

# **Investigating LEx Students' Difficulties and Strategies in Interpreting Activities**

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## **Abstract**

In the process of rapid information exchange from various languages and cultures, the competent interpreter is inevitable. Interpreting activity is important because it bridges the communication between two or more speakers who use different languages. In doing interpreting, the interpreter encounters various problems. The aim of this research was to find out the difficulties faced by LEx students and strategies to solve the difficulties faced by LEx students in interpreting activities. This research applied qualitative method and descriptive qualitative approach as research design. The data were obtained by interviewing three participants who joined LEx 2018 program at a private university in Yogyakarta. The finding of the research revealed that the difficulties faced by LEx students included lack of understanding source language, lack of vocabulary, difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed, difficulty in understanding pronunciation, and different cultural background. Furthermore, this research had found eleven strategies to solve the difficulties in interpreting activities such as asking for repetition, asking to use second language, Increasing focus on source language, asking the meaning, asking speakers to change the way they speak, using smartphone, familiarizing with pronunciation, pointing the item intended, asking friend's help, using body language, and finding synonym.

*Keywords:* Interpreting activity, interpreting difficulty, interpreting strategies.

## **Introduction**

Interpreting is a way to communicate between two people who do not speak the same language (Pratiwi, 2016). The person who does interpreting is called an interpreter. An interpreter conveys the information at the conference, seminar, speech, bilateral meeting, global meeting, and other significant events from one language to another language.

Interpretation is required to avoid misunderstanding and convey the speaker's message based on context (Rimadi, 2015). The role of the interpreter cannot be underestimated. A slight misinterpretation has a fatal effect for speaker and listener.

There is interpreting subject in English Language Education Department. English Language Education Department is one of departments in a private university in Yogyakarta. Based on the researcher's experience who has taken this subject, the students in interpreting class usually practice with their friends from the same country so if they cannot get the point they can ask using their language. However, it will be a problem when the speaker is foreigner who had different language with the interpreter. There are some problems which might appear in interpreting activity. The researcher wanted to investigate interpreting activities in real situation. Thus, the researcher chose LEx program because in this program there was interpreting activities between Indonesian students and Singapore students.

LEx or called Learning Express program is an international community service in a private university at Yogyakarta which is managed by International Relations Office (IRO). According to researcher's experience that joined this program, there was different language background among the villagers, LEx students and Polytechnic students. The villagers speak Javanese then using Indonesian language as their second language. LEx students have their own local language and speak Indonesian language as well. English is used as LEx students' foreign language. Meanwhile, Polytechnic students have different first language. Since Singaporean is multicultural country, the first language can be Malay language, Indian

language, Chinese language or etc. Furthermore, Polytechnic students speak English as their second language. Due to the different background language among the villagers, LEx students and Polytechnic students, it causes problem while doing interpreting activity. Based on that case, the researcher investigated interpreting activity in LEx 2018 program. In addition, this research aim to find out the difficulties face by Lex students and the strategies they done to overcome the diffuculties in interpreting activity.

## **Literature Review**

### **Difficulties in Interpreting**

This research mentioned some interpreting problems faced by certain interpreter found by the previous studies and categorized as followed:

**Lack of vocabulary.** One of challenges in interpreting activity is lack of vocabulary (Gile, 2009). Pratiwi (2016) exclaimed when interpreter does not have a lot of vocabularies will find it hard to deliver the message from the speaker because the interpreter cannot comprehend the meaning properly. In line with Nurfauziyah (2017), the interpreter encounters problem to interpret the speaker's message when found unfamiliar vocabulary.

**Difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed.** According to Yu (2017), the speakers' speaking speed influence interpreter's performance. The interpreter cannot get the message due to speaker's speaking speed in source language (Nurfaiyah, 2017). Yu (2017) elucidated when speaker talks slowly, the interpreter can comprehend almost all main points. An interpreter may have to handle 120 – 150 words per minute (Hasanshahi & Shahrokhi, 2016). As Amini (2011) acknowledged speed delivery of interpreting is linked to various factors such as source-text complexity, speed of input, interpreter's knowledge about source or target language, strategies used by the interpreter, the topic under discussion, intonation patterns, and etc.

