

# Examining Psychological Quality Requirements and Training for English Interpreters in Sports Psychology

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## Abstract

In order to study the psychological quality requirements and training of English interpreters in sports psychology. This paper first introduces the main reasons of psychological stress and puts forward the influence of psychological quality on the effect of interpretation: inverted U hypothesis. Through the analysis, we can see that the interpretation process is a process full of passion, wits and courage. Behind the shadow of the language is also accompanied by a psychological contest. At present, the interpretation courses offered in domestic universities mainly focus on interpretation training under different situations and technical training in the process of instantaneous conversion of two languages, and practice has proved that psychological quality training is also necessary for interpreters. When students go out of the classroom and step into the society, the good psychological quality established in the process of interpretation training can benefit them for life. Interpreting, like sports competitions, is conducted on-site. As interpreters, like athletes, there is an optimal level of arousal psychologically. When the level of psychological tension reaches this optimal arousal point, the interpreting effect will reach its best level. As an on-site translator, one also needs to possess some special psychological characteristics. In our interpretation class teaching, students should be consciously trained in psychological qualities.

**Keywords:** Sports Psychology, English Interpreter, Psychological Quality Requirements, Train.

## Introduction

Interpreters should be an encyclopedia with a deep understanding of various knowledge in order to make quick and accurate translations; Interpreters should also be versatile and have in-depth research in various fields such as national politics and economic development. Such great demands on interpreters in interpretation work will naturally cause them to have greater psychological stress. Only when there is pressure can there be motivation. Pressure may urge interpreters to keep learning, make adequate preparations, and help them focus on their work. However, stress may have more negative effects, causing interpreters to experience emotions such as tension and impatience during the work process (Feddersen et al., 2021). Excessive tension can interfere with interpreters' thinking, perception, memory, and other abilities, and may lead to problems such as short circuits in the brain and word poverty during translation. Anxiety can make interpreters unable to calm their emotions, resulting in a strong sense of failure and frustration. There are many reasons why interpreters have great psychological stress, some of which are due to their own high requirements, and some of which are due to the high expectations of the outside world. Only when they have a full understanding of the generation of pressure, can they do the right thing

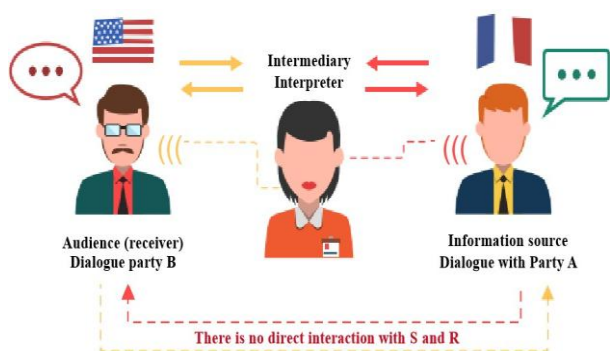
and take effective coping strategies. Figure 1 shows the Cognitive psychology of the communicative function of interpretation. As we know, interpretation, as a translation activity starting from "listening", has a great limitation in time. As an interpreter, there is not much time to think about the original language, to criticize the speaker's language habits, or even to choose sudden meeting situations. The oppression of time brings great psychological stress to interpreters, especially consecutive interpretation, especially simultaneous interpretation. So what supports interpreters to cope with unexpected situations on the translation site and ultimately complete translation tasks in the midst of intense translation thinking? In this regard, we can draw some inspiration from the process of athletes winning competitions. We know that in order for athletes to win the competition, they need to deal with various unexpected situations from the scene, and must have strong psychological qualities as the basic condition (Ernberg et al., 2023). This strong psychological quality is often the key for athletes to achieve victory. For example, most high-level table tennis players believe that psychological quality is an important factor affecting their performance on the spot. Some athletes summarize their own experiences, such as "psychological factors are important factors that affect whether you can perform at your best", "relaxing a little on the field can

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better achieve a higher level", and "feeling that if you adjust your mentality well, your level will naturally be displayed". The interpretation process has a certain similarity to sports competitions, as if it is conducted in a complex scene. This puts forward the same requirements for interpreters in terms of psychological quality as athletes, that is, for interpreters to cope freely in the interpreting field, they not only need to have the necessary intellectual factors for various cognitive skills, but also have good psychological quality. In view of the similarity of Psychological stress between athletes and interpreters in the process of sports competition and interpretation, we can interpret some problems of interpreters' psychological quality from the perspective of sports psychology (Shanskova et al., 2021).



