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UTILIZING AUDACITY AUDIO-RECORDING SOFTWARE TO IMPROVE CONSECUTIVE AND SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING SKILLS

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Abstract
In interpreting, the biggest problem is the evaluation of students' performance in consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting. The large number of students in the class leads to the small amount of time distributed to evaluate students' interpreting effectively. To overcome this problem, the Audacity audio-recording software is used to help students practice interpreting independently and to help the lecturer to conduct interpreting tests simultaneously. The classroom action research aims to find out how the teaching learning process is conducted and how the students use Audacity to improve their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills. This research was conducted to 25 seventh-semester students taking the Interpreting class. The research instruments were Reflection Sheet and Lecturer's Field Notes. From the students' reflection and Lecturer's Notes, most students understood the phases of interpreting and some students were still confused to differentiate between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. The skills that they developed during the course were concentrating, listening, taking notes, paraphrasing, and public speaking. The use of Audacity was able to help them practice consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills. An in-depth research to find out students' perception on the use of Audacity to improve their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills must be conducted.

Keywords: audacity voice-recording software, consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting.

Introduction

Interpreting is one of the compulsory courses offered to the seventh semester students in the English Language Study Program, Sanata Dharma University. The course aims to introduce students to various modes of interpreting, types of interpreting, and principles of interpreting. During the course, students are being accustomed to practicing in order to improve their interpreting skills through experiential learning activities, language exposure and active learning. By the end of the course, students will have been able to interpret

English speeches into Indonesian and the other way around. The prerequisites for this course are *Translation* and *Critical Listening and Speaking* 2.

In the previous courses, seventh-semester students are used to reading, listening, speaking, and writing texts in various topics. Presumably, students have achieved the comfortable degree to express their ideas on various topics in English. As we have known, an interpreter must master technical skills, such as ability to concentrate, listen, take notes, summarize, paraphrase, and public speaking.

Seen from the instructional perspective, the Interpreting course aims to train students to become professional interpreters. To achieve the goals, classroom activities must provide engaging exercises which simulate the real day-to-day work of interpreters, such as planning, understanding, conversion, delivery and evaluation. The activities must also develop their listening, note-taking, paraphrasing, critical thinking, and public speaking skills. The activities may vary from role plays, individual recording, peer evaluation, skits, discussion, question and answer, to interpreting modes simulation such as consecutive, simultaneous, sight translation, out-of-booth, and whispered interpreting.

The biggest problem in the Interpreting course is the inavailability of an Interpreting laboratory which facilitates evaluation for the simultaneous interpreting. Simultaneous interpreting is interpreting speeches to target readers at the same time when the interpreter is listening to the speeches in the source language. Simultaneous interpreting is commonly done during meetings or important hearings such as conferences, seminars, or general assembly meeting. To promote the successful performance of simultaneous interpreting, some technical equipment must be installed, such as sound-proof booths, headphones, earphones, microphones, amplifier, and a voice engineer. However, due to the lack of interpreting laboratory, students cannot practice interpreting skills maximally. To evaluate consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills was time-consuming and tiring as students had to wait for their turn during the interpreting tests for hours. To overcome this obstacle, Audacity voice-recording software is utilized to facilitate students who will practice simultaneous interpreting. Using Audacity, students can practice consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills independently and evaluate their own interpreting autonomously or collaboratively with some friends. The lecturer can save more time and energy to evaluate the students' interpreting results.

To achieve the Interpreting learning outcomes, a digital lesson plan is designed to facilitate students in sharpening their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills using the Audacity voice-recording software which is prepared digitally. The Interpreting course will use the Exelsa Moodle portal developed by *Pusat Pengembangan dan Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan* (P3MP/Center for Development and Quality Assurance in Education), or now PIP (Center for Education Innovations), Sanata Dharma University. The course assignments and exercises are uploaded in the Exelsa Moodle portal in the form of PowerPoint slides, videos, audio tracks, handouts and links related to the topics being learned in a given week. Students use Audacity to record their interpreting of a certain text, audio or video and then upload it in the Exelsa portal.

