



From Classroom to Studio: How Talk Show Simulations Shape Students' Consecutive Interpreting Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how talk show simulations serve as a pedagogical bridge between classroom-based interpreting instruction and real-world performance demands, specifically in consecutive interpreting. While simulation-based learning has gained increasing attention in translation and interpreting studies, empirical research on talk show-based simulation for interpreting programs in Indonesia remains limited. This mixed-methods study investigated students' perceptions, challenges, and skill development after engaging in structured talk show simulations over one academic semester. Data were collected from 21 undergraduate interpretation students through questionnaires, performance assessments, and semi-structured interviews. The findings have revealed that simulation of talk shows can be an efficient tool in developing note-taking techniques, fluency in delivery of answers, retention of the information in the memory, as well as speaker and listener coordination techniques among the participants. The students, however, experienced problems in other areas as well. The study concluded that talk show simulations provide an authentic, high-engagement learning environment that strengthens students' consecutive interpreting competencies while fostering professional readiness. Implications for curriculum design and interpreter training are discussed.

Keywords: Consecutive Interpreting; Interpreter Training; Note-taking; Talk Show Simulation; Pedagogical Innovation



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1. Introduction

Interpretation can be divided into two main kinds based on the circumstances where the interpreting process occurs: simultaneous interpreting and consecutive interpreting (Nolan, 2005). Consecutive interpreting remains one of the core competencies required in professional interpreting practice, particularly in community, diplomatic, and broadcast contexts. Its mastery involves cognitive processing, memory, note-taking, and discourse delivery skills. Conventional teaching methods like scripted dialogue or memory work typically cannot simulate the complexity of true interpreting situations. As a result, interpreter training programs have increasingly incorporated simulation-based learning to expose students to more authentic communicative conditions (Zhong et al., 2020; Orlando, 2019). Moreover, consecutive interpreting is a complex cognitive activity that requires the integration of listening comprehension, short-term memory retention, note-taking, and reformulation skills under time pressure. The interpreter must manage these processes simultaneously while maintaining accuracy and coherence in delivery.

Recent studies emphasize that simulation-based activities enhance learner engagement, strategic awareness, and the ability to cope with performance demands in interpreting tasks (Han, 2020). Based on theory from Sandrelli (2016), simulation-based learning has been widely recognized as an effective pedagogical approach in interpreter training because it provides learners with authentic communicative scenarios that resemble real professional settings. Simulation-based learning has been empirically shown to enhance the development of professional competencies among translation and interpreting trainees by providing realistic task contexts that mirror real translation/interpreting activity (Kozyar et al., 2022). In broader communication and interpreting contexts, structured simulation experiences (including role-plays and controlled practice environments) have consistently been linked to improved learner knowledge, confidence, and communicative competence (Wolfe et al., 2026). However, studies on talk show simulations, with spontaneous speech turns, multiple speakers, change of topics, and audience responses, remain few, and talk show formats are very similar to the broadcast and also underused in educating interpreters, including those in Indonesia. Although talk show formats closely resemble broadcast interpreting contexts, they are still underutilized in interpreter education, particularly within Indonesian higher education settings.

Consecutive interpretation requires coordinating and harmoniously blending different cognitive tasks. For example, it requires the tasks of listening, retaining the message, taking notes, and formulating. While role play or the teacher-led method is effective for the beginner in acquiring basic proficiency, the active and multifaceted nature of interpretation is usually absent in the role play or the teacher-led method. However, Phuong et al., (2023) states that consecutive interpreting is difficult, most student interpreters will probably face many problems while they are learning. For example, one of the most common problems interpreters' faces is handling their memory, especially short-term memory. When interpreting, they often have trouble remembering details like numbers, times, and places. This is why many students of interpretation have found it difficult to translate the training they have had in the class into the requirements of actual interpretation. Consequently, students frequently experience difficulties transferring classroom-acquired skills to authentic interpreting tasks involving rapid turn-taking, delivery pressure, and audiovisual stimuli (Han, 2020).

The growing emphasis on authenticity in interpreter education has led educators to explore simulation-based environments. Talk show simulations, in particular, offer a uniquely realistic training platform. They recreate media environments in which the interpreter is faced with spontaneous communication, semi-scripted communication, overlap, and visual stimulation. Such environments impose heightened cognitive and affective demands, mirroring the conditions faced by professional interpreters more closely than conventional classroom activities (Zhong et al., 2020; Lor & Hammes, 2023). Current pedagogical research shows that simulation-based instructional methods integrated into curriculum design significantly improve student performance and teaching outcomes by connecting theoretical knowledge with practical skills (Wang, 2025).

