EXPLORING LECTURERS' PERCEPTION ON EAR-VOICE SPAN FACTORS IN PROFESSIONAL SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING AND ITS PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

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Received 03 February 2024
Revised 17 April 2024; Accepted 31 May 2024

Abstract: The study delves into the concept of Ear-Voice Span (EVS) - the time lag between the comprehension of the source utterance and its vocalization in the target language in professional simultaneous interpreting (SI). Through a blend of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including questionnaires and in-depth interviews, the study investigates the perceptions of interpreting teachers at a university under Vietnam National University, Hanoi on EVS factors, including speech delivery rate, information density, speech type, speaker's speaking style, language pairs, language direction, technical problems, memory, available information, linguistic resourcefulness. The diversity in the responses highlights the multifaceted nature of SI and underscores the need for a nuanced approach in interpreter training. Furthermore, the study reveals how the interpreting teachers integrate their understanding of EVS into their teaching practices, emphasizing the development of specific interpreting skills and exercises. The study contributes to the broader understanding of EVS in SI, particularly in the context of interpreter training. It offers valuable insights into effective training strategies that prepare interpreters for the dynamic demands of the profession.

Keywords: ear-voice span (EVS), lag, décalage, simultaneous interpreting (SI), teaching approach, interpreter training

1. Introduction

"The future of the Internet II" report by Anderson and Rainie (2006) speculated that "by 2020 innovators will build some sort of translating function into the internet to make it technologically possible for everyone to speak and write in their native languages while being easily understood by people across the globe (p. 14)." As of January 2024, this speculation is far from reality. Although the recent advent of AI chatbots, notably ChatGPT, holds the potential to significantly alter our ways of living and communicating, translation and interpreting remains the primary means for people who speak different languages to communicate. In other words, translation and interpreting are still essential for effective communication in multilingual settings. This necessity has spurred the development of translation and interpreting programmes in higher education and has given rise to an increasing body of research in the field.

Today, simultaneous interpreting "has become the default mode of interpretation in all

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international organizations and multilingual meetings" (Setton & Dawrant, 2005, p. 255). SI is the most sought-after mode in the interpreting market, owing to its time efficiency and the capability to accommodate multiple languages concurrently. A distinguishing feature of simultaneous interpreting is Ear-Voice Span (EVS), or décalage, an inherent lag critical to the process of simultaneous interpreting. The majority of research on EVS focuses on its duration, the associated mental processes, and various influencing factors (Defrancq, 2015). In the context of Vietnam, research related to the topic of EVS has been quite underrepresented. To address this overlooked area of research on interpreting, this paper explores the perceptions of interpreting teachers from the University of Languages and International Studies on factors influencing EVS and examines how these perceptions influence their pedagogical approaches.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Interpreting and Simultaneous Interpreting

Mahmoodzadeh (as cited in Dollerup & Loddegaard, 1992, p. 231) defined interpreting as "consisting of presenting in the target language, the exact meaning of what is uttered in the source language either simultaneously or consecutively, preserving the tone of the speaker." Similarly, Webber (1984, p. 3) described interpreting as "the oral transposition of an orally delivered message at a conference or meeting from a source language into a target language, performed in the presence of participants". Gentile (1996, p. 4) proposed a similar idea, stating that "interpreting is the oral transfer of message between speakers of different language." Although expressed differently, these definitions collectively underscore the fundamental nature of interpreting as the transfer and conveyance of ideas from one language to another in order to facilitate understanding among people who speak different languages.

Different approaches are available to categorize and label interpreting, one popular method being by working mode. According to Pochhacker (2003), it is useful to distinguish between consecutive interpreting, which occurs after the source language utterance, and simultaneous interpreting, which occurs as the source language text is being presented (p. 18). SI was pioneered during the International Labour Organization meetings in the mid-to-late 1920s, then decisively tested after the war at the Nuremberg Trials of 1945-6. Subsequently, SI was adopted at the United Nations, and other international forums.

The cognitive load for simultaneous interpreters is significantly higher than that for consecutive interpreters, as it involves listening, processing, and speaking all at once. According to Gile's Effort Models theory (1995), SI is challenging due to three main efforts: the listening and analysis effort, the production effort, and the memory effort. Interpreters must swiftly comprehend the source language, retain the information, reformulate it into the target language, and ensure it conveys the same meaning and intent as the original speech. Efficient management of this split-attention is crucial to avoid information loss and ensure fidelity and fluency in the interpretation. The complexity of simultaneous interpreting, therefore, necessitates extensive training, linguistic proficiency, and familiarity with the subject matter to achieve professional competence.