Through these activities and assignments, students are expected to sharpen their interpreting skills independently and the lecturer plays her role to monitor the students' improvement in understanding the messages in the Source Language and transferring the message to the Target Language audience using Audacity. Students will get instant feedback from their peers and from the lecturer so that they will be motivated to keep sharpening their interpreting skill. The time and energy spent by the students and the lecturer will be more focused on the improvement of students' consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills.

To achieve this, the objective of the classroom action research is to find out whether the use of Audacity Voice-recording Software really helps the students to improve their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills.

Theory

Interpreting is "to transfer orally a text from a language into another" (Ginori & Scimone, 2001: 11). The language of origin is called source language (SL), the language into which the text is to be transferred is called target language (TL). "Communication has remained the main purpose of interpreting. By eliminating language barrier that separates people, the interpreter plays role as instrument of mutual understanding between them, thus performing an intermediary function of conveying a message by means of the spoken word" (Ginori & Scimone, 2001: 10).

The process of interpreting consists of three phases according to Ginori and Scimone (2001: 33), namely, 1) Understanding of the source language text, 2) Conversion of the SL text into the TL text, and 3) Delivery of the TL text. In the real world, interpreters or oral translators work in multicultural settings to mediate the cross-cultural communication in the efforts to create social justice and world peace. To play their roles, interpreters must have certain great qualities. According to Ginori and Scimone (2001: 11), they must have an innate ability to become proficient in two or more languages. Furthermore, since interpreting is a real-time event, interpreters must have promptness of speech and mind because the communication requires quick and spontaneous responses.

Interpreters should also have resistance as they work long hours under pressure. Most importantly, interpreters must have strong memory and power of concentration to focus on the message and reproduce it in the target language equivalents. In addition, to maintain confidentiality and impartiality, interpreters must possess high moral standards and a sense of responsibility. Finally, they must have wide culture and be well-versed in all current issues; both in national and international level, such as the areas of history, geography, economics, politics, sciences, law, government organization and public administration. Inaddition, they must understand the current issues and concerns of the world, such as wars, terrorism, gender movement, and human rights protection.

Due to its nature, interpreting tasks require a high degree of autonomy and excellent communicative and public speaking skills. Students are expected to practice inside and outside of class. Interpreting needs a high degree of learning autonomy and very good skills in communicating and public speaking. Benson (2001, p.47) defined "autonomy" as "the capacity to control one's own learning."

The word "capacity", according to Benson, refers to various kinds of abilities involved to control over the day-to-day management of learning, control over the mental processes involved in second language learning and control over the content of learning.

The learning model in the course is experiential learning involving students to experience a more meaningful learning process. Students do not only learn the materials and theories of interpreting, but also experience first-hand to become an interpreter. The learning model does not only focus on the cognitive aspects, but also on the socio-affective and psychomotor. The knowledge built from thismodel integrates the understanding and transformation of experiences (Kolb, 1984:38). Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) underlies the experiential learning model developed by David Kolb. This model emphasizes on the holistic learning in the educational process. Experiences play a central role in the learning process.

Experiential learning is defined as an action to achieve something based on the experiences which are continuously modified to increase the effectiveness of the learning outcomes. Since communication is the ultimate purpose ofinterpreting, lecturer and students are often involved in dialogs, not only to teach new materials, but also to engage students in the communication practices. Communication practices, according to Ur (1988:9) in Richards and Renandya (2002:168), refer to various types of information-gap activities which demand students to actively engage themselves in authentic communication and at the same time "observe the language structure being manipulated in the communication process." Thus, course activities and course assignments provide ample opportunities for students to extensive practice of spoken communication skills focusing on special conversation, discussion, presentation skills in various settings, such as non-formal conversations, round-table discussions, forum, seminar and conferences. They train their skills in listening to the source languagetexts, anticipating what comes next, taking notes, paraphrasing, and using the target language expressions in re-expressing the source language message in the target language expressions without changing the meaning intended by the speaker of the source language.

