PRAGMA-SEMANTIC FEATURES OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING

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Abstract. This article examines the pragmatic and semantic features of simultaneous interpreting as a complex communicative activity in which interpreters must reconstruct and convey not only the propositional meaning of an utterance but also the speaker's communicative intention, implied meanings, interpersonal attitudes, and contextual references. The study aims to identify the principal mechanisms through which semantic content and pragmatic meaning are processed and reproduced under the temporal and cognitive constraints of simultaneous interpreting. The research employs descriptive-analytical, comparative, contextual, and pragmatic approaches based on established theories of interpreting studies, speech acts, conversational implicature, and relevance theory.

Keywords: simultaneous interpreting, pragmatics, semantics, pragma-semantic features, communicative intention, speech acts, conversational implicature, contextual inference, presupposition, deixis, modality, pragmatic adequacy, cognitive processing, interpreting strategies, translation quality.

SINXRON TARJIMANING PRAGMA-SEMANTIK XUSUSIYATLARI

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada sinxron tarjimaning pragmatik va semantik xususiyatlari murakkab kommunikativ faoliyat sifatida o'rganiladi. Bunda tarjimon nafaqat nutqning bevosita mazmunini, balki so'zlovchining kommunikativ maqsadi, yashirin ma'nolari, shaxslararo munosabatlarni ifodalovchi munosabati hamda kontekstual ishoralarini ham qayta tiklashi va yetkazishi zarur. Tadqiqotning maqsadi sinxron tarjima jarayonida vaqt va kognitiv imkoniyatlar bilan bog'liq cheklovlar sharoitida semantik mazmun hamda pragmatik ma'noni anglash, qayta ishlash va qayta ifodalashning asosiy mexanizmlarini aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda tarjimashunoslik, nutqiy aktlar nazariyasi, suhbat implikaturasi va relevantlik nazariyasiga oid mavjud ilmiy qarashlarga asoslangan tavsifiy-tahliliy, qiyosiy, kontekstual va pragmatik yondashuvlardan foydalaniladi.

Kalit so'zlar: sinxron tarjima, pragmatika, semantika, pragma-semantik xususiyatlar, kommunikativ maqsad, nutqiy aktlar, suhbat implikaturasi, kontekstual xulosa chiqarish, presuppozitsiya, deyksis, modallik, pragmatik adekvatlik, kognitiv qayta ishlash, tarjima strategiyalari, tarjima sifati.

ПРАГМА-СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ СИНХРОННОГО ПЕРЕВОДА

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются прагматические и семантические особенности синхронного перевода как сложной коммуникативной деятельности, в рамках которой переводчик должен не только реконструировать и передавать пропозициональное содержание высказывания, но и учитывать коммуникативное намерение говорящего, имплицитные смыслы, межличностные установки и контекстуальные отсылки. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении основных механизмов восприятия, обработки и воспроизведения семантического содержания и прагматического значения в условиях временных и когнитивных ограничений, характерных для синхронного перевода. В исследовании применяются описательно-аналитический, сравнительный, контекстуальный и прагматический подходы, основанные на признанных теориях переводоведения, теории речевых актов, разговорной импликатуры и теории релевантности.

Ключевые слова: синхронный перевод, прагматика, семантика, прагма-семантические особенности, коммуникативное намерение, речевые акты, разговорная импликатура, контекстуальный вывод, пресуппозиция, дейксис, модальность, прагматическая адекватность, когнитивная обработка, стратегии перевода, качество перевода.

