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About the Effectiveness of an Interpreting Portfolio in Self-Assessment and Quality Management

Abstract

The paper presents an interpreting portfolio as a tool which facilitates self-development through self-assessment. An interpreting portfolio aids the identification of specific deficits in knowledge and skills as well as an individual diagnosis why certain problems occurred while interpreting and how to tackle them. Target texts become a benchmark against which own competences are evaluated. A 2018 questionnaire conducted among simultaneous interpreting students provides evidence that an interpreting portfolio is an effective self-assessment and a quality management tool designed to monitor the improvement of interpreter skills.

Keywords: portfolio, quality, self-assessment, simultaneous interpreter training

Preliminary Assumptions

The aim of this paper is to present a valuable tool which fosters self-assessment of a simultaneous interpreter trainee. It should be noted that specialised literature discusses various quality assessment criteria, rating scales, assessment forms or even progress assessment software tools to be applied in interpreter training in order to monitor the progress of participants¹. Unlike an interpreting portfolio, they only scarcely offer

1 See: e.g. Tiselius (2009), Tryuk (2012), Demidov (2022).

any examples of self-assessment forms to be used by interpreting trainees themselves². A tool regarded as similar to a portfolio and used especially in foreign language teaching is a logbook. Dam (2018) notes that logbook use involves teacher's time, learner's time and together time. Learners keep a logbook whereas a teacher influences its input. Then, the feedback from the teacher is worked on individually by the learners and a reflection on it follows in peer groups. The logbook is to develop learner's autonomy by monitoring the process of learning inside and outside the classroom (Dam, 2009) as well as to devise a clear plan of action for students (Klimas, 2017). This paper presents the results of a questionnaire used in empirical research to help determine the effectiveness of an interpreting portfolio as a tool to monitor and deliver desired quality of target texts produced by simultaneous interpreting trainees.

An effective interpreter training should develop skills which help to achieve required quality of the target texts. Simultaneous interpreting trainees implement specific communicative strategies while interpreting, i.e. communicative behaviours which help them fulfil an interpreting task. An interpreting portfolio enables trainees to monitor the improvement of their interpreting skills and facilitates their personal development. It is therefore an essential tool in simultaneous interpreter training in order to enhance quality of interpreted texts. The most essential elements of the interpreting portfolio and their advantages are discussed in reference to simultaneous interpreter training programme offered by the Department of Applied Linguistics at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland. However, they can be successfully implemented in other types of interpreting and translation contexts.

This paper focuses on students' perception of self-assessment and quality management through interpreting portfolios. The portfolio defined as a record of development of simultaneous interpreter competence is used to illustrate universal techniques³ that are intended to assist a trainee in honing the skills of self-assessment, self-control and self-reflection both on and in action, hence supporting self-teaching processes (Pędzisz 2019: 91). It should be noted that the aforementioned processes do not refer only to a formal, institutionalised context which is to develop these skills, but also to trainees' own initiatives aimed at developing their simultaneous interpreter competences. Those skills give interpreters-to-be an autonomous status and permit the trainer to furnish them with specific tools for self-cognition (herein referred to as elements or components of the portfolio) which encourage self-assessment, tailoring the learning process to individual needs. Undoubtedly, the elements of an interpreting portfolio help trainees recognise a given problem and self-reflect on satisfactory solutions to it.

The quality of the target text produced during simultaneous interpreter training is an essential factor constituting the effectiveness of an interpreter's performance. Students of Applied Linguistics, as interpreters-to-be, assess the quality of the target text on their own while gaining professional experience. The development of skills to evaluate the quality of an interpreted text as well as one's own performance, i.e. self-assessment, should be included in an interpreter training programme. Thus, the authors of this paper postulate the need to develop these skills through the use of portfolios. As a result, quality becomes the overarching binding category that determines students' self-assessment activities. Self-assessment, though, refers to evaluation of both the target text and the interpreting process itself.

2 See: a self-assessment form devised by Schjoldager (1996).

3 *Universal techniques* are defined by Pędzisz (2019: 91) as those applicable in the broadly defined translation instruction, covering interpreting modes such as simultaneous, consecutive or whispered, as well as translation of various text genres.

Theoretical assumptions and empirical research presented in this paper are based on the main theses of anthropocentric translation studies⁴. From the anthropocentric perspective, an interpreting trainee who performs their interpretation during simultaneous interpreter training (both in-class and outside tutorials) is equipped with specific theoretical as well as practical skills and knowledge about this type of interpreting⁵. These prerequisites enable them to succeed in a simultaneous interpreting task being a communication task and therefore help achieve required communication effectiveness as described below. It should be noted that interpreting (even in reference to an in-class interpreter training) is perceived as an act of communication and takes place in presence of the following participants: an interpreting initiator who may equal source text producer (*e.g.* an interpreter trainer who assumes the role of a foreigner), an interpreting trainee who acts as a cultural and linguistic mediator, and a target-text addressee (*e.g.* other interpreting trainees who are assigned particular roles in an interpreting situation). Thus, a simultaneous interpreting trainee is to establish communication between all parties involved in an interpreting situation viewed as communication. The trainee performs to satisfy a given target-text addressee's expectations in relation to the source text delivered by a source-text producer (frequently also an interpreting initiator).

