COMPUTER ASSISTED INTERPRETER TRAINING—A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

More and more computers are used in interpretation classrooms, but hardly any research has been available that investigates how to use them to teach interpreting systematically. The aim of this study is to investigate how to use subtitles in CD-ROMs as models to teach students to interpret correctly before they interpret flexibly and how to structure a CAIT (Computer Assisted Interpreter Training) course. The existing study investigates the implementation of the elective CAIT classes that I taught in the department of applied foreign languages in a university of science and technology in northern Taiwan and a series of weekend workshops I gave at a MA translation program in central Taiwan. Qualitative research methods have been used to collect and analyze data. The data consist of my reflective notes and head notes, students’ written and oral feedbacks, and video recordings of students’ interpreting test performance. The participants consist of the instructor and the 80 students in those classes. The results of the study indicate that the audios and subtitles in the CD ROMs serve as scaffolds and models for students to learn to interpret correctly. They enable students to learn to start interpreting from English to Chinese (hereafter referred to as Mandarin Chinese) as well as from Chinese to English within a short period of time. They also lowered students’ learning anxiety when they interpreted in the booth. Since students were designated at random to interpret, they learned to concentrate all the time as they are required to do when they actually interpret. The students learned basic interpretation principles and enhanced their public speaking techniques by giving presentations on topics related to interpreting. During the final examination, the students were free to choose the modes of interpretation and materials; so they tended to choose the most difficult mode of interpretation with the most difficult materials they could handle. Simultaneous interpreting ability may be developed by interpreting easy materials delivered at a reasonable speed, interpreting silently first and then interpreting in a soft voice. Finally, each interpretation class should be divided into three phases: warm-up, workout, and cool-down.
Key words: computer assisted interpreter training, consecutive interpretation, simultaneous interpretation, student empowerment, computer assisted language learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Computers are used more and more in interpreter training laboratories but no research has been available that investigates how to use them effectively and systematically. Interpretation courses have been taught in the following ways, according to the students in an MA program in Taiwan. None of them emphasized the use of computers despite their widespread use:

- CI note taking: The instructor teaches students some signs, symbols, and basic principles of CI note-taking, and then plays an audio message for the students to take notes and then interpret. Then the instructor asks a student to show his/her notes on the whiteboard. The instructor then compares the students’ notes with her own notes.

- Error analysis: The instructor plays the audio from the conference he has interpreted for at the conference and then asks the students to interpret simultaneously in the booths and audio records their interpretation. The instructor then plays the audios back and corrects the errors of the students’ interpretations.

- Audio work: The students are assigned to perform interpreter training tasks and audio record their interpretations. Their interpretations are played back in the classroom for error analysis. They receive feedbacks through peer critiques, self critiques, or the instructor’s critiques.

- Interpreting for visitors: Students are asked to interpret consecutively or simultaneously (into Chinese) for English speaking guests and Chinese speaking guests (into English) who visit the university. Dump booths are used for students to practice interpreting during conferences.

According to some other students in the existing study, the following teaching methods have been used by their teachers in the undergraduate programs:

- Mock conferences: One student serves as speaker and talks for the other students, who serve as interpreters, to interpret consecutively or simultaneously into another language after preparation.

In Mainland China, interpreter training courses are offered in the foreign language departments as compulsory courses; besides, two semester interpretation courses are offered in non-foreign-language departments as elective courses (Dawarnt & Jiang, 2001). In Taiwan, interpretation courses are offered in most departments of foreign languages but no research has been available that investigates how to teach such courses systematically with computers. An early pilot study indicated that with the input provided by CD ROMs on the computer, the subtitles can be turned on and off to teach students different interpretation tasks and different modes of interpreting. Students can be empowered during the final examination to perform difficult modes of interpreting with
difficult materials after preparation at an early stage of training.

1.2. Research Purposes

In this study, I will delineate the use of CD ROMs and internet materials to teach interpreting systematically; discuss some relevant issues, including interpreter training task sequencing, the rationale for teaching, learning material selection, testing and evaluation, and students’ reactions. It is hoped that the results of the study can shed light on interpreter training in general and CAIT in particular.

1.3. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions relevant to CAIT:

(1) What are the students’ backgrounds and motivations?
(2) How to sequence training tasks?
(3) How to administer the test?
(4) How do the students react?
(5) What are the criteria for selecting videos as teaching materials?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. What is CAIT?

Sandrelli and Hawkinsi (2006) defined CAIT as using multimedia computers to facilitate interpreter training. The ideas of CAIT were derived from CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) (Sandrelli 2003).

2.2. Three Existing Types of CAIT Courses

The CAIT courses may be divided mainly into four categories: Websites that offer audio, video, and text learning materials for interpreter training; computer software packages that carry video or audio materials for students to interpret and compare their interpretations with the instructor’s interpretation models or source language scripts; fully fledged software that simulates interpretation booths, and the most advanced (VLE) virtual learning environment that contains many learning tools. However, as Moser-Mercer said well, “You have to choose the kinds of CAIT solutions that suit your needs” (2006, personal communication). Obviously the simultaneous interpretation booths would not work for students whose foreign language and interpretation abilities are insufficient for performing even the basic training tasks.