Introduction. Simultaneous interpreting represents one of the most demanding forms of interlingual communication because the interpreter listens to the source-language speech, processes its meaning, formulates a target-language version, and delivers that version while the original speaker continues speaking. Unlike written translation, which generally permits repeated reading, consultation, and revision, simultaneous interpreting requires the interpreter to make rapid decisions under considerable temporal and

cognitive pressure.[1]

The distinction between semantic and pragmatic meaning is therefore particularly important in simultaneous interpreting. Semantics primarily concerns conventional linguistic meaning and the relationships encoded in lexical and grammatical structures. Pragmatics investigates how utterances are interpreted in context, including implied meanings, communicative intentions, presuppositions, and the interpersonal functions of language. These dimensions interact continuously in interpreting, and their separation is primarily analytical rather than absolute.[2]

Literature Review. The theoretical foundation of the present study draws on interpreting studies, pragmatics, and translation theory.

One of the most directly relevant contributions is Robin Setton's Simultaneous Interpretation: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Analysis [3]. Setton examines simultaneous interpretation through the relationship between linguistic input, cognitive processing, contextual information, and the reconstruction of discourse meaning. His approach is particularly relevant to the present research because it explains why successful interpreting cannot be reduced to the reproduction of explicit linguistic information. The interpreter must also infer relationships between propositions and recover meanings that depend on context.

Franz Pöchhacker's Introducing Interpreting Studies provides a broader theoretical framework for understanding interpreting as a multidimensional activity involving linguistic, cognitive, social, and communicative factors [4]. This perspective supports the argument that interpreting quality should be evaluated not only in terms of lexical correspondence but also in relation to communicative purpose and the requirements of the interpreting situation.

Daniel Gile's Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training develops influential models of interpreting effort and resource allocation [5]. His approach is important for explaining why pragmatic analysis becomes particularly demanding when listening, comprehension, memory, and production compete for limited processing resources. Under such circumstances, an interpreter may recognize the literal meaning of an expression without fully processing its implications or interpersonal function.

The communicative dimension of translation is also addressed by Basil Hatim and Ian Mason in The Translator as Communicator [6]. Their work highlights the relationship between textual organization, discourse, context, and ideological or interpersonal meaning. These considerations are relevant to simultaneous interpreting because an utterance derives part of its meaning from its position within a larger discourse and from the communicative relationship between participants.

The general theory of speech acts developed by J. L. Austin explains how utterances perform actions rather than merely describe states of affairs [7]. John R. Searle further systematizes the relationship between linguistic expressions, speaker intentions, and illocutionary functions [8]. These theories help explain why an interpreter must identify whether an utterance functions as a request, warning, promise, criticism, or other communicative act.

H. P. Grice's account of conversational implicature provides another essential theoretical foundation [9]. Speakers frequently communicate meanings indirectly, relying on contextual assumptions and principles of conversational cooperation.

Taken together, these studies establish a theoretical basis for examining simultaneous interpreting as the reconstruction of meaning at both semantic and pragmatic levels. However, the present article focuses specifically on the interaction between these levels and illustrates their relationship through comparative English–Uzbek examples.

Methodology. The study employs a qualitative, descriptive-analytical research design. Its theoretical framework is based on established publications in interpreting studies, pragmatics, and translation theory. The analysis focuses on selected English-language utterance patterns and their possible Uzbek interpretations.

Descriptive-analytical method. This method identifies the semantic content and pragmatic function of selected utterances. Particular attention is given to speech acts, implied meanings, modality, evaluation, and contextual references.

Comparative method. English utterances are compared with possible Uzbek interpretations to identify differences in grammatical form, communicative force, and the explicitness of meaning. The comparison is intended to demonstrate analytical principles rather than establish universal differences between the two languages.[10]

Contextual-pragmatic analysis. Each example is interpreted in relation to a hypothetical communicative situation, the speaker's apparent intention, and the knowledge available to the participants. This makes it possible to distinguish the literal meaning of an utterance from its intended communicative effect.

Interpretive synthesis. The observations are integrated into a framework of pragma-semantic features relevant to simultaneous interpreting, with particular emphasis on meaning preservation and cognitive constraints.

This methodology makes it possible to examine the mechanisms through which interpreters preserve communicative intention even when the target-language formulation differs structurally from the source utterance.[11]

Results and Discussion. A central finding of the theoretical analysis is that semantic accuracy and pragmatic adequacy are closely related but analytically distinguishable dimensions of simultaneous interpreting.

