Effect of prosody awareness training on the quality of consecutive interpreting between English and Farsi

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Chapter two

Interpreting and its pedagogy: Some prominent issues

Abstract

Interpreting is regarded as a useful communication device when two persons (A and B) who do not speak each other's language, want to exchange information through spoken language. The technique involves the help of a third person, a go-between or interpreter, who speaks and understands both languages. Speaker A produces a stretch of speech, which the interpreter then summarizes and translates into language B. Speaker B's response, is then transferred by the interpreter into language A, and so on. Interpreting studies have been set up to provide a model of the interpreting mechanism, which in turn may be used to set up and improve training programs for student interpreters. When interpreting, the interpreter has to keep (a semantic representation of) the input speech in memory, while formulating the equivalent as a suitable output in the source language. Research in the area of interpreting has not been enough and this field has not flourished the way it should. The curriculum of interpreting studies needs to be modified in order to meet the needs of interpreter trainees so that it can pave the way for training the qualified next generation of interpreters. One of these changes can be in the materials which are instructed at the interpreter training programs. A comprehensive curriculum should be designed such that contrastive phonetics of the working languages is included in it. Establishing comprehensive rules and guidelines for speech production and teaching of prosody is difficult compared with the specific second language learner problem in pronunciation which can be easily corrected in second language learning classes. The nature of prosodic features is inherently complicated and because of the complexity of prosodic feature errors, no specific teaching methodology deals with them appropriately and most of the teaching methods are focused on segmental aspects in second language learner's pronunciation problems. The choice of methodology in the teaching of prosody can be an important aspect as well. The choice of methodology should target individual differences between learners in different contexts. So, it demands that instructors, who are the models in most cases for the interpreter trainees, be conscious and proficient enough in the perception and production of prosodic features of the language(s) that they are working with.

Keywords: Prosody, awareness training, memory, curriculum, interpreting studies, Farsi sound system

2.1   Introduction[1]

On the etymology of interpreting Pöchhacker (2004) states that interpreting was prevalent in some societies before writing and translation. In most of the Indo-European languages interpreting has been used by words that etymologically they are different with translation (Pöchhacker 2004). Mahmoodzadeh (1992) defines interpreting as presenting in the target language the closest possible meaning of what is uttered in the spoken source language, either simultaneously or consecutively, preserving the intention of speaker. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 83) define interpreting as oral translation of speech or text.

Interpreting differs from translation in a number of important respects. First, interpreters should be highly proficient oral communicators. Second, in contradistinction to translators, who have the time to edit the translation, interpreters should render the message on the spot without having time to edit or review their formulations. Third, interpreters should be proficient and qualified enough to do their job without consulting any persons, reference works and other tools whereas this latter practice is possible in translation. Fourth, interpreters are always in the process of making on-the- spot decisions and taking communicative risks. Therefore, they are under a higher level of stress when doing their job compared with translators (Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997).

Interpreting does have different dimensions in practice which should be studied according to their specific features. Pöchhacker (2004) looked at this aspect and pointed out that interpreting cannot be called oral translation of a message. He argues that if we do that, then interpreting would be excluded from signed languages. He stated that by invoking the distinguishing property of 'immediacy', interpreting it can be differentiated from translation. The other aspect in interpreting would be that interpreters do not have time to process the incoming message so that they have to do their job on the spot. In this regard Pöchhacker (2004: 11) holds that through giving importance to the immediacy of text processing, interpreting would be a kind of translation that transfers a message in the target language through a one-time oral (or signed, as the case may be) presentation. According to Kade (1968), interpreting is a kind of translation in which the input (source language) text is presented just once and the output in the target language is processed and rendered under such time pressure that there would be no time for correcting (reported in Pöchhacker 2004). Seleskovitch (1978) sees interpreting as not being oral translation of words; rather it uncovers a meaning and makes it explicit for others. She believes that there are three stages in the act of interpreting:

1. Auditory perception: in this stage, the interpreter attempts to comprehend the input message. This is done through a complicated process of analysis.
2. Quick discarding of lexis and retaining concepts and ideas that represent the input message: in this stage, the interpreter should act properly and promptly, otherwise

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[1] This chapter is based on Yenkimaleki, M. (2015). Pedagogy of interpreting reviewed: Some prominent issues. *Scientific Bulletin: Educational Sciences Series Journal,* 1, 52−69 and Yenkimaleki, M. (2016). Why prosody awareness training is necessary in training future interpreters. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 2, 256−261.

concepts would get discarded and only some scattered words and structures would remain.

