



# Interpreter's non-rendition behaviour and its effect on interaction: A case study of a multi-party interpreting situation

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**Abstract.** By analysing a recorded naturalistic interpreting situation, this study examines how and why the overall structure of the interaction changes when an interpreter does not provide interpreting. The data on which the study is based is a segment of a business meeting where there are eight participants, including the interpreter. As a theoretical framework, the notions of frame and schema have been utilised. When previous information was not conveyed by the interpreter, a shift from the default interactive frame was identified. However, at the same time, an effort by participants in the interaction to restore and maintain the default frame was also recognised. The study shows that the behaviour of the interpreter in this study has an effect on the behaviour of other participants, as well as on the structure of the interaction.

**Keywords:** non-rendition; multi-party; frame; schema; business interpreting

## Introduction

An interpreter is supposed to provide interpreting in another language after a primary interlocutor utters something in one language. This paper attempts to investigate what happens when interpreting is not provided by an interpreter in a multi-party interpreting situation. There are occasions when an interpreter does not or cannot render a message due to various reasons, including when s/he does not understand the discourse of the previous utterance/s. In this paper, our focus will be placed upon the interpreter as well as upon the other participants, with a particular reference to the reaction of the latter to the interpreter's "non-interpreting behaviour". We will show that those participants aptly react in response to such "non-interpreting" behaviour of the interpreter.

Thanks to the vigorous research efforts in the past few decades or so, we have come to know the complex nature of interpreter-mediated interactions. Studies have revealed that the interpreter has a significant effect at various levels, including the discourse and interaction levels (e.g. Berk-Seligson, 1990; Hale, 2004; Roy, 2000; Wadensjö, 1998). Within the growing literature in interpreting studies, the area of so-called community interpreting has also shown remarkable outputs (cf. Hale, 2007). On the contrary, there is only limited research to date that investigates interpreting in the business area. At the same time, while there are prior studies that examine interpreting situations with more than two people (e.g. Amato, 2007; Wadensjö, 1998), most studies have examined the "triadic" (Mason, 2001) interaction. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will contribute to our further understanding of an interpreter-mediated interaction, in particular, involving complex multi-party business interpreting situations which have rarely been the focus of research attention.

The examination is based on a short segment of a naturalistic interpreting situation which was audio-recorded in Australia. This data is not a typical dialogue interpreting situation which involves two primary interlocutors and

an interpreter. Rather, it is a case study that looks into an interpreting situation where there are a number of participants in the interaction. The data is a part of an hour-long business meeting where two English native speakers and five Japanese native speakers were present (besides the interpreter), all of whom were top managers of various sections within the same manufacturing company in Australia. Therefore, each participant represents his own section, and has his own agendas and interests. The meeting was a weekly executive meeting, the main topic being various possible measures for improving the corporate financial situation. It took place in the boardroom of the company. The interpreter in this study is a NAATI- (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) accredited female interpreter. She was accredited at the professional level, and held a postgraduate degree in interpreting and translation conferred in an English speaking country. She also possesses professional accreditation as a translator. She had approximately four years of experience as a professional interpreter at the time of recording, although she had worked using her bilingual ability (Japanese and English) in a variety of capacities in a number of countries before becoming an interpreter. She was employed by this company as a casual member of staff for a few weeks until a permanent staff member would be appointed. Her formal position within the organisation is that of personal assistant to the CEO. Therefore, she undertook various tasks other than interpreting and translation outside this meeting. The interpreter had interpreted at the same meeting a week prior to this occasion. The interaction was recorded by the interpreter herself using a small hand-held digital audio-recorder.