**Figure 1** Cognitive Psychology of Interpreting Communicative Functions.

As is well known, interpretation, as a translation activity that starts with "listening," has significant limitations in terms of time. As an interpreter, I don't have much time to think about the original language, criticize the speaker's language habits, and even choose sudden meeting scenes. The pressure of time has brought great psychological stress to interpreters, especially continuous interpretation, especially simultaneous interpretation. So, what supports interpreters to respond to unexpected situations in the translation scene during intense translation thinking and ultimately complete translation tasks? In this regard, we can draw inspiration from the process of athletes winning the competition. We know that for athletes to win the competition, they need to respond to various unexpected situations from the scene and must possess strong psychological qualities as the basic condition. This strong psychological quality is often the key to winning for athletes. For example, most high-level table tennis players believe that psychological quality is an important factor affecting their on-site performance. Some athletes summarized their experiences, such as 'psychological factors are important factors that affect whether you can perform at your best'; 'relaxing a little on the field can better achieve higher levels', and 'feeling that if you adjust your mindset well,

your level will naturally show up'. There is a certain similarity between the commentary process and sports competitions, as if it were carried out in a complex scene. This puts forward the same requirements for the psychological quality of interpreters as athletes, that is, for interpreters to freely respond in the field of interpretation, they not only need to possess the necessary intellectual factors for various cognitive skills, but also need to possess good psychological qualities. The purpose of Cvetkov, V is to evaluate students' expression of tolerance towards themselves during training organized by the Russian Ministry of the Interior. The research methods adopted are theoretical analysis and comparative analysis, summarization, interpretation and reinterpretation of scientific data, and existing practices; Empirical methods: dialogue method, survey method, expert evaluation method. The research sample includes trainees and students from the Higher Education Organization of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs (94 respondents, aged between 18 and 22, 63 males and 31 females). The issue of forming a sense of tolerance, the structure of tolerance, the importance of tolerance in police professional activities, and the issues in police training and career development were considered (Cvetkov & Hrustaleva, 2021). In view of the similarity of psychological stress between athletes and interpreters in the process of sports competition and interpretation, we can explain some problems of interpreters' psychological quality from the perspective of sports psychology.

## Methodology

### Interpreter's Own Personality Reasons

A person's personality determines their attitude and way of doing things. Personality mainly refers to the intensity of their psychological activities (the strength of emotional fluctuations, the seriousness of handling things), the speed of psychological processes (flexibility of thinking, sensitivity of reflection, speed of perception), and the direction of psychological activities. These characteristics can all affect the interpreter's performance in work and the way they handle things. Some interpreters themselves are easily excited, and if they encounter some unpleasant things or make mistakes in their work, it is difficult to calm their emotions and magnify the situation; Some interpreters are silent and do not like to express their thoughts or opinions, but instead keep them hidden in their hearts; Some interpreters are cautious in their handling of affairs, have flexible thinking, and can achieve proficiency in their work. Interpreters will be in a state of high mental tension and high concentration for a long time

when working. If interpreters have defects in their personality and are not good at easing their emotions, they will have strong psychological stress, which will affect work and life.

### **Evaluate the Impact of Concerns**

Interpreters usually perform live translations to many listeners on large occasions. Modern psychologists believe that when people are in any situation where evaluation mechanisms exist, it is generally difficult for them to truly demonstrate their level. Interpreters working in such an environment where there are numerous reviews inevitably generate pressure, especially when there are their own leaders or foreigners in these reviews, and when translating to someone with higher skills, their pressure will be even greater. Especially when translating to colleagues in other countries, the other party is like a bilingual reviewer, who will compare the translations translated by the interpreter with the same source language. The greatest pressure is on national leaders' interpreters, as all their activities receive global attention, which means that the evaluation of interpreters becomes a global audience, and their mistakes in work will be exposed to the public. Interpreters are worried about the quality of translation work. The greater the psychological stress, the more difficult it will be for them to play in their work (Tahani et al., 2021).

