



Beyond the classroom: The relationship between family environment and students' motivation to learn English at SMPN 2 Pariaman

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Abstract:

Consecutive Interpreting is a demanding skill for EFL students, as it requires the simultaneous management of listening, memory, note-taking, and speech production. This study aimed to explore the challenges and coping strategies experienced by English Education students in practicing consecutive interpreting. Adopting a descriptive qualitative approach, the study involved six students from an interpreting class at the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang, selected purposively based on speaking performance. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed qualitatively. The findings indicate that students faced interconnected challenges across different stages of interpreting, including cognitive overload, memory limitations, difficulties in note-taking, and linguistic constraints, as well as psychological pressure such as nervousness and fear of making mistakes. To cope with these difficulties, students employed various intuitive strategies to manage information processing and support message delivery. Overall, the study highlights the multidimensional nature of consecutive interpreting challenges in EFL contexts.

Keywords:

Challenges , strategies , consecutive interpreting.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's multilingual and globalized world, interpreting has become an increasingly important communicative skill across various domains, including education, diplomacy, journalism, and also international relations. In the field of English education, interpreting is no longer considered only as a specialized profession, but also an essential pedagogical tool that can support language learning by engaging students in complex communicative and cognitive processes (Pym, 2023). As institutions promote multilingual skills, interpreting is gradually incorporated into EFL curriculum. Students are given the opportunity to practice interpreting as a way of improving their language skills, even if it is not to become professional interpreters (Pöchhacker, 2016).

Interpreting activities require learners to integrate multiple language skills simultaneously. Compared to regular speaking tasks, interpreting puts more pressure on the student, because it involves real-time comprehension, memory management, and fluent

reformulation of ideas (Gile, 2009). These processes place substantial cognitive demands on learners, particularly those who are still developing their proficiency in the target language. As a result, interpreting is regarded as a complex and challenging task for the students. Nevertheless, the complexity of interpreting also provides meaningful opportunities for students to improve essential language skills such as active listening, fluency, accuracy, and strategic language use.

In Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), interpretation from English to Indonesia is taught as part of the curriculum for English Education students as a way of improving their language skills, even if it is not to become professional interpreters. Students are given the opportunity to practice interpreting in the class, and one of the most frequently practiced modes is Consecutive Interpreting (CI). In consecutive interpreting, the interpreter listens to a segment of speech, takes notes, and then delivers the message in the target language after the speaker pauses or finishes speaking. Compared to simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting allows more processing time. However, it still requires a high level of concentration, memory capacity, and linguistic flexibility. Students must understand the source message, decide which information is essential, record key ideas through note-taking, and reproduce the message accurately and coherently in another language. For EFL learners, this combination of demands often makes consecutive interpreting one of the most challenging classroom activities.

Several studies have emphasize that interpreting can improve students' English skills, especially in listening, accuracy, oral fluency, and speaking strategy. Zhang and Wu (2017) emphasize that training in consecutive interpreting significantly enhances learners' listening comprehension skills and increases their overall language awareness. They also claim that engaging in interpreting tasks helps learners enhance fluency, accuracy, and summarization, making them an effective tool for integrated language learning. Hamidi and Pochhacker (2007) argue that consecutive interpreting can enhances listening comprehension and cognitive organization. Gile (2009) also claims that an interpreting task can encourage both fluency and critical thinking.

However, despite the benefits, it also offers significant difficulties, especially when it comes to consecutive interpreting. According to Pöchhacker (2016), consecutive interpreting is a mode where the interpreter listens to a speaker, takes notes, and then delivers the message in the target language after the speaker pauses or completes a segment. This method typically includes taking notes to support memory and ensure that the content is conveyed accurately. Compared to simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting gives the interpreter more time to process information, but it still requires a high level of concentration, memory, and linguistic flexibility.