The segment has been chosen for analysis due to the fact that the interpreter herself made an explicit comment on the difficulty of interpreting this specific part because of the technical nature of the conversation. The segment is taken from the middle part of the meeting and lasts for approximately 10 minutes. The entire segment has been transcribed for detailed analysis. There are 56 turns in total, including the interpreter's renditions. The interpreter's comment regarding this particular segment, which was also recorded on the same day as the meeting, is as follows:

#### **(Excerpt 1)**

その後がテクニカルになっちゃって、[...] そう、全然分からなかった、[...] T x x x [製造方法] から、A x x [製造方法] に変わったとか言って、もう、両方がわからないから、文脈がわからなくて、で、日本人の人が、三時間分必要、って言うのね、[...] 三時間分の何、何だかわかんなくて、[...] 日本人が言うの、日本語がわかんなかった、[...] そこはだから、もう、話がまったくわからずに、とりあえずなんか、英語のセンテンスにしてみたけど、なん、何だったんだらうなっていうのが、この次ぐらいに[...] 訳しながら、だから、その、隣にいるUさんの顔見て、目で聞かって感じ

(After that [part], [it] became technical [...] yes, [I] couldn't comprehend at all [...] [they said] Txxx [production method] was changed to Axx [production method], but, [I] didn't know either, so, [I] couldn't get the context and, a Japanese person, says, three-hour's amount was required [...] three hours of what, [I] didn't get what [it means] [...] a Japanese said it, I didn't understand the Japanese [...] so, there, well, [I] didn't understand the conversation at all, [I] somehow sort of tried to make it into English sentences, but, [the segment whose meaning] I still don't get it, comes next or so [...] while rendering, so,

well, [I] watched Mr U's face, and, like, asked him [the meaning] with my eyes)

The above discourse indeed reflects the interpreter's struggle to comprehend the original utterances as elaborated in her comments. This will be closely examined in the following sections.

## **1. Theoretical framework**

### **1.1 Frame and Schema**

We employ the notions of "frame" and "schema" in this paper, in particular, following Tannen and Wallat (1993). These two terms, along with the term "script", have extensively been considered for investigating a number of aspects of human interaction and communication in various disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and linguistics, to name a few. Although it is widely acknowledged that it was Bateson's (1972) study that initiated the concept of frame, it is Goffman (1974) who has had a significant impact in disseminating this notion. According to Goffman, a "frame" is one's knowledge with regard to the archetypal structure of activity or event, and is constructed based on one's past experience. Yule (1996), on the other hand, defines a "schema" as the knowledge construct that pre-exists in one's memory. Once such a schema begins to be shared by a society as a whole and becomes fixed, it is called a "frame". Accordingly, a "script" is characterised as "a pre-existing knowledge structure involving event sequences" (Yule, 1996 p.86). In addition to these definitions, there are considerable variations in the meaning of frame, schema, and script. This is because many scholars have attempted to use the term "frame" differently, especially in relation to the notion of "schema". Tannen (1993) and Metzger (1999) have examined this diversity in the use of these notions.

Tannen and Wallat (1993) use the notions of "frame" and "schema" in their investigation of a medical interview, making a clear distinction between "interactive frames" (or frame) and participants' "knowledge structure" (or schema). More concretely, they define a frame as "a sense of what activity is being engaged in" (Tannen and Wallat, 1993 p.60). That is to say, a "frame" is associated with the nature of the interaction, in the same way Goffman and Bateson used the term. For instance, someone's utterance may be understood by another person quite differently depending on how the latter perceives a frame (e.g. "joking" or "arguing"). According to Tannen and Wallat, a frame is closely related to Goffman's (1981) notion of "footing", or a participant's alignment vis-à-vis other participants in an interaction. In other words, when there is a change of frame in an interaction, the participants must align themselves to the other participants according to the new frame, therefore also causing a change in footing. On the other hand, a schema refers to participants' "patterns of knowledge" (Tannen and Wallat, 1993 p.60) in regard to their expectations about the world, people or things. Therefore, while a frame refers to the interactional aspect, a schema relates to an individual's knowledge structure. The study by Tannen and Wallat has revealed that a shift in frame occurs when different and conflicting schemas emerge amongst the participants. We thus attempt to analyse the above-mentioned interpreted discourse drawing upon the framework of "frame" and "schema" as defined by Tannen and Wallat (1993).

