# Theoretical basis and thinking throughout the 2023 advanced interpretation training teaching plan

## Li Zhou

Swan College, Central South University of Forestry and Technology, Changsha, 410211, China

*Keywords:* Material preparation stage, self-practice stage, evaluation and adjustment stage

*Abstract:* The author of this article combines her 2023 advanced interpretation training teaching plan, and plans to start from the three stages of material preparation stage, self-practice stage and evaluation and adjustment stage. We start with the first aspect to discuss the practical training of high-level oral students, and the second aspect is subdivided into four aspects: listening and memory practice, note-taking practice, speech skills, and translation skills. By exploring these many aspects, this article intends to explore a distinctive interpretation teaching model for college English majors that combines traditional interpretation classroom teaching, students' self-practice after class, and extracurricular interpretation practice.

At present, there is a shortage of outstanding interpreters in our country, and the overall professional quality of the interpreting team is not high. The "English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors in Colleges and Universities" has listed interpretation courses as one of the basic English skills courses, and described the interpretation courses as follows: Interpretation courses are basic English skills courses for senior students. By teaching the basic theories of interpreting, interpreting background knowledge and training basic skills of interpreting, students can master the basic theories of interpreting and the skills of topical consecutive interpretation, and initially learn interpretation memory methods, oral overviews, interpretation notes and public speaking skills, so that students can Translate Chinese into English more accurately and fluently. At present, the reform of college English teaching "is to realize the transformation from a teacher-centered teaching model that not only imparts language knowledge and skills, but also pays more attention to cultivating language application ability and independent learning ability". It can be seen that the key to the success of college English teaching reform is to cultivate students' independent learning ability.

As a very practical course, interpretation class requires a lot of exercises to achieve the desired effect. However, the limited class setting results in very limited classroom effects. Interpretation teachers guide students to carry out independent interpretation learning, which is an indispensable and important part of interpretation teaching. However, most interpretation teachers only focus on classroom teaching and ignore the importance of independent interpretation learning and the improvement of students' self-practice ability in interpretation. Due to inertia, most students find it difficult to actively participate in independent oral learning and self-practice. For some students who are interpretation, it is often difficult to achieve the desired results in self-practice of interpretation after class due to the lack of scientific guidance from teachers. How to

scientifically guide students' self-interpretation practice and make up for the shortcomings of classroom teaching is a question that college interpretation teachers need to think about.

In recent years, metacognition has become one of the hot topics in psychological research and has had a certain impact on educational practice, especially students' autonomous learning. American developmental psychologist John Flavell proposed the concept of metacognition in the 1970s and defined it as "an individual's knowledge about his or her own cognitive processes and results or other related matters", and "To accomplish a specific goal or task, the cognitive process is actively monitored and continuously adjusted and coordinated based on the cognitive object." Metacognitive strategy is a typical learning strategy, which refers to students' strategies for effectively monitoring and controlling their entire learning process.

According to Flavell, metacognition consists of three parts: metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experience and metacognitive monitoring. Metacognitive knowledge refers to an individual's knowledge about his or her own learning ability, which includes individual variables and task variables. And strategic variables; metacognitive experience refers to the cognitive and emotional experience that the subject has when engaging in cognitive activities; metacognitive monitoring refers to the individual's active participation in his or her own cognitive activities during the cognitive activities. Monitor and adjust accordingly to achieve predetermined goals. Metacognitive strategies are roughly divided into three types: (1) planning strategies: learners make a suitable plan for their own learning based on the cognitive knowledge they already possess; (2) monitoring strategies: learners make plans for their own learning Process, learning methods, learning effects, etc. are monitored at any time. These learning strategies can prompt learners to pay attention to possible problems in their own understanding to find and correct them; (3) Adjustment strategies: Learners evaluate their own learning progress and Adjust your own learning plan and strategies according to the actual learning situation<sup>[11]</sup>.

Under the guidance of metacognitive theory, the self-practice of interpreting can also be divided into three steps: material selection, practice process, and assessment adjustment. As a college interpreting teacher, the author has consciously cultivated the interpreting self-practice ability of the students in the teaching class and achieved obvious results.

