International Journal of Interpreter Education

Conference of Interpreter Trainers

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Editorial: Shared Learning Between Spoken and Signed Language Interpreters and Students

George Major and Ineke Crezee, Co-Editors[1]

Auckland University of Technology

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.

In the second issue of the *International Journal of Interpreter Education* for 2018, we are pleased to offer a rich variety of research articles from both signed and spoken language interpreting educators and researchers. We are proud to continue the journal's focus on crosspollination between different modes of interpreting. There is so much that spoken and signed language interpreting educators, researchers, practitioners and students can learn from one another.

At our university, signed and spoken language interpreting students learn alongside each other in several courses, namely the introductory classes on interpreting role, ethics, and contexts for work, as well more advanced classes focused on health and legal interpreting. These shared classes first came into being because of a financial impetus. We were required to merge previously separate signed and spoken language theory classes to make more efficient use of resources at our university. We were lucky that we had the opportunity to redevelop the theory courses, which meant we could tailor them to be more relevant to both groups as well as to students from many different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In the years following this merger, we have been struck by how many positives outcomes have arisen from something that initially was done purely for financial reasons. To begin with, we find a broad range of professional experience in the classroom including mature students who have come to interpreting from other careers (e.g. doctors, police officers, pathologists, court registrars, speech pathologists), as well as very young students who have just finished their secondary schooling. There is always a mix of native and non-native speakers of English. Some students also bring interpreting or translation experience to the classroom, whether through unqualified interpreting in venues overseas or through acting as child language brokers within their families (Antonini 2016; Napier 2017). These diverse backgrounds make for an extremely rich learning environment, particularly when it comes to discussing and debating aspects of the interpreter's role and ethical decision-making.

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[1] *Correspondence to: CITjournaleditor@gmail.com*

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In addition, we find these shared classes lead to an increased intercultural awareness amongst students, with students teaching each other. As one of our recent students told us:

> "Sharing classroom space with spoken language interpreters created a unique learning environment. I learnt about different cultures and belief systems relating to the way various cultures approached the task of interpreting."
>
> *Amy Nash, BA NZSL-English Interpreting graduate, 2018*

We have had rich discussions about the ways people from different cultures talk about death and dying, and whether this topic is avoided or discussed openly and directly. This has then led to interesting classroom discussions on the role of the interpreter as someone who needs to convey illocutionary intent in a culturally appropriate manner.

In practical terms, we also see that our students benefit from learning how to work with interpreters of other language pairs. There will likely be times in their future professional practice when they work alongside other interpreters (for example, in a court setting), and their experience in our mixed classes will leave them better prepared for this work. There is crosspollination between spoken and signed language codes of ethics, which are based on similar values but also have key differences in the ways they are set out on paper. We also see students of different language backgrounds finding unexpected similarities in the interpreting challenges that they face. As one of our Samoan-speaking students recently told us:

> "Learning in a shared classroom with spoken language and sign language students was an invaluable experience for me, I personally benefited from my sign language peers."
>
> *Bernice Ese, Graduate Diploma in Arts (Interpreting) graduate, 2018*

To give just one practical example, signed language interpreting students and students from Pacific language backgrounds (for example Samoan, Kiribati, Tongan in our recent classroom experience) are all working in languages that have had less exposure in a variety of domains and may have under-developed technical lexicons. We consistently see that these students, who struggle with finding linguistic and often conceptual equivalents for technical terms in English, have a lot in common with each other in the interpreting classroom, regardless of modality differences. These connections mean students feel less isolated and can help each other explore strategies for circumlocuting technical vocabulary that does not exist in their LOTE (Language Other Than English), for example in the health domain.

As Tsolidis (2001 p.104) reminds us, "students have as much to offer teachers as the other way around," and we certainly find that we learn as much, if not more, from our students as they do from us. We bring our experience as interpreters and interpreting researchers, while students contribute their linguistic and cultural experiences and reflections. The shared learning between signed and spoken language interpreting students reminds us of how valuable it is to continue this into the world of professional practice. In this vein, we are pleased to present a thought-provoking variety of articles in issue 10(2) of this journal.

The four research articles included in this issue reflect the international and cross-pollinated nature of the journal, with contributions from signed and spoken language interpreting research. In our first such article, *Designated or preferred: A case study of a deaf academic and two signed language interpreters working together for a PhD defence*, Maartje de Meulder (Belgium), Jemina Napier (United Kingdom) and Christopher Stone (United Kingdom) discuss how signed language interpreters can work with deaf academics to ensure a successful PhD defense. Their groundbreaking study uses an autoethnographic approach based on reflections written by all three authors immediately following the PhD defense, and the article includes embedded video clips that illustrate their key findings. The authors discuss the implications of their study for interpreter education and ongoing professional development to ensure that deaf academics can have access to interpreters who are familiar with and skilled at negotiating academic discourse at this level.

In *Source Attribution in ASL-English interpreter education: Testing a method*, Laura Maddux (USA) describes a study in which experimental and control groups were used to test a new method for teaching student interpreters source attribution skills. This paper is not only of interest for its implications for signed language interpreting

education, but also because it describes an effective method to conduct research on teaching methods in interpreter education in general.

In their article entitled *Relay Interpreting as a beneficial tool for Conference Interpreting training*, Fanny Chouc and José María Conde from the United Kingdom report on the way in which they prepare conference interpreting students for the practice of relay interpreting. The study presents students' perspectives on the activities and the impact these had on their own practice either as users or as providers of relay interpreting.

Three of our Finnish colleagues, Liisa Martikainen, Petri Karkkola, and Matii Kuitinen from the University of Eastern Finland, present findings in their article *Encountering change: Job satisfaction of sign language interpreters in Finland*. The authors report on the findings of an online survey comparing job satisfaction levels between signed language interpreters and Finnish workers in general. and. The authors discuss some of the factors that may have impacted the survey findings, including working conditions and changes in both the amount of work and the way it is now being organized.

In our Open Forum section, Oktay Eser (Turkey) and Miranda Lai (Australia) interview Niki Baras, who represents the Translator and Interpreter Division of Professionals Australia. In the interview, Niki Baras comments on issues affecting community interpreters in Australia from an industry point of view, including issues of social status, respect and sustainability, as well as the continued use of unqualified interpreters.

In keeping with the theme of this editorial, it is our pleasure to present dissertation abstracts from both spoken and signed language interpreting researchers. Adolfo Gentile is a well-known translation and interpreting scholar who has made an invaluable contribution to the development of the profession internationally. He completed his PhD dissertation entitled *A policy-focused examination of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters in Australia* at Monash University in Australia. Keith Gamache from Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, completed his PhD dissertation on *Investigating the impact of ASL proficiency levels on ASL-English interpretation,* focusing in particular on the impact of select language features on the work of novice ASL-English interpreters. In IJIE issue 9(2) we explored situated learning in interpreter education (i.e. Valero Garcés 2017; Saltnes-Urdal 2017). Annette Miner's PhD dissertation, also completed at Gallaudet University, explores the perceived impact on interpreter education of situated learning activities: *the use and effectiveness of situated learning in American Sign Language-English interpreter education*. The final dissertation abstract is Dr. Hayley King's PhD dissertation, completed at RMIT University in Melbourne and focused on *Translator education in context: Learning methodologies, collaboration, employability, and systems of assessment*. Dr King conducted her research in two quite different contexts, namely Spain and Australia.

We are happy to report that 2018 has brought a wide range of submissions to the journal, most of them research articles, and we would like to remind our readers that we are also always interested in book reviews, interviews and contributions to the Open Forum. We would additionally like the journal to be a platform for students and practisearchers to publish their first work. We are making efforts to ensure that work published in the journal becomes easier to find in Google Scholar searches: this should make *IJIE* an even more attractive outlet for contributors.

We think it appropriate to end with a quote on cross-pollination, taken from a somewhat unusual source, namely Peter Lloyd who, with Steve Grossman, jointly developed a way to assist people in identifying creative solutions to problems:

> "Just as in the plant world, where new life arises from the introduction of pollen from other plants, all great ideas arise from combinations of ideas that haven't met yet. In both cases, we call this process cross pollination. You get a greater diversity of ideas by collaborating with a greater diversity of creative people—people from a variety of disciplines, departments, cultures, ages, mindsets, motivations, and orientations."
>
> *Peter Lloyd*

It is our hope that this issue of IJIE will serve just such a creative end, resulting in a blossoming of new ideas and deeper understandings across our field.

Editorial

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Designated or preferred? A deaf academic and two signed language interpreters working together for a PhD defence: A case study of best practice

Maartje De Meulder [1]

University of Namur

Jemina Napier

Heriot-Watt University

Christopher Stone

University of Wolverhampton

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.

Abstract

In this paper we present an appreciative inquiry case study of our work together in a PhD defence, which we believe demonstrates a best practice in the field of signed language interpreting. We call into question the meaning and relevance of the 'designated interpreter' model, examining whether there is a 'perfect formula' for deaf academics and interpreters working together, not only in PhD defences, but also in academia more generally. We also challenge the very system for the provision of interpreter services as an institution creating structural inequalities, because it is heavily based on privilege. We argue that what is

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[1] *Correspondence to: Maartje De Meulder (maartje.demeulder@unamur.be)*

Designated or preferred?

key is preference (i.e. the ability to exercise real choice) and familiarity, rather than the assignation of a 'designated' interpreter, and that simply achieving a degree in interpreting cannot guarantee that an interpreter will be prepared to meet the needs of deaf professionals. We also argue that sign language interpreter education needs to focus more than it does now on training to work into English (and/or other spoken languages in non-English-speaking countries), on performing visibly comfortable language work, and on specific specializations linked to deaf professional access and continuing professional development.

Keywords: sign language, signed language interpreting, academics, deaf, PhD defence, designated interpreter model.

> *View video examples online*

Designated or preferred? A deaf academic and two signed language interpreters working together for a PhD defence: A case study of best practice

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

This paper presents a descriptive, 'appreciative inquiry' case study (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) – a presentation of best practice based on a PhD defence[2] experience with one deaf academic and two signed language interpreters, which took place in December 2016 at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. The paper will document three stages of the defence: the preparation, the in-situ defense itself, and post-defence reflections. In the process, it aims to discuss how deaf academics, through their collaboration with interpreters, can ensure that the defence of their PhDs is successful. This is a significant question, since an increasing number of deaf scholars are gaining PhDs and are engaging in signed, spoken and written academic discourse, such as writing articles, presenting at conferences, and networking (Kusters, De Meulder & O'Brien, 2017). Outside of specific contexts where there is an academic signing environment, much of deaf academics' face-to-face engagement with academic discourse takes place through interpreters.

Crucial in the process of working as an academic is having cognitive academic and linguistic proficiency and actively engaging with academic discourse. However, for deaf academics who have a signed language as one of their academic languages, their linguistic experience is a specific one: their written representation might be their own, but in many cases when presenting and networking they are interpreted by signed language interpreters to academic peers who may or may not know their written academic style.

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[2] The culmination of the PhD process typically ends with the student 'defending' their dissertation to external examiners by answering questions about the research study. The logistics of this varies across countries and according to different university traditions, and can involve a more informal conversation between the student and examiners, or a formal public presentation. This is referred to either as a 'defence', a 'viva' or a 'public examination'. In this case study we use the term 'defence' which is more common.

Designated or preferred?

The first benchmark in the process of becoming an academic is the PhD thesis submission and defence. In Finland, a PhD defence is a public event open to anyone but typically attended by family, friends and colleagues. A PhD student only gets permission to defend the dissertation after two external reviewers have approved it. The defence is thus largely a ritual, but its public and formal nature make it a high profile event that presents specific interpreting challenges. This PhD defence in particular was special because it was a multilingual event (including British Sign Language, International Sign, Finnish Sign Language, spoken Finnish and spoken English).

Our goal in presenting this example of best practice of our work together in this PhD defence is to provide an overview of an effective interpreting process. We call into question the relevance and meaning of the 'designated interpreter' model, examining whether there is a 'perfect formula' for deaf academics and interpreters working together, not only in PhD defences, but also in academia more generally. In this paper, we will also challenge the very system for the provision of interpreter services as an institution creating structural inequalities, because it is heavily based on privilege. In doing so, we hope to generate new and on-going conversations about signed language interpreting as a professional practice and as a social and political institution (De Meulder & Haualand, submitted). Like any institution, it should be studied and analysed critically.

1.2. Deaf professionals and interpreters working together

Studies of deaf professionals, leaders and academics have explored how they ensure that their professional and leadership identities are appropriately re-presented through interpreters by having careful selection criteria for those interpreters and working in close collaboration with them (Miner, 2017; Napier, Carmichael & Wiltshire, 2008; Napier et al., 2017; Haug, Bontempo, Leeson, Napier, Nicodemus, van den Bogaerde & Vermeerbergen, 2017).

Studies have identified the misperceptions of deaf people by hearing people that can occur when deaf people are being interpreted and/or when interpreters do not adequately match the personality or intent of the deaf signer in important workplace contexts (Feyne, 2015; Napier et al., 2017). For example, misunderstandings might arise because an interpreter is female and the deaf person is male (or vice versa), because hearing people are confused about the roles of deaf person and interpreter and over who is actually talking (see e.g. Napier & Kusters, 2018). Hearing people might not trust that interpreters actually re-present a deaf person's voice or, if an interpreter is not adequately conveying a deaf signers' meaning, might make assumptions about the deaf person's intent, personality or intelligence (Napier, et al, 2017, in press; Young, et al, in press).

The national shortage of signed language interpreters in almost every country (de Wit 2016) means that choice is limited. In most countries, signed language interpreters need to work in many different settings such as kindergarten and primary, secondary and higher education, employment settings, community settings, health care and legal settings with limited opportunities to specialize. This means that among signed language interpreters, even within one country, there is significant variation in terms of levels of skills and proficiency to work in different settings. Although one route to qualification for interpreters is through university programs, in many countries a university degree is not required. In many cases, signed language interpreters thus have a lower level of education than deaf academics. For example, not many sign language interpreters have an MA or PhD.[3]

This significant variability in skills and proficiency, and the specific profiles of deaf professionals, including academics, has led to the emergence of a designated interpreter model (Hauser, Finch & Hauser, 2008). In this model – which is mostly practiced in United States (US) contexts – deaf professionals work with one or two designated interpreters on a regular basis so interpreters can, it is claimed, more appropriately match and re-present deaf professionals' particular expertise and skills. Often, the deaf individual will also work with the same interpreters in contexts outside of their professional context.

The idea behind this model is that by working with the same interpreter(s) over a longer period of time, the deaf professional and the interpreter develop familiarity with one other; become accustomed to each other's signing style and manner of thinking and expressing themselves; learn each other's preferences; and build a relationship of trust and mutual respect (Blankmeyer Burke, 2017). The notion of trust between deaf people and

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[3] The interpreters for this specific PhD defence are a notable exception.

interpreters has previously been identified as a significant component in ensuring collaborative working practices (Haug, et al., 2017; Napier, 2011; Napier, et al, 2017, in press). An important foundation for building trust and respect, argued by these authors, is the shared professional space in which both the deaf academic and the interpreter approach the interpreted event (and the process of preparing for it) as a joint collaborative project.

Haug et al. (2017) found that deaf professionals use a variety of strategies to collaborate effectively with interpreters, including adapting signing style (e.g. repeating), making regular eye contact, giving feedback, and engaging in vocabulary preparation. They found that deaf leaders are not passive recipients of interpretation but instead manage interpreted events and collaborate with interpreters before, during and after mediated interactions. They do not just "sit back and listen", but put effort into the co-creation and comprehension of meaning in an interpreted event.

Using Llewellyn-Jones and Lee's (2013) interpreter role-space model, which focuses on how the interpreter utilizes his or her role-space during interpreting assignments, Haualand and Ringsø (2014) give an account of the interpretation of a PhD defence of a deaf academic in Norway, recounting how the deaf academic and interpreter co-constructed a role space. They describe some of the mechanisms and strategies involved for "grooming" an interpreter to work with a deaf academic and how this led to a successful signed-to-spoken language interpretation during a PhD defence. On the part of the interpreter, Ringsø, this entailed continuing professional development. For example, she studied for an MA in Applied Linguistics while working with Haualand and made herself familiar with publications from Haualand's discipline (anthropology). During assignments, Haualand managed role space by using humour and meta-communication about interpreters and how to work with interpreters (not trying to make them "invisible"). She also did "extra talk" and made efforts to align herself with the interpreter before starting a real argument (e.g. repeating the name of the previous discussant, repeating crucial concepts or ideas, providing written notes with key names). After several years of working together, the role-space changed. During the PhD defence, Haualand did not need to align herself as much to the interpreter as in the beginning of their collaboration, and did not involve herself as much anymore in how the interpreter managed her role space. This gave her more opportunity to concentrate on replying to the examiner's questions. The difference between this situation and the case under discussion in this article is that Haualand and Ringsø were used to working with each other, having done so from the start of Haualand's PhD studies. This could be described as a 'designated interpreter' model.

1.3. Challenges of working with interpreters

Most academic institutions such as universities and research centres are still hearing-dominant spaces working with dominant modes of language (O'Brien & Emery, 2014). This creates specific challenges for deaf academics working in these spaces. Kusters et al (2017) present an overview of these challenges, based on the published accounts of deaf scholars. For example, they mention that deaf academics often have to spend a great amount of time organizing access, such as booking interpreters or other language/communication support, which eats into their work time (Woodcock et al. 2007; Stapleton 2015; Haualand, 2017). Blankmeyer Burke (2016, 2017) states that deaf consumers' preferences are often overlooked and dismissed when booking interpreters, even though interpreters working in these contexts have to be able to work with specialized academic vocabulary (see Hauser et al., 2008; Blankmeyer Burke & Nicodemus, 2013).

Collaboration between deaf academics and interpreters is an increasingly discussed topic in deaf academic discourse as found at various workshops and conferences (e.g. Haualand and De Meulder 2017), as is the agency of signed language interpreters and how they can leverage their position of power and privilege as an agent of change (Boudreault & Gertz, 2018).

International mobility is a key aspect of academic life and an inherent part of many deaf academics' lives, especially those living in transnational regions like Europe, as in both their personal and professional lives they use different languages and modalities continuously. To publish and engage in written conversations (e.g. via e-mail) with deaf and hearing colleagues, deaf academics communicate in a range of ways. Some primarily use written English or one of their written national languages while others primarily communicate their work in a signed language (for example in Brazil and the US). To network, discuss, and present in international deaf academic contexts, they use one of the signed languages often used in those contexts such as American Sign

Language (ASL), British Sign Language (BSL) or International Sign (IS). International Sign is a complex multilingual translanguaging phenomenon where individuals draw upon their sign language, language and gestural repertoires to engage in communicative 'foreigner talk.' In some contexts this develops as a more stable lingua franca, for example with deaf academics in academic contexts, who often use a more conventionalized form of IS.

To network, discuss and present in international contexts which are predominantly hearing and non-signing (i.e. most international conferences), they use their national signed languages, or one of the academic sign language lingua francas (IS, ASL, BSL) via signed language interpreters who work into English or another signed or spoken language, depending on the context. Sometimes they also make use of captioning or speech-to-text services to access informational content or contribute to discussions during meetings by writing or typing and having a colleague or palantypist voice it. However, many deaf academics are not able to bring interpreters of their national signed language to participate in conferences. Even if they can, those interpreters often do not have the necessary skills to work in academic settings and might not have enough English proficiency to work into academic English. Similarly, conference organizers may refuse to provide interpreting in a national signed language when IS, BSL or ASL interpreting is already provided, even though not all deaf academics master these academic sign languages well enough (yet).

International Sign is now used in a range of institutional contexts, including by deaf academics at conferences, in order to cater to the international nature of academia (de Wit, 2010; Hiddinga & Crasborn, 2011; Supalla, Clark, Neumann Solon, & Müller de Quadros, 2010; Rosenstock & Napier, 2016). There is an emerging body of research on interpreting between IS and English (McKee & Napier 2002; Best, Napier, Carmichael & Pouliot, 2016; Rosenstock, 2004; Stone & Russell, 2014), but apart from descriptions from a practitioner perspective (e.g. Moody, 2002) very little is known about IS interpreting. At present there is no formal educational program to train as an IS interpreter, but there is a program that introduces experienced national signed language interpreters to the concept of IS and to translating and interpreting between IS and English: EUMASLI (Hessman, et al, 2011). As IS is increasingly used as a method of delivering information, IS interpreters are increasingly expected to work from IS into spoken English (Whynot, 2016). Although it is true that IS might satisfy administrators' and event organizers' needs to reduce costs by providing a single language combination, there is tension with deaf academics as some may prefer to use a national language to engage in academic discourse.