However, this paper presents also differing viewpoints on interpreting regarded as a commercial service. In such a case, interpreting is initiated by an interpreting commissioner (in the context of interpreter training, *e.g.* an interpreter trainer) who defines a particular goal of an interpreting situation and who asks a given interpreting trainee to perform interpreting as a commission in order to comply with the requirements of an interpreting commissioner and to satisfy an interpreting service recipient (*e.g.* other interpreting trainees).

In an attempt to discuss the issue of desired quality of interpreting, such features of interpreting should be taken into account which ascertain not only effective communication with a target-text addressee, but also satisfactory performance of an interpreting task suited for a target-text addressee. Consequently, in order to establish essential quality of a target text produced during simultaneous interpreter training the main focus should be on an interpreting trainee, i.e. their particular interpreting skills, preparation for an interpreting task and satisfactory quality of target texts which establish effective communication with a given target-text addressee. That is why, even the researchers who do not declare to work within the anthropocentric paradigm highlight the importance of defining quality assessment criteria for interpreting.

An Interpreting Portfolio as an Object of Study

In this paper an interpreting portfolio becomes, directly and indirectly, the focus of scientific reflection, i.e. the portfolio constitutes the background for the research methodology presented in this paper and simultaneously serves as an impulse to indicate its research potential.

This paper presents an interpreting portfolio as a tool to monitor and manage appropriate quality of target texts produced by simultaneous interpreting trainees. It is important to note that the interpreter trainer's actions coupled with the inclusion of the interpreting portfolio in the process of developing

4 The notion is used after S. Gruzca (2012).

5 According to the distinction provided by F. Gruzca (2009: 38).

interpreter skills, are a good fit for the concept of formative assessment (see: e.g., Janicka 2014: 245–248; Niemierko 2008: 301–308; Jürgens 2012: 32–33). The portfolio and a package of questions that stimulate self-reflection before, during and after an interpreting task correspond to the guidelines developed by AIIC (1999, 2016. *Practical Guide*) and Kalina (2005: 768–769) to enhance quality of interpreted texts. They also help simultaneous interpreting trainees gather data on the development of their particular interpreter competences. Thus, trainees are encouraged to implement a problem-based strategy.

Moreover, given portfolio components correspond to the concept of Design Thinking (Klimkowski & Klimkowska 2021: 156) which “helps master creativity (play), teamwork, focus (insight), goal-oriented performance and process ownership (accountability).” This concept primarily involves problem solving and underlies human needs (Lockwood 2010). Thus, the introduction of specific tools, e.g. a portfolio documenting the process not merely the product/result, whose function correspond to the concept of Design Thinking, is relevant to the university teaching-learning process. Indisputably, in reference to the development of simultaneous interpreter competence presented in this paper, a problem-solving approach applied in a given interpreting task involves problem diagnosis and the choice of particular competences and skills to overcome it. Consequently, simultaneous interpreting trainees are able to identify specific needs when designing their learning process in order to develop particular components constituting the competences they require.

Banfi (2002) discusses the use of various portfolio elements in fostering students’ autonomy. Wernice and Sabatier⁶ offer ready-made language portfolio elements for assessment of one’s own language skills. Galán-Mañas (2016, 2018) provides evidence for the effectiveness of portfolios in the development of translation competences. The author (2016) demonstrates the application of a portfolio in formative and summative assessment emphasizing the need for trainer-trainee collaboration as well as establishment and application of effective competence assessment criteria. Galán-Mañas (2018) also recognises the benefits of a professional portfolio that helps identify students’ general competences, set future goals and become familiar with the market rates and taxation. A portfolio proves useful among students who have difficulties in defining their professional profile.

The effectiveness of a portfolio was also proven by Mirek (2020) who treated it in simultaneous interpreter training as a self-regulation tool. In her study, the portfolio aimed to:

1. provide trainees with a tangible framework for organizing their work and documenting their progress (Johnson 2003 [in:] Mirek 2020: 145),
2. increase awareness of the role of self-diagnosis and self-education (lifelong learning),
3. support self-reflective practice, identifying one’s strengths and weaknesses,
4. plan activities towards a given goal, learning to reinforce the strengths,
5. work towards solutions to the weaknesses by specifying which factors propagate efficient and inefficient interpreting performance,
6. visualise the progress being made,
7. increase intrinsic motivation,
8. focus on process and not merely on the result (Mirek 2020: 145).