3. Immediate production of target language utterances: in this stage, the meaning representation of the input message is reformulated using the vocabulary and grammatical structures of the target language.

In simultaneous interpreting these three processes take place at the same time. In consecutive interpreting the processes mentioned under (1) and (2) are carried out simultaneously as well; it is only the third process that is delayed until the speaker finishes the chunk of text to be translated. As explained in chapter 1, keeping the meaning representation of the input speech in memory until the speaker reaches the end of the chunk, puts a heavy burden on the interpreter.

There are a lot of studies about different aspects in interpreting focusing on theories of interpretation but the pedagogy of interpreting has not has looked in any depth at what goes on in the interpreter training settings. Gonzalez-Davies is one of the few scholars who do pay attention to classroom practice in interpreter training, specifically memory training (Gonzalez-Davies 2005). Previous studies mostly focus on different dimensions of interpreting itself and do not consider the classroom variables in interpreter training. A perspective which pays attention to both aspects is felt necessary (Gonzalez-Davies 2005). Gonzalez-Davies also emphasizes the teaching techniques in interpreter training. She points out that after the pedagogical debate which resulted in the communicative approach in the 1970s and 1980s, the methods of foreign language teaching have undergone radical changes (Candlin 1978, Brumfit & Johnson 1979). Gonzalez-Davies (2005) also raises some fundamental issues regarding the number of academic settings which train instructors in interpreting studies, the familiarity of instructors in the field of interpreting with pedagogical approaches and principles of training interpreters, the syllabus of interpreting, the materials of teaching in this field, the procedure of applying teaching methods, different teaching methods for undergraduate as opposed to postgraduate studies, the people who can actually teach interpreting, and assessment procedures in interpreting. She concludes that these issues cannot be resolved unless more empirical studies are done on these aspects.

Researchers in the field of interpreting and those are train interpreters do not often collaborate. In this regard, Gonzalez-Davies holds that teachers, theorists and professional interpreters are three parties who could help interpreter trainees. She states that creativity in interpreting cannot be taught but interpreting can be systematically instructed so that, by focusing on theoretical issues, the overall quality of interpreting can be enhanced. There are different views regarding innateness of virtues (e.g., Weischedel 1977) or non-innateness of virtues for interpreters (Gonzalez-Davies 2005). Hervey and Higgins (1992) look at this aspect from the macro-level and consider the inborn talent and the acquired skills in interpreting by asserting that interpreters should take advantage of their inborn talent as well as their learned skills in interpreting. There would be two perspectives for those who are not sure of formal teaching of interpreting. The interpreter trainees who have an inborn talent for interpreting easily develop full proficiency and those who do not have inborn talent for interpreting learn some degree of proficiency through formal teaching in interpreting.

Niska (2005) holds that there are a lot of academic settings which train interpreters as the need for the profession of interpreting has recently increased. Most of these institutions are located in Europe but there are some universities and interpreting schools elsewhere in the world as well.

2.2   A typology of interpreting

There are several types of interpreting that can be distinguished depending on the context in which they occur (Dukate 2009). It should be mentioned that there is a great deal of overlap between some types of interpreting. Anderson (2002) categorized not only different types of interpreting from early sociological analysis but he also presented a three-part interaction model for interpreting, in which a bilingual interpreter has a vital role in mediating between two monolingual interactants. Pöchhacker (2004) pointed out that this is commonly known as bilateral interpreting or dialogue interpreting. Both these terms are closely associated with 'liaison interpreting'. While context-dependent interpreting foregrounds the directionality of interpreting, dialogue interpreting highlights the mode of communicative exchange (Pöchhacker 2004).