Previous research highlighted that interpreting is a complex communicative activity that requires more than just linguistic proficiency; it depends on the interpreter's ability to manage cognitive, linguistic, and psychological demands simultaneously. Pöchhacker (2016) argues that interpreting is not merely linguistic transfer but a complex act that requires accuracy, coherence, and contextual responsiveness. Gile (2009) points out that interpreting performance is strongly influenced by cognitive management, including balancing listening, memory, and note-taking. Gillies (2017) emphasizes the strategies of note-taking techniques, such as using symbols and abbreviations, and also information prioritization in supporting message reconstruction. While Ribas (2012) and Kalina (2016) highlight strategic decision-making, such as chunking, paraphrasing, omission, generalising, etc, when cognitive or linguistics constraints arise. These findings shows that interpreting quality relies not only on language skills, but also on the ability to handle challenges and to apply coping strategies effectively. It implies how interpreters cope will multiple challenges rather than language ability.

Students may find the process of listening, taking notes, and speaking challenging, particularly if they have limited interpreting experience. The need to listen, write, and reproduce it in another language in a short amount of time frequently causes anxiety and cognitive overload. As stated by Gile (2009), when the cognitive load in any one phase becomes too heavy, such as during listening or note-taking, it can reduce the effectiveness of the entire interpreting process. Additionally, since taking notes for interpretation needs a different strategy than standard academic note-taking, many students are not familiar with how to do it (Gillies, 2017). They often struggle with deciding what to note, how much to write, or how to organize their notes for effective recall.

Several previous studies have examined the difficulties faced by students and novice interpreters in consecutive interpreting. For instance, linguistic challenges that novice interpreters faced during interpreting from English into Arabic (Alhiyari, 2013), problem trigger in consecutive interpreting (Hidayat et al., 2017), linguistic and memory problem among English-Arabic translation students (Al-Harashseh et al., 2020), problems and errors in practicing consecutive interpreting (Tahir & Pinilih, 2023), and etc. However, although existing research has provided useful insights into interpreting difficulties by identified psychological difficulties, sound problems, or linguistics errors in consecutive interpreting, research combining the cognitive, psychological, and linguistic challenges is still limited, especially in the context of EFL students in the classroom. As a result, there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of how English Education students experience consecutive interpreting and how they manage the various challenges involved. This research intends to fill that gap by investigating the cognitive, psychological, and linguistic challenges faced by English Education Students and the coping strategies they adopted in practicing consecutive interpreting from English-Indonesian in the classroom.

This study focuses on the challenges and coping strategies experienced by English Education students in practicing consecutive interpreting from English into Indonesia in the classroom. While interpreting has been widely studied in professional fields, less attention has been directed to how EFL learners, particularly those without professional training, manage the cognitive and psychological challenges of consecutive interpreting tasks in classroom settings. The scope of this study is limited to consecutive interpreting in the classroom context, as it is the mode most commonly used in educational settings and requires the integration of multiple skills such as active listening, short-term memory, and strategic note-taking. In this context, the research aims to explore not only the cognitive, linguistics, and psychological challenges students face, but also the coping strategies they employ to manage these challenges. Hence, this study seeks to provide empirical insights into the real challenges faced by English Education students in consecutive interpreting and the coping strategies they use to cope with those challenges. This research is expected to contribute and help the lecturer better understand the difficulties students face during consecutive interpreting from English-Indonesian in the classroom. The insight gained may be used to develop a more effective teaching strategy in the interpreting class. Thus, this research may serve as a reference for future studies in interpreting pedagogy, EFL learner strategies, and the integration of interpreting in language education programs.

2. METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative case study approach to explore the challenges and coping strategies experienced by EFL students in consecutive interpreting within a real classroom context. According to Yin (2018), a case study is a research approach that investigates a

phenomenon within its real-life context. Creswell (2017) further explains that case studies are particularly useful when the researcher seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of a single setting, group, or event. This approach was chosen to allow an in-depth examination of students' experiences and perceptions rather than to generate statistical generalizations. The study was conducted in Interpreting class at the English Education Department of UNP during the 2025/2026 academic year. Six fourth-year students were selected through purposive sampling from a total of 31 students. The selection is based on their speaking ability in previous speaking classes, divided into three levels: two students from the upper group (with A grade), two from the middle group (A- and B+), and two from the lower group (B and B-). This grouping is intended to capture variation in interpreting performance and provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' challenges and strategies in practicing consecutive interpreting. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted after students performed English–Indonesian consecutive interpreting tasks. The interview questions were developed based on Gile's Effort Model (2009), Alhiyari's (2013) framework on interpreting difficulties, and Ribas's (2012) coping strategies. To enhance credibility and trustworthiness, interview instrument was reviewed by an expert in interpreting studies. Interviews were carried out in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure clarity, recorded with participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim. Data analysis followed Miles et al. (2014) qualitative analysis procedures.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

