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Conceptual Processing during English-Japanese Simultaneous Interpreting

(Submitted as part of the application for the degree of doctor of philosophy)

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Chapter 1

The aim of this study is to provide an explicit description of conceptual operation in discourse processing during simultaneous interpreting (SI). By comparing the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) of actual SI performances, I analysed interpreters' meaning construction during SI. The differences between ST and TT served as a means to explore interpreters' mental activities.

I use the term of concept for a mental representation constructed as a result of utterance comprehension. I explore the roles of both linguistic and non-linguistic information in making up concepts by analysing the content, source and timing of various forms of information. Concepts in discourse processing are not completed all at once. They are developed into more complete concepts step by step in accordance with the online processing of utterances in a discourse. Although I will also employ analytical devices developed in linguistics, I am not concerned with language itself, but with the relation between language and concepts constructed in verbal communication. For that purpose, the study is concept-oriented rather than language-oriented. As a theoretical framework in this study, I will adopt the model of conceptual complexes (the CC model) introduced by Funayama (e.g. 2005, 2007, 2008).

Composition of this thesis is as follows. Part I serves as an introduction. Chapter 1 clarifies the purpose, goal, and scope of this study and addresses relevant factors. Chapter 2 reviews previous discussions about conceptualization in the interpreting process. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the CC model as the main theoretical framework used in this study. Part II is comprised of two case studies. Chapter 4 explores the actuality of conceptual operation during SI. Chapter 5 examines the construction of a structured concept as an aspect of mental model (Johnson-Laird, 1983) through the Japanese morpheme *-sase*, which demonstrates the interpreter's construal of a causal event. Part III is an analysis of online development of concepts during SI. Chapter 6 provides background information about the source speech of our sampled SI performance. Chapter 7 presents a list of differences between ST and TT observed in the sample. Chapter 8 describes interpreters' conceptual operations in online discourse processing based on the CC model. Part IV consists of one conclusive chapter. Chapter 9 discusses how this study contributes to interpreting studies and other relevant fields.

Chapter 2

Since Seleskovitch (1978/1998) proposed the notion of deverbalization as an indispensable part of

her three-staged model of the interpreting process, it has become one of the most controversial topics in interpreting studies. From the mid-eighties to early nineties, some 'scientific-minded' researchers denounced this notion and criticised her approach as a personal theorisation. However, progress in pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, and cognitive psychology provided opportunities to re-examine the theory.

The meaning of an utterance does not only consist of linguistically encoded meaning, but also of non-linguistic information (e.g. Sperber & Wilson, 1986/1995). Setton (1999) attempted to analyse the pragmatic aspects of the interpreting process to elucidate the nature of mental representations constructed in an SI performance. He did not, however, pay sufficient attention to the fluid and flexible nature of concepts in the online development of discourse processing.

Funayama (2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) contrived a device to explore the mental reality behind an SI performance. This study aims to elicit the potential of this model based on actual SI performances. It is an attempt to explore the actuality of deverbilization as an essential part of interpreting process.

Chapter 3

The CC model, which is the theoretical framework used in this study, was proposed and developed by Funayama (e.g. 1994, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) to describe the online development of concepts represented in utterance comprehension.

This chapter introduces the basic structure of the model and addresses the basic nature of CCs. Furthermore, the potential of this descriptive device is demonstrated in several examples. The nature of CCs is fluid and non-linguistic and a group of CCs can form an event CC or a property CC, which means that CCs can form a nested structure. In this process, an event or property CC can be constructed as a form of mental models (Johnson-Laird, 1983). The CC is derived from three sources: linguistic information, background information, and the history of CCs. In this chapter, the online development of CCs is demonstrated based on a mini-discourse sample.

Chapter 4

This chapter analyses the retention and the status of CCs through repetitive translations for a single ST expression. A CC is a mental representation constructed through discourse processing. This chapter examines the non-linguistic nature of the CC and the components necessary to construct it. The non-linguistic nature of the CC examined in this sample is an example of deverbilization as proposed by Seleskovitch (1978/1998). The resources to construct a CC have been examined from three aspects: linguistic information, background information and history of CCs.

A case of anticipation has been examined using the same example in order to explore parallel processing in conceptual operations. Anticipation in this SI performance is considered to be a

product of discourse comprehension based on the formulation of CCs.

Chapter 5

This chapter focuses on the structural aspect of CCs by analysing the construction of a certain type of event CC. The construction of structured CCs contributes to the comprehension of a discourse framework.

This chapter examines the comprehension of a causal event as a type of event CC. The interpreter constructs CCs step by step in the course of online discourse processing. The example performance reveals an instance of such online CC construction. The performance suggests that the nature of SI forces interpreters to produce TT expressions without sufficient information even while they are still in the process of CC construction.

This chapter clarifies the specific role of contextual information in the construction of a causal event. Based on samples from an actual SI record, it analyses the function of structured event CCs in SI performances.