International conference interpreting, which is nowadays the most prominent manifestation of interpreting, emerged as a recognized specialty in the early twentieth century, when official French-English bilingualism in the League of Nations was first introduced in international conferencing (Pöchhacker 2004). International conference interpreting came about in order to follow the policy of linguistic equality among the nations in the European Union. Now it is practical in virtually any field of activity including multilateral diplomacy, for which it was initially introduced. It is therefore no longer associated with one particular institutional setting or context (Pöchhacker 2004).

The two best known manners of interpreting that are discerned most are simultaneous and consecutive, which will be discussed in the next section more in detail. It seems appropriate at this point to draw a line of distinction between the two terms 'interpreting' and 'interpretation'. While the term 'interpretation' has often been used interchangeably with interpreting, some writers and researchers insist that the former term should be avoided in this context (Mahmoodzadeh 1992). Keeping a distinction between these terms is of particular importance in the case of court interpreting, among other fields, where interpretation in the sense of 'conveying one's understanding of meaning and intentions' is an activity which interpreters are strictly asked to avoid (Pöchhacker 2004).

2.3   Modes of interpreting: consecutive and simultaneous interpreting

Before the 1920s, it was not necessary for interpreters to make a terminological distinction between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. After the 1920s, however, technical equipment was developed which enabled interpreters to work simultaneously so that from that moment onwards, consecutive and simultaneous modes of interpreting were distinguished (Pöchhacker 2004).

Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) define consecutive interpreting as one of the two basic modes of interpreting. Consecutive interpreting is the process by which the interpreter listens to a (sometimes fairly lengthy) section of speech delivered in a source language (while sometimes taking notes, serving as a memory aid rather than being a shorthand transcription of all that is said) and then producing an oral rendition of the same message in the target language.[2] Jones (2014: 5) defines consecutive interpreting as "the interpreter listening to the totality of a speaker's comments, or at least a significant passage, and then reconstituting the speech with the help of notes." Some speakers prefer to talk just for a few sentences and then invite interpretation, in which case the interpreters may rely solely on their memory. On the other hand, in simultaneous interpreting, the participants wear headphones, and the interpreter renders the speaker's words into the target language as the latter continues speaking. The interpreter usually works in a sound-proofed booth that enables everyone involved to focus optimally on the task without the distraction of hearing another language. In order for ideas to be put into words, they must first get clarified in minds. Another person's ideas when encoded, without having the possibility of repeating them word for word (which is what normally does not happen in interpreting), must be put into a clear, structured analysis by the interpreter. To do that, the individual ideas that are expressed by the speaker must be fully understood by the interpreter (Jones 2014). Understanding (decoding the source language), analyzing (computing meaning), and re-expressing (encoding in the target language), are therefore, respectively, the three fundamental components of an interpreter's work.

2.4   Pedagogy of interpreting

Interpreting as a field of scientific inquiry is understudied and has not flourished the way it should. Ma (2003) points out that interpreting as a recently grown-up profession has been recognized in international communities. Interpreters assist people to overcome to language barriers and mediate between people from different communities in their communication. Therefore, on order to accomplish their tasks, they have to have special talents and learned skills, and so the skills which are necessary for qualified interpreters have received considerable attention. According to an analysis of interpreting itself, all the authorities in this field agree that the final goal of teaching interpretation would be to train required skills for interpreters. Looking at the social context and the setting of interpreting, Pöchhacker (2004) mentions that if interpreting is viewed from a historical perspective, the most labeling factor for it would be the social context where the interpreting was performed. In the past, interpreting was conducted when different linguistic and cultural communities got into contact with each other for one reason or another. Moreover, it was used intra-socially when mediation of communication was necessary in heterolingual societies. Considering the ultimate goal of interpretation and its different dimensions, Musyoka and Karanja (2014: 196) claim that the final goal of interpretation would be for the message to have the same impact on the audience of the target language as it was supposed to have for the audience in the source language. Interpretation is a multi-faceted phenomenon

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[2] Consecutive interpreting is very typically used in court. Court interpreting is considered a specialist field on its own (Gallez 2014).

which has a sender, a channel and a recipient – like other types of communication. Moreover, they argue that the most important principle in interpreting would be the language proficiency since they believe that interpreting is beyond the rendering of words from source language into target language. It needs getting the meaning of the speech and perceiving the sense of message before transferring it to the target audience. So, it demands that the interpreter should be completely familiar with subject of the message and by considering the context, take advantage of not only the verbal information but also any other types of information in communicating meaning to the audience.