**Difficulty in understanding pronunciation.** Speaker's unfamiliar accent is one of possibly problematic factors (Pochhacker, 2015). For instance, accented speech might cause misunderstanding in interpreting (Lin, Chang, & Kuo, 2013). A survey conducted by Chang and Wu (2014) found that accent is perceived the main difficulties in interpreting; several accents are considered to be more challenging than others. Mahmoodzadeh (2006) claimed that one of the important components that interpreters should have is they can comprehend all of language variation or accent, at least by having standard pronunciation. On the other hand, several speakers might have heavy accent or unclear pronunciation and it becomes a problem for interpreter when he is not used to these language variations (Baranyai, 2011).

**Different cultural background.** According to Kalina (2000), the differences of country culture is one of problems in interpreting. Similarly, Gile (2009) revealed that the cultural differences linked to language community and it may also be the source of the difficulty for the interpreter. In addition, Meyer (2010) as cited in Pochhacker (2015) claimed that difficulties come from cultural differences among people who speak different languages. Everybody has different perception and the way community perceives is culturally established. Hence, the cultural background influences to international communication (Pujiyanti & Zuliani, 2014).

### **Strategies to Overcome Interpreting Difficulties**

According to some strategies found by experts and previous study, those strategies are categorized as follows:

**Asking for help.** This strategy includes asking for booth mate's help and asking friend's help. There are at least two interpreters in the booth at the time of simultaneous interpreting. They are an active interpreter and passive interpreter. The passive interpreter is able to give full attention to listen, so that s/he has a better chance to comprehend the difficult message. Meanwhile, the active interpreter has to divide attention to listen and

understand, have short-term memory and reconstruction (Ma, 2013). Furthermore, the passive interpreter has sufficient time to consult about other documents and then provides information to the active interpreter. Meanwhile, asking friend's help is one of strategies which can be done by interpreter to cope with the problems. Zagoto (2016) believed that asking help from others can support a better comprehension of target language. It deals with lack of vocabulary (Megawati and Mandarini, 2017). Moreover, asking friends' help is a comfortable way to comprehend the point of view in making a conversation or discussion (Mahfoodh and Alghail, 2016).

**Finding synonym.** According to Li (2015), when the interpreter cannot mention the ideal equivalent of lexical element in the source language, he or she provides a similar term or synonym in target language. Likewise Aryanto (2015) exclaimed that synonym can be used as variation of vocabulary.

**Using smartphone.** Using smartphone involves dictionary and application to learn English. Mohamed et al (2017) exclaimed that dictionary can be used as a strategy to comprehend vocabulary. Besides that, Scholfi (2010) stated that dictionary is implied to check spelling, look up the meaning of unfamiliar words, and confirm the meaning of partially known words (as cited in Mohamed et al, 2017). Similarly, Xueping (2014) mentioned that to discover specific vocabulary, dictionary is able to be used because it can give a lot of information. In addition, Wang, Teng, and Chen (2015) exclaimed that smartphone or mobile application help to facilitate English vocabulary.

**Familiarizing with pronunciation** Another strategy to understand speaker's accent is familiarizing with pronunciation. According to Hough (2010), the more familiar with pronunciation, the more comfortable the interpreter uses it, and the clearer he can communicate in conversation context. It is in line with Pradana (2018) who argued that being familiar with accent can help the interpreter to comprehend English better.

**Using body language.** One of strategies to help interpreter coping with difficulty in interpreting is by using body language. The interpreter can use body language in order to make the meaning clearer. Wang (2017) explained that body language is a good tool to communicate with others and express one self. Besides that, body language can be the supplement or information and allow effective communication with language.

**Increasing focus on source language.** An interpreter should focus and pay attention to source language. Meliadini (2017) claimed that interpreter should focus on what the speaker said to understand the content of the speech. In addition, Nolan (2005) revealed that an interpreter must keep focusing and concentrating during interpreting and catching up the point of discussions on many topics.

**Asking for repetition.** Another strategy that can be done by interpreters in interpreting is asking for repetition. According to Russel (2010), the interpreters are required to confirm and clarify when they need complete and suitable information. The interpreters cannot assume any information. Therefore, they need to clarify the correct information from speaker.

**Asking to use second language.** One of strategies in interpreting is asking to use second language. Russel (2010) claimed that the interpreters need to maximize source language so that he or she can interpret the speech without any challenges. This strategy helps the interpreter to convey the speech.

### **Learning Express (LEx) Program**

Learning Express also called LEx program is program collaboration between a private university in Yogyakarta and Polytechnic in Singapore under the supervision of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), United States.