1.4. The elephant in the room: Interpreting from a signed language into a spoken language

In the specific setting discussed in this paper (a PhD defence of a deaf academic using IS and BSL), the majority of interpreted renditions were from IS or BSL into spoken English. Interpreting from a signed into a spoken language can be the 'elephant in the room,' as signed language interpreters often perceive that this is their weakest working language direction (Napier, et al, 2005). Given that signing deaf academics typically have to have their signed utterances interpreted into a spoken language, it is crucial that interpretations in this language direction are of high academic quality. Indeed, Haug et al. (2017) found that when selecting interpreters, deaf professionals perceive the ability to interpret into a spoken language as an important criterion. At the same time, however, trusting that an interpreter can produce an accurate and effective rendition can be a 'leap in the dark' since most deaf academics do not have a direct, real-time mechanism to monitor how they are being interpreted, even if they are able to read and write to an appropriate academic standard in that language.

There is actually very little research on interpreting from a signed into a spoken language. There are some studies that have noted the expansion and compression strategies used by interpreters to deal with the structural differences of signed and spoken languages (Feyne, 2015; Finton, 2005; Finton & Smith, 2004; Hema, 2002), and a study of the perceptions of listeners of a spoken interpretation that featured disfluent pauses (Fitzmaurice & Purdy, 2015). In addition, we review here three studies that have focused on the team work strategies that have enabled successful spoken interpretations.

Firstly, in a pilot study of teamwork strategies between two interpreters working from ASL into English, Cokely and Hawkins (2003) found that the interpreters had particular cues for giving and receiving support to each other, including leaning towards each other, tapping on a leg or arm to request support, or making eye contact. Napier et al. (2008), in their case study of a deaf professional working with two interpreters for a formal presentation in Auslan that was rendered into spoken English, identified particular cues used by all three

participants to ensure that the interpretation was produced smoothly and had the impact on the audience that the deaf presenter intended. These primarily included maintaining eye contact, pausing, and nodding or signalling to each other throughout the interpreting process. Lastly, in a descriptive linguistic case study of strategies utilised by two professional sign language interpreters working simultaneously in an interpreter-mediated classroom environment, Best et al. (2016) found that interpreting from IS into spoken English can present complex challenges for interpreters as there are even fewer direct equivalents between IS and English than between a national signed and spoken language. The interpreters in their case study utilized various strategies to produce a fluent interpretation including preparation, team work, pausing to buy time to receive or process adequate information to produce a coherent English sentence, expansion, reduction, strategic omission, application of personal knowledge, compression strategies corresponding to reiteration, and couching (i.e. adding background or contextual information to clarify a concept).

So when we consider the challenges for deaf academics working with interpreters, the challenges of IS interpreting, and the strategies needed for interpreting from IS into spoken English, this case study will make an additional contribution toward understanding the measures necessary for a deaf academic to effectively deliver a PhD defence through signed language interpreters, and indeed, the measures necessary for any successful interpretation from a signed into a spoken language.

2. Methodology

In this paper we present an appreciative inquiry case study, which we believe demonstrates a case of best practice. Appreciative inquiry as a theory studies "the best of what is, in order to identify what could be" (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). It commonly refers to "an action research process that studies something from the positive side […] to create a new kind of conversation among people as they work together to improve a group or organization" (Bushe & Avital, 2009, p.48), and focuses on narratives and experiences of "best of" stories. These stories can lead to conversations, which in turn lead to "the collective design of alternative and preferred futures."

2.1. Data

Our data for this article consist of various texts and artefacts: Maartje's PhD thesis and publications[4]; her written opening presentation and PowerPoint; the opponent's written comments and questions; the briefing information Jemina and Christopher received from the Finnish interpreters; Jemina and Christopher's preparation notes; film footage of the defence; notes before and after the preparation meeting the night before and in the morning; reflective entries of the three authors and conversations between the three authors taking place during the year after the defence.

The three-hour-defence was filmed throughout, both Maartje's signing and Jemina's and Christopher's interpretation in both directions. The spoken language interpretation was subsequently transcribed verbatim. This gave Maartje retrospective access to a written rendition of the spoken output, although despite being able to read Christopher's and Jemina's words, she still did not have access to how they sounded, e.g. prosody, pronunciation, sound of voice. This gave us an opportunity to analyse not only the collaborative strategies we used, but also the interpretation output.

2.2. Participants

As the authors, we are the three main participants in the case study: Maartje, the deaf academic, and Jemina and Christopher, the two signed language interpreters. Maartje is from Belgium. Her PhD thesis was in the domain of

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[4] As is now increasingly customary, Maartje's PhD consisted of published articles.

sign language policy and planning, more specifically the legal recognition of signed languages and the aspirations of deaf communities. After gaining her first MA degree in Belgium, she lived in the UK for one year where she obtained an MSc degree in Deaf Studies at the University of Bristol and learned BSL. Her personal and professional life is inherently mobile and transnational, so she often uses IS in different contexts. She first worked with Flemish Sign Language interpreters while studying for her MA in Belgium (2000-2005) and has worked with signed language interpreters since then, in multiple settings. She has experienced this as a process of trial and error and over the years has gained an increasing awareness about strategies vis-à-vis working with interpreters.

Maartje was able to choose the interpreters for her PhD defence, who were paid by the University of Jyväskylä. She asked for Jemina and Christopher for this specific assignment because, although she had not worked with them before, she had seen them presenting and/or working as interpreters on various occasions. Because they are both also academics familiar with academic Deaf Studies and language policy jargon, and because BSL and IS are among their working languages for interpreting, she felt they were most suited for this assignment. Also, and importantly, from the few occasions she had engaged with them, she felt there was a match, not only on a deaf professional/interpreter level but also on a personal level. This situation was thus unusual in that all three, both the deaf academic and the interpreters, were academics in related fields and with similar professional interests. This turned out to be an important aspect of our work together.

Jemina is an interpreter and academic in interpreting studies from the UK and has expertise and experience working with deaf professionals, including academics. She is accredited as a BSL, IS and Auslan interpreter and regularly works as an IS interpreter at conferences attended by deaf academics. She accepted the opportunity to work with Maartje as she had seen Maartje presenting at other conferences was familiar with her scholarly work and felt they would be able to work together. She has participated in many PhD defences but had never interpreted one before, especially with the language combinations IS/BSL/English. Although she had not interpreted for Maartje before, she felt that the common interests, and the fact that they both knew BSL and IS, would be conducive to a positive work experience.

Christopher, also from the UK, has a similar profile as an interpreter (accredited in BSL, ASL, and IS) and as an academic who had a bilingual PhD defence himself (BSL and English). He had interpreted seven other PhD defences with deaf PhD candidates, some with deaf examiners and some with both candidate and examiner using BSL, IS and ASL depending. He studied his PhD at Bristol where he first met Maartje and has since interacted with many of the same academic peers as she in Europe and the US. He was familiar with Finland (although not with the Finnish PhD process), having lived there for a short time. He had successfully worked as a BSL/IS interpreter with Jemina previously and felt they would be an effective team in re-presenting Maartje's academic discourse..

2.3. The context

In Finland, a PhD defence is a public event, and friends and family are invited, as well as colleagues and collaborators. Some fifty people attended this PhD defence, a diverse audience of deaf/hearing and signing/non-signing people of different nationalities, but mostly Belgian and Finnish. One or two official "opponents" are invited to discuss the dissertation.

In this case, the opponent was Finnish professor Pirkko Nuolijärvi. The "custos" (a professor at the specific university, in this case professor Ritva Takkinen) acts as a chair and begins the defence by welcoming the audience, and briefly introducing the "disputant" (the PhD student) and the opponent. The disputant then delivers his/her introductory lecture for the public to give a general overview of the study's background, aims and methods. The opponent then gives a few general remarks, after which the actual discussion of the doctoral dissertation begins.

During the discussion, the disputant and opponent sit at facing tables at the front of the room (see Figure 1). This specific discussion ranged from questions about the wording of the title, to validity of the research, informant sampling, research questions, theoretical framework, choice of terminology, methodology, data analysis and researcher positionality, to future research directions. Once the opponent is finished with the questions, he/she stands up to give a statement about the overall quality of the dissertation and defence and makes a recommendation as to whether to pass the disputant. (In this case, the recommendation was positive.) The

disputant then thanks the opponent and asks the audience if anyone has additional questions or comments. In this case, there were no questions. The custos then declares the defence closed. Maartje's whole defence lasted approximately three hours from start to finish.

Figure 1: Setting of the PhD defence

One week before the event, the university asked Maartje in which language she would present so they could advertise this on their website. This was a tricky question, because Maartje's signing would be IS with a very strong BSL 'accent' or at least a higher level of BSL vocabulary than might be seen more widely in academic IS. Similarly, there would be ASL fingerspelling in order to convey appropriate academic terminology, as is customary in academic IS but not in more unconventionalized uses of IS. Maartje knew that just putting 'BSL' or 'IS' would not describe her languaging practices well and would give people (especially the deaf audience) incorrect expectations about whether they would be able to understand her. She asked the university to list 'BSL/IS'. This quandary is representative of the language choices that deaf academics often have to make in recent years. For example, Christopher has often interpreted in academic settings where the advertised 'language' is IS/ASL. Maartje's BSL/IS was interpreted to spoken English by Jemina and Christopher and this was then re-interpreted into Finnish Sign Language by two interpreters hired by the university.

3. Strategies: what worked and why?

3.1. Preparation

Jemina and Christopher planned to arrive in Jyväskylä the evening before the defence to meet with Maartje, but they had already undertaken preparatory work involving different strategies. Drawing on their previous personal and professional experience of the PhD defence process, they read and re-read articles published by Maartje that contributed to the PhD dissertation, summarized the dissertation and noted key points, read and highlighted the

dissertation and wrote out key terminology and author names that they expected to come up frequently in the discussion (see Figure 2).
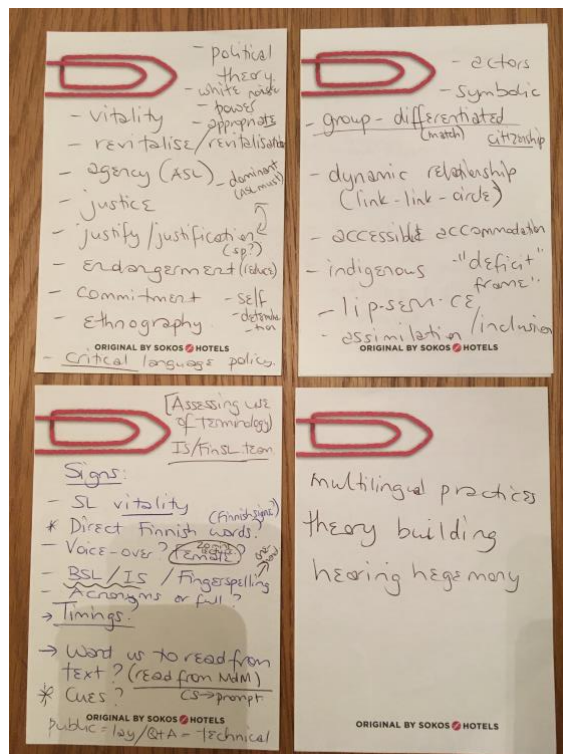

Figure 2: Preparation notes including key terminology

Maartje had also prepared. She went through the process of the defence with her supervisors, asked colleagues for advice on how to prepare for the discussion, re-read her PhD articles and summary, and practiced signing her opening lecture. Still, with the date of the defence coming closer, she had ambiguous feelings about working with interpreters. Because the opponent did not know any sign language but had English as a shared language, Maartje dreaded working with interpreters and wished she could address the opponent directly.

The first actual preparation session took place the night before the defence. A glitch in flight plans that prevented Christopher from being present in person did not stop preparation of the full team; Christopher participated via Skype. One FinSL interpreter also attended the preparation session, to further familiarize herself with the discourse. All interpreters had received the PowerPoint slides, the questions from the opponent beforehand (to which Maartje did not have access), and the full text of Maartje's opening lecture. Jemina and Christopher had also received photographs of the room from their Finnish interpreter colleague in order to better understand the physical space and layout, should that need to be taken into consideration when interpreting.

First, we went over some specific terminology, to discuss how some key concepts and specific academic jargon would be presented. For this, we drew upon a variety of linguistic resources using BSL lexicon, IS strategies, and one-handed (ASL) fingerspelling. This entailed finding a way of successfully indexing the English academic terminology especially in areas where there is no established lexicon in BSL. This was not about being prescriptive but about finding strategies that would work. For example, we established how Maartje signed specific concepts (or co-agreed a specific sign) and which English words she preferred for them, e.g. vitality, group-differentiated citizenship, endangerment, policy, politics, self-determination, discourse, hegemony, maintenance and legitimate. We also agreed on which signs we would use for several similar concepts (e.g. claims, arguments, stakes, demands) as well as how Maartje would sign several English expressions such as "catch-all phrases", "white noise", "lip service". For several concepts we decided to stick with (one-handed)

fingerspelling, e.g. separatist, instrumental, deficit, scrutiny. Lastly, we went over the names of several key authors that we expected to be highly cited in the discussion.

After that, we practiced Maartje's opening lecture, which entailed Maartje signing the full 20 minute-lecture while Jemina, Christopher, and the FinSL interpreter watched, without interpreting. This gave Maartje the space to present and engage with the interpreting team as she wished rather than being driven by the interpreters interrupting and clarifying. This space gave the interpreters a better sense of Maartje's discourse style and her academic voice. We established that they would watch Maartje's signing and interpret from there and not read Maartje's text aloud, because it would allow Maartje to improvise should she want to and not restrict her to having to adhere to the script. This was possible because of Maartje's trust in the interpreters to accurately re-present her in that moment. We also discussed strategies for working to re-present the English questions from the opponent, mindful of the English surface form. We established that the questions – as per Maartje's' request – would be interpreted in a more literally 'English form driven' way , staying closer to English word order and with mouthed and fingerspelled English vocabulary for Maartje to be able to access the English and mirror specific terminology used in her answers, if needed.

We agreed that Jemina would interpret the full 20-minute opening presentation so that Maartje would have a female (academic) 'voice', and then Jemina and Christopher would alternate working from and into English or from and into BSL/IS for the discussion session, each interpreter only interpreting in one direction for that turn to ensure that overlapping of opponent and discussant could occur. After having gone through the full presentation, we established some clues for unobtrusive clarification and discussed strategies to ensure smooth collaboration between the interpreting team and Maartje. For example: how would Jemina and Christopher let Maartje know that they were behind and needed some time to catch up? How would Maartje let them know that she did not understand something? This preparation meeting and the opportunity to practice with Maartje helped Jemina and Christopher to consolidate their reading and understanding of her work and her presentation style.

3.2. *During the defence*

About one hour before the start of the actual defence the next morning, Maartje, Jemina and Christopher met Maartje's supervisors and the opponent to discuss logistics, formalities and go over the process of the PhD defence. Then they went to the venue and met the Finnish interpreters and others to check logistics, microphones, layout, seating, sightlines and to agree where everyone would be seated and when.

Then Maartje's opening lecture began. During this lecture and during the subsequent discussion, Maartje maintained regular eye contact with Jemina and Christopher, who were seated in front of the stage between her and the opponent. She also paused now and then to make sure the interpreters could keep up.

During the opening presentation and the discussion, Jemina and Christopher had their papers laid out in front of them. Christopher held the speech notes while Jemina worked into English for the formal presentation. Throughout the session, they maintained eye contact with Maartje and supported each other and sometimes whispered prompts, which tended to be to capture terminology or phrasing. Sometimes this whispering was also to tell each other that they had captured a point excellently in their spoken interpretation, maintaining a sense of team cohesion and a positive working environment.

Analysis of the video footage shows only a few instances where clarification was needed. This was mostly the case with fingerspelled words which sometimes needed some minor clarification either on the part of Maartje or the interpreters, e.g. "deterministic," "Tatar," "modest" or author names such as "May" and "Kymlicka". Other strategies we noted included prompts from the interpreters to Maartje to control the flow of information, or supporting strategies for seeking and giving information between the interpreters. For example, in Figure 3 Christopher subtly signed (index finger raised in the lower area of signing space and a body lean towards Jemina) to Maartje that Jemina was still interpreting her last concept and was 'catching up' and Maartje needed to go give her time to finish the rendition.

Figure 3: Christopher prompts Maartje.

Alternatively, Figures 4 reveals how Christopher provided information for Jemina when she sought to confirm that Maartje had signed "Scottish Gaelic" (microphone out of the speech stream and visible to Maartje as not being used with lean in to Christopher), and at the same time he signalled (again using a low index) to Maartje that Jemina needed time to complete the interpreted rendition.

Figure 4: Christopher supports Jemina and prompts Maartje.

Figure 5 shows another example of interpreter support strategies, where Jemina prompts Christopher to add something to the interpretation, which he accepts.

Figure 5: Jemina prompts Christopher.

In Figure 6, we can see how Christopher provided reassurance to Maartje. She had just given the sign for 'essentialism' but quickly, and after that fingerspelled (one-handed) "e-s-s-e-n-t-i-a-l-i-s-m . . . e- . . . ." ". Jemina leaned over to Christopher to check and ask 'essentialism?' He confirmed and then made a thumbs-up sign to Maartje to show that the term had been understood and interpreted.

Figure 6: Christopher reassures Maartje.

Figure 7 reveals a combined strategy from both interpreters. Jemina had just finished interpreting a question from the opponent, who was asking something about the third point in Maartje's slide. Jemina interpreted the question accurately into BSL, but Maartje missed which point she meant (i.e. the first, second, or third). Christopher noticed this as he was waiting to interpret Maartje's response into English, and signed "THIRD" to Maartje (see fig. 7). Jemina saw this signed not only in her peripheral vision but also on the screen. Seeing this, she signed a different variant of "third" (see fig. 7) and quickly but calmly repeated the question, which Maartje then went on to answer. This all happened in the space of a few seconds and likely was not even noticeable to the audience, however it was critical in ensuring Maartje's prompt and appropriate response to the opponent.

Figure 7: Christopher and Jemina use a combined strategy to assure clarity.

To give an impression of the spoken output and how this reflected Maartje's discourse, we selected a few excerpts that Maartje felt were good examples of how her signed academic discourse was reflected in the spoken English target language (TL). These represented the type of talk that a prospective member of the academy should be demonstrating. They also represented the academic style that Maartje has developed through her PhD studies. The signed version of the excerpts below can be accessed through this link. To give context, the content is also shown before and after the specific excerpt. This is indicated as such in the video.

View video examples online.

Figure 8: Maartje responds to question on research questions (Click image to view video examples.).

In response to the question about which of the research questions were the most difficult to answer:

> Christopher: " … when you look at the different recognitions occur, the different languages, the different people, to try to actually disambiguate some of the information that was quite tricky to do, the typological issues made it quite complex."

About d/Deaf terminology:

> Christopher: "So, I follow that convention in terms of the fact that "small-d deaf: is about being a deaf person and in some ways "big D" and "deaf d" is quite antiquated and not positive and it tries to take a simplistic approach to the lived reality of deaf people. We have multiple identities, we

have multiple ways of being in the world at different moments, so it does not really deal with the notion of intersectionality in some ways."

About key authors:

Jemina: "So any recognition of sign language has to take into account the multilingual practices of deaf people and the fact that there is linguistic diversity within signing communities."

About the role of participant observation as one of the research methods:

Jemina: "… because I perhaps could go at a conference and see somebody present a paper and say 'yes we have sign language recognition in my country', but when I examined the actual paperwork, the legislation I was able to see exactly what level of recognition they were talking about and enabled me to draw down to a deeper level to find out exactly what kind of legislation exists across different countries."

About the limitations and opportunities of specificity and universalism:

Jemina: "You can't assume that sign language recognition functions on an international level because you have to take into account the language policy, the political system, the government framework, the legislative history, the infrastructures that are available within each respective country in order to implement any kind of sign language recognition."

About vitality of sign languages:

Christopher: "It's also important for us to not see that as a risk of sign languages changing, but actually as a positive process and part of natural languaging processes."

Thus it is evident that even though Jemina and Christopher were not designated interpreters the preparation and interaction with academic discourse prior to this defence enabled an accurate representation of Maartje's academic style.

3.3. After the defence

After the defence, each of us reflected on how well we felt the process had gone.

Maartje: After the defence, people approached me to ask if I had been working with Jemina and Christopher for a long time. When I told them it actually was the first time, most people reacted surprised. Also, my parents (who are hearing) approached me to say that sometimes they forgot I was being interpreted and that it was like they heard me speaking, both in terms of lexicon as well as intonation, tone of voice, etc. This got me thinking about the designated interpreter model. In fact, Jemina and Christopher were "ad hoc" interpreters I selected for that specific setting, not my designated interpreters. I guess this was a "match. "While they did not really know me well and I did not work with them before, they knew people "like me", and were familiar with the issues, the topic, discourse and academic jargon.