Garzone (2000), looking at the growing field of interpreting and problems associated with it, points out that studies in the field of interpreting focused on different dimensions of interpreting – including information processing, memorization, note-taking, lateralization, psychomotoric and neural activity in interpreting and cultural aspects of it. Binhua and Lei (2009) pay attention to the pedagogy of interpreting and its research challenges. They believe that the growing field of interpreting programs made different scholars more interested than in the past in research in methodological issues in this area and in trying to develop a comprehensive curriculum and syllabi for training interpreters. In some countries this current wave has caused the curriculum of interpreting studies to undergo modifications so that it can meet the needs of interpreting programs. Moreover, Binhua and Lei (2009) argue that interpreting these days is a job with considerable social prestige; they assert that good socio-economic conditions including advantageous academic settings have paved the way to enhance the position of interpreter training programs.

Some scholars, however, believe that just modifying the interpreting curriculum is not enough and that other types of training are also necessary. Kornakov (2000), discussing other dimensions of interpreter training, such as psycho-linguistic training, points out that in training future interpreters the psycholinguistic aspects should be taken into account since self-training and self-preparation would be the most important part of the work. The instructor can help the trainees through guidelines and exercises which can be advantageous in doing their job in future. Kalina (2000) examined the training problems some instructors have faced. Instructors felt that methods and strategies in order to accomplish their goal should be research-based but found no answers to practical questions. Accordingly, Kalina (2000) asserted the need of empirical studies to resolve problems associated with choices to be made in interpreter training, especially studies on the effectiveness of different methodologies in training interpreters.

In summary, the different points of view summarized above converge on the idea that the interpreting curriculum needs to be modified in order to meet the needs of students so that it can make them qualified interpreters. One of these changes concerns the length of interpreter training. The training period at present in Iran is in most of the cases too long. Most students do not show any interest to enter into training settings since they think that it would take a long time for them to graduate and find a job in their field. Therefore, they prefer to embark on other, related fields. Another aspect requiring change would be the quality of training which needs to be reconsidered and modified. In some domains of interpreting at this time there is no training of prosodic features and differences therein between the source and target language involved in the

interpreting task. A third aspect can be the syllabus of instructors in different classes which needs to be studied to see which points and domains function better compared to other ones. Therefore, according to the nature of learning, sound and logical decisions should be taken in order to get good results.

The following points should receive more attention in interpreting studies. Firstly, a comprehensive curriculum should be designed while cooperating with scholars in this field. As Sawyer (2004) pointed out, the most important problem in doing studies on the interpreting curriculum would be unreliable document sources (Pym 1998). Collecting these documents from different academic settings and schools of interpreting studies is so difficult because in most of the cases it is unknown where the documents are archived. Secondly, implementation of the new curriculum should be done with more attention to training settings. In this regard, Sawyer (2004) asserted that the complexity of curriculum design and perceiving this issue by practitioners should be taken into account. Expertise in different dimensions should be available when implementing those aspects and there should be reliable assessment procedures to see whether the curriculum is effective or not. Thirdly, students' performance should be evaluation in different universities according an educational plan with careful attention to all aspects of learning. As for evaluation of students' performance a new policy should be applied. As new software and technologies have become available, the evaluation can be done more precisely than before. However, the evaluation should not include just the performance of students but the entire curriculum and its implementation should also be taken into account.

