

SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION IN ONLINE MODE: CHALLENGES AND DEMANDS OF TIMES

*Kurkimbayeva A.M.¹, Yelubayeva A.A.²

¹PhD, associate professor, Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: aizhan--k@mail.ru,

²Master of philological sciences, Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: aluanai96@gmail.com

Abstract. The article deals with the implementation of online interpreting. It presents the result of the teaching staff's work in the process of teaching interpreting in online mode and some advantages and disadvantages of distance learning interpreting. The aim of the article: to present some aspects of the forced transition to online interpreting and distance learning interpreting in a pandemic environment and to consider the problems and difficulties faced by teachers and students in the process of teaching interpreting. Scientific significance of the article: the results of a survey among active simultaneous interpreters from around the world who used various social networks and platforms were analyzed. The interpreters shared their experiences, in particular, what difficulties they encountered in the process of interpreting online during the pandemic. The article also presents step-by-step instructions from experienced simultaneous interpreter A. Chelpachenko on how to set up relay translation on the Zoom platform. It was found that interpretation in the online mode was carried out not only on the platform Zoom, but also on paid platforms such as Kudo, Verspeak, Speakus and others. The result of the research work: the study of the discipline of remote simultaneous interpretation and interpretation in online mode is a difficult process in view of the technical and managerial problems. A survey of interpreters showed that online or remote simultaneous interpretation leads to stressful and time-consuming work. The value of the study: for the first time the study was conducted in the implementation of simultaneous interpretation and interpreting training in the online mode. Practical significance of the article: the methods, strategies and techniques used by simultaneous interpreters and teachers, conducting disciplines on the practice of interpretation can be widely used in training sessions for the practice of interpretation in the traditional offline format.

Keywords: online teaching, online learning, remote interpreting, translation strategies, online mode, relay interpreting, pandemic, cognitive strain.

Basic provisions

Worldwide lockdown has accelerated the process of transition to digital technologies. Due to pandemic over a short period of time, the role of information and technologies has been noticeably increased in our social life. Some areas of our life from education to negotiations smoothly shifted to remote or online work. This was an impetus to the creation of the online environment and now it has become as one of the inseparable parts of our life. The usage of digital practices dramatically has been risen due to lockdown in the life of humanity. Austrian researcher Mark Coeckelbergh [1] said that *digitalization process* in the sphere of *education, at the workplace* was too slow. Thanks too digital tools we have a great opportunity to

interact with each other and be aware what happens around us. We are, in the world that depend on digitalization. He has written articles and books that are devoted to digital technologies that can be applied in various kinds of discourses. Immersion in the online environment caused some technical challenges at the workplace. During the pandemic all human beings were forced to switch into the online activity. Many spheres of activity such as educational process, trading, meetings moved to the online mode.

Introduction

In a pandemic situation online distance learning, e-learning and online meetings, negotiations began to increase. As well as oral translators and simultaneous interpreters who used to doing translation at their special sound proof booth they also had to adapt to work in online mode. Doing interpretation at home on special online platforms was a new challenge for them but interpreters acquired new skills in their profession. Not only interpreters worked from home and teachers who conducted their disciplines on oral translation faced some difficulties as well. Because oral translation and interpretation demand close contact and interaction with speakers. The vocabulary list of translators and teachers enlarged with such lexemes as online teaching, cognitive strain, remote interpreting etc.

Likely the universal transition to remote translation or interpretation in time of lockdown was a significant change for simultaneous interpreters. Moreover, remote interpreting and more online events are waiting for us in the future. Online translation will develop because it is very comfortable and cheaper for clients.

According to the researcher of University College London A. Krouglov in contexts of a pandemic and the technology advances, some new brand was appeared in the interpretation space. This is an interpreter, who performs online translation at his home but not in the special soundproof booth [2]. Here we totally agree with his concept. They are specialized to translate via video by special online platforms in such a short period. At this period, interpreters faced many hardships. To analyze those hardships is vital in modern translatology.

A survey was conducted among interpreters via social network from various countries. They shared their *remote interpreting* experiences and what challenges they have faced in a Covid World. One of the challenges was changing of working conditions. As we know majority of interpreters used to work in real conditions, in real conferences and everything was connected with travel and flights, work in different countries. In 2020, everyone has massively switched to online translation at full-time work-compliance with security measures.

For instance, we all know that simultaneous interpreters work in pairs in soundproof booth, but in the case of quarantine they worked alone. To participate in the negotiations, they were previously sent for a smear test for covid at the expense of the client. Oral translation in online mode has become reality of our time. We saw simultaneous interpretation in an empty hall, where, in addition to interpreters, only operators and sound engineers. We saw masked speakers on video call.