2.3. Professor Yang’s CAIT Website

In Taiwan, Yang (Yang, 2002, Yang, 2003a, & Yang, 2003b) and her team built a computer learning website to provide audio and written materials for training interpreters of Chinese and six foreign languages (English, Japanese, French, Spanish, Italian, and German). The target audiences are the students of the departments of applied foreign
languages and foreign language departments of universities in Taiwan. In addition to introducing interpreter training tasks, such as shadowing, paraphrasing, and abstracting, Yang’s website also introduces terminology and background knowledge. Additionally, it has an online bulletin board for students to post course feedbacks. This project was successfully moderated and integrated to the non-synchronous distance learning website of the Japanese Department of Fujen Catholic University in Taiwan.

2.4. Using Moodle to Enhance Interpreter Training

Chang (2006) created an online learning community to facilitate interpreter training and investigated how using Moodle, an online course management system, could offer students opportunities for cooperative learning.

2.5. CAIT Software

The Liaison Interpreter Training CD ROM: Sandrelli (2001) reported the application of a CD ROM in liaison interpreter training for the senior undergraduate students of Italian at a university in UK. The CD ROM consists of eight pre-recorded audio of interviews and enables students to record their own interpretation of each dialogue. Each interview has a modular that has the following functions: It requires students to perform various interpreter training tasks. Additionally, it enables students to compare their own interpretation with the instructor’s interpretation in the final screen of each interview. Finally, it enables the students to check their own interpretations against the source language scripts.

Interpretations: According to Sandrelli (2003) the Interpretations prototype was created for training students to learn simultaneous interpretation by practicing training tasks. “Interpretations” has the following features: It facilitate diverse integrations of audio, video, and text materials. Moreover, it allows playing and recording simultaneously of the source language and the target language. Finally, it keeps students’ interpretation in separate folders for self evaluation or peer critiques.

Black Box 4.0: Sandrelli and Hawkins (2006) introduced Black Box 4.0 that, through campus network, can simulate live conferences; moreover, through broadband, it can enable instructors to provide online supports to students learning interpreting off campus.

Interpreter Training CD ROMs: The University of Salamanca (Spain) in 2004 published a CD ROM with materials for teaching consecutive and simultaneous interpreting in German, French and English (Jalón et al. 2004).

2.6 Virtual Interpreting Environment and Virtual Learning Environment

Virtual Interpreting Environment: Sandrelli and Hawkins (2006) introduced a Virtual Interpreting Environment (VIE) that offers software that facilitates interpreting booths for interpreter training.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): The first Virtual Learning Environment for interpreter training was launched by the Interpreting Department of the University of Geneva. This state-of-the-art VLE facilities structured and unstructured face-to-face and online interpretation learning tasks as well as group and individual learning activities.
(Sandrelli, A. & Jerez, M, 2007). The VLE also contains teachers and student learner supporting tools including SIMON (Shared Interpreting Materials Online), EVITA (ETI Virtual Interpreter Training Archives), and the Student Tracker (Motta 2006)

From the literature above, it becomes obvious that more and more audio and video materials have been developed thanks to the increase in the power of personal computers and the band width of the transmission on the Internet. However, before the development of a suitable learning computer platform for quickly uploading and downloading large video files become widely available the existing study attempts to investigate the use of such video files in multimedia computers in an interpreter training classroom. The CAIT approach that this existing study used has other unique features that will be introduced in this paper.

2.6. Modeling and Scaffolding

The existing study made use of an educational idea called instructional scaffolding, which refers to temporary support structures that the instructor offers to assist students gain new comprehension they can not attain on their own (Wyeth, & Venz 2004). Vygotsky’s social constructivism posited that learning can be enhanced by a temporary support structure that is kept until the student can achieve results independently (Vygotsky 1978). Vygotsky posited that social interaction is needed for effective learning, and that students learn the most effectively when the new concept to be learned is just beyond their existing abilities (Vygotsky 1978).

2.7. The Grounded Theory

This existing study uses the grounded theory, which according to Glaser and Strauss is a systematic, qualitative process applied to build a theory that delineates, at a broad conceptual sense, an action, a process, or interaction about a specific topic (Creswell, 2002). Data are collected in diverse ways, including interview transcripts, diagrams, observation notes, memos, and conceptual maps throughout the entire research process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory involves asking questions of the data which will form connections to establish a theory (Goulding, 1999). A theory is a sequence of well-developed categories, such as concepts or themes that are systematically interrelated through explanation of relationship to build a theoretical framework that describes some related social, educational, psychological, or other phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding constitute the mainframe of data collection in the grounded theory. Open coding is the process of dividing the data into separate units of meaning (Goulding, 1999). In this phase of coding, incidents or events are labeled and assembled through continuous comparison to create categories and properties (Babchuk, 1997). In open coding, memos are used, which are the notes the researcher takes throughout research to explain ideas about the data and the coded categories as a way of recording the impressions of the researcher and delineating the situation (Creswell, 2002). After systematic analysis and constant comparing of data, the next phase is to decrease the number of codes and to put them back together to demonstrate a relationship among them. This phase involves axial coding and the creation of concepts. At the top of the hierarchy are categories which integrate the
concepts and reveals a theoretical explanation of the phenomenon under investigation (Goulding, 1999). The aim of axial coding is to put back together the data that were disintegrated through open coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The final phase of data analysis is selective coding, in which categories are related to the central category to ultimately generate the foundation of the grounded theory (Babchuk, 1997).