2.5   The interpreting process

Some scholars look at the immediacy and mental aspect of interpreting and they believe that the processes in the mind of interpreters cannot be observed. They give the example of moving leaves when the wind blows. People can see the movement of leaves and based on that they understand the wind blows. It would be the same in interpreting: people can see the mediation of meaning between two parties but not what goes on in the mind of interpreters and their actual mental processes (Gile, 1988, 1999, Moser-Mercer 1997, 2000, Pöchhacker 2004, Roy 1999). In the interpreting process there are different variables which are all interrelated. The first important element would be concentrating on the source message in order to perceive and analyze it (Colonomos 1992). In this stage the competence of the interpreter and his technical knowledge of the subject matter would be of utmost importance. Of course, the culture and environment in which the interpreting takes place can have a determining role in the transfer of the message.

Ma (2003) emphasizes the role of the interpreting process by mentioning different aspects which are necessary in interpreting. She pointed out that the interpreting process starts with a perception procedure, which then goes on to a decoding procedure. She believes that in the perception stage through auditory and visual perception, the interpreter perceives the message. She states that in this stage listening ability and the setting impact on the quality of interpretation. Then, in the decoding stage, the interpreter extracts the information in linguistic and non-linguistic codes by processing

the stored information in the perceptual auditory storage. In the third stage the message is reproduced. Here the factors which have an impact on the quality of message would be the source, the speaker, the background knowledge and the linguistic competence of the interpreter. Ma asserted further that listening in interpreting is a more complicated process than general listening since the settings and the physical context where the communication is done influence interpretation. Time management and constraint could make the interpreter render the message at a furious pace and noise in the context of interpreting makes the perception of the message difficult for the interpreter (Ma 2003). Then she goes ahead and talks about the recording procedure, which may involve note-taking. The fourth stage is the encoding stage, which would be activation of relevant knowledge in the mind to transfer the message to the audience. Here the choice of words and appropriate structures would be of utmost importance. The fifth and last stage of interpreting process would be the expressing stage. At this stage the interpreter expresses his/her message with the chosen structure to the audience. Self-esteem and self-confidence of the interpreter play a very important role in this stage.

Therefore, the interpreting process starts with perception of the message. Interpreters should be skillful enough to understand the message in the source language, which demands their familiarity with the cultural nuances, setting of interpretations and the type of participants in decoding the message. The first and second steps are of utmost importance for interpreter trainees so that they should develop strategies to perceive the message comprehensively. Then the interpreters should compute meaning with the exposure to the target language and activation of relevant knowledge in their mind to find appropriate equivalences according to the genre of participants. And, in the final stage, they would encode meaning of the perceived message with the appropriate structure and style according to the type audience and settings.

2.6   Omission in interpreting

Generally, the norm is that interpreters should have a complete transfer of the source text to the audience, which does not leave any room for omission. This issue has received a lot of attention in typologies of errors and error analysis. But we know that in some cases omission of some aspects in interpretation enhances the quality of interpreting and as a result communication of message is done properly. Pym (2008) explicitly pointed out that omission, quality of message and the context in which the communication is done, are related. He stated that the high quality in transferring of the message by the interpreters would not be tantamount to transferring all the points in the source text. He pointed out that the quality of interpreting would be to what extent the communication act has achieved it goals. Supporting this perspective, Jones (2014) pointed out that interpreters in some situations are not in a position to render exact and complete messages. So, in such situations interpreters may omit part of the source text in order to relay a more coherent message to the audience. Therefore, in some cases, interpreters intentionally omit part of the source language because they want to transfer the gist of the message so that the audience can perceive the message easily. When this happens, the communication of the message between interpreters and the audience can be achieved comprehensively. We should know that in interpreting the important aspects and essentials are preferred over the completeness of message. However, the

omission issue in interpreting, which is the incomplete form of transfer of message from source language to target language, has been a controversial one. Sometimes omission is considered as an error but in other cases it is looked at as a technique which interpreters resort to in complicated situations, in cases in which they suffer from cognitive overload. Pym (2008: 95) differentiates between low risk omission and high risk omission and he claims that low risk omission would be a technique used by interpreters to manage the time they have to transfer the message; anything which is not perceivable, irrelevant and extra should not be interpreted. Thus, in these cases omission can be a technique which makes the interpretation more coherent. Gile (1995: 173) states that, generally, there would be some points that jeopardize interpretation. He summarizes them as follows: 1. High rate of delivery of language, 2. High density of information, 3. Strong accents, and 4. Incorrect grammar. Research shows that there is a positive relationship between delivery rate and omission by interpreters to the effect that faster delivery makes interpreters omit more redundancies of language.