6 Retrieved from <https://teach-educ.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2017/09/Professional-Language-Portfolio-En.pdf> on 14. April 2024.

With reference to presented studies on portfolios in education, translators and interpreters, should consider the inclusion of such portfolio elements in a translator/interpreter training that will: a. require creativity, b. produce an in-depth reflection, c. help diagnose the problem, d. enable to name the problem and e. provide a plan how to solve it.

The authors of this paper advocate the use of techniques derived from coaching and applied in the training of future translators/interpreters because they offer a significant help in visualizing the level of development of the translator's/interpreter's competences. Moreover, the portfolio components described in the paper are tools for assessing progress⁷ which, like the system presented by Demidov (2022: 5), can be used to identify learning difficulties and to work on individual skills. In the face of the pictorial turn, postulated by Mitchell already in 1992, visualization may prove the most effective way to self-evaluate translation/interpreting skills. Consequently, further sections of this paper present techniques originally used in coaching adjusted for simultaneous interpreter training. Portfolio elements authored by students of Applied Linguistics at MCSU are visualized and accompanied by students' reflections on an interpreting portfolio.

The Notion of Quality

Further down, we present most representative concepts and definitions of quality (compiled chronologically) in interpreting.

Quality is a key notion in "Practical Guide for Professional Interpreters" (1990, updated in 2016) devised by an international association for interpreters AIIC (Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence). The publication was to contribute to higher quality of interpretation and to the increased standards of interpreters' performance. Its authors regard interpreting as a professional communication service and quality of interpreted texts as crucial in providing effective communication (AIIC 2016: 10).

Moreover, AIIC's guidelines highlight the role of appropriate preparation for an interpreting task in obtaining desirable quality of the service, i.e. establishing successful communication: "If ensuring proper working conditions is the first pillar of quality in conference interpreting, diligent preparation is the second" (AIIC 2016: 5).

Kalina's views on quality provide a broadly similar picture to those presented by AIIC members. Quality in interpreting is defined (Kalina 2005: 768–771) as a number of factors which interact with one another, *e.g.*: situation, context and other variables. Consequently, maintaining good quality in interpreting largely depends on the interpreter's actions taken before and after a particular interpreting task. Moreover, it is pointed out (Kalina 2005: 775–777) that quality in interpreting should not be limited to the relationship between the source and the target text, but that it depends on the circumstances in which interpreting as an act of communication is performed. Thus, an interpreter should determine the characteristics of target-text addressees, *e.g.* their expertise, needs, relationship with the source text producer. These are the factors an interpreter can have influence on if they devote some time to establish them. Kalina (2005: 782) also accentuates the fact that "(...) quality assurance does not relate to the interpreted text alone but includes processes required to produce such a text (...)." ⁸

⁷ See also Demidov (2022: 5).

⁸ See: steps and phases in the process of preparation for an interpreting task discussed by Kalina (2002, 2004).

Furthermore, the publication of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (2012) highlights the fact that poor quality renditions performed for the EU institutions may result in serious consequences (*i.e.* legal ones). Maintaining high-quality of translation and other language services is included in DGT's mission statement, whereas ensuring quality and timely delivery of translated texts is listed among the main challenges for 2020–2024 (DGT 2020: 2–3). Similarly, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Interpretation or DG SCIC commits to provide high-quality conference interpreting (DG SCIC 2020: 4) and to deliver high-quality interpreting services which meet the customers' priorities and demand (DG SCIC 2020: 10–11).

The Role of Self-Assessment in Interpreter Training

Further down we present considerations concerning the role of self-assessment employed in interpreter training in order to review progress of interpreting trainees, both ongoing and towards the end of a particular phase of the training programme. Moreover, considerable advantages resulting from the application of self-assessment and quality management in interpreter training will be discussed below.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR (Council of Europe 2001: 192)⁹ presents self-assessment, *i.e.* assessment of individual development, as a tool which enhances motivation, increases language awareness as well as acts as an incentive to use one's own strengths and identify potential weaknesses. As a result, a given foreign language learner can effectively manage their learning process. Self-assessment brings most significant advantages when clear proficiency level descriptors are used and/or when the assessment relates to a specific experience, *e.g.* a test activity (CEFR 2001: 191).