At the beginning, online-interpretation caused many difficulties for which students must be prepared. Online interpretation requires technical training from all

who are engaged in interpretation. Online interpretation has its advantages as well. There is no need to spend money on travel, more opportunities to keep fit thanks to the Internet. Many technical devices like a writing pen, online dictionaries are available in the booth. Some interpreters say that machine translation would gradually become more and more a real competitor of translators. Increasingly, interpreters are using auto subtitles to enhance and simplify understanding of the source text. Zoom-the only common platform available that allows you to organize high-quality simultaneous interpretation, but only in the pay version. This platform has become a daily used tool and the only popular application by and among many companies, universities and governmental agencies during the lockdown. There are some professional commercial platforms for simultaneous interpretation such as Kudo, Microsoft Teams, Verspeak, SpeakUs, Interprefy, Voiceboxer, Interactio and etc.

Materials and methods

Online *comments of interpreters and translators have been used as research material that are published on the ATA Chronicle website. Moreover, comments of Kazakhstani and Russian teaching staff on their experience of teaching interpretation in online mode has as well used as a material. In the course of research work, online comments of simultaneous interpreters on the remote interpreting experience during the pandemic have been analyzed. Results of survey were studied on the methods and approaches of teaching staff of KazUIR&WL named after Ablai khan on conducting the discipline as practice of interpretation during the lockdown.*

Results and discussion

A lot of articles have been written worldwide which are related to online teaching process during Covid-19 the last few years. Kazakhstani scientists also have published various articles on this theme. The PhD, associate professor of our university Kurkimbayeva A.M. [3] has written an article, which is devoted to the application of information technologies in the process of teaching literary translation via Microsoft Teams. In 2021, many teachers also participated in an online master class on the topic "The specifics of remote simultaneous interpretation and how to learn it" organized by MGIMO University. Such kind of seminars are very helpful for all teaching staff.

Artyom Chelpachenko is an experienced simultaneous interpreter who usually translates the speeches of presidents and officials at negotiations and conferences. He is well trained during the pandemic on how to make a remote interpreting and how to configure relay interpreting in Zoom platform. Relay interpreting is provided in multiple languages like English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic.

Here is an instruction how to set up a relay interpreting in Zoom:

1. To login into zoom application using email that translator has given to the client to assign him as an interpreter in the first laptop.
2. In the second laptop interpreter logs in with the different email account that he has to create in advance a login. In this laptop interpreter is as a listener.

With the headset an interpreter will be listening to the interpretation in Russian by pressing the Qazaq channel button.

3. In the first laptop he will be interpreting from Russian into English.
4. In this mode he will have to activate the one standalone microphone but turn off the sound by pressing button or by decreasing the volume level to the minimum.
5. The second laptop (Rus) shouldn't have the mic on. It should be muted. When someone is speaking for example in French (you don't know French) you choose Russian language. And from the first laptop you are interpreting from Russian into English.
6. When interpreter uses two zoom apps at the same time with two laptops it's better that he doesn't use home Wi-Fi or mobile tethering.
7. It is better that interpreter connects either of these laptops with Wlan cable.
8. This allows to avoid any connection interruption [4].

Some examples are given below of working experiences of remote (online) simultaneous interpreters during the Covid-19. Remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI) is a modern type of technology for interpretation. In this case an interpreter is remotely at home using online interpreting platforms and translating the whole meeting that takes place far from them.

1. She worked on a platform Interprefy which is quite simple and easy to use, although there are some traps and pitfalls. The most difficult thing for her was the process of changing colleagues. It is different from what interpreters are used to work at a booth in a physical state. Interpreters not seeing each other face to face were obliged to conduct interpretation in different locations. They were able to interact with each other via chat of the platform they are working on. The platform on a sudden stop showing your colleague, it is incomprehensible whether your partner switch the microphone on, whether he/she is ready to interpret. In the process of interpreting, it is so challenging to type on the computer or any other messenger. There were some problems such as difficulties with sound quality and visibleness through the webcam is less well. It seemed like a guess work. Technology is in advance, there is just need to be mastered (Natalya Fedorenkova).

2. During the pandemic she was at my home and interpreting the patient who was wearing self-defense equipment. That was embarrassing to ask him to repeat and speak clearly (Lorena Ortiz Schneider).

3. Thanks to these experiences due to the coronavirus, she improved her skills remotely and effectively interpret from home and office. She gained new knowledge (Lucia Hernandez).

