The Contribution of Deaf Interpreters to GATEKEEPING within the Interpreting Profession: Reconnecting with our roots

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Abstract

The concept of *gatekeeping* within the interpreting profession has been mourned as the loss of a critical component in ensuring that practitioners enter the field by way of stakeholder induction. Historically, *gatekeeping* also served as a protective mechanism to ensure that the interpreters had a significant connection to the community. With the advent of legislation and interpreter education programs, the Deaf community's role in the selection of candidates to enter the field has diminished. We propose that one way in which the role of *gatekeeping* is currently evident is through the work of Deaf interpreters. This paper will provide an overview of data collected from the analysis of Deaf-hearing team interpretations. The data suggests that Deaf interpreters intervene in the interpreting process more frequently than their hearing counterparts in a number of ways. Ultimately, contributing to the *gatekeeping* function is an example of the unique role served by Deaf interpreters.

Keywords: Deaf Interpreters, gatekeepers.

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Numerous authors have talked about the dramatic shift that has occurred relating to the process by which individuals who can hear become interpreters and the diminishing role of Deaf people in the vetting process (Cokely, 2011, 2012; Williamson, 2012; Taylor, 2012; Suggs, 2012; Colonomos, 2013). Concern regarding the absence of *Deaf heart* in new practitioners is a common topic among Deaf people and seasoned interpreters. Prior to the establishment of certification standards, laws requiring linguistic access or the proliferation of interpreter education programs, Deaf people led the process of vetting interpreters. This vetting served to protect the Deaf community and ensure that interpreters had a sufficient connection to the community (Cokely, 2011, 2012). Deaf individuals often directly recruited individuals to serve as interpreters and invested personal time and energy guiding their acquisition and mastery of ASL, their immersion into the Deaf-World, and their induction into interpreting (Witter-Merithew, 2013). Some of those who were recruited were CODAs and other family members. Some were individuals who worked with Deaf people in some professional capacity where their use of American Sign Language was a necessity. Others were individuals who demonstrated an interest in connecting to and communicating with Deaf people. The internal grapevine of the Deaf Community was used to monitor which interpreters were most effective in advancing the interests of the Deaf Society, and which interpreters should not be used. This is no longer the norm.

There is an increasing interest in finding ways to return Deaf people to the position of *Gatekeeper* they once held within the interpreting profession. We propose that one way in which the role of *gatekeeping* is currently evident is through the work of Deaf interpreters who work collaboratively with hearing interpreters.

This paper will provide an overview of data collected from the analysis of Deaf-hearing team interpretations rendered during court proceedings and in vocational rehabilitation (VR) settings. The data provides evidence that Deaf interpreters intervene in the interpreting process more frequently than their hearing counterparts for the purpose of 1) checking in with Deaf consumers to determine comfort level, ensure understanding, provide process information or seek clarification, 2) to verify the accuracy of the hearing interpreter's interpretation and 3) to seek clarification regarding meaning and intention from the source speaker. Further, they provide more context-based information as part of their interpretations to Deaf consumers.

We also propose that this role of *gatekeeping* is not necessarily an intentional or conscious action on the part of Deaf interpreters, but rather a natural outcome of having Deaf natives involved in the interpreting process. We suggest that the Deaf interpreter serves as a buffer that protects the Deaf consumer and exhibits a protective feature of *gatekeeping*. It is our aim to give attention to the *gatekeeping* phenomena as it occurs in team interpreting and to promote further exploration of it for the purpose of deepening an understanding of it and fostering a more reflective

and deliberate application. To this end, we will discuss the implications of the findings for interpreter education and ways in which interpreter education can introduce the work of Deaf interpreters to students of interpreting.

Gatekeeping as a protective cultural phenomenon

Historically, when interpreters were inducted into the profession, members of the Deaf community played a central role in the process. This involvement ensured that the interpreter had the appropriate skills, temperament and character to serve the community. In essence, the selection process served to protect the community from outside interlopers. This vetting protected the interests of the community by ensuring that interpreters were skilled and compassionate and able to collaborate in the interpreting process. While that control mechanism is no longer the norm, the need to protect the community's interest in language access still exists. As suggested in the data, Deaf interpreters may serve as a critical link in the process of protecting the community's language access rights.

    Gatekeeping is not a term unique to the signed language interpreting community. In the law, *gatekeeping* has been discussed primarily in regards to its protective function. The judge has a responsibility to protect the evidentiary integrity of a trial by vetting out 'junk science' offered by expert witnesses. A rich body of case law exists defining the type of experts who may be allowed to testify in a trial. Only experts who could demonstrate that their opinions had a valid and reliable basis are permitted to testify as to those opinions in court (*Daubert*, 1993).

