

# Peer-assessment on the students' performance of interpreting prose text

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## Abstract

Peer-assessment is one alternative assessment to grade peers in group or individuals by commenting on and judging other students work. This kind of evaluation helps a teacher to have a different view on giving value and comment to the students' performance. Interpreting is translating spoken discourse orally. There are some types of interpreting from the experts, they are simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, whispered interpreter, conference interpreting, seminar interpreting, escort interpreting. Some requirements needed like ability to speak clearly, clarity, fluency, eye contact, and self-confidence. Some experts give opinion on evaluating student's performance on interpreting such as AIIC adopted from Bühler, EMCI, and Schjoldager. From those experts, the writer formulated one form of assessment for student in interpreting class. Prose text is a kind of expressive text and it needs some requirements to translate like ability to comprehend parts and whole story, idioms, structure, culture, and expressions. This paper discusses the results of students' performance on consecutive interpreting prose text with their partner through video. One student gave the score and comment for the other student on the assessment sheet while they were watching video in the classroom. The result shows that there were 1 (1,5%) student categorized into poor, 14 (21,5%) students categorized into fair, 33 (50,8%) students categorized into good, and 17 (26,2%) students categorized into very good.

*Keywords: Peer-assessment, interpreting prose text, students' performance*

## Introduction

As a part of translation, interpreting is an activity to translate spoken discourse. Interpreting has different form of act. According to Hale (2007) the difference of interpreting and translation is in form of oral (interpreting) and written (translation). Because of that, it also influences the process of translating. In interpreting, interpreter has to perform the result in front of audience and it needs some preparations to do. First is depending on text types. Different types of text like technical and literary have different terminology and structures, so that translator needs to understand those types while they perform. A translator has more time to understand a text because they do not have to present the result in front of audience. Second is the amount of license. A translator can adapt the result by considering the audience. They can do complete cultural adaptation to the original like translation of

advertising to sell particular product successfully in a different language. It also happens to translate brochure and legal document. A translator tends to be target-audience oriented. On the other hand, interpreter tends to be source-text oriented although it also depends on the types of interpreting. Monologic types of interpreting like simultaneous and consecutive interpreting have a main objective to convey the proportional content in the clearest and most accessible way. While in a dialogue interpreting, it is more source speaker-oriented because there is interaction between speaker and the opportunity for repair or clarification. Interpreters have to empower the speaker to communicate with each other by removing the language barrier through medium of interpreting.

In the process of interpreting, there are three steps to do: comprehension, conversion, and delivery. (p.17) Hale stated about facilitating comprehension process can be from discourse –internal level, interpreter should have a thorough knowledge of the two languages, coherence of discourse style, a willingness to be understood, and unambiguous expression. Then, from discourse-external level, interpreter should have understanding the discourse roles in interaction, social roles attributed to the participant, situation of the context, setting, relevant cultures, subject matter and knowledge with speakers.

Some factors are involved in conversion process. First is knowledge of the target language includes knowledge of the grammar, appropriate lexicon, register, and pragmatic conversion. Second is interpreting skills required include note-taking, mastery of the different modes of interpreting (simultaneous, consecutive, sight translation), situational management, ability to deconstruct and reconstruct the message quickly, ability to make difficult, complex choices under pressure, ability to concentrate, listen, and make use of long and short-term memory. Third is a theoretical underpinning approach like a conscious understanding of the reasons behind each choice. Lastly, delivery phase comprises the end-product that is the verbal output after the previous phases have been completed. The style of delivery depends on the mode of interpreting. Simultaneous and consecutive interpreting focus on the proportional content of the original to the target language audience in the most coherent and succinct way. It also forces interpreter to paraphrase and omit non-content discourse features while the dialogue mode focuses on both content and form. From the explanation above, it can be said that interpreting is a part of translation activity that is applied on the spoken discourse then the result is in verbal output. It needs required skills like knowledge on both two languages, cultures, ability to paraphrase, making a quick decision, listening, and note taking.

### **Interpreting prose text**

Interpreting is regarded as translational activity. It is also as a special form of translation or oral translation of spoken message. Because it is a part of translation activity, interpreting can be in different discourse like informative, expressive, and vocative. According to Newmark (1988), informative text is a text which transfers information and facts. The format is often standard: a textbook, a technical report, an article newspaper or a periodical, a thesis, minutes or agenda of a meeting. Expressive text is a text that is transferring feelings through the language. The examples are poetry, short stories, novels, plays. Vocative text is a text that is aimed to persuade behaviour influence.

