

Two modes of practice in dialogue-interpreter training: adding live practice in the interpreting booth alongside traditional face-to-face training

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Abstract

The article explores students' views and thoughts on two distinct ways of training students in dialogue interpreting (DI) by looking at a combination of the more traditional method of face-to-face training (which utilises simulated real-life DI situations in a classroom environment) with a 'semiremote' method involving simultaneous-interpreting booths used for consecutive DI. At the University of Tampere, DI is a mandatory course for all students of translation and interpreting at BA level. On the basis of two semi-structured interviews with senior DI teachers and the author's experience in teaching DI, a questionnaire was created and a survey conducted among DI students focusing on students' views of practising DI in the booth alongside traditional in-classroom practice. The survey focused on learning (sub)skills involved in DI and on comparing the two training methods used in the course. The findings indicate that using in-booth practice as an additional training method can actually serve students even better than DI teachers had initially expected.

Introduction

In this article, dialogue interpreting (DI) is understood in broad terms as the opposite of monologue interpreting. More specifically, the term is used to refer to dialogic consecutive interpreting situations that take place in interaction with at least two parties in communication (see also Kutz 2010: 218 on "bilaterales Dolmetschen", *bilateral interpreting*). With such a broad definition, the concept is not

limited to use as a synonym for public service interpreting (PSI); instead, it can be used to cover a rather large landscape of different interpreting situations in dialogue settings encompassing business negotiations, interpreting in court, broadcast interviews, etc. These “seemingly disparate event types” share several common features that are related to dialogic interaction, as characterised by Mason (2001: ii-iii). They are all three-way interactions (a dyadic communication situation turning into triadic communication, with the interpreter playing a more or less active and visible role in the shaping of communication, turn-taking etc.), often taking place “at the intersection of competing discourses” and with questions relating to distribution of power exerting “a determining influence on who says what, when and how” (*ibid.*). These aspects pose unique requirements on the interpreter.

In addition, DI is typically performed face to face, with all parties – including the interpreter – physically present on site.¹ In face-to-face human communication, interpersonal communication skills (Hargie 2011) play a crucial role in getting the message across. There is no doubt that also dialogue interpreters have to possess good interpersonal communication skills to “manage the interactive aspects of dialogue settings” (Russell/Takeda 2015: 108) and to achieve true mastery of their task of enabling communication across language and culture boundaries in these situations, where dialogue evolves on the spot only and the unexpected is always to be expected (Bahadir 2009: 30; Kutz 2010: 219).

From the point of view of the interpreter, in addition to the previous features, yet another characteristic of DI situations – as opposed to (consecutive and simultaneous) monologue interpreting – is that at least consecutive DI almost always includes working in both directions between the two languages (Russell/Takeda 2015: 104), i.e. the interpreter has to switch quickly and repeatedly between languages ($A \rightarrow B$, $B \rightarrow A$),² whereas in most monologue interpreting the interpreter usually only works unidirectionally ($B/C \rightarrow A$ or $A \rightarrow B$). Therefore, honing skills in reacting quickly (Kutz 2010: 219) and in language-direction change should be part of the training provided for DI students, in addition to improving the students’ interpersonal communication skills.

Training students in DI often employs such techniques as creating and/or simulating authentic dialogue and face-to-face communication situations in the classroom; it “is taught on the basis of how it is practised in the real world” (Russell/Takeda 2015: 107) (cf. the use of mock conferences in conference-interpreter training). However, often in these situations, only one student at a time can act as the interpreter, i.e., practise actual interpreting in the classroom. The amount of practice per student and feedback from teachers per student often remains small. At the same time, it is recognised that a great deal of practice and repetition is needed if one is to gain genuine *interpreting competence* (Kalina 2000:

1 A different situation occurs when the interpreter is absent and available to the communicating parties by telephone only, for example. In these cases, the constraints and demands on the dialogue interpreter’s competence are of another sort, since the interpreter can rely only on what is heard over the telephone and is, accordingly, deprived of all nonverbal clues and visible context of the communication situation.