    Forestal (2014), discusses the role of Deaf experts who serve as gatekeepers within the community as those who contribute to the work of Deaf interpreters. The research participants in her study about Deaf interpreters indicated that, "only Deaf persons who have experienced interpreting, translating, or communicating for other Deaf people during their formative and adult years and have been supported in this endeavor by the gatekeepers of the Deaf community should consider interpreting as a career option (p. 44)". This underscores the importance of expert and native cultural and linguistic competence as a pre-requisite for effective Deaf interpreters—a level of expert competence not achievable by non-deaf individuals.

    In terms of academic theory, a discussion of gatekeeping can be found in the literature of communication studies, journalism, political science and sociology (Barzilai-Nahon, 2009). Kurt Lewin—a German psychologist and pioneer in social psychology—first coined the concept of a gatekeeper. Lewin (1947) describes the gatekeeper as the individual who ensures that information moves between individuals and/or groups, based on social and cultural norms and values. He argues that such gatekeepers exist at various levels of society—parents assume the vital role of deciding what information their children receive or should avoid based on their personal values and beliefs; a news medium editor decides what kind of news items will be published and what will not, based on the news organizations policy. Other authors have used Lewin's theory of gatekeeping to argue expanded applications—mostly relating to the role of gatekeeping in mass media (Barzilai-Nahon, 2009). The overarching goal of the gatekeeping process is to empower the recipients of communication by helping to filter the flow of information into the most efficient and useful form.

    Davidson (2000) explored the role of interpreters as institutional gatekeepers by examining the social-linguistic role of interpreters in Spanish-English medical discourse. He concluded that interpreters were " acting, at least in part, as informational gatekeepers who keep the interview 'on track' and the physician on schedule. While the interpreters do in fact convey much of what is said, they also interpret selectively, and appear to do so in a patterned (non-random) fashion (p. 400)." Davidson further states that interpreters cannot be neutral machines of language conveyance 1) because they are faced with differences in how linguistic systems convey information contextually, and, 2) because, even though their role is unique, interpreters are also social agents and participants in the discourse event.

    In this study, protection of a Deaf child's access to full linguistic inclusion is the primary focus—although other data is considered as well. The actions and practices of Deaf Interpreters during a meeting between a Guardian ad

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Litem and Deaf child who is at the center of a child custody action suggest that in order to ensure this inclusion, the Deaf Interpreter must incorporate a variety of interpreter-initiated utterances.

The purpose of gatekeeping

Deaf people who share their language with interpreters, both in the past and today, instil communicative and cultural competence in interpreters that cannot be learned solely within the classroom.

> Communicative competence includes not only the grammatical competence a speaker has but the knowledge of culturally appropriate "ways of speaking," such as how to ask for information, give praise, complain, joke, and so on. (Roy, p. 20, 2000).

An interpreter may have sufficient grammatical resources, but still be unable to use the language in a way that is natural and unaccented. Interpreter education students are admonished frequently that to attain this competence, they must socialize within the Deaf community. Traditionally, Deaf people personally have selected those whom they would impart this competence and endorse as interpreters. Padden and Humphries explain the protectiveness felt by Deaf community members and their hesitation to permit un-vetted access.

> Before sign language became so public, the language bonded the group together and kept alive rich channels of cultural circulation. Its unusual qualities kept away outsiders because Deaf people believed there was little interest in the language outside the group. They had been told by others that their language wasn't worth preserving. <u>Yet part of their private use of sign language came from a desire to protect their private world, to have something that would insulate them from those who might do them emotional or physical harm</u>. Coming to accept that ASL was an object of public interest and that it should be taught to others was a difficult transition (Padden & Humphries, 2005, p.157)(Emphasis added).

Padden and Humphries set forth several essential questions facing the Deaf community in deciding whether and with whom to share their language: "How did hearing people plan to use their knowledge of the language? Would they learn the language in order to communicate with Deaf people, or to dominate them?" (Padden & Humphries, 2005, p. 198). Hence, the *gatekeeping* function points not only to language skills or communicative competence, but to the attitude and character of the outsider as well.

In discussing the transition of interpreting from a model of community collaboration to a profession and/or model of business, Cokely (2011) emphasizes the consequences the Deaf Community has experienced as a result of legislatively mandated communication access. One significant consequence is the loss of the Deaf Community's ability to define the work of interpreters.

> Deaf people used to be the primary source of helping us learn their language and they did so by teaching it to us from birth, or because we had familial ties or because they extended opportunities for us to socialize with them. But now according to a national survey 49% of nationally credentialed sign language interpreters spend less than 10% of their time socializing with Deaf people; only 20% of us are members of NAD and only 8% of us are members of their state association of the Deaf. How then do we keep abreast of changes in the language or changes in the attitudes/perspectives of Deaf people? How do we justify learning their language and profiting from it without giving back? In becoming a "profession" have we simply become parasites (Cokely, 2011)?

Cokely (2012) also discusses the implication of the vanquished native voices in the field of interpreting. The diminishing role of hearing interpreters from Deaf families—Codas—represents a loss of a rich source of knowledge and insight. The more consistent inclusion of Deaf interpreters in the interpreting process—particularly when they are

paired with interpreters who are non-native—offers a way in which this knowledge source can be regained and deepened.

