The pedagogical evaluation of SL IVY with students of interpreting at AMU

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INTERPRETER-MEDIATED INTERACTIONS: METHODOLOGIES AND MODELS

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Outline

1. aims
2. rationale
3. participants and procedure
4. materials and sample practice scenarios
5. macro- and micro-analysis of student data
6. outcomes and follow-up

Aims

- **assess the suitability of the IVY solution for interpreter training**
  by analysing:
  (a) self-perceived learning success (macro level)
  (b) individual students' practice (micro level)

- **suggest possible method of integrating SL IVY in interpreter training**

Rationale

- **situated learning**

  * life-like scenarios: translation as a 'situated' cognitive activity   (Kiraly 2005)

- **blended learning and teaching**

  "a systematic combination of co-present (face-to-face) interactions and technologically-mediated interactions between students, teachers and learning resources"

  (Bliuc et al. 2007: 234)

- **autonomous/self-directed learning**

  * self-management (contextual control),

  * self-monitoring (cognitive responsibility),

  * motivation: entering and task   (Garrison 1997)

- **self-perceived learning success via introspection**

Participants

- **2-year MA Conference Interpreting Programme at AMU**

- **working languages: PL, DE, EN, FR**

- **17 first-year students in week 4 of training**

- **22 - 25 years old (14 female, 3 male)**

- **intermediate computer skills**

Evaluation procedure

STAGE 1: Induction to SL IVY

    demonstrating the environment (cf. Ritsos et al. 2013),

    creating avatars, etc.

STAGE 2: Individual tutorial sessions

    instructions for available working modes and E-diary

STAGE 3: Self-study period (24 October-09 November)

    self-study in SL IVY with pedagogic materials and E-diary

STAGE 4: Feedback

    tutor-moderated in-class discussion

Materials

- **recordings**
  - PL, EN, DE, FR monologues
  - bilingual PL, EN, DE and FR dialogues

- **transcripts**

- **learning activities**
  - generic: preparatory, skills-based and reflective activities
  - language-specific: preparatory and reflective activities

Sample interpreting sessions

1. 'brief'

2. topic research

3. listening

4. recall of main ideas using
    visualisation

5. glossary building

6. liaison interpreting w/recording

7. quality assessment

8. reflective activities

1. 'brief'

2. specific preparatory activities

3. consecutive interpreting
    w/notes

4. specific reflective activities

Macro Analysis:
SELF-PERCEIVED LEARNING SUCCESS

Focus on students'

A. discrete interpreting-related skills

B. professional awareness

C. self-assessment skills

Discrete interpreting skills (A)

Preparation

Source text comprehension

"I practiced anticipation and I actually managed to anticipate the speaker successfully on a number of occasions"
(AMU Student 10)

"I managed to focus on active listening and identifying the structure of the speech"
(AMU Student 12)

Memory

"With every new fragment I would remember longer utterances"
(AMU Student 16)

Target text production

"After listening to my interpretation I managed to identify some minor mistakes but I realised that my output in Polish was quite fluent and that I spoke more slowly and calmly"
(AMU Student 17)

Professional awareness (B)

"I assumed that in professional situations I would not have a chance to listen to the original speech twice, so I decided to interpret right after the first listening even if my comprehension was not satisfactory"
(AMU Student 5)

"I know that in the future I would have to prepare for every interpreting assignment so in this case I should have read about Cannes before I started interpreting"
(AMU Student 17).

