

# Knowledge management in the simultaneous interpretation of LSP conferences

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# Introduction

- Name: Martin Will
- Profession: Conference interpreter
- Main occupation: Finishing PHD
- Aim of this presentation: Give an overall view on dissertation; only main results as official submission not done yet
- First presentation, then questions.

# Structuration

- 0. Problem statement, object & aim
- 1. State of the art
- 2. Theoretical foundations
- 3. Own model (formal problem solution)
- 4. Theoretical method for putting the model into practice
- 5. Verification of the method
- 6. Summary & perspectives for further research
- 7. Literature & appendixes

# 0. Problem statement – professional factors

- High fluctuation of clients and topics is typical for the profession of conference interpreters (CI)
- „Technical“ conferences important part in the job distribution; on these assignments, CIs are called to work for experts with a common and specific knowledge at least partially unknown to outsiders/CI (LSP conferences).
- Normally no time/resources for CI to acquire same knowledge as the audience.
- Paradox Nr. 1: Laypersons (CI) work for experts

# 0. Problem statement – working parameters for Interpretation

- Simultaneous reception & production of texts
- Spontaneous, unpredictable utterances by participants
- Translation cannot be interrupted, strong dependence from performance of the speaker.
- Paradox Nr. 2: Paid result of the CIs work (simultaneous interpretation) has to be produced when conditions are most problematic.

# 0. Problem statement – example from real life

- The survey was done as a mail-out questionnaire with a **telephone follow-up**. It was a sample group of one-thousand-five-hundred-and-fourteen corporations out of approximately a hundred-and-sixty-seven-thousand-ninehundred-and-fifty-one Canadian-controlled **private corporations** in Ontario. Now, what this means is that these are companies that are not traded on the stock exchange. Therefore the ownership of them is controlled by the actual **owner-managers**, although they're not necessarily small businesses, and in fact some of the ones in our study were quite large.
- Wir sa traten brieflich an die Unternehmen heran und\_s waren insgesamt eintausendfünfhundertvierzehn Unternehmen von insgesamt hundertsevenundsechzigtausendneunhundert **Familienunternehmen**, die unter kanadische Kontrolle stehen. **Das bedeutet, dass das Unternehmen sind, die n-nicht an der Börse notieren, die Eigen** das Eigentum ist mehrheitlich in den Händen **der Familie**, wengleich das oft keine Kleinunternehmen sind. Manche der Unternehmen in der Studie sind relativ gross. ...

# 0. Problem statement – analysis of the target text

- **Missing terms** in German version
- **Wrong link** between various terms (owner-manager/ Familienunternehmen/private corporation/ börsennotiert).
- Result: Comprehensibility of interpretation threatened.

# 0. Problem statement – basics for an adequate interpretation of the example

- Adequate interpretation depends on „right“ LSP knowledge:
  - Individual term knowledge: To know the corresponding denomination for *owner-manager (Eigentümer-Unternehmer)* as well as the content of the two concepts in both languages.
  - Structured term knowledge: To know the link between individual terms by placing them into a structured relationship. This would make an erroneous assignation like „private corporation“ – „Familienunternehmen“ – „Börsennotation“ – „owner-manager“ impossible.
- ..which has to be used in the „right“ way:

*Individual and structured term knowledge must be gathered according to the specific working parameters of simultaneous interpretation. It must be constituted in such a way that it can be used at the latest when it is needed for a specific interpretation.*

# 0. Object & aim

## **Object** of the PhD project:

The LSP-knowledge contained in oral and written conference texts that has to be known or constituted in order to assure an adequate simultaneous interpretation of the related conferences.

## **Aim:**

To describe what knowledge structures have to be assembled by the CI and how these structures are to be constituted and used according to a method suitable to the specific working parameters of simultaneous interpretation.