In anthropocentrically profiled translation teaching, self-assessment is inseparable from the trainee-trainer interactions. Moreover, it is primary to the assessment made by the trainer. For instance, when a trainee self-examines the outcomes of a translation as a communicative activity (Klimkowski 2011: 101) and then attempts to verify the quality of the target text and the essential skills to produce it. Self-assessment helps to develop self-control which is crucial for the trainee to relate their performance to the criteria of output text evaluation, and to determine whether the task has been completed properly or what further (remedial) actions to take (Klimkowski 2011: 101). The actions geared towards self-assessment provide the means to gain other skills, such as (a) assessment of the learning process and its deliverables, (b) setting objectives, (c) time planning and management, (d) positive assessment of one's own skills, (e) active participation in training activities, (f) efficient processing of information inflow, (g) organisation of an apt work environment, (h) efficient use of social resources, (i) focusing on positive outcomes, and (j) effective determination of success and failure factors (Moser-Mercer 2008: 16).

Factoring in the aspects such as specific character of foreign language teaching, the properties of particular translation modes, output evaluation criteria and learner self-assessment, the interpreter trainer will seek to:

1. Support trainees engaged in a specific interpreting task to develop the skill of monitoring one's own performance;

9 CEFR is an international standard which aids in describing language skills and levels of proficiency in language learning.

2. Teach interpreter trainees to set realistic objectives that are precise, measurable, challenging and treated as a task to be accomplished;
3. Direct trainees' attention to what they want to achieve in a specific interpreting task;
4. Make trainees aware of their responsibility for their change;
5. Provide descriptive feedback on what the interpreter trainer has seen or heard, and inquire about motivation for specific performance;
6. Inspire trainees' motivation to act, in close correlation with the objectives, expectations and plans they have defined for themselves;
7. Propose tools to develop trainees' self-consciousness and to monitor appropriate quality of translation tasks they perform (Pędzisz 2019: 93–94).

Thus, the interpreter trainer assumes the role of a personal development trainer, or coach, in some of the training activities. Moreover, they help interpreting trainees to establish expected quality of the texts they produce. A simulation of an authentic interpreting setting gives the trainee a stimulus to analyse and/or check their performance with reference to pre-defined aims. The interpreter trainer assists the trainee in identifying their individual predispositions that surface in the course of the translation process. Drawing on the narration present in the literature (Whitmore 2011: 16–22¹⁰), the main goal of the process is to track, release and employ the trainees' potential for optimum efficiency of their actions in a translation setting.

The interpreter trainer's unconventional procedures are listed below as components of the interpreting portfolio.

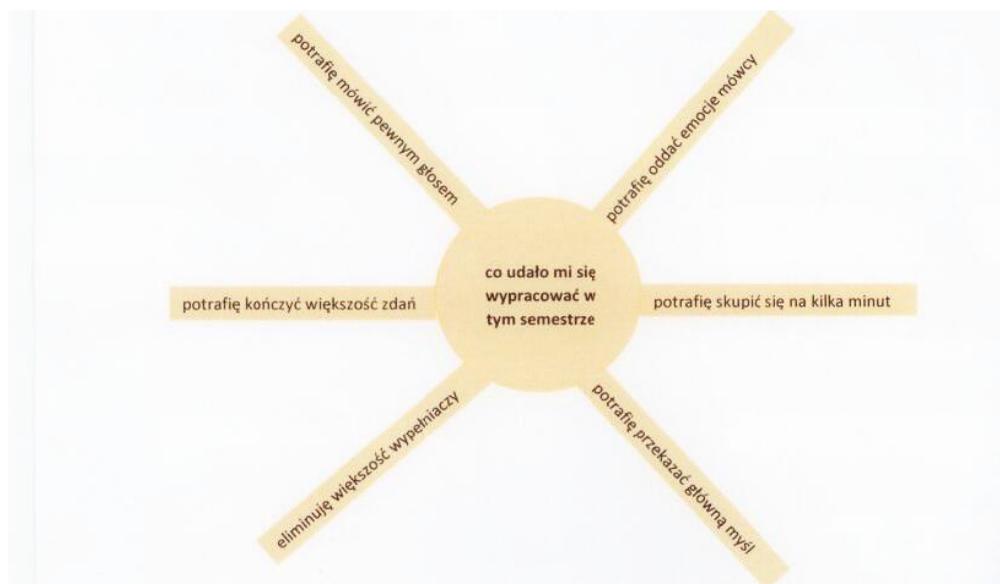
The Function and the Elements of the Portfolio

A portfolio is defined as (a) a tool documenting self-assessment of interpreting skills development and, consequently, self-checks, for example in the course of an interpreting task, against quality standards, (b) a form of control of broadly defined interpreting activities as communication activities by the trainee in the course of an interpreting task, (c) a tool for self-cognition that supports autodiagnosis and corrections required for interpreting skills development, and (d) a tool for determining success and failure factors (Pędzisz 2019: 94–95).