### **1.2 Frame in the interpreted multi-party interaction**

As described above, the interaction we examine here is a naturally occurring interaction in which the participants are two English native speakers (A1 and A2) and five Japanese native speakers (J1, J2, J3, J4 and J5) in addition to the

female interpreter (Japanese native speaker). In this interaction, all participants are clearly aware of the fact that this meeting is interpreted by the interpreter. Although it was only the second time for the interpreter in this study to interpret for the meeting, the weekly executive meetings in this company have always been interpreted by an interpreter because of the presence of both English and Japanese native speakers. In addition, membership is rather fixed. Therefore, one can assume that there is a commonly-held frame for this particular meeting which can be called the “interpreter-mediated interaction” frame. This means that the participants understand what usually happens within this frame. For example, after an English speaker says something, the interpreter interprets that utterance into Japanese for the Japanese native speakers so they can understand what the English speaker said, and so on. This frame is considered to be the main and “default” frame of the recorded interpreting situation. At the same time, this is a weekly managers’ meeting which is held within a particular organisation. Therefore, this interaction can also be framed as the “executive meeting” frame. Again, the participants expect such a meeting to have certain characteristics and they behave accordingly. Furthermore, it is also possible that there is another layer: a frame that is peculiar to this specific organisation. There may also be other outer frames such as industry-specific frames, region- or country-specific frames and so on.

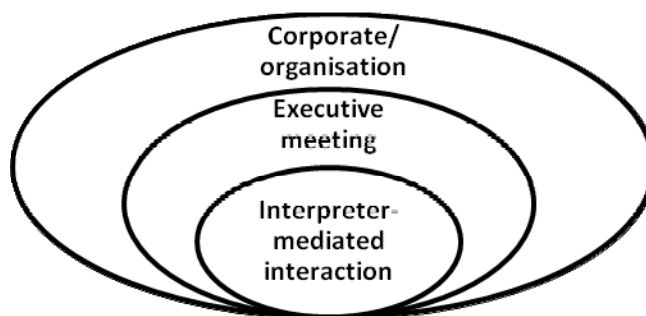


Figure 1: Frames within the interaction

## 2. Findings

### 2.1 Frame shift

When the meeting was in progress within the interpreter-mediated interaction frame, interpreting was provided by the interpreter after each turn, followed by another utterance by another participant. Interestingly, in the data examined here, there are occasions when interpreting is provided after a number of turns. Typically, this happens when speakers of the same language did not stop their conversation for a while. One can consider this as an example of a shift from the default frame, which was initiated by the participants. However, if all participants expected this to happen within the default frame because they share the same schema with regard to the rule for this particular meeting, then it would not be considered a shift. Although we cannot make a judgement based only on the examined data, at least the interpreter-mediated frame can be recognised after several turns, which is evidenced by the interpreter’s rendition. Within the default frame, all participants collaborated to support and maintain this frame. At the same time, there is no specific need to change this frame. However, in the recorded interaction, there were occasions when the interpreter did not provide interpreting, or when she did not render previous information accurately. This is mostly due to the fact that the content discussed was specialised, as was evidenced in her comment in Excerpt 1 above, making it difficult for the

interpreter to understand the discourse. Excerpt 2 below is considered to be one such occasion.

**(Excerpt 2)**

<u>Turn</u>	<u>Participant</u>	
8	J1	あの、Y さん今日本もね、あの、ボデー情報で造ってるんだけどさ、もうほとんどが、T x x x [製造方法]で造るのやめてきてる、それはまあそういうことだと思うんだけど、Y さんが思ってることと一緒に思うんだけど (2.2) Y さん、Japan, Japan case, uhh not uh make uh Txxx [production method]
9	A1	I know
10	J1	umm all Axx [production method], oh we do, Axx data make uh sheet and uhh welding all change the data
11	A1	but if we make 100 percent like Cxx [production method], we need very big investment on warehouses, this is middle of the way a little bit each way, so finally, finally by Axx but early processes by Bxx [production method], some, I'm just thinking low, low investment way in the middle
12	J1	but we need a little bit modify in uh process, uh shipping area
13	A1	currently with higher production rate, we have less data if we just use Axx

**Note:** To show the code-switch in Turn 8 clearly, the translation of J1's utterance in Japanese is provided below:

*Well, Mr Y, in Japan, too, well, [they] produce using the body information, but mostly, they are gradually stopping the use of Txxx [production method], [I] think that's perhaps what it means, [I] think [it's] the same with what Mr Y is thinking (2.2) Mr Y*

As the interpreter's comment in Excerpt 1 above shows, she was not able to comprehend the meaning of the original discourse, particularly the various production methods (e.g. Txxx, Axx, Bxx and Cxx). Within the interpreter-mediated interaction frame, it may be considered appropriate to ask or clarify any unknown concepts or words, but the interpreter in this instance did not initiate such an action.