Technology used to facilitate the simultaneous interpreting is *Audacity voice-recording software*. Audacity is a free, easy-to-use, multi-track audio-editor and recorder for Windows, Mac OS X, GNU/Linux and other word operating systems. Audacity records live audio tracks, computer playback on any Windows Vista and the later machine, convert tapes and records into digital recordings or CDs, edit WAV, AIFF, FLAC, MP2, MP3, WMA, and other formats (http://www.audacityteam.org/about/). Using Audacity, students can record their voices and while listening to speeches and lectures in the video at the same time.

The learning management system is called Exelsa Moodle developed by P3MP, Sanata Dharma University. Exelsa allows lecturer and students to communicate through the portal where lecturer uploads materials, give feedbackto students' performance, and students download materials and upload assignments.

Method

This research is a classroom action research which aims to find out the students' understanding of the interpreting processes and modes to increase their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills through the use of Audacityaudio-recording software. This research is intended to measure how students have understood the concepts and put them into practice.

The research subjects were 25 seventh-semester students taking Interpreting course in the academic year of 2015/2016. The data gathering technique used in this research is filling out the Reflection Sheet and Lecturer's Field Notes. Reflection Sheet is a type of open-ended questionnaire to allow the students (respondents) to say what he or she thinks, in his or her own words to evaluate thelearning process.

The Reflection Sheet consists of open-ended questions on the interpreting process, modes of interpreting, interpreting skills, and new skills they want to learn in the interpreting course. The students filled out the Reflection Sheet on September 28, 2016, in the middle of the semester to see the progress the students had made, to evaluate the process and to fix the existing problems. The results of the analysis are presented in a form of description.

Field notes have come with the territory of contextual-qualitative curriculum study which is concerned to see educational actions in their socio-cultural settings and milieu (McKernan, 2003: 93). Field notes often provide clues to fundamental issues of importance and group dynamics for the actors involved. Field notes are not rigidly structured so that they are open for unexpected turns of events. Lecturer makes field notes weekly to evaluate the learning process. The field notes mostly contain information on students' progress, comments on the classroom activities, linguistic and non-linguistic problems in interpreting, and so on. It also contains some insights to execute in the following meetings.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the students' Reflection Sheet and Lecturer's Field Notes, some linguistic and non-linguistic problems in interpreting were identified. Students understood the three processes of interpreting, namely understanding the source text, conversion of the source language text to the target language text. Challenges that students encountered during this phase were poor ability to listen to messages in the audio tracks, videos or texts due to limited English vocabulary, limited background knowledge of the topics being discussed, limited vocabulary and knowledge of the specific fields (health, environment, and social and cultural issues). In addition to linguistic matters, some non-linguistic matters hindered the understanding of the source language texts during the interpreting process. The non-linguistic challenges include unfavorable mood, noisy classroom atmosphere, poor health conditions (cough and cold). Their strategies to understand the source language text were relating the new texts to the prior knowledge (intertextuality), focusing on the main ideas and focusing on the message, instead of on the detail information.

For the second phase of interpreting, namely conversion of source language text to target language text, the challenges that students face were specific

terminology related to the topics being discussed. The role of memory and vocabulary is very important in this stage and the students admitted to have understood 70-80% of the messages they heard, but they were unable to think of the response quick enough. They still needed the help from the online dictionary and relevant websites to help them translate. The other problem encountered during this phase was the different level of formality of the source language and target language. Hence, students only tried to grasp the main ideas and improvisedto add the details. In this exercise, students were actually trained to think fast and rely on themselves. When they work as interpreters, they must rely on their memory and the stock of vocabulary. They will have no time to consult to the dictionary, internet or other people.