### **Interpreter Skills Are Not Proficient, and Preparation Work is Insufficient**

The proficiency of interpreters directly affects the progress of translation work. When interpreters have undergone long-term training and all their skills have reached an automated state, they do not need to control their thoughts and ideas at the translation site. All actions will be carried out according to their regular training process, and they will complete the work completely unconsciously. However, if interpreters do not have proficient skills, they will make mistakes during the translation process. The more mistakes they make, the less courage they will have to carry on the work, resulting in a serious psychological burden. Therefore, interpreters must learn more and accumulate experience before starting their work to ensure that the skills they have mastered are competent for this job. With proficient skills, preparation work is also quite important. Before work, interpreters can only make good translations by knowing themselves and the others. Before interpreting, one should first fully clarify the agenda of the meeting and grasp the overall situation of the translation work; Secondly, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of

the target audience and personal speaking skills and preferences; Once again, it is important to become more familiar with professional terminology related to the translated content, and so on. As long as the interpreters have good basic knowledge and experience to pave the way, coupled with careful preparation, there will not be too much psychological stress (Rohrbasser et al., 2022).

### **Unfamiliarity with the Work Environment**

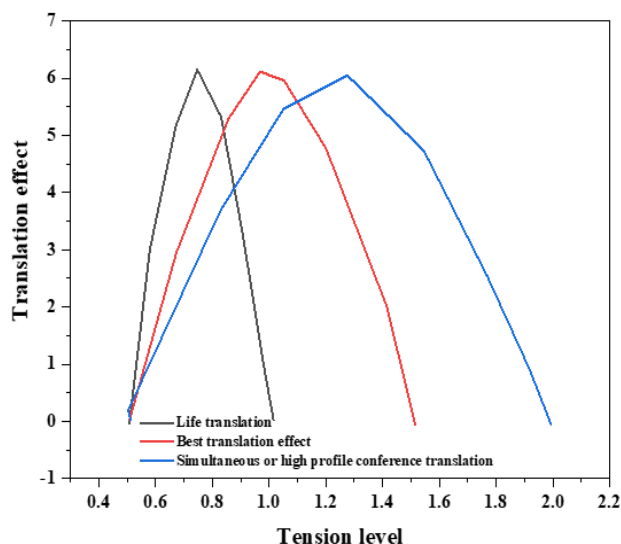
Changes in the working environment, place, form, etc. will cause interpreters' psychological tension and psychological stress. Interpreters may have participated in many training courses and have rich experience. During the training, their brain reflexes are quite fast. However, upon arrival at the translation site, there may be phenomena such as short circuits in the brain and poor vocabulary. The main reason for this is the lack of adaptability to the working environment. When people gather in a crowd, they will be more and more powerful. Interpreters are usually used to training in a small environment. Once they enter the big environment, even if the audience may not pose any threat to them, it will also make interpreters have greater psychological stress.

### **The Influence of Psychological Quality on Interpretation Effectiveness: The Inverted U-shaped Hypothesis**

The "inverted U-shaped hypothesis" in sports psychology points out that any behavior has an optimal arousal level, above or below which performance may not be ideal. Athletes' mental state can only achieve their best performance when they reach the optimal arousal level point. In the process of interpreting, interpreters need to have a moderate level of tension to ensure high concentration and quick analysis and integration of the received source language information. But once this tension is too high, the entire brain function will lose balance, leading to confusion and even shielding. Only when there is a perfect combination of intellectual and psychological factors can interpreters fully utilize their abilities, allowing their translation thoughts to flow like flowing clouds and reach the highest level of interpretation.

The relationship between an interpreter's level of tension and translation performance is shown in Figure 2. Insufficient or excessive tension can lead to unsatisfactory translation performance. Only when the level of tension reaches an optimal arousal level, which can be said to be the optimal value, can an interpreter perform the best translation performance. Overall, the relationship between the translator's level of tension and translation effectiveness presents an inverted U-shaped curve. Of course, the so-called optimal level of tension will also vary

depending on the nature of the translation task. For example, the optimal tension value for simultaneous interpretation is higher than that for consecutive interpretation, and for high-level meetings or meeting activities, the optimal tension value is higher than that for ordinary daily life translation. Interpreters should adjust their psychological state in a timely manner based on the nature of the translation task.



**Figure 2:** The Relationship Between the Degree of Tension Exhibited by The Inverted U-Shaped Hypothesis and Translation Effectiveness.