# 1. State of the art (only simultaneous interpreting)

- Interpreter is mainly considered a specialist for producing a linguistic result (constitution of the „correct sense“ is more important than „correct terminology“ which is more important than specialized knowledge in a specific field of knowledge).
- Necessary knowledge is gathered in different preparatory stages (before, during and after a specific conference).
- It is stored in glossaries.
- Interpreter seen as „last generalist“ (sort of human encyclopedia) constantly up to date.

# 1. State of the art - deficits

- Conflicting & unclear approaches (terminology can also be regarded as specialized knowledge etc.)
- Claims not differentiated. What „knowledge“??
- No clear indications about content and organization of preparatory stages, sources, „raw-material“, how the input is used etc.
- Glossaries not suitable: Polysemy, do not contain specialized knowledge.
- Conclusion (paradox No. 3): No clarity.

# 1. State of the art: Intuitive solution

- Problem statement centered around 2 aspects:
- **What LSP** knowledge structures does a CI need?
- And **How** does he/she constitute them?
- Tentative solution: To describe the „What“ and „How“. Result leads to a method for the implementation of the knowledge management for CIs in LSP conferences.

## 2. Theoretical foundations

- 1) Model for the description of individual terms within texts (Gerzymisch-Arbogast).
- 2) Model for the integration of individual terms into larger systematically organized structures (knowledge systems) (Mudersbach).
- 3) Model for the description of conditions under which these LSP entities can be constituted and used for simultaneous interpreting (Will).
- 1+2 = „WHAT“, 3 = „HOW“.

# 3. Own solution

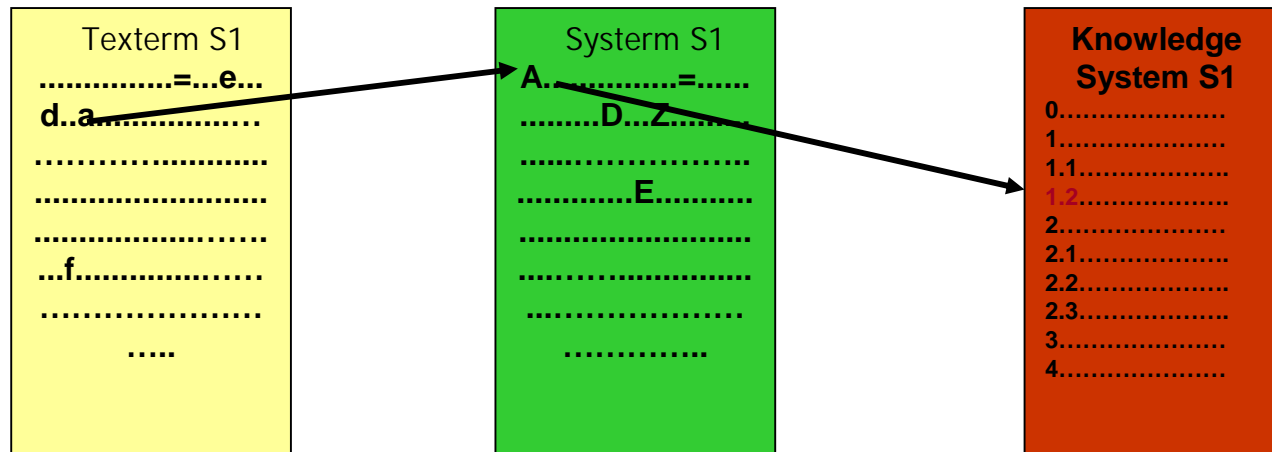
- Considers that LSP knowledge appears at 2 levels: Isolated In individual texts (f. i. conference texts) and embedded in a coherent and structured context within reference texts (f. i. databases, handbooks, encyclopedia).
- Starting point for the knowledge management are always individual texts; the terms which they contain are to be interpreted holistically as single elements of an overall structure (knowledge system).
- Precondition: The conceptual content must be clear for the recipient (CI). This may imply the use of reference texts.
- A meaningful assignation implies a differentiation of the relevant knowledge systems. This is achieved by placing the individual terms into a structured functional hierarchy. Its granularity depends on the source texts and the individual knowledge of each CI.
- Bond between an individual term and its position in a holistically structured knowledge system is considered as the basic knowledge element for understanding and producing LSP texts (Structured Terminological knowledge Entity – *TKE*)