2 Wittily described by Hietanen (2001: 288) as a “mental tennis match”.

3-5; Kutz 2010, 2012), whether it is for conference interpreting or PSI. Today, however, university teachers of interpreting in many European countries face pressure to scale back on resources and contact hours even further (e.g. Gorm Hansen/Shlesinger 2007; Gorjanc/Pokorn 2013; Viljanmaa 2014; Viljanmaa in press). Since there seems to be a constant demand for greater efficacy in training, alternative options for interpreter training are regularly considered. Of course, there is always the possibility of increasing the number of practice hours each student spends in self-training sessions that include tapes or other recorded material outside actual interpreting classes. However, quite often these self-practice materials are not met with great enthusiasm by the students (see for example Gorm Hansen/Shlesinger 2007: 101), so new approaches are still being sought.

The present article addresses a practical issue related to the training of students in DI. An attempt is made to answer the question of which skills and sub-skills (cf. Kalina 2000) generally needed in DI could be practised in a semi-remote practice mode utilising the booth in the manner currently employed in DI courses at the University of Tampere in Finland. Drawing from two semi-structured interviews with DI teachers and electronic-questionnaire-based surveys of Finnish DI students at this university, the article attempts to explore how student interpreters themselves feel about practising DI in the booth with the interpreting situation in the classroom that they can observe, as compared to engaging in DI practice in the classroom while in the midst of that simulated live situation themselves. The paper also examines which (sub)skills the students felt that they could actually practise in the booth versus on the spot in the classroom.

For data triangulation reasons, DI teachers were interviewed first, providing information on their initial thoughts when they, several years back, started using in-booth training in the DI course obligatory for all translation and interpreting students at Tampere University (usually done in the second or third year of the students' BA studies; see §1). The DI student survey e-questionnaire for the first survey was created on the basis of the results of the DI-teacher interviews and the author's own experience in training students in this DI course. The e-questionnaire for a second follow-up survey was a slightly modified version which was based on the results of the first survey. This second and final survey was designed to confirm findings from the earlier survey work and was addressed to a new group of students.

Students' views on (sub)skills learned in the booth versus in the classroom may have pedagogical implications and, for example, enable teachers to focus more effectively on certain other (sub)skills in the classroom training (turn-taking management and different interpersonal communication skills, for example). Examining the students' perceptions can be useful also in efforts to make better use of the additional in-booth practice method. Finally, the joint use of the two practice methods might show improved results if future students became aware (at the metacognitive level) of actual skills that can be practised in the booth versus in the classroom (cf. role of *deliberate practice* in (conference) interpreter training; see Tiselius 2013).

1. Teaching an obligatory DI course at the University of Tampere

At the University of Tampere, DI is taught in a mandatory five-ECTS-credit³ course in undergraduate studies for students focusing on translation and interpreting at the *School of Language, Translation and Literary Studies (LTL)*. The course is part of the students' intermediate studies (second or third year of studies at BA level), and it allows students specialising in translation and interpreting to become acquainted with various commonplace DI situations (negotiations, interviews, information retrieval discussions, etc.). They train in DI with two teachers (native speakers of the students' A and B languages) using simulated DI cases in the classroom. After their undergraduate-level studies, students have the option of specialising in either translation or interpreting at the graduate level. A prerequisite for taking interpreting at the MA level is having obtained a certain minimum mark in the BA-level DI course. In addition to serving as a qualifier course in this regard, the obligatory undergraduate DI course is designed to give all students the opportunity to try interpreting and, at the same time, help them determine whether continuing with interpreting studies is a suitable path for their MA studies. Given the fact that the course is obligatory, the students taking it are a highly heterogeneous group with different backgrounds and attitudes to interpreting that range from fear and anxiety to great interest and zeal.

The intermediate-level DI course described above is currently organised for three language pairs at LTL: English–Finnish–English, German–Finnish–German, and Russian–Finnish–Russian. The course lasts 14 weeks for English and German or 28 weeks for Russian and comprises a total of 28 contact hours of teaching for English and German or 56 for Russian.⁴ Class sessions are held weekly and last 90 minutes each (two academic teaching hours). The course is taught in the LTL interpreting studio, which is equipped with three booths. Simulated real-life cases that change from week to week are used as the basis for each training session in the classroom. Towards the end of the course, the authenticity of the interpreting exercises can be increased by leaving the classroom and organising 'interpreting field trips' to authentic settings. At field trips the location, speakers and/or audience are 'real' depending on the context and situation at hand (a guided tour in a museum or a church with own (teacher) or local guide, visit to the local market hall, a guided city tour offered to exchange students).