This Learning Express program implements the design thinking method, which is a method for creating a solution to solve the problems with innovation or technology. It can be said that LEx program is one of international community services in private university of

Yogyakarta. There are two batches opened each year. The first batch is conducted in March and the second batch is held in September.

This program involved 28 students of private university in Yogyakarta and 28 students of Singapore Polytechnics. In addition, there are some lectures from both of them as the facilitator. One of requirements to join LEx program is having English speaking skill. LEx student's fluency is examined at the interview process. LEx students required to have good English skill. However, based on the researcher's experiences, only some LEx students in batch 1 could speak English fluently. On the other hand, all LEx students in batch 2 master English well. In selection process of LEx program 2018 batch 2, the interview was more difficult than beforehand.

LEx program was held for 12 days in Yogyakarta but LEx students had done community service in Yogyakarta's village for 18 days previously. LEx students got workshop about design thinking method before going to Yogyakarta's village. After that, the students stayed for 3 days in a village to conduct observation and interview to find out the problems happened in the village. There are differences between LEx program batch 1 and batch 2. In batch 1, all of activities like workshop design thinking were carried out in Yogyakarta, but for batch 2 LEx students got workshop in Singapore for 3 weeks then they did community service in Yogyakarta for 12 days. Moreover, LEx students from batch 2 got workshop about leadership skill and data analysis.

LEx students did interpreting in the interview session. In addition, they doing interpreting when the villagers having free time. The villagers speak Javanese and Indonesian language, meanwhile the interpreters speak Indonesian language. Since villagers speak Indonesian language, while Polytechnic students speak English, Polytechnic students need an interpreter in order to bridge the communication. As the partner of Polytechnic students, LEx students become interpreter to help them in doing interview. LEx students interpreted the

message from villager to Polytechnic students and vice versa. The researcher mentioned students of Singapore polytechnic as Polytechnics students and students of private university as LEx students.

### **Methodology**

In this research, the researcher used descriptive qualitative to obtain the detailed description of difficulties and strategies in interpreting activities. Furthermore, by using descriptive qualitative design, the data gained was deeper for understanding the social world. According to Hancock (2009), descriptive qualitative endeavored to develop or to deepen an understanding of how things come to be the way in social world.

### **Place and Participants**

This research was conducted at a private university in Yogyakarta because this university held Learning Express (LEx) program. Besides, the data of this study were gathered from three participants who had joined LEx 2018 batch 2. The participants consisted of one female student and two male students. The researcher used pseudonym to present the participants' names. The pseudonym was Charlotte, William and Louis.

The participants had different language background. Charlotte uses Sundanese as first language. Her second language is Indonesia and her foreign language is English. Meanwhile, Louis uses Indonesian language as first language, and English as his foreign language. The last participant was William who speaks Indonesian language as his first language. His foreign language is English.

### **Technique and Procedure**

Interview was used to collect the data in order to gather information, opinion, and idea from the participants' experiences in interpreting activities. The interview is very useful to obtain the background of participants' experience (McNamara, 1999).

The researcher did several procedures in collecting the data. First, the researcher



prepared the interview protocol based on the research questions. Second, the researcher contacted the participants to decide the time and place to conduct the interview. After that, the researcher did the interview.

### **Analysis**

In the data analysis, the researcher analyzed the collected data from the interview. This research used several steps from Saldana (2016) involving transcribing, member checking, collecting similar fact, categorizing, and writing narration.

### **Findings and Discussion**

In this part, the researcher elaborated the difficulties faced by LEx students and strategies done by LEx students to overcome the difficulties in interpreting activities.

#### **Difficulties Faced by LEx Students in Interpreting Activities**

Based on the interview, the difficulties faced by LEx students in interpreting activities were lack of understanding source of language, lack of vocabulary, difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed, difficulty in understanding pronunciation, and different cultural background. The findings were categorized as followed:

**Lack of understanding of source language.** Charlotte and Louis stated that they faced the difficulty to interpret the meaning due to lack of understanding of source language. In this context, the source language was Javanese. On the other hand, the participant cannot speak Javanese. Both Charlotte and Louis were not able to grasp Javanese because they did not come from Java while the community which they interpreted sometimes spoke Javanese during conversation. From the statement, it happened because the villagers spoke Javanese. That way, the villagers often mixed Javanese and Indonesian language during the interview. Because of this, LEx students were not able to interpret the message to Polytechnics students properly. Charlotte said, "The people speak Javanese while I am not Javanese, so I cannot understand it" (P1.1). From the statement mentioned, it was similar with Louis who

acknowledged, “I do not understand Javanese” (P2.10). Those findings mentioned were in line with Ribas (2012) who claimed that lack of understanding of the source language can be problem in interpreting. Ribas (2012) added that the interpreter is not able to create the speech well because of lack of understanding of source language.

