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Self-assessment: Student Interpreters' Perceptions and Implementation

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This study explores student interpreters' understanding and implementation of self-assessment in their interpreting skill development. It also discusses the difficulties student interpreters experience in self-assessing their individual learning outside the classroom. Self-assessment is a critical learning method for student interpreters as well as professional interpreters to become self-directed learners who can acquire and maintain the skills required for professional interpreters. While researchers and teachers of interpreting recognize the usefulness of the learning method, student interpreters stand to benefit the most. Using mixed methods, this study carried out an online survey and focus group interviews with student interpreters at an interpreting education program in Australia. The findings revealed that while student interpreters generally believe self-assessments are beneficial and important for skill improvement, they do not have sufficient knowledge of the self-assessment process to carry out the activity successfully. Some students also experience difficulties that seem to prevent them from actively using self-assessments in their learning. It appears that the difficulties arise not only from a lack of knowledge of self-assessment but also from a sense of shame. Based on the findings, further research on more practical pedagogical approaches to self-assessment is suggested.

[self-assessment/student interpreters/implementation/perception/instruction]

I. INTRODUCTION

Self-assessment has been recognized as an important learning activity in the context of self-directed learning with the aim of fostering autonomous learners (Lew, Alwis, & Schmidt, 2010). Andrade and Valtcheva (2009) explained that "self-assessment is a process of formative assessment during which students reflect on the quality of their work, judge

the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly" (p.13). In other words, students evaluate their own performance and monitor their learning by themselves. By engaging in self-assessment, students can enhance their ownership of the learning process. In this sense, self-assessment is a dynamic process that empowers students in their learning, and thus, it is a core component of self-regulated learning (Siegesmund, 2017). Therefore, self-assessment has been studied in a wide range of educational domains, including writing (Nielsen, 2014), second language acquisition (Baleghizadeh & Masoun, 2013), and mathematics (Stallings & Tascione, 1996).

Self-directed, autonomous learning skills are particularly necessary for student interpreters and even professional interpreters. As Horváth (2007) stated, permanent learning is a professional requirement and self-assessment plays a key role in life-long learning. Interpreting requires a highly advanced set of skills, such as a mastery level of language competence in at least two different languages, complex cognitive processing (Gile, 2009) and risk management skills (Kao & Craigie, 2013). Therefore, student interpreters need to develop such skills during their training and those who are building their career as a professional interpreter need to maintain a high level of expertise throughout their career. As Gladwell (2008) stated that the 10,000 hours rule applies to a specialist in any field, such skills can be acquired through relentless practice. Student interpreters practice interpreting during class and receive feedback from their teacher that guides them in the direction of their practice. The teacher's productive feedback, however, is usually available only in class. In addition, professional interpreters hardly receive formative feedback on the quality of their performance, especially when they work as freelancers (Lee, 2005; Motta, 2016; Slatyer, 2015). Therefore, in addition to skills to perform interpreting, student interpreters and professional interpreters need skills to assess their own interpreting performance to supplement their training and replace a teacher's feedback after starting their career.

Literature in interpreter education suggests researchers and teachers have implemented self-assessments in interpreter training programs. The interpreter education program at Macquarie University in Australia, for example, is one that incorporates self-assessment into its curriculum. Interpreting practice units in the program require students to submit a self-assessment report, which is subject to be graded, at least once a semester to encourage students to perform self-assessments, expecting that they will develop the skills to be a self-directed learner.

Considering that student interpreters are encouraged to self-assess their own interpreting performance by completing an assignment in the current interpreter education context, it is important to understand how student interpreters perceive self-assessments as a learning method and apply the method to their own learning because they are the learners who are expected to benefit from these self-assessments. This study, therefore, investigates

interpreting students' perceptions about and use of self-assessment. The following are the research questions of this study:

1) What methods do student interpreters know that they can use for self-assessments in the interpreting education context?
2) What methods do student interpreters use for self-assessments?
3) What difficulties do they experience when performing self-assessments?
4) To what degree do student interpreters perceive the importance and the effectiveness of self-assessments in enhancing their interpreting performance?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Self-assessment in General Education

An abundant literature in education discusses the positive impact of self-assessment on learning, arguing that self-assessment may increase learning and academic achievement (Brown & Harris, 2013), enhance self-efficacy (Olina & Sullivan, 2004), develop metacognitive engagement (Rivers, 2001) and promote the effectiveness of self-regulated learning (Kostons, van Gog, & Paas, 2012). For example, Brown and Harris (2013) analysed 24 studies on self-assessment implementation to conclude that self-assessment may contribute to improvement of students' performance. In research by Kostons et al. (2012) that investigated secondary students' self-assessment, the participants who were taught self-assessment skills showed better application of self-regulatory activities such as monitoring and planning.