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Research Setting

The four interpretation classes were conducted in an interpretation laboratory that has the following equipments (“V” indicates that the equipments are available):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi Media Computer</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software (Microsoft Office XP)</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microphone</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headsets</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer broadcast control panel</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic projector and a wide screen</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two simultaneous interpreting booths</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to the loudspeakers on the floor</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to the Internet</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microphone stands for interpreters</td>
<td></td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interpretation laboratory can sit 45 students. The instructor has access to a broadcast control panel that allows him to click a red button to show the video materials of his computer on all the students’ LCD monitors. Each student has access to a multi-media computer, a LCD monitor, a microphone, and headsets. Students speak or interpret over the microphones. Blackboard Academic Suite and class blogs were used to store teaching materials, including handouts, videos, audios, and students’ grades. Students were encouraged to make comments or hold discussions on the bulletin board. However, due to copyrights, the CD ROMs that come with the textbooks can only be used in the classroom.

3.2. Research Participants

The research participants include me and the students of the CAIT classes that I taught. I served as teacher researcher. The student participants are the students of the four interpretation classes (among them two are graduate classes and two are undergraduate senior classes) I taught in 2007 and 5 students in a graduate institute of translation and interpreting (GITI) in central Taiwan, where I gave a series of workshops on CAIT in a pilot study. I have been a freelance conference interpreter and have been teaching interpreting since 1993. The students have learned English for at least 10 years; some of them are experienced interpreters, while the others are learning interpreting for the first time. English is their foreign language and Mandarin Chinese is their mother language. The students took the CAIT classes without taking any screening test; those who were
unqualified simply dropped the class toward the third week of the semester. Some students had taken a two-semester interpretation course that consisted of training in both consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation in other universities. Most of the other students were learning interpreting for the first time. Some of the students in the GITI had passed the interpretation part of the graduation examination. Students who had learned interpreting before reported that their former instructors required them to interpret with authentic materials in a series of mock conferences. One student said that she was so scared after taking the interpretation course in the first semester that she dropped the course in the second semester in another university. This student also said that at the beginning of the semester, more than 50 students signed up for the interpretation course, however, by the add/drop deadline, only 15 students remained to take the course. Most of the five students in the GITI wanted to become translators and interpreters. There is one American student, in his late forties who took the post-graduate interpretation course in order to enhance his Chinese listening and speaking abilities and increase his Chinese vocabulary. In the pilot studies, one participant once served as the interpreting officer for the Taiwan Air Force Commanding General and serves a liaison officer at AIT (American Institution of Taipei) presently; another student has interpreted for the Green Peace and the Taiwan Coast Guard Administration and has become a translator of localization. A student who graduated last year has become a professional full-time interpreter. In the existing study, one student works for the Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee as an administrator/interpreter; and another works as an editor of military journals for the ROC Ministry of National Defense and has interpreted for the generals. A third student works as a free lance conference interpreter on IT industry. These participants all felt that the CAIT courses were quite challenging but they enjoyed taking them. The novice students also commented that they could learn well with the other more advanced students.

3.3. Why Using the CAIT Approach

I decided to use CAIT because it was able to reduce the attrition rate in the pilot studies. In addition, in the university involved, I need at least 10 students to offer an undergraduate course and at least 5 students to offer a post-graduate course. The following chart shows the number of students in each class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Number of student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day program</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Day program</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night program</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Night program</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GITI</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of these students wanted to learn English and interpretation skills so that through self training they can do it when their future employers require them to interpret in the company workshops. Many students in the extension programs in both the pilot studies and the existing study reported that in their companies they had been asked to
interpret in workshops on topics related to their fields of work.

4. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

4.1. How Long is Each Session?

Each session in the graduate programs lasts for three hours with two ten-minute breaks. Each session in the undergraduate programs lasts for two hours with one ten-minute break. The series of weekend workshops are three hours long each with two 10-minute breaks.

4.2. The Materials

All the interpretation classes I teach focus on conference interpretation because it is the most prevalent mode of interpretation in Taiwan. I organized the interpretation classes, taught them, and modified my teaching methods based on students’ reactions and my observations. In the undergraduate classes I used two textbooks. One is titled “Putting Everyday English into Practice” (Wang, 2006). This book covers topics, such as ordering food at restaurants, backpacking, exchanging money, booking a room on the Internet, etc. Another book is titled, “CNN Listening Comprehension Edition” (Wang, 2004), which has articles for practicing cloze exercises. I also used two textbooks in the post-graduate classes. One is titled “Practical English for Business Situations” (Chen, 2006), with topics such as running a meeting, business negotiation, solving communication problems, etc. Another textbook is titled, “Learning English with the Famous” that contains CNN reporters’ interviews of world leaders or celebrities. All the textbooks come with CD ROMs that have Chinese and English subtitles, audio, texts, and video that can be turned off and on at any time.