Classroom sessions, however, comprise the major part of the DI course. They are structured as follows: while one student at a time interprets the given case on the spot with the two teachers and/or two peer students acting as speakers, the remaining students practise interpreting the same dialogue in the booths. The size of the student group determines whether the students practise in the booths alone

3 Until spring 2012, the course was worth four ECTS credits.

4 The difference in contact hours between Russian and English/German stems partly from the slightly different course/class structure (there is more preparatory and reflexive work for DI students in the English and German classes) and partly from the higher number of students per course for Russian (up to 13 versus a maximum of eight per group for English/German) and therefore, an even smaller amount of practice with teacher feedback per student per session.

or with a peer. The students in the booths listen to the utterances of the parties in the classroom via the interpreting equipment (the classroom microphone is switched on whenever one of the primary parties speak) and interpret consecutively what they hear while the student in the classroom is interpreting (and the classroom microphone is switched off). After a set time, roles are switched: the student in the classroom goes into one of the booths and another student joins the speakers in the classroom.⁵ The trainers always give feedback to the student in the classroom immediately after his or her performance, before the same dialogue is set forth with the next student.

Students in the booths act as if they were interpreting consecutively in the actual interactive dialogue setting between the two parties to the interpreted scenario, which they can see from the booth. However, they are not physically present and have only limited access to an interpreter's communication tools: for instance, they cannot ask the speaker for clarification or to repeat, affect the actual turn-taking (cf. Wadensjö 1998: 110, 127-133), or themselves use gestures, mimicking, or other non-verbal elements (see Kutz's "*parasprachliche Elemente der Dolmetschkompetenz*", 2012: 324-359) or check the listeners' non-verbal signals in order to know whether the interpreting has been understood. Furthermore, the students in the booths are unable to manage or control the time given for interpreting, as this is controlled by the interpreter outside: as soon as he or she is ready or has finished his or her turn, the microphone in the classroom is switched on, and one of the speakers continues. In this 'semi-remote' practice mode, the actual communication situation develops in real time before the DI students' eyes, and they can almost feel as though they are part of it. Their performances in the booth can be recorded for self-evaluation, and they are encouraged to give and ask each other for feedback to maximise what they get out of the exercise. They can also ask the teachers about vocabulary, phrases and idiomatic expressions during the breaks.

2. About the skills needed in DI and the teachers' views on in-booth practice

2.1 DI competence: Reflections on skills needed in DI

Speaking in general terms, the objective of all interpreter training (for conference or community settings) is helping students develop at least a minimum level of *interpreting competence* (e.g. Kutz 2010) which can then subsequently be developed into actual *interpreting expertise* while practising the profession (Albl-Mikasa 2013: 33; cf. also Tiselius 2013). Interpreting competence can be understood to consist of knowledge of how to act (*Handlungswissen*), innate personal abilities and characteristics (*Fähigkeiten*), and skills and subskills that can be practised and learnt (*Fertigkeiten*) (Kalina 1998: 222-223; Kutz 2010: 206). Interpreting involves

5 The described procedure applies as such for the German and English courses; the Russian course follows a slightly different procedure but still applies both in-booth and in-classroom practice as well.

complex processes that must be practised. In interpreter training, skills (e.g. note-taking) and subskills (e.g. analytical listening, public speaking, mnemonic skills) related to the interpreting competence can be practised separately at first (especially near the beginning of one's studies) and subsequently combined in a process proceeding from easier tasks to more demanding and complex ones (cf. Moser-Mercer 2008: 14 on examples of *scaffolding in interpreter training*).

Interpreting competence may take diverse forms, depending on the actual interpreting situation (Kutz 2012: 188). These forms involve different combinations of certain (sub)skills, knowledge and personal characteristics. Therefore, in a specific setting of DI – health care interpreting, for example – the required interpreting competence could be seen as consisting of, among other components, knowing how an interpreter should act and perform in line with professional standards in this field, knowing the preferable place to sit in this kind of triad communication situation (Felgner 2009: 59-65), owning personal characteristics that are suitable for interpreting in face-to-face situations in general (good innate interpersonal skills, emotional stability, etc.), and having achieved mastery of the relevant interpreting techniques (such as consecutive and/or possibly sight translation or chuchotage) with all the related skills and subskills (note-taking, listening and analysis skills, memory techniques, delivery, effective use of voice, prosody, etc.).