4. As far as she has a remote interpreting experience since 2017 interpreting in online mode was a piece of cake for her during the pandemic (Gio Lester).

5. Interpreters have faced multiple issues when lockdown was introduced. Connectivity was one of the main problems, power cut, poor sound quality were the biggest problems because due to unexpected transition to remotely working conditions. No one was prepared to that. In order to tackle the emerging issues, they

minimized the duration of conferences and the number of meetings. The purpose of reducing stress and workload for interpreters was important at that period (*Pedro-José Espinosa*) [5].

In 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic, all interpreters switched to online learning and teaching. Educational institutions and families were not ready for such a dramatic and large-scale transition to online education. What is the difference or similarity between distance and online education? Distance learning is a form of education in which a teacher and a student interact at a distance with the help of information technology. Student studies independently according to the program, studies the recordings of webinars. They also do assignments, consults with the teacher in an online chat and sends his work for review. According to Nikolaeva M.V. [6] online learning is a kind of continuation of distance learning. This is the acquisition of knowledge applying a computer or any other device connected to the Internet in the “here and now” mode. It is well known as “e-learning”.

Moscow State University’s teachers conducted special survey in 2020, June on the experience of online teaching in the world. 72 university professors from 12 countries took part in this survey. According to the results of this survey, 74% of teachers already have more than 10 years of experience in online mode. 65% of respondents before spring 2020 had no experience teaching online. 16.7% respondents had experience limited to hosting a few webinars.

Unfortunately, online teaching has caused some difficulties during the quarantine time. They are managerial-methodological, technical and psychological problems. Interpreting is one of the most difficult types of translation, and teaching interpreting in online mode is much more difficult and unusual as well. These issues were mentioned in the spring of 2022. According to the answers of teachers in the survey there were managerial-methodological problems such as:

- it is difficult to convene students at the same time;
- students use the trick of being asked to record an interpretation of a given video. They shifted to machine translation of the subtitles in an attempt to prevent the complexity of the assignment.
- teaching beginners to interpret is not an easy task because they are less able to concentrate on what is going on;
- checking students' independent work online in interpretation classes;
- it takes up a lot of time to give feedback for each task;
- arrangement of graded examination on the theory and practice of oral and written translation.

According to the teachers’ answers in the survey there were technical problems such as:

- inadequacy of the platform used by the university;
- training in consecutive and simultaneous translation using video recordings remotely;
- online format is not very effective for interpretation;
- technical issues for students (can't open links, the microphone does not work);
- lack of the necessary headset for students.

According to the answers of teachers in the survey there were psychological problems such as:

- no eye contact with students;
- inability to feel the personal presence of the student and teacher;
- the sharp transition to online learning and teaching has become a shock for teachers and students [7].

In online learning and teaching several programs have been used during the lockdown by universities. One of the most popular and frequently used platforms was Zoom. But not all universities were given permission to use it. Online teaching was conducted on platforms such as MS Teams, Pruffme, Skype. Recordings of translation were conducted on Audacity and online free of charge voice recorder Vacaroo.com.

Simultaneous interpretation teaching algorithm on the platform MS Teams:

1. Teacher sends the link to the video in chat.
2. Each student listens to it on their device through headphones and simultaneously translates into a microphone, recording the translation on a voice recorder.
3. Students send their audio recording to chat.
4. Group listens to their translations together, the teacher gives feedback and recommendations, mistakes and findings are discussed.

However, this platform is not intended for teaching consecutive and simultaneous translation. Teaching interpretation in online mode on such platforms causes challenges and was long over.

Another survey was conducted among the teaching staff of KazUIR&WL named after Ablai khan. They are not only teachers but also practicing translators and interpreters as well. One of them is Sayat Qanatuly, teacher who conducts practice of interpretation discipline for 3rd and 4th years students of the department of Translation Studies and intercultural communication. He shared his experience and teaching methods on the conducting of this discipline during the pandemic. As we know our university uses Moodle learning management system and all teachers and students as well are well trained in using this software. In fact, study materials and plans of practical classes are available for students on Moodle. Study materials include texts and videos on the topic according to the calendar-thematic plan of discipline. When all educational institutions switched to online education our university used MS Teams platform to conduct its lessons. At the practical classes Sayat Qanatuly displayed his screen with video to the audience in a Microsoft Teams meeting. After watching the video with 5–10-minute range students worked with the translation of unknown active vocabulary from the video. Then they one by one and consecutively translated two or three sentences into target language. In addition to translation, he used a short ice-breaker activity with student as “Snezhny kom” or “Snowball” which improves students’ short-term memory. This quick and easy game is carried out to enrich vocabulary skills and guidelines of game are no brainer. One student makes up a sentence in accordance with the theme by using active vocabulary. Then next student has to repeat first sentence and adds second sentence. Third student has to repeat previous two and adds his/her own sentence and so on.