On the other hand, potential negative impacts of self-assessment have also been discussed. For example, inaccurate self-assessment might have a negative impact on self-directed learning or autonomous learning (Kostons et al., 2012). While it is generally assumed that students can judge their performance quality, some researchers argued that self-assessment is not easy for students (Bourke, 2014). Domain knowledge is one of the factors that impact self-assessment accuracy. Thus individuals, particularly novices, who lack domain knowledge are likely to be inaccurate self-assessors. In such cases, they tend to be too critical of themselves and set too high a benchmark to compare their work. Inaccurate self-assessors, regardless that if they are aware of their competence in self-assessment, might eventually undermine the effectiveness of self-assessment and self-directed learning and thus be more likely to become demotivated, whereas accurate self-assessment provides students a clear idea about their learning process, thereby keeping them motivated (Baars, Vink, van Gog, de Bruin, & Paas, 2014).

In addition to the potential negative impacts on self-assessment, students' unwillingness to perform self-assessments has been discussed in the literature. In research by Andrade and Du (2007), students tend to opt out of applying self-assessments for classes where it is not required. Similarly, Leach (2012) found that the majority of students in her study chose not to self-assess when it was optional. These findings indicate that students may lack the motivation to self-assess or cannot perceive its utility. The findings of Olina and Sullivan (2004) seem to explain the behaviour and demotivation of students as it found that students put little effort into self-assessment even as an assignment because they felt they could not make an objective evaluation on their performance and thus did not expect to benefit from the activity.

2. Self-Assessment in Interpreter Education

Although relatively under-researched in the field of interpreter education, self-assessment has gained attention from researchers and trainers, and studies on self-assessment offer useful insight about the learning activity in the field. In the interpreting field, self-assessment normally refers to listening critically to a recording of one's own interpreting performance identifying weaknesses and strengths (Gillies, 2013). Researchers in interpreter education have developed methods for self-assessment to investigate various aspects of interpreting and/or self-assessment in interpreting. In the first empirical study that explored self-assessment by student interpreters, Russo (1995), who aimed to "encourage SI students to analyse their performance, discover their weaknesses and strengths and channel their resources during the training period accordingly" (p. 75), devised a questionnaire for self-assessment. The students in her study listened to a speech in a booth and interpreted it. Upon the completion of their performance, the students completed a questionnaire concerning problem areas in simultaneous interpreting, namely cognition, expression, and experience. Later, interpreting quality assessment criteria were developed by some experienced interpreting teachers (Bartłomiejczyk, 2007; Riccardi, 2002). Although terms used in the quality criteria varied among researchers, aspects that are commonly concerned to assess the quality of interpreting, such as faithfulness, fillers, and naturalness, are used in the studies. Some researchers designed a scoring rubric (e.g., Dillinger, 1994; Han, 2018) and required students to score their own performances. Transcribing the output of students' performance to compare with the speech they interpreted is another method that has been used in the self-assessment literature (e.g., Bartłomiejczyk, 2007; Tommola & Heleä, 1998).

A study carried out by Pinazo (2008) showed the effectiveness of self-assessment in interpreter training. He claimed that "self-assessment is a capital for interpreting teaching" (p. 197). He designed self-assessment criteria and guided students carefully throughout the

year. Thirty students were required to submit their self-assessment report on their performances that was recorded in class as an assignment, which contributed to their final grade. The students were provided with transcripts and a self-assessment sheet that included assessment criteria and required them to score their performance. The frequency or the number of self-assessment reports was not specified, but the assignment was given after every class. At the end of the academic year, he observed significant progress in students' interpreting performance in the program. Although the initial marks of the participants and academic assessment criteria were not provided, 90% of thirty students scored eight out of ten, and half of those students scored nine in their final assessment of the semester. Students who gained experience in self-assessments also holistically improved in the learning method.

