



3. Generic reflective exercises

These are generic exercises designed to be used with all IVY dialogues and monologues.

The exercises should be used after you have practised preparing and interpreting a particular monologue or dialogue. Here you are invited to think about the success (or otherwise) of your preparation, your interpreting performance and the interpreting assignment itself. Reflecting on the assignment in this way can help you to think about where improvements can be made and how you can improve your overall interpreting performance.

3.1 Reflecting on your preparation

Thinking about how you prepared for an assignment and how this helped (or otherwise) during the assignment can help you see to what extent your preparation was effective and how you could improve your preparation for your next assignment.

Reflecting on how you worked with the brief

Once you have finished interpreting, go back to the interpreting brief and consider whether there was any information in the brief that you missed or that could have been useful to prepare in advance. You could consider whether you had prepared effectively in terms of:

- The participants and their background
- The relationship between the participants
- The purpose of the communication
- The kind of language the speaker(s) used
- The kinds of communicative functions used in the monologue/dialogue
- Topic and subject-specific knowledge (see also below)
- Subject-specific terms and phrases (see also below)

If you researched any names of companies/organisations, places, people or events mentioned in the interpreting brief, did your research help you during the assignment? If so, how? If not, why not (e.g. they were not mentioned during the assignment, they were not the focus of the assignment)?

Would your reflections on how you prepared for this assignment change the way you carry out research for future assignments?

Reflecting on how you prepared the topic

Look back at the research you carried out to prepare for the topic and consider the following:

- How prepared you felt before carrying out the interpreting assignment (e.g. whether you felt confident that you were well prepared).
- How effective your research was (e.g. whether your research helped you with the assignment; whether you felt confident with your knowledge of the topic; whether there were any ideas that you could have explored in more depth during your preparation for the assignment).
- Whether there were any topics or subject matters that came up in the interpreting assignment that you had not prepared. If so, was there anything in the brief that could have given you a clue that this topic would come up?

Would your reflections on how you prepared the topic for this assignment change the way you carry out research for future assignments?

Reflecting on how you prepared words, terms and phrases

Look back at the research you carried out to prepare words, terms and phrases for the interpreting assignment and consider the following:

- How effective your research was (e.g. whether your research helped you with the assignment; whether you felt confident that you were able to grasp/retrieve the meaning of key words, terms and phrases, and that you knew how to use them appropriately in the given context).
- Whether there were any words, terms or phrases that came up in the interpreting assignment that you did not know. If so, add them to your glossary and research their meaning and usage for future reference.
- Whether the words, terms and phrases that were used in this assignment were used in the same way(s) as you had found in your research. If there were new uses, different contexts or useful collocations, add this information to your glossary.

Would your reflections on how you prepared the words, terms and phrases for this assignment change the way you carry out research for future assignments?

3.2 Reflecting on your interpreting performance

Think about the strengths and weaknesses of your interpreting performance and how your proficiency in the different skills involved in interpreting shaped your performance. Reflect on what you feel confident about, what you found difficult or challenging about the assignment, and what you could do to improve your interpreting performance.

Reflecting on source text comprehension

Think about the interpreting assignment you have just carried out in terms of how easy or difficult it was for you to understand the speaker, and the factors that affected your understanding.

- Think about the speed of the speech; the language used; how the idea(s) were presented (e.g. whether they were logically arranged, whether the speaker used connectors to link the main ideas). Were your strategies for coping with these aspects of the source text appropriate? What could you improve?
- Were the ideas or concepts the speaker(s) referred to simple or complex to grasp, and was the density of information low or high? How did you cope with concepts that were more complex to understand and with a higher density of information (e.g. by replaying the audio, stopping, taking notes to focus your cognitive resources on understanding the concepts)? Would you do the same again or would you use different strategies to understand more complex ideas and concepts?
- Was there anything in the text that you did not understand at all? If so, what were the reasons that you were not able to understand what was said (e.g. the ideas were too complex; there were words and terms you did not know; the speech was too quiet/mumbled)? How did you cope with this in your interpretation? Would you do the same in a future interpreting assignment or would you use a different strategy?