**Lack of vocabulary.** Another difficulty faced by participants in interpreting activities was lack of vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary came from LEx students and Polytechnic students. In this context, lack of vocabulary was from English language. LEx students revealed that Polytechnic students were lack of vocabulary. In addition, sometimes Polytechnic students did not know the vocabulary or they knew the vocabulary but it was used in different context. Therefore, they could not get the point. According to two participants, LEx students should explain the context clearly. As Louis said, “There were a number of obstacles when Singapore students did not know some vocabularies” (P2.1). For example, when Louis mentioned scoop for water, Polytechnic students did not get the point so that Louis explained to them. In this context, the scoop for water was used to take a bath.

Moreover, Loius stated that he could not mention the vocabularies about objects. Besides that, he explained that he did not know the vocabulary or little thing in daily life to mention carpet. Meanwhile, William exclaimed that he forgot about vocabulary while interpreting the message. For instance, when he wanted to say something, he suddenly forgot the vocabulary. Accordingly, LEx students could not deliver the speech because of lack of vocabulary in English language. The finding was similar with Pratiwi (2016) who asserted that when interpreters do not have a lot of vocabularies, they will find it hard to deliver the message from the speaker because the interpreters cannot get the meaning properly. In addition, Nurfauziah (2017) claimed that the interpreter encounters problem to interpret the speaker’s message to find out unfamiliar vocabulary.

**Difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed.** All participants stated that they encountered the difficulties in understanding speakers' speaking speed. In this context, the speakers were Polytechnics students who spoke very fast. LEx students were not able to get the point because Singaporean students spoke English too fast. The statement was mentioned by Charlotte who revealed, "I cannot grasp the language because the speech is quite fast" (P1.3). For instance, Charlotte told that she got difficulties to catch the point from Polytechnic students especially her friend from Indian race who spoke so fast. The statement mentioned was similar with Louis who said, "Singaporean students talk fast, so it becomes the difficulty" (P2.6). Furthermore, William had same thought. He said, "Singaporean students speak very fast, so I cannot comprehend the meaning correctly" (P3.2).

This finding is in line with Yu (2017) who stated that understanding speakers' speaking speed is one of the problems in interpreting activities. Besides that, it is also supported by Nurfauziyah (2017) who mentioned that the interpreters are not able to catch the meaning due to speaker's speaking speed in the source language.

**Difficulty in understanding pronunciation.** One of the problems in interpreting activities was difficulty in understanding pronunciation. In this context, Polytechnic students had-different accent so that LEx students got difficulty in interpreting. According to participants, Singaporean is multicultural country so there are some cultures, races, and language such as Malay, India, Chinese which might influence their accent. Different accent and unclear pronunciation made LEx students feel difficult to catch the point. In addition, all participants said that Polytechnic students' pronunciation was hard to be understood. Charlotte said, "I have the difficulty in understanding the language because the accent is unfamiliar" (P1.4). Similarly, Louis stated, "Singaporean students have very difficult accent" (P2.3). He added that he understood British accent more because he got exposure from British and American accent. Meanwhile Singaporean English is mixture of Chinese and

British accent. Moreover, William argued, “obstacle in interpreting occurred because Singaporean students had different accent, and they used mix-accent such as Malay, India and Chinese in speaking context” (P3.1). For instance, Polytechnic students spoke English using unfamiliar accent, or sometimes they used Chinese and Indian accent mixing with British accent. Thus, LEx students got the difficulty to understand the meaning. In addition, William stated that the pronunciation was different, so what he heard was different as well.