Translating “prose text” is translating literary works like novels, essays, fictions, short stories, comedy, folk tale, hagiography, works of criticism, science fictions. Haque (2012) said

that it is a type of literary creativeness where the written-work of one language is re-created in another language. For example: a novel of Harry Potter was translated from English into Bhs Indonesia. Translator should able to make readers in Indonesia understand the culture of England, terms of expressions, and also the story. He or she should able to re-create the story into different language with the same content. Another example can be Japanese comic (Anime) entitled Doraemon was translated into Bahasa Indonesia. The readers are children and translator should make the result understandable for them. Translating children literature should pay attention more on vocabulary and tone. Reducing words that are suitable to the age will be appropriate and avoid any subject that might cause insecurity like divorce, illness, or death.

In prose text, when the source and target language have different culture, the first problem faced is finding terms that are expressed in different languages. It needs high level of faithfulness possible to the meaning of certain words. For example: some terms of old English version, typical fabrics, cookery specialties, or jobs. A translator must have capability on knowledge of SL and TL culture, tone, style, flexibility, inventiveness (Landers, 1999). He or she must have skills to translate feelings, cultural nuances, humour, and other delicate elements of a piece of work.

Every different literary works has different culture, terms, and idea. Because of that case, a translator should able to be both bilingual and bicultural (Haque, 2012). So that, it will help translator to overcome the problem of translation that are: first, understanding of language, written and verbal of SL and TL. Second is awareness of subject matter of translated material. Third is a deep knowledge of expressions and idiomatic of two languages. Fourth is delicate common sense of when should translate literally and when should be paraphrased to get equivalence of SL and TL.

Based on those problem, Bassnet (2005) quote Belloc's six general rules for translating prose text: First is the translator should consider the text as an integral unit and translate it in sections. It means that he/she should pay attention to the whole text by connecting each section or chapter. Second is the translator should render idiom by idiom of the nature demand of TL into another form from SL. It is done to get the same form or system of language. The differences of language system will cause different understanding so that it needs to make the same system. Translator should able to find the same situation or terms related to the content of the story. Third is the translator must render intention by intention. It means that he/she should able to find the appropriate expression in TL by adding or deleting words to get the same message. Forth is translator should know words or structures that may appear to correspond in both SL and TL but actually do not. For example: demander means to ask translated wrongly into to demand. Fifth is translator should able to change something into a better content. Lastly is translator should not need to change the message into more interesting point of view by adding something into it.

Considering those problems and solutions, a prose-translator must not think that bilingual individual is able to produce satisfactory or high-quality document. It is because a translator should able to read and understand someone's thought then they have to translate it. It is also normal when translator can not produce the best result from SL into TL because it is unusual for someone who has learned a second language to have total understanding or fluency in that language.

## Peer-assessment in interpreting prose text

Peer assessment is a kind of alternatives assessment that is a process where students grade their peer performance or assignment based on standard of quality given by the teacher. It is a kind of assessment that allows students to participate in evaluation and provide opportunities for observation to grade their peers carefully and adjust their performance. According to Li (2011) in Pandu (2016), peer assessment is the evaluation process in which the students assess their peer works by using applicable criteria. Roberts (2006) in Azarnoosh (2013) said that it is the process of having the readers critically reflect upon, and perhaps suggests grades for the learning of their peers. Then, Peng (2010) in Pandu (2016) also said that peer assessment is the process of involving students on grading and/or giving feedback on their peer work and being judges for the quality of the appraisals they made.

According to Black et.al (2013), peer assessment is valuable for several reasons. First is to improve the motivation of the students to work carefully. Second is interchange in peer discussion is in language that students would naturally use. Third is feedback from a group to a teacher can give more attention to an individual and helps strengthen the students' voice and improves communication between students and their teacher about their learning. Fourth is when students are involved in peer assessment in the classroom, the teacher can be free to observe and reflect on what is happening and to frame helpful intervention. The impact of peer assessment depends on many factors including students' attitude, language levels, familiarity with the assessing criteria, the type of skill being assessed, and the possible presence of bias such as gender and friendships.

Peer-assessment can be applied in interpreting class. It involves two students as interpreter and their peer as a speaker. As interpreters, they need to listen first then perform speaking. As Jones (1996) said that an interpreter has to listen to the speaker, understand and analyze what is being said and then resynthesize the speech in the appropriate form in a different language. Some qualifications to fulfill the requirements of being interpreter are: language skill, analytical skill, listening and recall, interpersonal skill, ethical behaviour, speaking skill, cultural knowledge, and subject knowledge. Related to these requirements some experts give criteria for assessing interpreting. First is Bühler's criteria (1986) saying that the criteria consists of sense consistency with original message, logical cohesion, of utterance, correct grammatical usage, completeness of interpretation, native accent, and pleasant voice. These criteria are not further specified which mean that they cannot be operationalised by trainees. For Example: pleasant voice is clearly open to subjective judgements. Then, native accent although stressed in this set of criteria has been shown not to be a major concern for users of interpreting services.

