpretation. Finally, example no. 4 is a compression dependent upon the role of the elements of the communicative situation, where parts of the message are omitted because they are not essential in the communicative context.

Ultimately, while the compression strategy enabled the interpreter to manage the complexities of interpreting in real-time, it also highlighted the need for careful consideration of the source material. By applying this strategy, the interpreter focused on the key words, trying not to omit relevant information. Nevertheless, some examples show that the interpreter did not always achieve this goal, leading to misunderstanding and incoherence.

7.2. The Use of the Strategy of Explicitation

The explicitation strategy, also known as addition and elaboration, involves expanding the interpreted content by adding information or explanations to enhance clarity and comprehensibility for the target audience (Wadensjö, 1998). Explicitation increases the content of the target text compared to the source text and has been widely studied in translation research. However, as noted by Gumul (2017), explicitation in interpreting differs from translation, acquiring unique dimensions in the interpreting process. Gumul (2006, p. 174) distinguished twelve types of explicitation, including adding connectives, lexical specification, modifying cohesive devices, replacing nominalizations with verb phrases, disambiguating metaphors, and including explanatory remarks.

Numerous scholars have explored explicitation in simultaneous interpreting, often applied unconsciously. However, Gumul (2006) notes that interpreters are aware of certain operations, like meaning specification and metaphor disambiguation. Explicitation is linked to cohesion, which aids text organization. Shlesinger (1995, p. 193) highlights the challenges interpreters face with cohesive ties due to rapid speech, limited text access, and background knowledge constraints. To address this, interpreters use cohesion strategies, such as adding connectives or breaking down complex units.

Shlesinger's study confirms that simultaneous interpreters often use explicitation techniques like paraphrasing, specifying meaning, or adding proper names to clarify implicit links. While this enhances clarity and accessibility, its unconscious use can alter meaning. Explicitation helps to maintain fluency and coherence, especially when source-text cohesion is weak. The following section provides examples of these instances.

| Source text | | English translation of the source text | Target text |
|-------------|--|---|--|
| 1 | ...bez jego miłości, która nie ma dna, możemy od niego czerpać do tego, żeby kochać kogoś, kto już nas nie kocha i nas nie lubi. [S1] | ...without his love, which has no bottom, we can draw from him to love someone who no longer loves us and does not like us. | The blood is love as bottomless. We can draw from him to love someone who doesn't love it anymore, doesn't even like us anymore... |
| 2 | Teraz badanie po badaniu wskazuje na to, że młodzi ludzie nie są w ogóle zdolni do tego, żeby mieć prawdziwe relacje z żywą osobą. To jest tragedia naszego wieku. Skąd to się wzięło? [S1] | Now study after study shows that young people are not at all capable of having a real relationship with a live person. This is the tragedy of our age. Where did this come from? | And the research surveys indicate that young people appear to have no abilities to develop physical intimacy. And what did it come from? From this plain God's intention? |
| 3 | Paweł mówi: „Uciekajcie od wszeteczeństwa.” Uciekajcie, nie uważajcie na to, nie zastanawiajcie się, żeby nie popełnić. Uciekajcie. [S1] | Paul says: “Run away from adultery.” Run away, do not watch out for it, do not think about not committing it. Run away. | Paul says: “Run away from all kinds of adultery.” He doesn't say: “Watch it” or “Be careful”, but he says: “Run away.” |
| 4 | Nehemiasz dawał z siebie wszystko, co tylko mógł, aby usprawnić wspólną pracę. Wykupywał ludzi, którzy zaprzędali się innym narodom i plemionom. [S3] | Nehemiah gave all he could to improve the common work. He bought out people who had sold out to other nations and tribes. | Nehemiah was doing all he could with buying off people, sold into slavery. He lent money to people in poverty. And although he would be taking no usury or no interest, he went ahead in order to encourage the rich... |
| 5 | Bo psalmista w swoim psalmie mówi faktycznie o swoich zasługach, ale raczej inaczej niż ten z Łukasza. Bo przede wszystkim ten z Łukasza uważa, że to, co dokonał w przeszłości to jest wystarczający powód do tego, by „Panie Boże, musisz mnie zaakceptować tym, jakim jestem.” [S7] | For the Psalmist in his psalm does indeed speak of his merits, but rather different from the one in Luke. For above all the one in Luke thinks that what he has accomplished in the past is reason enough for “Lord God, you must accept me as I am.” | Because the Psalmist indeed speaks of his marriage, but differently than the Pharisee in the Gospel of Luke, because the Pharisee believed that what he had done in the past was sufficient for him to boast about it, and that God should accept him as he was. |
| 6 | A to, co robili kłuło w oczy tych, którzy ich słuchali i widzieli, i dlatego byli prześladowani. [S10] | And what they did stung the eyes of those who listened and saw them, and so they were persecuted. | Because they were preaching the Gospel and what they were doing was annoying to those who were listening and who were seeing that. That's why they were persecuted. |