Semantic accuracy concerns the preservation of the proposition expressed by the speaker. Pragmatic adequacy concerns the preservation of what the speaker intends to accomplish through that proposition in a particular context.

Source utterance: "Could you send me the report today?"

A strictly form-oriented interpretation might reproduce the interrogative structure of the English sentence. However, in an ordinary professional context, the utterance functions primarily as a polite request rather than a question about the listener's physical ability.

Possible Uzbek interpretation: “Hisobotni bugun yuborib bera olasizmi?”

The Uzbek formulation preserves both the request and its interrogative-politeness structure. Depending on the relationship between the participants and the degree of urgency, another appropriate rendering might be “Hisobotni bugun yuborishingizni so‘rayman” (“I ask you to send the report today”).[12]

The second formulation makes the request more explicit and changes its interpersonal tone slightly. Its suitability therefore depends on the communicative situation.

This example illustrates that interpreting involves a decision about communicative function, not simply grammatical form. Speech act theory helps explain why the surface form of an utterance does not always determine its principal illocutionary force [13].

In simultaneous interpreting, such decisions must often be made before the speaker completes the entire sentence. The interpreter therefore relies on lexical cues, intonation, discourse context, and expectations about the communicative situation.

Table 1. Pragmatic and Semantic Features of Simultaneous Interpreting

No.	Feature	Description	Example in Simultaneous Interpreting
1	Semantic meaning	Transfer of the literal and propositional meaning of the source utterance.	Preserving the factual content of a statement.
2	Communicative intention	Conveying the speaker’s intended purpose.	Distinguishing a request from a simple statement.
3	Speech acts	Interpreting utterances according to their communicative function.	Rendering a promise, warning, invitation, or command accurately.
4	Conversational implicature	Communicating meanings implied rather than explicitly stated.	Interpreting indirect criticism or polite refusal.
5	Contextual inference	Using the surrounding discourse and situation to understand meaning.	Resolving an ambiguous expression using the previous sentence.
6	Presupposition	Recognizing information treated as already known or accepted.	Preserving the assumptions embedded in a speaker’s statement.
7	Deixis	Interpreting expressions referring to people, time, place, or discourse.	Correctly transferring “here,” “there,” “now,” and “they.”
8	Modality	Conveying certainty, possibility, obligation, or necessity.	Distinguishing “must,” “may,” and “might.”
9	Register and politeness	Preserving formality, politeness, and social relationships.	Rendering a diplomatic statement in an appropriately formal style.
10	Emotional and interpersonal meaning	Conveying the speaker’s attitude, emphasis, and emotional stance.	Maintaining the intended force of an expression of concern.
11	Cognitive processing	Coordinating listening, comprehension, memory, and speech production.	Understanding an incoming message while delivering the translation.
12	Anticipation	Predicting likely continuations based on linguistic and contextual cues.	Anticipating the completion of a familiar phrase or argument.
13	Compression	Condensing redundant or repetitive elements without losing essential meaning.	Shortening a lengthy phrase to maintain the speaker’s pace.
14	Reformulation	Expressing the original meaning naturally in the target language.	Replacing a source-language idiom with an equivalent target-language expression.
15	Pragmatic adequacy	Preserving the intended communicative effect in the target language.	Ensuring that a warning remains recognizable as a warning.
16	Ambiguity resolution	Selecting the most appropriate interpretation of an ambiguous expression.	Using context to distinguish between alternative meanings of a word.
17	Cultural adaptation	Accounting for cultural references and communication conventions.	Explaining or adapting an unfamiliar cultural reference when necessary.
18	Temporal constraints	Managing limited time between receiving and producing the message.	Delivering an accurate interpretation without excessive delay.
19	Cohesion and coherence	Maintaining logical connections between sentences and ideas.	Preserving cause-and-effect relationships across a speech.

