摘 要

商务英语已经成为了国际商务交往中使用最多的语言，是一种有专门用途的语言，在日益增强的国际经济往来中起着举足轻重的作用。这个作用在汉英口译工作中，体现得最为明显。本文探讨的是在商业活动中应用的口译，譬如：商务谈判，合同签订仪式，商贸互访，业务洽谈，商业会议等等。因为商务口译有其独特性，它要求口译者对专业词汇及专业知识方面要求较高，因此，在进行口译活动之前，译员应对贸易双方的情况有所了解，要有足够的商业外贸知识，要掌握相应的经济法律法规，要了解国际通行的惯例等等。

由于商务口译的工作性质与普通口译一样，需要现场同步翻译，这就要求译员能在短时间内迅速找出相应词汇，这不仅需要掌握普通口译的特点和要求，而且应该掌握商务英语的特殊要求。因为商务口译不同于其他场合的翻译，它必须强调两种语言功能对等或者等效，而不是一般的语言交流，专家对于商务英语翻译的标准也更为严格，因为它关系到商贸洽谈的成败。本文先回顾了一下口译的发展历史，然后以商务英语翻译的几大特点为切入点，通过分析奈达的功能对等理论阐释商务口译的质量标准，最终得出针对译员提高翻译水平的实用技巧和方法。

关键词: 商务英语　口译　选词技巧

ABSTRACT

This paper is intended to study business oral interpretation on the lexical level and thus to offer some skills in word choosing aspect for interpreters in this field.

The thesis consists of three parts: Chapter One is a review of the development of interpretation, and then some basic features of business English are introduced. In Chapter Two the criteria of business interpretation is discussed, and how the theory of functional equivalence is applied in analyzing the quality assessment of the interpreters' performance: ideational equivalence, interpersonal equivalence and textual equivalence. In the last chapter the author introduces some practical skills for business interpreters to improve their interpreting abilities.

Key Words: Business English Oral Interpretation Word Choosing Skills

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Introduction

Mark Twain once said: "The difference between the right words and the almost right words is the difference between lightening and lightening bug". This is especially true in oral interpretation in business and commercial activities. A miss-expressed term in a business interpretation might ruin a potential cooperation between two companies and bring enormous loss to them. This is almost a known fact to most people who have paid duly attention to business oral interpretation.

Though as a variety derived from general English and sharing the same linguistic features, business English is still a language for specific purposes, with its own fixed language forms and word formation (Li Taizhi, 2006: 36). Business oral interpretation belongs to the big family of translation, which depends so much on using the right words to convey meanings from one language to another, so as to achieve the effect of a successful communication. Being the bridge of a successful negotiation, business interpretation is crucial in many respects and requires specific techniques of choosing words. Besides, business English is characterized by its special terms and semi-professional terms derived from general English. Thus, it is of great importance for business English-Chinese interpreters to pour their energy in selecting the right words. And the right words should be thought out in an instance of time during the process of oral interpretation, which definitely demands a good command of the skills in the choice of words.

Liu Miqing criticized the idea of regarding business English as non-rhetoric languages: "As long as the texts are bearing meanings and communicating functions... there must be the aesthetic question of word choosing" (Liu Miqing, 2003: 452). The concept that business English interpretation doesn't have a principle of "gracefulness" as literature translation is still a common misunderstanding. In fact, selection of right words and expressions from a rhetoric view should be given enough attention in business interpretation.

English is the most frequently used language in business world, so business English interpretation holds a special and important position in the future development of China's economy, and it works as a mediated tool in the process of negotiations and business talks. Despite the lack of attention at the beginning, researches on business oral interpretation have thrived in recent years. And gradually, different aspects are touched upon in the research, like cross-cultural, contextual, cooperative communication and many others. This thesis is intended to talk on the word choice in business oral interpretation from a semantic approach, thus to help interpreters build a better mechanism of choosing right words in interpreting practices.

Chapter I Basic Features in Business English and Business English Interpretation

1.1 Literature Review

Interpretation is one of the oldest trades in the world and its history can be traced back to the early stages of human community although it is quite hard to answer such question as "Which year did interpretation really emerge and then develop?" due to lack of historical documents. In the primitive society, the economic and cultural activities of primitive tribes were confined to their own regions, which obviously blocked their further development. Thus it was the wish and demand of the people to cross borders to do business and have cultural exchanges with tribes speaking different languages that led to the appearance of interpretation in history. The main areas in which interpreters were used included: business, barter trade, transmission of production techniques, big events among tribes, religious activities, marriage, wars, etc. The early interpretation may present itself as a kind of nonprofessional, coarse, and unskillful intermediary oral communication activity that mainly happened along the border of tribes speaking different languages. When people who did not speak a common language came into contact, they had to communicate with sign languages or find someone who happened to speak both languages to help them. Some people grew up in a bilingual environment, because they lived in a border area or because their parents speak different languages. Others moved from one tribe to another and acquired a second language. In a sense, they can be regarded as the predecessors of today's interpreters.

Though with such a long history of development, oral Interpretation as a profession is still comparatively new as a career in the whole world, with its researching history of a bit more than fifty years, and in China it has an even later start (Xiao Xiaoyan, 2002: 72). The first national scale Seminar on Interpretation Theory and Teaching wasn't held until 1996 by Xiamen University, and then continued to be held annually. This seminar has been providing a platform for Chinese interpretation and its researching development.

According to Gile, the history of interpreting research in the west can be divided into four periods. In the first period, the 1950s, interpreting studies were based on personal experience without claiming any scientific validity, but nevertheless most of the fundamental issues were still discussed. As interpreting developed, ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES INTERPRETES DE CONFERENCES (AIIC，国际会议译员协会) was set up in 1953 and became a proponent of better conditions for its members. Universities began offering courses of interpreting, which helped the interpreter attain professional skills and status, and academics began to do research on interpreting. Conference interpreting continues to play an important role around the world today both at the international level and at a regional level. China, with the advancement of its international status, the frequency of its international contacts and the implementation of its open-door policy, has achieved dramatic success as a socialist market economy, and thus has often been the first choice for a lot of overseas investors and travelers.

The second period covered the 1960s and early 1970s, a period featured by a lot of experimental hypothesis regarding the interpreting process and the influence of other factors like the SL, noise, speed of speech delivery, etc. however, the validity of these studies was not confirmed.

Interpreting research achieved greater development in the third period, in 1970s and mid 1980s. This period was characterized by a group of scholars based at ESIT, also known as the "Paris School", whose main proponents are Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer. Paris School has had a great impact on theoretical research of the interpreting process as well as on training of interpreters, and one of its key concepts is deverbalization postulated by Seleskovitch.

The late 1980s to the present was the fourth period or "Renaissance" period as Gile called it. In this period, a lot of new empirical studies and increased cooperation between researchers and practitioners were carried out and researching works were published at the turn of the new century, including Daniel Gile's *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training* (1995), *Conference Interpreting: current trends in research* (1997), co-edited by Yves Gambier, Daniel Gile and Christopher Taylor, Robin Setton's *Simultaneous Interpretation: a cognitive-pragmatic analysis* (1999), *Interpreting in the 21st century: challenges and opportunities* (2002), co-edited by Giuliana Garzone and Maurizio Viezzi and other constructive works. Also, interpreting has achieved dramatic progress in China in this period. More researching articles on interpreting were published in relevant publications like Chinese Translation Journal and other similar academic magazines from 1996 to 2008, and book-length contributions increased also, such as Bao Gang's *General Introduction on Interpreting Theories*, Liu Heping's *Interpreting Theories and Pedagogy*, and Liu Miqing's *Theoretical Research on Interpretation and Translation* and so on.