Despite their potential, studies focusing specifically on talk show simulations as a pedagogical tool in consecutive interpreting remain limited—especially in the Indonesian and Southeast Asian context. Most existing research concentrates on medical, conference, or remote interpreting simulations, leaving media-inspired formats relatively unexplored (Han, 2020). Yet the data gap mentioned above reveals the importance of empirical study of the experience of students within the studio-type learning context and the effect of the context upon the students' learning strategies and performance. This article, therefore, aims to (1) synthesize recent scholarship on interpreting pedagogy, cognitive load, and simulation-based learning; (2) present a conceptual framework integrating Gile's Effort Model (Gile, 2009) with experiential learning theories; and (3) propose an empirical research design to examine how talk show simulations shape the development of consecutive interpreting skills.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The permission to conduct this research was requested before starting the process. The population involved in this research was a class of first-year students who enrolled in the English for Business and Professional Communication class at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic, totalling six groups of students, which amounted to a total of 21 students (17 female, 4 male) who joined a semi-structured talk show research project. Among them, 6 students acted as interpreters and participated in a semi-structured interview, while the remaining 14 students acted as hosts, informants, and audience participants who completed the

questionnaire. The components of consecutive interpreting were introduced as part of the Introduction to Interpreting course, which students took in their first semester. None of the students had any prior experiences in the field of interpretation before attending this course, so all the participants in this study are novices in the field of interpretation. Purposive sampling was employed in the choice of the class of students as the participants for this study. All the participants provided their consent. Confidentiality was employed by assigning a distinct identifier to the participants.

2.2 Instruments

The research employed two main tools in collecting information: the use of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. A questionnaire was designed to measure student anxiety based on the use of Likert-scale questions and supplemented with open-ended questions that allow the researcher to gather information quickly and effectively. Semi-structured interviews were employed in gaining qualitative information since they allowed the researcher the flexibility to gather information through open-ended questions, which may reveal information beyond what is needed in the questionnaire since it lacks emotional perspectives. Documentation, such as video recordings or field notes during the semi-structured talk show project, served as an objective source of observational data to support and validate the findings from the other instruments, offering visual and audio evidence of anxiety-related behaviours during consecutive interpreting. Together, these three instruments were designed to complement one another and provide a comprehensive understanding of students' anxiety experiences during the semi-structured talk show project. In interpreting research, scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are commonly employed together to assess learners' anxiety and perceptions. Typically, quantitative data is collected from a larger sample to measure these factors, while qualitative interviews are conducted to clarify the underlying mechanisms or context of participants' experiences (Xing, X., 2023).

2.3 Tasks and Procedures

Data gathering occurred within a semi-structured talk show initiative that was integrated into the curriculum. The students were split into six teams, with each team tasked with organizing the roles, subjects, and structure of their respective talk show sessions. The format combined prepared segments with space for spontaneous questions, comments, and follow-up discussion. During each session, the designated interpreter in the group performed consecutive interpreting of explanations, questions, and responses that arose during the talk show. All sessions were video-recorded so that both speech and visible signs of anxiety could be examined later.

When all six talk show sessions are completed, a questionnaire is administered to all 21 participants about their experience. This allows them to reflect on levels of anxiousness experienced and difficulty levels within the task as well as personal experiences with a talk show as a learning process. Answers were gathered confidentially through the use of participant identifiers.

2.4 Data and Analysis

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Figure 1. Talk-Show Documentation

3. Results

3.1 Improvement in Interpreting Performance

The survey results indicated a noticeable improvement in students' consecutive interpreting performance after participating in the talk show simulations. Most students reported better control over key interpreting skills, particularly note-taking, fluency, accuracy, and memory retention. Students demonstrated more efficient use of symbols and abbreviations, clearer segmentation of speakers' ideas, and more coherent delivery during interpretation. Overall, the findings suggest that repeated exposure to semi-structured talk show simulations contributed positively to students' interpreting performance.

3.2 Students' Perceptions of Talk Show Simulations

Survey data revealed generally positive perceptions toward the use of talk show simulations as a learning activity. A large proportion of students agreed that the simulations increased their confidence, enhanced their readiness for real-world interpreting situations, and provided an authentic learning experience through dynamic and unpredictable interactions.