Deaf interpreters and interaction patterns

It is widely accepted that interpreters are more than intermediaries who transmit language in a triadic exchange without any effect or interference on the interaction (Metzger, 2000). Rather, interpreters function as participants both in regard to interaction management, and, in crafting renditions to satisfy the participants' interactional goals (Metzger, 2000). Wadensjo describes interpreting as a two pronged task: interpreting and coordinating (Wadensjo, 1998). Interpreter's utterances outside of the act of interpreting can function in a number of ways, including, to influence the interaction's progress or substance, to regulate aspects of the interaction, to influence the mode of the interaction, and to generate a shared discourse, among other functions (Wadensjo, 1998, p. 105). The coordination aspect of interpreting typically serves to solve some problem either in the translation or in communication (Wadensjo, p. 108-09). Coordination activities include requests for clarification, requests for time, requests to stop or start talking, comments on the translation, and requests to observe turn-taking, among other items. In examining interpreter-mediated interactions, Wadensjo also discusses expanded and reduced renditions. A close rendition would include only that propositional content that was expressly stated in the original, including the style (Wadensjo, p 107). An expanded rendition would include more explicitly expressed information than was present in the original corresponding to the more common notion of contextualization. The questions examined in the data here include both the nature of the coordination activity when undertaken by the Deaf interpreter and the nature of the expanded renditions within the Deaf interpreter's work.

Deaf interpreters are often used in court and legal settings. When Deaf interpreters work in court, it may be because the Deaf participant does not use formal ASL. In those cases, the interactional involvement, particularly the coordinating aspect, of the interpreting team may be foregrounded. In *People v. Vasquez*, the defendant appealed a murder conviction on the grounds that his due process rights were violated because of a Deaf witness' inability to express herself through a team of Deaf and hearing interpreters (*Vasquez* 2004). The Deaf witness did not use ASL yet she was able to express herself to the Deaf-hearing interpreting team through gestures and some rudimentary sign. At numerous points in the witness' testimony, the interpreting team collaborated with each other on the most efficient rendition. The team frequently had to explain their difficulties to the court and to assist counsel in crafting questions that would be more effectively translatable. Hence, the nature of the consumer for whom the Deaf interpreter is working may have some impact on the Deaf interpreter's interactional coordinating activities. Even when working with Deaf consumers who use ASL, however, the data we examined showed a number of times when the participation and coordination by the Deaf interpreter were foregrounded within the interaction.

Legal interpreting data

The Mid-America Regional Interpreter Education ("MARIE") Center is housed within the University of Northern Colorado's Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Education ("DOIT") Center and is one of six entities that form the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. UNC-MARIE is the center on excellence in legal interpretation, among other priorities, and hosts annual legal interpreter training events for practitioners. In preparation for the 2014 Institute on Legal Interpreting, which focused on examining the decisions and work of highly skilled teams of Deaf and hearing legal interpreters, the work of four Deaf interpreters was filmed interpreting various aspects of a civil custody trial. The Deaf interpreters selected the hearing interpreters with whom they worked. Three

of the four Certified Deaf interpreters come from Deaf families. Two of the four Certified Hearing Interpreters selected also come from Deaf families. All of the interpreters are trained and experienced legal interpreters. The filming took place in October of 2013 in Denver, Colorado. The custody case involved Deaf parents and a Deaf child. Materials for preparation were provided to the participants included schematics of the physical layout of the courtroom, a report from the Guardian ad Litem ("GAL"), a summary of the issues in the trial and reports from a psychologist regarding custody recommendations. The interpreting team was filmed engaging in preparatory discussions regarding teaming agreements and process issues. While over twenty (20) hours of interpreting work was filmed in which the Deaf interpreters interpreted for parts of the custody trial for hearing witnesses in the simultaneous mode, the data for this paper derived mainly from the rich and robust work engaged in by the Deaf interpreters in the consecutive mode for the interview between the GAL and the Deaf child. All four teams interpreted the interview between the GAL and Deaf child—although the GAL and Deaf child differed for two of the interviews, the focus of the interview and subjects addressed was the same for all four. The Deaf interpreters and their hearing team did not observe each other interpreting the interview, but all did have access to a common case file and had the opportunity to meet briefly with the GAL and Deaf child prior to beginning the interpretation. All four of the Certified Deaf interpreters used consecutive interpretation. The four interpretations examined ranged from 24 to 40 minutes in length, depending on whether the Certified Hearing Interpreter used simultaneous or consecutive interpretation.

The interpretations were analysed and all instances of interpreter-initiated utterances were recorded and later organized around the themes identified by Wadensjo (1998). Specifically, instances of coordinating activities and expanded renditions of the source language message were the primary focus. The instances for each team are represented in Table 1 and show both the number of instances by the Certified Deaf interpreter and their hearing counterpart. In this setting, outside of the court, the coordination aspect of the Deaf interpreters' work was most apparent. In court, there are strict rules governing the coordination aspect of interpreting which must be transparent to and supervised by the judge. As a result, the coordination aspect of all interpreters' work is tempered in courtroom interpreting.