1.2 Business English Lexis

Researchers abroad have established their own corpora, on Business English lexis and try to categorize business words and compare them with General English through linguistic analysis approaches. Business English words thus fall into three categories: functional words as in general English, sub-technical terms and technical terms only found in a given area. Collocation and idiom are also discussed in detail. Generally speaking, they try to define business English and find out the differences and similarities between Business English and General English so as to provide appropriate materials and methods in Business English teaching.

Cowan (1974) distinguished four categories of general vocabulary:

1) Highly technical words such as duodenum and aorta.

2) Sub-technical vocabulary defined as "context independent words which occur with high frequency across disciplines" (1974: 391). Examples of these words he gave are *function, inference, isolate, relation* and *basis*. He also expressed the need to determine these sub-technical words for each individual discipline.

3) Semi-technical and Non-technical words such as *hospital, medicine, patient, disease* and he didn't make explicit distinction between them.

After having a little knowledge of the composition of general vocabulary, a study of Pickett's work (1989) will allow us to discern three key areas in which he put forward the ideas which affect the nature and make-up of business language used in different ways. These are summarized as follows:

1) The language of business itself: The lexis of business flows from the general to the opaque (and back again). This indicates that words in a business environment take on new meanings from time to time.
2) Language choice: The select of business language is determined by subject matter, situation, social roles and channels used (speaking or writing), and all these factors influence the final choice of language output.
3) Communication partner on a macro-level: Communication includes business to public, business to business, and business to business area, and also the discussion within a company's own field.

It should be noted here that Cowan's division of categories sounds very similar to Pickett's notions because they both advocated the use of electronic corpora, which was quite advanced at that time.

Trimble (1985) continued the discussion on sub-technical vocabulary by quoting Cowan's definition and then extending its meaning to words which "have one or more general English meanings and which in technical contexts take on extended meanings (technical, or specialized in some fashion)" (Trimble, 1985:129). Thus, sub-technical words are those that occur with a frequency across the different disciplines of science, and also words that are found in both general English and "scientific" English but with different meanings. He gave actual examples of this latter category of terms, e.g. *base,* which has different meanings in botany, chemistry, electronics and navigation—as well as in general English. Trimble also looked at noun compounds to be found in scientific texts such as metal shaft and liquid storage vessel and graded them on a four-stage scale depending on their difficulty of learning: simple, complex, more complex and very complex (Trimble, 1985:133), again substantiating Pickett's theory of the layering of specialist language.

Yang (1986) worked on the hypothesis that as terms are context-specific they should have a very high frequency where they occur but also "vary dramatically from one subject matter to another" (Yang, 1986:97).Yang compiled a 270,000 word corpus of science texts using a novel, Graham Greene's *Human Factor*, as a reference corpus. His results were interesting and showed a "remarkable difference between science texts and general texts in two-word combinations" (Yang, 1986:102). Overall, he was able to divide the corpus into four categories of word:

1) functional words: well distributed words with high frequency,

2) sub-technical words: broad distribution but with peaks in some texts,

3) science/technical terms: low distribution but high frequency in some texts,

4) overlap category: a general sub-technical term can be a specialist term in one specific area.

Indeed, in terms of Business English, Pickett suggested that it was largely based on its lexis. Early works in register analysis also suggested that "special" languages are very difficult to demarcate grammatically. Thus the lexis of

Business English must be of vital importance to our understanding of it.

Nelson (2000) reports that "Business English appears similar to general English with only a small amount of business lexis appearing amongst the most frequent words" (Nelson, 2000: 101). Despite this shared lexical core, he also reports that there are significant contrasts between the business and non-business collocations, colligations and semantic prosodies of the frequently used words in his Business English corpus.

1.3 Types of Interpretation

In accordance with the serving scopes and the actual working situations, interpretation could be classified into the following types.

1.3.1 Simultaneous Interpretation

During an interpretation when the interpreter constantly translates the speech of the speaker with no stop or intermittence, this mode of interpretation is defined as simultaneous interpretation.

Simultaneous interpreter hears the next sentence while he is stating the preceding idea, yet he does not listen to the sentence which he is delivering. He does, however, get the meaning of the sentence being delivered by the speaker and it is this meaning which he retains in order to deliver the sentence himself immediately afterwards. Thus, just as when he speaks spontaneously, the words he hears are those which he translates, but his mind focuses on those which will be produced.

The effect of a simultaneous interpretation varies a lot depending on many relevant factors such as the distance between the speaker and interpreter, the pronunciation of the speaker and even the physical conditions of the interpreter.

So the great difficulties of a simultaneous interpretation are inevitable. The intensity of information input to the interpreter and the pressure of time require the interpreter to be highly attentive and thus such exhausting work demands a shift in every 20 minutes between two interpreters.

Simultaneous interpretation can be categorized into three different modes as following.

1.3.1.1 Conference Simultaneous Interpretation

Typically, while doing simultaneous interpretation, the interpreter sits in a booth wearing a pair of headphones and speaks into a microphone. In some way, however, simultaneous interpretation is a misnomer since the interpreter has to wait until he or she understands at least generally what the content is of the speaker. This kind of interpretation usually provides language services for bilingual or multi-lingual conferences, symposiums, trainings and commercial talks and so on.

1.3.1.2 Sight Interpretation

Sight interpretation is a varied mode of simultaneous interpretation since it requires the interpreter to translate the untranslated text into target language on reading it. Thus the interpreter has to interpret simultaneously with a written text, and since this process is to translate the written language which usually demands longer time to work out the main idea because of the complexity of the sentence formation and word selection along with the intensity of information contained. So the interpreter is no less than doing a literal translation in a verbal form. And usually the interpreter can only get the document or speech minutes or longer before the conference and then have a quick glance for the sake of secrecy.

1.3.1.3 Whispering Interpretation

For the interpreter, whispering interpretation is the same process as conference simultaneous interpreting: speech is reproduced in another language almost at the same time. The main difference between the two is that the interpreter is not speaking into a microphone in a booth at the other end of the room. Instead, he or she sits behind or next to the listener and whispers the translation into the listener's ears. Whispering interpretation is usually restricted to situations with one or two listeners. Otherwise, it could distract the attention of the speaker or the other participants.

1.3.2 Consecutive Interpretation

In its purest form, consecutive interpretation is a mode in which the interpreter begins the interpretation of a complete message after the speaker has stopped producing the source utterance. At the time of the interpretation the interpreter is the only person who is speaking at a time in the communicational environment. In practice, a consecutive interpretation may be rendered when the interpreter does not have a written text nor does he hear a text in its entirety, that is, the person delivering the source text may have more to say than what he has prepared, but the interpreter has enough information to deliver a message with complete group of meanings. It is important to note that although the person who originated the message has ceased their delivery of new information, this speaker has not necessarily given up the floor and, once the interpretation has been delivered, the speaker will resume delivery of their message.