The statements mentioned are in line with Asgari (2015) who explained that pronunciation is one of important aspects in interpreters’ success. If the interpreter cannot comprehend the pronunciation, it can be a problem. Moreover, Pochhacker (2015) revealed that speaker’s unfamiliar accent is one of possible problematic factors. Some speakers might have heavy accent or unclear pronunciation, so it becomes an obstacle for interpreter when he or she does not get used to the language variations (Baranyai, 2011). According to Lin, Chang, and Kuo (2013), accented speech might cause misunderstanding in interpreting. A survey was conducted by Chang and Wu (2014) found that the accent is perceived the main difficulties in interpreting, and several accents are considered to be more challenging than others.

**Different cultural background.** The last finding was different cultural background. According to participant, since Singapore and Indonesia had different culture, there were several things or objects which the Polytechnic students knew, but it was not transferable in Indonesian language. Therefore, LEx students had difficulty to explain the context to them. The Polytechnic students were not familiar with Indonesian context. As seen in the following statement, Louis stated, “Singaporean students know the vocabulary, but it is not suitable with the context” (P2.2). It occurred when Louis explained the context about place in Indonesia. For example, Polytechnic students asked LEx students when they saw the soccer field in Yogyakarta village. Polytechnic students thought that the field was a large area like

soccer field in Singapore. However, a field in Indonesia was like open area in which it could be used to play football for community activity. LEx students should explain the context what field in Indonesia was. Besides that, LEx students encountered the obstacle to explain intended ideas when they and Polytechnic students discussed to find problem solving. It happened because LEx students and Singaporean students had different perception of culture, so Singaporean could not get the point. This difficulty happened between LEx and Polytechnic students who discussed to solve the problem in Yogyakarta's village. William said that Polytechnic students' notion was irrelevant to be implied because they did not know the culture of the village people. He added that they had different perception of culture, so Polytechnic students were not able to get the point. Because of different understandings, it could make the students feel difficult to explain their perceptions.

According to Kalina (2000), different culture is one of problems in interpreting. Meyer (2010) as cited in Pochhacker (2015) argued that problems can come from cultural differences among people who speak different languages. Likewise, Gile (2009) mentioned that the cultural differences related to language community which may also be the source of the difficulty for the interpreter. Everybody has different perception and the way community perceives is culturally established. Therefore, the cultural background influences to international communication (Pujiyanti & Zuliani, 2014).

### **Strategies Done by LEx Students' to Overcome the Difficulties in Interpreting Activities**

There were eleven findings resulted to answer that questions. The strategies to overcome the difficulties in interpreting activities were asking for repetition, asking to use second language, increasing focus on source language, asking the meaning to solve difficulty, asking speakers to change the way they speak, using smartphone, familiarizing pronunciation to solve difficulty in understanding pronunciation, pointing the item intended, asking friend's

help, using body language and finding synonym. Hence, for more detailed information is explained in the following paragraphs:

**Asking for repetition.** This strategy was used to solve the issue related to difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed and difficulty in understanding pronunciation. Based on Charlotte's statement, "I asked Singaporean students to repeat the words" (P1.5). She said that when Polytechnic students speak so fast, she asked them to repeat the words. The statement mentioned was similar to Louis who argued, "I told them to repeat their words, and they repeated with a British accent" (P2.17). He also said that he used this strategy to know what the speaker said clearly. Moreover, he asked for repetition in order to avoid misunderstanding between him and Polytechnic students. This finding was in line with Russel (2010) who explained that the interpreters are required to confirm and clarify when they need complete and appropriate information.

**Asking to use second language.** This strategy was used to solve the lack of source language. In this context, the first language used by villagers was Javanese, and the second language was Indonesian language. LEx students asked the people to use Indonesia language. They told to resident that they did not come from Javanese so they could not comprehend Javanese clearly. Charlotte stated that she asked the residents to speak second language so that she could interpret the language well. Besides that, Louis said, "I asked the people to speak Indonesia language" (P2.11). He asserted that he told to resident that he does not understand Javanese, and the resident knew it. Then, the resident spoke Indonesia language. As the result, it was similar with Russel (2010) who argued that the interpreters need to maximize source language so that he or she can interpret the speech without any challenges.