2.2. Ear-Voice Span

The concept of EVS, fundamentally integral to the field of SI, has been extensively studied and debated in the realm of interpreting studies. EVS is defined as the interval or delay between an interpreter's auditory reception of a source language (SL) message and its reproduction in the target language (TL). Essentially, it represents the temporal gap between

the commencement of the original speech and the start of interpretation (Gile, 1995).

While Gerver (1969) proposed measuring EVS in words, suggesting an average lag of 4 to 5 words, this approach faces criticism due to the variability in word length and composition across languages (Setton, 1999). A more widely accepted method is measuring EVS in seconds. Setton and Dawrant (2016) claimed a general consensus for an average EVS of 2-4 seconds among researchers and this was also the EVS typical of most interpreters (p.304). Lederer (1981) noted variations in EVS, with a general lag of about 3 seconds in German to French SI, but with fluctuations ranging from -5 to +11 seconds. Ono et al. (2008) reported an average EVS of 2–4 seconds in a study involving Japanese interpreters. Lee (2002) found an average of 3 seconds in English to Korean SI for television.

The length of EVS can significantly impact the quality of simultaneous interpreting. Herbert (1952) argued for a longer EVS, which may be associated with better and more expert SI as it allows interpreters to better grasp the context and produce more accurate and fluent interpretations. However, in speeches with high information density, or with the use of visual material like tables, photographs or slides, a prolonged lag "won't work – and may even be disastrous" (Setton & Dawrant, 2016, p.304), as interpreters can easily fall behind and are unable to compensate for lost information. De Groot (1997) advocated for a shorter EVS and emphasized that EVS should be as short as possible because long EVS requires interpreters to remember more information, which may cause them to lag too far behind the speaker. Similarly, Timarová et al. (2014) favored a brief EVS, particularly for interpreting numbers.

These arguments reflect the nuanced considerations that interpreters must balance when determining their EVS. The choice between a long and short EVS often depends on the specific circumstances of the interpretation task, the interpreter's personal capabilities and strategies, and the nature of the discourse. According to Gile (1995), "By shortening the lag, they decrease short-term memory requirements; on the other hand, this deprives them of anticipation potential and increases the risk of misunderstanding an unfolding sentence and driving themselves into target-language sentences which will be difficult to complete if it turns out their anticipation was incorrect. By increasing the lag, interpreters improve comprehension potential, but may overload short-term memory" (p. 204).

2.2. Factors Influencing EVS

The EVS in simultaneous interpreting is influenced by numerous factors, primarily related to cognitive processes and practical skills. Setton and Dawrant (2016) claimed that the EVS is influenced by memory, available information, and linguistic agility. Other influencing factors, as noted by Yagi (2000), are speech delivery rate, information density, discourse type, interpreter experience and individual preferences. Preparation also plays a role, with effective preparation leading to better prediction and anticipation, thereby potentially shortening EVS (Díaz-Galaz, et al., 2015). Last but not least, language pairings significantly influence EVS. Gile (1997) and Lederer (1981) highlighted that syntactic differences between languages increase cognitive load and processing requirements.

2.3. EVS in Simultaneous Interpreting Training

In the context of SI teaching, the manipulation and control of EVS are considered crucial skills for interpreters. Gile (1995) pointed out that while trainers may suggest adjustments in the length of EVS under certain circumstances, such as when dealing with numbers, there appears to be no clear and consistent rules governing this. According to Gile's observations, the management of EVS predominantly stems from practical experience. He emphasized that

this is a key advantage gained from regular practice of SI. Research by Setton and Dawrant (2016) emphasizes that EVS is not a fixed entity but a variable that can be adjusted depending on the complexity of the source speech and the interpreter's expertise. This adaptability of EVS is essential to interpreter training programs, which frequently incorporate specialized exercises aimed at fine-tuning EVS to suit varied contexts, as underscored in Jones' research (2002). Specifically, as Jones (2002) stated, "the first question that arises for an interpreter in simultaneous ….is when to start speaking, and thereafter what distance to keep from the speaker" (p. 72). Jones proposed three strategies: first, the distance from the speaker should remain more or less constant; second, the interpreter must be flexible as variation is necessary, depending on the speaker's rhythm, style, content, and syntactic difficulties; and third, the interpreter should try to end a speech as close as possible to the speaker (p. 80). All this highlights the importance of a technique that Jones emphasizes "lies at the heart of SI: reformulation" (p. 81). In his view, reformulation means breaking down complicated sentences into simpler, shorter ones; rearranging relative and subordinate clauses within a sentence; and changing active clauses into passive or deponent ones, among other adjustments. Jones also suggests other techniques such as the salami technique, simplification, generalization, omission, summarizing and recapitulation, explanation, and anticipation. These strategies are specifically designed to help students achieve an optimal EVS during practical exercises, laying the groundwork for the professional development of students, and ensuring they are well-equipped to manage the complexities inherent in SI.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Setting