### Psychological Characteristics That Interpreters Should Possess

Supporting excellent athletes in the competition with a strong psychological quality of fearlessness and daring to fight, in addition to a competitive mindset and self-confidence, they also need to possess psychological qualities such as stability and optimism that can balance the competition pressure. Similarly, interpreters in dynamic processes also need to possess excellent psychological qualities that can balance work pressure and stimulate internal potential. These psychological qualities can be specifically divided into the following six aspects:

**Expressiveness:** Interpreters should exhibit a more exciting expression state than usual in the interpreting arena and be able to exert subjective initiative to respond to various situations that arise at the interpreting scene.

**Concentration:** When performing interpretation work, interpreters need to be highly focused in a short period of time, focusing on a particular translation task without being disturbed by other external factors. In the process of Ear training and translation training at ordinary times, we should also concentrate.

**Confidence:** For interpreters, confidence is not innate but built on a large amount of interpretation training. This training not only improves their translation skills, but also continuously makes them experience a sense of success. The more successful they experience, the more solid a sense of confidence is established in their hearts. Confidence is built on sufficient training, which in turn optimizes the training effect.

**Stability:** Unpredictable unexpected situations may occur at the interpretation site, such as the speaker changing the speech draft temporarily, and the occurrence of incomprehensible proprietary terms during the interpretation process. At this point, interpreters must remain calm and stable to adjust their mindset in a timely manner, find solutions, and complete interpretation tasks to the maximum extent possible.

**Optimism:** Optimism is manifested as stability during the interpretation process, but before the specific implementation of the interpretation work, especially when the interpreter accepts a translation work involving important leaders or higher levels, they will experience varying degrees of tension, and even doubt whether they can complete the interpretation work. At this point, the interpreter needs to make corresponding psychological adjustments, implying that they will be able to successfully complete the interpretation work. A good mindset is a prerequisite for successfully completing interpreting work (Pan et al., 2022).

**Exploratory:** Before each interpretation work, it is necessary to prepare as much as possible for the translation content. After the interpretation work is completed, it is also necessary to make a timely summary of the application of interpretation skills.

### Interpreter Psychological Quality Training Program

#### Attention Concentration Training Method

Attention and concentration are the ability to remain fully focused on a specific goal, without being distracted by other internal and external stimuli. In interpretation training, we require students to focus on listening to information and not be disturbed by other external stimuli during the process of obtaining information. Understanding "is the first and most critical stage of the entire interpretation process. If an interpreter cannot achieve high mental concentration during the interpretation process, it will be difficult to make a complete and accurate translation of the information they hear. At present, most of the interpretation courses offered in domestic colleges and universities are taught in multimedia listening classrooms. When implementing Ear training, the content of the corpus should follow the

sequence from general paragraph information to paragraph information containing specific information step by step. At the beginning, students can be given a passage of language material, asking them to summarize the meaning of the passage. The language used for summarizing can gradually transition from their mother tongue to the target language. When translating, it is not necessary to stick to the form of the original text, but more importantly, to grasp the central meaning of the paragraph. After a period, segment translation can introduce listening and translation training that includes specific information such as numbers, place names, person names, titles, and time. Compared to segment translation, the listening and translation of specific information requires absolute accuracy, which will put higher demands on students' concentration level. For a corpus, teachers can declare to students in advance that it will only be played once. After listening, students are required to retell or translate it in their mother tongue, which requires them to be highly focused when listening to the corpus. Of course, after the teacher completes the preliminary assessment, they can further play the corpus repeatedly to the students, and even have the teacher help organize it. This can not only reduce the psychological burden on students, but also help them summarize their shortcomings in listening and translation in a timely manner.

Of course, while proposing to focus, it is also important to remind students to shift and allocate their attention in a timely and reasonable manner. In the simulation training method that will be mentioned later, in a simulated and authentic atmosphere, students' energy will unconsciously be highly concentrated. However, in the actual interpretation process, it is also necessary to understand how to transfer and allocate attention reasonably. A narrative corpus, especially multiple attributives or paragraph information in the form of parallelism, can focus on capturing the central idea of the paragraph without being limited to the form of the original language in terms of energy allocation. But for the specific information listed, it is necessary to remember as accurately as possible. Integrating attention concentration, transfer, and allocation training into specific practical interpretation training will produce the best results, and students are most likely to resonate.