Mastering appropriate interpreting techniques is not merely about learning how to handle and coordinate all the relevant *interpreting efforts* (Gile 1995/2009: 160) – i.e. in consecutive interpreting the effort of listening and analysis, mnemonic operations, note-taking and note-reading, speech production, and the coordination of all these efforts (*ibid.*: 175-179) – it also entails a gradual development of *adaptive expertise* (as described in Moser-Mercer 2008), through which one's knowledge, skills, and subskills can be flexibly and quickly adapted to new and changing situations. Undoubtedly, adaptive expertise is something that is required even more from dialogue interpreters, who often find themselves in demanding dynamic face-to-face situations calling for *reflexive coordination* (cf. Baraldi/Gavioli 2012: 4-6) and “high flexibility in communicating and turn-taking strategies, integrating rationally learned communication principles with a readiness to meet the challenge of unexpected, contradictory, conflicting actions and adapt the strategies learned to every new case” (Bahadir 2009: 30). It is impossible to cover all these areas in a first DI course; however, what is possible, is to give the students a first idea of what DI interpreting could be and what it can require from the interpreter. Starting with training basic skills for “short consec” (Russell/Takeda 2015: 96) – i.e. attention and listening skills, memory techniques and note-taking – language and quick reaction skills, use of prosody and nonverbals, vocabulary training with more common topics and then gradually proceeding to more complex ones (also ethically speaking) is a good base on which to build subsequent interpreting courses.

2.2 Trainers' views on in-booth practice of DI

The first part of the research object of this paper consisted of interviewing two senior teachers of DI at the University of Tampere: one who still teaches the Russian DI course and the other having taught the German DI course for many years (both with and without the semi-remote practice method). The interviews, which took a semi-structured form and lasted 55:36 and 27:48 minutes respectively, dealt with, among other matters, the skills the teachers considered necessary for most common types of DI (interviews, business negotiations etc.) and those, if any, that they expected the students could or actually would employ in the booth. They were also asked what the original reasons were for the use of the in-booth practice method at Tampere. The interviews were recorded and transcribed when necessary.

The German DI teacher replied that the in-booth training method was initially employed in the DI course with the objective of engaging the students who were not interpreting on the spot, instead of just leaving them to just wait for their turn. The Russian teacher, on the other hand, cited as one reason that students should receive as much practice as possible and that this came from also making use of the booths. In a post-presentation discussion at the KÄTu Symposium 2013 (KÄTu 2013), it became clear that the in-booth practice method had been used in (dialogue) interpreting classes in other translation and interpreting study programmes in Finland, too, exactly for both of these reasons.

When asked about the actual skills that could be learnt and are supposed to be practised in the booth, both teachers cited vocabulary training as one such skill. Quick switching between languages and language direction was pinpointed as another skill to be honed in the booth. In addition, the German teacher saw the in-booth practice as a good warm-up exercise for the actual on-the-spot training: it is better to speak and train your brain while waiting for your turn rather than simply listening to others and letting the anxiety and nervousness about your approaching turn grow. The relevance of the latter becomes clear if one considers the heterogeneity of the DI student groups in the course presented in this paper: being a course mandatory for everyone, it meant that the students would differ greatly in their attitudes towards interpreting: some expressing fear and trepidation, and others showing interest and even a passion for interpreting. Those not feeling comfortable with interpreting were thought to prefer the inbooth training method over in-classroom interpreting and to profit more from the in-booth practice (on account of nerves etc.). Nevertheless, it was deemed important to give all students a chance to practise as much as possible with both forms of training.

3. Survey 1

3.1 Research questions and hypotheses

On the basis of the interviews with DI teachers and the author's experience in teaching the same DI course for German and English students since 2009, the following research questions (marked with 'RQ') and hypotheses (marked with 'H') were formulated for the student-survey research.

RQ1: What kind of skills or subskills (needed in DI) does the in-booth training method help to develop from the learner's point of view? What do students themselves think they practise in the booth versus in the classroom?