Though most people may be more familiar with simultaneous interpretation, where the interpreter renders the interpretation while still listening to the source speech, consecutive interpretation has distinct advantages in some interpreting situations, that is, consecutive interpretations should be more accurate, equivalent, and with complete messages. In fact, the two modes, when performed successfully, employ the same cognitive processing skills, with the only difference being the amount of time that elapses between the delivery of the source utterances and the delivery of the interpretation. This being the case, mastery of techniques used in consecutive interpretation can enhance an interpreter's ability to work in the simultaneous mode.

Consecutive interpreting is commonly used for short welcoming and farewell speeches. The interpreter takes notes when listening to the original speech. Once the speaker is finished with the entire speech, or with small sections of it (up to 10 minutes), the interpreter reproduces the speech in the target language. This means, of course, that consecutive interpreting doubles the time needed to give a speech. Unlike simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting does not require any special equipment. The interpreter just needs a note-pad and his or her personal note-taking techniques.

1.4 Basic Features of Business English and Business Interpretation

Although most scholars stress that translation and interpretation essentially fulfill the same function, Danniel Gile pointed out "... many interpreters consider that the two are very different, even incompatible professions" (Gile, 1995:89). And according to Gile, the major differences between translation and interpretation are outlined in the following three aspects:

1) Translators need to know the rules of written language well and know how to write in the TL, while interpreters need to know the features of oral language well and know to speak well in public.
2) Any special or world knowledge can be gained during translation but has to be acquired before interpretation.
3) Interpreters have to make decisions much faster than translators.

As a functional variation of English, business English can also be defined as "English for business" or "English used in business contexts" as Alexander and Jones (1994) explained in their book. Business interpretation is a new occupation which developed with that of the international trade and globalization. As a profession, it is not an independent language which totally distinguished from general English, and just oppositely, it shares some features with general English while having some other distinctive linguistic characteristics, which mainly demonstrate in the following aspects:

1.4.1 Conciseness

The objective of a negotiation or a business talk is to settle business terms and thus to prepare for the final subscription of a business contract, which concerns the benefits of both parties, so the language used must be very logical, precise and concise, no less than the language used in the law.

Compared with long and complicated words, short ones are preferably used in oral business communication, as they can signal the same meaning in an effective way. On the contrary, big words can make the communicated meanings confusing and difficult to understand instead of impressing people deeply as someone assumes.

The small words or terms on the right side in the following list are usually preferred to their longer equivalents on the left:

Words to Avoid	Words to Use
initiate	*start, begin*
demonstrate	*show*
application	*use*
anticipate	*expect*
signify	*mean*
substantial	*large*
obligation	*duty*
alleviate	*lessen, ease*

Common words and terms are preferred than their uncommon and outdated ones in business English. Clichés are also to be avoided. According to this principle, the words and terms on the left side of the following list should be replaced by the ones on the right side:

Phrases to Avoid	Phrases to Use
as per	*according to*
state	*say*
prior to	*before*

dated September 1st	*of September 1st*
reveal	*show*
at your earliest convenience	*immediately, soon*

Likewise, some outdated structures have been abandoned and substituted with new ones, because the formers are often wordy while the latters are more concise. By comparing the pairs of sentences below, we can have some ideas of how sentence length is directly related to clarity and intelligibility:

1. A: *I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to you for your kind cooperation.* (Wordy)

   B: *Thank you for your cooperation.* (Concise)

2. A: *In case you would wish to schedule the deliveries of certain or all of the products, arrangements for these shipments may be made by getting in touch with any member of this firm.* (Wordy)

   B: *If you want to schedule the delivery of your products, please contact us for shipping arrangement.* (Concise)

3. A: *It is not within our power to obtain the letter he has in his possession.* (Wordy)

   B: *We are unable to obtain the letter he has.* (Concise)

People in business field usually prefer simpler terms for the effect of a direct understanding and the shorter time spent on negotiation. Besides, long and abstruse words and sentences will also cause difficulty for interpreters and will cost them more time to think of the meaning, which also needs more mental work. So on the one hand, long sentences will cost longer time in the understanding stage, and on the other hand, they will not contribute to the success of interpreting work.

1.4.2 Preciseness

Since what is involved in a business interpretation is not only business interests but also future business relationships of the parties of the negotiation, so words used in a business interpretation tend to be more precise, for instance, expressions like: "no later than", "not less than", and measurement terms like "yard", "dozen", "score", and monetary units like "dollar", "Euro" or "pound" are very common in a business interpretation. So to get mixed up two different measurements like "long ton (长吨)" and "short ton (短吨)" sometimes will incur an unexpected loss. Imagine a slight mistake of using "dollars" instead of "Hong Kong dollars" will lead to a tremendous economic disaster.

Therefore, facts, words, expressions and numbers that are impeccably exact are suggested to be used in business interpretation, though sometimes they seem to make the whole sentence longer. Please compare the following sentences:

1) A: *All offers by telex are open for five days.*

   B: *All offers by telex are open fore five days inclusive of the date of dispatch*. (More precise)

2) A: *This contract will come into effect from Oct. 1st.*

   B: *This contract will come into effect from and including Oct. 1st.*

(More precise)

Not only should we pay attention to the preciseness of the meanings of words and expressions chosen, but we also should be cautious that the sentences and words used do not exaggerate the effect of the product. Compare the following pairs of sentences:

1) A: *This product is absolutely the best on the market.*

   B: *This product is the best one we can offer.*

2) A: *We assure you that this error will never occur.*

   B: *We'll do all we can so that we may not repeat such an error.*

Besides, to be precise we should use appropriate business terminologies. Terms below are common business expressions:

1) 信用证	*L/C (Letter of Credit)*
2) 到岸价格	*CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight)*
3) 离岸价格	*FOB (Free on board)*
4) 提单	*Blading (Bill of lading)*
5) 边境交货	*DAF (Delivered at Frontier)*
6) 打白条	*issue IOUs*
7) 市场多元化战略	*Market Diversification Strategy*
8) 贸易盈余	*trade surplus*
9) 横向经济联系	*lateral economic ties*

10) 优惠条件 *confessional terms, favorable terms*

1.4.3 Politeness

Just as Michel de Montaigne said: "Politeness doesn't pay a penny while it wins all." Politeness is one of the major social constraints on human interactions regulating participants' communicative behavior by constantly reminding them to take into consideration the feelings of the others. As an adhesive instrument to a harmonious communication, politeness plays an important role in business English.

The Politeness Principle by Jeffery Leech encompasses six maxims: Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement and Sympathy maxims. The fact that he put tact maxim into the politeness principle shows the tight relationship between tact and politeness, and tact is indispensable in business communications. Tact in language communication refers to explaining things in an accurate, fluent and elegant way to the effect that it is appropriate for listeners on different occasions. Whether appropriate business language is used or not concerns the success of the business. In most cases, both (or several) parties show courtesy and goodwill in order to strengthen friendship and promote business. One of the decisive factors is how to employ the language properly. Being tactful not only means using polite phrases, but more importantly, showing consideration for others as well. Thus, euphemisms are advisable in business English, for example, the word "fold" is sometimes used to replace "failure" or "collapse", such as in "Many small business have folded in the economic recession."

