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Amplification and Linguistic Amplification in Consecutive Interpreting of a Religious Sermon: A Study Based on Molina and Albir's Translation Techniques

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Abstract

This study analyzes the frequency and realization of Amplification and Linguistic Amplification in the consecutive interpreting of a religious sermon, based on the 18 translation techniques of Molina and Albir (2002). A total of 339 utterance units were classified using Claude AI as an initial classification aid, after which all results were rechecked and corrected manually by the researcher. The two techniques combined account for 142 units (41.9%), consisting of 115 units of Amplification (81%) and 27 units of Linguistic Amplification (19%). Amplification adds new information, mainly through the addition of phrases, explanations, and clauses, whereas Linguistic Amplification takes the form of synonym duplication or rhetorical reinforcement without new information. A qualitative reading of selected examples shows that some instances of Amplification serve as clarification, while others may risk shifting the meaning of the source. This study contributes to interpreting studies through a criterion for distinguishing the two techniques in oral data and through the identification of the risk of meaning shift in the addition of information. Because the data come from a single sermon and a single interpreter, the findings cannot yet be generalized.

1. Introduction

Translation and interpreting are both oriented toward conveying meaning from a source language to a target language (Bühler, 2002), but they differ in process. Translation works with written text that can still be revised, whereas interpreting works with oral speech without an opportunity for revision (Jayantini, 2024; Gile, 2004; Pöchhacker, 2016). Interpreting is divided into consecutive, simultaneous, and liaison interpreting (Trisnawati & Netta, 2020; Jayantini, 2024). The interpreter's role becomes crucial when a pastor from abroad preaches to a congregation that speaks a different language, because the interpreter must bridge spiritual meaning, cultural distance, and the pastor's delivery

style spontaneously and in real time. Because both activities are oriented toward meaning, Molina and Albir's (2002) classification of 18 techniques can in principle be used to analyze interpreting.

However, its application is not automatic. The classification was formulated from products of written translation that can be revised, whereas interpreting produces spontaneous oral output. Techniques that demand careful lexical consideration, such as Established Equivalent or Calque, logically emerge more readily in a written process than in spontaneous speech. Molina and Albir (2002) themselves note that Linguistic Amplification is commonly used in consecutive interpreting and dubbing. This means that at least one of the two techniques examined here has already been associated with oral contexts by the original authors. This provides a theoretical foothold as well as a reason for caution, since the transferability of the entire classification to spontaneous speech cannot be assumed without adaptation.

Studies that apply Molina and Albir's classification to planned written texts show a fairly consistent pattern: Established Equivalent and Literal Translation dominate, while Amplification and Linguistic Amplification appear in small percentages or not at all (Savitri & Budiati, 2024; Fauzi, 2022; Armyla et al., 2022). Darmayanti et al. (2019) are a partial exception: they focus on Amplification and find that the technique is used to add implicit information needed by target readers, but their data are still written text (a novel). Meanwhile, Ngana et al. (2020) study sermon interpreting using an interpreting strategy framework (Pöchhacker, 2004), not a translation technique classification, and do not analyze text units quantitatively. Of these five studies, those based on Molina and Albir's classification rest on written text, while the study of sermon interpreting uses a different framework. In the literature reviewed, the distribution of Molina and Albir's techniques in oral interpreting has not been widely tested systematically. Because the number of studies reviewed is limited, this conclusion is tentative and not a generalization.

The oral and spontaneous nature of consecutive interpreting in sermons gives reason to expect a pattern of technique distribution different from that of written text. At least four contextual factors support this expectation: (1) theological concepts that are often implicit and require additional explanation for lay audiences; (2) cultural distance between pastor and congregation that demands explicit bridging of meaning; (3) the accessibility needs of a heterogeneous audience; and (4) real-time pressure that limits the opportunity to search for precise equivalents. These factors serve only as the basis for an expectation, not as explanations tested in this study.