In addition, interview responses supported the survey findings. Students described the experience as "feeling like a real interpreter," "learning to manage spontaneous speech," and "being pushed outside their comfort zones." These responses reflect students' perceptions of the talk show simulations as both challenging and meaningful for their learning process.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Perception Toward Talk Show Simulations

Perception Category	Agreement (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagreement (%)
Increased confidence	86%	10%	4%
Improved real-world readiness	82%	14%	4%
High authenticity	78%	17%	5%
Improved strategic note-taking	84%	11%	5%
Greater engagement than traditional practice	90%	7%	3%

3.3 Challenges Encountered

Despite the positive outcomes, students also reported several challenges during the talk show simulations. Three main categories emerged from the survey and interview data. Cognitive Load. Students experienced difficulty in simultaneously listening, analysing incoming information, taking notes, and

preparing their delivery. This challenge was particularly evident during longer explanations and spontaneous audience questions.

3.3.1 Cognitive Load

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3.3.2 Turn-Taking Management

The fast-speaking speed and overlapping speech among speakers made it difficult for students to accurately separate information, especially during interactive discussion sessions.

3.3.3 Topic-Specific Vocabulary

Limited preparation time increased lexical gaps, especially in specialized topics that were introduced or appeared during the talk show sessions.

4. Discussion

4.1 Talk Show Simulations as a Bridge Between Classroom Practice and Real-World Interpreting

The findings of this study indicate that talk show simulations contributed positively to students' development of core consecutive interpreting skills. The data from the questionnaires indicate a significant level of support for the perception that the simulation activity helped increase confidence, strategic note-taking, and a feeling of preparedness for real-world interpreting work. These findings support previous research suggesting that authentic, task-based simulations can facilitate skill integration and professional awareness in interpreter education (Zhong et al., 2020; Han, 2020).

Interview data further illustrate how students experienced concrete skill improvement during the talk show project. Several respondents mentioned becoming increasingly selective and strategic during note-taking, capturing main ideas rather than trying to get complete sentences down on paper. Note-taking is defined as the process of selecting and transcribing essential information in a personalized writing style for future memorization and use. Typically, note-taking consists of two primary stages: transcription and review. Effective note-takers require strong interpretation and transcription skills. Additionally, they must be adept at generating ideas and recording them quickly. According to Phuong et al, (2023) under high pressure, the consecutive interpreters may not perform well and face mental issues after the interpretation. Therefore, the CIs need to use the note-taking technique because it helps them minimize their effort during the CI process, especially in the production phase. One student reported that she "only noted important points and familiar terms," showing an emerging awareness of efficient information prioritization—a central skill in consecutive interpreting. This observation aligns with empirical findings that interpreters adapt their note-taking strategies in response to task complexity and cognitive demands (Kuang & Zheng, 2023). These recurring patterns of strategy development were identified through a reflexive thematic analysis of students' narratives, following Braun & Clarke (2021) framework, which emphasizes meaning-making across repeated and shared experiences rather than frequency alone.

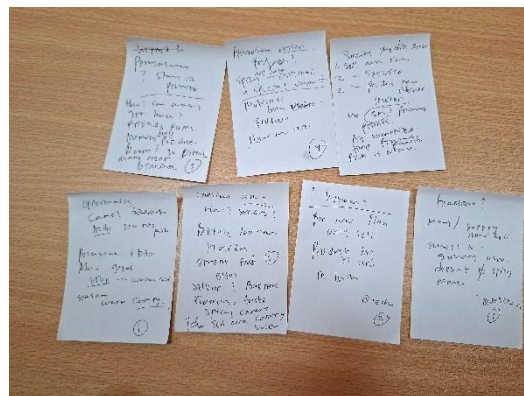


Figure 2. Notes Taken by A Student During the Talk Show

Moreover, students' accounts suggest improvement in delivery and fluency as the activity progressed. Although many participants initially felt hesitant, they reported being able to speak more smoothly once the session was underway. This supports the idea that repeated exposure to realistic interpreting conditions can help learners adapt their cognitive processing and speech production, as proposed in Gile's Effort Model. The talk show format, which combines prepared segments with spontaneous interaction, appears to encourage learners to integrate listening, memory, note-taking, and reformulation more holistically than traditional classroom exercises.

4.2 Cognitive Load, Anxiety, and Interpreting Performance

Despite these positive outcomes, it can also be noted from these results that simulations of talk shows have imposed great cognitive as well as emotional demands on the students. The data from student surveys, as well as interview scripts, clearly indicates anxiety, pressure from audience presence, or fear of misinterpretation as the key factors. Students have reported feeling anxious before the simulation took place for the very first time. Such anxiety responses are commonly reported among interpreting students and are closely linked to increased processing demands (Korpál & Stachowiak-Szymczak, 2020). In interpretation classes there are different types of anxiety. As stated by Yan J. X and J. Liang, (2022) their study revealed a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety in consecutive interpretation, which showed that the more anxious the students were, the heavier their cognitive burden during consecutive interpretation.