According to Liao Ying (2006), there are in general three ways to make a business talk more polite:

1) Change imperative sentences into requesting sentences. It would be more polite if we use "will you..." or "would you..." structures, for example:

A. 请将贵方所需详细信息告诉我方。

Tell us more detailed information on your requirements.

Will you tell us detailed information on your requirements? (more polite)

B. 请报青岛最低到岸价。

Make your lowest quotation CIF Qingdao.

Would you please make your lowest quotation CIF Qingdao? (more polite)

2) Use sentences with modal verbs, such as "would be", "should be", "might make", "could have" and so on to express the tone of euphemism and politeness so as to improve the effectiveness of the talk, for instance:

A. 希望贵方能向中国人民保险公司投保该货。

We wish you could effect insurance on the goods with PICC.

B. 务请贵方即期装运。

We would ask you to make a prompt shipment.

3) Use expressions like "I'm afraid...", "we would say...", "as you are

aware…", and so on to avoid putting too much emphasis on one's own party and provoking unpleasant feelings of the other party, and this can ease the tense atmosphere of a business talk. Besides, phrases showing gratefulness, regrets and happiness are also helpful to creat a friendly ambience, for example:

A. 我方建议贵方应当减价 8%。

We would suggest that you should cut down your price by 8%.

B. 我方可能不能一次性交货。

I'm afraid that we can not deliver the goods all at one time.

C. 我们能签订这个合同感到很高兴。

It is a pleasure for us to sign such a sales contract.

Chapter II Criteria and Functional Equivalence in Business English Interpretation

For any profession, a set of norms or standards is necessary for both regulating and promoting this occupation. In oral interpretation, professional norms are not only useful for relative institutions to judge the performance of the interpreters but also provide them a system of methods to improve their work. Furthermore, interpreting training requires effective and practical assessment system to guarantee their training programs.

2.1 History of Research on Interpretation Criteria

The assessment on interpretation can be dated back to the appearance of interpretation, which was spontaneous, subjective and in small scale. Only after the Second World War, when interpretation was becoming a profession, study on criteria of interpretation assessment began to be carried out.

2.1.1 Study on Criteria in the West

The study on criteria of interpretation in the West started during the 70s last century, and has flourished since the 80s. Many scholars did both theoretical and experimental researches and their results were fruitful. The following are some important experiments, figures and conclusions in this field.

2.1.1.1 Study on Expectations

The first field study on "quality" of interpretation was in 1986 by Buhler, which was to infer users' assessment from that of interpreters. She pinpointed 16 criteria which had the virtue of being the first and in addition had been used in subsequent studies thus enabling a degree of comparability. Later, in 1989 Kurz used 8 of Buhler's criteria with users to put Buhler's inference to the test. Both studies were dealing with expectations and some conclusions were reached which are still used now.

According to the results of the two experiments, sense consistency with original message is the most highly valued criterion, followed by logical cohesion. And the first two criteria were proved most valued by the users and interpreters in most of experiment till now.

1. The interpreters attach higher value to all the criteria than users do.

(Kurz)

2. The interpreters attach significantly greater value to expressive criteria such as native accent, voice quality or correct grammatical usage than the users. (Kurz)

Kurz's results were later confirmed by Marrone and Kopczynsky.

2.1.1.2 Different Expectations of Interpretation from Distinct User Groups

Kurz first examined this conclusion examined in the year 1993, and the conclusion became a basic hypothesis for later experiments on users' expectations and in 1995 was confirmed by Peter Moser commissioned by the AIIC Research Committee.

2.1.1.3 Other Conclusions

The objective and quantifiable criteria was approved by Danniel Gile. He admitted "information losses, sometimes important in a speech, may be offset by a qualitative transformation of the speech reinforcing its impact" (1983). Stenzl also agreed at this observation in the sense that a clear and intelligible text with some information loss may be more useful to the listener than a text seeking to be complete at the expense of clarity and intelligibility. Moser-Mercer (1996) created three assessment models in accordance with different purposes of the assessment. And Collados found that interpretation with melodious delivery and mistakes was generally rated better than interpretation with a monotonous delivery and total sense consistency. (1998)

2.2 Criteria for Quality Assessment of Business Interpretation

In this thesis, only a few factors which should be considered important when assessing the performance of the business interpreters are listed as a simple reference.

1) Accuracy

The sense consistency with original messages has been proved and widely accepted as the number one criterion for the quality assessment of interpretation in a general sense. And when the research area is narrowed to business interpretation, this criterion should be stricter to accuracy.

Accuracy not only means the accurate interpretation of terms, meaning, figures, but also the tone and style of the speaker. In business negotiations, any mis-interpretation may cause misunderstandings or confusions which would fail the negotiation or bring losses to the parties.

2) Fluency

Fluency includes the logical cohesion of utterance and the fluency of delivery. Because of the high efficiency demands from the negotiation, the atmosphere of the situation is thus active and lively. Only when the efficiency of interpretation is achieved, the negotiators from the two sides can rapidly respond with feedbacks after the interpretation each time. In other words, the communication between the customers of two sides will be going on smoothly and experiencing no obstacles from the aspect of languages.

3) Completeness of Interpretation

This criterion has also been proved one of the top criteria for assessing the interpretation. In the business negotiation, the interpreters should interpret all the details. For an omission of one word may change a term in contract which may bring great losses to the negotiating parties,

4) Flexibility

Flexibility deals with how the interpreters control the atmosphere or how to interpret the improper remarks or avoid the conflicts that may be caused by cultural differences. Business negotiation is a very complex situation. And the interpreter, as both a bridge to remove language barriers and a business assistant, must work hard helping to achieve the goals of the negotiators. But this is a criterion hard to be quantified.

2.3 Functional Equivalence in Business Interpretation

In the last century, study of the criteria for interpretation quality assessment was the core in interpretation study circles. Scholars in the west have done a lot of experimental and theoretical research in this field. But due to the complexity of this occupation, no consensus on a set of criteria suitable to all interpretation has been reached.

However, most western interpreting criteria emphasize on the concept of "equivalence", including Nida's most famous theory of "functional equivalence", which could be assumed as the most influential theory in China, and which is quite illuminating for business oral interpretation, since whatever the text or style the translation is, its major aim should be the equivalence of information that to be translated. According to Nida, a minimal, realistic definition of functional equivalence could be stated as "The readers of a translated text should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of how the original readers of the text must have understood and appreciated it" (Nida, 1993:18). "Functional equivalence" indicates that an ideal effective translation should be able to produce the equivalence of function, message and response to both the target and the original receptors.

Business English interpretation can be defined as the process of establishing equivalence between the source language (SL) and target language (TL) discourses in business and commerce. That is to say, the characteristics of the discourse in a source language must correspondingly should shown in the discourse in a target language. As the function of business discourse is purpose-oriented, the international business translation correspondingly should achieve this function after the discourse in a source language has been translated into a target language. Thus international business interpretation can be regarded as the process in which discourse in one language is replaced by the equivalent discourse in another, to achieve the functions of business negotiations.

