

**EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND INTERPRETER NEUTRALITY IN ENGLISH–
RUSSIAN DIPLOMATIC SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC
ANALYSIS BASED ON UN MATERIALS**

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Annotation. This article explores the mechanisms of emotional regulation and interpreter neutrality in English–Russian diplomatic simultaneous interpreting, focusing on United Nations conference materials. Drawing upon psycholinguistic theories, the study examines how interpreters manage affective responses, cognitive load, and linguistic transfer while maintaining professional detachment. The research highlights that emotional control is not the absence of feeling, but the strategic regulation of empathy and cognitive focus during high-stakes discourse. Based on authentic UN speeches and interpretation transcripts, the analysis reveals recurrent strategies such as emotional distancing, cognitive reappraisal, and metacognitive monitoring. The findings demonstrate that interpreter neutrality is dynamically constructed through interactional and psycholinguistic mechanisms that ensure accuracy, impartiality, and emotional balance. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the human factor in diplomatic interpreting and provides insights into interpreter training for emotionally charged, politically sensitive communicative settings.

Keywords: emotional regulation, interpreter neutrality, psycholinguistics, diplomatic discourse, simultaneous interpreting, UN materials, empathy control.

Introduction. In the field of diplomatic communication, simultaneous interpreting represents one of the most complex forms of language mediation, requiring interpreters to balance cognitive precision with emotional stability. Within the framework of English–Russian diplomatic interpreting, interpreters not only transfer semantic meaning but also navigate layers of political sensitivity, cultural nuance, and emotional undertones embedded in high-stakes discourse. The United Nations (UN) setting offers an ideal environment for examining this phenomenon, as it demands interpreters to function as both linguistic and psychological mediators between ideologically diverse participants. Emotional regulation and neutrality have become central topics in interpreting studies, particularly within the psycholinguistic paradigm that views interpretation as a cognitive-emotional process. As scholars such as Moser-Mercer and Gile point out, the interpreter's mental performance is highly influenced by affective factors such as stress, empathy, and emotional contagion [1]. In diplomatic contexts, emotions are not merely incidental; they form a subtle layer of meaning that shapes international dialogue and can influence the perception of impartiality. Consequently, the interpreter's ability to maintain composure and neutrality under emotional pressure is essential to ensuring communicative balance and political accuracy.

The psycholinguistic approach provides valuable tools for analyzing how interpreters regulate affective states during simultaneous interpreting. Emotional regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal, self-monitoring, and suppression enable interpreters to control their internal responses while sustaining fluency, coherence, and neutrality. This process aligns with the broader theoretical

notion of “metacognitive awareness”, which refers to interpreters’ capacity to manage attention, emotion, and linguistic output simultaneously [7].

This study aims to examine the psycholinguistic mechanisms underlying emotional regulation and interpreter neutrality in English–Russian diplomatic interpreting using authentic UN speeches and interpretation transcripts. By analyzing linguistic markers, prosodic features, and self-regulatory strategies, the research seeks to reveal how interpreters achieve emotional equilibrium in politically charged contexts. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of interpreter cognition and emotion, offering practical implications for interpreter training programs, particularly in diplomacy-oriented institutions where emotional resilience and professional neutrality form the cornerstone of communicative success.

– **Literature review.** Research on emotional regulation and interpreter neutrality has gained considerable attention in interpreting studies over the last two decades. Early studies by Gile and Setton emphasized the interpreter’s cognitive load, noting that simultaneous interpreting requires real-time coordination of comprehension, memory, and speech production. Later, psycholinguistic approaches expanded this framework by integrating the affective dimension, recognizing that interpreters continuously manage emotions while maintaining fluency and neutrality.