3.1. Research finding

The findings are organized according to the four phases of consecutive interpreting proposed by G listening and analysis, memory, note-taking, and production. Across these phases, students experienced interconnected cognitive, linguistic, and psychological challenges, which in turn prompted the use of various coping strategies. The analysis reveals that difficulties in earlier phases often accumulated and affected performance in subsequent stages, confirming the cumulative nature of consecutive interpreting.

1. Challenges

The findings of this study indicate that students encountered various challenges during consecutive interpreting tasks. To clearly present these challenges, the results are summarized in Table 1, which categorizes the problems experienced by students into six main themes: listening and analysis, memory, note-taking, production, psychological factors, and linguistic factors. The table provides an overview of the types of difficulties reported by participants across different stages of the interpreting process.

Table 1. General breakdown of interpreting challenges

Theme	Problems
Listening and Analysis	Fast speech and delivery rate
	Environmental and technical noise
	Distraction and loss of concentration
	Length and density of the speech
Memory	Information overload
	Losing information and coordination problems
	Unfamiliar vocabulary and specific details
Note-taking	Determining and writing appropriate symbols

	Coordination problems
	Note-reading problems
Production	Impact of unclear notes on reformulation
	Hesitation, pauses, and loss of fluency
Psychological	Nervousness and anxiety
	Fear of making mistakes
	Performance pressure
Linguistics	Grammatical difficulties
	Technical terms and unfamiliar vocabulary
	Accent and pronunciation difficulties
	Finding appropriate lexical equivalents
	Reconstructing sentence structure

As shown in Table 1, challenges related to listening and analysis were the most frequently reported. Students experienced difficulty coping with fast speech and delivery rate, particularly when the speaker provided dense information. As participant 6 described: *"When the speaker talks too fast, it becomes more difficult because I have to listen to the rapid speech and simultaneously translate it in my head before writing it down in my notes"*. Similarly, participant 5 also added: *"I find all of this challenging. Especially when the speaker speaks too fast. I often lose the words I've just heard because I can't keep up with the speed."*

Memory-related challenges were also prominent. Students reported experiencing information overload, especially when required to process long segments of speech. Losing information while attempting to remember previous content was a common issue, particularly for unfamiliar vocabulary and specific details such as numbers or names. Participant 2 described: *"I find it difficult when there is too much and complex information to remember."* Coordination between listening and memory was reported as difficult, leading to partial recall during interpreting. In terms of note-taking, students encountered difficulties in determining appropriate symbols and writing them consistently. Coordination problems between listening and writing were frequently mentioned, as students struggled to decide whether to prioritize listening or note-taking. As participant 4 said: *"I can't remember well when I have to listen and remember at the same time"*. In addition, note-reading problems emerged when students were unable to interpret their own notes during reformulation, which affected message delivery during interpreting. Participant 4 said: *"When I look at my note again, I don't really understand what I wrote"*. Participant further explain that the difficulty stemmed from inconsistent symbol use during note-taking. Limited time forced them to write hastily, which often led to confusion when re-reading their notes.

During the production stage, challenges related to unclear or incomplete notes were found to affect reformulation, leading to hesitation, pauses, and loss of fluency. These issues made it difficult for students to deliver the message accurately and smoothly. Participant 2 explained that she often hesitated because she forgot the meaning of the symbols she had written. She said: *"Sometimes I go blank because I forget the symbols I made, and then I get confused about which words to use"*.

Psychological challenges were also evident, including nervousness, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and performance pressure. As participant 1 said: *"I feel nervous and pressured when interpreting. There's a feeling of fear that I might not be able to do it, and it makes my performance messy."* These factors influenced students' confidence and concentration during interpreting tasks.