4.3. Using the Audio and Subtitles as Scaffoldings

The subtitles served as scaffoldings, which were turned off one by one until students were able to interpret on their own. The subtitles and audios also served as models for students to learn to interpret and speak correctly. Students need to learn to interpret correctly before they learn to interpret with flexibility by performing such tasks as paraphrasing or summarizing. However, when students were interpreting with the subtitles to refer to, I asked them to avoid relying completely on the subtitles. Instead, I asked them to use subtitles only as references when they encountered interpreting difficulties. I also encouraged the students to keep on interpreting quietly even when they were not designated to interpret because that is the only way to guarantee that they would interpret well as they were called upon to perform a subsequent more difficult task.

4.4. CAIT Principles

I observed the following principles when I taught the CAIT courses:

- CI is taught before SI.
- The performance of a task with subtitles or texts (e.g. sight interpretation) to refer to is done before the performance of a task without subtitles or texts (e.g.
simultaneous interpreting) in spite of the fact that the latter is not necessarily more difficult than the former.

- Interpreting from English to Chinese is taught before interpreting from Chinese to English.
- A task is performed without lagging is done before a task is done with lagging (e.g., lagging while shadowing).

4.5. Interpreter Training in a Recycling Approach

I used the recycling approach to reduce students’ learning anxiety and the attrition rate. In CAIT, I used tasks from the charts in the next section and recycled them selectively in each class session based on the students’ language and interpretation abilities as well as the time constraints. Some basic tasks, such as sight translation, reading aloud, and consecutive interpreting were recycled in almost every class session, but some tasks, such as paraphrasing, abstracting, and expanding were used as the students became more proficient. Chinese students learned to interpret from English to Chinese before they learned to interpret from Chinese to English. However, the American student preferred to do reading aloud in Chinese and interpret from English to Chinese in order to enhance his Chinese skills. Most of the time, the student who did a certain task, such as shadowing or brainstorming also served as a speaker and provided input for the other students to interpret into another language. Some students had learned interpreting in another university where they mainly used two major training approaches:

1. Role play: one student played the speaker, the rest of the students played the interpreters, and they used authentic materials.

2. Salami: Students learned a training task (from an easier task to an increasingly more difficult task) every two or three weeks. These students said that when undergoing interpreter training in those approaches, students’ learning anxiety and the attrition rate tended to be quite high.

4.6. Recycling the Tasks and Materials

The learning materials are recycled so that they become so easy that the students can concentrate on performing the tasks that become more and more difficult. Any task will become difficult if the materials are very difficult for the students.

The following chart shows all the tasks performed in CAIT, however, some tasks involve subtasks. The instructor calls a student to perform a task (e.g., shadowing), after that the student calls at random another student to do the next task (e.g., listening to the shadowing and then interpreting consecutively). This goes on until the completion of each unit. Student A is the speaker and Student B is the interpreter.

C Sub = Chinese Subtitles; E sub = English subtitles; aud = audio; B = basic; I = intermediate; A = advanced; St A = student A; St B = student B; E>C = interpreting from English to Chinese; C>E = interpreting from Chinese to English; CI = consecutive interpreting; SI = simultaneous interpreting. Some tasks require no subtitles or audios. Student A and Student B could be any student designated to take turns performing training tasks as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training tasks</th>
<th>St A</th>
<th>St B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Consecutive sight translation (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>Consecutive sight translation (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Simultaneous sight translation (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>Simultaneous sight translation (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Shadowing and reading the subtitles aloud (E)</td>
<td>(4) Sight CI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) CI without note taking (E&gt;C)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Shadowing (lagging) (E)</td>
<td>(7) SI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Reading aloud (C)</td>
<td>CI without note taking (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Paraphrasing aloud (E)</td>
<td>CI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Summarizing aloud (E)</td>
<td>CI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Expanding aloud (E)</td>
<td>CI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) Condensing aloud (E)</td>
<td>CI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing aloud (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing aloud (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding aloud (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condensing aloud (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing aloud (C)</td>
<td>CI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing aloud (C)</td>
<td>CI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding aloud (C)</td>
<td>CI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condensing aloud (C)</td>
<td>CI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing aloud (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing aloud (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding aloud (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condensing aloud (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading a text aloud dense in digits and terminology (E)</td>
<td>(13) Interpreting digits and terminology consecutively (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading a text aloud dense in digits and terminology (E)</td>
<td>Interpreting digits and terminology simultaneously (E&gt;C)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading a text aloud dense in digits and terminology (C)</td>
<td>Interpreting digits and terminology consecutively (C&gt;E)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Reading a text aloud dense in digits and terminology (C)</td>
<td>Interpreting digits and terminology simultaneously (C&gt;E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Delivering a medium to long speech (E)</td>
<td>(14) CI note-taking &amp; CI (E&gt;C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delivering a medium to long speech (C)</td>
<td>CI note-taking &amp; CI (C&gt;E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brain storming (E)</td>
<td>(15) SI (E&gt;C) in the booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brain storming (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E) in the booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delivering a speech based on a text or PowerPoint (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C) in the booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Delivering a speech based on a text or PowerPoint (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E) in the booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading a text aloud (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C) in the booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading a text aloud (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E) in the booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(16) Reading a cloze text aloud (E)</td>
<td>CI (E&gt;C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading a cloze text aloud (E)</td>
<td>SI (E&gt;C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading a cloze text aloud (C)</td>
<td>CI (C&gt;E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading a cloze text aloud (C)</td>
<td>SI (C&gt;E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17) Preparing to interpret at a conference, research skills, bilingual glossaries, &amp; pre-conference briefing</td>
<td>Preparing to interpret at a conference, research skills, bilingual glossaries, &amp; pre-conference briefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18) Mock conferences</td>
<td>SI, CI, sight interpretation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the terms are explained below:

(1) Consecutive sight translation: Reading subtitles and translating them one by one orally into another language.