H1: The in-booth training method is seen mainly as language training for listening comprehension and speech production, for improving vocabulary and/or learning how to switch or practise switching between the two languages quickly.

RQ2: What do students themselves feel the differences are between practising DI in the booth and in the classroom? Which method is preferred and/or considered more useful, the inclassroom training or the in-booth training method (both obligatory), and why?

H2: The in-classroom method is more authentic and therefore favoured by students who indicated that they liked interpreting (asked on the e-questionnaire). The in-booth method is less stressful and thus preferred by students who do not like interpreting in general or fear it.

3.2 Structure of the e-questionnaire, respondent data and response rate

The student-survey questionnaire was prepared in Finnish in the form of an electronic questionnaire for online completion (*e-lomake*). It featured six background questions, one tick-box item and seven open-ended questions on the two training methods used in the DI course. Finally, there were eight statements on the two training methods under investigation, with responses to be given on a five-level Likert scale.⁶ In an effort to ensure data validity and at least partial triangulation of data, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that students were asked the open-ended questions about the training methods first and then, only after they had replied to these questions, shown the statements (based on the teachers' views) about the same topics. This option was selected to prevent the ready-made statements from influencing student responses to the open-ended questions. Although it was not technically possible to prevent respondents from returning to the previous page and altering their responses to the open-ended questions after having seen the statements, it was considered rather unlikely that students would take the time to go back and alter their initial answers based on the ideas presented later in the questionnaire.

6 The e-questionnaire (in Finnish) can be obtained from the author upon request.

The e-questionnaire was sent to DI students divided into two sets (referred to as sub-surveys 'a' and 'b') in the spring of 2013. The first set of students had completed the English DI course in the 2012–2013 academic year or the German DI course between 2010 and 2013 and were still at the university (Sub-survey 1a: English and German DI courses). Of 63 e-mail addresses, 62 proved to be working addresses. The response rate with set 'a' turned out to be 37%, with 23 students submitting a filled-in questionnaire before the submission deadline (13 students from the German and 10 from the English DI course).

The second set of students was contacted a few weeks later: all students who had completed the Russian DI course in 2010–2013 who were still available for contact. All 30 e-mail addresses were working addresses. The response rate for this sub-survey (1b: Russian DI course) was 43% (from 13 completed questionnaires). The overall response rate for Sub-surveys 1a and 1b combined was thus 39% (there were 36 completed questionnaires in all), which can be considered satisfactory for the purposes of representativeness of data.

4. Results of Survey 1

The following is a presentation of some of the data obtained from Sub-surveys 1a and 1b taken together with respect to RQ1 and RQ2 and Hypotheses 1 and 2.

4.1 RQ1: Students' view on statements about skills practised in-booth versus in-classroom

The teacher interviews and the author's experience in teaching DI at the University of Tampere provided the basis for the seven ready-made statements about in-booth versus in-classroom DI practice that were presented in the latter part of the e-questionnaire, after the students had answered the open-ended questions on the topic. The students were asked to indicate whether they *completely agreed*, *partially agreed*, *neither agreed nor disagreed*, *disagreed partially*, or *disagreed completely* with each statement.

The following two statements (Statements 3d and 3e) were linked to H1, according to which the in-booth training method would be seen mainly as language training, improving vocabulary and/or for learning how to switch quickly between two languages. S3d was 'The in-booth practice aids in developing and practising your reaction skills and quick language switch (A→B, B→A) skills', and S3e was 'The in-booth practice gives the opportunity to practise the use of B-language vocabulary and grammatical structures'.

DI students' responses to S3d did not contradict H1: rather, they clearly supported it. Of 36 students, 12 (33.3%) completely agreed and 14 (38.9%) partially agreed with the idea that in-booth practice helps in developing and practising reaction skills and quick language switch skills. Only seven students partially disagreed, and three offered a neutral opinion. As to S3e, also here the students' answers seem more to confirm than contradict the hypothesis based on the DI teachers' views. In all, 26 students (72.2%) either completely (11 students) or partially (15 students) agreed with the idea that the in-booth practice aids in training

in the use of B-language vocabulary and language structures; four students neither agreed nor disagreed; five partially disagreed, and one disagreed completely.