Here, attention should be directed to Turn 8. J1 started his conversation in Japanese, which is considered to be his ordinary behaviour within the given frame (i.e. interpreter-mediated interaction frame). After a brief pause, however, he uttered Y's name, and then started speaking in English. That is, a clear code-switch was observed within the same turn. Obviously, this is a significant shift from the interpreter-mediated interaction frame. It appears that J1 actually waited for the interpreter to start interpreting his utterance in Japanese into English. This was evidenced by a short pause before the code-switch. Meanwhile, the interpreter did not commence interpreting, possibly pondering over her strategy. J1, then, seemed to realise what was happening and judged that she was not ready to interpret, and therefore, he began explaining himself in English. In other words, J1 decided to move out of the interpreter-mediated interaction frame, and chose to adopt a different frame (i.e. executive meeting frame) which does not require the interpreter's rendition. Using Goffman's term, "keying" (Goffman, 1974 p.40) was initiated at this point. That is to say, a modification of the frame was introduced due to a necessity. Interestingly, once the default frame was replaced with a different frame, both A1 and J1 collaborated to support this

new frame for the next few turns. The reason for this frame shift can best be explained as the interpreter's knowledge schema not allowing her to properly sustain the interpreter-mediated interaction frame. Just as the study by Tannen and Wallat (1993) shows, this example also indicates that a discrepancy in schemas can indeed result in a change of frame.

Following the above-quoted excerpt (Excerpt 2), J1 this time began by explaining in Japanese what he was talking about with A1 in the previous turns.

**(Excerpt 3)**

<u>Turn</u>	<u>Participant</u>	
14	J1	<p>社長、あの、Y の言ってること本当で、あの日本ではもう、あのもう Txxx 生産でやってないんですよ、それはやっぱりあの、連れ残業の対策で、日本もやっぱりそういうことに気が付いてきて、またあの Axx 生産に戻ってるわけですよ、だからうちも Axx 生産にすれば、その連れ残業っていうのがなくなるんですね、ただ、その部分で、ええ、僕が過去に調べたやつでやっぱり 3 時間分くらいの、あの、キャパがないと、んん</p> <p><i>(President, well, what Y is saying is true, in Japan, well, [they] no longer use Txxx-production, which is because, well, a countermeasure against the companion-overtime work, Japan too began to realise that, and [they're] gradually returning to Axx-production, so if we also adopt Axx-production, that companion-overtime will disappear, but for that part, well, based on my research in the past, like, about three hour equivalent, well, capacity is required, um)</i></p>
15	J2	<p>ストックを、//の、ね*</p> <p><i>(stock// of, yea*)</i></p>
16	J1	<p>生産*のぶれがありますので、それはやっぱり 3 時間どうやってもつかっていうところにちょっと焦点を絞って、そうすると、出荷のところのキャパシティーを上げないといけない</p> <p><i>(production* fluctuation is there, so it's like how to allow the three hours should be focused a bit, and then, [we] must increase the capacity at the shipment section)</i></p>

Although his turn started with an address to the president, the utterance could have been directed toward the Japanese speakers in general. Again, had the interpreter begun her interpreting right after Turn 13 by reporting the content of the conversation between J1 and A1, it appears unlikely that J1 would have initiated this utterance in Japanese. In other words, it is possible to claim that J1 attempted to fill in the interpreter's role, which indicates that the interaction here is not within the default (interpreter-mediated interaction) frame. In that sense, although the interpreter-mediated interaction frame was no longer used, the need for explaining in both languages was still recognised and somehow fulfilled. The finding of this kind of shift endorses Mason's (1999 p.149) claim that there are occasions when "... primary participants conduct dialogue with each other directly, almost as if no interpreter were present ...".

## 2.2 Efforts to maintain the default frame

Following the segment described above, the interpreter then attempted to convey the message in the form of a summary presentation in the next few turns, as shown in Excerpt 4 below.