According to Halliday (1970), language consists of three functions—ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function, which correspond to that in business English interpretation. Therefore, business English interpretation tries to explore the functional equivalence between the two languages in business context to achieve the purpose of functional equivalence between the two discourses.

But how can we establish such a functional equivalence so as to retain the characteristics of international business English? Halliday's three aspects of equivalence: the ideational equivalence, the interpersonal equivalence and the textual equivalence are to be studied below.

2.3.1 Ideational Equivalence

Ideational refers to the meaning of the specialized vocabulary or the concepts a term represents. Words used in international business English have specialized and accurate meaning. Equivalence in this aspects focuses or specialized meaning in international business English. Business vocabulary consists of terminology and vocabulary which gets specialized meaning in international business context. Terminology gets fixed and does not vary with the change of business context, such as FOB, CIF, Bill of Lading. Therefore, translation of the terminology should be faithful.

Examples:

Bill of Lading 海运提单	*Del Creder agent* 保付货款代理
Insurance policy 保险单	*Collection document* 跟单托收
WAP 水渍险	*Pro forma invoice* 形式发票
FAP 平安险	*Sales confirmation* 销售确认书
Firm offer 实盘	*Commission* 佣金
Delivery order 提货单	*Freight forward* 运费到付
Retirement 赎单	*D/A* 承兑交单
Negotiation of draft 汇票议付	*Endorser* 背书人
Clean slate 清白记录	*Force majeure* 不可抗力

International business English is an interdisciplinary variety of language which involves wide areas of related professions. So the vocabulary should avoid ambiguity. The common words used in general English are always employed in international business English to express specific concepts or meanings. Those terms are always a hinder for international business English interpreters. For example: "dry goods" can not be translated literally by its linguistic forms as “干货”, but should be “纺织品”. The same is true with “sweet water” and “red eye” which should be translated to “饮用水” and “廉价威士忌”, but not “糖水”, and “红眼病”. Only by the mastery of disciplinary business knowledge could such meanings be correctly interpreted.

Business English is also a multi-disciplinary subject. Therefore, it is very common for the same words to express different meanings when used in different business context. The following words are very typical in business interpretation, such as: discount, confirm, average, etc. Translation of these words depends on the different business context. Examples are:

1. ***discount***

① *You may get a 5% **discount** if your order is on a regular basis.*

如果你方定期给我方下定单，你方便可得到5%的**折扣**。

② *If a seller extends credit to a buyer through a time draft, they have made a trade acceptance. The seller can request that the bank finance the transaction by buying the draft. The bank is said to **discount** the draft.*

如卖方开出的是远期汇票，以此向买方提供信用，此时就做了一笔商业汇票承兑业务，卖方可以请银行买下商业承兑汇票，银行用这个办法对出口商融资，也就是说, 银行对该汇票**贴现**了。

The term “discount” has different meanings in these two sentences. One is “折扣” and the other is “贴现”. Discount (折扣) in the first sentence means the percentage of price reduction on the basis of original price of product. Whereas discount (贴现) in the second sentence refers to the bank charge made for payment of a draft prior to maturity for funding purpose and the drawer receives a percentage of the draft's face value after deducting interests from the date of buying to the date of expire after the bank charges certain fees.

2. ***confirm***

① *Our counter sample will be sent to you by DHL by the end of this week and please* ***confirm*** *it ASAP so that we can start our mass production.*

我们的回样将于本周末用特快专递给您，请尽快**确认**，以便我们可以开始大批生产。

② *Payment will be made by 100%* ***confirmed,*** *irrevocable Letter of Credit available by sight draft.*

付款方式为 100%即期，**保兑**，不可撤消信用证。

The term "confirmed" in the first sentence is a variation of its verbal form: "to confirm". It should be translated as "确认". But in the second sentence, "confirmed L/C" is a kind of Letter of Credit which issued by an "issuing" bank and paid by a "confirming" bank. It should be translated as "保兑信用证".

3. ***negotiable***

① *Terms of payment and the date of shipment will be* ***negotiable.***

付款条件和装运日期**可以进行商议**。

② *This Bill of Lading is issued in a negotiable form, so it shall constitute* *title to the goods and the holder, by endorsement of this Bill.*

所签发的提单是**可转让的**，故只要在提单上背书，便确定了货物和持票人的所有权。

In the first sentence, negotiable means "可商议的", and in the second means transferable of ownership, and should be translated as "可让的". Similarly, "negotiable B/L" is "可转让提单" which can be transferred to the other person after the endorsement.

4. ***average***

① *If a particular cargo is partially damaged the damage is called particular **average**.*

如果某批货是部分受损，我们称之为"**单独海损**"。

② *It's obvious that the products are below the **average** quality.*

很明显，这批产品的质量是**中下水平**。

In the ftrst sentence, "particular average" is a kind of insurance risk. It means partial loss or damage accidentally caused to the ship or to a particular lot of goods. It should be translated as "单独海损". Thus "average" here means damage or loss. In the second sentence, it means "平均".

2.3.2 Interpersonal Equivalence

An international business activity not only aims at the realization of business goals determined by linguistic input, but also involves maintaining good social relationship for the future business activity. Therefore, translation work should not only pay attention to professional aspect of discourse but much to the courtesy competence so as to convey the interpersonal meaning contained in the original language.

As a carrier of culture, language records, transfers culture and in turn, culture contains in the meaning of the words. When the two parties in international business communication belong to different cultural backgrounds, it concerns the problem of intercultural communication. Leech (1983) stated that apart from the cooperative principle of the language communication, the politeness principle should be paid more attention as the communication is affected and shaped by the social conventions.

Communicative strategies conventionally applied in one language community often lose their communicative effect when transferred into another, where a certain strategy simply does not work. In international business, it is the same situation that the polite expressions are constrained by the social conventions. The way of expressing politeness differs from one culture to another. Translation works on the assumption that the same discourse can be manifested in different cultures. In order to achieve politeness equivalence of a discourse both in international business English and Chinese, more attention should be paid in translation to the difference between politeness conventions and expressions in both languages. For example, "Would you kindly send us your quotation by the end of July?" This interrogative sentence that conveyed the euphemistic request actually is to achieve the interpersonal function. The translation in Chinese should be transferred into imperative sentence: "烦劳贵

方7月底寄来报价。" which conforms to Chinese conventional expression. If translation according to lingual components fails to give corresponding source and target terms, the unit concerned is determined by courtesy and not lingual constraints.

Politeness is largely constrained by the social conventions. The usually employed politeness expression in Chinese is "请". In contrast, the politeness expression in English are complicated and stressed as "We would appreciate...", "It would be appreciated (clause)" or "We would be glad to..." For instance:

① 请给我方最优惠价格的奔驰轿车目录。

We would appreciate if *you can give us the catalogue of Benz cars with their best prices.*

② 货已备妥，等待装运，请指示。

The goods are nearly ready for dispatch and we ***should be glad to*** *have your instruction.*

③ 请报椅子的最优惠上海到岸价，同时请报最交货期。

It would be appreciated if *you could quote your best prices of the chairs CIF Shanghai, and also let us know the earliest possible date you can make shipment.*

Sometimes, it is necessary to change or omit the personal pronoun and adopt Chinese polite address: "贵公司" or "贵方" and address one's own part as "敝公司" or "本公司". For example:

We inform you that your order has been shipped.