Pöchhacker argues that neutrality in diplomatic interpreting should be understood not as emotional absence but as controlled empathy a deliberate adjustment to maintain professional balance [5]. Kalina highlights that interpreters engage in “emotional filtering,” selectively suppressing personal responses to ensure impartial transmission of meaning [3]. This aligns with Riccardi’s findings that interpreter neutrality is shaped by institutional expectations and political sensitivity, particularly in high-stakes diplomatic events [6]. Recent studies in psycholinguistics, including works by Moser-Mercer and Bontempo & Napier, explore how emotional self-regulation mechanisms such as reappraisal and suppression directly affect performance quality and decision-making under stress. Furthermore, research on empathy control and affective dissonance in interpreting demonstrates that interpreters develop adaptive strategies to mitigate emotional contagion from speakers [2].

In the context of United Nations interpreting, emotional neutrality emerges as both a cognitive and ethical construct. It ensures communicative stability and prevents ideological bias in multilingual negotiations. Despite this growing body of research, few empirical studies have examined how interpreters in English–Russian diplomatic settings specifically regulate emotions at a psycholinguistic level thus defining the gap this study aims to address.

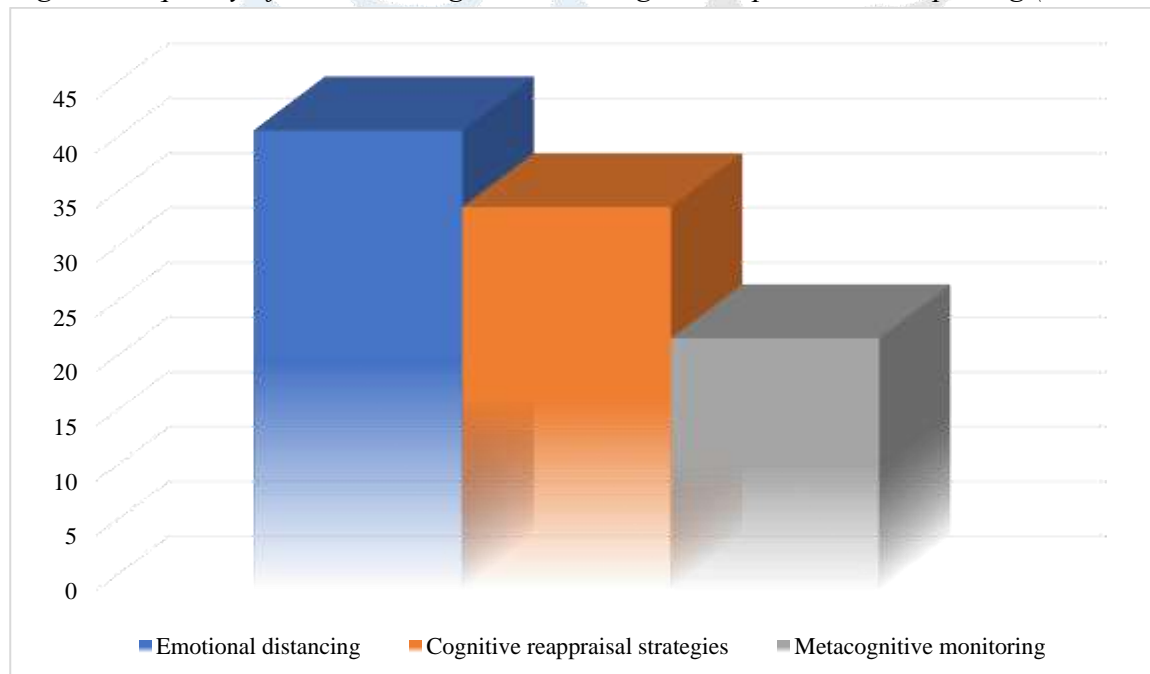
– **Research methodology.** This study employs a qualitative psycholinguistic approach to examine emotional regulation and interpreter neutrality in English–Russian diplomatic simultaneous interpreting. The research is based on authentic United Nations (UN) conference recordings and transcripts from 2018–2023, focusing on sessions dealing with politically sensitive topics such as peacekeeping, sanctions, and humanitarian negotiations. These materials were selected because they provide real instances of interpreters’ cognitive and emotional engagement under diplomatic pressure. Data were analyzed using discourse and prosodic analysis methods to identify emotional cues intonation shifts, pauses, self-corrections and corresponding interpreting strategies. Particular attention was given to segments where interpreters faced emotional tension, such as confrontational dialogue or persuasive rhetoric. The analytical framework integrates Moser-Mercer’s stress-cognition interaction model and Gile’s Effort Model, which together explain how interpreters regulate affective and cognitive processes simultaneously [4]. Additionally, thematic coding was applied to interpreter

