

# Prediction at the nexus of source and target discourse

**Rhona Amos**

Kilian Seeber

*University of Geneva*

Martin Pickering

*University of Edinburgh*

People make comprehension easier by predicting upcoming language. We might therefore expect prediction to occur during the extremely difficult task of simultaneous interpretation. We report an eye-tracking study that used the visual-world paradigm to investigate the time-course of prediction during a simultaneous interpreting task. Based on Ito et al. (2018), twenty-four L1 French professional conference interpreters working for international organisations in Geneva and twenty-four L1 French professional translators, again working for international organisations in Geneva, heard an English sentence containing a highly predictable word (e.g. The dentist asked the man to open his... mouth a little wider) and viewed four objects, one of which was either a target object (mouth; bouche), an English phonological competitor (mouse; souris), a French phonological competitor (cork; bouchon) or an unrelated word (bone; os). We considered whether 1) interpreters and translators predict during a simultaneous interpreting task 2) whether interpreters and translators predict word form and 3) whether interpreters and translators predict differently. We used a linear mixed model and a growth curve analysis to assess looks to the critical object in the three conditions as compared to the baseline condition. Both interpreters and translators looked predictively at the target object. However, interpreters did so more rapidly and more consistently than translators. Our results suggest that prediction of word-form may take place in certain circumstances. We discuss the implications of these new empirical findings for our understanding of the prediction and possible deverbalisation processes of the interpreter at the nexus between source and target discourse.

## References

Ito, A., Pickering, M.J., & Corley, M. (2018). Investigating the time-course of phonological prediction in native and non-native speakers of English: A visual world eye-tracking study. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 98 (1-11).