Challenges to quality in interpreting

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Challenges to quality in interpreting

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#UnivUN17
Main stressors
Speed

- Optimal speed?
- Actual speed and impact?
- Impact of speed on quality?
Research project

- Collaboration between UNOG and FTI

- UNOG:
  Alma Barghout & Mónica Varela García

- FTI, University of Geneva:
  Lucía Ruiz Rosendo
Norming experiment

I analysis (MAS, 2012)

2 weeks of 16th session of HRC, 2 speeches/day (State/NGO).
20 speeches randomly selected.
189 wpm
106 wpm
Average: 140 wpm

II analysis (2016)

24th session of UPR Working Group
Review of Belgium & Namibia (at random speeches).
193 wpm
128 wpm
Average: 162 wpm
Speed

I data analysis (quantitative)

• Analysis of omissions of redundancies

II data analysis (qualitative)

• Descriptive analysis of omissions.
Do expert interpreters omit redundant information as a strategy when speeches are delivered at high speed?
The Experiment: General methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Single-factor design (one IV at 3 levels: speed).</td>
<td>• Existing corpus of actual HRC speeches: high ecological validity.</td>
<td>• 10 experienced professional staff interpreters from FR booth (UNOG).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Professional interpreters asked to interpret 3 speeches (EN-FR) at 3 speeds: 120, 160 &amp; 200. Synonyms and redundant conjunctions inserted.</td>
<td>• 3 speeches representative of work at HRC.</td>
<td>• Average professional experience: 8.9 years.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Divided into 3 different speed segments according to values determined.</td>
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Results Analysis I
Results Analysis I

Redundant conjunctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed (in words per minute)</th>
<th>Score (in %)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>40</td>
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Legend:
- Blue: mentioned
- Orange: omitted
- Light Blue: Poly. (mentioned)
- Pink: Poly. (omitted)
Analysis II: RQs

- The faster the speed, the more omissions expert interpreters make.
- What type of omissions make expert interpreters when confronted with moderate, high and very high delivery rates?
- At high and very high delivery rates, expert interpreters omit segments that carry meaning.
Procedure

- Identification of omissions
- Coding: categories & subcategories
- Classification into categories
Procedure
Results

160
Words = 22.33
Adjectives
Redundancies
Segments = 8.33

120
Words = 14
Redundancies
Segments = 3.33

200
Words = 24
Redundancies
Adjectives
ELEN
Segments = 10.33
Results

120
- Words = 10.33
- Adjectives
- Redundancies
- Segments = 2.33

200
- Words = 25.66
- Redundancies
- Adjectives
- ELEN
- Segments = 14

160
- Words = 32
- Redundancies
- ELEN
- Adjectives
- Clusters
- Segments = 5.33
Discussion

= types of omissions
≠ quantity

120: very few segments omitted.

BUT: omissions of redundancies & adjectives.

160: many omissions of segments and words (redundancies, adjectives, ELEN, clusters).

200 (= 160): + more changes in meaning.
Implications for UN
Implications for Training

la première conférence...
Resources

• The experimental study
  https://archive-ouverte.unige.ch
• https://benjamins.com/catalog/babel.61.3.01bar

• Speeches norming experiment
  www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/16session

• Speeches experiment from HRC
  www.un.org/webcast/unhrc/index.asap
Gracias | Спасибо | Merci | Thank you |谢谢 | #UnivUN17
Questions? Comments?

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Other researchers: Lucia.Ruiz@unige.ch, abarghout@unog.ch
United Nations DGACM on social media

UNITED NATIONS DGACM ON TWITTER
ARABIC | CHINESE | ENGLISH | FRENCH | RUSSIAN | SPANISH

UNITED NATIONS DGACM ON FACEBOOK
ENGLISH | FRENCH

UNITED NATIONS DGACM ON YOUTUBE
ALL LANGUAGES

UNITED NATIONS LANGUAGE CAREERS ON LINKEDIN
ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS DGACM ON GOOGLE+
ENGLISH