Lastly, linguistic challenges were identified in the form of grammatical difficulties and limited vocabulary, particularly when students encountered unfamiliar terms. Participant 6 further explained: *“If the topic is heavy and there a lot of technical terms, it’s more difficult to follow”*. This often hindered comprehension, as students needed more time to process meaning. Accent and pronunciation differences also contributed to listening difficulty, while environmental and technical noise disrupted concentration. Several students reported losing focus during long or dense speeches, resulting in incomplete understanding of the source message.

2. Coping strategies

The findings indicate that students employed various coping strategies to deal with difficulties encountered during consecutive interpreting. These strategies are summarized in the table below, which presents the coping strategies used by the students across four main themes: listening and analysis, memory, note-taking, and production. The table highlights the range of strategies applied by the students to manage cognitive, linguistic, and psychological demands during interpreting tasks.

Table 2. General breakdown of interpreting coping strategies

Theme	Strategies
Listening and Analysis	Paying greater attention
	Ignoring
	Generalising
	Using common sense
	Trying to calm down
Memory	Paraphrasing
	Memorizing
	Chunking or segmentation
	Omission
	Summarizing
Note-taking	Chunking or segmentation
	Omission
	Changing the order
Production	Paraphrasing or reformulation
	Generalising
	Ignoring
	Repetition
	Trying to calm down

As shown in Table 2, several strategies were used during the listening and analysis stage. Students reported paying greater attention to the source speech to improve comprehension. When difficulties occurred, some students chose to ignore certain information, particularly unfamiliar or less important elements. As participant 1 said: *“I try to focus on the main points. If I force myself to understand everything, I get confused”*. Generalising information and relying on common sense were also reported as ways to maintain overall understanding. Participant 4 further explained: *“If I don’t know the exact word, I try to understand the meaning in general and simplify the message”*. In addition, trying to calm down was mentioned as a strategy to cope

with pressure during listening. Participants commonly mention that they try to calm themselves so they can focus on listening and not panic.

In relation to memory, students employed strategies such as paraphrasing, memorizing key points, chunking or segmenting information, omission, and summarizing. As participant 6 explained: *"I don't try to remember all the sentences. I just keep the main points in my mind. Prioritize the main idea first"*. These strategies were used to manage information overload and to support recall during interpreting. Chunking and summarizing were commonly used to reduce the amount of information that needed to be remembered, while omission was applied when students were unable to retain specific details.

For note-taking, students reported using chunking or segmentation to organize information more clearly. Participant 2 further explained: *"I try to separate the information into parts in my notes so it's easier to remember"*. Omission was also used when time constraints made it difficult to write complete notes. In some cases, students changed the order of information in their notes to make it easier to understand during reformulation.

During the production stage, students applied strategies such as paraphrasing or reformulation, generalising, ignoring certain details, and repetition. As participant said: *"Sometimes I don't remember the exact words, so I just say it in another way that I can. And skip the information that I cannot catch"*. These strategies were used to compensate for limited vocabulary and memory gaps. In addition, trying to calm down was mentioned as a way to manage nervousness and maintain fluency while delivering the interpreted message. Overall, the findings show that students employed a variety of coping strategies across different stages of consecutive interpreting, as summarized in Table 2. The strategies were used flexibly depending on the challenges faced during the task.

3.2. Discussion

Based on the findings, it becomes clear that the difficulties faced by the participants do not stand alone in a single phase of interpreting. Instead, challenges tend to emerge gradually and carry over from one phase to another, starting from listening and analysis and continuing through memory, note-taking, and production. This shows that consecutive interpreting is a complex and cumulative process, where problems in earlier stages often shape performance in later ones.