The University of Languages and International Studies (ULIS) has a tradition and reputation for offering high quality programs in teacher training and translator & interpreter training. The Division of Translation and Interpreting, situated within the Faculty of English Language Teacher Education (FELTE) is managing all translation and interpreting courses.

Presently, at FELTE, a marked emphasis is placed on consecutive interpreting (CI), a more traditional and pedagogically accessible form of interpreting for students. However, this focus seems misaligned with the demands of the current interpretation market, where SI accounts for a sizable portion of professional opportunities. According to statistics of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (Neff, 2014), 85.2% of days worked by its members in 2010 were in SI mode (96% for staff interpreters), compared to only 6.9% in short or long consecutive, and 5.6% whispering or ex-booth (*bidule*) SI. The predominance of SI in the market, attributed to its time efficiency and suitability for multilingual events, is anticipated to persist and expand.

Consequently, a thorough understanding of the perceptions of FELTE's interpreting teachers regarding EVS is imperative. This exploration is crucial to ascertain whether these perceptions exert an influence on their pedagogical strategies in SI teaching. Such an understanding is instrumental in aligning the teaching methodology with the market's demands, thereby ensuring that students are effectively equipped with market-relevant skills.

3.2. Participants

In this study, 8 interpreting teachers were engaged as participants. This group, comprising both genders and aged between 27 to 36, currently teaches at FELTE. They offer courses in Consecutive Interpreting, Advanced Interpreting, Conference Interpreting,

Specialized Interpreting, with their teaching experience ranging from 5 to 13 years. In addition to their teaching roles, all participants are also active freelance interpreters with professional experience ranging from 2 to 6 years. This selection is quite representative, considering the small size of the Division of Translation and Interpreting, which totals only 11 teachers, out of which three do not participate in freelance simultaneous interpreting. This dual role of the participants as both teachers and active freelance interpreters enriches the research with practical insights and experiences, adding significant value to the findings. Their participation extended beyond responding to the questionnaire, as they were also involved in subsequent interviews, thereby providing a richer understanding of the research topic.

Convenience sampling was used to select the participants. These individuals were selected on a voluntary basis due to their availability and willingness to contribute to the research.

3.3. Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What is the perception of FELTE interpreting teachers regarding the factors that influence their Ear-Voice-Span (EVS) in professional SI?

- How does an understanding of EVS impact the pedagogical approaches of FELTE interpreting teachers to SI teaching?

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

This study incorporated a mixed-methods approach, employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to thoroughly investigate the posed research questions.

3.4.1. Survey Questionnaire

The initial phase of the research involved the development of a comprehensive questionnaire, designed to gather information pertinent to the first research question. This questionnaire proved to be a valuable tool, offering deep insights into the teachers' perception of the factors influencing EVS in the context of simultaneous interpreting. To enhance clarity and facilitate ease of response, the questionnaire was structured into two sessions. The first session concentrated on external factors affecting EVS, while the second delved into internal factors. This division not only simplified the participants' task in providing their inputs but also streamlined the subsequent data analysis process. The questionnaire was designed with a 5-point Likert scale to quantify responses, ranging from 1, signifying "extremely unlikely", to 5, indicating "extremely likely". This scale was employed to capture a nuanced spectrum of attitudes and perceptions regarding EVS factors.

3.4.2. Semi-structured Interviews

Following the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants to address the second research question. The researcher designed the interview questions to explore the potential direct correlation between the teachers' perceptions of EVS factors and their pedagogical approaches in SI teaching. The interview questions were specifically tailored to uncover how these perceptions influenced various aspects of their teaching practice, including the selection of course content, teaching methods, types of exercises offered, and the skills emphasized during SI training.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

Phase 1: In this initial stage, the questionnaire and interview schedule were developed. These instruments were then piloted with two voluntary participants to identify potential issues. The first version of the questionnaire revealed problems related to ambiguous wording and irrelevant questions, which could have negatively impacted the results. Based on the responses, feedback and reactions from the participants, the questionnaire was carefully reviewed and revised to address the issues.