"there were phrases which I found difficult to interpret and which led to long pauses in my output but this made me realise that sometimes one has to interpret some ideas more generally in order to avoid long pauses in the interpretation"

(AMU Student 7)

Self-assessment skills (C)

"As I was listening to my interpretation I spotted a tendency of repeating the same words and phrases. I need to widen my vocabulary (also in my mother tongue) and try to look for synonyms"
(AMU Student 6)

"As I listened to my interpretation I realised I should work on my grammar more"
(AMU Student 6)

"I realised that I speak too fast and use many empty fillers. Moreover, I gesticulate too much"
(AMU Student 14)

"Listening to my interpretation a couple of times and comparing it to the original speech (using transcripts) helped me to detect and eliminate many mistakes"
(AMU Student 15)

Outcomes of Macro Analysis

- students perceived improvement in various discrete interpreting-related skills

- students tried to behave professionally from the very start of their interpreting practice

- autonomous practice can help students develop self-assessment skills

"if unsupervised practice sessions are to be useful, students need to be able to assess their own performance and identify their weaknesses." (Sandrelli 2005: 4)

Micro Analysis:
CASE STUDIES

Focus on students'

A. **student profiles**

B. **approaches to learning**

C. **strategies and skills**

Student profiles (A)

Frequent user

Moderate user

Infrequent user

**Total practice time
780 min
in 6 days**

**Total practice time
360 min
in 3 days**

**Total practice time
270 min
in 3 days**

Approaches to learning (B)

Entwistle and Peterson (2004: 415)

Deep

Strategic

Surface

- **meaning-seekers**
- **uncover underlying principles**
- **relate to previous knowledge and experience**
- **critically monitor progress**

- **well-organised**
- **focused on academic content and grades**
- **carefully manage study time and effort**
- **want to achieve personal and syllabus-related goals**

- **reproducers of content, memorisers**
- **study to fulfill syllabus requirements**
- **tend to feel pressure and anxiety**

Strategies and skills (C)

Frequent User

Deep Approach

- worked with challenging topics, vocabulary, accents

- focused on improving active listening, memory skills, fluency of delivery

- prepared extensively: preparation activities, glossary, analysis of brief, online sources and corpora

- listened to each fragment once

- assessed interpretations with reference to transcripts

- quickly solved interpreting problems (e.g. numbers, proper names) by listening again and referring to transcripts

Moderate User

Strategic Approach

- worked with familiar topics

- aimed to interpret longer chunks

- focused on preparation, anticipation, concentration, note-taking, intonation

- organised studying: preparation, interpretation, assessment
(over time extended preparation)

- assessed interpreting quality impressionistically (w/o recordings)

- gradually solved memory and comprehension problems by improving note-taking and concentration
(multiple interpretations of problematic chunks)

Infrequent User

Surface Approach

- chose 'easy' topics and materials

- aimed to improve memory, fluency and overall delivery
(disregarded e.g. comprehension, analysis skills)

- practiced in a chaotic, superficial way
(poor preparation, no recording, reflective activities before interpretation, interpretation interrupted by preparatory exercises)

- got distracted easily: had to listen twice

- did not reflect on coping strategies
(unsolved problems with anticipation, active listening, longer chunks, meta-comments, lexical retrieval)

- had problems with proper names, abbreviations, numbers   (partly solved by note-taking)

Outcomes of Micro Analysis

- students tried to improve too many skills at once

- some practice sessions would benefit from better organisation

- different approaches to learning need individualised tutor guidance (scaffolding skills and strategies)

INTERPRETER TRAINING IN BLENDED SETTINGS

Students

- need to know what skills and strategies to develop and in what order to practice them

- benefit more from well-structured sessions

INTERPRETER TRAINING
IN BLENDED SETTING

Tutors

- **set a hierarchy of skills** to be developed
- **teach strategies** that can be used to attain those skills (e.g. mnemonic, note-taking)
- **suggest ways in which interpreting sessions in IVY should be structured** (preparation, scaffolded practice, reflection, using learning activities, online sources and corpora)
  - create the **perfect blend**: adjustable to individual needs

FOLLOW-UP: eVIVA

- **investigate interpreter training opportunities in 3D environments, video-based and video-conferencing settings**
- **develop further guidance for autonomous and collaborative interpreting practice**
- **equal focus on prepared materials and live interactions (students and clients)**
- **discourse processing model of (consecutive/liaison) interpreting: focus on interpreting challenges (Braun and Kohn 2012: 200-201)**

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