On this basis, Amplification (the addition of new information) is expected to be more dominant than Linguistic Amplification, which only reinforces style without adding information. The addition of information by an interpreter is also not always neutral. A distinction needs to be made between additions that clarify meaning already implicit in the ST and additions that have the potential to become interpretive intervention, namely when the interpreter inserts specificity, motives, or nuances that cannot be confirmed to exist in the ST. Because Amplification by definition adds new information, this technique carries a risk of meaning shift that other techniques do not. This consideration is discussed further in the Discussion section.

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To the best of the researchers' knowledge, studies that specifically analyze Amplification and Linguistic Amplification in the consecutive interpreting of religious sermons remain limited in the literature reviewed. Based on this gap, this study addresses two questions:

1. What are the frequency and percentage of Amplification and Linguistic Amplification in the data, and which technique is more dominant?
2. How are the two techniques realized by the interpreter, as seen in concrete examples from the data?

The novelty of this study lies in the application of Molina and Albir's (2002) classification, focused on Amplification and Linguistic Amplification, to the consecutive interpreting of religious sermons, a context that, in the literature reviewed, has not been widely studied with this framework.

2. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the realization of translation techniques in oral interpreting data. This approach is relevant because the realization of meaning in spontaneous speech needs to be read contextually and cannot be adequately measured quantitatively. The frequency of each technique is still counted, but its realization and its impact on meaning are read qualitatively based on the context of each data unit. The data source is the video recording of the sermon "Coping 25/1/26 Pastor Brian" on the official YouTube channel of The Potter's House Bali, uploaded on 25 January 2026, with a duration of 42 minutes 53 seconds. The video is a public broadcast accessible to anyone. The study does not involve human subjects directly and therefore does not require formal ethical approval, in line with the conventions of research based on public audiovisual data in interpreting studies.

The unit of analysis is one utterance by the pastor together with its oral equivalent by the interpreter. Short utterances are counted as one unit. Long utterances containing more than one proposition are split by sentence so that a single unit does not contain too many techniques. The boundaries of a proposition are determined through the researcher's contextual judgment, not a fixed quantitative threshold. The initial transcript was obtained from YouTube's automatic captions and then corrected manually by replaying the recording, for both the source utterances (English) and the target utterances (Indonesian), because automatic captions are prone to errors in spontaneous speech and religious terminology. The ST and TT were then aligned manually based on the correspondence of speech units. The analysis was carried out in five stages.

1. The researcher watches and listens to the entire recording to understand the content of the message.
2. The transcript is corrected manually.
3. The ST and TT are aligned manually.
4. Each unit is classified into one of the 18 techniques of Molina and Albir (2002) in two stages: initial classification with the assistance of Claude AI, followed by manual verification by the researcher of all initial classifications.
5. Units containing Amplification or Linguistic Amplification are selected for further analysis in the Discussion section.

Claude AI was used only as an aid for the initial classification, not as the final decider. The researcher entered the transcript together with the definitions of the 18 techniques, then gave a prompt in Indonesian, the researcher's mother tongue, to make checking the results easier. The prompt used (quoted verbatim) was: "Analisis data ini menggunakan teknik Molina & Albir (2002), pilih salah satu teknik yg dominan antara 18 teknik berikut ditaruh di kolom techniques dan besertakan alasannya di taruh di bagian Reason" (English gloss: "Analyze this data using the techniques of Molina & Albir (2002); choose one dominant technique among the following 18 techniques and put it in the techniques column, and include the reason in the Reason column"). The same prompt was used for all units. Because the prompt asks for one dominant technique per unit, this design is single-label. As a result, the absence of units showing both techniques at once is a consequence of the design, not the result of testing for overlap. This is acknowledged as a limitation and discussed in the Conclusion.

All AI outputs were rechecked by the researcher by matching each classification and its reasoning against the definitions of Molina and Albir (2002). Where they did not match, the researcher corrected the technique and rewrote the reasoning. A unit is categorized as Amplification when the TT contains information, details, or specifications that are not explicitly present in the ST and that change or add to the propositional content of the message. A unit is categorized as Linguistic Amplification when the TT contains an expansion of linguistic form (for example, synonym duplication) that makes the utterance longer without adding new information, where the difference in meaning between the duplicated elements is stylistic, not propositional.