Phase 2: 8 questionnaires were distributed directly to 8 teachers in person. Participants were provided with all necessary instructions and definitions of key terms in advance to ensure they fully understood the questionnaire items. The response process was meticulously monitored to address any issue that might arise. Fortunately, no problem occurred during this phase, thanks to the enthusiastic cooperation of the participants.

Phase 3: After the questionnaire was completed, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant via Zoom, according to their own schedule. Each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes. During the interviews, the researcher had the opportunity to ask predetermined questions, clarify any issues, and listen to additional information the participants were willing to share. The interviews were recorded with the participants' permission for later analysis.

Phase 4: All data collected from the questionnaire and interviews were compiled and preserved for analysis to address the research questions.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected in this study comprised responses from the questionnaire and insights gained from interviews. This dual-source data underwent a rigorous analysis to extract meaningful insights relevant to the research questions.

3.6.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

For the questionnaire data, statistical measures including the mean and standard deviation were calculated using Excel formulas. The mean provided an average value of the responses, offering a view of the central tendency of the dataset, which is essential for understanding the general attitude of the participants towards the questions posed. The standard deviation was used to assess the dispersion of the responses, indicating how much the data varied from the mean value. This measure is crucial as it helps in understanding the diversity of responses and whether most participants were aligned or had various perspectives on the issues discussed. Employing these statistical tools allowed for a comprehensive presentation of the data, highlighting both the central tendencies and the variability within the data sets.

3.6.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Interview data with the teachers was decoded and transcribed. The transcription process was meticulously undertaken to ensure accuracy and reliability of the data, preserving the original meanings conveyed by the participants. The qualitative data were then subjected to thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns that emerged during the interviews. This method enabled the exploration of complex interactions and the drawing out of rich, detailed, and nuanced interpretations of the data. Additionally, quotes from the data were also selectively integrated into the research narrative to illustrate and support the analysis, providing real-life examples of how the theoretical concepts discussed are reflected in practical scenarios.

These analytical methods facilitated a thorough interpretation of both sets of data, allowing for an integrated approach to the research findings. By combining quantitative measures with qualitative insights, the study provided a robust and nuanced perspective of the researched phenomena, laying a solid foundation for drawing informed conclusions and formulating practical recommendations. This comprehensive approach ensured that the findings were not only statistically valid but also deeply contextual and grounded in real-world experiences.

4. Findings

4.1. The Perception of FELTE Interpreting Teachers Regarding the Factors That Influence Their EVS in Professional SI

Table 1

FELTE Interpreting Teachers' Perception Regarding External Factors Influencing EVS

External factors influencing EVS	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Information density	4	5	4.29	0.49
Speech delivery rate	2	5	4.14	1.21
Language pairs	3	5	4.0	0.82
Speaker's speaking style	2	4	3.57	0.79
Speech type	2	4	3.29	0.76
Other: technical problems: sound quality, internet connection during online session	4	4	4.0	NA

Table 1 presents a comprehensive analysis of the external factors influencing EVS as perceived by interpreting teachers. The table methodically categorizes and presents the minimum, maximum, mean values, and standard deviations for each factor, offering an understanding of their impact on EVS.

The *speech delivery rate* exhibits the broadest range (Min 2 to Max 5), indicating its varied impact on EVS. The mean score of 4.14, coupled with the highest standard deviation of 1.21, suggests that while many participants find fast speech delivery significantly impacts EVS, there is notable variability in responses. This indicates that interpreters' ability to cope with fast speech depends heavily on individual skills and experience.

Information density, with a narrower range and a high mean score of 4.29 indicates a general agreement among participants that dense information heavily influences EVS. The lower SD (0.49) supports this argument as the SD shows little variability in responses and a uniform perception among interpreters regarding the challenge posed by information-dense speeches.

Speech type, with the lowest mean score (3.29), indicating that this factor exerts a moderate influence on EVS. The moderate range (2-4) and second-to-lowest SD of 0.76 reflect that this is a common opinion among participants. The impact of different types of speeches (narrative, descriptive, argumentative) on EVS may vary, thereby leading to different opinions from participants.