Table 3. Examples of the explicitation strategy

The strategy of explicitation was the least utilised by the interpreter, largely due to time constraints during interpretation. The rapid and continuous delivery of the sermons often left little space for the interpreter to expand on the content without interrupting the flow. As a result, the interpreter's additions were typically limited to a few extra words or, rarely, sentences aimed at making the utterance clearer or more accessible to the audience. Despite these limitations, the interpreter managed to implement explicitation effectively in a few key areas.

Gumul's (2006) distinction of the explicitation strategy provides a useful framework for analysing the interpreter's choices in these examples. The strategy was primarily employed to clarify vague or ambiguous elements in the source text, particularly when dealing with complex religious themes. For instance, example no. 1 illustrates the disambiguation of metaphors, where a metaphor in the source text was replaced with a more explicit explanation, enhancing the audience's understanding. In example no. 2, both explicitation and compression strategies were combined as the interpreter omitted parts of the original message but added a supplementary question to maintain coherence and engage the audience. Here, "physical intimacy" was added to clarify "a real relationship", demonstrating lexical specification.

Further explicitation occurs in example no. 3, where the interpreter specifies "all kinds of adultery", reiterating and slightly paraphrasing the source text. This falls under adding modifiers and qualifiers, as well as reiterating in the form of paraphrasing. Example no. 4 expands the source text by introducing new information, representing and distributing the meaning of a source-text unit over several units, along with additional explanatory remarks. Similarly, in example no. 5, the interpreter clarifies "the one in Luke" by specifying "Pharisee" and "Gospel of Luke", an example of adding a proper name to a generic term and further lexical specification. Lastly, in example no. 6, the metaphorical expression "stung the eyes" is replaced with "was annoying to those who were listening", which is another example of disambiguating metaphors for clearer comprehension.

Overall, the explicitation strategy enhanced the audience's understanding by clarifying vague elements and making complex religious themes more accessible, with the few instances of its use reflecting a thoughtful approach to ensure comprehension, even with the constraints of live interpretation. The interpreter's background in theology and knowledge of biblical texts likely influenced his ability to apply explicitation effectively. By drawing on this expertise, he could add context to the sermons without straying too far from the original utterance. However, there were moments when time pressure limited the effectiveness of this strategy, resulting in fewer opportunities for expansion. Hence, while the explicitation strategy was employed sparingly, its use demonstrated the interpreter's understanding of the need for clarity in religious discourse.

7.3. The Use of the Strategy of Repairing

The repairing strategy involves correcting mistakes during interpreting. Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) distinguished repair (a broad concept beyond error correction) from correction (replacing errors with correct forms). Repairs help interpreters self-monitor and improve accuracy.