Student interpreters who experienced self-assessment seem to agree on the usefulness of the activity in their interpreting learning. In two separate studies, Lee (2005) and Ibrahim-Gonzalez and Noordin (2012) surveyed their student interpreters about their self-assessment experiences. Both surveys showed that the participants agreed they could pinpoint their weaknesses through their self-assessment experience. On the other hand, Ibrahim-Gonzalez and Noordin (2012) also found that students felt that self-assessment is time-consuming and focused only on their errors and mistakes. Investigating students' self-assessment results, Bartłomiejczyk (2007) asked students to perform self-assessments and found that student interpreters tend to focus considerably more on negative aspects than positive aspects. Moreover, remarks in the students' assessment were found not useful for their improvement. It should be noted that the students in this study did not receive explicit instruction and a rubric. Considering that self-assessment in interpreting is critically analysing one's own performance, it is not surprising that negative aspects were the focus in self-assessment as students need to identify errors and areas to work on for improvement when evaluating their own performance.

Self-assessment performance, however, should be carefully approached. Hild (2014) stated that "the self-reflective phase encompasses post-performance processes of self-judgement and self-reaction, which contribute to long-term learning and affect individuals' construction of their self-image and their motivation to engage in subsequent tasks." (p. 133). Student interpreters are easily susceptible to demotivation, and one of the demotivating factors is perceived competence although they are generally highly motivated as most student interpreters are self-selected (Wu, 2016). In this regard, focusing on errors and mistakes when assessing their performance might have a negative impact on students' perceived competence and thus demotivate students to use self-assessment, which is a vital learning method for their interpreting skill improvement.

III. METHOD

In this study, students' responses play a key role in gaining insight about their self-assessment practices. Thus, a descriptive study is conducted based on an online survey and focus group discussions. Surveys gather relatively large amount of data in a relatively short period of time and enable researchers to observe patterns by analysing results (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Focus groups are useful to confirm the results of a survey and to provide additional information that might not be available from a survey.

1. Participants

The participants of this study were student interpreters who were enrolled in the Graduate Diploma of Translating and Interpreting, Master of Translation and Interpreting Studies, Master of Conference Interpreting at the time of data collection. While the length of the programs ranges from two semesters to four semesters, those who were taking or had taken an interpreting practice class were invited to participate in the study irrespective of how long they had been enrolled in their program. It should be noted that the data for this study was collected about three weeks before an academic semester ended. Therefore, even first semester participants were eligible to participate as they have had experiences of performing interpreting and self-assessment by the time of data collection. The study participants were from Australia, China, Columbia, France, Iran, Japan, Korea, Russia, Spain and Vietnam, and their ages ranged from mid-twenties to fifty years old. All are bilingual with English and a language other than English (LOTE). Of the 117 potential participants who met the recruitment criteria and were invited to the survey, 40 students (34.2%) completed the survey. As for the focus group interviews, 8 students participated.[1]

2. Data Collection

1) The Survey

The survey, which was administered online, consisted of 27 questions. Among these questions, 17 questions were designed to explore student interpreters' knowledge and engagement in self-assessment, using dichotomous questions and multiple choice questions. The students were asked whether they self-assess in their self-study sessions and to choose methods for self-assessment that they use. The methods that have been

[1] This project received approval by the Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee of Macquarie University.

commonly discussed in the interpreting literature (recording, listening, and transcribing an interpreting performance, and using a rubric) were provided for selection. Then, how often they are engaged in each method and the reasons for the frequency were asked in separate questions. The multiple choice questions had a comment field to avoid forcing respondents to select only from the options provided, and questions that investigated reasons allowed multiple answers. Using rating scales from 0 to 10, how useful and how difficult to perform self-assessment were explored, with questions for the reasons followed. The rest of the questions were about demographic information and expressing interest in focus group participation.

2) The Focus Group Interviews

At the end of the survey, participants were invited to participate in the follow up focus group. Students indicated their interest in participating in a focus group by leaving their contact information, which allowed the researcher to contact them. Considering the total number of students invited to the survey, the size of the group was set to five, which is neither too small nor too big (Cohen et al., 2000). A total of 11 people responded they were interested in participating in the interview but eventually 8 participants joined the interview. The first group had five participants and consisted of one student from the multilingual stream, two students from the Korean language stream, and two students from the Japanese language stream. The second focus group had three participants, consisting of two students from a Korean language stream and one from the Japanese language stream.

