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Syntactic Challenges in Simultaneous Interpreting from English Into Uzbek

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the syntactic difficulties encountered in simultaneous interpreting from English into Uzbek, examining their linguistic and cognitive origins as well as effective strategies for overcoming them. The typological contrast between English as an analytic language and Uzbek as an agglutinative language creates significant challenges for interpreters, particularly in real-time restructuring of word order, inversion, complex clauses, and multi-component verbal structures. The study highlights how interpreters employ chunking, anticipation, simplification, syntactic explicitation, and transposition as key strategies to manage processing load and ensure accuracy. Findings demonstrate that syntactic asymmetry remains one of the principal sources of cognitive strain in simultaneous interpreting.

Keywords: - Simultaneous interpreting, syntax, inversion, syntactic projection, segmentation, interpreting strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Simultaneous interpreting (SI) represents one of the most cognitively demanding forms of interlingual communication. It requires the interpreter to process incoming speech in the source language while almost simultaneously producing equivalent meaning in the target language (Hamid, 2025). This activity engages linguistic, cognitive, psycholinguistic, and neurolinguistic mechanisms at their highest levels: the interpreter must listen, decode, analyze, reconstruct syntactic structures, and express meaning in another language—all in real time.

The syntactic systems of English and Uzbek differ profoundly. English, being an analytic language, expresses grammatical relations primarily through fixed word order—typically SVO (Subject–Verb–Object). Uzbek, conversely, is agglutinative, with grammatical relations conveyed through affixes, allowing relatively free word order. As a result, interpreters frequently need to restructure sentences during SI. For example, the English sentence "The committee approved the new project yesterday" becomes "Qo'mita kecha yangi loyihani ma'qulladi" in Uzbek, requiring full reordering based on Uzbek syntactic norms (Wang et al., 2025).

Such syntactic discrepancies significantly increase the interpreter's processing load (Pöchhacker, 2016). Since the predicate in English typically appears earlier than in Uzbek, interpreters often face the "lag effect"—they cannot complete the target sentence until they hear the verb (Yang et al., 2025). Therefore, SI from English into Uzbek

necessitates continuous syntactic reconstruction, high-level working memory use, and predictive processing.

This article examines the nature of these syntactic challenges and proposes effective strategies for managing them during simultaneous interpreting.

SVO vs. SOV: Word Order as a Source of Cognitive Load

English follows a strict SVO order, whereas Uzbek allows flexible SOV or alternative patterns due to morphological marking. Because syntactic function in English is largely encoded through word order, interpreters must reorganize sentence components during SI (Hamid, 2025).

Example

English: "The results of the competition were announced yesterday."

Uzbek: "Natijalar kecha e'lon qilindi."

The Uzbek version places the predicate at the end and simplifies the English passive voice. Such restructuring must be performed within milliseconds. The interpreter often delays production until the predicate appears, relying on predictive inference to manage the lag.

In emphatic constructions such as "What we need is change," the interpreter must anticipate the focus element before the English verb emerges:

→ "Biz uchun aynan o'zgarishlar zarur."

This method, termed cognitive inversion, requires placing the logical focus first in Uzbek, while preserving emphasis semantically rather than syntactically.

Inversion as a Stylistic Challenge

English frequently uses inversion to express emphasis or stylistic nuance:

"Never have I seen such progress."

Rendering this into Uzbek requires lexical, not syntactic, emphasis:

→ "Men hech qachon bunday taraqqiyotni ko'rmaganman."

Here, emphatic meaning is transferred through lexical markers ("hech qachon"), illustrating a focus shift from syntax to semantics (Chernov, 2004). Although meaning is preserved, emotional intensity may shift, forcing interpreters to manage prosody and intonation consciously.

Gerunds, Participles, and Absolute Constructions

English gerundial, participial, and absolute clauses frequently encode temporal, causal, or conditional relations implicitly. Uzbek, however, typically expresses these relations explicitly.