Jemina: I was elated. I felt so proud of Maartje for what she had accomplished and had a real feeling of privilege to have been a part of it. I was impressed by how Maartje had conducted herself in her defence and was full of admiration for her. I was particularly pleased when she told me her parents said it 'sounded just like she would if she spoke', which made me feel like I re-presented her well during her presentation. I actually felt that we had both re-presented her well throughout. Basically – she nailed it – and we nailed it! I really enjoyed the work and would like to do it again. In fact I was slightly surprised that it worked so well –I had not worked with Christopher a lot and had never interpreted for Maartje before. Others asked if we'd worked a lot together. So it feels like this situation actually contradicts and/or complements the designated interpreter model. Trust is such an important part of the working relationship, and in this instance we trusted our familiarity with academic discourse, PhD processes, deaf studies current theories, and being generally up to date with literature really helped too.

> Christopher: I remember feeling that we had not let Maartje down. She had been able to engage in her PhD defence without us 'getting in the way'. Of course this was not something that happened without preparation, both the career-long preparation before this job and the specific preparation for the job on all our parts. That Maartje trusted us and that we trusted each other enabled us to have the privilege of representing Maartje's argument and her engaging in academic discourse with her opponent and witnessed by her colleagues, family and friends. It was a little overwhelming too because you're proud of Maartje and her achievement and glad to have been a small part of it, but also proud of your work and the interpreting team.

The last formal event involved a dinner with the opponent, supervisors, and one other colleague. During this dinner, some formal rituals are required to be followed, such as expressing gratitude to each supervisor and to the opponent, who then also gives a short speech after which small presents are exchanged.

> Christopher and Jemina: Dinner was a watershed – a historical professional and life moment – Maartje was the first deaf PhD graduate in Finland. Being a part not just of Maartje's PhD completion, but also having agency in effecting change – seeing the potential impact for other deaf academics as Maartje will have impact through her position, status and on-going research work – was humbling. We think we used this agency well.

4. Discussion

4.1. *Interpreting as a performance?*

As has become clear, interpreting is more than language work. Along with the other kinds of work (preparation, etc.) there is a performance element to providing an interpretation. Maartje effectively engaged with the interpreters to ensure that she could perform and be re-performed in an appropriate way by them, i.e. as an academic. As seen in the figures above there are instances where there was visible interaction between Maartje, Jemina and Christopher. However, when looking at the video of the defence, much of the time it is not obvious that Maartje was being interpreted; she did not significantly change how she presented, notwithstanding the moments where clarification was sought and the interpreting process became visible.

Similarly, in the video of the defence you often cannot see from Jemina's and Christopher's body language or posture that they are interpreting. Part of this visible comfort in performing interpreting is that both interpreters brought many years of experience to the task. Although the situation of a Finnish PhD defence was novel, other aspects of the task were familiar to the interpreters. This familiarity allowed for the interpretation to be a performance approaching natural speech rather than marked as an interpretation (Ahrens, 2005, Wadensjö, 2008). This is also reflected in Maartje's parents' comment that Jemina "sounded just like Maartje would if she spoke", with the same tone of voice, intonation, word choice, etc. This is significant, since Maartje's parents know her way of speaking Dutch but not English. What does it mean that this kind of quality of someone's 'voice' is transferred even across languages, through an interpreter? This might also point to an influence of gender and personality, which brings us to the next point.

4.2. *Re-presentation?*

After reading the transcript, while Maartje found that Christopher and Jemina both re-presented her content equally well, she sensed that Jemina's register was closer to the one she herself would use. For example, the use of the verb "disambiguate" or the expression "quite antiquated", as used by Christopher, while known to and understood by Maartje, would not come naturally to her. This raises the issue of re-presentation on two levels. On the one hand, Maartje as an academic wants the interpretation to demonstrate her engagement with academic discourse generally, but on the other hand this representation is ideally a re-presentation of her own style.

This difference in style could be a gender issue (i.e. men's talk versus women's talk) although there is little exploration of the differences between interpretations by men and women (Morgan, 2008). When reading this, Christopher did wonder whether it would have been better when preparing to (re-)read Maartje's journal articles, speaking them out loud to better entrench Maartje's voice in his spoken English prior to the defence. It could also be that Christopher was unconsciously aware of Jemina's longer experience as both an interpreter and an academic and this influenced his choices to ensure academic re-presentation. Jemina, on the other hand, as a senior academic and interpreter in her own right, with her own well-established academic voice, was perhaps less conscious of needing to re-present an academic voice and could be more sensitive to re-presenting Maartje's own voice. For Maartje, when choosing interpreters for her PhD defence, the most important reasons to choose Jemina and Christopher were that they were academics in related fields, with similar professional interests, had BSL and IS among their working languages, and because there was a match. For her, given the limited choice of interpreters for this kind of setting, having an interpreter with the appropriate skills was more important than the interpreter's gender.

4.3. Designated interpreter?

The account of this PhD defence calls into question the meaning and relevance of the 'designated interpreter model' (Hauser et al, 2008). The model is based on the idea that familiarity is important and leads to better outcomes. It is indeed understandable within a work context where greater exposure to workplace talk and workplace institutional knowledge prepares the interpreter to work for that client with minimal specific preparation. The designated interpreter model as we know it now is also rooted in a primarily U.S. context, where the legislative and policy environments make it possible to engage interpreters in this way, and for interpreters to specialize rather than to remain generalists.

But do all deaf academics want the same interpreter? And do they want that interpreter for all their professional (conference, office, networking, etc.) and private situations? Not necessarily. Familiarity with each other is important, but for deaf academics other factors seem to be more important in professional settings: primarily familiarity with academic discourse, the PhD process, and in this specific case familiarity with new theories in Deaf Studies, language policy and planning terminology and discussions. For example, Jemina's and Christopher's own research and teaching overlaps with, or can be situated within, Deaf Studies and applied linguistics, which seemed to be relevant for the interpreting process during the defence. Thus, what is key is preference (i.e. the ability to exercise real choice) and familiarity, rather than working with a 'designated' interpreter.

Not only are the needs of deaf professionals and deaf academics changing, but the faces of the interpreters are changing too. Although this is still a very slow process, signed language interpreters are achieving higher levels of academic qualifications such as an MA or PhD. For example, Jemina was the first UK-born sign language interpreter to achieve a PhD, and Christopher the first to achieve one from a UK institution. This means that deaf academics are able to make choices other than having to engage in a workplace apprenticeship model such as the designated interpreter implies, and that interpreters achieving a degree in interpreting alone is not enough to meet the needs of deaf professionals.

4.4. Interpreting system creating inequality

The account of this PhD defence also calls into question the systems of interpreting provision as a social and political institution. Signed language interpreting provision in general, and in academic settings specifically, is a system that is heavily based on privilege. A deaf academic who works into English and has the privilege to be able to use one of the academic signed languages such as BSL, ASL, IS or a combination of these, has more choice of better-qualified interpreters than a deaf academic who does not, or who works in a language other than English. This structural inequality is because the same interpreters who are qualified to work as IS interpreters and/or who are BSL/ASL interpreters working in academic contexts are also in many cases native English speakers.

These deaf academics also have more control over the selection and preparation of interpreters than deaf people without this privilege. It takes a great effort to actively and successfully engage in an interpreter mediated-interaction (Haug et al., 2017). This effort is not equally distributed and is more easily achieved by deaf people including most deaf academics, who have English in their language repertoires and context-specific knowledge. As a result, not only might there be a widening gap between deaf academics and other professionals who have the linguistic capital and skills to gain more out of interpreter-mediated interactions than deaf people without this capital and skills, but such a gap might also be developing between deaf academics themselves. This is because it is easier for deaf academics who work in Deaf Studies or sign language linguistics, the areas that have traditionally had a critical mass of deaf people and therefore interpreters working within the domain, to find interpreters who can undertake high quality interpreting into spoken English. This is virtually impossible for deaf academics working in non-deaf related fields as there are far fewer interpreters who have academic exposure to these fields, and far fewer who have a degree in those domains and have seen sign language being used in those domains. This is how the system of interpreting could potentially be actively creating inequality.

5.   Conclusion

5.1.   *Identify what could be*

After the defence, several deaf audience members and academic colleagues told Maartje that they thought this situation was like a dream: being able to choose which interpreters to work with, being lucky that they were available at all, having interpreters with a PhD themselves and even familiar with the specific academic discipline, having the university pay for them, etc. In reality, this is indeed a situation that unfortunately does not occur frequently, because of the general educational level of interpreters, the limited availability of specialized interpreters, and budget constraints. As this paper clearly identifies "the best of what is, in order to identify what could be" (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), it calls us to enter into on-going conversations among and between deaf academics and interpreters, and to design alternative futures.

The number of deaf academics who make use of these interpreting services is steadily increasing, but the pool of qualified interpreters, especially those with English as a working language, does not expand at a similar pace. It is arguable whether this situation is sustainable in the long term, and deaf academics will need to think about how to widen the pool of interpreters who are available to them. Perhaps this is where the apprenticeship-like model of designated interpreters could be further explored; that is, opportunities could be provided for interpreters and deaf professionals to build relationships based on trust and to give interpreters increasing exposure to domain-specific linguistic and cultural capital. This ensures that expertise is not concentrated with only one or two individuals but instead is shared to create a more broadly available resource upon which deaf academics can draw.

This vision of the future involves redressing the structural inequality in interpreter provision and improving not only interpreter education but encouraging interpreters to gain degrees in subjects other than interpreting. This may require a greater number of masters-level interpreter programs that recruit students with specific undergraduate degrees that meet the needs of deaf professionals and academics. Sign language interpreter education needs to focus more than it does now on training to work into English, in addition to another spoken language in non-English speaking countries, on becoming visibly comfortable with performing language work, and on specific specializations linked to deaf professional access and continuing professional development. A broader education than just an interpreting degree will allow interpreters to be better matches for deaf academics.

Designated or preferred?

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Source Attribution in ASL-English Interpreter Education: Testing a Method

Laura Maddux, PhD [1]

Lamar University

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.

Abstract

In interactive signed/spoken language interpreting situations, participants in the conversation learn who is speaking if the interpreter identifies the "source" or initiator of each utterance. This interpreting technique is referred to as source attribution (SA). Although attributing interpreted utterances is a critical skill for interpreters, this is the first study to test a method for teaching SA techniques to signed language interpreting students. Using a mixed-method approach involving an experimental group and a control group, data was collected using a pretest/instruction/posttest method, along with journals, questionnaires, and interviews. The experimental group improved significantly more than the control group after the targeted instruction, suggesting that the proposed method of teaching SA provides beneficial instructional results for students' SA skills. The results of this study may also inform the broader interpreting research field by demonstrating an effective method to conduct research on teaching methods for interpreting students.

Keywords: Interpreter education, interpreting, linguistics, American Sign Language, source attribution, interpreting technique

[1] *Correspondence to: lmaddux@lamar.edu*

Source Attribution in ASL-English Interpreter Education: Testing a Teaching Method

1.   Introduction

As Deaf interlocutors engage in conversations, they approach interactions with specific goals and discourse strategies. When signed/spoken language interpreters work in these situations with multiple interlocutors using different languages, they must inform the interlocutors which person is producing an utterance. This behavior is referred to as *source attribution* (SA) (Metzger, 1999). To indicate SA in American Sign Language (ASL), an interpreter may utilize a variety of linguistic forms (Metzger, 2005). Source attribution techniques have been documented in interpreting by previous research (Metzger 1999), however there is no evidence that they are widely known, taught, or used correctly (Dickinson, 2010). Individuals in the deaf community report being frequently confused as to who is speaking because interpreters are not knowledgeable and skilled in using SA techniques. This can be detrimental in venues such as a courtroom, where the person's freedom may be at stake, or in the classroom where the student is inhibited in participating in the discussion (S. Collins, personal communication, October 4, 2015). As one deaf person told Dickinson about their experience in interpreted interactions,

> "Hearing people all 'speak really fast and at the same time', always 'just pitching right in'. They don't put their hands up to take a turn or wait for other people to stop speaking . . . I spend much of my time working out 'what are they talking about, who said that, who said this' (heavy sigh)" (J. Dickinson, personal communication, October 9, 2015).

Effective SA is essential to communication accessibility; thus, SA must be taught to interpreters in order for them to incorporate it properly. However, there is little available empirical research on tested interpreter education methodology, and none on previously tested SA instructional methods. This study will focus on a proposed six-step instructional method for teaching interpreting students SA techniques (Metzger, 2005).

2.   Literature Review

2.1.   Source Attribution

In conversational situations with multiple spoken language speakers, interpreters should identify which participant is speaking in order for deaf people to know the source: that is, who is initiating the utterance. However, interpreters may be unaware of how to properly use SA, or of SA's importance (Metzger, 1999; Napier, 2004; Wadensjo, 1998). In Metzger's (2005) study, the researcher analyzed interactions that occurred in two interpreted medical scenarios and reported how the interpreters were vitally involved in handling the conversations. During the interactions, interpreters used four different types of source attribution techniques to let deaf people know which of the non-signing interlocutors initiated the utterance: index-to-source (see Figure 1), body shift (see Figure 2), eye gaze (see Figure 3), or name/description (see Figures 4 and 5). The most frequent type of SA in Metzger's study was index-to-source, which occurs when the interpreter points to the person who is speaking before rendering their utterance. The choice to use a pointing gesture allows the interpreter to indicate a change in speaker or the location of the speaker quickly without shifting focus from the main discourse of the interlocutors, as shown in Figure 1 (Metzger, 2005).

Figure 1: Index-to-source. The interpreter points to the person speaking.

Another way to indicate a change in speaker is through body shifting. This technique requires interpreters to move their upper body or head from one space to another (e.g. right to left or front to back) in order to change characters. To show a second interlocutor, they would then shift their body to another position and begin the next utterance, as shown in Figure 2. While body shifting can effectively demonstrate two speakers, it can become confusing if three or more interlocutors are involved in the conversation (Metzger 2005).

Figure 2: Body shifting. The interpreter moves the body from one side to another to indicate the person speaking.
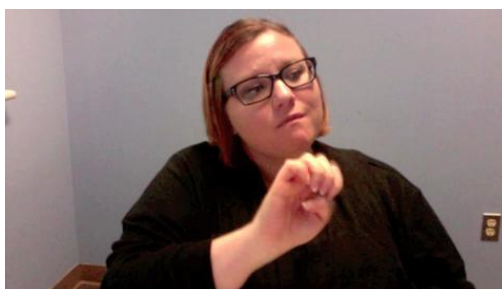
A third way interpreters indicate the source of an utterance is by using their gaze to indicate the person who is speaking. The photo in Figure 3 shows the interpreter looking directly at one of the interlocutors, who can then be distinguished from others. Looking may be all that is needed if there are only two non-deaf interlocutors speaking or if the potential speakers are sitting apart from one another.

*Figure 3: Eye gaze. The interpreter looks towards the person speaking.*

The final type of SA is naming or describing the speaker, which is effective if the deaf participants know the names, titles, or physical features of the interlocutors. If the names are not familiar to all interlocutors, then the interpreter may indicate a specific personal identifier such as the hair color/style, clothing, or other visible aspect of the speaker (Metzger, 2005) Figure 4 shows the interpreter fingerspelling the name of one of the interlocutors (photo shows the letter "O"). Figure 5 shows the interpreter identifying the speaker by signing the color PINK to indicate an interlocutors' shirt.

Figure 4: Naming. The interpreter fingerspells the name of the person speaking.
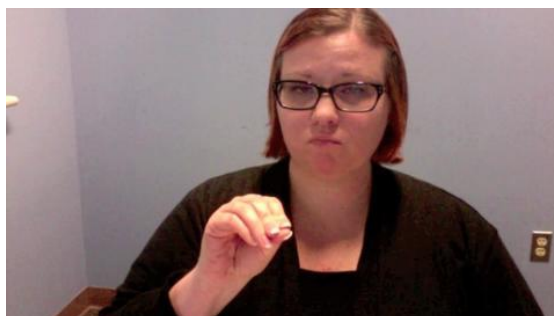
Figure 5: Description. The interpreter signs a description of the person speaking [PINK].
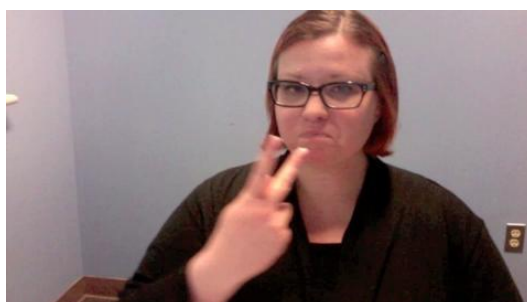
These ways of identifying the source of an utterance provide information about the location of the speaker, the identity of the speaker, or a change in speaker. Each of these strategies for identifying speakers can be used individually, or they can be combined to provide several layers of speaker identification for clarity (Metzger, Fleetwood, & Collins, 2004; Metzger, 2005). Examples of combining the utterances could be fingerspelling a name then pointing to the person speaking, or describing a person then body shifting to begin their utterance.

2.2. *Metzger's Teaching Practice*

Metzger (2005) designed a sequence of six steps for teaching students how to make use of SA as they incorporate it into interpretations. She suggested that these steps could be incorporated during a typical post-secondary course or short-term training program.

The six instructional steps suggested by Metzger (2005; p. 114-115) are:

- Review source attribution.

- Observe source attribution.

- Have students practice attributing source.

- Ask students to analyze source attributions in their own interpretations.

- Have students redo as needed, with a focus on the features of SA.

- Try a variety of role-plays, including small-group interaction.

Metzger's method begins with reviewing SA in order to first familiarize students with this concept and why it is important to include as part of interactional equivalence during interpretation. The exposure increases their factual knowledge of the techniques and how they are used in interpreting (Napier, 2005).

Students next see SA modeled by watching videos and observing experienced interpreters using SA. During the observations, the instructor points out the strategies that constitute situationally appropriate SA, when the students need additional input or direction.

Students next incorporate SA into their own work in a structured manner, to increase their procedural knowledge through interacting with videotaped sources. The students record themselves interpreting, watch their own interpretations to see when and how they incorporated SA, and discuss if this use created interactional equivalence. After analyzing their videotaped work, and repeating it as needed, the students engage in live role-plays. While working through these steps, the students can also spiral back to repeat those that need reinforcement (Metzger, 2000).

3.   Research Questions

This study focuses on the following research questions using a mixed-method approach to data collection.

Question #1: Does source attribution (SA) instruction based on Metzger's (2005) six-step instructional method lead to an increase in the quantity and types of ASL source attributions used during an English to ASL interpretation in discourse settings that have more than one English speaker?

Question #2: What are the perceptions of interpreting students who learn via this method of instruction?

Question #3: What are instructors' perspectives after teaching using this method as compared with their usual teaching methods?

4.   Research method

In order to begin testing this method for teaching SA, a mixed method study was designed to test two groups of students, using a quantitative pretest/instruction/posttest design, along with a qualitative component involving instructor journals, a post-questionnaire, and instructor interviews. Detailed methods are described in the following paragraphs.

4.1. Procedure

Prior to beginning the study, the researcher recruited two instructors at two different universities who were teaching a total of three undergraduate, junior level, interactional interpreting classes for ASL-English interpreters. One was designated the experimental group and the other the control group. The researcher met with the instructors for both the experimental and control groups to conduct training for the study. The instructor of the experimental group received instruction on the types of SA, the six-step teaching method, how to do journal entries, how to record mentions of SA, and how to handle the introduction of research into the classroom.

The instructor of the control group received the same training but without learning the six-step process for teaching SA. The instructor of the control group was asked to only include SA in the same way he would in a typical semester and to record all mentions of SA that occurred during class time. Both instructors were asked to make notations in electronic journal entries of instances of SA, amount of time spent teaching SA, and anything else pertaining to SA that occurred during the class .

Students were informed during the first class that a research study about teaching methods would take place during the semester. They were not told which parts of the class would involve research, but were reminded they were responsible to complete all parts of the class. During the first class, the students recorded their pretests in a computer lab. The students watched and listened to the testing videos in English (see Materials section) as they interpreted into ASL.

After the first class period, students in all classes attended the duration of their university-level interpreting courses. All three classes used departmentally approved, interactive interpreting curricula. In addition to the typical instructional topics, the students in the experimental group were taught SA using Metzger's (2005) method. Both instructors kept track of what occurred during the class using their online journals. The data recorded in the journals were used to calculate mentions of SA instruction or discussion during classes by counting the number of mentions. The data also provided a starting point for the instructor exit interview questions (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2006; Postlethwaite, 2005, Tan & Saw Lan, 2011).