In addition to trainer feedback, self-assessment and peer feedback, the portfolio has become an element of the teaching process in the simultaneous interpreter training between languages A and B at the MCSU Department of Applied Linguistics and has had following forms:

1. Diary page to keep track of the trainee's reflection in a descriptive form, summarising their activity in a single tutorial session.;
2. Sun diagram: What have I learnt/succeeded in today? Each ray of the sun stands for things done successfully in an interpreting task.;

¹⁰ *Coaching. Trening efektywności. Rozwój ludzkiego potencjału w oparciu o model Grow: zasady oraz praktyka coachingu i przywództwa* (2011). Retrieved from <https://zwierciadlo.pl/psychologia/trening-personalny-coachingu-i-przywódtwa> on 17 July 2018.

Figure 1¹¹. Sun diagram: example 1.

3. Fishbone (Ishikawa) diagram is a cause-and-effect diagram that resembles a fish skeleton and seeks to visualise the interrelationships between the reasons for an event under analysis and the resulting outcomes. The diagram helps to separate the effects from their causes. Principally, each cause (depicted as a fishbone) can be traced back to one of five categories: Man, Method, Machine, Material and Management. The portfolio did not pre-define causal categories for the problems that would arise as the interpreting task unfolded. The trainees were to define the categories and find their components (Pędzisz 2023: 141);

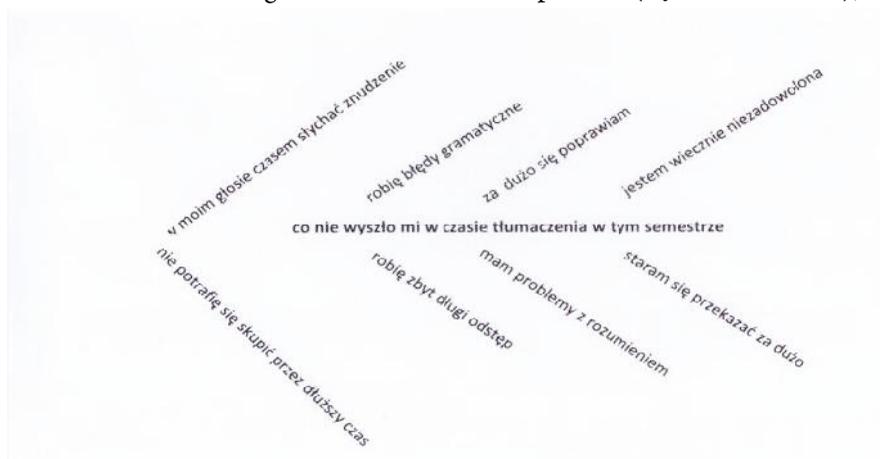


Figure 2. Fishbone (Ishikawa): example 2.

11 Due to the fact that self-reflection is much easier in the native language, sample portfolio elements prepared by MCSU Applied Linguistics students have been included in the original version.

4. SWOT¹² analysis is a basic tool for strategic analysis of an organisation (*e.g.* in planning, development, or investigation of opportunities) and includes all the characteristics that warrant success, all the characteristics that prevent the attainment of objectives, elements in the environment that could be exploited to its advantage and elements in the environment that could hamper success. By running a SWOT analysis in the portfolio, the trainees identified their strengths and weaknesses in their interpreting activity and, at the same time, had to find a correlation between the strengths and the opportunities, and between the weaknesses and threats.;
5. The Wheel of Life is a graphic representation of the essential areas of activity in personal life. In the portfolio, trainees evaluated their skills development. They rated the degree of satisfaction with each of the areas on the wheel on an arbitrary ten-degree scale, from lowest to highest (Pędzisz 2019: 96–97, Pędzisz 2023: 140).