### (Excerpt 4)

<u>Turn</u>	<u>Participant</u>	
17	I	to um as (.) pointed out (.) as you pointed out now, Japan also adopt the A, Axx production in order to eliminate the following operation to the Z, Zxx [company name] and but we need this 3 hours capacity (.) <i>これは3時間、//何* (this 3 hours, // what*)</i>
18	J2	<i>えー*、ストックね、//スリーアワー* (well*, [it's] stock // three hours*)</i>
19	I	<i>ああ、Three hour* stock (.) //in the* (oh, -----)</i>
20	J2	<i>3時間分*のストックが必要だという (three-hour equivalent* stock is needed)</i>
21	I	for Axx production ↓ [long pause (16.0)]

The interpreter's comment clearly indicates that she had difficulty in understanding what "three hours" meant. Here, she seemed to be struggling to make sense of the discourse, which is reflected in the clarification that she initiated at the end of Turn 17, as well as in translations such as "following operation" (for 連れ残業: "companion overtime", or overtime work caused by someone else's fault/requirements). According to her comment, her chosen strategy was therefore as follows: "話がまったくわからずに、とりあえずなんか、英語のセンテンスにしてみた" (*[I] didn't understand the conversation at all, [I] somehow sort of tried to make it into English sentences*). Despite this difficulty, the interpreter, at least, was making an effort to keep (or recover) the interpreter-mediated interaction frame. A similar effort was indeed made also by J2. Following the long pause recorded after Turn 21 (Excerpt 4), J2 started his utterance by "rounding up" the previous content of conversations. That is to say, J2 appeared to present a summary of the previous discourse in a simple manner so the interpreter could comprehend the meaning. In fact, the interaction successfully remained in the default (interpreter-mediated interaction) frame because the interpreter provided an interpretation after J2's utterance in Turn 23.

The above examples show that a difficulty in comprehending discourse, or a mismatch in schemas with regard to specialised knowledge, can directly contribute to a frame shift. However, physical constraints should also be considered in a multi-party interpreting situation. The overall interaction can become very complex when there are a number of participants (Takimoto, 2008). This, in turn, makes it difficult for an interpreter to interpret all utterances accurately. This is most noticeably the case when there are conversations that overlap, conversations without the help of an interpreter, or conversations that happen locally between the speakers of the same language. On such occasions, the interpreter may have to manage information by selecting what needs to be interpreted (Takimoto, 2008; Wadensjö, 1998). In the data used in this study too, a local conversation between two Japanese speakers (J1 and J3) was recorded in Turns 26 to 30, lasting for about 38

seconds, during which nobody else spoke. The “local” nature was evidenced by their low voice speaking style. During and after the exchange of conversation between these two participants, the interpreter did not provide interpreting. The reason may be that she found it unnecessary to interpret it for the English speakers, or that she found it difficult to interpret due to the intricacies of the content, similar to the example examined above.

After it became apparent that the interpreter would not provide interpretation for this conversation, it was again J2 who initiated the next move: he presented a comment in the form of a kind of summary of previous conversations between J1 and J3. This was followed by the interpreter’s rendition of J2’s utterance. Such behaviour on the part of J2 seems to suggest that at least J2 thought it relevant to refer to what they (J1 and J3) were talking about, despite the fact that the interpreter did not convey the information presented. In other words, because of the lack of interpreting, there was a lapse of information for those who did not understand Japanese. It may be the case that the interpreter was not able to interpret due to the difficulty of the discourse, which means that her knowledge schema did not match the schema of the others. Therefore, it is possible to understand that J2 attempted to fill in the gap by re-presenting the previous discourse in a way that can be understood by the interpreter, so that the interpreter could, in turn, provide an interpretation into English. Alternatively, as discussed above, the non-rendition behaviour of the interpreter may have been based on her decision to not interpret due to its irrelevancy for other people. In such a case, it is possible to understand that the interpreter’s schema in regard to selection of appropriate information was not the same as that of J2. Therefore, although one cannot determine the exact reason for the interpreter’s non-rendition behaviour for the discourse between Turns 26 and 30, it is possible to explain it in terms of a discrepancy between schemas. Although this discrepancy caused a temporary shift of the frame, in this instance, the default frame was successfully recovered. Here, one can recognise the effort made by J2 to try to maintain the default frame, due to J2’s very recognition of the discrepancy. That is to say, by J2 re-presenting the essential information, the interpreter was able to interpret the “re-presented” message within the default frame, or interpreter-mediated interaction frame.

