

## **The Application of pause\_edit to Sight Translation**

**Feng-lan Kuo, Heien-kun Chiang, Wei-chun Chen**

National Changhua University of Education (R.O.C.)

[lafkuo@cc.ncue.edu.tw](mailto:lafkuo@cc.ncue.edu.tw), [hkchiang@cc.ncue.edu.tw](mailto:hkchiang@cc.ncue.edu.tw), [caronchen88@hotmail.com](mailto:caronchen88@hotmail.com)

### **Abstract**

During interpretation, people pause to plan for speech, take a breath, aid comprehension, or fulfill other linguistic functions. However, interpreting experts such as Tissi, (2000) and Mead (2005) considered pauses as general indicators of disfluency. This paper therefore reports the findings of using a self-developed pause detection computer program to examine the pausing patterns of student interpreters' performance in two-way sight translations. First of all, a computer program PauseEdit is developed to accurately identify the location of a silent pause, to measure the length of each pause, and to count the total occurrences of pauses. This study then empirically analyzed the pausing patterns of 20 graduate students with different levels of interpreting training (9 advanced, 11 beginners). An English passage and its equivalent Chinese version were given to the subjects respectively to be read aloud once, and then the subjects immediately produced two-way sight translations. The results of the whole group revealed that between the two output languages, significant differences existed in pause frequency and distribution, but not for pause duration. Furthermore, it was found that these student interpreters performed significantly better when working from their passive language into active language than vice versa. Comparing the performance between the two subgroups, results further showed that the more experienced subjects made no noticeable difference on all three pausing parameters while the less trained subjects paused significantly more frequently and ungrammatically in English. This indicates that training does affect the subjects' pausing patterns.