At the conclusion of the study, students recorded the same source video from the pretest as a posttest. The researcher designed the study to have a period of time (ten instructional weeks in this situation) between the initial recording and the final recording in order to reduce student performance based on familiarity with the source texts (Tomal, 2010). The researcher coded the test videos in ELAN (a software tool for annotating video) by watching each video and notating whenever an instance of SA occurred. These notations were verified by a deaf, native ASL-user who is a linguist and interpreter educator.

Students in the experimental class also completed a post-questionnaire regarding the SA instruction over the two weeks following the conclusion of the study. This questionnaire asked about their knowledge of SA and their opinions on how it was taught to them during this course. It was also used to guide the instructor exit interview. After collecting all test videos, questionnaires, and journals, the researcher recorded interviews with both instructors via online video software. The researcher transcribed these recorded interviews and coded them for themes as shown in the results section.

4.2. Participants

The student participants in this study were Interpreter Education (IE) majors enrolled in three junior level interpreting classes moving through undergraduate terms at two universities in different parts of the United States. Their classes focused on translation, consecutive interpreting (CI), and simultaneous interpreting (SI). The students were divided into a control group (N=14) and an experimental group (N=10). These numbers exclude one student from the control group and five from the experimental group because of technical issues with their recordings. The study was completed over a simultaneous ten-week period in all classes. See Table 1 for pertinent demographics.

Table 1: Student Demographics

Demographic	Control	Experimental
Gender	Female – 12[2] Male – 2	Female – 9 Male – 1
Age at time of study	18-23 – 8 24-29 – 4 30-34 – 1 35-39 – 1	18-23 – 7 24-29 – 3 30-34 – 0 35-39 – 0
Age learned ASL	0 to 5 – 3 6 to 12 – 2 3 to 18 –5 after 18 – 4	0 to 5 – 0 6 to 12 – 0 13 to 18 – 7 after 18 – 3
Length of interpreting experience	0 to 1 year –13 1 to 4 – 1	0 to 1 year - 10 1 to 4 – 0
Academic Status	Junior – 14 Senior – 0	Junior – 9 Senior – 1

Additionally, all students were hearing and two of the control students reported being children of deaf adults (CODAs). The groups were deemed by a group of researchers to be suitably comparable for the purposes of the study.

Both instructors were hearing and held Master's degrees in the field of interpreting. They were both nationally certified interpreters, and had experience both interpreting and teaching interpreters.

The researcher was a nationally certified hearing interpreter conducting this research study as her dissertation project (Maddux, 2015). She had been involved with the deaf community for over 16 years, had interpreted for 11 years, and had taught ASL, English and interpreting for more than four years.

4.3. Materials

Three source text videos were used during the study. The three videos were combined into one continuous video for the pretest and posttest. The first and third videos were intended to mask the use of the middle video as the data collection video. See Table 2 for a description of the three videos (Chu, 2012; College of St. Catherine, 2011; Obama & Obama, 2011).

Table 2: Description of Source Testing Videos

Video	Description	Procedure	Purpose	Used for Analysis?
1	Two English-speaking interlocutors discussing Health Apps. 7 minutes 43	Introduction of participants and instructions, introductory clip of content, 1-minute pause for preparation,	Warm up interpreters and mask target video. Given to instructors to use as baseline and in instruction.	No

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[2] The discrepancy between male and female students in this study is consistent with the larger population of interpreters in the US (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2013).

	seconds long.	*source text*		
2	*Three English-speaking interlocutors on a TV talk show. 12 minutes 55 seconds long.*	*Introduction of participants and instructions, introductory clip of content, 1-minute pause for preparation, source text*	*Target text for data collection.*	*Yes*
3	*Two deaf participants at a doctor's appointment. 8 minutes 5 seconds long.*	*Introduction of participants and instructions, source text*	*Mask target video. Given to instructors to use as baseline and in instruction.*	*No*

The first video was a warm up video where only two English-speaking interlocutors spoke about a familiar topic. It was used to allow the students to get into the frame of mind to interpret from English to ASL and to mask the target video. The middle video, which was used to analyze students' SA, was a taped interview between Oprah Winfrey, Barack Obama, and Michelle Obama. The third masking video was an interactive video between deaf and hearing interlocutors. Figure 6 shows the general set-up of the interlocutors on the screen for the target video.

Figure 6: Set-up of three interlocutors on screen.

Both pretests and posttests were recorded using recording software (QuickTime) on Mac desktop computers in video labs at the universities. Following the data collection, a video annotation program, ELAN, was used to track SA for test videos (Lausberg & Sloetjes, 2009). ELAN allowed the videos to be analyzed for various components as it allows both the video and tiers detailing aspects of interpreting (ex. Index-to-source, naming, etc.) as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: ELAN. Tiers and interpreter are depicted in the ELAN file.
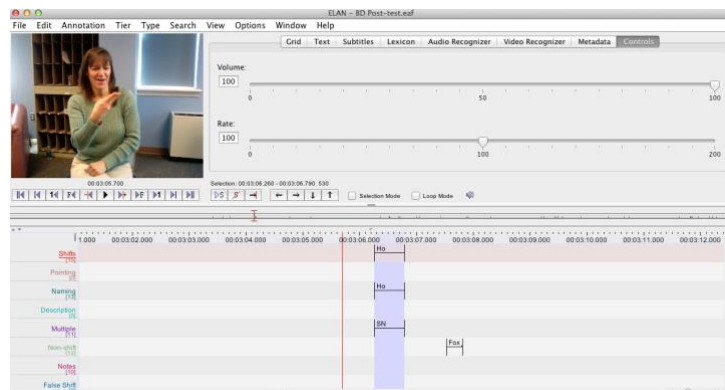
Electronic journals were provided for the instructors to record mentions of SA in their classes. They were instructed to record when SA was mentioned with one count per five minutes of class. They also used the journal to describe what occurred during each mention of SA. Other materials provided were video clips of an expert interpreter using all four types of SA, a written post-questionnaire for the experimental group (see Results and Discussion section for questionnaire details) , and information on how to use SA taken from Metzger (2005). Google Hangouts and QuickTime were used for exit interviews.

5.   Results and Discussion

The results of this study indicated that the steps used in the study to teach SA did provide some benefit to the students in the experimental group. The research questions are shown below, then details of both the quantitative and qualitative data are shown and discussed in the following sections.

5.1.   Research Question #1:

Does source attribution (SA) instruction based on Metzger's (2005) six-step instructional method lead to an increase in the quantity and types of ASL source attributions used during an English to ASL interpretation in discourse settings that have more than one English speaker?

Quantitative results showed that the instructional method led to an increase in both the quantity and type of SA. Although the control group had higher initial SA levels, the experimental group demonstrated significantly greater gains in SA after the intervention (See Table 4). These results indicate that the six-step method of SA instruction did lead to greater gains in SA usage compared to unstructured mentions of SA with normal instruction.

5.1.1   Types of SA

On the original source video/pretest, there were 134 distinct times when the speaker changed among the three interlocutors, however, none of the students included SA for every possible speaker change in the source text (Min = 9; Max = 72).

The most commonly used type of SA was body shifting on both the pretest and the posttest for both groups, with indexing being low on both tests for the groups. One experimental student used naming twice on the pretest, another student named the participants and set them up in space prior to beginning to shift on the posttest, and another student included one name. Eight of the control group students named interlocutors on the pretest, while

six did on the posttest, with one additional student setting up the interlocutors with names prior to the test beginning.

None of the experimental students used more than one type of SA for any of the speaker changes on both the pretest and posttest, while six of the control group students used multiples from two to 28 times on the pretest and six students used multiples from one to 38 times on the posttest to indicate the speakers (see Table 4 for types of SA).

Table 4: Instances of SA

	N (# of students)	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Experimental				
Shifting Pretest	10	9	51	32.50
Shifting Posttest	10	36	56	45.00
Indexing Pretest	1	1	1	1.00
Indexing Posttest	3	1	1	1.00
Naming/Describing Pretest	1	2	2	2.00
Naming/Describing Posttest	1	1	1	1.00
Control		*Minimum*	*Maximum*	*Mean*
Shifting Pretest	14	26	44	35.79
Shifting Posttest	14	38	51	44.65
Indexing Pretest	4	1	11	4.25
Indexing Posttest	0	0	0	0.00
Naming/Describing Pretest	8	3	45	14.88
Naming/Describing Posttest	6	1	40	14.83

5.1.2 Baseline comparisons of use of SA

The independent t-tests checked the control and experimental groups' starting SA counts. Results show that the control group performed significantly better than the experimental group on the pretest, $t(22) = -2.23$, $p = .04$, indicating that they were at a higher starting level regarding SA performance (see Table 5).

Table 5: Pretest Group Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental Group	10	32.80	12.87	4.07
Control Group	14	44.57	12.66	3.83

5.1.3 Pretest/posttests comparison

Each group was also compared with itself, using dependent t-tests to see if there were differences within groups for the pretest and posttest (Control = $t(13) = 4.049$, $p = .001$; Experimental = $t(9) = 3.667$, $p = .005$) (see Tables 6

and 7). The control group used a wider variety of types of SA on both tests. However, the experimental group improved significantly more in overall use of SA between pre and post instruction.

Table 6: Dependent Means t-Test for Experimental Group Pretest and Posttest

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	*32.80*	*10*	*12.874*	*4.071*
Posttest	*45.40*	*10*	*6.310*	*1.996*

Table 7: Dependent Means t-Test for Control Group Pretest and Posttest

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	*44.57*	*14*	*12.660*	*3.236*
Posttest	*51.57*	*14*	*12.107*	*3.383*

5.1.4   Change scores

The experimental group (32.23% difference) improved significantly more than the control group (14.56% difference) on the average number of SA instances between the pretest and the posttest ($t(22) = 1.96$, $p = .06$) (See Table 8).

Table 8: Independent Means t-Test for Experimental/Control Pretest and Posttest

Class	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	*12.600*	*10.865*	*3.436*	*4.828*
Control	*7.000*	*6.469*	*1.729*	*3.265*

Although it seemed the experimental group initially had a lower level of knowledge and fewer instances of SA than the control group, their change score showed they improved significantly more than the control group after the targeted instruction.

5.2.   Research Question #2:

What are the perceptions of interpreting students who learn via this method of instruction?

5.2.1   Post-questionnaires

At the conclusion of the study, all members of the experimental group completed a post-questionnaire asking about their feelings and opinions regarding the SA instructional method as shown below through selected questions and answers.

Question 1: What does the term source attribution mean to you?
    The majority (n = 8) of students indicated that they could not identify the term SA, but a few did try to guess at what it could mean using a variety of interpreting-related terms. One guessed, "Not 100% sure…My best guess is, making sure the original message in an L1 is interpreted into an L2 in a way that the source can be identified (who said what.)" Two other students said source attribution was giving credit to the person speaking or the original work.

Question 2: How did you include source attribution in your interpretation before this class?
    Only one student indicated previously using SA in their work saying, "With DB [deaf-Blind) interpreting, it is by stating the name before the comment. With general interpreting I use pointing mostly."

Question 3: Did you have specific source attribution learning experience before this class?
Only one student indicated having learned about SA before this class.

Question 4: If you have been taught about this topic before, describe the instruction. If your answer is no, then skip this question.
One student said, "Yes. Just briefly discussing the different ways of source attribution."

Question 6: How will what you learned about source attribution impact your interpreting?
This question again yielded few answers. However, one student did indicate it helps with the fluency of interpreting, and student N said it would help in, "Knowing how to stick to the source and give credit."

Although the data obtained from the post questionnaire seems to indicate that the students did not learn the term "source attribution" well, these results are mediated by information from the instructor as detailed in the next section.

5.3. Research Question #3:

What are instructors' perspectives after teaching using this method and teaching via their usual methods?"
While taking the post-questionnaire, students initially seemed unsure of the definition of "source attribution". However, the instructor immediately addressed the topic, and students indicated that they did know how to do SA, and were able to name the types of SA. They had forgotten the technical vocabulary for SA during the semester, but knew about the methods. This lack of term awareness may be because they did not internalized the name due to the limited time spent on the topic in class (as further detailed in the discussion on research question #3 on the interview with the experimental instructor).

5.3.1 Journals

Each instructor kept electronic journals throughout the ten-week course to notate mentions of SA. Tables 9 and 10 describe what was noted in the journals on how SA was discussed in the class and give frequency counts on how often SA was mentioned in each class.

Table 9: Instructor of the Experimental Class Journal

Number of days of SA instruction	Number of SA mentions (defined as any number of mentions within a five-minute span)	Type of SA instruction used
2	19.5 (97.5 minutes)	Reviewing SA, examples of SA, role-plays, discussion of how it went

Table 10: Instructor of the Control Group Journal

Number of days of SA instruction	Number of SA mentions (defined as any number of mentions within a five-minute span)	Type of SA instruction used
2	3 (15 minutes)	Instructor demonstrated shifting and pointing. Instructor responded to question on attributing source to speaker.

Although this project was originally intended for insertion throughout the semester for the experimental class, the journal showed that SA was taught on two days during the experimental class. Even with the limited number of days spent on SA, the experimental instructor was able to complete all steps of the method and spend more time on SA than the control instructor.

5.4. Exit Interviews

The researcher transcribed each interview, organized them into themes, and had a Deaf researcher review them for accuracy. Collated themes are listed below in both bullet points and description with the frequency the instructor referred to the theme in parentheses.

5.4.1 Themes of the Instructor of the Experimental Group

A number of noteworthy themes emerged from the instructor of the experimental class exit interview, several of which serve to elaborate on previously mentioned occurrences during the study. The following bullet points are the described themes.

- Concerns about if the students were at the right stage of learning for this study (9)

- Disappointed about post-questionnaire results (3)

- Delay between instruction and post-questionnaire (3)

- Students knew SA in spite of post-questionnaire results (2)

- Need for spiraling[3] teaching methods in the future/Plans to include SA in the future (3)

- Usefulness of the teaching method/Positivity about using it (8)

- Logistics of what occurred during the course (8)

The instructor of the experimental class expressed that she was concerned throughout the study that her students might not be at a level to incorporate SA in their interpretation. In spite of her concerns though, she did believe that her students were capable of incorporating SA into their work as shown by statements like, "I also thought, um, that it was possible. I guess. So I thought you know. I thought they could do it."

The instructor stated several times that she was disappointed that the students did not indicate that they knew about SA on the post-questionnaire. However, she said that after the conclusion of the post-questionnaire, the students asked her what the term meant, and immediately knew what she was talking about when she began to explain. All students could name three types of SA, and a few could name all types. It was her opinion that that the students did learn about SA, but that they were not exposed to the term enough to keep it in memory as shown in her comment, "but then as soon as I told them the term they were, like 'Oh yeah that's what that is!'" The instructor surmised that the reason the students did not know the term was either because it was not repeated enough or because there was a delay between the days of instruction and the completion of the post-questionnaire.

The results of the post-questionnaire led to questions focused on the instructors' thoughts about what occurred during the class and how it would inform her future teaching. She emphasized that she originally thought it would be more effective to teach SA in a concentrated segment of time, but has since changed her mind to believe she should have spiraled the instruction throughout the course by repeating the steps multiple times:

> "I think I would spread it out more consistently. Umm, because that makes me, the results of the post-survey made me think, hmm, I wonder if you know, like they just needed more repetition talking about it. So I think that, that's just good for me as a teacher to know in general. All the topics I feel like I need to loop things more if that makes sense to, you know."

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[3] Spiraling involves cycling through the curriculum in order to emphasize or review previously learned topics or techniques.

When asked about how it was to insert this into the curriculum of the class, she had the following comments:

> "I think giving them specific examples of what SA can look like was really useful so that they are aware of all the tools available." and "I actually {thought} that it was fine being incorporated into the curriculum, because, it, I mean it's something that we do as interpreters so we talk about a lot of things," and "there were lots of benefits for talking about it and giving them a chance to consider how they would interpret in class, and in real life, but you know where our practice in class or, umm, in situations with multiple speakers and all these kinds of things so I think it moves towards being more authentic practice instead of just, umm, monologic view of texts with just one person talking."

While the instructor did incorporate all steps, she said that most of the interpretation work was translation focused. Based on what emerged from the exit interview, it seems that the instructor believed her students might not be fully ready to incorporate SA into their simultaneous interpreting work at this point but thought it was beneficial and possible for them to do. During the course, she taught about SA on two days, but students mentioned it at other times. She was disappointed that the students seemed to not know about SA on the post-questionnaire, but her further discussions with them revealed that they knew the topic instead of the term. She believes that this method of teaching is useful but needs to be cycled or spiraled throughout the semester.

5.4.2 Themes of the Instructor of the Control Group

Several themes regarding emerged from the instructor of the control group interview, as shown below.

- Students not ready (3)
- Need for SA instruction (3)
- Mentions of SA during course (4)
- Logistics of what occurred during the course (6)

The instructor of the control group did not believe his students were ready for this level of simultaneous interpreting (SI). He said, "Umm, I think that they're still really struggling with the interpretation task, um, and then adding the layer of SA, um, I think that would be challenging for them to add to their cognitive load to think about it." Despite this concern, he did say that there is a need for SA instruction towards the end of the course, as they would be doing more SI as they went along.

The instructor also described the limited references to SA during the course. SA was only mentioned once during the study when a student asked how to distinguish between speakers. When asked how he handled that interaction, he said:

> "I told them that there were several ways to do it. Could name the person, you could indicate which person was speaking if you had established them in space, you could role shift for them, umm, I think those were the options I gave them."

These mentions of SA in the classroom were brief, but the instructor believed there could have been more if there was more chance for lab time.

6. Suggestions for Future Research

Implications for interpreter education research include investigating differences arising from situations at community colleges verses universities and incorporating larger pools of well-matched students of varying skill levels with repeated testing over a longer period of time. Researchers may do action research and should test other popular instructional methods and how students learn from them in clearly defined, data-based quantitative and qualitative studies.

7.   Limitations

Although care was taken to minimize variables and limitations to the study, some were unavoidable or unforeseeable. An unavoidable limitation for this study, or any study involving interpreting students, is the small class size. Due to the limited classes and small class size, the researcher chose to situate the control and experimental classes at different universities to gain larger sample sizes. The separate locations then became a limitation as well, as it was impossible to create fully matched groups at the beginning of the term, or to have the same curricula, labs, or instructors. Additionally, live deaf consumers would be preferable for an authentic interpreting scenario, and there were a number of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events such as delayed questionnaire conduction and deleted videos.

8.   Conclusion

In sum, this study showed through data-based testing that the proposed SA instructional method seemed to provide benefits to students, as seen when the experimental students performed significantly better than the control students after instruction by including significantly more SA instances in their interpretations. Interviews with the experimental instructor indicate that the benefits could have potentially been greater if the teaching method was followed in a more focused manner with spiraling through the steps multiple times. These results suggest that this teaching method should be implemented in interpreting classrooms and workshops. Future research may focus on repetition of this research for SA and other interactional methods, as well as further data-driven research into interpreter education. As a whole, the interpreter education system must move beyond simply wanting students to master skills and content, to finding ways to foster effective interactive interpreting strategies in the next generation of interpreters (Winston, 2005).

Currently there is limited empirical research testing IE teaching methods, and this scarcity must be remedied through implementing research studies in the classroom in order to investigate more aspects of the process of instructing interpreters. This can only be accomplished by conducting more focused research on how IE teaching methods impact learning as we incorporate research that has come before in signed languages, spoken languages, applied linguistics and other related fields. As more empirical data becomes available on effective learning approaches and teaching methods, the interpreting community can hope that the school-to-work gap will be reduced until our Interpreter Education Programs regularly graduate qualified entry-level interpreters. Preparing interpreters effectively will only be possible if interpreting researchers, educators, and practitioners work together to be sure research and curriculum are distributed around the world (Napier, 2005.) When this happens, a greater number of qualified, prepared, and educated interpreters will be present to satisfy the access needs of the deaf community.

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Encountering Change: Job Satisfaction of Sign Language Interpreters in Finland

Liisa Martikainen[1]

Humak, University of Applied Science

Petri Karkkola

University of Eastern Finland

Matti Kuittinen

University of Eastern Finland

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.

Abstract

The organizational system for providing Finnish sign language interpreter services has recently changed, and this change has influenced the whole interpretation service industry. It poses major challenges for the maintenance of job satisfaction among sign language professionals. The level of job satisfaction of sign language interpreters (in this study, $N = 135$) was surveyed by means of an online questionnaire. While examining this phenomenon, this study mainly addresses the systemic factors in employment conditions. According to the results, the level of job satisfaction among interpreters is quite high; however, it remains clearly lower than the average for Finnish workers. The key factors in job satisfaction are working conditions, changes in the amount of work and the way that it has been organized. Many of these problems

[1] *Correspondence to: liisamartikainen3@gmail.com*

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are seen to be the result of the recently reformed Kela[2]-led interpreter booking system and the interpreting service's bidding system. As a conclusion, we note that, in future, more attention should be paid to the working conditions and job satisfaction of Finnish sign language interpreters. If the level of job satisfaction continues to decrease, not only will interpreters' health and well-being be at risk, but the quality of service provided to clients may also be impacted.