J2’s utterance on this occasion is structured in a specific way, as shown in Excerpt 5 below:

**(Excerpt 5)**

<u>Turn</u>	<u>Participant</u>	
31	J2	<p>で、[breath]そういう意味で Y さんが言ったように、          今のくらい費用がかかって、各項目ごとに目標          をちょっと立てて…  <i>(so, [breath], in that sense, as Mr Y said, how much cost is          currently involved, and like [we] set a target for each item...)</i></p>

The above instance shows a striking similarity to J2’s utterance in Turn 22 (Excerpt 6), in which J2 “rounded-up” the previous discourse as discussed above.

**(Excerpt 6)**

<u>Turn</u>	<u>Participant</u>	
22	J2	<p>で、そういう意味じゃあ、あの、まあ、Y さんなど H          さんが言われているようにね、えー …</p>



*(so, in that sense, well, um, like what Mr Y and Mr H are saying, well...)*

In Extracts 5 and 6, both utterances start with “*لذلك*”, which is something like “therefore” in English, the function being to refer to the previous content and connect it to the next topic. This was followed by a phrase, “given that” or “in that sense”, which also shows that J2 was referring to the previous topic. In terms of the content, too, it is clear that his intention was to recapitulate other participants’ (Mr Y and/or Mr H’s) previous utterances. As we have argued, this particular behaviour of J2 can best be understood as his attempt to maintain or recover the overall frame back to the default interpreter-mediated interaction frame. Furthermore, one can recognise J2’s particular strategy for achieving such a goal, which takes the form of referring to the previous discourse and presenting it in a concise way. Since J2 is the CEO of the company and the chairperson of this particular meeting, he appears to have a legitimate motive to do so in order to maintain the interpreter-mediated interaction frame.

The findings discussed so far appear to be significant. First of all, there were occasions when the interpreter in this study was not able to provide interpreting. This means that there were occasions when the default frame (i.e. interpreter-mediated interaction frame) could not be sustained. In this paper, we mainly examined the cases where the interpreter’s schema did not match that of the other participants. More precisely, the interpreter’s limited knowledge regarding specific industry concepts and jargon seems to have had a significant effect on the interaction in general. Also, the interpreter’s schema may have been different from the other participants in regard to what needed to be done in the interaction. For example, with the interpreter’s effort to clarify something which she did not understand, a shift may not have occurred. Secondly, when a participant felt that the default frame became inappropriate, a shift of frame was initiated by that person. That is, a different frame which did not require the interpreter was introduced in this interaction. Thirdly, it was observed that such a shift was nevertheless temporary. Rather, there appears to be a strong drive to maintain the default frame, or to recover it when a shift was introduced by the participants in the interaction. In the examples examined here, it was A2 (company CEO) in particular who displayed such a motive. As discussed above (in relation to Excerpt 4), the interpreter herself also seemed to make an effort to maintain the interpreter-mediated interaction frame. Naturally, she also had a strong motivation to do so: otherwise, her existence itself could have been denied.

### **2.3 Discussion**

Tannen and Wallat (1993 p.61) maintain that “a mismatch in schemas triggers a shifting of frames”. The segment examined here does not contradict their claim. Although our findings are based on a short segment of one interpreting situation, the study clearly indicates that there are at least occasions when such shifts can occur in interpreter-mediated interactions. Furthermore, this study implies that a frame shift that results from a mismatch in schemas can actually lead to the exclusion of an interpreter from an interaction, which, in turn, directly relates to the fundamental issue of an interpreter’s identity and his/her role in an interaction. It will be meaningful therefore to further look into participants’ (including an interpreter’s) schemas and their relationship with frames in other interpreting situations. These notions appear to be particularly useful if they are applied to interpreting situations in the area where a distinctive “world perspective” (Hale, 1997) is required to correctly understand the discourse (i.e. the legal

domain), or where a peculiar institutional culture is recognised, such as in medical encounters (e.g. Davidson, 2000; 2001). By the same token, the relationship between the corporate culture of this particular company and the schema/frame may also prove useful, although the data used in this paper does not provide such a perspective.