Focus group questions were designed to further probe students' self-assessment practices and perceptions about self-assessment as a learning activity by supplementing the survey results. Therefore, the questions were devised in accordance with the survey results and focused on the participants' experience in self-assessment: what they do to assess their performance and why, and how they feel about doing self-assessments.

Each discussion was held for an hour, audio-recorded, and manually transcribed by the researcher. Pseudonyms are used for the interviewees to ensure anonymity and excerpts from the focus groups are verbatim without grammar corrections.

3. Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyse survey responses, except for the comments that respondents typed in manually. Thematic analysis, using NVivo 12, a qualitative research software, was carried out to analyse the comments made in the survey and the focus group interviews.

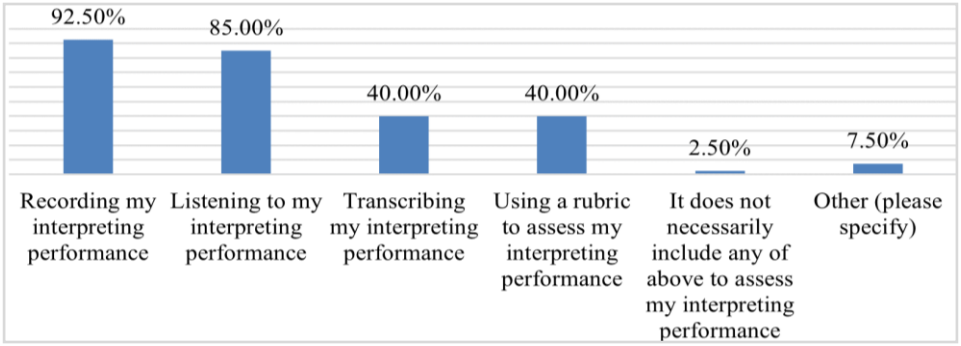
IV. RESULTS

In order to investigate the participants' use of self-assessments, whether they practice self-assessment out-of-class was explored first. Out of 40 participants, 12 students responded that they assess their interpreting performance every time, 21 students answered they occasionally do so. Three students responded that they do not self-assess their performance while four students skipped the question as they do not practice interpreting individually out-of-class or they practice interpreting as a group and receive peer feedback.

Regarding a question about the students' ideas that what method self-assessment consists of, the responses of the students varied as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

Methods that Student Interpreters Perceive as Self-Assessment



Other than the methods provided in the survey options, students specified other methods that they consider self-assessment methods in the survey and in the focus group interview. Those methods included checking the transcript of the source speech, comparing their performance by listening to their recording with the parallel text of the source speech, receiving peer feedback in a group study session and reviewing their notes. Interestingly, some students also commented that they simply reflect on their performance, relying on their memory.

As the methods for self-assessment varied among the students, there were differences in the usage frequency of the methods of the students (Table 1). The methods and options about frequency ("All the time", "Occasionally", and "Never") were given to the students. Therefore, other methods commented by the students were not investigated. Also, the total number of responses are different among the methods because the students who responded that they do not record their performance could not select some methods such as "Listening", and "Transcribing".

TABLE 1

Methods Used by Student Interpreters for Self-Assessment

Methods	Frequency N (%)			Total number of responses
	All the time	Occasionally	Never	
Recording	7 (19.4%)	28 (77.8%)	1 (2.8%)	36
Listening to a recording	8 (24.2%)	24 (72.73%)	1 (3.0%)	33
Transcribing	0 (0 %)	12 (40.0 %)	18 (60.0%)	30
Using a rubric	4 (13.3%)	9 (30.0%)	17 (56.7%)	30

Among 36 participants who have performed self-assessment, 35 answered they record their performance (with 28 participants occasionally recording and 7 recording every time). Providing reasons for not recording their performance, 10 students reported that they think recording their performance every time is not necessary. Sixteen participants answered that they forget to record their performance. In the focus group interview, a student commented that she first records her performance after five or six performances because it is more helpful to see her progress by doing so than by recording and listening to each performance. Another student answered that she does not think recording and listening to her performance is helpful if the problems which occurred during a performance were caused by linguistic incompetence and not grammar issues.

