Content:
Assessing students’ interpreting performance is a highly complex task. Students may demonstrate a wide variety of error patterns ranging from problems related to linguistic features such as lexicon and syntax to those related to paralinguistic features such as abnormal pauses and repetition. The traditional assessment method has been criticized for its subjectivity and incomprehensiveness. Therefore, more scholars began to explore the application of corpus approach in evaluating students’ performance so as to provide objective and systematic feedback.

Under this backdrop, the current study aims to investigate students’ performance in interpreting classes through a corpus-based approach. Interpreting students from a tertiary institution in Hong Kong will participate in this study. An Error Annotated Learner Interpreting Corpus (EALIC) will be built. Students’ interpretation exercises will be collected and transcribed with prior permissions sought from the students. The interpretation errors will be categorized following the methods by Lindquist (2004). The error tagging will cover both linguistic and paralinguistic information such as loss of coherency or cohesion, omission, syntactical error, pronunciation error, unintelligible expression, addition, etc. WordSmith 5.0 will be used to analyze the data. The type-token ration, sentence length, keywords, and lexical density will also be looked into in order to identify problems interpreting students may have.

Most salient and frequent errors in interpreting are expected to be identified. The findings will benefit both teachers and students. Teachers can adjust their teaching plans based on problems revealed in this study. The corpus can also serve as valuable resources for students to embark on the road to autonomous learners: With the help of the corpus, students can compare their own errors with those of their peers, and alter their learning strategies based on the comparison. In summary, the corpus-based study enables teachers to provide objective and systematic feedback to students, which will in turn help the students to learn independently.

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