## **1.** Material preparation stage

Planning strategies include setting learning goals, browsing reading materials, generating questions to answer, and analyzing how to complete learning tasks. "A successful student does not just listen to lectures, take notes, and wait for the teacher to assign test materials. He should be an active rather than a passive learner. Under the guidance of planning strategies, teachers should guide students to make plans, set goals, and provide Study materials and help students "tailor-make" study plans<sup>[2]</sup>. For self-practice in interpreting, the selection of practice materials is crucial. Therefore, the author helps students interpret in terms of the difficulty of the materials and whether they are suitable for interpretation practice. Practice materials are selected and regularly posted in public mailboxes for students to choose and use. Practice materials include audio materials and text materials, and the sources include online interpretation resources (Obama's weekly radio speeches, national leaders' Chinese and foreign press conferences, "Economic Scholars, etc.), text or audio resources selected from different interpretation teaching materials, and real test simulation questions of various interpretation exams, used for students to practice listening and sight translation. According to different English foundation of students, teachers can divide the difficulty of the interpretation practice materials into three levels. Students can choose based on their assessment of their English proficiency, and can change and adjust during the learning process. This also cultivates students' self-esteem and cognitive ability to a certain extent<sup>[3]</sup>.

## 2. Self-practice stage

Monitoring strategies include tracking attention while reading, asking self-questions about the material, and monitoring one's speed and time during exams. "According to the monitoring strategy in the metacognitive strategy, teachers should guide students to monitor the self-practice process, and provide targeted guidance on learning methods in conjunction with classroom teaching, such as listening skills, memory skills, interpretation note-taking skills, speech skills, and practical interpretation skills. etc., and guide students to apply the learned methods to independent learning. The author achieves guidance and monitoring of students' self-practice stage through the following means

#### 2.1 Listening and memory exercises

Generally speaking, factors that affect translators' memory include: not really understanding the original language, lack of concentration, and unfamiliarity with the topic. Only by understanding these three factors that affect memory can students conduct targeted memory exercises on their own. Through listening and memory exercises under class, students can find out the reasons that affect interpretation memory, thereby strengthening their interpretation memory ability from the aspects of listening comprehension, attention and knowledge.

There are two types of memory exercises commonly used in interpreting learning: 1. Visual memory. It means that the interpreter mentally visualizes what the speaker is saying. This memory method is more suitable for memorizing descriptions of certain situations, environments, geographical locations, etc. or introductory interpretation materials. 2. Outline memory. It means that the translator makes full use of the basic structure of the text and the connection between its main meanings to treat the source language speech content as an outline or framework. Outline memory is often used for speech materials where the speech content is relatively organized and the primary and secondary meanings are clear, such as argumentation and introduction speeches. For beginners in interpreting, choosing appropriate materials for memory exercises can achieve twice the result with half the effort. The author selects speech audio with clear logical order suitable for memory exercises, and provides students with methods and steps for memory exercises, namely original language retelling, target language retelling and interpretation. Take the following paragraph in chronological order as an example<sup>[4]</sup>.

Beijing, the capital of the People's Republic of China, is the country's political, economic, and cultural center. The city's long history dates back to very early times. During the Warring States Period between 475 and 221 BC, it was the capital of the state of Yan. From the 12th century onward, Beijing was the capital of 4 feudal dynasties—the Jin, Yuan, Ming, and Qing. The last dynasty, the Qing, was overthrown during the Revolution of 1911. In the early 1920's, Beijing became the cradle of China's new democratic revolution. The May Fourth Movement, a massive student movement against imperialism and feudalism, began here in 1919. This movement eventually led to the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. It was in Beijing on October1, 1949 that Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed to the world the founding of the People's Republic of China.

This type of paragraph or article has clear logical levels and is suitable for memory exercises for beginners in interpretation. Students listen without taking notes, repeating in the original language for the first time, repeating in the translated language for the second time, and interpreting for the third time. At the beginning of practice, students can only recite a small amount of content, or only the outline of the content. However, with the increase of such practice, the content that can be recited will gradually increase, and the accuracy will improve. In the early stage of memory practice, it is necessary for teachers to help select materials, but after students have practiced memory for a

period of time, they can select materials for practice based on their own learning conditions. This is also in line with the metacognitive theory that emphasizes self-awareness and self-awareness in the learning process. The essence of self-regulation.