贵方所订货物业已经交运。

In an international business negotiation, the essential factor which should be considered by the two parties is to avoid threatening the other party and try to maintain the relationship. So is it in translation equivalence. Examples are shown:

① 由于原料成本涨价，我们须提价 3%。

A. *Due to the rising cost of raw materials, we* ***must*** *raise our price by 3%.*

B. *Due to the rising cost of raw materials we* ***have to*** *raise our price by 3%*

C. *Due to the rising cost of raw materials we* ***are reluctantly compelled to*** *raise our price by 3%.*

The word "must" used in translation A seems to be much equivalent to the original utterance "须", but shows much subjective and strong attitude. And "have to" used in translation B is much more objective and sincere, but still lacks appropriate tone. Translation C used "be reluctantly compelled to" to imply the unwillingness of being forced to raise the price by which express politeness and sincere attitude.

② 相信贵方会按期发货，因为迟误势必会给我们造成很大不便和经济损失。

A. ***We believe you will see to it that the order is shipped within the stipulated time, as any delay would cause us great inconvenience and financial loss.***

B. ***We trust you will see to it that the order is shipped within the stipulated time, as any delay would cause us no little inconvenience and financial loss.***

There are two points we should pay attention to. Firstly, it is much better to translate "相信" to "trust" than "believe" as "trust" contains strong feeling and "I trust you" can make the other feel better than "I believe you". Secondly, "很大不便", has been translated to "no little inconvenience", the phrase of double negation, which is milder and euphemistic than to say "great inconvenience" directly because the former version will make it more acceptable. Although the polite expression in business discourse seems very common, the result is very significant by which reflects the courtesy competence of the interpreter as well as the disciplinary features of business language: disciplined as well as flexible.

2.3.3 Textual Equivalence

Textual equivalence here refers to the forms and structures of the discourse which are constrained by professional practice or social and cultural conventions. As mentioned, forms of discourse are preferred by the members of business community to show their membership and distinguish themselves from other communities. They adopt certain kind of style of expression, the formulaic style due to the professional and conventional reason. When translating this style, we should pay attention to the different forms of both languages. For instance:

① 上述多种优质产品，备有现货，欢迎订购。

We have many of these quality products in stock, and you are welcome to order.

② 此报盘以你方 9 月 1 日复到有效。

This offer remains valid if your reply can reach us no later than September.

Although the English translations are able to convey the content and information of the original Chinese discourse and there are no grammatical and logical mistakes, they are not preferred versions conforming to professional practice of business English interpretation, for example, "欢迎订购" is often expressed as "ready for your oder" to conform to the speech habit of English speakers. So the revised version should be:

Many of these quality products are in stock, ready for your order.

In example 2, "以……有效" means "under the condition that. . ." which can be expressed as a set phrase "be subject to" in international business English. So the revised version should be:

This offer is subject to your reply being received by September.

Sometimes interpretations are largely constrained by set expressions which are constrained by professional practice in line with the expression of target language. For example, in the following sentence about shipment, there's not to much room for the interpreter to interpret freely.

成批发货的所有产品必须和认可的样品一样，没有事先书面认可不能提前提交货物。

For phrase like "成批发货" and "提前交货" are almost set expressions in business language, so its interpretation in English must be correspondent set expressions which at same time conform to English way of expression. Therefore, it must be interpreted as "All products within the bulk shipment must be as approved samples, and no substations could be made without prior written approval."

Other examples are:

由于外汇的波动，报价随时可能改变，不另行通知。

On account of the fluctuations of foreign exchanges, the quotation is subject to change without previous notice.

你方凭此信用证向我方银行按你方发票金额开立 60 天见票付款的汇票。

You are authorized to draw a 60 days draft on our bank against this credit for the amount of you invoice.

Chapter III Word Choosing Skills from the Perspective of Interpreters

In most cases, successful trades or businesses are achieved in the process of business negotiations, and in such negotiations interpreters are the bridges between the two parties to obtain a satisfactory goal. Business negotiation is a consultative process between buyers and sellers and can be conducted either by correspondences or by face-to-face talks, so interpreters should give full play to their language skills in business negotiations and assist to achieve successful business deals.

3.1 General Qualifications of Business Interpreter

The verb "interpret" comes from the Latin word *interpretari* which means to explain; while the noun form *interpres* means "a negotiator". So the work of interpretation is an act of explaining things. In most cases, the interpreters should interpret the words of the speakers exactly without adding any personal opinions. Even any unnecessary detailed explanation of the problem being discussed is forbidden and regarded as improper, which is especially the case in political interpretation. But for business interpreters who deal with business negotiations on many occasions, their targets are to interpret correctly, fast, steadily and avoid making mistakes on the negotiation table. To promote the success of negotiation, finish the interpret tasks successfully are the foremost targets that concern the interpreters most.

Interpretation conveys the contents and stresses the meaning instead of the words. Even the same meaning can be expressed in many different words, so when doing business interpretation, the interpreter must be flexible and cater to different situations. When it goes to the prices, quantity, quality, requirements and packing problems, the interpreter should use the interpreting method of literal interpretation. This literal interpretation stresses the formal structure and the surface meaning instead of considering other meanings below the surface. However, business activities are not only about negotiation on quantity and quality. Often the negotiating parties express their ideas in an effective manner to achieve the goals. For example, they will respond in time without losing temper while hiding their eagerness to win. Thus, in business interpretation, the method of free interpretation is adopted more frequently. Free interpretation, as its name suggests, would be fluent and natural without much attention to details. Free interpretation does not focus on the form of the original, including sentence structures, surface meaning of the words, metaphors and so on. It puts great emphasis on the deep structure of the source language. Free interpretation is a result of active thinking. The interpreter rearranges the information, grammar and structure of the sentences in short-term memory, and then makes association, does the logical reasoning and finally makes his or her expression positively and immediately. By keeping this in mind, interpreters can avoid exchanging linguistic symbols mechanically during the interpretation. And the interpreter should not start interpretation only after hearing half a sentence or only one sentence, or even a few words. This kind of interpretation will put the negotiation into a failure because the two parties will only hear and understand the message, and they will get lost in the talks. The interpreter, besides assisting the communication, should also try to promote the talks to go smoothly. If the interpreter finds that some negotiating delegates tend to use synonyms, or speak too slowly, or repeat the same opinion or words too many times, the interpreter should sum up their ideas and remove the redundancy. This method makes the interpretation brief and to the point.

When one party is proving their opinion and making a highly logical speech, the interpreter should not interrupt them indiscreetly, but let them finish, try to grasp the general idea of the original speech. Note-taking is a necessity, because human memory is limited, and in business negotiation, even a trifle error may bring a bad reaction which may influence the further talk. The interpreter should always only remember the contents and forget about the formal structure of the words. If the original speech is of too many redundant or repeated words, topics irrelevant to the discussion, the interpreter can omit or delete them freely. Of course, if the listener does not understand, the interpreter has the responsibility to re-interpret or explain to him or her.