Keywords: Sign language interpreters, organizational change, job satisfaction, working conditions, job insecurity

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[2]Kela (*Kansaneläkelaitos)* is an independent social security institution, under the auspices of the Finnish parliament, with its own administration and budget., See: http://www.kela.fi/web/en/about-kela

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Encountering Change: Job Satisfaction of Sign Language Interpreters in Finland

1.   Introduction

Finland is a relatively small Nordic country with approximately 5 million inhabitants and approximately 3,000 Deaf sign language users in need of interpreting services. In addition, there are other client groups that use the same interpreting services, such as hard of hearing elderly people, speech-impaired and blind-deaf individuals, which brings the total number of service users to approximately 4,500 (see Rainó & Martikainen, in press). There are approximately 600 working sign language interpreters at the moment, in work or educational settings, social and public service settings and within the context of users' leisure time activities.[3] Until recently, the employment situation of sign language interpreters was very satisfactory: Unemployment was very low and the most common type of working contract comprised permanent, full-time contracts (with an interpreter services providing company). At the same time, the demand for interpreters has been seen to be increasing (e.g., Nikoskinen, 2010). Nevertheless, this situation has radically changed during the last few years as the field of sign language interpretation in Finland has been undergone some major changes.

The change that we address here encompasses changes in organization and clientele. The change in clientele is related to the decline in the number of Finnish deaf people using Finnish Sign Language (FSL) as their mother tongue. More than 90% of deaf born children in Finland receive a cochlear implant that enables hearing while 70% to 80% of those who receive such an implant go on to learn to become spoken-language learners; therefore, their main mode of communication is not FSL (Rainó & Martikainen, in press). In addition, the organization of the interpretation service sector has also changed. Under the Act on Interpretation Services for Persons with Disabilities 133/2010 (see Finlex, 2018), responsibility for organizing the interpreting services was reassigned from the municipalities to the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) in 2010.

Kela is an independent social security institution, supervised by the Finnish Parliament, which provides social security coverage for Finnish residents. Social security benefits offered by Kela include family benefits, health insurance, rehabilitation, basic unemployment security, housing benefits, financial aid for students and basic pensions (see Kela, 2017). Kela invites service providers to tender on the basis of criteria it has defined. On a practical level, this means that all the interpreting service providers in Finland are prioritised as potentially preferred suppliers mainly on the basis of price and, to some extent, the quality score they receive from Kela. Interpreting assignments are allocated to service providers according to their ranking (Krook, 2011). This tendering process, occurring approximately once every 4 years, practically defines the operating conditions of these companies, including the kind of knowledge and training hired interpreters should have (see, e.g., Kela, 2013, 2014). As a result, according to news reports (Kilpeläinen, 2014a), more than 100 permanent interpreter

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[3] A hearing or speech impaired person has the right to use the interpretation service for at least 180 hours per year, with costs covered by Kela.

jobs have been lost,[4] and permanent contracts have been replaced by zero-hour contracts. One of the main reasons for the increase in these type of contracts is that the bidding system involves companies being ranked mainly based on price. As a result, successful bidders are those with cost-effective organizational structures preferring the type of working contracts described above (Kilpeläinen, 2014a).

The organization of the entire interpretation service sector has also been influenced by the centralization of interpreters' booking services from their own booking centers to Kela in early 2014 (Kilpeläinen, 2014b). This change has sparked a lot of debate. In the spring of 2014, the Finnish Sign Language Interpreters Association and the Akava Special Branches[5] demanded a remedy for the problems encountered in the interpreter booking system, which included a backlog in the processing of requests. In addition, according to interpreters and clients, local information on customer needs was lost. It is claimed that current assignment booking systems hinder clients from getting an appropriate service, and is disadvantageous to interpreters due to deteriorating employment conditions (Akava Special Branches AE & Finnish Sign Language Interpreters Association, 2014).

The aforementioned change in work assignments, working methods and organizations reflects the wider change in the workforce in Finland (see Statistics Finland, 2014). In 2013, four out of ten (40%) workplaces had been or were undergoing a major organizational change; in one third (34%) there was a change in customer group or product and in four out of ten (41%), changes in information systems. Over half (53%) of jobs had also seen a change in executive or management. In almost one third (27%) of the cases, there had been staff reductions over the last 3 years (Statistics Finland, 2014).

These types of changes are by no means a uniquely Finnish phenomenon. Many of today's societies are facing massive macro-level change driven by globalization, rapid technological progress, changes in industrial structures, radical political change (in accordance with neoliberal policies), and demographic change (Kim, 2008; Obschonka & Silbereisen, 2015). As a concrete result of these changes, the pace of working life has increased, leaving employees with less and less time for more and more tasks and an increasing need to adapt to continuous organizational changes (Korunka, Kubicek, Paškvan, & Ulferts, 2015; Roberts, 2007). Therefore, skill development becomes essential. This learning process includes becoming familiar with technological devices and software programs again and again, at shorter time intervals, and also with knowledge of work practices, guidelines, and policies (Obschonka, Silbereisen, & Wasilewski, 2012; Korunka et al., 2015).

Increasing labour market uncertainties and the perceptions of job insecurity can have detrimental effects on employees' job satisfaction, resulting in negative consequences on their attitudes towards the organization, willingness to remain in the organization, and on performance (Obschonka & Silbereisen, 2015; Sverke, Hällgren, & Näswall, 2002). Especially when change occurs very frequently, individuals are likely to feel fatigued by change and experience an increase in anxiety due to the unpredictability of change in that setting (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Also, work intensification over time leads to increased emotional exhaustion and reduced job satisfaction (Korunka et al., 2015). These facts support the relevancy of this research. All in all, the basic starting point for this research is that individuals are viewed as part of a broader social and historical context (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

2.   Job Satisfaction Research

Job satisfaction has received a lot of attention in psychological research within the past hundred years (e.g., Locke & Latham, 1990; Spector, 1997). However, not much research has been done on job satisfaction levels among sign language interpreters, especially in relation to systemic or 'structural' factors in employment. This is the research we have undertaken here. (For the sake of comparison, this article will also present more general level results in relation to job satisfaction research.) In this study, job satisfaction is defined as a positive attitude towards work, where emotional-like elements are emphasized. Accordingly, work is seen especially from the

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[4] 17 % of employees in the sector (Finnish Sign language Interpreter Association [FSI], 2016).

[5] Akava Special Branches is a multidisciplinary trade union and service organisation to which FSI belongs.

point of view of achieving one's own goals (Spector, 1997). Studies on job satisfaction show that most employees are relatively satisfied with their jobs. For example, in a survey of 15 European countries (see Benach, Gimeno, Benavides, Martinez, & Torné, 2002), 85% of workers reported being rather or very satisfied with their jobs. The most dissatisfied employees included those with unstable employment. The level of job satisfaction among Finnish employees was the second highest in Europe, with only 7% of employees expressing dissatisfaction with their work (Benach et al., 2002).

In 2013, almost one third (28%) of Finnish employees were very satisfied with their jobs (Statistics Finland, 2014). However, at the same time, just under half (48%), found their work either quite or very burdensome mentally. Senior graduates (61%) and senior staff (66%) especially reported that their job was mentally taxing. The psychological burden was increased by internal conflicts in the workplace and experiences of being rushed. According to half of respondents (54%), feeling rushed was associated with staff shortages (Statistics Finland, 2014).

These conflicting perspectives on work (i.e., being relatively satisfied but highly stressed at the same time) can be explained by two different dimensions of intrinsic motivation and external working conditions (see Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). From this perspective, intrinsic motivation is related to the job itself and leads to job satisfaction and work conditions being related to the work environment, which can be a cause of job dissatisfaction (Shin & Jung, 2013). It has been found that most interpreters initially choose the interpreting profession based on intrinsic motivation. Acting as a language link, salary, and working with the deaf community motivate interpreters to continue in the profession (McCartney, 2016). Nevertheless, research has shown that there is a great turnover and burnout rate in the field of sign language interpreting (McCartney, 2016).

Danna and Griffin (1999) point out that sources of stress can be associated with organizational structure and climate, and may result from organizational culture and management style. These sources include the lack of participation and effective consultation, poor communication, politics, and the consequences of downsizing, such as major restructuring, unstructured work environment, and individual cultural incongruence (Danna & Griffin, 1999).

All in all, it has been found that working conditions such as job security, fair payment and whether the working contract is suitable for the worker are strongly related to one's perceived level of job satisfaction (Johansson, 2004; Spector, 1997; Sverke et al., 2002). This applies to professional interpreters too (Lee, 2017). Consequently, employees with high levels of job satisfaction are more highly committed to their work and experience lower levels of stress than do co-workers with lower levels of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). At an organizational level, it has been found that job satisfaction has an impact on organizational effectiveness and job absenteeism (Noblet, Rodwell, & Mcwilliams, 2006; Spector, 1997).

In addition, social support has been found to be a predictor of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. A strong association has been found between the advice, assistance, and feedback received from colleagues and supervisors and employee well-being (Mark & Smith, 2012; Noblet et al., 2006). All in all, there is very strong evidence as to the importance of social characteristics in the context of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to results from a summary of 259 studies and 219,625 participants (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007), social characteristics explain incremental variances of 24% in turnover intentions, 17% in job satisfaction and 40% in organizational commitment.

In short, during periods of extreme upheaval and uncertainty, levels of job satisfaction and mental and physical health seem to decline significantly. Those in positions of less control and higher uncertainty suffer the greatest negative effects of major organizational change, particularly when the change is outside their control and the implications and consequences of the change are less clear (Nelson, Cooper, & Jackson, 1995). Indeed, it has been found that job control (or job autonomy) alone is a very strong predictor of job satisfaction (Mark & Smith, 2012; McGlone & Chenoweth, 2001; Noblet et al., 2006; Obschonka & Silbereisen, 2015). In line with these findings, high autonomy and an acceptable workload are found to be most significant factors in relation to job satisfaction among interpreters (Swartz, 1999). Schwenke (2012) argues that interpreters who notice they have more control within their environment have lower levels of burnout, which in turn is positively related to job satisfaction.

The main forces underpinning these uncontrollable changes (as described above) were in most cases found to be related to macroeconomic forces such as a significant deficit in government budgets which lead to undesirable changes in employees' jobs, resulting in layoffs and/or terminations of contracts. This equates to very insecure

and stressful work environments which have detrimental effects on workers' health, as well as threats to workers' identity and self-worth (Danna & Griffin, 1999). In light of these notions, according to different scholars (cf. Chen, 2007; Lee, 2017), self-actualization, sense of job security, social recognition and steady employment are the most valued needs of interpreters.

As stated, FSL interpreters and their work communities have been undergoing a process of significant change with regard to work and working conditions for some time, a process that continues to date. In the field of sign language interpretation, the transformation process can be described as a series of unanticipated and contradictory changes. This has meant, for example, that while the interpreter's clientele becomes more heterogeneous and demanding (e.g. deaf immigrants, speech impaired; see Martikainen, 2012), from the worker's perspective, competition-related Kela guidance (e.g., Kela, 2013) and organizations and their ways of working (including funding and coordination) have undergone several changes in a more complex and demanding direction several times over a short period of time.

3. Research Questions

The research questions for this study were defined as follows:

1. What is the level of job satisfaction of professional FSL interpreters, and what types of working conditions are related to job satisfaction?

2. What kind of changes have been encountered by FSL interpreters in the past few years and how do the changes affect the level of job satisfaction?

4. Methods

4.1. Participants

The data were collected via an online questionnaire in May 2016. The link to the questionnaire was sent to members of the Finnish Sign Language Interpreters Association (FSI), which has 632 members on its mailing list. Emails were returned as undeliverable for 55 email accounts; therefore, the size of the target group was about 550 people. The questionnaire was completed by a total of 135 people (25% of potential respondents).

The most common age group responding to the questionnaire consisted of interpreters aged 30–39 years, which also corresponds with the age of sign language interpreting graduates from Humak University of Applied Sciences (Humak); see Table 1. Humak is one of the two universities of applied sciences in which sign language interpreters are educated in Finland. These graduates can be considered as a representative sample of Finnish interpreters. Respondents aged more than 40 years of age were somewhat overrepresented, and respondents less than 30 years of age somewhat underrepresented compared to those who have graduated from Humak.

Table 1. Comparison of age: Interpreters graduated from Humak and respondents

Age cohort	Humak graduates (%)	Respondents (%)
20–29	33	21
30–39	46	44
40–49	16	25
50+	6	9

Less than half of respondents (44 %) had more than 11 years' of work experience, while just over a third (33 %) had 6–10-years' experience and 22 % had 5 years or less.

Table 2 shows that when it came to the size of service-providing companies, the respondents were working in similar type of companies compared to average interpreters in the field. Respondents working in organizations of 31 to 100 people were somewhat overrepresented, while respondents working in companies with more than 100 employees were somewhat underrepresented.

Table 2. Comparison of the size of service providing companies: Target group and respondents

Number of workers	Target group (%)	Respondents (%)
1	4	3
2–10	11	12
11–30	17	12
31–100	23	48
101–	45	25

4.2. Measures

Job satisfaction. We assessed job satisfaction based on an individual's overall affective reaction to his or her job (Spector, 1997), measured by the question "How satisfied are you with your job at the moment?" (1 = *very unsatisfied* and 5 = *satisfied*).

Working conditions. Respondents were asked about the nature of their employment contract (full-time, part-time, monthly-paid, hourly-paid etc.), the suitability of it in relation to their overall situation (yes/no; if not, why), whether the contract was permanent or not, how sure they were about the continuation of their employment (1 = *very unsure,* 4 = *very sure*), and if they had experienced periods of unemployment recently (1 = *not at all,* 2 = *just a few days,* 3 = *periodically (such as during the summer),* 4 = *more than 3 months,* 4 = *some other situation; describe*). Also, the size of the organization they worked in was queried.

Changes in the workplace. Respondents were asked about the changes that had occurred in their workplace over the last five years or any changes that were currently in process (e.g. change in work technologies, workload, etc.; see Table 5 for the categories). The scale was as follows: 1 = *has not happened;* 2 = *is happening right now;* 3 = *has already happened;* 4 = *both* (Statistics Finland, 2014). The survey also asked whether there had been changes in the amount of staff or in actual workload during last 5 years (number of employees/amount of work may have increased or decreased). In addition, respondents were asked how these changes had affected job satisfaction (-2 = strong negative effect; -1 = mild negative effect, 0 = no relevance; $+1$ = mild positive effect, $+2$ = strong positive effect). Respondents also had the opportunity to explain why they felt these changes influenced their job satisfaction via an open-ended question ("You may explain your answers concerning the impact of changes described above").

External factors. Respondents were asked about the possible positive or negative effects of external societal level factors (see Danna & Griffin, 1999) in relation to their perceived level of job satisfaction. There were five factors including Kela's way of organizing interpreting services (see Table 4 for all the appraised external societal factors). The scale was identical to that which related to changes in the workplace (from -2 = strong negative effect to $+2$ = strong positive effect). It was possible to explain these ratings with an open-ended question ("You may explain why these factors are having such effects in relation to your job satisfaction").

4.3. Methods of analyses

The level of job satisfaction and perceived effects of external factors are described with means and standard deviations. The prevalence of changes in the workplace is described on the basis of the frequency of respondents reporting either a change over the last 5 years or an ongoing change in each the defined change categories.

Associations between working conditions and job satisfaction and between changes in the workplace and job satisfaction are examined with the chi-squared test (χ^2). When the association is statistically significant (p < .05), its magnitude (effect size) is described with Cramer's V, where rating between .10 and .19 denotes a weak association, between .20 and .59 a moderate or relatively strong association, and .60 or more a strong association (see Rea & Parker, 1992).

Answers to open-ended questions were thematically coded by one researcher and quantitatively analysed by counting the number of answers that could be classified in a certain category (e.g., the number of answers mentioning "Kelas's operations" as a negative-external factor). In addition, some text samples have been included in the results for descriptive purposes, especially for readers unfamiliar with the Finnish system of providing sign language interpreters.

5.   Results

5.1.   *Level of Job Satisfaction and Working Conditions Associated with Job Satisfaction*

When respondents were asked how satisfied they were with their work at present, the level of satisfaction was rather high (M = 3.5, SD = 1.09; scale 1–5). Of the respondents, 4% were very dissatisfied, 19% were rather dissatisfied, 11% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 50% were rather satisfied and 14% were very satisfied (n = 133) with their work. In addition, respondents with a different work history differed statistically in terms of job satisfaction, χ^2 (8, n = 133) =18.72, p < .016, Cramer's V =.27, where respondents with over 11 years' work experience were the most satisfied with their work (74% rather/very satisfied, n = 59) and respondents with 5 years or less work experience were the least satisfied (44% rather/very satisfied, n = 32).

As can be seen in Table 3, the following working conditions are related to job satisfaction: the size of the work company, the quality of the employment contract, the suitability of the employment contract (if the employee felt comfortable with it or not) and confidence in the continuation of employment. The most satisfied with their work were those who were self-employed (100% very satisfied, n = 4) and the second most satisfied were respondents working in companies with 11 to 30 people (31% very satisfied, n = 16). The change in the workload of the personnel of such enterprises differs significantly from the change in the workload of people working in other companies: their workforce has not decreased to the same extent as those of other companies, χ^2 (16, n = 147) = 31.11, p < .013, Cramer's V =.23.

Table 3. Working conditions associated with job satisfaction

Working conditions	χ^2	p <	Cramer's V	n
The size of the work company	$\chi^2(24) = 45.91$	.005	.59	131
The quality of the employment contract	$\chi^2(10) = 34.09$	.000	.36	133
The confidence in the continuation of employment	$\chi^2(12) = 31.23$	.002	.29	122
The suitability of the employment contract	$\chi^2(4) = 48.97$	.000	.61	133

Table 3 shows that the quality of the employment contract and its suitability seems to be strongly related to job satisfaction. Full-time and permanent employees were more satisfied with their work than other employees (89% very satisfied, n = 46) and the most dissatisfied are workers with zero-hour-contracts (5% very satisfied, n = 66). Workers with zero-hour-contacts were the largest respondent group (44% of all respondents, n = 135). The second largest group of respondents were full-time workers (34% of respondents). The relationship between work-related uncertainty and job satisfaction was linear: The most satisfied are those who are fully convinced of the continuation of the employment contract (78% very/rather satisfied, n = 36) and the most unsatisfied are the ones with a highly uncertain situation (0% very/rather satisfied, n = 6). Also, those with employment contracts that they felt comfortable with were clearly more satisfied with their work (85% very satisfied, n = 91) than those who did

not agree with their current employment contracts (2% very satisfied, $n = 41$). The reasons for the unsuitability of the employment ($n = 42$) highlighted the uncertainty of work and income due to zero-hour-contracts, and the low total number of hours worked (20 references) and hourly wage less than FSI's recommendations. In addition, dissatisfaction is caused by the unpredictable nature of work tasks and workload (eight references). This means that the interpreters' work planner must be constantly open, all assignments must be accepted (even when the workload is accumulated unreasonably) and one must be ready for duty at short notice.

According to respondents, the most influential external factors (i.e., factors originating outside the immediate workplace surroundings) that positively influence job satisfaction were the ongoing general technological development (such as development of IT-based interpretation assisting tools[6]), the support of the wider collegiate community (such as colleagues working in other sign language interpreting service providing companies or other FSI members) and cooperation with stakeholders (such as clientele associations or education providers; see Table 4). The most negative external influence was seen to be Kela's way of organizing sign language interpreting services.

Table 4. External factors influencing job satisfaction (scale: –2–+2).

External factor	M	SD
Technological development	+0.54	0.72
Support of collegiate community	+0.38	1.00
Cooperation with stakeholders	+0.31	0.78
Outsourced funding	–0.05	0.54
Kela's way of organizing SLI services	–1.33	0.91

Participants' answers to the open-ended question (n = 70) confirmed the above findings. Of the respondents, 56% (39 people) thought that Kela's activities had a strong negative effect on the entire field and the work of individual interpreters. Problems arise, for example, in the fact that Kela is not collecting feedback or developing its business on the grounds of expertise or quality. The rules created by Kela do not allow for choosing interpreters on grounds of their expertise. The Kela booking service does not seem to be sufficiently knowledgeable; for example, customers may not be able to get interpreter services suitable for a particular customer profile or the level of difficulty of the assignment. According to one respondent:

> Kela assigns interpreting requests only based on the order of tenders and does not regard the quality at all. For example, I have worked as an interpreter [for] only a year, and I have been given quite a lot of jobs too difficult without a partner [co-interpreter]. Kela should be able to better evaluate the demand for interpretation assignments relative to how long the interpreter has done interpreting work and forward assignments on that basis. This would be one way to improve quality.