## 2.2 Note-taking practice

Interpretation notes are an extension or supplement of memory. For interpreters, it is dangerous to rely entirely on the memory ability of the human brain, so taking notes is very important. The functions of interpretation notes are: First, they can assist short-term memory and avoid forgetting. Second, through the interlaced use of images, layouts and symbols, notes have the function of logical analysis and preservation of paragraphs, and can organize paragraphs of text clearly and save them for a period of time.

After teachers explain and demonstrate the methods, principles, precautions and commonly used note-taking symbols for students in class, students can truly master and flexibly use the interpreting note-taking method with a large number of out-of-class interpreting exercises. The author demonstrated his own interpretation notes for students in class and recommended the "Practical Guide to English Interpretation Note-taking" published by Wuhan University as a tutoring book. Some commonly used symbols and abbreviations in interpretation notes are what students need to master and remember. Note symbols such as "rising, increasing", "descending, decreasing", "because", "so", "excellent, important", etc., abbreviations such as CEO (Chief Executive Officer), LCD (Liquid Crystal Display), FIFA (International Football Federation), etc. These require teachers to gradually master these by taking notes and demonstrating different paragraphs in class. In addition, the work that needs to be done is a lot of practice taking notes after class<sup>[5]</sup>.

The author's requirement for students to practice after class is to complete at least 15 note-taking exercises on A4 paper every week. While students supervise themselves, the teacher will conduct irregular spot checks and guidance in class. During the author's spot checks, it was found that students frequently encountered problems in interpreting note-taking exercises, including: unclear logic (not good at using symbols that represent logic or insensitive to logical relationships between languages), too much note content, which affects brain recording. (The ratio of brain notes to notes should be 7:3), horizontal notes (interpretation notes should be written vertically), etc. In response to these problems, the author provided corrections and guidance in class so that students could make targeted corrections. After a period of teacher guidance, students gradually develop the ability to self-monitor their interpretation notes, and can monitor their own learning progress, learning methods, and learning effects at any time, and discover and correct problems at any time. When such note-taking practice reaches a certain amount, many students find that their notes have made a qualitative leap.

### **2.3 Speech skills**

Interpreting, as the name suggests, means that interpreters rely on oral expression to achieve cross-language and cross-cultural communication. Therefore, it is particularly important for interpreters to master appropriate speech skills. A successful translator must also be a good speaker to a large extent. However, in our country, English speech is far from being popularized in university English major teaching, and the Chinese and English speech skills of interpretation students still need to be improved<sup>[6]</sup>.

In class, the author will first emphasize the importance of speech skills for interpretation work, and help students master basic speech skills through observation, demonstration and explanation, including control of volume, speaking speed, tone, clothing, standing posture, control of eyes and gestures, etc. I'll provide students with some interesting topics that are common in interpreting for

in-class and extra-curricular speech practice, such as "the pros and cons of globalization", "the importance of environmental protection", "the development of China's tourism industry", etc. Students are prepared Speeches on this type of topic require consulting a large number of online resources to find relevant vocabulary and Chinese and English expressions, which in turn helps students practice the very important "pre-translation preparation" link in actual oral interpretation; and in pairs, In this format, one person speaks and the other interprets, practicing not only speaking skills but also taking notes and interpreting, so this practice mode can be said to serve multiple purposes. In actual classrooms, this model is also very popular among students because it greatly mobilizes students' autonomy and enthusiasm.

## **2.4 Translation skills**

In addition to basic translation skills exercises, translation skills in interpretation also include conversion skills, digital interpretation, famous sayings interpretation, etc., which are based on a large number of extracurricular reading and translation exercises.

Take the after-class practice of digital interpreting as an example. One of the practice methods the author provides for students is to work in pairs, with one person randomly writing down 10 numbers (the number of digits ranges from high to low, up to 10 digits), and pronouncing it in Chinese or English, while the other person is recording it. After downloading, translate it into the opposite language. After completion, you can check your answers and score points<sup>[7]</sup>.