**Increasing focus on source language** Increasing focus on the source language came up as the strategy to solve difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed and difficult in understanding pronunciation. One of the participants, Charlotte revealed that her strategy to

cope with difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed and difficulty in understanding pronunciation was done by increasing focus to source language. In this context, the source language was English and the speaker was Polytechnic students. She listened to the point of conversation carefully. In addition, she had to pay attention and focus on the speaker. It was proven by her statement. She said, "I listened to the point of conversation carefully" (P1.7). She added, "I have to pay attention and focus to the speaker whose accent is unfamiliar and too fast" (P1.8). She argued that this strategy was quite effective in order to assist conversation during interpreting. It can be said that the participant implied strategy by increasing focus to deal with Polytechnic students' pronunciation and the speaker which speak so fast. The result is supported by Meliadin (2017) who asserted that interpreter should focus on what the speaker said to understand the content of the speech. An interpreter must focus and concentrate during interpreting and catching up the point of discussions on many topics (Nolan, 2005).

**Asking the meaning.** Asking the meaning was used to cope with difficulty in understanding pronunciation. One of the participants, Louis, did this strategy. Louis explained that he had to ask the meaning when he was not able to catch the point from Polytechnic students. In regards to his statement, he said, "Sometimes I have to ask what the meaning is" (P2.4). Due to Polytechnic students' accent is different, Louis could not listen to it properly. Hence, he had to ask what the speaker meant. The finding was supported by Kharis (2018) who revealed that asking the meaning can reduce misunderstanding toward the English speakers.

**Asking speakers to change the way they speak.** This strategy was used to solve difficulty in understanding speakers' speaking speed and difficulty in understanding pronunciation. Asking speakers to change the way they speak included asking to speak clearly, asking to speak loudly, and asking to speak slowly. There were two participants who

mentioned this strategy. Louis said that he asked Polytechnic students to speak clearly because they had different accent. This finding is in line with William who said that he asked Polytechnic students to speak loudly to cope with unfamiliar accent. In addition, both participants asked the speaker to talk slowly. This strategy was done when Polytechnic students speak so fast. Louis maintained, "I ask the speaker to speak slowly" (P2.7). William added, "I asked Singaporean students to talk slowly so that I can grasp it" (P3.3). Moreover, he exclaimed that asking speakers to change the way they speak was useful strategy-to make clear conversation. The result of this study is in line with Meliadiny (2017) who said that asking speakers to change the way they speak makes the interpreter understand the topic. Thus, she claimed that this strategy can be used to avoid misunderstanding.

**Using smartphone.** Using smartphone was able to solve lack of vocabulary and difficulty in understanding pronunciation as the strategy used in interpreting activity. One participant said this strategy using Smartphone. Using smartphone consisted of using dictionary and English learning application. Louis argued that he needed the dictionary to translate the vocabulary. Besides that, he downloaded English learning application to check the pronunciation. He said, "I need to open dictionary to translate the vocabulary" (P2.9). Moreover, Louis stated that he used smartphone to download English learning application. In English learning application, there was the feature about pronunciation. Louis used pronunciation feature to check pronunciation whether it was correct or not in order to avoid misunderstanding. Furthermore, he used English learning application because it was not sufficient if he only used dictionary. Additionally, using smartphone was practical, effective, and efficient because it did not waste the time. This finding is in line with Wang, Teng, and Chen (2015) who maintained that smartphone or mobile application helps to facilitate English vocabulary. Besides, Xueping (2014) asserted that to discover specific vocabulary, dictionary



is able to be used because it can give a lot of information. Furthermore, using dictionary can assist to find the correct English' pronunciation and translate the meaning (Kharis, 2018).

**Familiarizing with pronunciation.** Familiarizing with pronunciation was a strategy to solve pronunciation problem. The second participant, Louis clarified that he did this. After getting used to listen to it, he could comprehend the point by himself. Louis exclaimed, “I familiarized with the accent which finally I understood it by myself” (P2.14). He told that for the first time he did not get used to Singaporean accent, but after four till five days in Singapore, he had familiarized with the accent. It can be said that he listened to speaker's accent then to be familiar with it in order to overcome different in understanding pronunciation of Polytechnic students. This result was related to Pradana (2018) who believed that being familiar with accent can help the interpreter to comprehend English better. Additionally, it is supported by Hough (2010) who stated that the more familiar with pronunciation, the more comfortable the interpreter uses it, and the clearer he can communicate with it in conversation context.

**Pointing the intended item.** This strategy was used to solve the lack of vocabulary mastery. One of participants said that he pointed the item intended as a strategy. Louis explained that he pointed the item or object intended when he could not mention the vocabulary. He also said, “If the items are around me, I pointed it” (P2.15). Besides that, he pointed the item intended to deal with lack of vocabularies. It seems that the participant had no idea to mention the vocabulary refers to object in the middle of conversation with Polytechnic students, so he pointed the item intended in order to convey his meaning. The finding of this study is in line with Megawati and Mandarini (2017) who exclaimed that pointing the item or object intended can be used as a strategy when the interpreter does not have the idea to mention it.