Chapter 6

This chapter examines the background information known to interpreters before the ST input from four aspects: world knowledge, knowledge about the topic, setting of the interpreting performance, and introduction of the source speech.

Individual differences must be assumed concerning different interpreters' background information, and the degree of attention given to each element during discourse processing depends on the interpreter's cognitive status at each given moment. These variables provide an explanation for the fact that each interpreter may comprehend the ST differently, and that even the same interpreter may produce different TTs for the same ST expressions on different occasions.

Chapter 7

This chapter examines five types of differences between ST and TT and other relevant points in the SI performance sample, thus analysing the conceptual operations behind an SI performance. The types of differences examined in this chapter are summarised below.

- **Repetition**

Interpreters sometimes translate the same part of the ST into the TT repeatedly. The motivation for repetitive translations varies and can include revision of an unsatisfactory performance, and stalling strategically or to overcome syntactic differences. Some instances of repetitive translation reveal interpreters' efforts to explore the direction of the ST based on background information.

- Exhibition of background information

Sometimes background information the interpreter has gained prior to the performance appears directly in the TT. This exhibition of background information tells that the interpreter employs background information at the timing of the corresponding TT production in discourse processing.

- Exhibition of meta-representations with a demonstrative

Some evidence in the TT demonstrates that interpreters establish a new referential relation in the TT, which is not found in the ST. This occurs when the interpreter refers to information in previous parts of the TT. This type of performance shows that the interpreter has conceptualised the previous part of the TT and retained the CC when formulating the TT. This means that interpreters can operate within the history of CCs at the meta-level and use this process as material for their comprehension of the ST and their production of the TT. Especially when demonstratives are used to exhibit a meta-representation, this operation involves packaging the previous part of the ST.

- Construal of implicit logic

Interpreters recover implicit logic in the ST as part of discourse comprehension and occasionally produce it in the TT. The recovery of implicit logic occurs when the interpreter uses two CCs and establishes a plausible relationship between them. The meaning of the recovered logic is more procedural than conceptual (Blakemore, 1992, 2002). The exhibition of implicit logic reveals that interpreters explore the direction of discourse through the SI performance.

- Exhibition of an event CC

When an interpreter understands a situation, he/she usually constructs an event CC. Some evidence shows that event CCs are retained in the background of the SI performance and explicitly or implicitly employed when formulating TT expressions. An event CC includes a conceptual frame as a structured representation of an event and consists of participants and the relationships between them. The construction of event CCs during an SI performance is interpreted as the interpreter's effort to organise the ST as part of discourse processing.

Chapter 8

This chapter uses an SI performance sample in order to trace the online development of CCs and related conceptual operations.

All phenomena observed in this performance involve the contribution of contextual information to discourse processing. This chapter analyses types of contextual information and describes the online development of CCs by exploring the detailed contents of the information, the timing, and the role of its contribution in discourse processing.

An event CC can be derived from linguistic and non-linguistic sources. The structure of an event CC is discursive rather than being a reflection of the syntactic structure of an utterance. Once an event CC is constructed, it can be a guide for discourse comprehension.

Observations in this study suggest the existence of a prestigious CC. Though the explicit use of the CC was limited in both ST and TT, this element was anchored and played an indispensable role in processing this discourse. The role of the CC cannot be independent from the construal of event CCs. Once a topical event is comprehended, the interpreter's operations are firmly supported by it. As long as discourse processing runs in accordance with event CCs, the production of the TT can be free from the superficial linguistic features of the ST. This analysis suggests the indispensable role of CCs in discourse processing and SI performances.

Chapter 9

The major contributions made by this study are summarised in two points below.

- Elaboration of the CC model and instantiation of its description
- Explicit description of conceptual operations in SI

First, the study elaborates on the CC model as a descriptive device for concept construction by interpreters and instantiates descriptions of online discourse processing based on the model. The nature of CCs described based on this study's approach is summarised in three points below.

- Incremental formulation in accordance with discourse processing
- Linguistic and non-linguistic conceptual resources
- The non-linguistic nature of conceptual content

The second contribution of this study is an explicit description of conceptual operations in online discourse processing during SI performances. By closely observing actual SI performances, linguistic differences between expressions in ST and TT could be identified. Employing such differences as clues, and drawing on the CC model, interpreters' conceptual operations during SI could be described. This description made it possible to analyse types of conceptual operations and mechanisms that cause such differences. This analysis supports the notion of deverbilization (Seleskovitch 1978/1998).

The conceptual operations examined in this study are not limited exclusively to SI performances. Rather, CCs are assumed to be generated for utterance comprehension in general. This study's observations indicate the existence of such conceptual operations based on the differences between ST and TT in SI performances. Therefore, while the conceptual operations examined in this study are an essential part of discourse processing necessary to re-express a message related in one language in another, these observations can also serve as a clue to explore the cognitive mechanisms of utterance comprehension in general. On the other hand, although the proposing model of conceptual processing is intuitively plausible based on the linguistic evidence, it is something which requires validation and enrichment through future interdisciplinary research.