4.2 RQ1: Students' free-form answers on skills practised in the booth

RQ1 addressed the question of what kind of skills or subskills needed in DI that the inbooth practice method helped develop and what skills the students themselves felt they had practised or learnt in the booth. This research question was addressed in the open-ended questions in the first part of the e-questionnaire. Since answering all of the open-ended questions was not obligatory, only 32 of the 36 students supplied an answer to the open-ended question about what they had actually learnt during practice in the booth, and the content of only 32 answers could be analysed.

H1 suggested that students see the in-booth training mainly as language training: that is, useful for practising skills such as listening comprehension, speech production, improving vocabulary and learning how to switch quickly between languages. The students' answers indeed covered most of the skills and subskills presented by H1 (which had been formulated on the basis of the teachers' views), but not all of them or them alone. In their free-form answers, students indicated that they practised memory skills and note-taking in the booth (seven answers), vocabulary, fluency of speech production, and listening and concentration (six answers each). In contrast, the ability to switch quickly between two languages, also listed in H1 as a skill practised in the booth, is not mentioned in the students' free-form answers, although 26 students (72.2%) expressed partial or complete agreement with the respective statement in the second part of the questionnaire. This may indicate that the students had not really become aware of that skill yet. It might be useful to raise their awareness of the possibility of honing it in the booth in future DI courses as well, for even better results from inbooth practice.

Somewhat surprisingly, the skill referred to in the largest number of open answers was one not covered by H1 at all in this particular context. In total, 11 students (34%) wrote that they actually practised and learned quick-reaction skills with reference to prioritising and/or summarising source-text content when practising in the booth. This was closely linked to the feeling of heavy time pressure due to the uncertainty regarding the actual time available for the interpreting, coupled with the general sense of not being able to control the time at all: i.e. of being totally dependent on the interpreter in the classroom and his or her time management. While S3d did refer to quick reactions, it did so in the context of rapid language-switching.

4.3 RQ2: Preferred practice method

RQ2 enquired about the training method preferred and/or considered more useful by the students – the in-classroom or the in-booth training method (both obligatory forms of practice in the DI course) – and the reasons for their preference. In total, 33 students replied to the question about whether they preferred one of

the training methods or liked both (Open-ended Question 2b1), so 33 answers have been analysed. Of the 33 students, 20 (60.6%) preferred the in-classroom method, 11 (33.3%) the in-booth method, and two students (6%) expressed no preference.

In their replies to Open-ended Question (OQ) 2b2, students who had stated that they preferred the in-classroom method to the in-booth practice mentioned as reasons the authenticity and/or intensity of the situation and/or the possibility of using the interaction tools of an interpreter.

When practising in the classroom, the situation forces you to participate and listen, and you have to concentrate on interpreting, whether you like it or not. When you are yourself part of the situation without any other people in between, the speaker's gestures and mimicking also aid in transferring the communication better (Respondent S1bR5).⁷

When interpreting in the classroom, you can interact with the people you are interpreting for and, if needed, ask them to repeat something if you don't understand, hear, or remember it. (Respondent S1aR18)

The experiences of both respondents cited here (S1bR5 and S1aR18) are confirmed by the free-form answers to OQ2e, which asked, 'What exactly did you learn when practising in the classroom?' In their answers,⁸ 19 of 32 students (59.4%) wrote they learned communication and interaction skills in the classroom situation; ten (31.2%) mentioned stress management; and eight said that they learned to co-ordinate and control the situation as interpreters.

The in-booth setting, on the other hand, was preferred by students for reasons such as it "not [being] a public performance and thus [being] less stressful. I thought too that I performed better in the booth when I was able to concentrate on the essentials" (Respondent S1aR8). One of the students indicating equal preference summarised the pros and cons of both training methods in her answer:

In the classroom, it was somehow easier to be present in the actual situation and interpret directly between human beings. In the booth, on the other hand, you don't have that much anxiety, and can detach yourself from the outside world and concentrate on the utterances only (Respondent S1aR20).