(2) Simultaneous sight translation: Reading a series of subtitles that appear on the screen one after another very quickly and interpreting them into another language.

(3) Shadowing and reading the subtitles aloud: Listening to an audio message, reading its subtitles, and at the same time repeating after the message.

(4) Sight consecutive interpreting: Listening to an audio message, reading its subtitles, and interpreting (hereafter referred to translating orally into another language) at the end of each sentence or long statement.

(5) CI without note taking: Listening to an audio message and interpreting at the end of a pause or long statement. The purpose is to enhance short-term memory.
(6) Shadowing (lagging): Listening to an audio message and repeating it at the same time (by falling behind it by a few words).

(7) Simultaneous interpreting: Listening to an audio message and at the same time interpreting it into another language.

(8) Reading aloud: Reading a text aloud with the appropriate emotion, intonation, and eye contacts.

(9) Paraphrasing aloud: Reading (or listening to) a message and respeaking in different words and sentence structures.

(10) Summarizing aloud: Reading (or listening to) a message and respeaking by reducing it to a shorter length but keeping the main ideas.

(11) Expanding aloud: Reading (or listening to) a message and respeaking it by increasing it to a longer length.

(12) Condensing aloud: Reading (or listening to) a message and respeaking by reducing it to a much shorter length.

(13) Interpreting digits and terminology: Reading or listening to a message dense in figures and terminology and interpreting them into another language.

(14) CI & note taking: Listening to an audio message, taking notes while listening, and during the pauses interpreting in another language by referring to the notes. Note-taking is very personal, but it is based on some common principles, e.g. verticality, shifting, and using signs, symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, etc.

(15) Interpreting in the booth: Students take turns interpreting for approximately 10 minutes each in the booth at a time. The source language inputs are short speeches improvised by on students on what they have done over the weekend, or brain storming on specific topics. A student may be asked to read a text out loud and digress from the text occasionally for another student to interpret by referring to the same text. Sometimes, students are asked to interpret the audio message in the CD ROMs that come with the textbooks.

(16) Reading a cloze text aloud: A textbook for practicing cloze exercises is used. There is a short article in each unit. A word is deleted after every 10 words or so. When reading aloud, students have to guess out the deleted words by watching the video in the CD ROM played on the computer.

(17) Preparing to interpret at the conference: When preparing to interpret at the conference, students learn the following tasks:
   (1) Working with conference organizers, speakers, and other people involved.
   (2) Asking questions relevant to interpreting preparation.
(3) Using the resources on the Internet.
(4) Creating a bilingual glossary.

(18) Mock conferences: Toward the end of the semester, in the MA programs, a professional interpreter was invited to give a talk for 1.5 hours on “Qualitative Research: Applying Portfolio Assessment to Interpreter Training”. Five students volunteered to take turns interpreting simultaneously in the booths for the speaker. They were taught to obtain the PowerPoint slides from the speaker by e-mail, create a bilingual glossary, and meet the speaker briefly before the presentation. At the end of the speech, the class discussed on the interpretation quality of the student interpreters.

4.7. Multiple-tasking

Multiple tasking training requires students to do many tasks at the same time. Professor Franz Poehacker (2006, personal communication) said that multiple tasking that involves listening to a message and writing down three digit figures backwards has never been used in his classroom, and neither has it been used in my CAIT classes, in which SI ability is developed, after they have learned CI, through interpreting simultaneously in the following processes:

- Interpreting silently.
- Interpreting by murmuring.
- Interpreting by speaking softly.
- Interpreting by speaking normally.

4.8. Memory Training

Memory training in CAIT is done by interpreting consecutively in different modes as indicated in the chart above. Students enhanced their short-term memory by interpreting without taking notes.

4.9. Testing and Evaluation

Mid-term examination: For the mid-term examination, each student gave a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation on a topic related to interpreter training.

Final examination: In the final examination, the students were required to interpret in a mode of interpretation they had chosen. The students’ grades were given based on the difficulty of the mode of interpreting they used, the difficulty of the materials they chose, language they chose to interpret into. They are also evaluated based on an interpretation quality checklist. They downloaded audio or video materials from the Internet sites, such as Speech Bank (http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speechbank.htm) and Research Channel (http://www.researchchannel.org/prog/) and practiced as many times as they needed before interpreting in front of the class without referring to any notes with the exception of notes taken during long consecutive interpretation. They get a higher grade if they perform long CI with CI note taking, medium grades if they perform SI, and lowest grades if they perform short CI. Students who interpret into English get higher grades than those interpreting into Chinese, except the American student, who gets a
higher grade for interpreting into Chinese. The entire testing processes were video recorded for self critiques and peer reviews.