In the listening and analysis phase, the participants consistently reported difficulties related to fast speech rate, unfamiliar vocabulary, accent variation, message density, environmental noise, and divided attention. This finding supports Gile's Effort Model, which explains that listening and analysis demand a large portion of cognitive resources, especially for novice interpreters. When these demands exceed the interpreter's available capacity, comprehension becomes fragile. Similar challenges have been reported in earlier studies. Alhiyari (2013) found that fast speech rate significantly limits interpreters' processing time, increasing the risk of information loss. Likewise, Omolu et al. (2022) emphasized that accent unfamiliarity poses a major barrier for EFL interpreters due to increased perceptual effort. The participants' experiences in this study confirm that when students must allocate excessive attention to decoding sounds, accents, or unfamiliar terms, fewer cognitive resources remain available for meaning construction. The findings of this study reinforce the idea that listening is one of the most cognitively demanding phases for student interpreters.

The findings also show that loss of concentration and cognitive overload were recurring issues during listening. Students frequently described divided attention caused by multitasking between listening, understanding, remembering, and preparing to take notes simultaneously.

This directly reflects Gile's notion of competing efforts within limited mental capacity. Hidayat et al. (2017) similarly reported that student interpreters often lose focus when cognitive and emotional demands overlap, supporting the idea that attention management is a central challenge in interpreting training contexts.

In the memory phase, participants often reported losing information, especially when the speech was long, complex, or filled with unfamiliar terms. Many students explained that they could not retain all the information at once and tended to forget earlier parts of the message while processing new input. This finding supports Moser-Mercer (2003) argument that memory performance deteriorates when input density exceeds working memory capacity. The students' tendency to forget earlier parts of the message while processing new input further illustrates the fragile nature of short-term memory in interpreting tasks. Gillies (2017) also noted that interpreters are more likely to lose detailed or unfamiliar information first, which aligns with participants' reports of difficulty remembering numbers, names, and technical terms. Both of them emphasize that memory overload is common among novice interpreters, particularly when they lack efficient note-taking strategies. The present study confirms that memory problems often arise as a continuation of cognitive overload experienced during listening.

In the note-taking phase, the findings reveal that although note-taking is intended to support memory, many participants described it as an additional source of difficulty. Students struggled to coordinate listening and writing at the same time, which often resulted in incomplete or unclear notes. Inconsistent use of symbols and poor organization further reduced the usefulness of their notes. This finding aligns with Gillies (2017) view that note-taking problems are not simply related to handwriting, but to how information is encoded as memory cues. When notes lack clarity or consistency, they fail to support recall and instead create new problems during reformulation.

In the production phase, participants frequently reported problems with lexical choice, sentence structure, and fluency, even when they understood the source message. Memory gaps, unclear notes, and limited vocabulary often forced them to paraphrase, generalize, or omit certain information. This supports Gile's argument that successful comprehension does not automatically lead to successful reformulation. Similar findings were also reported by Alhiyari (2013) who found that student interpreters often struggle to deliver accurate and fluent interpretations due to linguistic and cognitive constraints.

Psychological challenges also played an important role throughout the interpreting process. Feelings of nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and pressure to perform especially in front of classmates, were commonly reported by the participants. These emotional factors often disrupted concentration and increased the likelihood of blank moments or hesitation. This finding supports previous studies which suggest that anxiety consumes cognitive resources that could otherwise be used for processing and production. In this sense, psychological challenges are not separate from cognitive ones, but closely intertwined with them.

Despite these difficulties, the participants demonstrated active efforts to cope with the challenges they faced. They reported using strategies such as focusing on main ideas, generalizing unfamiliar information, omitting less important details, paraphrasing during production, and trying to calm themselves down. These strategies closely described by Ribas (2012) who defines interpreting strategies as deliberate actions taken to overcome difficulties during the interpreting process. Importantly, the students did not apply strategies in a rigid or systematic way. Instead, they chose strategies that felt practical and manageable within their own limits as novice interpreters.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that consecutive interpreting presents multifaceted demands for EFL students, in which cognitive, linguistic, and psychological factors interact throughout the interpreting process. The challenges identified in this study highlight the complexity of managing listening, memory, note-taking, and production simultaneously in a classroom-based interpreting context. At the same time, the strategies employed by students reflect adaptive responses to these demands rather than fully developed interpreting competence. Overall, this study underscores the position of consecutive interpreting as a cognitively intensive activity for EFL learners and contributes empirical evidence on how interpreting challenges and coping strategies manifest in an English education setting.

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