No.	Feature	Description	Example in Simultaneous Interpreting
20	Translation quality	Combining accuracy, completeness, fluency, and pragmatic appropriateness.	Producing a clear and coherent interpretation that preserves the speaker's intended meaning.

Conversational implicature is another major pragma-semantic feature of simultaneous interpreting. Speakers often communicate information indirectly, expecting listeners to infer an intended meaning that is not explicitly encoded in the utterance.

Speaker A: "Will the project be completed by Friday?"

Speaker B: "The final section still needs substantial revision."

The second speaker does not explicitly say that the project will not be completed by Friday. Nevertheless, in an appropriate context, the response suggests that completion by the deadline is uncertain or unlikely.

A possible Uzbek rendering is: "Oxirgi bo'lim hali jiddiy tahrirni talab qiladi."

If the surrounding discourse makes the implication sufficiently clear, this interpretation preserves the original level of explicitness. If the target audience lacks the relevant context, the interpreter may need to clarify the relationship between the revision process and the deadline, provided that doing so does not introduce unsupported information.[14]

In simultaneous interpreting, the recognition of speech acts is particularly important in diplomatic negotiations, academic discussions, business meetings, and institutional communication, where a slight change in the force of a statement may affect how participants understand their obligations, intentions, or positions.

Presupposition refers to information that a speaker treats as already established or accepted within a communicative context.

Source utterance: "We need to return to the original proposal."

The expression "return to" presupposes that an earlier proposal has already been discussed or considered.

Possible Uzbek interpretation: "Dastlabki taklifga qaytishimiz kerak."

This interpretation preserves the presupposed relationship between the current discussion and an earlier proposal. If the interpreter instead says "Yangi taklif tayyorlashimiz kerak" ("We need to prepare a new proposal"), the relationship with the previous discussion is lost and the intended meaning is changed.

Presuppositions are often conveyed through lexical choices, definite descriptions, aspectual constructions, and other linguistic devices. Their interpretation depends on both linguistic knowledge and discourse memory.

During simultaneous interpreting, the interpreter must retain relevant information from earlier portions of the speech and connect it with the current utterance. Gile's discussion of interpreting effort helps explain why maintaining these connections can become difficult when processing demands increase [15].

Hatim and Mason's communicative approach provides a useful basis for understanding these features as elements of discourse meaning rather than as isolated lexical details [16].

Gile's Effort Model provides a theoretical explanation for the competition between these processing activities [17]. When the speaker delivers information rapidly, introduces unfamiliar terminology, or constructs syntactically complex sentences, fewer cognitive resources may remain available for detecting subtle pragmatic implications.

This may result in several types of interpreting difficulty:

- Semantic omission: an element of propositional meaning is not reproduced.
- Pragmatic omission: the factual content is preserved, but an implication, warning, qualification, or interpersonal attitude is lost.[18]
- Pragmatic distortion: the interpreter changes the communicative force of an utterance, for example by turning a tentative suggestion into a categorical demand.
- Contextual misinterpretation: a reference or implication is interpreted incorrectly because the relevant discourse information is not identified.
- Unjustified explicitation: the interpreter states as fact an implication that remains uncertain in the source utterance.[19]

These categories are proposed here as an analytical framework for examining pragma-semantic adequacy; they are not presented as an empirically validated classification of interpreting errors.[20]

Conclusion. The analysis demonstrates that the pragma-semantic features of simultaneous interpreting constitute an essential dimension of communicative meaning transfer. Successful interpreting requires more than the reproduction of lexical and grammatical content: it also requires the reconstruction of the speaker's communicative intention, the interpretation of contextual implications, and the preservation of interpersonal meaning.

The study identifies several particularly important features: the interaction between semantic and pragmatic meaning, conversational implicature, speech acts, presupposition, deixis, modality, evaluation, and the use of explicitation, compression, and compensation.

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