In some cases the interpreters indeed resort to omitting some part of the message in the terminal stage of the interpreting process because of cognitive overload of their memory or due to fatigue. Whatever the reason, what is of utmost importance, is that the gist of the message should be transferred to the audience and at the same time the interpreters should be loyal to the basic structure of the message. It should not be altered in any way so that there would be misunderstanding in the communication of the message. Considering all these aspects, it should be pointed here, the omission issue in interpreting did not enjoy enough research in the past because of the different cultural contexts. Yet, this issue demands much more investigation.

2.7   Input and output in interpreting

Yenkimaleki and Van Heuven (2013, 2016, 2017) looked at the procedure of the inter-preting itself and the role of memory in consecutive interpreting. In interpreting, the interpreter must keep a semantic representation of the input speech in memory, so as to provide acceptable output in the target language. The other aspect in interpreting and input processing would be the familiarity of interpreters with different dialects and pro-nunciations so that the interpreters may get the message easily and comprehensively. In this respect, Ma (2003) states that interpreters should be proficient enough to perceive the message on the spur of the moment, since the input to the interpreting process is spoken language: the physical sound stimulus evaporates long before the mediation is done. Since different parties in interpreting come from different situations, the pro-cedure of formulating their intentions and their pronunciation will differ from each other. This demands knowing the source and target language rules of pronunciation. There would be some cases that interpreters have to interpret for non-native speakers, whose pronunciation would be difficult to follow because of mother-tongue influence. It would an advantage for interpreters to be familiar with different accents and types of pronunciation so that it can help interpreters in finding clues in perceiving the message and mediation of meaning successfully. There are a lot of non-native English speakers in different organizations in international settings who have different accents and pronunciation types, for instance Nigerian English or Spanish English – to mention just

a few. Therefore, familiarity with a wide range of types of accents and pronunciations seems to be a necessity for interpreters to accomplish their job.

The other important point would be the type of input for interpreter trainees in order to train them skillfully to perform their jobs. In this respect Jest (2011) believes that the ideas of Krashen could be applied here. Krashen (1982, 1985, 1998) emphasized the role of input for second-language learners. Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis states that input should be available and provided to the second language learners, and that input should be a little beyond the learner's current second-language competence. He uses the (i+1) formula to express this idea and says that the provided input should be of interest and relevant to the learner and learner should consciously pay attention to it. Jezo (2011) stresses the importance of understanding the available input. He claimed that the most important aspect for interpreters is to perceive intentions and ideas and not to limit themselves to words. It is practically possible to render the speaker's ideas and meaning without having to perceive every single word he utters or to reproduce every single expression used in the source-language speech.

Obviously, then, input and its understandability for interpreter trainees are important aspects of interpreter training which should be emphasized in the interpreting curriculum. When training interpreters, the ultimate goal in the first stage is to train learners in developing listening comprehension skills so that they have the potential of perceiving the message. Instructors need to expose learners to a range of authentic listening experiences and by doing so they could become familiar with different dialects and pronunciation types. This can be done by using lots of different authentic listening materials, such as stories, conversations and descriptive talks, which incorporate a variety of languages, whether formal or informal, spoken by native speakers or foreign speakers and training awareness in prosodic features of the second language so that interpreter trainees can perceive the points easily. All these activities and tasks will familiarize learners with real and natural listening material, thus, to some extent, problems like message perception, pronunciation, speed, culture, etc., will no longer be a problem anymore. Therefore, it can be concluded that the different points of view which were elaborated here, can be of great help for future interpreter trainees and instructors in the field of interpreting to perceive the message and improve the quality of their work. Moreover, instructors should bear in mind that being familiar with recent theories of message perception and production makes them raise their consciousness to train their students more efficiently.