Checking in as coordinating activity

In all of the segments, Deaf interpreters engaged in coordination activity such as checking in which took place in a variety of ways. Often, the Deaf interpreters checked in to keep the Deaf child apprised of the interpreting process. For example, because the hearing interpreter in one section used consecutive interpreting and note-taking for the English to ASL rendition, as a result, the Deaf child experienced lengthy silences when the GAL was speaking. The Deaf interpreter consistently would explain the process to the Deaf child during this down time. The Deaf interpreter would inform the child that the hearing interpreter was listening to the GAL and would convey the question once the GAL finished speaking. Likewise, when the hearing interpreter was rendering the English interpretation, the Deaf interpreter would inform the child what the hearing interpreter was doing. Further, at times, the Deaf interpreter would back-translate to the child the English interpretation being rendered by the hearing interpreter to the GAL. In one of the four interpretations, during the approximately twenty-four (24) minute segment, the Deaf interpreter intervened in this coordinating activity seventeen (17) times. Presumably, because the interpreting process was explained during the preparatory meeting with the Deaf child, this coordinating activity served to organize the interaction and keep the child in the loop of what was occurring. It functioned to provide a measure of comfort and to ensure that the child knew what was transpiring.

In another interpretation, one Deaf interpreter let the child know what the interpreting process would look like while the hearing interpreter was waiting for the GAL to complete the initial spoken English utterance. This Deaf interpreter informed the child that once the GAL was finished with her statement, the hearing interpreter would interpret it and then the Deaf interpreter would tell the child what the GAL had said. Additionally, after taking notes

for the first time during the interview, the Deaf interpreter explained the purpose of the notes to the child. This seemed to function as a way to reinforce the child's understanding of the interpreting process.

When there was a coordinating issue such that the hearing interpreter had to interact with the GAL such as to obtain more time to complete the interpretation, one Deaf interpreter let the child know what was occurring. This type of communication occurred across several of the Deaf interpreter's work though not to the same extent. In another example, there was confusion regarding the meaning of the GAL's question, and the Deaf interpreter related to the child privately that the GAL seemed to be having some confusion. This comment seemed to situate the interpretation since the GAL's unintelligible question was simply dropped and the subject changed. The Deaf interpreter's coordinating remarks to the girl explained the reason for the abrupt change in topics. A common theme among most of the Deaf interpreters was to check in with the Deaf child to ensure they understood the process as it was happening.

Wadensjo reminds us that interpreter utterances can serve to bridge not only a linguistic gap, but also a social gap. (Wadensjo, 109). While the coordinating interpreter utterances are generally thought to organize the dialogue, they may also be thought of as utterances intended to assist the listener connect to the interaction, particularly if that is one of the speaker's goals. In the footage examined, several techniques were used by the Deaf interpreters to engage the Deaf child in the interaction and served to bridge the social gap. One mechanism used by at least one of the Deaf interpreters involved an express validation of the Deaf child's statement. This Deaf interpreter had a comforting head nod at the end of the child's utterance that seemed to function as an "I hear ya" or "I know" kind of rapport building statement reinforcing the child's right to make the statements she made. Other times this rapport building technique was expressly stated as a "yes" as the child completed her statement functioning to validate the child's statement. Another of these rapport building techniques that was evident in a number of the Deaf interpreters' work was the heavy use of discourse markers such as "WAVE-TO-GET-ATTENTION" to open the interpreted renditions and make other transitions as if the Deaf interpreter were talking directly with the Deaf child rather than interpreting. Again, the inclusion of these markers framed the discourse competently but also seemed to reinforce the idea that there was a bond between the Deaf child and the Deaf interpreter. While this is a hallmark of a competent interpretation, only the Deaf interpreters used these markers consistently.

Another Deaf interpreter used this bond forming technique in the interpretation when the GAL indicated that the child could not live with both parents even if she wanted. The Deaf interpreter included the concept that this was the court's decision and with a shrug of the shoulders and an apologetic eye roll, the interpreter indicated that the court had the power and neither the girl nor the interpreter did. This reinforced the bond between the Deaf interpreter and the Deaf child as if to say, "I wish it were not the case, but there is nothing we can do about it."

Checking in to verify accuracy or seek clarification as a coordinating activity

At times, the Deaf interpreters would check in with the Deaf consumers to verify the accuracy of the both of the interpreters' work or to seek clarification. Many times, the Deaf interpreters would check first with the Deaf consumer, in this case the child, rather than checking with the hearing team. In one instance, for example, while the hearing interpreter was providing the English interpretation, the Deaf interpreter reviewed her notes and realized that omissions had been made. The Deaf interpreter first checked her recollection with the Deaf child privately, confirmed the information had been omitted, and then rendered it to the hearing interpreter to add to the ASL to English interpretation. All of the Deaf interpreters checked in with the Deaf child more than once. At times the checking in was subtly indicated with simply an eye gaze to the child with a confirmatory head nod indicating, "was that a correct interpretation?"