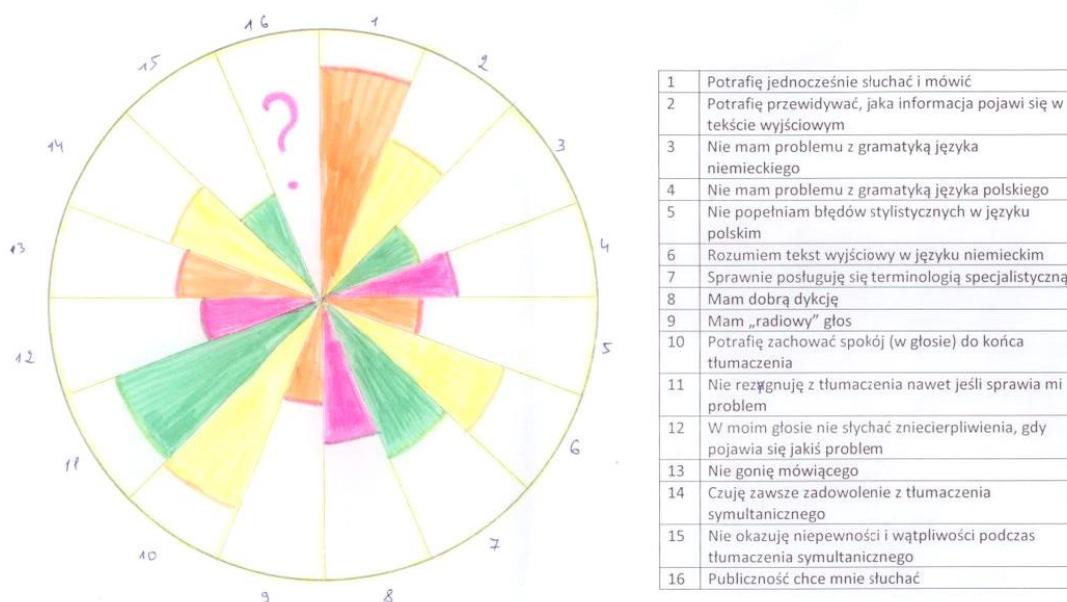


Figure 3. The Wheel of Life: example 3.

In the spring semester of 2018, portfolio-based activities became an element of the syllabus. Below is a brief overview of the techniques the simultaneous interpreting students at MCSU applied, as well as prospective ones, considered for implementation in the future. The first two belong to a category that Roda (2011: 408–409) referred to as developing self-awareness:

¹² SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

1. Preparation of development route maps (figure 4) for their skills using traffic signs (Pędzisz 2023: 141);

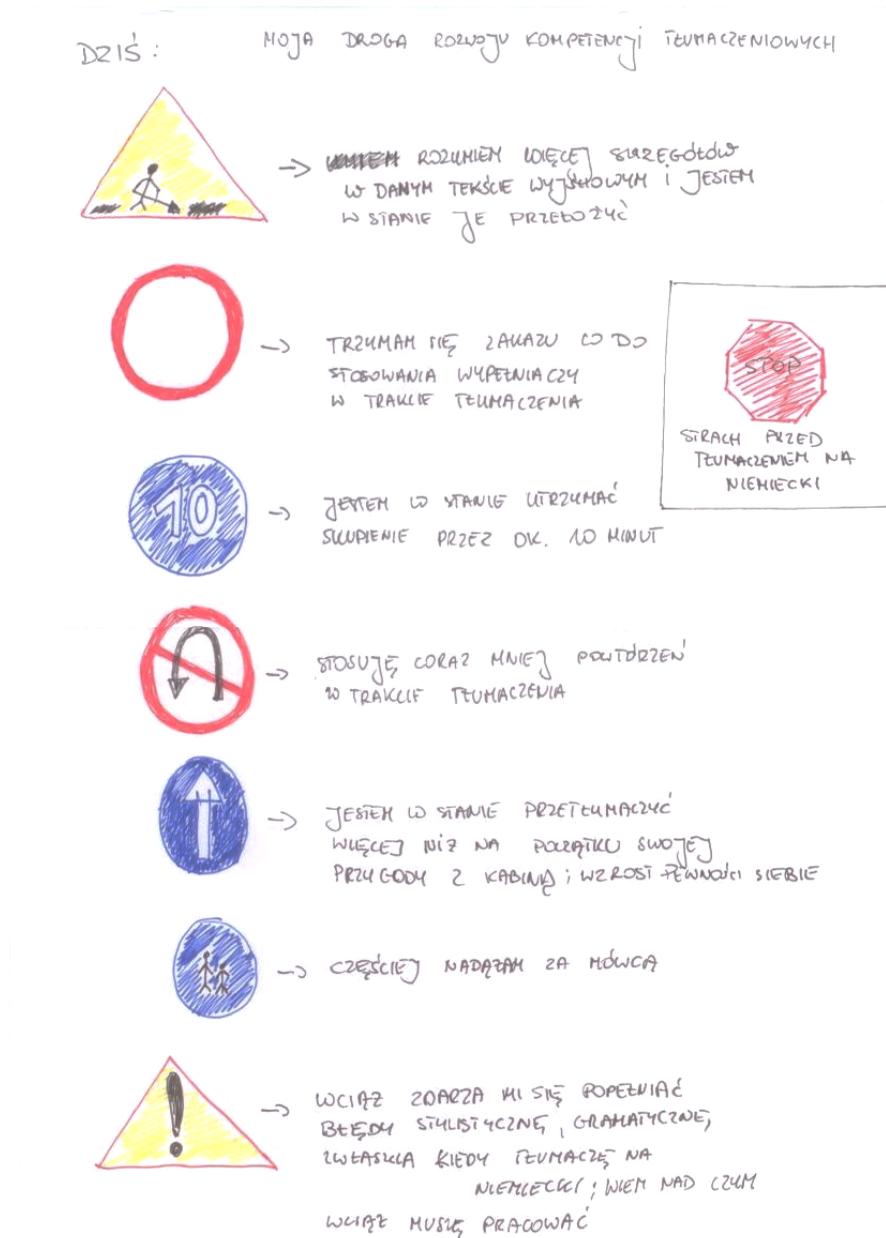


Figure 4. Road map: example 4.