2.8   Prosody

Prosody is defined as the ensemble of properties of speech which cannot be predicted from the mere linear sequence of segments (i.e. vowels and consonants) that make up a spoken sentence (e.g., Van Heuven 1994, Van Heuven & Sluijter 1996, Nooteboom 1997, Gussenhoven 2015). This is essentially a negative definition which is echoed by traditional term 'suprasegmentals'. The most important linguistic functions of prosody are: (i) to signal the boundaries of (larger) linguistic units in the time domain, such as paragraphs, sentences and phrases, (ii) to qualify the larger domain as finished (terminal boundary, after statements and commands), or unfinished (non-terminal boundary, after non-final clauses and questions), and (iii) to present one element within the

domain as the focus of information (accentuation). Prosody literally means 'accompani-ment'. This etymology illustrates that the segmental structure basically defines the verbal content of the message (the words) as in printed text, while prosody imparts a musical layer to the utterances, e.g., the melody and rhythm (e.g., Van Heuven 1994).

Ahrens (2004) claims that prosody is a fundamental aspect of speech. Prosodic features are the necessary for the listener to process the incoming speech (cf. Cutler 1983). Prosody can be a representative of mental-cognitive processes of the speaker when he produces speech (cf. Goldman-Eisler 1958). Perception studies demonstrate that pros-odic information carried by pitch and intensity can be used for language identification in conditions where sound units and phonotactics have been degraded (e.g., Mary & Yegnanarayana 2008, Mori et al. 1999, Kometsu et al. 2001).

Gut et al. (2006), paying attention to the teaching of prosody, urge that the goal of instructors in different academic settings should be to make second-language learners perceive and produce the prosodic features of the second language adequately. The needs of second-language learners can be targeted as either 'comprehensible commun-icative abilities' or 'near-native like language competence'. Instructors take advantage of different methodologies such as teaching theoretical aspects of prosody, consciousness raising of language structure, production exercises and perceptual training. Considering the needs of the students in different academic settings and their expectations, different methodologies can be employed. Instructors have applied different theoretical insights and methods in their training courses and through experience they always try to modify their methods. Gut et al. (2006: 5) refer to the important current problem of prosody awareness training in practice and how this relates to current theoretical issues. They claim that teachers put theories in practice in the classroom and that researchers produce theories but the experiences of the two parties would be different. An exchange of ideas between the two parties, i.e. the practitioners and theory makers, is fundamentally necessary but there is no formal setting for professional groups con-cerned with second language prosody to exchange perspectives.

I suggest that the same problem exists in the interpreting curriculum in Iran. Instructors in most of the cases are not aware of how prosody helps in message perception and they do not pay attention to it in their working syllabus; and in the few cases where instructors recognize the importance of prosodic feature awareness training, they are not competent and skillful enough to teach their learners to apply prosodic feature awareness strategies in the classroom. So, this issue needs more investigation in different academic settings in order to pave the way for training qualified future interpreters.

2.9 Prosody awareness training and the quality of interpreting

Jilka (2007), writing on the difficulty and problems associated with teaching prosody and training awareness of the learners, points out that establishing comprehensive rules and guidelines for speech production and teaching of prosody is difficult compared with second-language learning problems in the area of segmental pronunciation, since the latter type can be easily corrected. Jilka also says that the nature of prosodic features