Across the Deaf interpreters' renditions, when a clarification was made, all but one of the Deaf interpreters typically explained to the child what had happened. For example, when one hearing interpreter corrected the Deaf interpreter's rendition and a clarifying conference was held, the Deaf interpreter obtained clarification, then let the Deaf child know what had just happened, such as saying "sorry, I was not clear" to keep the Deaf child in the loop. Another time, after the clarification was provided, one Deaf interpreter thanked the Deaf child for their patience.

Most of the time the hearing interpreters informed the GAL what was transpiring, but that was not the case in all of the interpretations. At least once, one Deaf interpreter expressly instructed the hearing interpreter to let the GAL know that the Deaf interpreter needed to interact more extensively with the Deaf child in order to render an accurate interpretation. In another team, each time the Deaf interpreter sought clarification from the Deaf child, the Deaf interpreter prefaced the comment with an instruction to inform the GAL that a clarification was happening. While there was no consistent practice, the need to let the Deaf child know what was transpiring during a clarification seemed to be important to the Deaf interpreters.

Providing expanded renditions including context

In examining interpreter-mediated interactions, Wadensjo discusses expanded and reduced renditions. In examining the data presented for this study, Deaf interpreters tended to provide expanded renditions at similar places in the texts indicating an inherent awareness of where the Deaf consumer could benefit from more context in the SL message. For example, in the interview between the GAL and the Deaf child, reference was made to the child being stranded on a desert island and having to choose a companion to accompany her. Across all four (4) Deaf interpreters, the decision was made to provide an expanded rendition of the physical context of the island. None of the hearing interpreters providing the original text for the Deaf interpreter included such an extensive descriptive physical context for the interpretation. When the GAL discussed that both parents wanted custody of the Deaf child, all of the interpreters expanded on the concept of what is meant by custody and emphasized that both parents deeply cared for the child. All the Deaf interpreters also stressed that joint custody, in this particular case, was not an option, although visitation would be liberal. In a segment where the GAL discussed with the child her thoughts about the possibility of relocating to a different house and neighbourhood as a result of her parent's pending divorce, all of the Deaf interpreters provided an expanded context of why such relocation might be necessary. Likewise in another segment in which the child asked whether she would be present in the courtroom for the custody hearing. Each of the Deaf interpreters provided an expanded rendition of the physical setting in which the custody trial would occur. Further, depending on the systems knowledge of the Deaf interpreter, the interpretation included a physical description of the child in a private conversation with the judge in chambers.

That each of the Deaf interpreters expanded the source message in similar places is significant, particularly given that none of the hearing interpreters with whom they teamed provided such expansions in conveying the source message to them. In each instance, it appeared such expansions were made based on ASL discourse patterns and perceived familiarity of the Deaf child with the procedural or physical context in which the information was situated.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) interpreting data

Data of a similar nature was also culled from interpretations generated by Deaf-hearing teams and Deaf or hearing interpreters engaged in providing interpretations in Vocational Rehabilitation settings. The UNC-MARIE Center, on behalf of the NCIEC, filmed a series of interpreter-mediated discourse events within the VR setting. Several of the scenarios included a Deaf interpreter either in collaboration with a hearing interpreter team or working alone. Other scenarios included a hearing interpreter working with another hearing interpreter team or alone. The 6-part DVD series, entitled *Interpreting in Vocational Rehabilitation Settings,* has been widely distributed by the NCIEC, including the provision of the series to all interpreter education programs in the United States.

Deaf Interpreters as *Gatekeepers*

One of the Deaf interpreters whose work was recorded as part of the court interpreting footage was also involved in the VR setting project. He is from a Deaf family. A review of his interpreting performance in VR settings allowed for the exploration of the degree to which the use of interpreter-initiated interactions occurred when working with an adult consumer as opposed to working with a child.

Specifically, three scenarios were analysed. The first scenario involved the Deaf interpreter working alone with a VR evaluator and a deaf VR client during a vocational evaluation. The VR evaluator was able to use sign language, although with limited competence. The Deaf interpreter had sufficient knowledge of the setting to be able to follow the limited signing of the evaluator, and when coupled with his speech-reading ability, was able to interpret the information to the Deaf client. The data from the analysis of this event is represented in Table 2. The second scenario involved the Deaf interpreter working with a hearing interpreter to team interpret a meeting between a hearing/non-signing VR counselor and a Deaf VR client engaged in setting a vocational goal and plan. The data from the analysis of this event is represented in Table 3. The third scenario involved a hearing interpreter working with a VR professional who is assisting a non-signing hard-of-hearing VR client during an intake interview. The data from the analysis of this event is represented in Table 4. The data collected provides additional evidence that Deaf interpreters intervene in the interpreting process more frequently than their hearing counterparts for the purpose of a variety of coordinating activities and to provide more context-based information as part of their interpretations to Deaf consumers.