H2 suggested that the authentic and interactive in-classroom method would be appreciated by the students expressing a liking for interpreting, whereas the probably less stressful in-booth practice method would be preferred by students who do not like interpreting in general or who struggle with a fear of interpreting. All 36 students replied to the question on whether they liked interpreting and the interpreting exercises in general (the tick-box item 1e). Their answers are distributed in the following way: 13 students (36.1%) expressed a liking for it; only three expressed an absolute dislike; and the majority, 20 students (55.5%),

7 The original answers in Finnish have been translated into English by the author.

8 Most students mentioned more than one skill in their answer.

wrote that they sometimes liked it and sometimes didn't, with their feelings depending on the context. H2 was not confirmed, since two of the three students who indicated that they did not like interpreting actually preferred the in-classroom training method. Since the number of answers is limited (with only three respondents in this category), no generalisations can be made, but the findings seem rather interesting nevertheless. It is of course possible that most students who disliked interpreting did not participate in the survey at all.

All in all, no significant correlation can be observed in preference for the in-booth or the in-classroom practice method among students who expressed a liking for interpreting in general (13) and the ones who stated that they liked interpreting sometimes depending on the context (20). One way to interpret these data might be to conclude that students who like interpreting want to get more practice (a need met by the in-booth method) but, at the same time, also desire instant feedback from the teachers (given in the in-classroom practice) and enjoy the more authentic on-the-spot context of the in-classroom practice method.

4.4 Summary of the results from Survey 1

Students of DI experienced the two distinct DI practice methods (in-booth and in-classroom practice) in varied ways. The hypothesis linking a student's attitude toward interpreting to one of the two practice methods used in the DI course was not supported – or rather, could not be explored, as there were only three respondents who 'disliked' interpreting. Of these three students who reported not liking interpreting and interpreting practice in general, two actually expressed the opposite preference, i.e. for the in-classroom interpreting method.

At the same time, however, students' answers revealed some new information about the actual skills that, in their view, are and can be practised in the booth versus in the classroom. Considering the in-booth practice, students reported having learnt how to cope with time-related stress and having practised attentive listening, vocabulary and fluent speech production. In contrast, classroom training helped the students focus on interaction and interpreting skills, as well as the skills regarding co-ordination and control of the communication situation (which simply cannot be honed in the booth, whilst the skills practised in the booth could easily be practised in the classroom as well). All in all, the teachers' views were mostly supported, but also new skills were revealed.

5. Survey 2

5.1 Content of e-questionnaire, respondent data and response rate

In October 2014, a slightly redesigned e-questionnaire was sent to persons who were active DI students in the 2013–2014 academic year. The objective of the new survey (Survey 2) was to validate data obtained in Survey 1 (Sub-surveys a and b). The e-questionnaire was slightly modified to confirm and further elaborate on the existing questions with the goal of obtaining more precise responses. The

changes involved updating one skill-related question (adding two skills/sub-skills identified on the basis of the results from the first survey, namely the ability to stay focused and to concentrate, and the ability to condense or summarise information, i.e. 'wrap it up') and adding two tick-box questions regarding the three most- and least-perfected skills honed while practising in the booth. The core intent of Survey 2 was to see whether the replies would be consistent with – and thereby validate the results of – Survey 1 or not. Therefore, most questions from Survey 1 in the e-questionnaire were left intact.⁹

Of the 34 students to whom the Survey 2 questionnaire was sent, only 33 were at the university at the time of the survey, so only 33 invitation e-mail messages were sent out. All e-mail addresses were working addresses. By the time of the response deadline, 19 students had filled in the questionnaire, making the response rate to the survey 57.6%.

5.2 Results of Survey 2

The results of Survey 2 were mostly consistent with those of Sub-surveys 1a and 1b. S3d stated that '[t]he in-booth practice aids in developing and practising your reaction skills and quick language switch (A→B, B→A) skills' and S3e that '[t]he in-booth practice gives the opportunity to practise the use of B-language vocabulary and grammatical structures'. Of the 19 respondents, 11 fully agreed and seven partly agreed with the idea in S3e about the value of in-booth practice in terms of reaction and quick language switch skills. Only one student disagreed, and only partly. Also in the case of S3e on B-language vocabulary and language structures, the students' answers were in line with the results of the previous two sets of students. Virtually all students (94.7%) either completely (14 students) or partly (four students) agreed that in-booth practice helped them practise B-language vocabulary and language structures. Again, only one student expressed (partial) disagreement.