The *speaker's speaking style*, with a range of 2 - 4 and a mean score of 3.57, indicates a moderate but notable impact on EVS. This factor encompasses elements such as clarity, accent, or unpredictability in speaking style, each of which can affect interpreters' performance to varying degrees. The SD of 0.79 reflects some variability, suggesting that some interpreters may adapt better to different speaking styles than others.

The *language pairs* factor has a high mean score (4.0), and a moderate SD (0.82,) indicates that the difficulty of the language pair has a significant impact on EVS, though experiences may vary among interpreters.

Additionally, two participants selected the "Others" option, introducing new factors into the discussion. The first additional factor is *technical problems*, such as sound quality and internet connection, especially relevant in online simultaneous interpreting scenarios. The second factor highlighted is *language direction*; specifically, the notion that interpreting from one's native language to a foreign language is generally easier. This perspective, though not yet empirically verified, is widely accepted among professionals. It posits that interpreting from Vietnamese to English, for instance, requires less cognitive effort in processing the source text, allowing interpreters to conserve energy for effectively rendering the message.

Overall, the analysis from Table 1 reveals that while certain factors like information density and language pairs have similar impact on EVS across interpreters, others, such as speech delivery rate and speech type show more individual variability. This indicates that while some challenges are universally acknowledged in SI, others are more dependent on personal skills and adaptive strategies of the interpreters.

Table 2

FELTE Interpreting Teachers' Perception Regarding Internal Factors Influencing EVS

Internal factors influencing EVS	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Memory	2	5	3.14	0.90
Available information	3	5	4.0	0.58
Linguistic resourcefulness	3	5	4.0	0.82
Others: Health conditions (physical & mental)	4	4	4.0	NA

Table 2 provides an insightful exploration into the internal factors - personal attributes and skills – that play a crucial role in determining interpreters' EVS. This detailed analysis helps understand how individual qualities and competencies contribute to effective EVS management in simultaneous interpreting.

The factor of *memory*, with the broadest range of 2-5 and the lowest mean score (3.14) suggests that, according to FELTE teachers, memory plays a relatively less critical role in influencing EVS. However, the highest standard deviation among the three factors (0.90), indicating that memory's impact on EVS is highly subjective and can vary significantly among individuals.

Available information, marked by a narrow range and the high mean score (4.0), emerges as a critical factor. This consensus highlights the pivotal role of readily accessible information during an interpreting session in managing EVS effectively. The lowest SD suggests uniformity in the perception, underscoring a shared understanding among interpreters

of its importance.

Linguistic resourcefulness, encompassing language proficiency and the ability to swiftly navigate linguistic challenges, is rated as highly influential, as reflected in its mean score of 4.0. The moderate SD (0.82) suggests some divergence in views, indicating that interpreters vary in their perception of how linguistic agility impacts EVS.

An intriguing addition to the list is the factor of *health conditions*, including both mental and physical health. This factor, suggested by two participants, underscores the importance of the interpreters' overall well-being on their performance. Both participants have rated this factor at 4 out of 5, reflecting a high impact on EVS. However, as there is only one value to this factor, the SD is not applicable.

In summary, Table 2 highlights the significant influence of individual factors, including memory, available information, linguistic resourcefulness, and health conditions, on interpreters' EVS. While there is a general consensus on the importance of certain factors, the variability in other aspects highlights the complex interplay of personal attributes in shaping an interpreter's EVS. This analysis underlines the need for a personalized approach in interpreter training and development, catering to these diverse internal influences.

4.2. The Impact of EVS Understanding on the Pedagogical Approaches of FELTE Interpreting Teachers to SI Teaching

To address the second research question, semi-structured interviews with all participants of the questionnaire were conducted. These interviews provided rich insights into how the teachers' perceptions of EVS factors influenced their pedagogical approaches in SI teaching.

Regarding the first question of the interviews, all interviewees confirmed that their perception of EVS factors significantly influenced their approach to teaching SI. Participant 8 highlighted the importance of recognizing the varying levels of EVS factors, stating "By recognizing and appreciating the diverse levels of importance associated with each EVS factor, I am better equipped to anticipate potential challenges that students may encounter within these domains, tailoring my teaching methods to properly familiarize the students with diverse situational dynamics". This statement reflects a common theme among all interviewees, emphasizing the need for adaptability in teaching strategies based on an understanding of EVS. Participant 7 stated "I want to bring what is best for my students. If there is something that I think they need to know, I incorporate that into my lesson plan".