For the third phase, i.e. the delivery of target language text, students found difficulties such as low self-confidence in delivering the interpretation result, inability to focus on the main ideas and to deliver the whole message completely, slow responses in delivering the target language texts, and poor grammar. The success of an interpreter is evaluated from the wholeness of the message being delivered orally to a group of audience. Therefore, the public speaking skill is helpful and pivotal in supporting the delivery of the message.

In terms of modes of interpreting, consecutive interpreting was considered as easier than simultaneous interpreting. Consecutive interpreting was deemed easier because of the delayed response which allowed the interpreter to prepare for the response and to make sentences. However, interpreters must have a good memory because they must remember long stretches of sentences. On the contrary, students thought that simultaneous interpreting was the most difficult mode since they had to listen and speak at the same time. This mode allowed themno time to think and required them to concentrate 100% on the tasks at hand. Students' anxiety deals with their inability to understand the sentences correctly and thus render them incorrectly. Despite the fact that most of the students stated that consecutive interpreting was easier than simultaneous interpreting, there were
3 students who did not understand the difference between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting.

To interpret well, there are some skills that interpreters must have, namely concentrating and focusing on the message, listening, note-taking, paraphrasing, and public speaking. The exercises that students did independently helped them to tune in and focus on the message despite the noises, both internal and external noises, which hindered concentration. To listen carefully, limited vocabulary knowledge and access to the speaker's ideas were the problems. In interpreting consecutively, the skill of note-taking played a very important role. Students took notes using pictures, mind map, and shapes to represent ideas. The obstacles they faced include their inability to multitask, to read their own notes, or because the notes were too detailed. Through the exercises, students had ways to distinguish main ideas and details during note-taking by using margins. In addition, students used surrounding objects to trigger the retrieval from memory. Further, students' ability to paraphrase the sentences improved, although hesitantly.

Other skills that the students need to develop were the public speakingskills. Interpreting is the ultimate test for language skill and oral proficiency in

which the success of an interpreter is evaluated. Thus, students are trained to deliver a message orally in front of public. The biggest obstacle students experienced when they were speaking in public was nervousness, lack of self- confidence, which affected their posture and gesture. They had a panicky attack upon being requested to speak in public. Therefore, they felt that they still needed to train themselves to speak loudly, clearly and confidently.

To help students improve their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills, an audio-recording software was used, namely Audacity. Students felt that the use of Audacity helped them to improve their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills. Audacity was easy to use and allowed them to listen to their recorded speech, evaluate and learn from their mistakes. The problems they faced regarding the use of Audacity were incompatible computers or laptops which did not support Audacity, unfiltered noises caught in the recording, and incompatible headsets.

In the Interpreting course, students have understood what it takes to be competent interpreters. Since the reflection was conducted at the middle of the semester, it is expected that lecturer could fulfill the students' aspiration to learnin the interpreting course. They hoped that in Interpreting class, they would learn how to take notes efficiently, how to handle stress during interpreting, and how to improve public speaking skill, paraphrasing skill and vocabulary mastery. They wanted to know how to be competent interpreters.

From the Lecturer's Field Notes, it was known that students were excited and challenged with the interpreting tasks. Learning from the weekly activities, lecturer must prepare more activities for one-on-one practice, reduce teacher- centered teaching and prepare more teaching media (flash cards, worksheet, role cards, etc). Exercises had to be various and graded from individual, pair, group, and finally one-and-whole class. These activities were intended to train students to listen, understand, paraphrase, and speak in public.

The topics were adequate to introduce students with issues that were likely the topics of International conferences where interpreters mostly work for. Students had to be exposed to the vocabulary, texts and contexts first before embarking on an interpreting task. Students had problems in the three phases of interpreting, i.e. understanding the source language texts, conversion of the sourcelanguage texts into target language texts, and delivery of the target language text. Students had problem in the first phase of interpreting, i.e. understanding the source language texts, because they have limited exposure on such texts and very limited vocabulary to understand the texts. They needed more exposure to listening in order to listen more fluently.