# 3. Own solution

conference text

reference text

knowledge system



**a** : denomination

= e..d..f : conceptual content

**A** : denomination

= D..Z..E : conceptual content

**1.2** : term-level within a knowledge system (Subholeme)

Fig. 1: Structured Terminological Knowledge Entity - monolingual

# 3. Own solution

- Important preconditions:
- - CI has to work out the relevant knowledge systems in departure and target language.
- - The individual elements within each knowledge system have to be compared as to their conceptual content and their function.
- - The constitution of the knowledge systems must be done in a rational and relevant way according to the conditions/tasks of each stage.
- - The entities which are constituted must be usable for the production of the target text (interpretation).

# 3. Own solution

Strukturierte TWE AS			Daten- verwaltung	Strukturierte TWE ZS		
WS	System	Texterm		WS	System	Texterm
Benennung:	Benennung:	Benennung:	Gemeinsamer „Bereich“/ Konferenz bezug	Benennung:	Benennung:	Benennung:
Hole- stufung –u. Benennung:	Begriff:	Begriff/Ko- okkurrenzen		Hole- stufung –u. Benennung:	Begriff:	Begriff/Ko- okkurrenzen
Quelle:	Quelle:	Quelle:	Identitätsgrad AS/ZS Begriff/Funktion	Quelle:	Quelle:	Quelle:
	Abweichung/ Kontamination			Abweichung/ Kontamination		

Fig. 2: Recall-oriented data model: Structured TKE in departure and target language

# 3. Own solution

- Knowledge management stages:
- I. Preparation of assignment
- II. Conference
- IIa. Preparation of individual interpretation
- IIb. Individual interpretation
- IIc. Revision of individual interpretation
- III. Revision of the assignment

### 3. Own model – „How“?

- I. No restrictions due to text reception and production factors: Differentiated constitution of knowledge systems according to existing departure text and subjective interest of CI. Progression: Texterm, System, Holon, target Holon. All constituted entities are structured TKEs in departure and target language.
- II. Limitations increase with approaching individual interpretation:
- IIa. Selective completion of existing knowledge through constitution of new (partial) entities: If possible structured TKEs, otherwise parts of it (to be completed as soon as possible).
- IIb. Recall of existing structures (or „emergency solution“).
- IIc. Revision of deficits from IIb (with means of IIa)
- III. No restrictions due to text reception and production factors: completion of partial structures constituted in stage II into structured TKEs within existing and/or new knowledge systems (see stage I).

## 4. Theoretical method for putting the model into practice

- = Application of the constraints/aims of the different stages to the constitution of TKEs.
- Method consists in 31 steps distributed over 5 individual stages.

# 5. Verification of the method

- Based on „Pöchhackerkorpus“ = Transcripts of authentic and coherent discourse texts produced during an international conference on SMEs (ICSB-conference: 24-26.6 1991 in Vienna) as well as the conference documentation used for preparation (provided by Franz Pöchhacker).
- 5 texts: 3 for stage I; 1 for stage IIa, 1 for stage IIb. Stage IIc and III based on stage IIa & IIb.
- All departure texts in English, produced by native speakers.

## 6. Summary and perspectives for further work

- First complete and coherent description of knowledge management for CI: Content, sources, method, conditions.
- Clear cut positions regarding previous (controversial) claims within interpreting practice and literature.
- Possibility for improving CIs performance (to be checked out in an empirical investigation)
- Didactical usage.
- Implementation via the computer.

# The end

- ..for now....
- Thanks for listening!