commentary and UN interpreter training documents to trace patterns of emotional self-regulation, cognitive reappraisal, and neutrality maintenance. Combining linguistic and psychophysiological perspectives allows for a holistic understanding of how interpreters achieve equilibrium between accuracy and emotional restraint. This methodology thus bridges theoretical psycholinguistics and practical interpreting studies within real diplomatic environments.

– **Results/Discussion.** The analysis of UN interpreting data revealed three dominant strategies interpreters employed to manage emotions and preserve neutrality during diplomatic sessions. First, emotional distancing emerged as a primary mechanism: interpreters consciously avoided affective identification with speakers by focusing on message structure rather than tone or intent. This strategy minimized emotional contagion and ensured linguistic precision. Second, cognitive reappraisal was frequently observed when interpreters reframed emotionally charged expressions into neutral equivalents, thereby maintaining diplomatic decorum without altering meaning. Third, metacognitive monitoring allowed interpreters to self-assess their emotional state in real time, adjusting speech rate, tone, and lexical choice to sustain balance between empathy and detachment.

Prosodic analysis indicated that interpreters maintained stable pitch and rhythm even during confrontational exchanges, reflecting controlled physiological responses. Discourse analysis further showed that moments of heightened emotional intensity correlated with longer pauses and lexical simplification, confirming the impact of affective load on processing. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that interpreter neutrality in diplomatic contexts is achieved through dynamic, psycholinguistically grounded emotional regulation strategies.

Figure. Frequency of emotional regulation strategies in diplomatic interpreting (UN Data).



The findings confirm that emotional regulation is an integral part of professional interpreting competence, particularly in diplomatic contexts where neutrality and precision are paramount. The predominance of emotional distancing demonstrates that interpreters actively create cognitive space to separate personal reactions from political discourse. This aligns with Kalina’s view of “emotional filtering” as a mechanism to sustain impartiality. Similarly, the frequent use of cognitive reappraisal

supports Pöchhacker's argument that neutrality involves controlled empathy rather than emotional suppression.

Metacognitive monitoring, though less frequent, was essential in moments of heightened tension, validating Setton's theory of interpreters' self-regulatory awareness. These strategies collectively reveal that neutrality is not a static state but a dynamic process of emotional adjustment influenced by linguistic, cognitive, and situational factors. The results reinforce Moser-Mercer's stress-cognition interaction model, illustrating how interpreters transform affective pressure into cognitive focus. Ultimately, the study highlights the psycholinguistic sophistication of diplomatic interpreters who navigate emotional complexity while maintaining communicative equilibrium.

– **Conclusion.** This study examined how English–Russian diplomatic interpreters regulate emotions and maintain neutrality within the high-pressure environment of United Nations conferences. The psycholinguistic analysis demonstrated that emotional regulation is not merely a background skill but a core element of interpreting performance. Interpreters actively employ strategies such as emotional distancing, cognitive reappraisal, and metacognitive monitoring to manage affective load while ensuring the accuracy, impartiality, and coherence of their output.

The results indicate that emotional control enables interpreters to transform stress into focused attention and maintain professional detachment without losing empathetic awareness. This dynamic balance reflects the essence of diplomatic interpreting, where both linguistic precision and emotional intelligence are indispensable. The study supports the theoretical frameworks of Gile and Moser-Mercer, emphasizing the interdependence of cognitive and affective processes in simultaneous interpreting.

These insights contribute to interpreter training and professional ethics by underscoring the need for systematic development of emotional resilience, self-monitoring, and neutrality as key competencies for interpreters working in politically sensitive multilingual arenas.

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