4.10. Interpreting in the Booth

Toward the end of the semester, I started each class session by asking the students to take turns interpreting in the booth of talks delivered by the other students who took turns brain storming. I usually asked them to talk about what they had done over the weekend or a controversial topic. Their speeches were usually predictable and not very difficult, so when interpreting such talks, the students could concentrate on enhancing their SI skills.

4.11. Self Training

Because the students have different language backgrounds, language abilities, and motivations, self-training becomes the most important factor that can affect their learning. All the tasks practiced in the classroom can also be practiced in self-training or practicing with peers. Students also have the CD ROMs that come with the textbooks. It is up to the students to decide how much time they would like to spend on self-training. The more time they spend on it the better they will interpret. All the tasks may be practiced by using MP3 players or CD ROMs in personal computers.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study used grounded theory in collecting data, analyzing them, and completing the report. The data consist of the instructor’s observation notes, reflective notes, headnotes, and the students’ written and oral output. The data were analyzed with open coding, axial coding, and selective coding as indicated in the grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

6. LIMITATION

This study is limited in that it used qualitative methods. Other researchers are encouraged to look into the quantitative aspects of ACIT.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

7.1. Teaching CI Note Taking in the CAIT Approach

Interpreter trainers often complain that students often take too many notes during CI. However, in this study, I found that if you give students clear and concise guidelines and then ask them to take notes by following them, they will follow them and take concise notes but in diverse styles.

CI note taking can be taught on the computer step by step to reduce the amount of notes that students take each time (with the exception of certain signs that can only be drawn by hand). Students take too many notes because they are afraid that if they don't do that they will soon forget. To avoid taking too many notes, they may be taught to take
notes step by step as follows:
(1) Train students to interpret consecutively in CAIT without taking notes to enhance their listening comprehension ability and short term memory. This phase may last for several weeks or months depending on the students’ abilities and time constraints.
(2) Introduce Rozan’s seven principles of note-taking because they are easy to remember and apply.
(3) Select passages that are logical and interesting and then paraphrase them aloud for the students to take notes and then interpret. It is important to paraphrase not to read the text because reading a text out loud, that is meant to be read silently, is extremely difficult to interpret even for professional interpreters.
(4) Require students to interpret based on the notes they have taken. Ask students to write their notes on the whiteboard for peer critiques.
(5) Correct the students’ notes on the white board based on Rozan’s seven principles of CI note taking that students have been taught.
(6) Show on the computer the instructor’s notes and, based on which, ask students to correct each other’s notes and give peer critiques.
(7) Use logical materials (that are selected carefully) at the beginning. Start using authentic materials as students become more proficient.

Note taking taught in this way encourages students to take notes systematically and selectively. However, students will eventually develop their own note taking systems.

7.2. Students’ Responses after Using Authentic Materials

I used two textbooks in the post-graduate program, both comes with CD ROMs. One is on business meetings and negotiations with role plays by several actors. Another is on interviews of world leaders by CNN reporters. I asked students to give feedbacks on their experience of using these textbooks. Students’ comments are listed in the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical English for Business Situations (based on role plays)</th>
<th>Learning English with the Famous (authentic CNN interviews)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTORS: The same actors do role plays so it is boring.</td>
<td>Different reporters interview different speakers so it is interesting and fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOCABULARY AND SENTENCE PATTERNS: It has common sentence patterns, useful expressions, and topics on business that are useful and easy to learn.</td>
<td>Vocabularies are difficult, some sentence patterns are journalistic, and accents are diverse making it difficult even to understand sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEED OF DELIVERY: Speed of the delivery is fast but easy to understand.</td>
<td>Most interviewees speak at a reasonable speed, but the reporters speak too fast for interpreting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents: Knowledge is limited to business, so it is easily comprehensible.</td>
<td>Contents are diverse, so it is difficult to comprehend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USEFULNESS: It should be used as a main textbook.</td>
<td>It should be used as an important supplementary book.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW SHOULD IT BE USED: It should be used for learning to interpret without preparation. It should be reviewed before class and should be learned slowly.

ADVANTAGES: Its vocabulary, idioms, and sentence patterns are limited but it can enhance students’ interpretation abilities. It can enhance students’ general knowledge, vocabulary, idioms, and listening comprehension abilities.

ACCENTS: Speakers carry the north American accent, which is considered as the standard English accent and favored by English learners in Taiwan. The reporters and other speakers all speak with diverse accents. It is great to expose students to different accents if they want to become interpreters.

7.3. The American Student’s Surviving Strategy

The American student did quite well in the CAIT class with the assistance of his Chinese classmates. One day I asked students at random to come to the podium to interpret the video of a whole unit of a textbook without subtitles to refer to. He said that he had prepared some twenty expressions that he was unfamiliar with. If he was called upon to come to the podium to do CI of the entire unit, he would use the list of expressions to help him interpret. He said that he felt relieved when he was not asked to come to the podium to interpret. At the final examination, he interpreted a poem in English consecutively into Chinese after thorough preparation.

7.4. Students Learned Multiple Tasking by Interpreting Simple Materials at Slow Speed and in a Soft Voice

I believe interpreting simultaneously is a multiple tasking ability that students develop by interpreting as much as possible so I asked the students to interpret continuously in class using different ways of interpreting in increasing difficulty as shown below:

- Interpreting simultaneously and silently.
- Interpreting simultaneously by murmuring.
- Interpreting simultaneously in a soft voice.
- Interpreting simultaneously in a normal voice.