Checking in as coordinating activity

In the scenario where the Deaf interpreter worked alone with the VR evaluator and Deaf VR client, represented in Table 2, the Deaf interpreter checked in with either the evaluator or client a total of 13 times within the 28 minutes of footage. For example, on at least four occasions, the Deaf interpreter would seek eye contact with the VR client with raised eyebrows and head titled slightly forward, as if to say, "Is everything OK?" He would look back and forth between the evaluator and the client, checking in with each, nodding in affirmation, and then while looking at the Deaf client, ask, "OK?" by using the F-handshape.

Checking in to verify accuracy or seek clarification as a coordinating activity

Several times the Deaf interpreter also indicated to the client that everything was on track in terms of the process. For example, in the same scenario, the Deaf interpreter watched the evaluator recording an answer made by the VR client, and indicated to the Deaf client the F-handshape for "OK," as if to let the VR client know that her response was being accurately recorded. In other segments, the Deaf interpreter would double check a question or response with the counselor or client before rending the interpretation to ensure accuracy.

Providing expanded renditions including context

On several occasions, the Deaf interpreter provided the VR client with an explanation of context as part of rendering the source message. For example, the VR evaluator states that he will ask questions and record the VR client's answers. The Deaf interpreter expands this statement with an explanation that what will happen is a question and answer process, where the evaluator will ask questions, and the client is to respond, while the evaluator writes down the answers, adding that the recorded answers will be kept as part of the client's file for reference later. After providing the explanation, the Deaf interpreter asks the VR client if the process is clear to her.

This process of providing expanded renditions occurred when conveying the source message to the counselor as well. For example, when the VR client responded to a question about who currently lived in her home, the Deaf interpreter added that the client's two daughters have grown and moved away and so it is only she and her husband currently living in the house.

Deaf Interpreters as *Gatekeepers*

In several instances, the Deaf interpreter asks additional questions of the VR client. For example, when the evaluator asks if the client is currently taking medicine, and she confirms she is, the Deaf interpreter independently asks what is the name of the medicine and for what reason is it being taken. Another example of this occurs when the VR evaluator asks the VR client to describe her emotional well-being. The Deaf interpreter provides a series of examples that represent emotional states, and after receiving a response to each, follows up with the question of whether the VR client has ever seen a therapist, counselor or talked with the doctor about her emotional state. A third example occurred when the evaluator was asking questions about physical abilities. The question asked was whether the client could lift a box weighing 20 lbs. The client indicated some hesitancy and so the Deaf interpreter independently asked if she could lift a box weighing 10 lbs. The client responded, "10-15 lbs..... maybe 20 (tentatively)". These added questions appear to reinforce the findings of Davidson (2000) who concluded that interpreters were acting, at least in part, as informational gatekeepers who keep the interaction 'on track' and progressing efficiently within a limited timeframe. The Deaf interpreter anticipated the questions that were coming and proceeded to ask them without a prompt. In at least once instance of this, the VR evaluator, who was having difficulty expressing his questions in sign, thanked the Deaf interpreter and indicated he had planned to ask that question. It may have been because of the difficulty the VR evaluator had with signing that the Deaf interpreter assumed more of an informational gatekeeping role.

The most consistent way in which SL messages were expanded was by the Deaf interpreter making explicit what had been implied in the message. Again, this was done both when interpreting from the evaluator to the client and when interpreting from the client to the evaluator. An example of this is when the evaluator talked about filling out a mock application form and the Deaf interpreter added the implied context "as if you were going into a place of employment and had to fill this out."

Comparisons and differences across samples

The high number of instances of interpreter-initiated utterances in the VR scenario where the Deaf interpreter was working alone may be influenced by the fact that the interpreter was by himself and responsible for the two-way interaction without any assistance. However, the types of interpreter-initiated utterances that occurred are consistent with those observed in the team interpreted interactions, although perhaps to a differing degree.

As well, the number of instances of interpreter-initiated utterances in all of the team interpreted interactions is influenced, at least in part, by the fact that the interpreters need to interact with one another for intra-team purposes. However, there were number of instances of interpreter-initiated utterances that went beyond the intra-team functions and easily fit into the coordinating and expansion functions discussed by Wadensjo (1998).

In both the interpretations from the legal and VR settings, the Deaf interpreters had an overall higher number of instances of interpreter-initiated utterances than did their hearing counterparts. In the four examples of interpretations of the meeting between the GAL and Deaf child, the Certified Deaf Interpreters initiated a total of eighty-seven (87) utterances as compared to forty-seven (47) utterances by their hearing counterparts. In the VR team interpreted event represented by Table 3, the Deaf interpreter initiated twenty-three (23) utterances as compared to twelve (12) utterances by his hearing counterpart. When the Deaf interpreter worked alone in a VR setting, he initiated forty-one (41) utterances. In the VR scenario, represented in Table 4, where the certified hearing interpreter worked alone with a VR counselor and VR client, he initiated only four (4) utterances. Certainly, the content of the interaction and the communication patterns of the participants can contribute to the number of interpreter-initiated utterances, but is unlikely to account for all of them.