Second is a group of eight university levels drew up a core curriculum interpreter training at postgraduate level, EMCI, (2000) states that the assessment criteria for simultaneous interpreting as follows: at the end of the program, students will be able to provide a fluent effective simultaneous interpretation of speeches at least 20 minutes into the target language, accurately producing the content of the original and using appropriate terminology and register. The criteria are not clearly expressed and its criteria for final exam (Figure 1).

EMCI Final Exam Benchmark		Our attempt of further analysis and clarification	
Content	accuracy/fidelity	source text vs. target text	→ observable in output
	coherence/logical links	target text as a whole	
	cultural comprehension, general knowledge	→ inferable from output (cognitive resources and processes)	
	linguistic comprehension	→ observable in output (accuracy & fidelity)	
Form	concision, clarity grammar and usage appropriate vocabulary style, register	→ linguistic attributes (phonetic, grammatical, lexical, semantic) observable in output	
	Delivery	→ fluency or presentation skills?	
Skills	communication	→ function of the output, judged by the end users	
	analysis, reasoning, problem-solving	→ inferable from output, yet not observable	

Figure 1: Final exam criteria

Third is Schjoldager (1996) created feedback sheet to enable trainees to judge their own and their peers' performance of simultaneous interpreting and for trainer to assess trainee's performance in class should be as follows. First, the listener can understand what the interpreter says and can bear to listen to him/her. Second, the interpreter language is adequate. Third, the interpreter's rendition is coherent and plausible. Fourth, the interpreter is a loyal communicator of the speaker's message. The purpose of this feedback sheet can help trainees become confident and more skilled at offering and receiving criticism. The explanation of assessment criteria helps students' understanding description, for example: coherence means when interpreter's performance lacks coherence, the listener loses interest in the message. Those kinds of criteria help trainees to get information about the quality of performance they need to fulfill because in interpreting there is a collaboration between speaker and interpreter.

There is a joint work between listening and speaking in interpreting class. It needs a team consisting of two persons with different job. The first person acts as a speaker who reads or speaks the discourse and the other one acts as an interpreter. The interpreter should also consider the audience, topic, his/her voice, eye contact, and self-confidence as objective and subjective factors. Heaton (1990) provided an analytical grid for language courses. It allows to set clear criteria for correction based on simple arithmetic (Figure 2).

Correction Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
Fluency /Flow					
Grammar					
Terminology					
General Content					
Mechanics	X	X			

Figure 2. Analytical grid



Group \_\_\_\_\_

	Articulation	Coherence	Flexibility and relevance	Total score
100-85	Plenty vocabularies, correct grammar, good pronunciation	a long and coherent speaking, occasional pause when speaking	Natural and active participation in talking, use proper words	
84--75	Plenty vocabularies. There're mistakes in grammar and pronunciation, but doesn't affect communication.	Short and simple speaking, long time pause, complete the communication basically	Active participation, sometimes not keep the point, properly use words basically	
74--60	Less vocabularies, mistakes in grammar and pronunciation, affect communication	Short and simple speaking, longer time pause, complete communication basically.	participate in the discussion, sometimes unable to suitable for new topic	
59--0	Much less words, more mistakes in grammar and pronunciation so that block communication	Very short and simple speaking, no coherence, almost no communication	Almost unable to join in the discussion,	

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

*Figure 4. Peer-assessment rubric*

Considering the explanation, a rubric of criteria can be formulated by combining analytical grid from Heaton for translation correcting, interpreter criteria for new recruiting by Buhler (1986), and accredited inter preter organization (AIIC, EMCI, LNTO, SCIC) (Figure 5).

Correction Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
1. Fluency/Flow					
2. General content					
3. Completeness of interpretation					
4. Pleasant voice					
5. Quality of communication with audience					
6. Correct, spontaneous use of target language					

Comment : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Figure 5. Rubric of criteria*

The description of the score were: first is poor in fluency, general content, completeness of interpretation, voice, quality of communication, and correct spontaneous use of target language. Second is fair. Third is good. Fourth is very good. Fifth is excellent. The student can give comment to their peer performance based on language level and critical thinking. The evaluation can be given by teacher and students. Student can give the score based on their ability and the teacher also can give the score too. The teacher and students can also discuss the grade of rating so that there is no misunderstanding why teacher gives low scores but students give high scores.

### **Result on student's performance on interpreting prose text**

The result of discussion were from videos of the students made as an assignment of Interpreting and Subtitling course. In this course, students learned and trained to be an interpreter in Bahasa Indonesia into English and vice versa. The materials were interpreting operative, informative, expressive texts, and subtitling. Those material included theory and practice. These kinds of material were given for 14 weeks. Every student with his/her partner had some practices for being an interpreter by applying some steps of translating those different texts.