Due to the limited time in interpretation classes, teachers should use their limited time to teach and guide interpretation methods. However, the interpretation textbooks on the market are mainly based on large-scale exercises and are not suitable for classroom teaching of interpretation. However, the interpretation exercises in the textbook are very rich in subject matter and content, including a large number of dialogue interpretation, paragraph interpretation and chapter interpretation exercises, with audio and reference answers. These cannot be covered in a short classroom time, and are very suitable as materials for students to conduct self-study after class. They can not only practice interpretation skills, but also improve translation skills. The author assigns students one unit of practice tasks per week and I will use part of the class time to check the effect of practice. Besides, I'll ask students to listen to the audio texts to directly interpret. All of their above performance will be recorded in their routine assessment. Through these methods, I efficiently encouraged students for extra-curricular practice. The outcome is that students have made obvious progress to some large extent.

## 3. Evaluation and adjustment stage

Regarding adjustment strategies, teachers should guide students to think independently and conduct self-evaluation, and can use regular Q&A, regular questionnaires, simulated interpreting scenes, recommended interpreting internships, etc. to help students evaluate the effects of independent learning, and guide students to evaluate their own learning effects based on the evaluation of learning effects. Adjust the learning process and strategies, correct your own learning behavior, and further improve the learning effect.

The ultimate goal of interpreting learning is to be able to truly play the role of an interpreter in the interpreting scene. Only by placing themselves in the actual interpreting scene can students truly understand their own shortcomings and make continuous adjustments accordingly. Otherwise, No matter how much practice you do, you can only do it on paper. However, the lack of real practical interpretation exercises is a shortcoming that currently exists in most college interpretation classes. There are many reasons for this: schools and teachers lack communication channels with the interpretation market, students' limited interpretation skills are difficult to cope with real

interpretation practice, etc. The practical course "Advanced Interpreting Training" is designed to serve as a supplement to the "Advanced Interpreting" course and truly improve students' practical interpreting abilities. As an interpreting teacher, on the one hand, the author will give students exposure to and experience of interpreting work through simulated negotiations, simulated interpreting scenes, and interpreting on-site observations in interpreting internship classes. On the other hand, I will fully mobilize my own social resources to provide students with Interpretation interpretation interpretises and institutions for a two-week interpretation internship and submit internship diaries and interpreting, these can give students a more intuitive understanding and experience of interpreting work, so that they can understand their own shortcomings and further adjust themselves in interpreting. Practice in order to achieve the best learning effect<sup>[8]</sup>.

Interpretation teaching is different from the teaching of other English major courses. It is difficult to cultivate real interpreting talents through classroom teaching alone. Interpretation teachers in colleges and universities must change their thinking and transform from a relatively simple imparter of knowledge in the traditional sense to a leader in students' interpretation learning and a stimulator of interest in interpretation learning as soon as possible. In the self-practice of interpreting guided by metacognitive strategies, teachers play a very important guiding role in the three stages of planning, monitoring and adjustment, and can help students carry out self-interpretation practice more efficiently. In addition to improving their professional skills and teaching skills, interpreting teachers should make full use of all resources, such as the Internet, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, movies, multimedia classrooms, language labs, teaching software, etc., to provide help for students' learning to the greatest extent possible. Maximize the role of the guide, effectively screen, integrate and deliver resources, and help students practice extracurricular interpretation. Interpretation teachers should also fully mobilize their own social resources to provide students with interpretation internship opportunities. Interpretation teachers should give full play to their initiative in teaching and explore a unique interpretation teaching model for college English majors that combines traditional interpretation classroom teaching, students' self-practice after class and extracurricular interpretation practice.

### **References**

[1] (USA) Flavell. Cognitive Development. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, pp.24–57, 2002.

- [2] Mei Deming. Interpreting Tutorial for the Advanced English Interpreting Qualification Certificate Examination. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, pp.43–86, 2016.
- [3] Nolan, James. Interpretation: Techniques and Exercises. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, pp. 101–127, 2008.
- [4] P öchhacker, F. Introducing Interpreting Studies. London & New York: Routledge, pp.59–72, 2004.

[5] Seleskovitch, D. & M. Lederer. Interpreter Training. Paris: Didier Erudition, pp.18–65, 1984.

[6] Jones, R. Conference Interpreting Explained. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, pp.47–89, 1998.

[7] Setton, R. & Dawrant, A. Conference Interpreting-A Complete Course. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co., pp.90–112, 2016.

[8] Bühler, H. "Linguistic (Semantic) and Extra-linguistic (Pragmatic) Criteria for the Evaluation of Conference Interpretation and Interpreters". Multilingua, vol.5, no. 4, pp. 231-235, 2017.