5.2. Changes in Working Life Associated with Job Satisfaction

Many of the factors related to working conditions described above are also related to changes in the work organization and wider societal context. As can be seen in Table 5, there have been various changes in the respondents' work organization.

Table 5. Respondents whose work organizations have or have just undergone a certain type of change over the last 5 years.

Change at the workplace	Number of respondents	Percentage of all respondents (%)

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[6] Such tools include smartphones or tablets which enable an easy access for material needed in interpreting situations, as well as other technology that can be used in remote interpreting

	undergoing or having undergone change	
New way of organizing work	*115*	*85*
Decrease or increase in workload	*116*	*85*
New information system	*105*	*78*
Work community change	*105*	*78*
Change in the number of employees	*102*	*76*
New competence requirements	*98*	*72*
Change of customer groups or products	*93*	*69*
New work equipment or technology	*90*	*66*
Changes in the physical working environment	*75*	*56*
New supervisor or management	*67*	*50*
Change of company ownership	*48*	*36*

The most common change reported concerns the way the work is organized and the second most common change, the amount of work (Table 5). We also asked if the amount of work had decreased or increased; 76% ($n = 131$) of interpreters reported that their workload has decreased, while only 3% said that it has increased significantly. When talking about changes in the number of employees, for 35% respondents, the change meant a reduction.

Changes in the work community, χ^2 (6, $n = 131$) = 12.86, $p < .045$, Cramer's V = .22, and workload, χ^2 (8, $n = 132$) = 25.51, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .31, correlated with job satisfaction. The respondents were satisfied with their work if:

1. the immediate working community had not changed (79% very/rather satisfied with their work, $n = 28$); or

2. the workload had remained unchanged (90% very/rather satisfied with their work, $n = 19$).

Interpreters were also asked about the relevance of these changes to their job satisfaction, and the respondents' own estimates support the above-described result: The most negative were changes in workload ($M = -1.16$, $SD = 1.06$, range $-2-+2$) but also the changes in the way work was organized ($M = -0.47$, $SD = 1.28$). The most positive factor was the change in tools and technology (such as new IT-based interpretation assisting tools; $M = 0.54$, $SD = 0.96$). In answers to open-ended questions, in the case of change in workload and work organization, respondents said that Kela's activities were seen as the biggest underlying factor (28, $n = 70$). One of the respondents describes these changes in the following way:

The competition model introduced by Kela eliminated the opportunity to optimize bookings and time management within the workplace. This has caused a great deal of stress and uncertainty and in particular frustration.

6.   Discussion

6.1.   *Working Conditions and Job Satisfaction*

According to the results, level of job satisfaction among Finnish sign language interpreters is rather high. Nevertheless, the number of respondents who are very satisfied with their work is clearly lower among all

respondents (14%) when compared with average job satisfaction rates among Finnish workers (28%; Statistics Finland, 2014). The results also show that work conditions such as the quality of the employment contract (e.g. full-time or part time/hourly), the suitability of working contract (whether the employee felt comfortable with it or not) and confidence in having continuation of employment are related to job satisfaction. Also, the size of employer organization was related to job satisfaction. This relation can be explained by the fact that companies of particular size have been successful in Kela's competitive bidding (Kela, 2014), which has a significant impact on the employability of employees. These results are similar to previous studies: job uncertainty, unstable work situation and unwanted part-time work (e.g., Finnish Institution of Occupational Health [FIOH] 2012; Lee, 2017; Spector, 1997; Sverke, et al., 2002) have been found to have a detrimental effect on job satisfaction.

6.2. Changes in Working Life and Job Satisfaction

In general, there have been more changes in interpreters' work organizations (e.g., SLI services providing companies) than on average in Finnish organizations. Changes have taken place around how work is organized, in interpreters' immediate collegiate work community[7] (due to heavy redundancy processes executed in many working units and organizations), in information systems, and in workload (see Statistics Finland, 2014). Of these changes, the change in the immediate collegiate work community, the change in work organization and work technology and the change in workload are also associated with job satisfaction. The research results have shown the importance of collegial social support underpinning job satisfaction (e.g., Mark & Smith, 2012; Noblet et al., 2006). This fact may explain the link between immediate collegiate working community change and experience of job satisfaction. It is understandable that the transformation of the immediate workplace community brings a clear challenge to its functioning. All these changes have also had an impact on controllability of one's work: Interpreters reported that opportunities to control their own work had diminished, which in turn diminished levels of job satisfaction. In previous studies it has been found that job control is a very strong predictor of job satisfaction (Mark & Smith, 2012; Noblet et al., 2006; Obschonka & Silbereisen, 2015; Schwenke, 2012), and our results are in line with these findings. Important influential factors underpinning these changes in work organization and amount of workload were seen to be the Kela Tendering and Interpretation Booking System introduced in the 2010s (Kela, 2013).

6.3. Limitations and Future Research

Inherent limitations of this study may have skewed our findings somewhat. For example, survey respondents (sign language interpreters) may have more of a vested interest in participating, potentially impacting on responses in a survey like this. Since this was social research, respondents may also have shown a tendency to socially desirable answering that could affect the responses of participants. Some of the mitigating factors for social desirability responses, however, would be that the respondents knew the survey was anonymous; there was no impact on their work, salary, promotion, etc. in returning the survey, so there was no need to rate proficiency in a falsifying fashion; and the fact that the respondents gave a large number of very detailed answers in relation to the difficulties that they have faced at work, there seemed to be a trend towards honesty amongst participants. An additional limitation was the length and detail of questionnaires, which may have put people off participating in the study in the first place. Further, we note that the veracity of all self-report measures can be problematic, but these are not unique to this study (see also Bontempo, Napier, Hayes, & Brashear, 2014).

In addition, it should be noted, that there are only couple of studies that relate to job satisfaction among sign language interpreters in general (see, e.g., Swartz, 2009) and there is no information about the level of job satisfaction of interpreter professionals in Finland. Consequently, it is difficult to measure the actual 'change' in job satisfaction over time. There is an urgent need for a follow-up study to explore in what direction the situation

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[7] The concept of "immediate collegiate work community" means those employees who the interpreters are working with at their normal everyday working surroundings. These employees may have the same employer.

described in this article is developing. It is also important to explore what significance these recent (and possible upcoming) changes have to deaf consumers: If the level of job control and job satisfaction continues to decline, this will most likely have an impact not only on the quality of service provided, but more significantly, on interpreter professionals' well-being and work commitment (see Korunka et al., 2015; Obschonka & Silbereisen, 2015; Sverke et al., 2002). Also, there is a need for a qualitative study to provide further insight into practical impacts of the changing work environment to show in detail how these system changes practically impact individual interpreters' work and the companies that directly provide services. All in all, this study could act as an important starting point for larger discussion of the job satisfaction of sign language interpreters in context of changing working environments.

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Relay Interpreting as a Tool for Conference Interpreting Training

Fanny Chouc, José María Conde[i]

Heriot-Watt University

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to explore the pedagogical benefits of experiencing and practicing relay interpreting for conference interpreting trainees. Relay interpreting was defined by Shlesinger (2010) as "the practice of interpreting from one language to another through a third language". This activity is occasionally featured de facto in the learning experience of conference interpreting trainees, but it has not yet been studied extensively as a deliberate tool for the training of conference interpreters. This article focuses on students' experience and practice of relay interpreting as part of mini-conferences, a pedagogical activity built into interpreting students' curriculum. We draw on theories of situated and experiential learning by Lave and Wenger (1991), Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989), Kolb (1984) and Kolb and Kolb (2005). A study was carried out with Heriot-Watt University students on the Honors and Master Conference Interpreting programs. All students experience relay interpreting during weekly simulations of multilingual conferences, in which students may take relay from their peers to interpret into one of their working languages when the speaker's language is not part of their combination. Alternatively, students may themselves play the part of pivot, defined by Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989, p. 199) as "the interpreters who produced the first version relay those who interpret next": They know that some of their peers depend upon them to relay the initial message into their working language. Providing and depending upon relay enables students to approach a range of key interpreting skills from a different angle, such as monitoring, as raised by Sawyer (1994) and Gile (2009). Relay interpreting creates a set-up conducive to the learning strategies highlighted by Boud, Cohen, and Sampson (2001), based on active observation of techniques. The mixed-method approach used for this study focuses on students' perceptions of the activity, as well as of the impact of relay interpreting on their own practice as users and providers of relay.

Keywords: Conference Interpreting training, relay interpreting, multilingual conferences, situated learning.

[i] *Correspondence to: f.chouc@hw.ac.uk and j.m.conde@hw.ac.uk*

Relay Interpreting as a Tool for Conference Interpreting Training

1.   Introduction and Background

This study proposes to explore the learning benefits that conference interpreting students draw from a practical, first-hand experience of relay interpreting (RI), described by Shlesinger (2010, p. 276) as "the practice of interpreting from one language to another through a third language". Students are placed in the position of *pivot,* defined as "the interpreter the other booths are listening to and taking relay from" (AIIC, 1999). They also have to depend on their peers' interpreting for their own practice. This dual experience of relay interpreting, as provider or user, is built into the learning experience of the students at Heriot-Watt University and is one of the tools used to further their conference interpreting skills.

The study focused on a sample of students from the MA (undergraduate) program in translation and conference interpreting and from the MSc (postgraduate masters) program in conference interpreting. It was carried out over a period of 2 years, in order to collect data from as many participants as possible. We wanted to recruit participants from two cohorts of students who had all received a similar training in conference interpreting, following the interpreter training model described by Gile (2009). Students were enrolled either in the final year of the MA in Translation and Conference Interpreting or in the Masters in Conference Interpreting at the Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies at Heriot-Watt University.

Although MA and MSc students have different levels of linguistic and academic competence, both groups are taught the same conference interpreting techniques and theory, and both groups take part in multilingual mock conferences (also described as "mini-conferences") as part of their training. These sessions are the set-up during which students get to experience relay interpreting as users, but also learn to act as a *pivot,* a role described as "the interpreters who produced the first version relay those who interpret next" by Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989, p. 199) and presented as "using a single language as a relay" by the Directorate General for Interpreting (SCIC, n.d.).

The MA undergraduate program is a 4-year program during which students are progressively introduced to interpreting skills. On this program, students are expected to work from either one or two foreign languages (French, German, Spanish) into English, or bilaterally between British Sign Language (BSL) and English. The MSc program is a postgraduate-level program of study organized around one academic year of teaching (9 months) and the production of a dissertation (3 months). Students on this program of study either work bilaterally or from two foreign languages into English. Languages catered for are Chinese, Arabic, French, German and/or Spanish.

Considering two MA and two MSc cohorts meant that we were able to include BSL in the range of languages engaged in the set-up described, because the first cohort of BSL students reached their final year on the year when the second stage of the data collection took place. In doing so, the experiment provided a set-up in which every student would, at some point, have to be a pure user of interpreting (i.e., a listener who genuinely depends on an interpreter to access the meaning of the initial intervention) or depend on relay to interpret. The cohorts also all included students who were interpreting into their B language (i.e., a language other than their native one, in which they are highly proficient) in the case of students working bilaterally between English and another language, for the benefits of the audience and/or relay use.

Relay interpreting as a tool for conference interpreting training

Multilingual mock conferences are introduced as part of the training to enable students to work together rather than solely by dual-language combination, and they give students an opportunity to experience a situation close to the reality of professional multilingual meetings. Mini-conferences for MA students take place during the course of Semester 1 and at the start of Semester 2, because these students have already followed training in consecutive and liaison interpreting in their second year of studies and receive an intensive training in simultaneous interpreting at the very start of Semester 1 of their final year. Some MA students have also followed additional training in their penultimate year, spent abroad (Year 3 of the MA). MSc students have their series of mini-conferences in Semester 2, because some students' first introduction to conference interpreting techniques is at the start of the 1-year program (the MSc program runs from September to September). These sessions bring together all the students registered on the same program, regardless of their language combinations—students usually have two active languages (A and B language) or one active language (A language) and two passive languages (C languages) as defined by AIIC—and a multilingual mock debate is staged over a period of 2 to 3 hours, around a particular aspect of current affairs such as environmental concerns, immigration, healthcare provision or new technologies. At MA level, mock conferences are led by members of staff who select current affairs topics consistent with the curriculum covered in other classes. At MSc level, only the first session is led by staff; students then take on all roles (mini-conference chair, speakers, interpreters, etc.) and select a theme themselves, drawing from their awareness of current affairs. In these mini-conferences, students encounter for the first time a genuine audience, as well as an authentic interpreting community of practice. This study focuses most specifically on a unique aspect of this experiential learning activity: relay interpreting.

These sessions simulate a multilingual conference where presenters may use different languages not understood by all; therefore, interpreters are needed to bridge the linguistic gap and facilitate communication among participants. Student interpreters do not necessarily understand all languages used as part of the mock conference, so they need to rely on a pivot interpreter. On these occasions, pivot interpreters relay utterances by presenters into a language understood by the other interpreters present. When a speech is delivered in Chinese, for instance, the students working from Chinese into English know that their fellow interpreting students in the booths are depending on their interpreting to provide relay, so that the non-Chinese users may in turn interpret the initial speech into other languages such as French, German, Spanish, Arabic or BSL. Students carry out the interpreting required to enable communication, in consecutive and simultaneous modes.

Neither student work during mini-conferences nor the practice of relay as part of these sessions are formally assessed: students receive purely formative assessment during the debriefing session which follows the mock conference, including feedback on how they performed when depending on a pivot or acting as a pivot. Formative assessment for pivot provision also comes from peer feedback, because students who used a peer as pivot can provide valuable insight on the performance. Summative assessment for both programs of study is carried out on individual performances as part of the exam diet, in which students work directly from their working languages, not from relay. Therefore, relay interpreting is used as a pedagogical tool to further their conference interpreting skills, but students are not assessed on this practice.

2.   Theoretical Framework

The experience is part of the formative learning experience, and the sessions were designed with situated learning in mind, following Kolb's idea: "Knowledge is continuously derived from and tested out in the experiences of the learner" (1984, p. 27). The purpose of these mini-conferences is to create the experience of this community of practice described by Lave and Wenger (1991), a key element to the learning process, and relay interpreting is very much part of professional practice. Students experience a genuine multilingual event, in which they can observe the dynamics of interpreter-mediated communication, as well as engage with the professional practice required to enable communication.

This set-up creates a context favorable to another dimension of situated learning stressed by Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989): the autonomous and collaborative phase. This kind of tasks leads learners to a stage in which "students no longer behave as students, but as practitioners, and develop their conceptual understanding through

social interaction and collaboration in the culture of the domain, not of the school" (Brown et al., 1989, p. 40). It is also consistent with the need for an apprenticeship model, highlighted by Sachtleben (2015) in her research on the multilingual classroom, and aims at addressing students' need to approach their interpreting practice in an analytical and reflexive way (Bontempo & Napier, 2007; Winston, 2005) by creating a situation where their performance is crucial to the learning activity. In fact, the quality of the pivot's interpreted rendition is fundamental; if it is of poor quality, communication will break down. The key aspect of this activity, which is the focus of this article, is the "process of collective reflection—with multiple and reciprocal feedback—involving all those taking part in the taught sessions", described by Perez and Wilson (2011, p. 251) in the context of public service interpreter training. Because not all students speak all the languages involved in this situated learning experience, all of them are providers and/or users of RI. This set-up serves a dual purpose: First, students become active users of their peers' performances, thus observing interpreting in a critical way. Second, students also practice with the awareness that that their peers depend upon their performance to work, so they replicate the type of activity they observed by swapping roles. This creates a significant shift from the standard bilingual conference interpreting classroom set-up, in which all participants understand the working languages used, rendering the learning context more distant from professional practice. Although this parameter is rarely formulated explicitly in studies on conference interpreting pedagogy, it often underpins teaching strategies, such as that described by Gile (1999).

In addition to constituting an experiential learning practice, the RI dimension of mini-conferences also creates a peer-learning situation following concepts highlighted by Hara (2009) and Boud, Cohen, and Sampson (2001), as well as a context favorable to peer support (Boud et al., 2001). In this study, we explored more specifically the learning benefits of a situation in which students "share the status as fellow learners and they are accepted as such" (Boud et al., 2001 p. 4). We explore Boud et al.'s view that "reciprocal peer learning emphasizes students' simultaneous learning and contributing to other students' learning" (p. 4) applied to conference interpreting training, looking at the particular learning set-up of multilingual mock conferences in which RI takes place. Such an experience creates a situation of collaborative learning as "constructed both individually and in society" (González-Davies & Enríquez-Raído, 2016), and reinforces the "pre-specialisation" and "professional skills" that need to be embedded in the curriculum at the latter stage of students' training (González-Davies, 2004).

Finally, the medium of RI, defined by Shlesinger (2010) as "the practice of interpreting from one language to another through a third language", is also used to lead students to reflect upon professional practice, in particular on what constitutes good quality simultaneous interpreting, by approaching the question from the perspective of the pivot. This reflexive dimension is built into the debriefing session which takes places at the end of each mini-conference, during which staff provide formative feedback but also invite students to reflect on the challenges and good practice encountered and to provide specific peer feedback.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research questions and hypotheses

The research questions underpinning this study were as follows: How do students perceive RI? and How does RI affect students' focus and learning experience?

The hypotheses considered at the start of this study were:

- RI is a valuable training tool for trainee conference interpreters, and

- RI raises awareness of the professional community of practice.

Our purpose was to assess the learning outcomes of this collaborative learning experience for conference interpreting students and the extent to which it can enhance their own individual learning process. The outcome can be used to better inform curriculum design and students' preparation for such situated learning experiences.

3.2. Sample of participants

All students involved in the study had already taken part in at least five mini-conference sessions when data were collected, so they had all used or provided relay before taking part in the study.

A total of 43 students completed the questionnaires (22 for the first cohort, 21 for the second), out of which 24 were Masters students and 19 were Honors. Thirty-two students (14 MSc and 18 Honors students) volunteered to take part in the interviews over the two academic years. All language combinations were represented in both the questionnaires and interviews, thus creating a representative sample.

3.3. Set-up of mini-conference sessions

A purpose-designed conference interpreting laboratory was used for the mini-conferences (see diagram in Figure 1). The room is organized around a debating table equipped with microphones and headsets, enabling participants to address the rest of the audience or to listen to a relevant booth if they require interpreting to understand other participants' interventions. Booths (represented in grey on the diagram below) are located around the room, providing interpreters with a full or partial view of the proceedings. There are 19 booths in total, three of which are double booths.
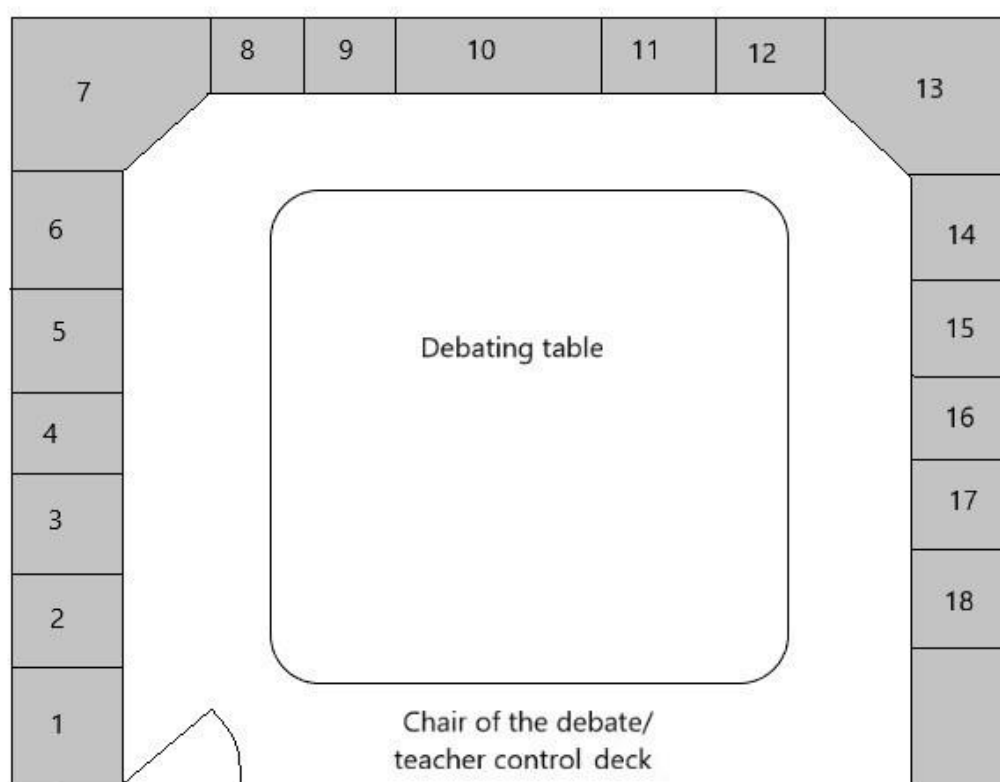
Relay interpreting as a tool for conference interpreting training

Figure 1: Typical setup of room for mini-conference practice.