Such ideas may explain why some of the students who record their performance do not listen to all the recordings (73.73%). In addition, ten students reported that they simply forget to listen to the recordings, eight students ticked "I do not want to listen to it", and four students selected "I do not think it is necessary". Other reasons provided by the students were all related to the idea that listening to a recording is time consuming. In the focus group interview, most of the students said the activity is time consuming and it is difficult for them to find time to listen to their performances because they are busy with interpreting practice and assignments.

The reasons why the students do not want to listen to their recordings were explored with the students who participated in the focus group interview. The comments about how the students feel about listening to their performance indicate that student interpreters perceive the activity stressful, often associated with the senses of embarrassment, which explains their avoidance of the activity.

> ″[...] it is stressful to listen to yourself. And if you really want to correct your mistakes, you have to listen to it over and over again, and you definitely don′t want to do that. After listening once, you are like ′Oh my god, I am gonna kill myself [...]″ (Amy)

Amy's comment indicates that the students feel disappointment and shameful about their

performance when they identify their mistakes. In the case of Emma, even listening to her own voice was perceived stressful.

> ″It is quite stressful to listen to myself, because you know...you don′t know what your voice actually sounds like.″ (Emma)

There was one student whose comment about the same acitivty differed from other students.

> ″[...] it doesn′t damage me any more I know it is so poor and I don′t need to embarrass the person who hear that because it is just my self-practice.″ (Chole)

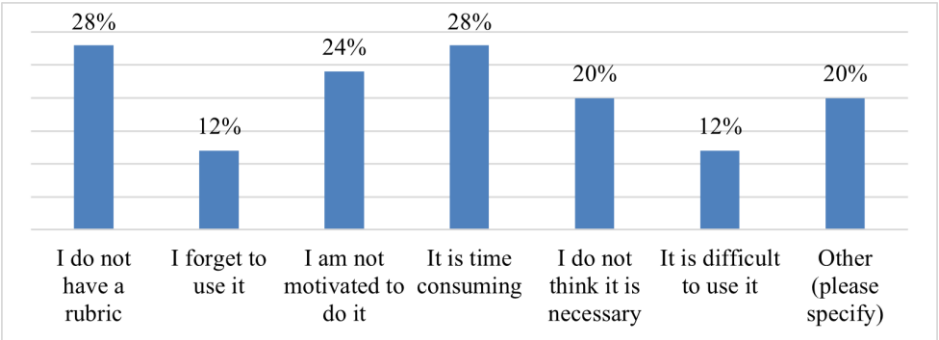
Chole said that she records and listens to her performance every time she practices interpreting as advised by her lecturer in her first semester in the program and she was in her third semester at the time of the interview.

As for transcribing their interpreting performance, 12 students (40%) responded that they use the method and 18 students (60%) reported they never used it. No one responded that they transcribe their outputs all the time. The option "it is time consuming" was the most frequently chosen for a reason for why they do not use the method for self-assessment, which is understandable as transcribing is indeed time consuming. Surprisingly, it was noted that five students reported that they did not know about the method.

Responses about the use of a rubric showed that 17 students out of 30 students who responded to the question reported that they do not use a rubric for self-assessment. Figure 2 shows the reasons for the students' behaviour. It should be noted that students were asked to choose all applicable options.

FIGURE 2

Reasons for Not Using a Rubric for Self-Assessment



What is notable is that seven students responded that they do not have a rubric. In addition, one student commented that she did not know about the idea of using a rubric for self-assessment. In the focus group interviews, students provided more detailed reasons. The most commented reason was that they were unsure of the usefulness of using a rubric.

> ″I didn′t really find how much they are useful in my practice. It must be useful. It must be. But not to me. At the stage my stage is it should be very low. I mean too low to use the rubric. Are they really useful?″ (Sarah)

Sarah was in her first semester of the course, and she thought her performance level was too low to apply a rubric for assessment. On the other hand, Jessica was in her final semester, yet commented that she had reservations about the objectivity that using a rubric can offer for self-assessment.

> ″I don′t use them because I don′t believe they are useful that much. Because I get easily biased, sometimes I overestimate myself and sometimes underestimate myself. I don′t think the rubrics can reflect that effectively. I just can′t be bothered to use them, honestly.″ (Jessica)

Regarding the methods that can be utilized for self-assessment, it was found that some students used methods only for completing their assignment – a self-assessment report, which was required once or twice during a semester depending on their enrolled course load. Moreover, some other students said they performed self-assessments to complete an assignment but usually do not review their performances on their own.