7.5. Students Would Like to Have More Opportunities to Interpret in the Booth

Occasionally I required students to take turns interpreting in the booth improvised speeches provided by me and the students, or audios of the CD ROMs. The students indicated that the experience was good, useful, exciting, and motivating, so they would like to have more opportunities to practice interpreting in the booth. One student said that she could enhance her listening and vocabulary by preparing to interpret in the booth. However, the students of the undergraduate classes believed that they needed to work harder to overcome the following difficulties that they had encountered sometimes:

- They forgot what the speaker had said after interpreting a portion of the speech.
at the same time.

- They couldn’t catch up with the speaker’s speaking speed.
- They couldn’t interpret fast enough.
- Their listening comprehension ability and vocabulary were insufficient.
- They had difficulties interpreting figures.

7.6. Most Students Liked CAIT

CAIT based itself on the principles of using recycling training materials and training tasks to enhance students’ short-term memory, concentration, interpretation automaticity, interpreting speed, listening and speaking abilities, and CI and SI abilities. Students gave the following comments about the teaching methods:

- CAIT approaches keep them busy and concentrated all the time, which is essential to interpreting ability development.
- Learning with CD ROMs and turning subtitles off one by one reduce students’ learning anxiety; enable them to become familiar with the content of the materials so they can focus on the training tasks they are practicing.
- Just as variety is the spice of life, there should be diverse training tasks, materials, and modes in each session.
- Learning materials should be easily used in students’ home computers for self-training.
- Each training unit should have a distinctive training goal and training should be done step-by-step.
- Student presenting on topics related to interpreting can enhance both their knowledge and their public speaking skills.
- Interpreting in the booth made students nervous, but after interpreting there for a while they don’t feel nervous any more.

One student commented that to add variety, the class should be taught like a sandwich that consists of three parts: (1) Warm-up: Students take turns brainstorming by talking about specific topics for the other students to take turns interpreting; (2) The workout: Students practice training tasks using CD ROMs with subtitles that are turned off one by one; (3) Cool-down: Students give presentations on topics related to interpreter training to enhance their interpretation knowledge as well as enhance their public speaking skills.

7.7. The GITI Students’ Reactions

After I finished conducting a series of workshops, the students at the Graduate Institute of Translation and Interpretation provided some feedbacks which are summarized below:

- “CAIT is quite challenging and interesting. It gets the whole class involved because every student has to pay close attention to any utterance in order to interpret well. In addition, students have the opportunities to practice interpreting in both the source language and the target language in every session.”
- “CAIT made it possible for us to all get involved in learning different interpretation tasks.” Everybody had to concentrate fully, so we all had a lot of practice in interpreting and there were no free loaders. In addition, we could all
hear the interpretations of our classmates’ so we were able to learn interpreting from each other.”
• “I found CAIT a big boost to my heart. I can see that it would be useful to use it as a way to prepare for a conference. It is impossible to miss a single minute. And I found few chances, if any, to engage in such challenging tasks. I hope next time Professor Chen can give us more interpreting-related exercises like this”.

8. IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERPRETER TRAINING

8.1. Training Material and Tasks Should be Recycled

Recycling training materials and tasks enables students to focus on enhancing their interpretation skills. It is effective to interpret the same text repeatedly using different tasks because after students have become familiar with the content of the materials, they can then concentrate on skill enhancement. In addition, it can enhance their concentration as well as their speaking and listening abilities. However, since interpreters are never asked to interpret the same materials twice, the ultimate goal should be to train students to interpret the materials only one time preferably with little or no preparation at all.

8.2. Students Should be Given Opportunities to Interpret in the Booth As Often as Possible

Students should be asked to interpret in the booth as often as possible because their reactions to their experience of interpreting in the booth have been quite positive. They all treasure the “opportunities” to interpret in the booth and feel that it is more realistic to interpret in the booth than it is to interpret sentences or paragraphs in their seats. They feel nervous at the beginning but they feel much more relaxed as they spend their time interpreting in the booth.

8.3. Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Enhancement Should be Part of the Training Goals of a CAIT Course

Numerous students have mentioned that their poor listening comprehension and insufficient vocabulary are to blame for their poor interpretation. Students should be asked to interpret materials that are slightly more difficult than they can handle and faster than they can comprehend, so that they will feel a sense of accomplishment when they can understand the materials after the materials have been recycled by requiring students to practice various tasks.

8.4. Students Should be Assigned to Give Short PowerPoint Presentations

The students easily get tired and fall sleep once the instructor starts lecturing on the theories of interpreting, but when the students give presentations, the other students will listen attentively. Students giving presentations can enhance both their interpretation knowledge and their public speaking ability.
8.5. Designating the Students at Random to Interpret Keeps Students Concentrated All the Time

Designating students at random to interpret may enhance their concentration and keep them alert all the time. It will create some anxiety but it will also make them more concentrated. Interpreting is impossible without a certain level of anxiety and full concentration. The anxiety level will subside as the training continues and as the students become more familiar with the materials. At that time students will be able to concentrate on learning the training tasks. On the other hand, it can also be exciting and fun to be called upon unexpectedly to interpret.