Teacher of the practice of interpretation discipline at the department of Translation Studies and intercultural communication G.K. Kozhbayeva used the different approaches at the lesson. For example, she created several rooms during the class meetings in MS Teams. Furthermore, she sent links of the different videos to each room with four or five students. Participants of first room watched the given video and made a summary translation to the participants of second room. Second room's students made a summary translation of the given another video to the first room students. After that they swapped videos with each other and commented each other's translation. Next exercises was carried out is this way: students had to make a shadowing of the video which was sent by teacher to their WhatsApp one by one.

Interpreter and teacher of the department of simultaneous interpretation R.K. Alshanov also shared his experience on how he conducted discipline of interpretation during the online education. He mostly focused on the sight translation and active vocabulary during the practical classes in online meeting at MS Teams. Some brain exercises for memory were proceeded during practical classes. As well as students carried out their simultaneous interpretation on Audacity then uploaded to Moodle and teacher gave feedback to their interpretation on Moodle.

As the result of this survey, the given tasks of this discipline the practice of interpretation mostly was carried out in Moodle. As for the study materials like videos, students had to translate orally, then record it on an Audacity and send it to the Moodle. Teacher gives feedback to each of them. To teach a number of students to an interpretation in online mode is a challenging as it takes up a lot of time. There is no close interaction with students. They used special technical devices such as computers and headphones.

Conclusion

The proverb “live and learn” is closely connected with the specialty of interpreters. Except rendering information from source text into target an interpreter should meet the demands of time by learning and acquiring something new for him. Teaching translation in online mood requires more experience and different teaching approaches as well. Urgent move to remote teaching and learning of interpretation was available only during the lockdown. However, as it has become comfortable both interpreters and clients it turned out to be a good opportunity to work in this way. Nevertheless, remote interpreting cannot replace the interpreting at soundproof booth in offline mode and teaching as well. Various information technologies and platforms are crucial to use in such kind of emergency cases in conducting interpretation disciplines. Overall, these tools make the teaching process more effective. Translation strategies that are usually used during simultaneous interpreting in offline period can easily be applied in online process too.

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ОНЛАЙН РЕЖИМІНДЕГІ СИНХРОНДЫ АУДАРМА: ЗАМАН ҚИЫНДЫҚТАРЫ МЕН ТАЛАПТАРЫ

*Куркимбаева А.М.¹, Елубаева А.А.²

¹PhD, қауымдастырылған профессор, Абылай хан атындағы Қазақ халықаралық қатынастар және әлем тілдері университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: [aizhan--k@mail.ru](mailto: aizhan--k@mail.ru),

²филология ғылымдарының магистрі, оқытушы, Абылай хан атындағы Қазақ халықаралық қатынастар және әлем тілдері университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: [aluanai96@gmail.com](mailto: aluanai96@gmail.com)

Аңдатпа. Бұл мақалада заман талабы мен қиындықтарына сай синхронды аударманың онлайн режимінде қалай жүзеге асырылатындығы қарастырылған. Сондай-ақ, мақалада синхронды аудармашылардың қашықтан синхронды аударма жасаудағы тәжірибелері мен жоғары оқу орындарындағы оқытушылардың онлайн режимде ауызша аударма практикасын оқытуда қаншалықты тәжірибелі екендіктеріне сауалнама нәтижелері берілген. Зерттеу жұмысында қашықтан синхронды аударма жасау мен ауызша аудармаға онлайн режимде оқытудың кейбір артықшылықтары мен кемшіліктері көрсетілген. *Мақаланың мақсаты:* бірер жыл бұрын болған пандемия кезінде онлайн аударма жасауға және ауызша аударма практикасы пәндерін оқытуға шұғыл түрде көшу қалай жүргізілді, бұл тәжірибе оң болды ма және онлайн аударма барысында тап болған қиындықтарды анықтау. *Зерттеу жұмысының ғылыми маңыздылығы:* әлеуметтік желі арқылы әлемнің әртүрлі елдерінде жұмыс істейтін аудармашылар арасында сауалнама нәтижелері талданды. Олар өз тәжірибелерімен және пандемия кезінде онлайн режимде синхронды аударма жасаудың қиындықтарымен бөлісті. Сондай-ақ тәжірибелі синхронды аудармашы А.Челпаченко Zoom платформасында релелік ауызша аударма жасау үшін берген