### **Simulation Training Method**

Simulation training is a repeated practice process aimed at simulating situations or problems that may arise at the interpreting scene, with the aim of adapting to various interpreting environments and ensuring that

interpreters can perform their interpreting skills normally in any environment. The core idea of simulation training is adaptation. The simulation training method restores the scene of the interpretation scene to the greatest extent through role setting in the classroom, enabling students to experience how to allocate attention reasonably in a relatively realistic environment, and learn how to cope with unexpected situations in the interpretation scene, experiencing the unpredictability of the interpretation scene. Before practicing, teachers should assign tasks to students, such as arranging them to play the roles of speakers, interpreters, and listeners, or as exhibitors, interpreters, and foreign businessmen. Speakers and exhibitors need to gather information in advance, prepare the speech content, and preferably use some simple props to enhance the atmosphere of the venue. Translators can be divided into two groups to translate for both sides. As listeners and foreign businessmen, we should prepare some questions in conjunction with the theme and interact with the speaker and exhibitors on-site through interpreters. When assigning roles, teachers should try to ensure that every student has the opportunity to exercise and show themselves.

At the initial stage, students often experience language and body movements that are not coordinated due to the need to remember their lines during the performance process, or some students with poor psychological qualities may appear at a loss, their eyes may wander, and their speech may be unclear when acting as interpreters. At this point, teachers need to provide correct guidance. In the implementation of simulation training, on-site performance is more important than language. Only by fully immersing oneself in the performance state, students may also find a sense of real-life interpretation. In the real process of interpreting, language is often not the only way to solve problems.

### **Cognitive Regulation and Self Suggestion Training Method**

The training of cognitive regulation is mainly carried out through self-suggestion, which is the process of using language and other stimuli to exert influence on people's psychology and thereby control behavior. During the interpretation process, interpreters often develop erroneous perceptions that can affect their psychological emotions and ultimately affect the overall interpretation effect. Therefore, it is necessary for us to adjust translators' misconceptions. Here we list some misconceptions and adjusted cognition as references, as shown in [Table 1 \(Pryahina & Potlachuk, 2021\)](#).

**Table 1***Misconception and Adjusted Cognition*

<b>Misconception</b>	<b>Adjusted Cognition</b>
I must do this translation well to prove myself. I hope the spokesperson can speak according to the prepared speech manuscript as it is. Simultaneous interpretation is a high-intensity translation process, but the speaker does not consider the interpreter's feelings at all, and the speed of speaking is terrifying.	I must fully prepare and do my best to do this translation well. If the spokesperson speaks off the cuff, I also have the ability to translate well. The evaluation criteria for interpretation cannot be equated with translation. In simultaneous interpreting, as long as I can translate 60-70% of the original meaning, it is great.

Everything has two aspects, and understanding from different perspectives can have different impacts on our psychology. For a translation task, if we can view the gains and losses correctly and do not exaggerate the potential impact of translation results, the pressure on interpreters will be reduced to the lowest point, thus focusing on the translation work itself. Specifically, the most effective way to adjust cognition is through self-suggestion. This method is to regulate the function of the autonomic nervous system through language cues, allowing the mind and muscles to relax and achieve the best practical state. The specific language content can be "I am an excellent translator", "I have the ability to do such a translation well", "I am an expert in this field compared to others", "Don't be too harsh on yourself, the evaluation standards for interpretation and translation are different after all", and so on. Of course, in addition to self-suggestion, interpreters can also relieve their tense emotions before interpreting through methods such as "closed eye meditation" and "deep breathing".

#### **Make A Correct Evaluation of The Interpretation Process**

When summarizing one's interpretation performance, the correct evaluation of the interpretation process directly affects whether an interpreter can develop a healthy psychological quality. The common saying in the arena that 'win without pride, lose without discouragement' is a vivid portrayal of this process. Having done a successful interpretation, the effect was very good and was recognized by many industry insiders. As an interpreter, one should never "take one as a hundred" and assume that one's interpretation level has reached an unparalleled level. However, if one experiences a failed interpretation, one should never fail and negate all of their strengths. Whether it is the "arrogance" after victory or the "frustration" after failure, it is contradictory to the actual situation. This psychological imbalance will eventually become a psychological burden, which will affect the psychological recovery of interpreters after translation. If the interpreter can objectively view the highlights and problems of the

interpretation process after each interpretation, then the psychological quality of the interpreter will improve with an increase of interpretation experience.