In fully appreciating the impact of the data, it is important to keep in mind that the primary purpose of the interpreter-initiated utterances by the Deaf interpreter were to solve some problem with communication, keep the interaction on track, and/or to keep the Deaf consumer as informed about what was transpiring as was possible.

Conversely, the primary purpose of the interpreter-initiated utterances by the hearing interpreter was to ask for time or clarification, or to ask the speaker for further information.

In terms of the intra-team communication, it is interesting to note that the primary purpose of the utterance was to feed or clarify information. Of particular interest was the monitoring function of the hearing interpreter during team interpreting events. As an example, in Team 3, the hearing interpreter, who was a CODA, did a thorough job of monitoring the interpretation of her Deaf colleague and offering corrections where needed. Such corrections were offered at least six (6) times during the interaction. This function was evident in all the interpretations to some extent and serves an important role in ensuring message accuracy—one of the primary rationales interpreters offer for working in teams. Sometimes the corrections were minor—such as a time referent or detail, sometimes significant—such as an entire thought, cohesion-creating information, or a salient point. When corrections were offered it was evident that the intent was to remain accurate to the SL message.

However, in several instances, no intra-team clarification occurred when it was needed—meaning no monitoring function or other negotiations around meaning was evident between the team—and the accuracy of the Deaf interpreter's interpretation of the SL message was impacted. Sometimes, it can been seen that the error by the Deaf interpreter is directly related to an error or miscue in the hearing interpreter's interpretation. In other instances, it is unclear why no correction is offered. It may have been due to the inconsistent use of notes by the hearing interpreters, the intra-team dynamics of the Deaf-hearing team, a lack of identification of the error by the hearing interpreter, or other causes. Based on this limited sample, the role of intra-team monitoring during Deaf-hearing teams is a subject for further investigation.

Implications for Interpreting and Interpreter Education

This is a small study that offers unique insight because four teams interpreted the same event at different times and reflected similar outcomes. The types of interpreter-initiated utterances were common across all four samples, and evident in other samples within different settings. Certainly, engaging in additional studies of Deaf-hearing teams in similar and different settings are necessary to determine the full implication of these findings. However, the findings from this study do offer some important insights to be considered.

Students of interpreting and practitioners need to more fully appreciate the role and function of interpreter-initiated utterances so that 1) they become more aware of when such utterances occur and the function they serve, 2) they can learn how such utterances are managed in a native-like manner, and 3) they can reflect on their own performance to determine if there are instances where they are failing to initiate an action when an action is required. Further, continued exploration of interpreter-initiated utterances offers students and practitioners with the opportunity to consider the implications of such utterances for ethical decision-making and role application. Such discussions can increase awareness about the range of discretion that is available for practitioners during the act of interpreting.

Another important implication to be considered is the necessity for Deaf interpreters to be used in a broader range of settings to ensure that Deaf individuals are provided with the highest degree of communication access and inclusion as possible. If in fact it is Deaf interpreters who are best equipped in applying the coordinative and expansion functions as part of their interpretations, and these functions enhance the inclusion of Deaf consumers, then the more frequent and consistent use of Deaf interpreters is imperative. The fields of interpreting and interpreter education should therefore more fully explore the situations in which Deaf interpreters are both necessary and appropriate and advocate for this as standard practice.

As well, for well over a decade the "gap" in readiness of interpreters to work upon graduation from interpreter education programs has been documented. The field of interpreter education has only been moderately successful in reducing this gap—it is still prevalent in the majority of newly entering practitioners. Inclusion of more DIs addresses this gap. This will mean that students, and current practitioners, need to learn how to work collaboratively with Deaf interpreters, as well as how to incorporate and manage the intra-team communication that is central to an effective team interpreting relationship.

Deaf Interpreters as *Gatekeepers*

Achieving this standard of practice means several things. First, more Deaf interpreters need to be trained and the market needs to be cultivated that will provide for their sustained employment. Second, students of interpreting need to gain training and experience in working with Deaf interpreters, both as part of their classroom learning and internship/practicum experiences. And third, students, as well as current practitioners, need to become adept at providing persuasive rationale for why Deaf interpreters are needed and warranted. Providing opportunities for students and practitioners to practice making requests and explaining the rationale and need for Deaf interpreters can be integrated into pre-service and in-service programs. Such opportunities could include invitations to hiring entities from the community to engage in discussions about the demands and resources available for Deaf-hearing teams—educating the community-at-large about the work of Deaf interpreters is an important part of the process.