Reflecting on anticipation

Think about how you tried to anticipate what the speaker(s) was/were going to say next.

- Were you usually right about what the speaker was going to say next?
- If so, what helped you to anticipate what was coming next (e.g. certain words, certain communicative functions, your general knowledge)? If not, can you identify why you were not able to anticipate correctly (e.g. illogical order of information, unexpected items in the speech)?

Reflecting on your note-taking

Look back at the notes you made during the interpreting assignment. Think about the following:

- Whether you can still make sense of your notes now. If so, what features of your notes help you to make sense of your notes (e.g. your symbols/abbreviations are familiar to you; you know why you have laid out your notes the way you have; the links between ideas/sections of text are clear to you)? If not, what is it about your notes that make them difficult to use now (e.g. you have used symbols/abbreviations that you made up during the assignment; you cannot read your writing; the links between ideas are not clear)?
- Whether you took too many notes or not enough notes.
- How long it took you to make the notes and whether this slowed down your target text production.
- Whether you could have omitted anything in your notes. How can you justify omitting this from your notes?
- Whether you should have made a note of something that you did not note during the interpreting assignment. What was the effect of not noting this during the assignment (e.g. did you forget to render it in the target language; did you get the information wrong in your interpretation)?
- Which language(s) you made your notes in. Think about whether this is the most effective way of taking notes *for you*.

Based on your observations and reflections, assess your overall note-taking skill. Is there anything you would change for future interpreting assignments? If so, how are you going to practise this change so that you are familiar with it before your next interpreting assignment?

Now listen to the dialogue/monologue again and revise your original notes. Then think about the revisions you have made and why.

Listen to the dialogue/monologue for a third time and produce a more condensed version of notes. Compare your original/revised version and this shorter version. What are the main differences?

Reflecting on your target text production

Think back to your interpretation of the assignment. Consider:

- What you felt confident about and what you found difficult (e.g. finding appropriate words, terms or phrases in the target language; expressing ideas or concepts in the target language).
- If you were interpreting a dialogue, how your target text production in one language compared to your production in the other language. If you felt less comfortable in one language than in the other, how could you improve your performance (e.g. by working on grammar, vocabulary, communicative functions)?
- Whether you used an appropriate register and style for the target audience and for the situation.
- Whether you felt that your delivery was appropriate (e.g. whether you felt you spoke at an appropriate pace or too fast/slowly; too quietly/too loud; fluently/too hesitantly).

Based on these reflections, how do feel you could improve your interpreting performance?

3.3 Assessing your overall interpreting performance

Use the following assessment criteria or similar criteria (e.g. the ones used in your study programme for interpreting exams/assignments) to assess your own performance or the performance of your peer(s):

Overall assessment

Was the performance close to professional standard, fit for purpose?
Was the performance appropriate for the situation and the audience?

Preparation and focus

Was the interpreter familiar with the subject matter?
Did s/he know where to sit/stand?
Was s/he focused and ready to take notes right from the start?

Source text comprehension

Was the message understood accurately?
Was the message understood completely?

Target text production

Was the semantic and communicative content of message conveyed accurately?
Was the message conveyed without omissions, additions, distortions?
Was the target text message clear and logically coherent?

Linguistic performance

Was the use of words, terms and phrases appropriate and consistent?
Were culture-specific references handled appropriately?
Was an appropriate register and style used?
Were cohesive ties (linking words where applicable) used appropriately?
Was the target text grammatically correct?
Did the target text adhere to target language norms or conventions?

Target text delivery

Was the articulation clear and was the target text delivered with an appropriate tone of voice?
Was the delivery confident? Were there any major disturbances (e.g. hesitations, 'uhm'...)?
Was the conduct appropriate (e.g. eye contact and gestures)?
In a dialogue, was the switch between languages effortless?
Was note-taking handled appropriately for the situation (e.g. no long pauses after the speaker ends)?