Making videos was one of the assignments of interpreting expressive text. The contents were prose texts in various short story. There were 65 videos in 2 until 4 minutes long. The students and their partners acted as speakers and interpreters. These videos were played in practicum classes. Every student had to give score by putting a tick (√) after watching a video of his/her friend on the assessment sheet. One student gave score for their peer. There were 5 categories that should be signed. First category is fluency or flow. Second is general content. Third is completeness of interpretation. Fourth is quality of communication with audience. The last is correct and spontaneous use of target language. The range of the score for every criteria was 1 – 5. Score 1 was categorized into poor, 2 into fair, 3 into good, 4 into very good, and 5 into excellent. When a student got 1 for every criteria, the total score was 6. When a student got 2 for criteria, the total score was 12. When a student got 3, the total score was 18. When a student got 4 for all criteria, the total score was 24. When a student got 5 for all criteria, the total score was 30. The scores were classified into a range because it was



impossible that a student got the same score for all criteria. The description of ranges were 6 – 12 called poor, 13 – 18 called fair, 19 – 24 called good, 25 – 29 called very Good, and 30 called Excellent. These ranges made the result possible to classified. In giving scores, every student paid attention to the performance of interpreting prose text of other student, then gave comment at the end of assessment sheet. The result of all score for every students varied because it is made after watching the video.

After getting scores, there were a recapitulation of all students' score. This score gives description about student's ability in performing interpreting prose text (Table 1). This table shows about the range of score that was divided into Poor from 6 – 12, Fair from 13 – 18, Good from 19 – 24, Very good from 25 – 29, and excellent for 30.

Table 1. *The result of the students score on interpreting prose text*

No.	Range of Score	Description	Amount of students	Examples of comments
1.	6 - 12	Poor	1	Fluency, quality of video, voice
2.	13 - 18	Fair	14	Diction, meaning, eye contact
3.	19 - 24	Good	33	Self-confidence, pronunciation
4.	25 - 29	Very Good	17	Voice, eye contact
5.	30	Excellent	-	-

As shown in the table, there was one student in the lowest range. The student got poor grade for fluency/flow and general content, and all criterias. There was also a comment on quality of voice of the interpreter was not clear. In the second range that was fair with 14 students. In this grade, 12 students got 2 (fair) score and 3 (good) score for almost all criteria and only 2 students got very good in fluency, completeness of interpretation, and pleasant voice. Some comments related to choice of words, meaning, unclear voice, eye contact, reading the text and uncomplete content. The third range (good) had the highest number. 33. It means that 23 students got 3 and 4 scores for all criterias. But, there were 10 students who got 5 in general content, completeness of interpretation, quality of communication with audience, and pleasant voice. Some comments related to self-confidence, pronunciation, reading the text, quality of video, and fluency. In the fourth range (very good), there was 17 students. It shows that these students got 4 and 5 for all criterias but 2 students still have some problems on pleasant voice and general content. Some comments are related to eye contact and pronunciation.

Some problems were found from the lowest until the highest range. From the lowest range (poor), the problem was unclear voice so that audience cannot catch the general content, completeness of interpretation, quality of communication with audience, and correct, spontaneous use of target language. Then, in "fair" range some problems were dictions that influence the meaning of word, and general content. It made the audience got confused with the content. Some students were reading text during interpreting so that it was not natural and disturbed the result of interpreting. In "good" range, some problems found were self confidence, pronunciation, reading the text, quality of video, and fluency. In "very good" range, some problems found were quality of video, fluency, eye contact, and pronunciation.

From those comments, the student got some advantages. First, they can made a critical comment by considering theory of translating prose text. Second, they did not feel afraid of making judgement because they did not need to put their name on the sheet. Third,

they could learn how to be an interpreter for prose text. Fourth, they could learn how to make video. This last advantage was not related to translating ability but it could help students to get knowledge of making video by themselves. This knowledge is important to know the quality of video from its picture and sound. However, some disadvantages came, including the opportunity to read the result on the text and less spontaneity because they could practice before taking a shoot/picture.

## Conclusion

From the result of the student's scores on interpreting prose text, it can be seen that there was 1 student categorized into poor, 14 students into fair, 33 students into good, and 17 students into very good. Based on those number, 1,5 % categorized into poor, 21,5 % categorized into fair, 50,8 % categorized into good, and 26,2 % categorized into very good. It shows that the students fulfill all criterias which include fluency/flow, general content, completeness of interpretation, quality of communication with audience, and correct, spontaneous use of target language. However, some students needed to improve their ability especially in poor and fair categories. It did not mean that the students that were categorized into good and very good did not need to improve their language skill but they needed to practice more to fulfill all requirements.

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