3.2 Specific Interpreting Skills for Business Interpreters

Business interpretation shares the same interpreting modes with other forms of interpretation. And the basic skills are required throughout the whole procedure of interpretation, such as understanding of the speaker's ideas, the immediate analysis of the content of the speech, and the re-expression of the content in the same style as much as possible.

3.2.1 Ample Preparation

Business interpreter is not only a language assistant, but also a business assistant to some degree, so collecting all related special terms before the task begins is very essential. Let us take international trade as an example, the interpreter should first know the four steps of a trade, inquiry—offer—counter offer—order. This process seems easy but concerns many professional knowledge such as the payment, insurance, shipping, packing, etc. If an accident happens, claims, presentation, arbitration and other specific terms will be used. When talking about payment, there are cable draft, collection bill and L/C for the seller and buyer to choose.

For example: If the seller wants the buyer to pay with irrevocable L/C, which is not accepted by the buyer. The interpreter should explain the common reasons for the refusal and offer advice:

It is expensive to open a L/C what's more we also need to put a deposit into the bank as collateral. So we hope this time you may consider D/P or Collection Bill.

开立信用证的成本很高，另外，我们还需要把钱存入银行作为抵押。所以，我们希望此次贵方能考虑用付款交单或电汇的方式。

Adequate preparation and mastering certain trade terms and relative professional knowledge are highly necessary for the interpreter to act on behalf of the employer actively and help to minimize losses in negotiations.

3.2.2 Interpreting Proper Terms and Professional Names

In business English, some words are endowed with different special meanings in different context. Thus the interpreter should try to learn the specific meanings of words and know more about related knowledge in these areas. Below is just a short list of common business terms.

Word	Ordinary Meaning	Meaning in Business English
Acquisition	取得	收购
Enter into	进入	签订
More or less	或多或少	溢短装
Documentation	文件	制单
Quote	引用	报价

3.2.3 Dealing with Fuzzy Message

In business negotiations, there are lots of fuzzy messages. How the interpreters deal with them plays a very important role in successful interpretation. The Following are some skills to interpret fuzzy messages:

(1) Using the fuzzy words of the target language to interpret fuzz messages in the source language. For example:

Shipment for this lot of goods is to be made in ***around*** *20 days after receipt of the buyer's order.*

我们将于收到买方订单后 20 日*左右*查发运该批货物。

(2) Interpretation the fuzzy messages into clear ones. Example:

This section sets out specially required supplies and services but ***without excluding*** *other necessary components and services not* *mentioned.*

本节提出了特别要求的供货和服务，还包括了尚未提及的其它要的零部件和服务。

Here, “without excluding” is a fuzzy message which makes it difficult for the bidding party to understand the scope of goods to supply. So the interpreter, should change “without excluding” into “also including”.

3.2.3.1 Using Vague Language Properly

Besides the broad experience in international trade negotiations, the interpreter should also master as much linguistic skills in expressing ideas and combine the two together.

Although some people consider that vague language is almost the opposite of accuracy or clearness and think that it is “bad”, most of them still use vague language when they are unable or unwilling to give accurate information, or when they think it is either unnecessary or socially inappropriate to do so. Though business negotiating language—both oral and written, should be clear and accurate, sometimes we don’t express clearly or speak specifically for some pragmatic purposes. Under these circumstances, the negotiators prefer using vague language reasonably. Vague language is considered as a common skill and tactics in international negotiations.

3.2.3.2 Situations in Which Vague Language Is Required

(1) When some information can’t be expressed directly

When some questions can not be answered or some clauses can not be agreed on immediately, vague language is the best choice in such a situation.

For example:

① *We'll get in touch with our manufacturers and try our best to advance the time of delivery.*

我方将厂家联系，尽量把交货时间提前。

② *We would give you our reply as soon as possible.*

我方将尽快给贵方答复。

③ *If your products are good in quality and reasonable in price, we'll place a large order at once.*

如果贵方产品质量好，价格合理，我方将立即大量订货。

In the above sentences, phrases such as "to advance the time of delivery", "as soon as possible", and "place a large order" are vague language, made under situations that certain data, time, terms or standards can not be confirmed. These phrases are very flexible and can be explained or understood in many different ways.

(2) When some information is inappropriate to be expressed directly

If the delegates are not ready to give answers to certain problems or need to beat about the bush, vague language is the most effective and safe choice. For example:

① 我认为我方客户很难接受你方的价格。以这个价格我们是谈不到一块了。

I don't think the end user would accept your price. We are not playing *in the same ballpark at this price.*

② 我们一直坚持"平等互利，互通有无"的原则，但我们现在的做法上比以前灵活多了。

We have always insisted on the principle of "equality and mutual benefit and exchange of needed goods", but we have adopted much more flexible method in our dealings nowadays.

③ 好吧，詹姆斯先生，考虑到这是一种新产品，为了开拓市场，我们可以给你浮动折扣。

Well, Mr. James, considering this is a new product, we may offer you allowance on a sliding scale in order to open up the new market.

④ 好吧，我正想听取你的意见呢。

Well, I'm here at your disposal.

In the above sentences remarks such as "谈不到一块 (not playing in the same ballpark)", "更加灵活的方法 (much more flexible method)", "浮动折扣 (allowance on a sliding scale)", "听取你的意见 (at your disposal)" are vague words which convey fuzzy messages and express the speakers' ideas indirectly. Obviously, fuzzy messages tend to bring more positive negotiating results.

(3) To avoid head-on conflicts

In business negotiations, a harmonious atmosphere is very important. Interpreters should make efforts to ease off the tense situation and save face of the two parties. When a head-on conflict happens, vague language is the most effective way to soften the situation. For example:

① A: *Oh, you can't be serious...It would be difficult for us to push any sales if we buy the goods at such prices.*

你是在开玩笑吧，如果我们按这样的价格买进，我们很难推销。

B: 我当然不是在开玩笑。你也许注意到了，自从上月以来，这些商品在国际市场上的价格大大上涨了，因为近来生产成本涨了许多。我们也不得不相应地调整销售价，和国际市场的价格相比，我们提供的价格还是相当合理的而且有竞争力的。

I'm not joking, of course, you may notice that the prices for these commodities have gone up a lot in the international market since last month because the cost of the product has risen a great deal recently and we also have to adjust our selling prices accordingly. The prices we offer are fairly reasonable and competitive as compared with those in the international market.

② A: *If that's the case, there is hardly any need for further discussions. We might as well call the whole deal off.*

如果真是这样，那我们就不必再谈下去了，整个交易就此告吹。

B: *What I mean is that we'll never be able to come down to the price you name. The gap is too great. Well, in order to get business, we are quite willing to make some concessions.*

我的意思是，我们不可把价格降到你说的程度，距离太大了。好吧，为了成交，我们很愿意做些让步。

③ A: *Do you mean that we'll have to make a reduction of 20 dollars in the unit price of our product? That's impossible.*

你的意思是我方产品的单价必须削减 20 美元吗？那可不行。

B: *I think it unwise for either of us to insist on our own price. Each will make a further concession so that business can be concluded.*

我认为我们各自坚持自己的价格是不明智的，各自再让一步，便可成交。

We can see in the first conversation, the prices given by the seller is too high. To avoid tense situation, the interpreter uses fuzzy message like "the prices for these commodities ...have risen a great deal recently". In the second one, buyer B was very angry because of the too high prices quoted by the seller A. to keep the friendly atmosphere, A then used the fuzzy phrases "willing to make some concessions". In the third one, "a further concession" is used as fuzzy message to change the unpleasant situation.