Examples:

"Having finished the report, she left the office."

→ "Hisobotni tugatib bo'lgach, u idoradan chiqdi."

"Knowing her, I did not believe a word he said about Jane."

→ "Jeynni bilganligim uchun, uning aytgan gaplariga ishonmadim."

These operations represent syntactic explicitation—implicit logical relations in English are made explicit in Uzbek (Wang et al., 2025).

Subordination and Complex Sentences

English commonly employs noun clauses, relative clauses, and adverbial clauses. Because these elements often occur later in the sentence, interpreters may not immediately know the semantic core of the message.

"He believes that what they proposed yesterday is not acceptable."

During SI, the Uzbek output must be linearized:

→ "Uning fikricha, ular kecha taklif qilgan narsa maqbul emas."

This reflects a linearization strategy, transforming complex English subordination into a more manageable Uzbek syntactic sequence.

Syntactic Asymmetry and Latency

Syntactic asymmetry refers to mismatches between the structural order of source and target

languages (Wang et al., 2025). Because the semantic nucleus (verb) in English precedes modifiers, whereas in Uzbek it typically follows, interpreters experience syntactic latency—a delay needed to hold information in working memory before producing the target sentence.

Example:

"The proposal which the committee discussed yesterday was approved by the board."

→ "Qo'mita kecha muhokama qilgan taklif boshqaruv kengashi tomonidan ma'qullandi."

This requires the interpreter to temporarily store multiple syntactic units, increasing cognitive load.

Morphosyntactic Transformation of Verbal Forms

English analytic verbal forms—is being done, has been completed, will have been approved—often require morphologically condensed Uzbek equivalents.

"The task has been being discussed for weeks."

→ "Vazifa bir necha haftadan beri muhokama qilinmoqda."

This constitutes morpho-semantic compression, a necessary cognitive adaptation in Uzbek SI (Yang et al., 2025).

Strategies for Overcoming Syntactic Challenges

1. Segmentation (Chunking)

Breaking complex sentences into meaningful units significantly reduces working memory load.

"According to the latest report, which was published yesterday by the Ministry of Finance, the economy has grown by 5%."

→

1. So'nggi hisobotga ko'ra,
2. U Moliya vazirligi tomonidan kecha e'lon qilingan,
3. Iqtisodiyot 5 foizga o'sgan.

Chunking facilitates syntactic clarity and supports interpreters' predictive modeling.

2. Anticipation (Predictive Processing)

Interpreters must infer upcoming verbs or clause types before they are spoken (Pöchhacker, 2016).

"The committee, after several weeks of deliberation, finally decided to…"

→ "Qo'mita bir necha haftalik muhokamadan so'ng…"

This strategy relies on syntactic projection and cognitive modeling.

3. Stepwise Translation (Interim Formula Translation)

Used for long, multi-clause sentences when full syntactic reconstruction is impossible.

"He said that the new policy, which had been discussed by the government, would take effect next month."

→ "U aytishicha, yangi siyosat… hukumat tomonidan muhokama qilingan edi va kelasi oy kuchga kiradi."

This reduces memory strain and preserves semantic accuracy.

4. Reordering and Transformational Techniques

Effective training exercises include:

Delayed shadowing

Paraphrasing under time pressure

Simulated SI drills

Such techniques build neural automatisation (Hamid, 2025).

Conclusion

Syntactic differences between English and Uzbek represent one of the most significant challenges in simultaneous interpreting. The interpreter must constantly manage word order disparities, inversion, subordination, multi-component verb

forms, and implicit logical relations. These challenges heighten cognitive load, requiring interpreters to rely on scientifically grounded strategies such as segmentation, anticipation, simplification, explicitation, and transposition.

Mastering these strategies enhances syntactic flexibility, working memory efficiency, and predictive processing—ultimately raising the quality of English–Uzbek SI to international standards and contributing to the advancement of Uzbekistan's multilingual communication and interpretation scholarship.

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