This study was conducted by a single researcher without a second coder (independent coder). The final classification was reviewed by the thesis supervisor as part of standard supervision, not as independent expert validation in the sense of inter-coder reliability. Therefore, the level of agreement (inter-rater reliability) cannot be reported quantitatively, and the results of this study constitute a single interpretation that requires replication.

3. Results

Of the 339 data units classified with Molina and Albir's (2002) 18 techniques, 142 units (41.9%) were found to contain Amplification or Linguistic Amplification. Among these 142 units, Amplification was far more dominant with 115 occurrences (81%), compared with Linguistic Amplification with 27 occurrences (19%), as shown in Table 1. Because the classification is single-label (see Method), each unit is counted only once.

Table 1. Total frequency amplification and linguistic Amplification

Techniques	Frequency	Percentage (%) of 142 units	Percentage (%) of 339 units
Amplification	115	81%	33,9%
Linguistic Amplification	27	19%	8%
Total	142	100%	41,9%

The two techniques show different realization patterns (Table 2). Amplification is realized in three forms: addition of a phrase (52.2%), unpacking or explanation (29.6%), and addition of a clause (18.3%). Phrase addition is the most frequent, but the other two forms together still account for nearly half of the data (47.8%). Linguistic Amplification is

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mostly (77.8%) realized as synonym duplication, and the remainder (22.2%) as rhetorical reinforcement, such as repetition of connectors or intensifiers.

Table 2. Pattern of amplification and linguistic Amplification realization

Realization Pattern	Amplification (n=115)	Linguistic Amplification (n=27)
Added Phrase	60 (52,2%)	-
Added Explanation	34 (29,6%)	-
Added Clause	21 (18,3%)	-
Synonym Duplication	-	21 (77,8%)
Rhetorical Reinforcement	-	6 (22,2%)

In this data, Amplification tends to be used to insert new informational content in various syntactic forms, whereas Linguistic Amplification tends to function as reinforcement of oral delivery style without adding to the content of the message.

4. Discussion

This section discusses how Amplification and Linguistic Amplification are realized by the interpreter in the data, as shown in Table 2. The discussion is organized around selected data points, three for each technique, covering the context of their occurrence in the sermon, a comparison between the source text and the target text, the rationale for classifying the technique based on whether the addition carries new information or merely repeats existing meaning in other words, as well as its impact on the congregation's understanding of the message.

Amplification

Data 1

00:02:47

ST : He had crisis after crisis.

TT: Dimana Yakub mengalami **berbagai macam permasalahan dari satu masalah ke masalah lain.**

Data 1 occurs in the opening narrative that introduces Jacob's life pattern as a figure who continually faces difficulties, before the pastor moves into the specific details of the story of Jacob and Esau. This technique is realized as unpacking/explanation, seen in the unpacking of the compact idiom "crisis after crisis" into the descriptive phrase "berbagai macam permasalahan dari satu masalah ke masalah lain" (literally, "various kinds of problems from one problem to another").

In terms of meaning, this steers the reading toward "diverse crises", which builds Jacob's characterization as a figure with complex life experiences. This realization shows a general tendency in translation to make explicit the meaning that is already implicitly contained in the ST, in this case the idea that "crisis after crisis" refers to various kinds of difficulties, not one repeated crisis. Because the ST idiom itself conventionally carries the meaning of "diverse and successive difficulties", this addition lies on the relatively safe side of clarification: the risk of meaning shift is low because the interpreter does not add genuinely new information, but only makes explicit what is already contained in the source idiom.

Data 2
00:03:18
ST: He would run from people
TT: bahkan lari dari orang orang **yang punya masalah dengan dia**

In Data 2, at minute 3, Pastor Brian recounts Jacob's habit of avoiding conflict with the people around him throughout his life, as a recurring behavioral pattern before he finally had to face Esau directly. This technique is realized as the addition of a clause, seen in the relative clause "yang punya masalah dengan dia" (literally, "who have problems with him") attached to the general word "people."