During mini-conferences, students were most commonly working in one of four double booths (Booths 1, 7, 10 or 13) or in one of the single booths (all remaining booths). Each session was organized in such a way that all students spent half of the time in a booth and the other half around the debating table, acting as delegates, real users of interpreting and participants in the discussions.

3.4. Data collection

A mixed-method approach was used to collect the data: quantitative, with questionnaires that were made available, on paper and online, to reach out to as many students as possible; and qualitative, with interviews where students had the chance to answer open questions and explain their views in depth.

The questionnaires followed Sachtleben's (2015) model, adopting a series of statements which participants were asked to rate from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*), to make it fairly easy and quick for students to engage with this study. Participants were asked to react to three statements on the actual practice of RI and to two statements focused on the professional side of conference interpreting.

To complement these questionnaires and "put the responsibility for and ownership of the data much more firmly into respondent's hands" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 392), in-depth interviews were carried out, using open-ended questions. The interview invited participants to express their reflections on their understanding of the practice of relay, on their experience as relay users or providers, on the impact of this specific situation on their perceived performance and learning experience, and on the impact of RI on communication, based on what they had observed. Interviews were filmed, with the students' consent, capturing both verbal responses and visual expressions or gestures which might be used to highlight meaning.

3.5. Data analysis

A themed-analysis approach was adopted to identify recurring elements. These findings are organized around two questions: What was the impact of RI on the learning experience of trainee interpreters, and what were trainees' perceptions of this specific practice, with professional training in mind. Participants who had completed the questionnaire were invited to take part in interviews on a voluntary basis, so as to revisit the themes and provide more in-depth reflection on the practice of relay interpreting.

4. Findings

4.1. Research Question 1

Participants were first asked to react to a statement focusing on the impact of RI on trainee interpreters' experience. As stated before, trainee interpreters usually have a dual responsibility when interpreting during mini-conferences. Bearing in mind the aforementioned AIIC (1999) definition of a pivot, trainees were asked to react to the statement "Being a relay interpreter user has helped me understand what I need to focus on in my simultaneous interpreting". As AIIC (1999) outlines:

> When you are a pivot, all the principles of quality interpreting apply, of course, and a good pivot is, first and foremost, a good interpreter. However, the pivot must also make a

special effort to interpret with the needs of colleagues in mind, and to be maximally clear and helpful. (p. 628)

4.2. Survey findings

Bearing this in mind, trainee interpreters were asked to react to the statement: "Being a relay interpreter user has helped me understand what I need to focus on in simultaneous interpreting delivery." The aim of this question was to observe whether participants consciously connected the practice of RI with the professional delivery one expects of a professional conference interpreter.

Table 1: Response to "Being a relay interpreter user has helped me understand what I need to focus on in simultaneous interpreting delivery" (n = 43).

Response	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Strongly agree	41.86	18
Partially agree	41.86	18
Neither agree nor disagree	11.67	5
Partially disagree	2.32	1
Strongly disagree	2.32	1

Over eighty-three percent of students strongly or partially agreed that the experience contributed to them gaining a better understanding of how to improve their delivery, a point on which interpreting trainers often focus: In his handbook for interpreting students, Gillies (2013) starts his chapters on consecutive and on simultaneous interpreting with "delivery,". The codependency created by the knowledge that a fellow interpreter is listening and using your performance as a source is clearly considered to add to the students' learning process, as one of the participants stated during the interview:

> Having the pressure often helps me to improve. Often you can tell the people are listening to you because they turn around and stare, which occasionally can be off-putting at the beginning when someone is listening, but I really think it helps you to improve your performance. For example, if someone is listening, I really try to finish off my sentences, which I should be doing anyway, but if you don't think they are listening, it's very easy just to leave it, so I try to finish off my sentences. (Participant 5)

Students are faced with RI for the first time during these mini-conferences, so this practice is new to them. They have described it as overwhelming and somewhat frustrating at first, but thrilling, exciting and useful as they progress further into their training. When asked about their first impressions after being a user of RI, participants highlighted the challenge represented by this practice. They felt it had an impact on their usual decalage; they had

to rely on peers and the quality of the relay might vary. It also required added focus to ensure that the content remained coherent and clear.

4.3. Research Question 2

Participants were invited to reflect on the impact RI can have in terms of communication and professional practice, using two opposing statements: "Relay interpreting facilitates communication" and "Relay interpreting hinders communication". Although other factors affect interpreting performance, for the purpose of this study, students were invited to reflect on this specific practice. By presenting them with two statements similar in form but opposite in content, the aim was to make students consider this activity critically. And indeed, answers for each question are not the exact opposite: This formulation led participants to think more critically on the learning benefits of such a practice.

Table 2: Responses to "Relay interpreting facilitates communication" and "Relay interpreting hinders communication" (n = 43).

Response	**Relay interpreting facilitates communication**		**Relay interpreting hinders communication**	
	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Strongly agree	32.56	14	0	0
Partially agree	30.23	13	27.9	12
Neither agree nor disagree	30.23	13	32.56	14
Partially disagree	4.65	2	18.6	8
Strongly disagree	2.33	1	20.94	9

As stated by Giambagli (1993), RI is increasingly used both on the private market and in international institutions, despite the existing argument for "pure booths" (in which interpreters work solely into their native language), to address financial and practical considerations. As a result, it is legitimate to consider whether relay may impede communication. A range of issues may lead to the detrimental impact of relay on the quality of interpreting: lack of understanding of the message on the part of the relay interpreter, technological issues like the mishandling of interpreting consoles, and poor delivery by the relay interpreter, among others.

In fact, as shown in Table 2, more than 60% of participants agreed that RI facilitates communication. However, when asked to react to the statement "Relay interpreting hinders communication", only 27.9% agreed (partially or strongly). This led to interesting reflections on the practice during the interviews. Participant 7 explained, "Sometimes, if you get a poor relay, then it hinders the quality of your interpretation and you might have to second-guess the original intent of the speech, but overall I think it facilitates it". This point was reinforced by Participant 32, who stated, "It depends on the quality of the interpreter. If the interpreter is good,

there can hardly be any difference. When the interpreter is not brilliant, then it can hinder interpreting". These observations mirror what Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) stressed: Depending upon a pivot puts the interpreter in a situation of dependency, and the challenge can be heightened when the pivot is working into a B language. As Participant 13 stated, "I don't think the message is as clear and concise if they aren't native speakers, if they are not too comfy in that language, they stick too close to their A language". These reflections on the part of students highlight how using relay led them to reflect more critically on their peers' performance and on strategies to cope when interpreting from a partial or unclear source.

Participants were then invited to reflect on another crucial dimension of professional practice: the quality of interpreting into a B language. This question was motivated the presence of a number of nonnative speakers in the group of participants involved in the study, which meant that interpreters acting as pivot were occasionally working into their B language. Because the use of pivot (including working into their B language) in professional booths is increasing, scholars and professionals alike are considering the issue (e.g., Doempke, 2002). It was therefore relevant to lead students to reflect on the matter and its impact on RI. They were asked to react to the statement "Interpreting into the foreign language means a decrease in quality". There was no clear consensus on the question amongst participants.

Table 3: Response to "Interpreting into the foreign language means a decrease in quality" (n = 43).

Response	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Strongly agree	4.65	2
Partially agree	39.53	17
Neither nor agree nor disagree	32.56	14
Partially disagree	20.94	9
Strongly disagree	2.32	1

Only 44.18% of participants agreed with this statement while 32.56% remained undecided and 23.26% disagreed altogether. So even though a message reaches the second interpreter through a pivot, less than half of the participants considered that this necessarily meant that elements were lost in translation.

4.4.   Interview findings

The matter was explored further during the interviews when participants were asked: "How would you say that interpreting from a "native relay" (i.e., a relay in the native language of the interpreter) differs from a relay provided by someone working into their foreign language?" Based on existing works (e.g., Seleskovitch & Lederer, 1989), one would expect students to find working from a pivot who interprets into a B language more challenging than one who works into their A language. We were surprised to discover that several students took the opposite stance, considering that working into their B language was better because they have a larger understanding of the source speech and deliver the meaning in simple terms into their B language, and going as far as suggesting that taking relay from an interpreter working into their B language may in some cases be easier. Participant 2 said, "Sometimes nonnatives make sentences simpler but you get all the info that is perfectly right, if

the nonnative speaker is very clear and sentences are simpler". Participant 27 expanded on this idea by saying, "Sometimes it is very good, even when it is not done by a native speaker, because the pace is slower and because of that, they go straight to the point and use less complicated vocabulary". Backing this argument, another student reflected:

> If you interpret into your native tongue, you have a broader vocabulary. That can be a good and a bad thing because you have all the words but you can't figure out which one would be best. Sometimes in your foreign tongue, you just have certain words and it is better to come up with them, because you don't have five synonyms at hand, and into the foreign tongue you may interpret in simpler terms and you may break down the sentence structure and try to construct it in an easier way for your listener. (Participant 23)

These observations, based on ease of use for the pivot and pivot user, contradict Seleskovitch and Lederer's (1989, p. 205) statement that: "The form given to the speech by the pivot working into his B language is necessarily inferior to that of the original", arguing not on the quality of the language but on the clarity and coherence of the message. It is worth noting, however, that the Participant 23 nuanced their answer, adding, "A strong accent can counter-effect the perceived benefits of a pivot working into his B language".

However, as shown in Table 3, views were divided. Participant 11 also expressed concerns regarding interpreting into a B language: "Delivery is more stressed into the foreign tongue, they are having to think about what they are reformulating". Some participants did believe that working into their native tongue is "generally better" (Participants 8, 30 and 31). Working into their A language enabled them to focus on "making the message make sense" (Participant 9), and because they were working into their strongest language, they felt that they generally managed to convey the meaning more clearly. According to Participant 26, "Working into your own language, it flows a lot better, the meaning and sense come across a lot better, it is just generally a better message that you are getting". Yet there is the issue of comprehension, a matter possibly more significant for less experienced trainees: "Into your native language you provide a smoother, flowed interpretation and that is better for the listener. But you have to understand the original message; you miss nuances" (Participant 28).

One comment shifts the focus to interpreting skills rather than linguistic skills. In the view of Participant 5, "the most important is how good the interpreter is, more than the language". This point was also stressed by Participant 11, who noted that the quality of the relay is not just down to the quality of the pivot's B language, it "depends on the interpreter" who provides the relay. It therefore appears that, according to participants in this study, taking relay from somebody working into their B language is not necessarily problematic: The clarity of the utterance is more significant than the type of language (A or B) into which the pivot works.

To conclude the interviews, students were asked if the experience of relay had enabled them to consolidate and further their conference interpreting training. All respondents agreed that they had been able to draw lessons from the practice of RI and had applied them to their own interpreting training process. Students stated that they benefited greatly from working with their peers rather than alongside them. One interviewee felt that providing relay encouraged them to perform at their very best:

> I know I should always be at my top best performance, but when I am providing relay, it makes me more aware that people are listening, so I try to make it as clear as possible. Maybe I prioritize clarity over content sometimes, and when I am depending on others, some interpreters can be very good, but when they are not so good, sometimes your performance suffers. (Participant 14)

One further comment explores this idea: "[RI] has made me more aware of finishing my sentences even though it's something I knew [I should do]". The same participant went on to explain that the added pressure of knowing that someone may be using them as pivot actually encouraged them to continue, when they may have given up in a classroom setting. This point was confirmed by another interviewee:

> You are aware that someone is relying on you, so it pushed me a lot more to make sure what I was saying was clear, even though sometimes I did not understand what I was

> listening to, so that it was clear enough for the next person to interpret it into their own
> language. (Participant 22)

Students proceeded to name a range of skills on which they focused more significantly following the experience of RI: handling decalage, managing gaps, maintaining consistency of delivery and pace, tone, stamina, quality of expression in their A or B language, but also anticipation and preparation. All these elements are an inherent part of conference interpreting training receive, but the experience of relay enhances students' awareness of such skills.

5. Discussion

Based on participants' own words and perceptions, having to both provide relay and depend on peers can make students more focused on improving their interpreting skills and performance. As pure users of simultaneous interpreting in this setting (in the sense that they had no access to the meaning of the original speech), students were able to critically observe their peers' performance. The regular practice of this critical observation enabled them to apply what they had noted to their own practice in turn: They became more acutely aware of the importance of providing coherent, complete and intelligible interpreting. Such behavior contributes to creating a "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The feed provided by interpreting students when they are in the booths is not just a mere class practice anymore; it actually becomes essential, because multilingual communication cannot work without reliable interpreting. Students saw this dimension of challenge, which mirrors the situation in professional booths (Giambagli, 1993), as highly motivating and valuable, despite the added pressure. It made their practice much more authentic and meaningful than in a standard single language combination classroom setting, as highlighted by Participant 19: "You feel that people need to listen to you, so you need to keep going like in a professional setting, because it's hard to get that across in classes, but in a mini-conference people need to listen to you". This statement confirms the benefits of peer-supported work in a multilingual classroom (Sachtleben, 2015), and overcomes one of the issues Sachtleben highlights, because the setting means that students must pair up with different peers depending on the language used, thus fostering a deeper and more inclusive cooperation.

Relay interpreting also leads students to reflect more on their own performance:

> As an interpreter, it is hard because you kind of see the thought process of the person you
> are interpreting from, so when you hear them say something that does not sound right in
> English, your initial thought is, you think, 'oh wait, I would say something like that too'.
> Therefore, it can be a good way to try and note your own faults and improve in that way.
> (Participant 29)

This response acknowledges the benefits of co-participation and the significance of being part of a community of practice (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991, on legitimate peripheral participation); it directly informs this respondent's self-analysis and ultimately their own professional practice. It also addresses the need to develop good monitoring skills for interpreting practice (Sawyer, 1994).The collaborative nature of the exercise, during which all students were at one point a source or a user of relay, made them particularly attentive and empathetic towards their colleagues.

Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 93) established that "there are strong goals for learning because learners, as peripheral participants, can develop a view of what the whole enterprise is about, and what there is to be learned". The situated learning experience described in this article, achieved this, as illustrated by the comment of a participant, who subsequently started to reflect upon what constitutes good interpreting in the light of a relay situation:

> By understanding how difficult it can be to provide relay, you try to make the language
> you are working into as accessible and easy to use as possible rather than word choices.
> That has affected my way of interpreting in terms of making the message as clear as

> possible. When you are working from relay, you don't want a flowery and convoluted
> language. You just want a clear, calm delivery so that you can work with this and that has
> affected how I try and deliver my interpreting. (Participant 13)

Peripheral participation and practice has, in this case, led the student to question what constitutes good quality interpreting, thus starting the reflexive stage of the situated learning approach, which is further explored in the Translation and Interpreting studies lectures and tutorials followed by MA (undergraduate) and MSc (postgraduate masters) students.

Another crucial benefit of this experience was its impact on motivation and peer emulation, as illustrated for instance by this comment:

> When I listen to my colleagues, if they are well spoken or they enunciate well, it
> encourages me to continue with that same emphasis in my speech production so I can
> learn from my peers, and it is nice to see what level everyone is working at [...] Listening
> to my peers really pushes me along. (Participant 27)

It also appears to have fostered more active peer support: As part of the experiment, students were encouraged, but not required, to pair up (one student around the table with one student in a booth) and give each other feedback. Students saw clear benefits to the exercise and followed through. Participant 21 noted, "I find it helpful to get feedback from people listening to me, so I learnt a lot about the way I speak".

Not all students focused solely on the challenges presented by RI. Several comments from participants reinforce Lave and Wenger's (1991) view that "learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind", as summarized by Hanks (1991, p.15). Participant 19 stated that "[RI is] quite useful because by the time the message gets to you, it is concise, all the extra bits have been cut out, usually quite well formed". The practice of RI over several weeks during mini-conferences also helped students take stock of their own progression:

> [RI was] quite difficult at the beginning when we were not as comfortable and it was
> strange to listen to broken up sentences but as time went on, it was easier to then translate
> them into another language because the person had summed up what other people were
> saying in quite good English so it was quite concise and seemed to flow nicely.
> (Participant 22)

RI also enables students to engage with the cognitive apprenticeship model described by Brown et al. (1989, p. 40), as students "must recognize and resolve the ill-defined problems that issue out of authentic activity". This genuine setting leads students to fully engage with the professional practice they are aiming for; as Participant 16 stated, "Knowing that other people were relying upon your interpretation shows you how essential communication is". Such an experiment addresses the limits of a classroom set-up, where the lecturer cannot be listening to each student at all times, and where each user (lecturer or fellow student) has a full understanding of both languages.

The experience of RI also leads students to reflect upon a key debate in the profession, that of the quality of interpreting into A and B languages, as considered by Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) and by AIIC (1970, 1991). Interestingly, students do in fact appear to follow the same reasoning as Giambagli (1993), who concluded:

> The initial condition must be first and foremost that the ideas constituting the core of the
> message be formulated in an absolutely perfectly clear way; since relay is, all things
> considered, a linguistic filter, complex structures, flowery language, extravagant
> formulations, sentences left on hold, blanks or uncertainty in the tone are not acceptable
> (p. 83; authors' translation).

This also reflects the conclusions of Gile (2005) on directionality: Historically, it was believed in "Western" interpreting circles that interpreting into an A language was the best professional practice, but Gile noted that views are changing, or at least that the practice of working into one's B language is being considered and that evidence shows it is not necessarily detrimental to the quality of the output. Students' views in the current study may have been divided, but having approached the issue from the perspective of a relay user or provider led them to consider the functional dimension of RI. Their training in RI led them to reflect on the issue of communication,

over the concept of near-perfect interpreting, and this reflective process mirrors emerging scholarly views on the matter.

However, this study focused on two cohorts, providing a sample of only 43 participants in total, and benefits were recorded solely from the students' perspectives. Further data collection across other cohorts and specific performance analysis is needed to establish whether the use of RI as part of the training process consistently and significantly improves students' actual interpreting performance.

6.   Conclusions

This study, carried out over 2 years with two cohorts of MA and Masters students training as conference interpreters, highlights a number of valuable aspects of the practice of RI as part of the learning process. As initially anticipated, there were clear learning benefits: Using a situated learning experience requires students to cooperate actively to co-construct learning, leading to a heightened awareness of good professional practice and strategies. The results confirm findings from Perez and Wilson's (2011) study on public service interpreting training strategies: "During the training they [students] have to learn not only from immersion in authentic professional situations followed by self-reflection/analysis, but also from a process of collective reflection—with multiple and reciprocal feedback—involving all those taking part in the taught sessions" (p. 251).

The practice of RI also led students to consider the quality of interpreting when working into one's B language, the challenges it presents, and, ultimately, what constitutes a good quality simultaneous interpreting performance. Students learn how to formulate the message in the target language with two types of users in mind: the audience, so direct, pure users, but also colleagues who are listening to their interpreting to take relay and interpret the message for further pure users in the audience who have a different mother tongue.

The weekly multilingual mini-conferences also led students to engage more actively and systematically in peer feedback on top of the de facto cooperation inherent to the practice of RI. A number of students noted that practicing relay from or for peers who had a different language combination, and with whom they would not otherwise have cooperated, reminded them that they were all trainee interpreters, each experiencing challenges. The benefits of this collegial dimension in terms of motivation would be worth exploring further so as to analyze the benefits of actively becoming part of a community of practice. Further studies are needed to establish the actual interpreting performance improvement when trainee interpreters are aware that they are being used as pivot, and the actual impact of taking relay from a pivot working into their A or B language.

Integrating the practice of RI, as used by professional interpreters in multilingual conferences into the training of conference interpreters has a notable and positive impact on their learning process, and further situated learning experiences can be derived from this model to foster a better understanding of professional practice and performance in training programs. This study opens new avenues of research to expand on RI in conference interpreting training settings, such as using RI to consolidate students' confidence and the quality of students' interpreting into their B language following the experience of using a pivot.

7.   Acknowledgments

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Interview with Niki Baras, Translators and Interpreters Australia - A Division of Professionals Australia

Dr. Oktay Eser[1]

Amasya University, Turkey

Dr. Miranda Lai

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University), Australia

Niki Baras

Translator and Interpreter Division of Professionals Australia

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.