нұсқаулықтары мен кадамдарды мақалада талқыланды. Онлайн режимінде аударма тек Zoom платформасында ғана емес, сонымен қатар Kudo, Verspeak, Speakus ақылы платформалары арқылы жүргізілгендігі анықталды. *Зерттеу жұмысының нәтижесі:* зерттеу нәтижесі бойынша онлайн режимде қашықтан синхронды аударма жасау және ауызша аударма практикасы пәнін онлайн режимде оқыту техникалық және басқарушылық мәселелерге байланысты қиын болып табылады. Аудармашыларға жүргізілген сауалнама нәтижесінде онлайн немесе қашықтан синхронды аударма жасау күйзеліс пен жұмыстың көптігіне алып келетіндігі белгілі болды. *Зерттеу жұмысының маңыздылығы:* синхронды аударманы онлайн жасау және ауызша аударма практикасы пәнін онлайн режимінде оқыту бойынша бұл жұмыс алғаш рет зерттеліп отыр. *Зерттеудің практикалық маңыздылығы:* зерттеу жұмысында көрсетілген сауалнама нәтижесі бойынша синхронды аудармашылар мен ауызша аударма практикасын жүргізетін оқытушылардың әдіс-тәсілдері мен жаттығуларын ауызша аударма практикасы пәні барысында кеңінен қолдануға болады.

Тірек сөздер: онлайн оқыту, онлайн оқу, қашықтан ауызша аударма, аударма стратегиялары, онлайн режим, релелік аударма, пандемия, когнитивті жүктеме.

СИНХРОННЫЙ ПЕРЕВОД В ОНЛАЙН-РЕЖИМЕ: ВЫЗОВЫ И ТРЕБОВАНИЯ ВРЕМЕНИ

*Куркимбаева А.М.¹, Елубаева А.А.²

^{*1} PhD, ассоциированный профессор, Казахский университет международных отношений и мировых языков имени Абылай хана, Алматы, Казахстан, e-mail: aizhan--k@mail.ru,

²Магистр филологических наук, преподаватель, Казахский университет международных отношений и мировых языков имени Абылай хана, Алматы, Казахстан, e-mail: aluanai96@gmail.com

Аннотация. Статья посвящена реализации процесса устного перевода в онлайн-режиме. Представлены результаты работы преподавательского состава вузов Казахстана в процессе обучения устному переводу в онлайн-режиме и результаты опроса переводчиков-синхронистов об их опыте проведения устного перевода в условиях пандемии, а также упомянуты некоторые преимущества и недостатки дистанционного обучения перевода. Цель статьи: представить некоторые аспекты форсированного перехода на онлайн-переводы и дистанционное обучение учебным дисциплинам по устному переводу в условиях пандемии, рассмотреть проблемы и трудности, с которыми столкнулись преподаватели и студенты в процессе обучения переводу. Научная значимость работы: проанализированы результаты опроса среди действующих синхронных переводчиков из разных стран мира, использовавших различные социальные сети и платформы. Синхронисты поделились своим опытом, в частности, с какими трудностями столкнулись в процессе перевода в онлайн-режиме во время пандемии. В статье также представлена пошаговая инструкция опытного переводчика-синхрониста А. Челпаченко по настройке релейного перевода на платформе Zoom. Установлено, что устный перевод в онлайн-режиме осуществлялся не только на платформе Zoom, но и на платных платформах, таких как: Kudo, Verspeak, Speakus и др. Результаты исследовательской работы: выявлено, что реализация практики удаленного синхронного перевода и устного перевода в онлайн-режиме является сложным процессом ввиду технических и управленческих проблем. Опрос переводчиков показал, что онлайн-перевод, или удаленный синхронный перевод приводит к стрессовому состоянию и трудоёмкой работе. Ценность проведенного исследования в

том, что впервые исследование проведено в русле осуществления синхронного перевода и обучения устному переводу в онлайн-режиме. Практическая значимость статьи: по результатам опроса, отраженного в исследовательской работе, методы, стратегии и техники, используемые синхронными переводчиками и преподавателями, ведущими дисциплины по практике устного перевода, могут быть широко использованы в ходе учебных занятий по практике устного перевода при традиционном офлайн-формате.

Ключевые слова: онлайн-преподавание, онлайн-обучение, дистанционный перевод, переводческие стратегии, онлайн-режим, релейный устный перевод, пандемия, когнитивная нагрузка.

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