The use of this technique affects the meaning of the message by clarifying Jacob's behavioral pattern from a psychological point of view. The TT makes clear that Jacob was not merely avoiding other people in general, but specifically avoiding those with whom he was in conflict.

However, this addition needs to be read critically. The ST "people" is general and does not specify whom Jacob avoided, whereas the TT narrows this meaning to "orang-orang yang punya masalah dengan dia" ("people who have problems with him"), a specification that the pastor does not explicitly state at this point in the sermon. An addition of this kind lies on the boundary between contextual clarification (if the wider context of Jacob's story does imply this) and interpretive intervention (if the interpreter inserts an assumption about Jacob's motives that the pastor did not necessarily intend at that moment of speech). This data thus serves as a concrete example of the risk of meaning shift inherent in the Amplification technique, as discussed in the Introduction section.

Data 3
00:09:36
ST: And Jacob realizes he can no longer run
TT: Dan Yakub menyadari Akhirnya dia tidak bisa lagi lari **dari esa**

Data 3 occurs at minute 9, after the pastor recounts Esau's anger (00:08:41) and Jacob's flight (00:08:58), and before the pastor reads Genesis 32:6. This technique is realized as the addition of a phrase (added phrase), namely the prepositional phrase "dari Esa" ("from Esau") attached to the verb "run." In the ST, "run" has no complement, so the pastor does not state from whom Jacob can no longer run away. The TT fills this gap by naming Esau. In addition to this phrase, the TT adds the marker "akhirnya" ("finally"), which is not in the ST, but this marker is discourse-level and does not add propositional content, so "dari Esau" is the basis for classifying this unit.

Analytically, this addition makes explicit the object of Jacob's flight and emphasizes the turning point of the narrative, namely that Jacob can no longer avoid Esau. Unlike Data 2, the information added here has already been stated explicitly in the preceding narrative, so the addition lies on the side of context-supported clarification, and the risk of meaning shift is relatively low. A similar pattern recurs at minute 24:32 ("tidak bisa lagi lari dari si esa," "can no longer run from Esau"), so this addition appears to be a recurring tendency rather than a single occurrence. Data 3 also indicates that the level of risk in Amplification appears to depend more on how far the addition is supported by explicit context than on its linguistic form.

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Linguistic Amplification

Data 4

00:01:39

ST: That's his way of handling the crisis

TT: Itulah bagaimana caranya dia **menghadapi atau menangani** masalahnya

Data 4 occurs in the opening section, when Jacob's life pattern is being introduced, right after the pastor shows an image of a man in a crisis situation as an opening illustration. This technique is realized as synonym duplication, seen in the doubling of the single ST verb "handling" into two synonymous TT verbs, "menghadapi" ("to face") and "menangani" ("to handle"). These two words essentially refer to the same action, and neither adds any new detail. Because no new information is added, this unit is categorized as Linguistic Amplification.

Its impact on the meaning of the message is quite small in terms of content, because the duplication functions only as reinforcement of speaking style, making the statement about how Jacob handled his crisis sound firmer and easier to follow orally, without changing the congregation's understanding of what Jacob actually did about his problem.

Data 5

00:02:08

ST: Sometimes Asian people have trouble as well.

TT: Kadang kadang orang asia juga menghadapi **masalah atau tekanan**.

Data 5 occurs at minute 2, specifically in the part of the narrative that emphasizes that difficulty in facing crises is experienced not only by Westerners but also by Asians, serving as a bridge before the pastor moves into the story of Jacob as a concrete example from the Bible. This technique is realized as synonym duplication, seen in the doubling of the single ST word "trouble" into two synonymous TT words, "masalah" ("problem") and "tekanan" ("pressure"). Both refer to the same thing, and neither explains a different type or degree of severity. No new information arises from this duplication, so this unit is categorized as Linguistic Amplification.