(4) To avoid loopholes

In business negotiations, "fuzzy message" sometimes is used to avoid loopholes which may turn into trouble in the future. In this circumstance, the interpreter can abridge the sentences properly without distortion of the original meaning.

For example:

① *We as the seller reserve the right to lodge a claim for direct losses sustained, if any.*

作为卖方，我们有权对遭受的直接损失提出索赔。

② *The parties undertake to act in good faith with respect to each other's rights under this contract and to adapt all reasonable measures to* *ensure the realization of the objectives of this contract.*

双方将公平对待相互所享有的本合同赋予的权利，并采取一切合理措施保证本合同的实施。

3.2.4 Cross-cultural Awareness in Business English Interpretation

Speech acts as greetings, compliments and responses to compliments, invitations, accepting and declining invitations, offers and requests, social amenities, are necessary social activities in cross-language and cross-cultural communication. They are of great importance to interpreters. Thus, an interpreter must have acquainted himself/herself with the pragmatic differences between Chinese culture and cultures of English-speaking countries so as to avoid pragmatic failures in interpreting. English is a foreign language to a Chinese interpreter, so it is almost impossible for him to completely avoid all marks of Chinese culture and language form. When speaking English we should be aware of such pragmatic differences and smooth away all the obstacles in communication. Sometimes lacking the sense of different cultural values may not only cause misunderstandings but may also be offensive to the foreigners. For example:

① 史密斯先生，欢迎来到我市。对于接待的不周，我们感到非常抱歉，希望您能够谅解。

Mr. Smith. Welcome to our city. We apologize for the poor receptionand I beg your forgiveness.

② A: *Thank you for your help.*

谢谢你们的帮助。

B: 这是我们应该做的。

That is what we should do.

It's a known fact that Chinese people are mostly modest, so it's not uncommon that the Chinese partner said the above remarks to show his kind, humble and friendly attitude. But the Chinese modesty poses confusion to Western people who have different ways of expressing kindness and friendliness. In example ① Mr. Smith may think: "If you know the reception is poor, why not make it better?" The improved version is "If there is anything we can do for you, please let us know." In example ② the English partner will think the help from Chinese part out of duty instead of kindness. Clearly there is no grammatical error in these interpretations. However, when cultural differences are taken into consideration, the interpretations are improper and must have hindered the friendship between the two parties. The correct interpretation should be "With pleasure" or "It is my pleasure."

Nearly every language has its own fixed sayings and idioms, which poses a great difficulty to the interpreters. For example, as we know, in Chinese culture, "海燕" (petrel), is the symbol of bravery and is often used as a trademark, but its English equivalence is not welcomed in western world because in their mind petrel is "a person whose presence excites discontentment, quarrelling, etc. in a social group" (Longman Contemporary English-Chinese Dictionary, 1413), and that's how the phrase "stormy petrel" came into use. An example of the failure of General Motors Coperation's (通用

汽车公司) entrance into Mexico market again shows the importance of cultural awareness in translation and interpretation. In the negotiation between the two parties, the interpreter didn't know about the word "Nova" has another meaning of "unable to run fast" in Spanish, besides its normal meaning of "a new star", so the failure of GM's new product "Chevrolet Nova" was almost doomed.

3.2.5 Context and Word Choosing in Business English

In the process of interpretation, contextual factors have to be considered, because it is the context that provides the background information for the production and reception of the message. An interpreter actually acts as a mediator dealing with different contextual factors and assumptions in interpretation. So the tones of the speaker, the speed of the remarks and the words he or she uses should all be taken seriously, because they may show his or her intentions, expectations, and attitudes. The interpreter then should use proper words fitting the context.

Examples:

① 我们是商场老朋友了，你直接开个价吧。

We are good partners in trade. Could you possibly give us an offer?

② 过去两年，我们的合作非常愉快。现在，你就拿些我们合资企业的产品让大家见识见识吧。

We have been cooperating very well in the past two years. Now, I wonder if you could let us have a look at of our latest products?

There are no errors in the above interpretations from the lexical level, but they don't fit the context. In the two informal situations, the interpreters used "Could you possibly" and "I wonder if you could", which are too formal. The listeners would suspect the sicerety of the Chinese part towards them. The proper interpretations should be:

① *We are good partners in trade, so just give us an offer.*

② *We have been cooperating very well in the past two years. Now, let us have a look at of our latest products.*

Conclusion

Unlike many established professions, business interpretation is a marginal profession which does not have a place in academia. Fast development of world economy and the increasing business and economic exchanges require more and more professional interpreters who should not only be excellent in linguistic ability, but also can deal with various business activities, especially the complex business negotiations. There might be simultaneous interpreters, technical interpreters, court interpreters, liaison interpreters, escort interpreters, but no professional business interpreters are available. For ordinary business activities, such as reception, introduction of related information, general interpreters can do the work easily and successfully. But when it comes to the business negotiations, there is a shortage of qualified interpreters who should possess outstanding linguistic competence, interpreting skills, business knowledge, knowledge of cultures, abilities of dealing with problems with a sense of professional ethics. However, at present, most interpreters working in business activities are not qualified enough. Some are general interpreters without intensive training, some are part-timers, and some are members of the companies who can just speak two languages in daily communication. The big gap between the high demand and low supply makes it an urgent task to promote this new occupation to be professional and regulated.

Interpreting studies, although long existed in history, is a relatively new area of research that started only a few decades ago. However, researches in interpreting in the past restrained the study from further developing due to lack of objective academic support, therefore, studies on interpretation should be carried on from the perspective of broad disciplines.

In this thesis, in order to study how to choose words appropriately in business interpretation, firstly an overall introduction of oral interpretation in business and commerce is given, which includes definitions, basic features, requirements on professional interpreters, as well as the criteria of their work. Through the discussion of Nida's functional equivalence theory in business field interpretation, three aspects are introduced for quality assessment of the performance of business interpreters: ideational equivalence, interpersonal equivalence, textual equivalence. The discussion may hopefully provide a perspective of thinking in the future research. In the end, the thesis sums up some practical interpreting skills in word choosing for interpreters, including how to prepare before an interpreting task, how to deal with business terminologies, and how to interpret fuzzy messages. The author emphasizes the importance to remain cultural awareness and to pay attention to contextual factors in interpretation.

Though with inevitable limitation, the paper intends to give a brief and general idea on the aspect of word choosing in business interpretation for interpreters. It is no easy job to pick up proper words in proper sentences, especially in business interpretation, which requires the interpreter to posess both the accuracy of science and elegance of literature. However, through practice and relative theoretical studies, combined with accumulation of business knowledge, including special vocabulary and so on, interpreters can get improved into a higher level.

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