is inherently complicated. Because of the complexity of prosodic feature errors, no specific teaching methodology deals with them appropriately and most of the teaching methods are focused on segmental aspects in second language learner's pronunciation problems. Research and data analysis of prosodic feature awareness has its own problems/difficulties. Gut (2007), for instance, claims that second-language prosody research in most cases deals with non-native intonation. The other prosodic domains and their relationships have not been studied comprehensively so far. Generally, investigations do not relate their results to non-linguistic factors which impact on the acquisition of prosody in the second language. The impact of second language learners' native language on their second-language prosody has been the only explanatory point in second-language learning. Ahrens (2004: 10), in order to solve some of the problems of instructors in prosodic feature awareness, states that technology should be called upon to solve the problems associated with this aspect. She claims that through computer-aided analysis of voice characteristics and prosody we can get more information on the relationships between prosodic domains. She also states that, despite the helpfulness of computer-aided analysis of voice characteristics, specialists in language pedagogy should seek active cooperation with experts in voice and signal processing in order to advance the technology. In another study on the effect of computer-assisted prosody training, Hardison (2004) claims that the most important impact of computer-assisted training would be on the acquisition of second-language prosody and on the segmental accuracy of second-language learners' speech. Moreover, she states that when the second-language learners were exposed to prosodic cues in their training it frequently facilitated the recall of lexical content of sentences. This finding is in line with exemplar-based learning models, in which all the attended perceptual details of different tokens are stored as traces in memory. In this study the easiest points to recall were the prosodic and lexical content; these attracted most of the learners' attention. Hirschfeld and Trouvain (2006) urge that there should be lots of studies to develop suitable methods for teaching prosody to second-language learners. It demands recognition of phonetic prosodic deviations, application of exercises in training programs and developing a sound assessment procedure for the mastery of prosodic features by second-language learners. Moreover, they state that systematic awareness training of prosodic features yields better intelligibility in the foreign language, which was illustrated by teaching practice in different academic settings.

Gussenhoven (2015) investigated the role of phonological prominence in the perception of emphasis in structures, which should be correctly perceived by learners in order to understand the message. He pointed out that different factors have impact on listeners' impression of the significance of (parts of) utterances, which in turn influence the listeners' judgments of the importance of words or syllables in them.

Hirschfeld and Trouvain (2007) point out that in the materials which are used in teaching prosodic domains to second-language learners, the choice of exercises is not made appropriately. The materials do not meet the specific needs of the students in providing cues that might enhance prosodic awareness. They argue that the materials should differ according to the learners' first language, their proficiency in the second language, the age of the learners and their learning goals. Moreover, the issue of proficiency of instructors with respect to prosodic features would be another important aspect. In this regard, Hirschfeld and Trouvain (2007) point out that teacher training

programs do not pay attention to the mediation of phonetic and pedagogical basics in training teachers. The result of this insufficient attention to train teachers satisfactorily would be that teachers are not sufficiently qualified to teach phonetic aspects, especially in teaching prosodic domains of the second language to second-language learners.

Therefore, the teaching of prosody should be given a more prominent role in the interpreter training curriculum. Also, in this respect, appropriate materials and data should be compiled carefully according to the mother tongue of the learners and the analysis of the data should be done by professionals to diagnose the gaps in the teaching and students' learning processes. The choice of methods in the teaching of prosody can be an important aspect as well. It should target individual differences between learners in different contexts. Moreover, the instructors themselves should be proficient enough to implement the materials to be developed in the training of prosodic features for the interpreter trainees.

The basic hypothesis underlying the present thesis is that that the interpreting training curriculum that is in use in Iran needs modification and – depending on the non-native languages involved – prosodic feature awareness training should be included in the curriculum of the training for future interpreters. This, in turn, demands that instructors, who are the models for the interpreter trainees, be conscious and proficient enough in the perception and production of prosodic features of the language(s) that they are working with. The materials which are produced for use in interpreter training should include prosody teaching and tasks which make the learners raise their consciousness of prosodic differences between the native language (in our case Farsi) and the second working language (English).

Although omission of message elements is viewed negatively by most instructors, they should be aware that in some cases omitting part of the message may facilitate the mediation of meaning without compromising the recipient's understanding since the interpreters, who are continually under time pressure, cognitively overloaded and tired by concentrating on demanding task, are released from this pressure.

The issues which were elaborated in this chapter, demand more investigation in different societies according to specific contexts. The results of such studies can be of great help for instructors, practitioners, producers of course materials, researchers in the field of interpreting and for future interpreters to improve the quality of their work. To accomplish this, instructors should bear in mind that they need to enter into an intensive exchange of ideas about what they consider good practice with researchers in this area so that the latter may subject these ideas to rigorous experimental testing.

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