## **Conclusion**

In view of the similarity of psychological stress between athletes and interpreters in the process of sports competition and interpretation, we can interpret some problems of interpreters' psychological quality from the perspective of sports psychology. Analysis shows that interpretation, like sports competitions, is conducted on-site. As interpreters, like athletes, there is an optimal level of arousal psychologically. When the level of psychological tension reaches this optimal arousal point, the interpretation effect will reach its best level. As on-site interpreters, we also need to possess some special psychological characteristics. In our interpretation class teaching, students should be consciously trained in psychological qualities.

#### **Positively View One's Tense Emotions**

Interpretation itself is an art of regret, and it is impossible to achieve perfection in translation. Psychologists believe that to effectively eliminate the impact of psychological tension, it is necessary to actively face challenges and optimistically accept the flaws in translation work. If the interpreter is too demanding for perfection and likes to compete in everything, it will naturally cause greater psychological stress. The interpreter should treat his work with a calm attitude, not as work, but as communication in daily life. In life, he should also achieve a combination of work and rest, relax, and do not limit himself to a tight atmosphere forever.

What methods should be used to debug interpreters when they experience nervousness? The most effective method is to divert attention. The famous singer Pavarotti is always very nervous and anxious before entering the stage, which seriously affects the singing effect. His assistant learned about this mentality and every time Pavarotti comes on stage, he nails a few nails in his line of sight. This way, when

Pavarotti performs, he will focus his attention on the nails and ignore the dark audience below. When interpreters experience tension, they should face it calmly and consider it a normal phenomenon. They should learn to shift their attention instead of resorting to extreme means to confront it. Fighting against tension and unease will only make them deeper and deeper.

### **Be Prepared Before Translation**

Former President of the United States, known as the "outstanding speaker," Lincoln once said, "Without sufficient preparation, even a strong person cannot deliver a systematic and organized speech." Adequate preparation work is of great help to the psychology of interpreters and the improvement of the quality of interpretation work. Firstly, the most important preparation to make is to recall one's past successful cases and recreate the situation at that time. This not only inspires interpreters to calmly and calmly handle their tasks, but also enables them to find the secret to victory, summarize successful experiences, and apply them to their work. Only by being good at discovering one's own strengths and flexibly applying them to various tasks can one achieve proficiency and enhance self-confidence. Then, different methods and channels should be used to gain a deeper understanding of the specific process of the entire event from the organizers. Although interpreters will receive a meeting flowchart before work, the content on the spreadsheet is only a summary and cannot be expressed in detail. Interpreters need to make their own efforts to conduct on-site understanding; At the same time, it is necessary to actively consult various sources of information and fully understand the personalities of each spokesperson. It is not only necessary to understand their work and interpersonal characteristics, but also to understand their daily routines.

A person's personality and lifestyle are directly related to their speaking skills and methods; For some professional terms that need to be involved in translation work, interpreters should also be able to proficiently master them (Budianto, 2021).

On March 14, 2010, Premier Wen Jiabao of the State Council met with Chinese and foreign journalists in the Great Hall of the People. Zhang Lu, one of the premier's chief translation officers, conquered the public through his calm, wisdom and professionalism. The premier likes ancient poetry and likes to quote ancient poetry when answering. Zhang Lu can quickly and accurately translate this ancient poetry into English, but also retains the cultural essence of ancient poetry. This is closely related to her daily accumulation. She understands the preferences of the Prime Minister, so she actively absorbs knowledge of ancient literature and records all the ancient poems and lyrics that the Prime Minister has said in a small notebook. She can review them anytime and anywhere, and ultimately achieve a sense of stability and elegance in times of danger.

### **Exercise One's Psychological Qualities**

One of the reasons for psychological stress is that the psychological quality is not strong enough, which is mainly due to the lack of emergency ability. Interpreting often faces various challenges, which have high requirements for interpreters' psychological quality, language skills, responsiveness and basic knowledge. In daily training, attention should be paid to cultivating the emergency response ability of interpreters. For example, these emergencies will be encountered in real translation work. If we can pay attention to this in the usual training and train more emergency ability, we believe that interpreters will not have much Psychological stress in their work (Maboloc & Eviota, 2021).

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