The survey asked the student to rate the level of difficulty they feel about doing self-assessments on a scale from 0 to 10. The result ranged from 0 to 8. The average value was 4.8, the median value was 5 and the mode value was 6. This result indicates that while some students do not regard self-assessments as difficult, about the same number of students did. The results of the analysis of the comments provided by the participants about their issues in self-assessment can be broadly categorized into three groups. First, they were unsure of whether their assessment was accurate. Some students were concerned that their assessment is subjective and either overly critical or lenient. In addition, they were not confident in assessing interpreting performance from their A language to B language[2] as their capability is limited to identifying errors in their production when interpreting into

[2] The A language refers to the interpreter's mother tongue and B language refers to a language in which the interpreter is fluent although it is not a mother tongue. (http://aiic/org)

their B language. Second, they felt self-assessments were emotionally draining. Reviewing their performance, they find their errors and seem to become disappointed in their poor performance. Some students expressed that they "feel ashamed" and their "self-esteem gets damaged". Third, they were unsure of the usefulness of self-assessment in improving their interpreting skills because they did not know how to apply their self-assessment results for improvement, and they could not see their progress by performing self-assessment as they find same types of mistakes repeatedly in their interpreting performance.

Despite the issues they experience with self-assessment, when asked to rate how much they think this method of learning is useful on a scale from 0 to 10, six students rated 10, eight students rated 7 and 6 each, and two students rated 8 and 9 each among 29 students. This result indicates that most of the students perceive self-assessment is a useful method for improving their interpreting skills. The comments received from the focus group interviews support this perception, for example:

> ″The reason why I believe it is useful was the first time I actually had to listen to myself the moment I realised that I have so many more problems, so much more problems, [...]. So that was really, I don′t know, like a sort of a wake-up call to sort of motivate myself to study even harder. [...] I believe that self-analysis or self-assessment is pretty important, but, I know it is very useful, I know it is very good [...] (Emma)

> ″I think it is essential to...even if it is time consuming, we all know that master degree is a lot but, yes, so just when you start interpret, I think it is important to do all of it.″ (Emily)

The findings suggest that the students are aware that self-assessment is useful and necessary for their learning.

V. DISCUSSION

It appears that the levels of knowledge in self-assessment seem to vary among the student interpreters, considering that some students did not have a supportive tool (e.g., a rubric) or had not heard about using a rubric or transcribing their performance for self-assessment. Perhaps this finding is attributed to that teachers tend to assume that students know how to self-assess and do not feel the need of providing thorough instruction (Heo, 2018).

It was found that the majority of participants think listening to their own performance provides enough data to identify errors in their performance. It seems that other methods such as transcribing and using a rubric are regarded as supplementary and are used for writing self-assessment reports to submit because the assignment requires the use of such methods. While the common scope of self-assessments among students appears to stretch as far as listening to their recordings, it should be noted that they often forget to record and/or listen to the recordings. This seems to indicate that they regard practicing and assessing interpreting performance as two separate activities. This perception may explain why the students deprioritise self-assessment complaining that the activity is time-consuming while investing a good amount of time practicing interpreting performance.

The finding that most student interpreters in this study regarded listening to their performances as sufficient form of self-assessment indicates that they may not be able to analyse their performance quality in-depth (Heo, 2018), and they are not aware of it. Considering that student interpreters are in their learning phase and quality criteria in the field of interpreting is fuzzy (Fernández, 2013), the students have not internalized the quality criteria and how to apply them to self-assessment (Heo, 2018). Perhaps their level of quality assessment is similar to that of users who use interpreting services while performance quality assessment concerns structural, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic features (Roy, 1992). Therefore, they may think that they know how to analyse their performance although it is not the case.

The students' concerns about inaccurate self-assessments can be discussed in the same vein that they are not competent assessors with limited domain knowledge (Alqassab, Strijbos, & Ufer, 2018) in both interpreting quality and language competency, particularly in their B language, which they have not yet completely mastered. As Tai, Ajjawi, Boud, Dawson, and Panadero (2017) stated, "making an evaluative judgement requires the activation of knowledge about quality in relation to a problem space" (p. 6), it is likely that students feel unconfident about their self-assessment and thus hesitant to set their improvement goals accordingly, which is the main purpose of self-assessment. As they are unsure how to apply a rubric to their self-assessment, they may not see the point of using one.