8.6. Materials Should be Diverse

In CAIT, the CD ROMs are very useful because they can enhance students’ listening comprehension, vocabulary, interpretation skills, and interpreting speed. However, they should cover both easy and difficult topics. There should be two types of materials: One type should be easier but contains useful vocabulary, grammar, idioms, sentence patterns, and general topics. Another type of materials should be authentic and more challenging. The audio materials should be easy enough for the students to interpret without much difficulty but should be so challenging that students have to fully concentrate to understand. There should be some difficult idioms and vocabulary so that students can practice cloze exercises and guess from contexts (with the difficult expressions serving as gaps), but they should not be so difficult that students have to keep on consulting the dictionary to comprehend them.

8.7. The Teaching Process in Each Session Should be in the Form of a Sandwich

In each session there should be three phases: warm-up, workout, and cool-down.

Warm-up: Each student is required to summarize one article or speech in three to five minutes (or longer as students become more competent) in each class session for the other students to take turns interpreting into another language. The goal of this phase is to enhance students’ general knowledge and ability to summarize by extensive reading and interpreting. It also prepares students mentally for the following more rigorous phase of training.

Workout: During workout, students practice interpreting by watching a CD ROM with English and Chinese captions turned off one by one until finally students have to interpret without referring to the captions. The goal of this phase is to enhance students’ interpretation speed, reaction, and dexterity with different training tasks and modes of interpretation.

Cool-down: Each student gives a PowerPoint presentation on a topic related to interpreter training to practice public speaking and research abilities. The other students enjoy the presentations and ask inspiring questions. The instructor provides feedback and comments.

The sandwich approach of interpreter training enables students to learn interpreting step by step, reduces student attrition rate, and makes interpreter training more doable.
8.8. The Sky is the Limit When Students are Empowered in the Interpretation Test

The students should be empowered to decide the mode of interpretation, the language to interpret into, and materials that they will use during the tests. This can motivate them to use the most difficult materials, the most difficult mode of interpreting, and the most difficult language to interpret into. In one word, when the students are empowered, the sky is the limit. However, they may also be allowed to do role play by using authentic materials. Just as variety is the spice of life, variety too should be the spice of CAIT testing and evaluation.

8.9 Teacher Feedback, Self-training, and Peer Critiques

When this paper was presented at the TILS Conference on 1-2 February 2008 at the University of Macerata, Italy, several participants asked questions about CAIT. Here are their questions and my responses:

Professor Franz Poechhacker asked “How do you deal with feedback in CAIT?”

My answer: In general, I encourage students to interpret in different ways instead of criticizing them because beginners need to develop interpretation flexibility, which is very difficult to develop. Important coping tactics, such as abstracting, summarizing, and paraphrasing are essential for the students to learn so that they can use them when they encounter difficulties during interpreting. If the interpreter stops completely during interpreting without reasons, the audience will notice it and lose confidence in their performance. Therefore, instead of pointing out students’ interpretation errors, I take the opportunity to explain to them how to use strategies and coping tactics to handle difficult situations. However, when students make mistakes obvious mistakes, e.g. when interpreting figures, numbers, and special terms incorrectly, I correct them without hesitation because these errors are too obvious to ignore. Professor Poechhacker agreed to what I said and, after the conference, he told me that he also likes my idea of dividing a CAIT class session into three phases: warm-up, workout, and cool-down.

A participant from Italy asked me if I required students to practice by themselves. I responded by saying that I understand that self-training is a significant factor that can greatly influence the effectiveness of interpreter training. However, since the CAIT course is elective, I focus more on teaching students the training tasks. Students who are more interested in learning may then practice by themselves as much as they want by using the video materials I introduced to them. However, this course does require some self-training. For instance, before every class session, students have to take turns preparing to deliver a speech by summarizing an article or preparing to interpret other students’ speeches. Besides, at the end of the semester, each student has to interpret for 10 minutes.

A participant from Greece asked me how to deal with mistakes in the subtitles of the movies used in the CAIT classroom and if I played the videos of the students’ final examinations for self critique. My answers are: There are very few mistakes in the movies, and even if there are, they would serve as good examples for students to learn how to avoid making similar mistakes in interpreting. In terms of self evaluation with the videos of the students’ own final examinations, the students told me that they prefer not
to watch them. Instead, they prefer watching the videos of the examinations of the students of the other CAIT classes. In other words, they prefer to do peer critiques. However, I believe that the students should also benefit from self critiques and will include them in the future CAIT classes.

9. CONCLUSION

The results of the existing study indicate that CAIT is feasible for conducting interpretation courses that are offered in a continuous basis and diversity is the key to success in CAIT. The training materials should cover diverse topics and should include both authentic materials and role play performed by actors. Training processes should be in the form of a sandwich that includes warm-up, workout, and cool-down. Training tasks and materials should be recycled to enable students to concentrate on interpretation skill and interpretation speed enhancement. Students should be empowered to choose the most challenging tasks and materials they can handle in the tests. In addition, they should be allowed to do role play or interpret in a mock conference during the test. When students are empowered in the tests, they sky is the limit. Students should develop their multiple-tasking ability by interpreting simultaneously in different voice volumes. Finally, students should be encouraged to interpret in the booth as often and as early as possible.

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REFERENCES


Internet Materials