Its impact on the meaning of the message is limited to emphasis in manner of speaking, not to the content of the message. The duplication strengthens the impression that the difficulty in question is pervasive and heavy, while also making the oral delivery sound more natural in a sermon, without changing the basic message that Asians also experience difficulty just as Westerners do.

Data 6

00:03:01

ST: He would run.

TT: yaitu dia **menghindarinya, melarikan diri**

Data 6 occurs in the description of Jacob's habitual response to difficulty, right before the narrative moves to specific events in his life, such as moving house and avoiding other people. This technique is realized as synonym duplication, seen in the doubling of the single ST word "run" (used figuratively, meaning to avoid) into two synonymous TT words, "menghindarinya" ("to avoid it") and "melarikan diri" ("to flee"). Both indicate the same act of evasion, and neither explains a different manner or degree of avoidance. Because

there is no additional information about how, why, or to what extent Jacob avoided, this unit is categorized as Linguistic Amplification.

In terms of meaning, this technique has more impact on manner of delivery than on the content of the message. The duplication strengthens the understanding that "run" here means avoiding in a psychological sense (not running literally), helping ensure that the congregation grasps the figurative meaning, while also adding emphasis that suits the oral style of sermon delivery, without changing the basic message that Jacob was accustomed to avoiding his difficulties.

The finding of this study, the dominance of Amplification over Linguistic Amplification at a ratio of 81:19, can be read in relation to Ngana, Suastra, and Puspani (2020), who also studied consecutive interpreting in religious sermons but used an interpreting strategy framework (not Molina and Albir's translation techniques). That study confirmed that consecutive interpreting is commonly used in sermon contexts, but did not quantify the distribution of strategies systematically as this study does. The similarity of context (religious sermon, consecutive interpreting) between the two studies supports the relevance of the contextual factors proposed in the Introduction, namely implicit theological content and the accessibility needs of the audience, as drivers of the use of information-adding strategies, although a direct quantitative comparison between the two studies cannot be made because of the difference in theoretical frameworks.

The critical reading of Data 2 above, which distinguishes clarification from interpretive intervention, was carried out by a single researcher without an independent comparison. The judgment about where the boundary lies between "context-supported clarification" and "interpretive intervention" is subjective and may differ between readers. This limitation is consistent with the absence of an independent coder acknowledged in the Method section, and is the reason this study does not claim a precise proportion of clarification versus intervention cases among the 115 Amplification data points as a whole, but rather offers a conceptual framework that can be applied more systematically in further research.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzes the frequency and realization of Amplification and Linguistic Amplification in the consecutive interpreting of Pastor Brian's sermon, based on Molina and Albir's (2002) classification of translation techniques. Of the 339 data units, 142 units (41.9%) were found to contain one of these two techniques, with Amplification far more dominant (115 units, 81%) than Linguistic Amplification (27 units, 19%). The two techniques show different realization patterns. Amplification most often takes the form of phrase addition (52.2%), followed by explanation (29.6%) and clause addition (18.3%), whereas Linguistic Amplification is mostly synonym duplication (77.8%). The main contribution of this study is the application, to oral interpreting data, of a distinction between the two techniques based on a single criterion: whether the addition carries new information or merely repeats the same meaning in other words.

This dominance of Amplification appears different from the tendency reported in studies based on written text, which are generally dominated by Established Equivalent or Literal Translation, but the comparison is tentative because of the limited number of comparison studies, as noted in the Introduction.

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The qualitative analysis shows that Amplification does not always carry the same level of risk to the meaning of the ST. In Data 1 and Data 3, the addition makes explicit meaning or a referent that is already contained in the source idiom or has already been stated in the preceding narrative, and is therefore supported by context. In Data 2, the addition narrows "people" to those in conflict with Jacob, which the ST does not state, placing it on the boundary between clarification and interpretive intervention. This study does not measure the extent to which such additions affect the congregation's understanding. The causes of the dominance of Amplification were also not tested. Factors such as sermon genre, cultural distance between pastor and congregation, interpreter style, the pastor's delivery style, and real-time pressure may play a role, but the influence of each cannot be separated in this study.

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