Due to high cognitive load and time constraints, simultaneous interpreters often make slips in pronunciation, lexis, or syntax. David Gerver (1976) confirmed that conference interpreters actively self-correct their output. Christelle Petite (2005) contributed significantly to research on repair in interpreting, identifying key repair types:

- (a) breaking the trichotomy of overt repairs, covert repairs and rest repairs into a dichotomy of overt repairs and mid-articulatory repairs; (b) introducing a new dimension and dividing occurrences into input-generated and output-generated repairs; (c) deleting ALC (a repair made by the speaker to make a level adoption or establish coherence); and (d) adding EG (a repair to correct a grammatical error). (Tang 2020: 38)

Petite's framework builds on Levelt's (1983) distinction between covert (pre-articulatory) and overt (post-articulatory) repairs. The ALC abbreviation comes from Levelt's taxonomy and it determines repairs: AL (moving from a less to a more precise term) or AC (creating coherence with previous text or terminology). The repairing strategy is inherent to the spontaneous nature of simultaneous interpretation, where continuous speech makes errors inevitable. Table 4 presents examples of this strategy in practice:

| Source text | | English translation of the source text | Target text |
|-------------|---|--|---|
| 1. | A jeżeli jesteś jedynym dzieckiem Bożym w swojej rodzinie... [S4] | And if you are the only child of God in your family... | And if you're <i>the only son/a child</i> of God being in your family... |
| 2. | Potrzebowałem pastora, potrzebowałem liderów, którzy pomogli rozeznaczyć to/to, kim jestem. [S8] | I needed a pastor, I needed leaders who helped recognize who I was. | ...they needed pastor <i>and leader/and leaders</i> who all helped me to recognize my position, my place in the church. |
| 3. | Ciekawe, czy możemy powiedzieć o sobie... [S7] | I wonder if we can say this about ourselves... | Interesting, can we <i>see/make</i> such a statement by ourselves... |
| 4. | ...uparcie przypomina o tej pierwotnej zasadzie, o tym pierwotnym namyśle, o tej pierwotnej intencji, która stoi za małżeństwem... [S1] | ...he stubbornly reminds of this original principle, of this original intention that stands behind the marriage... | ...he stubbornly reminds of the original intention that <i>stand behinds/stands behind</i> this marriage... |
| 5. | „Jak to, przecież Biblia mówi, że mąż jest głową, nie?” [S2] | “What do you mean, after all the Bible says the husband is the head, no?” | “Heck, come on, the Bible says that the husband is a head, <i>isn't it?/isn't he?</i> ” |
| 6. | ...zachęca go do tego, aby żył pobożnie. [S10] | ...he encourages him to live a pious life. | ...he encourages him to live <i>religiously/reli/in godly way</i> . |

Table 4. Examples of the repairing strategy

The repairing strategy was the most frequently employed technique by the interpreter throughout the sermons, with approximately 190 instances identified in the research material. The repairs made by the interpreter are displayed in italics.

In several instances, the interpreter corrected issues with nouns, verbs, subject-verb agreement, and even syntax (examples no. 1–6). These self-corrections align with Petite's (2005) taxonomy, which distinguishes between input-generated and output-generated repairs. In example no. 1, the mistake lies in redundancy and noun choice, where "son/a child of God being in your family" creates unnecessary repetition and narrows the meaning. In example no. 2, the error involves the incorrect use of singular nouns, with "pastor and leader" needing plural agreement, resulting in "leaders who helped me recognise my position." Example no. 3 contains an awkward verb collocation, where "can we see/make such a statement by ourselves" is corrected to the more idiomatic "I wonder if we can make such a statement about ourselves". The next instance concerns wrong verb conjugation, where "stand behinds" is incorrect, and the proper form is "stands behind". In example no. 5, the mistake involves pronoun usage, where "isn't it?" should be "isn't he?" to correctly refer to "the husband".

Despite the interpreter's diligence, there were moments when repairs were less successful or repeated more than once, likely due to the intense time pressure and cognitive load. In these cases, such as example no. 6, the interpreter struggled to recall the correct form or meaning of a word, resulting in multiple attempts to repair the utterance. This reflects the challenges interpreters face when working under demanding conditions, where the speed and complexity of the source text hinder immediate access to the correct lexical or grammatical choices. Thus, examples no. 1 and 6 represent ALC repairs, examples no. 2, 4, and 5 represent EG repairs, and example no. 3 represents an ALC (AC) repair.