2. Description of trainees' actions as interpreters in animal, colour or car make categories;
3. Tearing out a human figure form of an A4 sheet of paper folded in half, and listing what trainees already have or what they need as interpreters, *i.e.* knowledge in the head; values in the heart; skills in the hands; and material things in the legs.

4. Pasting a picture of an interpreter in the centre of an A4 sheet and enumerating features (both negative and positive) which extend radially away from it: I am patient / stressed out / excited / discouraged / *etc.* Each feature has a space to complete the sentence: “whenever...”
5. Doing a bin/suitcase exercise, directly following the interpretation of an input text which requires trainees to write down what they succeeded in/failed in on cards they either put in a suitcase of “things I am taking along as I go on a trip of honing my interpreter skills” or toss into the bin.
6. Performing a rating exercise to determine the level of satisfaction with particular actions during an interpreting task – drawing a ditch (how deep in a ditch each action is) or a ladder (which action is on which rundle) (Roda 2011: 99–100).

Evaluating Portfolio Effectiveness

The results of students’ reflection on the effectiveness of the portfolio elements and their functions are thoroughly discussed by Pędzisz (2019). The brief overview of the most important observations of MCSU Applied Linguistics students is reported below.

Following the winter semester 2018 the effectiveness of the portfolio format was rated in a questionnaire conducted among 22 students of Applied Linguistics at the MCSU (further in the text referred to as simultaneous interpreting students or SIS; students instead of trainees as they are in a university programme), on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 stood for low effectiveness, 2 – average effectiveness, 3 – high effectiveness, and 4 – very high effectiveness. 40% of the cohort rated it effective and 40% – very effective¹³ (Pędzisz 2019: 98). These students (20 women and 2 men) attended a simultaneous interpreting course (2 x 45 min per week) for two semesters of their master degree programme (5th and 6th semester). Their previous experience with interpreting was limited to consecutive (4 semesters) and sight interpreting (4 semesters). The respondents majored in English (language B – advanced level) and German (language C – intermediate level).

The students filled in the questionnaires at the end of the 6th semester, i.e. after having finished their simultaneous interpreter training. The questionnaire findings were to provide preliminary evaluation of the portfolio. In order to collect students’ reflections on the portfolio’s effectiveness and not to suggest any particular answers, open-ended questions and “other option” answers were predominant in the questionnaire.

The simultaneous interpreting students gave the following feedback on the interpreting portfolio format. They noted the processual character of the development of their interpreting skills (SIS1: “It helps identify both good and weak points, looking from a holistic perspective at the entire semester”; SIS11: “With the portfolio, you can see if there has been any improvement over the semester and the errors you made at the beginning have been straightened out”). Moreover, students observed that the portfolio supported the process of self-diagnosis and was instrumental in identifying success and failure factors (SIS3: “The portfolio was also very helpful in understanding what I have learnt and what I still have to wrestle with”). The portfolio was regarded as a tool of self-cognition that documents self-assessment

¹³ Students did not receive any tips or guidelines on how to define effectiveness. The study was based on their individual perception of this phenomenon.

(SIS10: “The portfolio is a great idea because it gives pause for thought about what I can do and what I have to work on harder”) (Pędzisz 2019: 98–99).

Their opinions confirmed that the portfolio had served its intended functions. They stated that it was a tool for self-cognition (SIS2: “This format makes me reflect on my skills, by which I can find out more about myself and realise a lot of things”), making the identification of success and failure factors easier (SIS4: “A student is able to see their good and weak points, which is an incentive for action and a boost for self-esteem”). The simultaneous interpreting students emphasised the motivating character of the interpreting portfolio (SIS4: “You need this to keep perfecting your skills”) and frequently pointed out that its use in tutorials simply made sense (SIS7: “The portfolio works better in class because you remember your successes and failures more vividly immediately after interpreting”). The simultaneous interpreting students particularly liked the ways of visualising their skills improvement (SIS4: “The variety of the forms, and the variety of forms of representation and visualisation of strengths and weaknesses”), or even emphasised the therapeutic character of the portfolio exercises (SIS3: “Clears your head, calms you down; SIS4: “Creating the portfolio components relaxed the atmosphere after a period of intense interpreting practice”).

