A Study of the Relationship between Discoursal Elements in Parallel Corpora: A Case Study of Simultaneous Interpretation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Simultaneous interpretation is a complex interactional process involving the simultaneous decoding and encoding of information in both source and target languages. Discourse relations play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining coherence within units of discourse, encompassing semantic and pragmatic links. Coherence can be achieved through various frameworks such as elaboration, contrast, inference, and temporal sequence, often facilitated by the use of discourse markers. However, despite the importance of studying discourse relations in simultaneous interpretation, there is a lack of research in this area, particularly in Iranian scientific and educational environments. This study aims to address this gap by analyzing the discourse relations in parallel corpora during the process of simultaneous interpretation, focusing on linguistic and metalinguistic elements and drawing on Coherence Theory and a discourse marker inventory.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research adopts a functional linguistic perspective, drawing on Coherence Theory in pragmatics and Translation Spotting in translation studies. Coherence Theory emphasizes the presence of coherence in texts, the identification of different types of coherence relations, and the analysis of these relationships for text comprehension. Translation Spotting, on the other hand, explores the strategies employed by translators to ensure equivalence across languages, cultures, and discourses. The analysis of discourse relations is conducted using a model developed by Mohammadi and Dehghan (2020), which encompasses the planes of elaboration, contrast, inference, and temporal sequence.

To ensure reliability and scientific credibility, two raters participated in the analysis of the parallel corpora. Rater A, a linguistics expert with a focus on discourse markers, and Rater B, an expert in TEFL and translation-discourse analysis, evaluated the researcher's exploration of the observed differences in discourse relations during simultaneous interpretation.

The corpus for this study consists of 35,000 words comprising three lectures delivered by Iranian leader Grand Ayatollah Khamenei in 2020, along with their

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simultaneous interpretations on the Iranian TV channel, Press TV. The lectures and their translations were randomly selected from the lectures given in 2020. The procedure involved recording the simultaneous interpretation, downloading the Persian text of the lectures, analyzing the five planes of discourse relations in the parallel corpora, and providing 25% of the data to the raters for validation and evaluation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the parallel corpora revealed that discourse producers approached the construction of discourse relations differently during simultaneous interpretation. The results showed both an increase (80%) and a decrease (20%) in the creation of these relations. These findings, supported by Translation Universals, provide a more reliable basis for understanding discourse relations compared to analyses based on monolingual texts. Furthermore, the findings supported the application of the fourth principle of cooperation, namely manner. The study also discusses pedagogical implications for designing comprehensive systems to analyze pragmatic interactions in scientific, educational, and research environments.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze discourse relations in parallel corpora during the process of simultaneous interpretation, focusing on linguistic and metalinguistic elements based on Coherence Theory and a discourse marker inventory. The findings revealed that discourse producers approached the construction of discourse relations differently in the context of simultaneous interpretation, resulting in both an increase and decrease in the creation of these relations. These explorative findings, supported by Translation Universals, provide a reliable basis for understanding discourse relations compared to analyses based on monolingual texts. The application of the fourth principle of cooperation, manner, was also supported by the results. The study highlights the pedagogical implications of these findings for designing comprehensive systems to analyze pragmatic interactions in scientific, educational, and research environments. By shedding light on the discourse strategies employed by simultaneous interpreters, this research contributes to the understanding of the complexities involved in achieving coherence and effective communication in the process of simultaneous interpretation. Future research in this area can further explore and refine the analysis of discourse relations in different contexts and language pairs to enhance our understanding of this intricate linguistic process.

Keywords: Cooperative Principles, Relations Between Units of Discourse, Simultaneous Interpretation