**Asking friend's help.** This strategy could solve the lack of source language, lack of vocabulary, and different cultural background. Another strategy was found by LEx students through asking friend's help. LEx students asked their friends who understood the language better than them. The first participant, Charlotte asked friend's help when she could not understand Javanese. She acknowledged, "I asked my friend who understands Javanese" (P1.2). Meanwhile, Louis asked to his friend when he did not know the vocabulary. He asked his friend who mastered English better than him. He said, "I asked friend who is expert in English because I know their capabilities" (P2.16). Furthermore, William asserted that he chose one of his friends who could speak English fluently in explaining the topic so that Singaporean students were able to get the point easily. As mentioned in his statement, "I chose one person who is fluent in English for explaining to Singaporean students so that they are able understand the communication content well" (P3.9).

In addition, this finding is similar with Megawati and Mandarin (2017) who mentioned that appealing for assistance is one of strategies to deal with lack of vocabulary. Also, Megawati and Mandarin (2017) added that appealing for assistance may be used when the interpreter ask for help about the difficulties which they face. Besides that, asking help from others can support a better comprehension (Zagoto, 2016). Mahfoodh and Alghail (2016)-added that asking friends' help is comfortable way to comprehend the point of view in making a conversation or discussion. Furthermore, the interpreter can ask for mate's help in simultaneous interpreting (Ma, 2013).

**Using body language.** This strategy was to solve lack of vocabulary. Based on the interview, there was one participant who stated that he used body language as a strategy to overcome the difficulties in interpreting activity. William argued that applying body language; Polytechnic students could get the point of him. He said, "I used body language so that Singaporean students understand more" (P3.6). William told that he used body language

because he did not know the vocabulary which he wanted to say. Thus, he tried to use body language to deal with that problem. This result is in line with Wang (2017) who explained that body language is a good tool to communicate with others and express one self. Besides that, body language can be the supplement or information and allow effective communication with language.

**Finding the synonym.** Finding the synonym came up as the strategy to solve lack of vocabulary. The third participant, William mentioned one of strategies to cope with difficulties in interpreting which was finding the synonym. He said that by finding out the synonym or other explanation that was easier to be understood though it quite long explanation could solve lack of vocabulary. He argued, “I found synonym or other explanation which refers to the word” (P3.8). William claimed that even though finding synonym or other explanation took time to think, it was quite effective strategy. For the reason, Polytechnic students grasped the point. Thus, when William had no idea of a certain vocabulary that he did not know in English, he tried to find the synonym. Therefore, the finding is related to Aryanto (2015) who believed that the use of synonym is a way to overcome difficulty of vocabulary. Furthermore, Li (2014) exclaimed that when interpreter cannot mention the discourse, he/she can provide a near equivalent term or synonym in target language.

## **Conclusion**

This research found that there were five difficulties faced by LEx students such as lack of understanding source language, lack of vocabulary, difficulty in understanding speakers’ speaking speed, difficulty in understanding pronunciation, and different cultural background. This research also had found eleven strategies done by LEx students to overcome difficulty in interpreting activities included asking for repetition, asking to use second language, increasing focus on source language, asking the meaning, asking speakers

to change the way they speak, using smartphone, familiarizing with pronunciation, pointing the item intended, asking friend's help, using body language, and finding the synonym. This research concluded that every participant faced different difficulties in interpreting activities. They had several strategies to deal with the difficulties in interpreting activities to overcome the difficulties. In this research, it had found that the same strategy which could be implied to overcome some different difficulties. In addition, based on interview, the strategies done was effective to tackle the difficulties faced by the participants.

Based on the result, the researcher recommends students to familiarize themselves with the foreigner's different accent. Besides, the teachers who teach interpreting subject are supposed to provide more practice like role-play in order to familiarize students with interpreting. Moreover, the researcher recommends other researchers to develop this research by adding additional information such as the process of interpreting or the factors of interpreting activities in order to gain deeper and better of the data results. In addition, International Relation Office (IRO) as a provider of Lex program needs to prepare interpreting training for Lex students.

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