What the students questioned was the challenging character of self-assessment as they either lack an objective perspective on their interpreting practice or tend to be overcritical (SIS1: “Assessment is often unjust, particularly if someone has a low self-esteem.”; SIS3: „I am afraid we sometimes find it hard to evaluate ourselves and tend to go over the top, either positively or negatively. It is not easy to look objectively at yourself”) (Pędzisz 2019: 100–101).

Results

Data collected from the 2018 questionnaire revealed overwhelmingly positive attitudes of MCSU Applied Linguistics students towards the implementation of an interpreting portfolio in their 2-semester simultaneous interpreter training. Of the 22 participants, 80% found it either an effective or a highly effective tool for self-assessment and quality management.

Throughout two semesters of their simultaneous interpreter training the simultaneous interpreter students of Applied Linguistics participated in various portfolio-based activities so as to keep track of their progress. The interpreting portfolio components revealed themselves as valuable instruments for continuous assessment and helped to pinpoint students’ strengths and identify skills they still need to work on. Respondents observed it was easier to monitor their progress and to set goals concerning given deficits in knowledge and skills due to the use of the portfolio. The portfolio-based activities proved to motivate students or aided them in tackling various problems which occurred when performing an interpreting task. Undoubtedly, the portfolio implementation provided a framework for an enhanced dialogue between simultaneous interpreter students and their trainer.

When reviewing the effectiveness of the interpreting portfolio, quality is a category which reflects the ability to self-reflect on one’s own skills as well as to evaluate the process of interpreter’s performance. Quality serves as a point of reference for every single step a simultaneous interpreter student takes to execute their interpreting task i.e. before, while and after. Students are aware of the fact that they have to provide effective communication between all parties involved in an interpreting situation, e.g. express

the intentions of an interpreting initiator or a source-text producer and satisfy the expectations of the target-text addressee. For example, MCSU Applied Linguistics students reported the following problems concerning the source-text producer's intentions (visualised in various portfolio components included in the paper): focusing long enough on the source text, partial understanding of the source text, identifying the main idea of the source text. Difficulties when executing an interpreting task which influenced target-text addressee's satisfaction included *e.g.* delivering too many details, confident and lively delivery, repetition of lexis and ideas.

Conclusions

The research question of this paper focused on the effectiveness of an interpreting portfolio as a tool to develop self-assessment and quality management in simultaneous interpreting students of MCSU Applied Linguistics programme. The results of a 2018 questionnaire conducted among simultaneous interpreting students present an interpreting portfolio as a useful tool in monitoring the development of particular interpreter skills and competences, identifying students' strengths and weaknesses, setting goals to achieve required quality in fulfilling an interpretation task, documenting students' progress in tutorials as well as having motivating and therapeutic character. The majority of questionnaire participants regarded an interpreting portfolio as an effective self-assessment tool. Target texts of satisfactory quality which help to establish communication between a source-text producer and a target-text addressee become a benchmark against which students evaluate their own performance as interpreters. As a result an interpreting portfolio aids in pinpointing categories and phenomena which constitute desirable quality of interpreted texts and an interpreter's performance (i.e. quality in reference to both: a product and a process). It should be noted though that the findings about the portfolio effectiveness among MCSU Applied Linguistics students present only the initial work to be continued in order to use the full potential of an interpreting portfolio.

Certainly, the inclusion of the portfolio elements discussed in this paper should not be limited to translator/interpreting training in the classroom. The authors of this paper propound the regular use of an interpreting portfolio as a learning/teaching practice based on the need for continuous improvement to develop the ability to name the needs and problems related to translation/interpreting activities as well as to find solutions to given deficits in related tasks. In this context, the authors of the paper see that an interpreting portfolio supports the assumptions of the Design Thinking concept as the core of Design Thinking is to solve a given problem (Klimkowska/Klimkowski 2021: 165). Consequently, a portfolio and its components enable to conduct the first stage of Design Thinking which aids in recognising a problem. Moreover, the elements of an interpreting portfolio manifest Design Thinking "as a tool encouraging creative problem solving" (Klimkowska/Klimkowski 2021: 165).

Undoubtedly, the use of portfolio components provides opportunities for further discussion regarding the teacher's perspective. It is not yet entirely clear to what extent portfolio creation is a process- and not a product-oriented task – devising portfolio elements for the purposes of receiving grades/credits from classes, etc. Consequently, it involves taking responsibility for the portfolio creation process, openness and honesty towards involvement in the self-evaluation process and its documentation in the selected form.

Moreover, the authors of this paper believe that a portfolio in this form develops professional skills and prepares to operate on the translation market. Further scientific reflection on this tool may provide feedback on students' sensitivity towards their skills and their use – not only at work as interpreters.

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