The finding that the majority of the students do not use a rubric may be linked to the findings that the students feel self-assessments have negative impacts on their self-esteem and that they often become doubtful about the effectiveness of self-assessments as they cannot see their progress. Assessing their own performance without referring to a rubric, students tend to heavily focus on negative aspects of their performance such as excessive use of fillers and inaccurate renditions (Bartłomiejczyk, 2007). Given this tendency, students will only find mistakes in their performance, which may lead them to have low perceived competence, and thus further lead to low self-esteem and demotivation (Wu,

2016). In addition, with the error-focussed manner of self-assessment, they cannot see their progress and/or strengths. If students feel that they are not making progress despite having invested their time and effort in practicing interpreting, they may not find the point of analysing their performance because their analysis results would be similar to their previous one (Harris, 1997). Similarly, students might be reluctant to transcribe their performance if they are unsure of how to make a good use of the visual aid, a transcript, and thus the effectiveness of visual inspection. This could explain why some students simply relying on their memory to compare with a source text script.

It can be postulated that the findings discussed above may be the factors that contribute to the students' avoidance behaviour regarding self-assessment. Although the most salient reason that the students provided for not engaging in self-assessment as much as they do in interpreting practice was that the activity is time-consuming and they cannot afford to spare the time as they are too busy with interpreting practice and other assignments, at a deeper level, they are avoiding self-assessment because of the factors discussed above, namely, concerns about inaccurate self-assessment, lack of knowledge of methods for self-assessment (particularly a rubric and transcript), low self-esteem, and lack of perceived progress.

Interestingly, despite the avoidance tendency, the students were in all agreement that self-assessment is a useful learning method that helps their improvement, overall. As they have assessed their performance and thus have identified their weaknesses, they are likely to have seen what self-assessment could offer to their learning to some extent. In addition, they may be expecting that self-assessment is useful for their learning as their teachers introduce the method and encourage them to use it. However, it is doubtful whether they are able to fully benefit from using the learning method considering that they are reluctant to perform self-assessment and most of the students conducted a thorough analysis on their performance by using a recording, transcript of their performance and a rubric, only when they were required to do so.

VI. CONCLUSION

The current study investigated student interpreters' understanding of and use of self-assessment as a learning method and the difficulties they experience when using the method. It would seem that most of the participants perform self-assessment to some extent with an understanding of the concept as a learning activity. The findings in this study indicate that there are different levels of student interpreters' knowledge of what methods they can use or need to self-assess their own interpreting performance. Regarding the difficulties that student interpreters experience in self-assessment, three themes were

identified. First, the students were not confident in assessing their own performance with concerns about assessment accuracy. Second, the student feared that reviewing their performance was damaging their self-esteem and even made them doubtful about their aptitude to become an interpreter. Third, the students were unsure of the link between self-assessment and improvement as they find that they are making the same types of mistakes repeatedly when assessing their performances. It was found that the students regarded self-assessment as a separate activity from interpreting practice. The students reported that they often forget to self-assess their performance, even when they meant 'self-assess' by simply listening to their recordings. In addition, the students seem hesitant to perform self-assessment although they diligently practice interpreting. Although the students consider self-assessment as a useful method for their learning, which is in line with the previous studies (e.g., Ibrahim-Gonzalez & Noordin, 2012; Lee, 2005), they may not be fully benefiting from using self-assessments in their own learning process, considering their use of it and the difficulties they have with the method.

This study's findings indicate the need for more explicit and careful guidance to student interpreters to perform self-assessments. Although the differences in knowledge among the students cannot be entirely attributed to their teacher's instruction, there is no doubt that interpreting teachers can play a key role in enhancing their knowledge of self-assessment. It would be helpful if teachers explained what methods can be used for self-assessment and how to use them, such as a transcribing an interpreting output and a rubric in detail. In addition, more practical encouragement may motivate student interpreters to actively engage in self-assessment and overcome their uncomfortable feelings about performing self-assessments.

It should be noted that this is a small-scale study with limited number of participants at one interpreting education program. Therefore, it is hoped that future research to investigate on this topic with a larger population to deepen our understanding. In addition, further research is needed on effective pedagogical approaches to teaching self-assessment in the field of interpreting education.

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Examples in: English
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