This study is based on an analysis of a multi-party interpreting situation. Therefore, the kind of frame shift discussed here may not be relevant in an interpreter-mediated interaction between two primary interlocutors, or in a more “structured” interaction. The situation investigated in this paper is characterised by the diversity of the participants and their language backgrounds. For instance, J1 moved out of the interpreter-mediated interaction frame, and attempted to make himself understood without the interpreter, which was only possible because he believed that he was capable of achieving that goal using English. Also, with more participants or increased complexity, the frame options that are available may also change. The study by Tannen and Wallat suggests three different frames which appear to correspond to the number and nature of the participants. In the case of the interaction examined here, there may be other frames that are relevant, although the data employed here does not provide any meaningful insights into them. For example, a study of multi-party interactions suggests that an interpreter may consider a certain participant as a “main” person for whom s/he provides interpreting (Takimoto, 2008 p.116). Therefore, for instance, it is possible that the interpreter could have treated the CEO with a different frame. In that sense, although the data used in this study does not allow us to investigate the impact of each participant’s attributes on the schema/frame, that perspective may also be useful. The number of participants may influence the number of frame options available, but plural frames may also be at work, even in an interpreter-mediated interaction with two primary interlocutors.

In their study, Tannen and Wallat assumed three frames, which are: frame for social encounter; frame for examining patient; and frame for consultation with mother. The doctor in their study used these three frames interchangeably as the situations required. That is to say, those three frames do not constitute a hierarchical or a layered structure. They are considered to be equally available, although some frames may require a more skilful approach. On the other hand, the model of frames we have suggested here is multi-layered and hierarchical. The structure and inter-relationship between various frames may in fact be much more complex depending on the interaction. For instance, even within the interpreter-mediated interaction frame proposed here, a sub-frame may be recognised if the interpreter treated some of the participants differently, as suggested above. Therefore, a more detailed examination would be needed to investigate these aspects.

### **3. Conclusion**

The main focus of this paper has been occasions when the interpreter did not provide a rendition. The study has demonstrated how the participants in the interaction behaved in direct response to such occasions. One reaction recognised is the participant’s behaviour in moving to a different frame that does not require the interpreter. In other words, this move involves, in a way, a removal of the interpreter from the interaction. The other reaction is quite the opposite. It is an effort by the participant to bring the interpreter back into the default frame. When a participant initiates a new utterance which the interpreter is able to comprehend, then the default frame (interpreter-mediated interaction frame) can successfully be maintained or recovered. Because most participants are not bilingual in the interaction examined here, it is always desirable to implement the default frame where the interpreter

provides interpreting. It is considered significant that this study has identified these two seemingly conflicting efforts at work. If one looks at these two directions from a slightly different perspective, however, both are in fact very similar in their orientation. One can argue that both are an attempt to maintain communicative interaction with minimal interruption.

The notions of frame and schema have been extremely useful. While the notion of frames provides insights into the overall structure of the interaction, the notion of schemas enables us to see why a frame shift can occur. These two notions will be extremely powerful in analysing different kinds of behaviour of various participants in an interaction. Investigation of other interpreting situations utilising the same theoretical framework would certainly contribute to explaining the complex nature of face-to-face interpreting situations.

The analysis undertaken in this study showed that the participants reacted immediately to the behaviour of the interpreter, in this case, to the “non-rendition” behaviour of the interpreter. Such responsive behaviour itself deserves attention. However, even more significant is the fact that it was the interpreter’s non-rendition behaviour that triggered the moves of the other participants. That is to say, the study not only demonstrated that the interpreter in this study was a participant in the interaction, but also showed that the interpreter was an entity who could influence the behaviour of other participants and the overall direction of the interaction.

### **Transcription conventions**

- // overlapping speech commences
- \* overlapping speech ends
- (.) micro pause
- (xx) pause (in seconds)
- ↓ descending intonation
- [ ] transcriber’s remarks, explanations

Japanese utterances are translated and are indicated in italics. We attempted to translate so that the texts reflect the original, rather than to make the translation sound natural. That is to say, the overall approach can be summarised as a literal translation.

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