There are some examples where the candidate has hesitated or momentarily lost focus in some of the question-answer interactions. One participant noted that spontaneous audience questions required "interpreting without preparation," which significantly increased processing difficulty. Environmental factors further intensified cognitive load. Several students reported feeling more nervous when the classroom became silent and all attention was directed toward them. Such findings reflect the impact of increased delivery rate, unpredictability, and real-time decision-making on cognitive load during interpreting tasks, as discussed in studies examining processing pressure in interpreting (Zhu & Aryadoust, 2022).

From a pedagogical perspective, the presence of anxiety should not be viewed solely as a negative outcome. Instead, it represents an affective response to task authenticity. Research suggests that realistic interpreting environments may heighten stress while simultaneously fostering deeper engagement and skill development (Guo et al., 2024). In this study, anxiety often coexisted with perceived improvement, indicating that cognitive strain may function as part of the learning process rather than a barrier.

4.3 Authenticity, Learner Perceptions, and Professional Readiness

The students' perceptions of the simulation of a talk show were very positive, mainly in terms of authenticity and engagement. According to Wang & Ye, (2009) considering the requirements of professional interpreting practice, interpreter training should always strive to be skills based and profession oriented, and involve simulated real-world features. Many agreed that a "feeling like a real interpreter" was accomplished via this simulation, a phrase which was used in a number of student responses to focus their views in this context. Such perceptions are crucial, as task authenticity has been shown to enhance learner motivation and professional self-concept in interpreter training (Zhong et al., 2020).

At the same time, more authenticity also caused affective experiences, particularly anxiety. The students felt nervous before participating in the simulation activity, perhaps due to a lack of preparation and comparisons with other groups of students. As one student said, "Watching other groups perform with confidence makes me feel unprepared and nervous".

Interestingly, students reported the development of coping strategies. For example, students reported using deep breathing, praying, mental rehearsal, or more preparation. These strategies for self-regulation indicate the presence of anxiety that impacted the individual's performance. However, the anxiety also prompted the development of strategies. This finding confirms the claim of Guo et al. (2024) on the enhancement of anxiety and the development of resilience. Accordingly, anxiety in this particular context must not be considered merely as a negative result, but a crucial part of the experiential method of training interpreters.

4.4 Pedagogical Implications for Interpreter Training

It appears from the findings of this research that simulations of talk shows are a valuable learning method for interpreters, especially for beginners. It is possible to take advantage of a combination of preparation and natural communication in a simulation while staying within a pedagogically controlled learning setting.

Students' feedback has revealed that there was a great need for more experience in similar practice exercises. Many students have come out clearly to say that their interpretation skills would have benefited from 'more practice like this.' This supports the view that repeated exposure to authentic tasks enables learners to experiment, reflect, and gradually refine their interpreting strategies (Kozyar et al., 2022).

In terms of curricular design, the inclusion of simulated talk show examples with increasing degrees of spontaneity might be beneficial, from guided to more spontaneous. Further role teaching related to strategies for dealing with these, preparation, or performance anxiety could also serve to enhance learning. Additionally, explicit instruction on coping with cognitive load, preparation strategies, and performance anxiety could further support students' professional development. Repeated exposure to simulation-based and situated learning tasks has been shown to enhance learner engagement and professional readiness by bridging academic training with authentic professional practice (González-Davies & Enríquez-Raído, 2016). Overall, talk show simulations offer a promising innovation for strengthening both interpreting competence and professional readiness in consecutive interpreting training. Repeated exposure to simulation-based tasks has been shown to enhance learner engagement and professional readiness in interpreter education.

5. Conclusion

Simulations of talk shows lead to considerable improvements in the consecutive interpreting skills of students. Not only are these simulations very engaging, but they also provide students with a realistic learning environment. In spite of the potential challenges associated with the learning environment, students show increased confidence, note-taking skills, and readiness to interpret professionally.

Pedagogically, what this might mean is incorporating talk show simulation tasks into interpreting curricula, providing pre-simulation vocabulary preparation, and developing rubrics based on real-life performance tasks. Future studies could examine additional multimodal considerations (camera presence, studio technology) or a comparison of talk show simulations with other forms of simulations, like press conference simulations and diplomatic briefings.

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