Abstract[2]

Niki Baras represents the Translator and Interpreter Division of Professionals Australia, an amalgamated organization representing professionals from various fields with a mission to ensure their work is recognised and rewarded appropriately. This interview looks at the social status, respect and sustainability issues of community interpreters in Australia from an industrial point of view. After a brief overview of how the Translator and Interpreter Division came about under the organization, Niki explains the historical contexts in which the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters in Australia was founded in 1977. After more than 40 years of development, community interpreting in Australia has become unsustainable due to poor working conditions, low social status, and the prevalence of unqualified interpreters. Niki believes in the earlier model under which government took charge of organizing and running its own public service interpreting services. She also urges community interpreters to stand up for themselves. At the end, she focuses on the code of ethics as one of the features that makes community interpreting a profession.

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[1] *Correspondence to: oktay.eser@amasya.edu.tr*

[2] This is an abridged version of one of the interviews conducted as part of the first author's post-doctoral research into community interpreting services in Australia, funded by the TUBITAK BIDEB 2219 program, Turkey.

Interview with Niki Baras, Translators and Interpreters Australia - A Division of Professionals Australia

Dr. Oktay Eser is an associate professor at the Department of Translation and Interpreting, Amasya University, Turkey. His graduate studies in Translation and Interpreting were undertaken at Istanbul University, Turkey. He also holds an MA degree in Business Administration at Istanbul Kültür University. A translator of Turkish and English languages, he is a member of Translation Association, Turkey, and International Federation of Translators. His research interests include translator education, professional ethics and translation and interpreting services. He has published research papers and books in translation studies. His recent books are entitled *Çeviribilimde Edinç Araştırmaları* (Competence Studies in Translation) and *Translation and Interpreting as Sustainable Services*.

Dr. Miranda Lai is a lecturer and trainer in interpreting and translating studies at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. She has taught translating and interpreting skills in both higher education and vocational training contexts. Her research interests include interpreting and translating pedagogy, investigative interviewing in bilingual settings and ethics for translators and interpreters. She has developed and delivered training for interpreters in Australia and overseas. Miranda is the co-author of the books entitled *Police Investigative Interviews and Interpreting: Context, Challenges and Strategies*, and *Ethics for Police Translators and Interpreters*.

Oktay: Niki, could you tell us about your professional background and the institution you work for?

Niki: I work as an interpreter, translator and organizer. I have done so for most of the last thirty years, and even when I haven't, I've been working in the industry, running agencies and project management in translation. My job with Professionals Australia[3] started four years ago. When I was hired, I was a workplace representative as a

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[3] Professionals Australia is an amalgamated organization with more than 25,000 members in Australia, representing professionals from various fields such as architecture, engineering, IT, pharmacy, professional management, science, translation and interpreting etc. One of its missions is to ensure that these professionals' work is recognised and rewarded appropriately. For more information, see: http://www.professionalsaustralia.org.au/about/history-professionals-australia/.

volunteer, and I was then hired to be the organizer because of my industry experience. I actually come from the industry.

Miranda: What about the Translating & Interpreting Division under Professional Australia, the union in layman's term?

Niki: I'm attached to the Victorian branch, and I oversee everything and work with support from the other lead organizers and the actual CEO of this union. Overall, the CEO of the organization is in charge of the campaign, but I also work with the campaigns team and I work with the lawyers when I need to. I actually engage with everybody and any organization to meet the different needs, because organizing is fundamentally about recruiting and membership growth. It's so complex in our [T & I] industry.

Oktay: And there are different divisions under Professionals Australia, right?

Niki: We come under Translators and Interpreters Australia.4 Our group is under the Managers and Professionals division. So, we also have managers and a lot of our members predominantly work for government directly or indirectly. Our engineers, for example, usually are found in government departments or in local councils, so they're salaried engineers. They're not high-flying, but they're very well paid. Many of their professional issues are not related to money, but rather to work conditions and status. We also flow into the private sector. Often in the private sector, you'll find they belong to the associations rather than the unions. There are a lot of parallels. So the organization's used to dealing with government, because most of the members are ultimately employees of the government, and translators and interpreters in community T&I are seen fundamentally as employees of the government farther down the food chain.

Miranda: Is the T&I Division the smallest one in the overall organization?

Niki: Probably, the more specific one. We're a professional association and a union. The unions are not what they used to be. The union movement doesn't have the same power [as before]. They're finding out now that they can't work the way they've always worked. We've got Liberal governments trying to shut unions down, so the unions are having to find new ways of operating. So we even do things with the dentists. They're community dentists who work in the community health centres. They are often like interpreters. They are often migrants and they're often women. They're members of the Dental Association, so we have an agreement with the Dental Association where we're kind of subcontracted to provide the industrial union support to their members. So, we're subcontracting a union to provide industrial services. These are just new ways in which unions are working today. Wealso have the pharmacists whom we represent fully, and they're the community pharmacists. They work in pharmacies, often in the chain stores like Chemist Warehouse and all those places. They're severely underpaid. If you have a look there, a lot of them are also migrants.

Oktay: Niki, I'm interested in hearing about the working conditions and social status of the profession of community interpreting in Australia.

Niki: I'm happy to talk to you about that, as it's a primary problem. Social status is probably the overarching issue, because it's all tied in. I'll give you a synopsis of the historical context. We formed NAATI5 in 1977 when

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[4]Translators and Interpreters Australia is a division of Professionals Australia, established in 2014. For more information, see: http://tia.professionalsaustralia.org.au/TIA/Home/TIA/Default.aspx?hkey=4e51dace-88d9-442b-8fc6-5721f1ecd180.

[5] The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd (NAATI) is a company that is jointly owned by the state and territorial governments of Australia. It was established on September 14, 1977 with a mission to set and maintain high national standards in translation and interpreting. There are currently 19,900 accredited interpreters and 24,600 accredited translators in Australia. For more information, see: https://www.naati.com.au/news-events/news-events-container/updates/naati-and-ausit-a-shared-history/.

most interpreting was being done ad hoc, and interpreting needed to become a profession. There needed to be some sort of formalizing. A lot of the early migrants were taxi drivers. A lot of them were from Egypt and were multilingual. They used to go to the hospitals to pick up patients. Because they drove taxis, they had some English, even broken English. They were also called into emergency departments to interpret, because they were all migrants. It was in that context that NAATI was founded. We had to do something about this situation, so we founded NAATI and the services started. We started producing trained graduates. It all evolved.

The pay wasn't too bad when I started in the 1980s. Then in 1986-87, the industry was privatized, and that was the end of it. It all became about price and cost cutting. The fees have been declining and it's been a race to the bottom ever since. As a result, we've seen significant attrition. Good people leave. Trained people leave. They cannot earn a living. But immigration continues, and demand goes up. Demand is exceeding supply at a rapid pace, so we have now gone backwards [in terms of employment conditions] and I think we're back to where we were about 30 years ago after all the work we did.

Eventually, we've seen, for a variety of reasons, a complete diminishing of a status that never really developed. We never really made it to professional respect, but many of us who are known as the pre-2007 cohort who took courses and completed degrees felt that we had a little bit of a moment in the sun, but really not quite enough and then it's been gradually diminishing. Professionals Australia came into being because a group of people who were frustrated went looking for a body to represent them. And under the rules this was the body that could take them and form a group. We've only been around for five years. In 2014, we ran a survey of the industry, not just members. We surveyed close to a thousand people and the number-one issues were, even above remuneration, lack of respect for the profession and no status. I think that's still the case, and that's still probably one of the principle barriers to the work we're trying to do.

Oktay: What do you think are the main components of gaining professional respect?

Niki: Well, I think one of the reasons we don't have respect is that not all interpreters have a compulsory degree. There is a difference between interpreters and translators, so, from this point, I'll focus a lot more on interpreters, because that's where most of our work [at Translators and Interpreters Australia] is concentrated at the moment. Translators are a slightly different case, but community interpreters don't all have training. Some of us simply took a test through NAATI. Some of us aren't even fully bilingual. There's no consistency in our skills and abilities or our qualifications. You will get credentialed people, and the credential is one thing, but it's not the thing. That's where I think the confusion comes into play, in that the government agencies and institutions that use our services might know about NAATI and credentialing, and they think that's all there is. But it's not. It's one thing, and it's the one thing that unites us and that gives us some leverage with government. That's it. The government owns NAATI. It is a government mechanism for the protection of the consumer, not the protection of the interpreter. If the interpreters want to get smart, they have to come together. While the government says, "You must have a NAATI accreditation", the union says:

- The government currently only wants the credential and nothing else, but you're not even enforcing your own policy. You're breaching your own policy as well as people's privacy. You're allowing non-credentialed people to do the work, because you don't want to pay a professional-level fee.

- Interpreters should have some university training *and* get a credential. A credential is one thing, but it's not the only thing. The credential, which we say, is the minimum you should have.

- The government is not investing in organizing the work in such a way that interpreters can earn a living.

There are many 'interpreters' in the field who are untrained, unqualified, lack credentials and even lack a regard for the role as a professional one. Language services providers have in recent years been reckless in their recruitment of untested bilinguals to perform the interpreting role. This is what the consumer sees. So, a lack of respect for our profession probably comes - this is my hypothesis - from the way people present on the job. We're all aware that interpreting practice and presentation are not consistent, including the way people dress, the way they turn up to work, and the way they behave. In addition to low professionalism attributable to lack of skills, training, and poor presentation, the lack of respect can also be related to the fact that many of us are "migrant" workers and women, who are often the usual targets for exploitation. So, I think we don't get the respect.

Interview with Niki Baras

Another angle is that we've never stood up for ourselves, and when we do, it's within our own communities. Language group associations are a positive way in which interpreters can unite – especially when these groups show leadership and interest in industrial activity and how it can benefit their group. In the absence of regular workplaces, these associations or groups provide a forum where Professionals Australia can reach out to interpreters. In my view, the students are the future. I think a lot of energy has gone into my own peers and colleagues [on union movement], but I think we're on our way out, and I think we need to now really invest in newer groups. The students are coming through now, if they're serious about this job.

Oktay: Professionals Australia published a document entitled "Language Services: A National Policy"[6], *in which it says that the workforce in the translation and interpreting industry is aging, and only 7.6% of practitioners are younger than 30 years of age. The survey also shows that 60% of the interpreting workforce earns less than AU$20,000, and only about 7% earn above AU$60,000 per year.*

Niki: Interpreters are averaging three jobs a day, which takes them up to a base salary of about AU$42,000 a year, which is still below an average wage. That's why you're only working part-time [in real terms]. You're away from home for eight hours a day, but you're working three separate assignments. In between, you're driving, and you're not getting paid for that time. Many interpreters are refusing to travel, because it's just not viable. The Victorian government commissioned a review. The review found everything we were saying was correct:

- an unsustainable industry;
- aging interpreters; and
- a decrease in income over the years.

Something has to be done. Last year, the Victorian state government announced a 21.8 million dollar boost to language services on top of the 40million dollar existing budget. But we don't just need more money. What you do is you reorganize how you spend the existing budget. One solution could be to have the government take all the services back, the way they used to be before the late 1980s, and to run the services out of a central office. In return, though, interpreters would have to give something back, because the Victorian government is well aware that the quality of interpreting is below par and that they would have to invest in professional development as well. The Minister for Multicultural Affairs, who also sits on the board of NAATI, is leading this initiative. NAATI is improving the credentialing system, which is what the Victorian Government wants to see. As far as the union is concerned, all of these initiatives are very timely and useful. We support NAATI and credentialing as a means to a sustainable end.

Oktay: Niki, another issue is that interpreters are often migrants, asylum-seekers or refugees, who interpret for other migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. These interpreters often have expertise or a degree in another area such as medicine or law. They have qualifications which aren't recognized by the Australian government when they arrive in Australia. They become taxi drivers or interpreters. Over time, they become qualified interpreters, but they also tend to move back to their original professions, as they are better paid there. Does it lead us to the sustainability problem, too?

Niki: Right. That's a really good point. That's another barrier because the profession, as it stands, is not attractive enough for that group of people to stay in it. However, most interpreters – regardless of the reason they've gone into the job, actually like the job, and many have altruistic reasons for doing it. On the other hand, if they can get their original professional credentials recognized or if they can re-train in a better paying field, they will move into another profession. I know a gentleman who interprets Dinka. He is a smart man and articulate in English. But because he can't get enough work, he can't survive. There's only a small group who need interpreting in Dinka, and the Dinka interpreters' highest credential is [NAATI] Paraprofessional [Interpreter], for which the pay is even

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[6] Professionals Australia (n.d.). *Language Services: A National Policy*. Accessed from:

http://tia.professionalsaustralia.org.au/TIA/Publications%20reports/A_National_Policy.aspx

lower. But there's a whole bunch of other Dinka interpreters with no credentials, so the work is just spread out amongst a whole lot of people rather than the work being channelled [to the few qualified ones]. This is what the qualified Dinka interpreters complain about. They say that if the work were consolidated and a smaller group of people did all the work, then they could all possibly earn a living. What you've got now is all the workers dispersed, and you've got a whole range of people qualified and unqualified doing the work. It's impossible to earn a living wage over time, and there's no career path or progress, so people inevitably seek other work. Interpreting often becomes an interim job, even though they may like the job. Often interpreters themselves don't actually see it as a profession either and don't see the need to even study. There's attrition.

Miranda: I'll just give you an example. Credentialed Mandarin interpreters are in over-supply. Graduates from our master's program are very enthusiastic in their first year of practice, but then attrition sets in. I know one high-performing graduate, who did all the specialist subjects such as investigative interviewing. Two years into practice, she's seeking to change professions.

Niki: Anyone who is bright and has a lot of the qualities doesn't want to stay in this profession because it's so limiting, and we know from anecdotal evidence that if it were more attractive, people would want to stay, because we know that intellectually it can be stimulating. Unless the government invests in it, it's not sustainable. It's government work and the government has a responsibility. Government needs to take responsibility for that work. Despite its modern multicultural profile, this country is so behind in acknowledging the importance of bilingualism and multilingualism.

Miranda: I think that's a very good point. The media often only feature ethnic organizations in the light of celebrating multiculturalism. But these organizations must make more fuss about the issues and risks of multilingualism.

Niki: What matters to government is risk and votes. That's the reality. By having an unsustainable language services industry, they put the communities at risk. But the communities need advocates to speak up for them. We've done a report on it, with all those case studies and a whole lot of anecdotal material and the things that could have gone wrong by not having an interpreter or not having a properly qualified interpreter. We wrote to the government and said that was the cost and the risk for you. I think there needs to be more engagement with the community for them to speak up. It's about the communities or their representatives engaging with us, and their representatives should get them up and activate them. A large part of the work of a community interpreter is understanding the context and the environments where we work, but unfortunately a lot of people don't have that, and part of the training is exposing them to the need to learn that. A profession is also defined by its allegiance to a code of ethics, and I think dealing in the environments we deal in, we need to have a code of ethics. So, I guess that's one of the features that makes us a profession.

   You also have to guard against juggling between supply and demand. A lot of people can work part-time as a hobby. We call people "hobbyists" who are happy to do a little bit of this work on the side to earn some pocket money. Sometimes they don't even charge. That altruism can be really detrimental to those who really want to earn a living and provide a professional service. Those well-meaning people can often do more harm than good. So, it's how you meet the demand and create a professional supply with integrity and ethics. Those are the challenges.

Oktay: Thank you for your time, Niki.

Dissertation abstracts

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.

A Policy-Focused Examination of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters in Australia

Adolfo Gentile

School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics, Monash University

Email: anacapri@ozemail.com.au

Degree: PhD thesis, Monash University

Abstract

The establishment of translation and interpreting services in Australia and the changing role of government in this endeavor represent significant and innovative milestones in the ambit of Australian migration policy. This work describes the developments which culminated in the creation of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) and which resulted in a then-unique system for the provision of language services. This thesis analyzes these developments employing the multiple-streams framework, a policy process model developed by Kingdon (1995), previously utilized in other contexts but not as yet in translation and interpreting services. The analysis illustrates how these developments were part of translation policy, a concept which has only received sporadic and scant academic attention. A fundamental definitional problem exists in the area, whereby translation policy has been regarded as a policy applicable to non-official (often labelled *minority*) languages within political systems, and most often in a discussion of status planning within a language(s) policy framework (Diaz Fauces 2005; González Núñez 2016; Meylaerts, 2011; Ozolins 1991, 2010).

The kind of policy developed in Australia and which is the object of this study encompasses a view of translation as a service belonging to the realm of public policy. The findings indicate that the policy in question was the outcome of a philosophy of the migration program rooted in the concept of nation building and supported by a bipartisan political approach more than in the realm of language policy.

This research informs policy development in many parts of the world which are now experiencing massive movements of people between states and continents, as well as the formalization of policies dealing with interpreting and translating services.

Keywords: Interpreter and Translator accreditation; policy; Australia; migration and language services

Investigating the Impact of ASL Proficiency Levels on ASL-English Interpretation

Keith Gamache

Department of Interpretation, Gallaudet University

Email: kgamachejr@ivc.edu

Degree: PhD dissertation, Gallaudet University

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate how select language features in signers with varying American Sign Language (ASL) proficiency levels may impact novice ASL-English interpreters' interpreted work. Interpreter

education programs have long sought to define what constitutes effective interpreting practice, including but not limited to how best to respond to the challenges of the Deaf community's shifting demographics. Due to inter-language influence between English and ASL, signers typically demonstrate varying proficiency levels in ASL. In this study, stimulus video material was created from preselected video recordings of individuals who had previously taken the ASL Proficiency Interview (ASLPI). In particular, two language features were examined: depiction and fingerspelling – and The correlation between the linguistic features and the impact of each on the interpreted work were analyzed. ELAN (an annotating software program) was used in assessing ASL source texts for the language features. Novice interpreters' interpreted work of the stimulus video material was recorded, transcribed and analyzed. The analysis used both propositional accuracy and subjective quality measures. The stimulus video material and interpreted work were then compared to find emerging patterns. Findings showed that ASLPI Level 4 signers produced the most language features, while ASLPI Level 5 signers produced the most fingerspelled words. Interpreters performed better with ASLPI Level 3 and Level 4 stimulus materials as compared to Level 5. Overall, interpreters struggled with complex signed phrases that included more language features. Fingerspelled words in the stimulus video materials impacted most of the interpreted work products.

Keywords: language features, proficiency levels, ASL-English interpretation, novice interpreters, fingerspelling

The Use and Effectiveness of Situated Learning in American Sign Language-English Interpreter Education

Annette Miner

Email: minerinparadise@yahoo.com

Abstract
The purpose of this study was to describe the use and perceived impact of situated learning activities in ASL-English interpreter education in the United States. A mixed-methods approach consisting of two separate studies was employed for the investigation. The first study was a survey of interpreter educators to discover the extent to which situated learning is used in interpreting programs. Questionnaire results and follow-up interview data were collected. The second study was a case study of a short-term, intensive interpreting program that utilized a situated learning approach to provide authentic interpreting experiences for students. Data collection included interviews with faculty, staff and students as well as analysis of the curriculum and student work samples.

Based on a review of research in the situated learning and ASL-English interpreter education literature, a continuum of situated learning activities in interpreter education was developed as part of this study. The continuum organizes interpreter education activities from least to most authentic. It was used for questionnaire development in Study One and for analysis of case study data in Study Two. It was found to be a useful tool for curriculum development and evaluation.

Results of this research show that educators and students found situated learning experiences to be valuable in building confidence and interpreting skills in real world settings. Although other, less authentic learning experiences were more commonly part of interpreting curricula, situated learning was seen as an important way to scaffold students toward authentic learning experiences. Teamwork and partnerships were seen as key factors in providing situated learning experiences for students.

Keywords: experiential learning, apprenticeship, authentic, curriculum, ASL, context

Dissertation abstracts

Translator Education in Context: Learning Methodologies, Collaboration, Employability, and Systems of Assessment

Hayley King

School of Global, Urban and Social Sciences, RMIT University

Email: hayley.king@rmit.edu.au

Degree: PhD thesis, RMIT University

Abstract

Translator education within a higher education context aims for student-centred collaborative learning that produces employable graduates. There is a close connection between curriculum and the translation labour market, with competence models in Europe and through NAATI in Austraila ensuring that market demands are met. This study used an ethnographic case study approach to investigate features that support and inhibit learning in translator education programs. Fieldwork, including observation, informal chats and semi-structured interviews, combined with document analysis was undertaken over an eighteen month period at three sites: one in Spain and two in Australia. An iterative analysis created a dialogue between literature and data. The research revealed that high-stakes, student-centered translator education programs that are grounded in requirements for employability have to contend with the consequences of testing. This was particularly the case in Australia, where NAATI certification testing was integrated into education programs. However, it was equally the case in Spain where competitive practices secured learners a place in the program and then continued to impact their learning in the classroom.