The second question probed deeper into the specific aspect of teaching impacted by EVS, understanding. For instance, regarding teaching content, Participant 7 emphasized, "Clearly, students need to be made aware of EVS, and the factors affecting it. This content must be included in the course." This notion of incorporating EVS understanding into the curriculum was echoed by Participant 4, who stated "When teaching 'decalage' as an important technique in simultaneous interpreting, the trainer may help students understand the impact of objective and subjective factors on their performance and design various exercises (with different difficulty levels, different speech types & speech delivery rate) for them to practice shortening/ lengthening the time lag".

The participants also placed significant emphasis on the skills required for mastering SI. For instance, Participant 8 discussed a step-by-step approach to developing key simultaneous interpreting skills while maintaining proper EVS: "I would introduce sight translation, shadowing and monoaural input skills. These skills would step by step guide the students to not only familiarize themselves with the concurrent tasks of a simultaneous

interpreter but also maintain a proper EVS during the interpretation assignments. Based on the specific skills targeted in each lecture, I would design exercises that are well-suited to reinforce and enhance the students' proficiency." This approach underscores the importance of a gradual, skills-based methodology in simultaneous interpreting training. Similarly, Participant 5 shared insights on weekly skill emphasis on certain skills to manage EVS effectively, "before SI, students familiarize themselves with simpler activities: shadowing (initially, listening and speaking simultaneously, then once students are accustomed to this, they speak after a delay of 1,2 and 3 seconds); shadowing with a twist (listening and repeating, trying to paraphrase as much as possible), and finally, proceeding to SI". Participant 7 focused on various skills impacting EVS, "I focus on the things that I find to be influential on EVS, e.g.: listening skills, speaking skills, the ability to analyze information and to listen to various accents". Participant 3 shared her way of scaffolding for students by introducing skills in a certain hierarchy "Students may have a chance to do CI or shadowing again and again to make sure they get and memorize the idea organization before they have to switch to SI".

The collective experience of the interviewees as freelance interpreters enriches their pedagogical approach. Their firsthand experience in the field allows them to impart practical, market-relevant skills to their students, focusing on developing competencies that directly address the challenges and dynamics of EVS in professional simultaneous interpreting contexts. These responses highlight a consensus among the teachers about the critical importance of understanding EVS in shaping their pedagogical approaches. Their diverse strategies, rooted in extensive professional experience as freelance interpreters, allow them to impart practical and market-relevant skills to their students and ensure that their students are equipped with the necessary skills and understanding to excel in the demanding field of simultaneous interpreting.

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses have effectively demonstrated how the two sets of findings are not only complementary but also mutually enriching. Quantitative data from the questionnaires highlighted key external and internal factors influencing EVS, such as information density, speech delivery rate, and linguistic resourcefulness. These findings provided a statistical baseline for understanding the common and variable influences on EVS across different interpreters. Qualitative insights from the interviews added depth to these findings by illustrating how individual interpreters perceive and react to these factors in their professional and pedagogical practices. For instance, while the quantitative data pointed to a high impact of speech delivery rate on EVS with significant variability among interpreters, the qualitative data elaborated on this variability by discussing individual strategies used to manage fast speech delivery. This includes tailored training techniques shared by the teachers, which are designed to help students adapt their EVS effectively to varying speech rates and complexities. Ultimately, the research method has reinforced the validity of the research findings. By correlating the quantitative data with insights from the qualitative data, the study offers a comprehensive view that not only informs academic understanding but also enhances practical training approaches in the field of simultaneous interpreting.

5. Discussion

The questionnaire conducted among FELTE interpreting teachers yields significant insights into their perspectives on the factors influencing EVS in professional simultaneous interpreting. These factors are categorized into external and internal elements, each playing a distinct role in shaping the interpreters' performance. Analyzing these factors offers significant