Students did not understand the texts because of poor grammar knowledge, such as translating noun phrases, misunderstanding of active and passive sentences. Students misunderstood some idiomatic expressions and vocabulary such as *missing out an opportunity, to make ends meet, lost in the shuffle, to see beyond your circumstances, overlook, stand with you, the door is open, devastating, break down the barriers, and role models*.

In terms of registers, students were not too familiar with terms or registers in health, environment, technology, social issues, communication and IT, etc.

Students did not keep abreast with the latest issues, such as *MEA (AEC/Asian Economic Community), Tax Amnesty, human resources, UMKM (Medium-Scale Enterprise), Tax Revenue, Triple Helix, BUMN (State-owned enterprise), DPR (House of Representatives), MRT (Mass Rapid Transportation), commuter line, IRT, etc.* In health, students were not familiar with terms, such as *prevalence, stunting, malnutrition, obesity, breast milk, health provision, labor force, adolescence education, poverty alleviation, and multiple sclerosis.*

In discussing environment, students were not familiar with terms such as *peat land, renewable energy (energy terbarukan), global climate, heat wave,nuclear power plant, carbon pollution, PLTA (Water Power Plant), mileage,Clean Air Act 1970, pollutant, EPA (Environment Protection Agency), and wildfires, Dust Bowl.*

Other terms were *demographic bonus, sustainability, angkatan kerja, PTN (public universities), PTS (private universities), World Economic Forum, KKNI (Indonesian National Curriculum Framework), national competitiveness, goods and services, slums, and Millennium Development Gold.*

In terms of grammar and vocabulary, students must expose themselves to language used in public speaking activities such as greetings, thanking,signposting, etc. Students could not interpret these words into English: *ketua,wakil ketua, anggota, yang terhormat, sebangsa dan setanah air, Assalamualaikum, insya Allah,* and *dengan tanpa mengurangi rasa hormat.* Students' inadequate knowledge of grammar was shown in their inability to understand the sentence construction using appositive, gerund and past participle phrases, tenses, and conditional sentences type 3.

In terms of prior knowledge, students could not understand the content of the speech because of the lack of intertextual prior knowledge underlying the new texts/speeches. The examples were *Magna Charta, Mulberry School for Girls, Peace Corps, Malala Yousafzai, Hurricane Sandy, national problems, such as poverty, unemployment, and social injustice*. This failure to understand the text due to limited prior knowledge was mainly caused by students' poor reading habit. In the class, students admitted that they never read news, watch news onTV, or read articles on the assigned topics (health, environment, IT, Culture, and Religion, for example). This explains why they are not familiar with the terminology or the contexts.

Conclusions

From this activity, it can be concluded that Interpreting course is the ultimate application of all the language knowledge and skills learned during the previous semesters. The use of Exelsa to upload and download learning materials and course assignments is considered to be effective as it helped the successful implementation of the course. The use of Audacity to record students' speeches helped the lecturer and students to evaluate and provide feedback to improve students' learning progress in terms of three phases of interpreting. The use of Multimedia laboratory to conduct the course was conducive for the students to do research before doing interpreting tasks. By integrating collaborative learning and

independent studies, students are expected to master the skills gradually so that they could become competent and confident interpreters in the long run.

The students' Reflection Sheet and the Lecturer's Field Notes highlighted the linguistic and non-linguistic problems in interpreting and ways to solve the problems. The linguistic problems in interpreting deal with grammar, vocabulary, specific terminology (registers), and idioms. The non-linguistic problems in interpreting deal with prior knowledge, public speaking skills, memory span, technical problems related to computers, connectivity and software compatibility.

Hopefully, this research can help Interpreting lecturers to provide more classroom activities and assignments to help students overcome their problems in interpreting. It is recommended that a more in-depth research should be done to investigate students' perception on the use of Audacity to improve their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills.

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