As for the preferred practice method, the students' responses were distributed as follows: ten students (52.6%) preferred in-classroom practice and eight (42.1%) in-booth practice, while one was undecided. As for their views of interpreting in general, two students indicated a dislike; 11 reported liking interpreting in general; five said they liked it sometimes, depending on the context; and one student remained undecided. Whilst both students expressing a dislike of interpreting in general reported a preference for in-booth practice, which would support H1, again the sample is too limited to confirm any relationship from which to draw general conclusions. Neither was any clear link found between practice method and preferences in the other groups (liking interpreting in general versus liking it sometimes depending on the context).

9 In addition, a completely new section focusing on anxiety and nervousness in interpreting was included in Survey 2 as a separate portion at the end. Results from this survey will be reported on in a separate paper.

Of the 19 respondents, 18 answered the open-ended questions about the skills learned most during practice in the booth. The most-learned and most-practised skills cited most in the answers to open questions were the following: note-taking techniques (six of the 18 replies), concentration skills (six replies), listening and related comprehension (three), and summarising when interpreting (three). Working with a peer in the booth was mentioned twice, as was using the interpreting equipment. Skills mentioned only once included vocabulary use, understanding content, speed, and understanding the role of preparation in interpreting. Here a clear difference emerges between the results of Survey 2 and those of Survey 1, in which working under time pressure was cited most.

Lastly, let us explore the answers to the two new questions added to the e-questionnaire sheet for Survey 2. The objective of introducing these new questions was to find out which of the many skills mentioned by the students were regarded as the ones most practised and best acquired in the booth. In Q3h, students were asked which three skills they had learnt or practised most with the booth-based technique. The ten options presented were 1) listening analysis and comprehension in general, 2) memory techniques, 3) note-taking, 4) listening comprehension in the A or B language, 5) speech production in the A or B language, 6) mastering vocabulary, 7) quick language switch, 8) prosody, 9) interpersonal skills of the interpreter, and 10) interpreting under time constraint. Q3i asked for the three least-practised and least-learned skills in the booth, students being asked to choose from the same ten options. All 19 students replied to these questions and picked the three most practised and best acquired (Q3h) and the three least-practised and least-learned skills (Q3i) according to their own experience. The result was thus a total of 57 answers (skills) for Q3h and 57 for Q3i.

The three skills that students cited as best acquired and most practised in the booth were interpreting under time pressure (mentioned in 12 of the 57 answers), listening analysis and understanding in general (9 of the 57), and speech production in the A or B language (9 of the 57). The least-practised ones were interpersonal skills of the interpreter (mentioned by 19 out of 57 participants), prosody (by 13 out of 57), and memory techniques (by 8 out of 57). As in the previous survey, coping under time constraint emerged as one of the most important skills honed in the booth, even though it was not mentioned very often in the students' free-form answers in Survey 2.

Accordingly, the findings from Survey 2 are very much along the lines of those from Survey 1.

6. Conclusion and implications

The two student surveys partly confirmed the teachers' ideas as to which skills can be honed with in-booth practice: use of vocabulary and rapid change of language and interpreting direction. However, the student surveys also point to other skills that students feel they can and do exercise while practising DI in the booth. The most important of these skills is coping with time constraint (summarising the source text under pressure), but note-taking and memory skills are prominent as well. Introducing these skills to the students as learning objectives or skills

that can or should be practised in the booth, and thereby increasing the students' metacognition of them, could possibly improve the results obtained from in-booth practice. That said, however, one of the roads to take in future research could be actually verifying whether the skills cited by the students truly improve with booth-based practice and, if so, to what extent, especially when compared to independent training with audiotapes or video material, for example.

All in all, however, it seems that combining this 'semi-remote' in-booth practice of DI with the more traditional way of DI training in the classroom, i.e. interactive face-to-face dialogues using simulated cases from the real world, as is currently done at the University of Tampere, is a good option to allow for additional practice of several of the basic (sub)skills needed in DI. These skills include quick reaction skills and the ability to quickly change language, but also skills like performing under time constraint, coping while being dependent on others (always expecting the unexpected to happen), and the analytical skills needed in condensing and summarising source text content. That being said, in-booth practice must not be seen as a mode of practice that would be sufficient on its own, but instead only as an accompanying mode of practice for face-to-face DI practice, which should be still considered the main avenue to obtaining DI competence. After all, training how to interpret in dialogic human interaction is hardly possible without having practised it in actual human interaction.

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