Nevertheless, during the interpretation, the interpreter demonstrated the ability to self-correct and monitor errors, effectively employing the repairing strategy to maintain the logical flow and accuracy of the sermons. This strategy highlights the importance of understanding repairs not as simple corrections but as a reflection of the interpreter's skill in adapting to the challenges of live interpretation.

8. Conclusions

The study focused primarily on the quality of the individual strategies applied in ten selected sermons preached at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław. However, indirectly, the aim was also to analyse the grammatical and semantic aspects of simultaneous interpreting. The study was product-oriented rather than process-oriented. Nonetheless, based on the interviews conducted with the interpreter after each of the ten services, the decisions and actions taken by the interpreter can be considered more as strategies than tactics. When the interpreter encountered problems or misunderstandings in the interpreting process, he consciously made decisions to prevent or resolve them. Indeed, years of interpreting practice, self-education, and active participation in the life of the Baptist church had a significant impact and facilitated the interpreter's ability to cope with new linguistic challenges. Furthermore, his experience in this specific field of interpreting enabled a better understanding of the theological context, contributing to more precise and consistent interpretations.

This is demonstrated primarily by a large number of examples of the repairing strategy, with around 190 instances identified in the research material, as well as the compression strategy, along with other strategies not discussed in this article but still influential in the research material, including the reformulation strategy, transcoding/sound reproduction strategy, and omission strategy. These strategies were instrumental in the interpreting process, enabling the consistency of communication to be maintained, particularly when dealing with difficult-to-interpret passages and time constraints. Although not always fully realised, the interpreter's behaviours mentioned earlier proved helpful in managing the flow of information, organising thoughts, and structuring sentences. The interpreter confirmed that these strategies made it easier to manage the volume of messages. Such automatic actions may be the result of many years of practice, which allow the interpreter to process and organise messages more efficiently, especially in situations that require quick reactions and precise formulation of thoughts.

As for the analysis, the interpreter employed various strategies to manage the complexity of simultaneous interpretation, each with its own strengths and challenges. Compression allowed the interpreter to condense large volumes of information and maintain the flow of the sermons. However, the quality of this approach was inconsistent. While compression helped eliminate superfluous details and colloquialisms, it sometimes led to the omission of key points and introduced grammatical errors or shifts in meaning. In contrast, the explicitation strategy, though less frequently used due to time constraints, was applied when clarifications were necessary. The interpreter clarified vague or metaphorical elements, providing lexical specifications that enhanced the audience's understanding of complex religious themes. However, the rapid pace of the sermons often limited opportunities for further expansion, revealing the tension between time management and the need for clarity. The repairing strategy demonstrated the interpreter's responsiveness to errors, with most repairs successfully addressing issues with syntax, nouns, and verbs, though some were less effective due to repeated attempts to correct errors under pressure.

In summary, the simultaneous interpreter demonstrated a skilled use of these strategies, but the quality of interpretation varied depending on the balance between conciseness, clarity, and accuracy. The examples of different interpreting decision-making strategies may provide valuable insights for further work on interpreting in the context of religious settings.

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of interpreting strategies employed by a simultaneous interpreter in sermons delivered during selected services at the First Baptist Church in Wrocław. The first part of the article provides a theoretical framework for the analysis, including an overview about the history of church interpreting and various perspectives on the definitions of interpreting strategies. The second part of the article contains the methodological background for the analysis, detailing the methods of data collection, the characteristics and analysis of the collected material as well as the conclusion. The analysis shows that simultaneous interpreting performed in a religious setting is characterized by considerable complexity and challenges.

Keywords

simultaneous interpreting, interpretations, simultaneous interpreter, interpreting strategies, religious terminology, Baptist church