insights into the complexities and challenges faced by professional interpreters. External factors pertain to elements arising from the work environment or attributable to speakers. These are aspects over which interpreters typically have limited control. The analysis reveals two factors: speech delivery rate and information density, both scoring high mean values, which reflect the critical impact these factors have on interpreters' performance. Rapid speech and information-packed content can strain the cognitive resources of interpreters, necessitating the development of specific skills to manage these challenges effectively. Interpreter training programs need to incorporate exercises that simulate such demanding conditions, helping trainees to adapt their EVS accordingly. Additionally, the high standard deviation in responses for speech delivery rate suggests a personalized approach in training, acknowledging the individual variability in coping mechanisms among interpreters. The moderate influence of speech type and speaker's speaking style on EVS indicates that interpreters encounter varying levels of difficulty depending on these factors. This variability underscores the importance of exposing trainees to a wide range of speech types and styles during their training. By encountering diverse speaking styles and content types, interpreting students can develop greater flexibility and adaptability, key traits for professional success in SI. The impact of language pairs and directionality on EVS is a critical finding, suggesting that certain language combinations and directions pose unique challenges in SI. This finding has pedagogical implications, highlighting the need for language-specific training modules that address the peculiarities of different language pairs. Additionally, the response regarding the ease of interpreting from Vietnamese to English suggests that language directionality plays a significant role in influencing EVS. Training programs should be tailored to address these directional complexities, equipping students with strategies to handle the specific challenges of different interpreting directions. The influence of technical problems, such as sound quality and internet connection, especially in online interpreting sessions, reflects the evolving nature of the interpreting profession. With the increasing prevalence of remote interpreting, it is imperative for training programs to incorporate modules that prepare students for the technical challenges of online interpreting. This includes not only familiarization with various online platforms but also training in troubleshooting common technical issues. The second category is internal factors, which are those coming from the interpreters themselves. Linguistic resourcefulness and available information both getting high mean, indicating their critical impact on EVS as perceived by FELTE interpreting teachers. The high rating for available information highlights the necessity for interpreters to have access to relevant materials before an interpreting session. Interpreter preparatory routines should include research and familiarization with the subject matter. The significant impact of linguistic resourcefulness on EVS suggests that language skills are not just about proficiency but also about agility and adaptability in language use. Training should therefore focus not only on language learning but also on exercises that enhance linguistic creativity, quick thinking, and rapid problem-solving skills. Memory, while receiving a moderate rating from participants, remains an essential component in simultaneous interpreting. Although short-term memory may play a less critical role in SI compared to CI, overall memory capacity directly impacts EVS. This insight suggests that students still need to practice memory skills in different interpreting contexts. One participant highlighted health as a critical factor in interpreting performance. Maintaining good physical and mental health is crucial for interpreters to perform effectively. This perspective emphasizes the importance of training that extends beyond academic knowledge and skills to include aspects of physical fitness, mental well-being, and stress management.

The interview results underscore that FELTE interpreting teachers actively tailor their

teaching methods according to their perspectives on EVS. Their experience as freelance interpreters provide them with a comprehensive understanding of factors affecting EVS. This knowledge is instrumental in developing a curriculum and training methodologies that prepare students for the dynamic and multifaceted challenges of professional interpreting. The findings suggest that a dynamic and adaptive approach to managing EVS, informed by both empirical data and professional experience, is essential for preparing interpreters to excel in their careers. This holistic understanding is crucial for developing future curricula and training programs that are both theoretically sound and practically viable in enhancing the professional competence of interpreters.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Summary of Findings

The study offers an in-depth examination of the Ear-Voice Span (EVS) within the context of professional simultaneous interpreting, particularly focusing on the perceptions and pedagogical approaches of FELTE interpreting teachers. Insights gathered from both quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews illuminate the multifaceted nature of EVS, underscoring its significance as a dynamic variable in SI. The study reveals that EVS is influenced by a spectrum of external and internal factors. External factors, largely beyond the interpreter's control, such as speech delivery rate, information density, technical challenges, speech type, speaker’s speaking style, and language pairs, necessitate a high degree of knowledge, adaptability, and quick decision-making in interpreters. Internal factors, including available information, linguistic resourcefulness, memory, and personal health conditions, are integral to an interpreter's ability to manage and optimize EVS effectively. The participants also elaborated on their perceptions and pedagogical practices during the interviews, reinforcing the questionnaire results that EVS is a critical factor in SI. This discussion underscored the necessity for effective strategies to manage EVS effectively.

6.2. Implications

The pedagogical implications of these findings are significant. FELTE interpreting teachers recognize the influence of their perceptions of EVS on SI as well as on their teaching strategies. As a result, the training exercises are meticulously designed to not only acquaint students with the diverse aspects of EVS but also to provide them with the necessary tools and strategies for its effective management. Consequently, students benefit from a pragmatic and experience-based learning environment, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the field of interpreting. Overall, the study contributes valuable insights into the intricacies of EVS and its impact on SI, offering a roadmap for educators and practitioners alike to optimize their approach to this crucial aspect of interpreting.

6.3. Limitations

One clear limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size of participants. The limited number of FELTE interpreting teachers involved may not fully represent the broader population of professional interpreters. This constraint could affect the generalizability of the findings and suggests that the conclusions drawn should be interpreted with caution, as they may not encompass all possible scenarios or reflect the diversity found in larger, more varied groups of interpreters.

6.4. Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should aim to expand the participant base to include a larger and more diverse group of interpreters from various backgrounds and with various levels of experience. This expansion would enhance the reliability of the data and provide a more comprehensive understanding of EVS across different settings and cultural contexts. Additionally, subsequent studies could explore the impact of advanced technological aids in managing EVS, which could offer significant implications for training and practice in SI. Researchers might also investigate the longitudinal effects of pedagogical strategies on the development of EVS over time, providing insights into the long-term efficacy of current teaching methods.

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Appendix

Part 1: Questionnaire

Lecturers' perception on factors influencing EVS in professional simultaneous interpreting

This questionnaire is designed to understand your perception of the factors that influence your Ear-Voice-Span (EVS) in professional Simultaneous Interpreting (SI). Please assess the impact of the following factors on your EVS during SI session.

**** Explanation of term: EVS means the lag between the original speaker's words and the interpreter's rendition.*

Section 1: External Factors (Speaker's)

How likely have the following factors impacted your EVS during SI session?					
1 = extremely unlikely ---> 5 = extremely likely					
External factors (speaker's)	1	2	3	4	5
Speech delivery rate					
Information density					
Speech type (e.g., narrative, argumentative, ceremonial, descriptive)					
Speaker's speaking style					
Language pairs (e.g., English – Vietnamese vs Japanese – Vietnamese)					
Others:					

Section 2: Internal Factors (Interpreter's)

How likely have the following factors impacted your EVS during SI session?					
1 = strongly disagree ---> 5 = strongly agree					
Internal factors (interpreter's)	1	2	3	4	5
Memory					
Available information					
Linguistic resourcefulness (grammar, vocabulary, etc.)					

Others:					

Part 2: Semi-structured Interview

Impact of the understanding of EVS factors in the pedagogical approach to SI

Based on the responses provided in the questionnaire, could you elaborate on the following:

- Does your perception of EVS factors influence your approach to teaching SI?

- In what way does this influence manifest in terms of teaching content, methods, types of exercise, and the skills emphasized?

Thank you for your contribution!

NGHIÊN CỨU QUAN ĐIỂM CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN VỀ CÁC YẾU TỐ ẢNH HƯỞNG ĐẾN ĐỘ TRỄ (EVS) TRONG PHIÊN DỊCH ĐỒNG THỜI VÀ Ý NGHĨA TRONG VIỆC GIẢNG DẠY

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Tóm tắt: Nghiên cứu tập trung vào khái niệm độ trễ (EVS) - khoảng thời gian giữa việc nghe hiểu phát ngôn gốc và trình bày bản dịch trong ngôn ngữ đích trong phiên dịch đồng thời chuyên nghiệp. Nghiên cứu sử dụng kết hợp phương pháp nghiên cứu định lượng và định tính với bảng câu hỏi và phỏng vấn để khảo sát quan điểm của giảng viên dạy phiên dịch tại một trường đại học thuộc Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội về các yếu tố ảnh hưởng tới độ trễ trong phiên dịch đồng thời, bao gồm: tốc độ bài nói, mật độ thông tin, thể loại bài nói, phong cách của diễn giả, cặp ngôn ngữ, chiều dịch, các vấn đề kĩ thuật, trí nhớ, thông tin có sẵn, và khả năng ngôn ngữ. Sự đa dạng trong phản hồi cho thấy bản chất phức tạp của dịch đồng thời và yêu cầu cần có cách tiếp cận linh hoạt trong đào tạo phiên dịch. Nghiên cứu cũng cho thấy cách giảng viên dạy phiên dịch thiết kế các hoạt động dạy và học, tập trung vào việc phát triển các kỹ năng và bài tập cụ thể. Nghiên cứu góp phần nâng cao hiểu biết về độ trễ trong phiên dịch đồng thời, đặc biệt trong bối cảnh đào tạo phiên dịch. Nghiên cứu cũng cho thấy các phương pháp đào tạo hiệu quả giúp người học chuẩn bị kỹ năng cần thiết cho nghề phiên dịch sau này.

Từ khóa: độ trễ (EVS), phiên dịch đồng thời (SI), phương pháp giảng dạy, đào tạo phiên dịch