There are some new resources that can assist with these processes. The newly released Deaf Interpreter Curriculum produced by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) is an excellent resource for expanding the pool of Deaf interpreters. As well, exposing all interpreters to the content of this curriculum, and seeking ways to expand existing curriculum with information contained in the DI curriculum is essential. Further, the NIEC and NCIEC have created learning modules for use by interpreter education programs. One specific module relates to Deaf-hearing interpreter teams. These resources should be included in IEP curricula. The MARIE and NCIEC produced DVDs showing interpreting teams in legal and VR settings are also an excellent source of data that students and practitioners can engage in reviewing and analysing to increase their recognition and understanding of working in teams and the role of interpreter-initiated utterances in achieving effective interpretations. All of the NCIEC resources can be found at the NCIEC website at interpretereducation.org.

Also, as more Deaf interpreters enter the field, foster discussion between Deaf and hearing interpreters—as part of regular class processes, community forums, observation-supervision activities. Provide opportunities for observation of Deaf-hearing teams in action with discussions afterwards. Creating these observation events can occur using media, simulated events, and actual interpreting assignments.

Conclusions

Gatekeeping by Deaf interpreters as part of the interpreting process is a paradigm with crucial implications for the fields of interpreting and interpreter education. It potentially contributes to a greater degree of access and inclusion for Deaf consumers by providing more coordinating functions than are present in the work of hearing interpreters. As well, there is evidence that Deaf interpreters intuitively recognize the same linguistic constructs as requiring an expanded context and in providing such, Deaf interpreters offer a richer and more dynamic rendition of meaning than their hearing counterparts. This too creates greater linguistic access.

Given the native intuition and experiences of Deaf interpreters, it is highly unlikely that non-native users of ASL can gain sufficient bilingual competence to parallel the abilities of Deaf interpreters in creating linguistic access for those individuals within the Deaf society who benefit from the work of Deaf interpreters. Consequently, it is imperative that hearing interpreters know how to collaborate and work effectively with Deaf interpreters. As well, the consistent and/or increase of Deaf interpreters in certain settings—such as in all settings involving Deaf children—is critical. Since the need for inclusion of Deaf interpreters is often dependent on the hearing interpreter's expressed request, it is necessary that hearing interpreters know how to advocate for the inclusion of Deaf interpreters. Such skills can be acquired within the context of interpreter education programs and in-service training programs, as well as guidance and direction that is provided by Deaf interpreters themselves.

Acknowledgments

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Table 1: Interpretation of Meeting between Guardian ad Litem and Deaf child
Coordinating activity analysis
(Interpreter-initiated utterances)

Team 1: Certified Deaf Interpreter-26:25 Duration	Team 1: Certified Hearing Interpreter- 26:25 Duration
• Clarification with child – 5 • Clarification with GAL – 4 • Intra- team clarification – 1 • Explanation to child- 2 • Asking child to respond – 1 • Expands SL message - 4	• Asking GAL for time – 2 • Asking GAL to continue – 9 • Clarification from GAL – 1 • Intra-team clarification- 2 • Intra-team feed- 3

Team 2: Certified Deaf Interpreter-29:42 Duration	Team 2: Certified Hearing Interpreter- 29:42 Duration
• Clarification with child – 5 • Clarification with GAL – 1 • Intra-team clarification – 3 • Explanation to child – 0 • Asking child to continue – 1 • Expands SL message – 5	• Asking GAL for time – 5 • Asking GAL to continue – 1 • Clarification from GAL – 3 • Intra-team clarification – 0 • Intra-team feed– 0

Team 3: Certified Deaf Interpreter- 40:47 Duration	Team 3: Certified Hearing Interpreter- 40:47 Duration
• Clarification with child – 10 • Clarification with GAL – 0 • Intra-team clarification– 5 • Explanation to child – 4 • Affirming head nod to child – 4 • Expands SL message – 4 • Miscellaneous (self-talk) – 4	• Asking GAL for more time – 1 • Asking GAL to continue – 1 • Clarification from GAL- 0 • Intra-team clarification – 10 • Intra-team feed– 4

Team 4: Certified Deaf Interpreter- 24:10 Duration	Team 4: Certified Hearing Interpreter- 24:10 Duration
• Clarification with child – 3 • Clarification with GAL – 1 • Intra-team clarification – 3 • Explanation to child – 17 • Expands SL message – 5 • Index finger hold – 9 • Miscellaneous – 4	• Asking GAL for more time – 0 • Asking GAL to continue – 1 • Clarification from GAL- 1 • Intra-team clarification – 2 • Intra-team feeds – 2

NOTE: Certified Deaf Interpreters in Team 1, 2 and 3 come from Deaf families. Certified Hearing Interpreters in Team 1 and 3 come from Deaf families.

**Table 2: Interpretation of Meeting between Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluator and Deaf VR client--Evaluation
Coordinating activity analysis
(Interpreter-initiated utterances)**

Certified Deaf Interpreter (working alone)
28:03 Duration
• Clarification with VR evaluator – 4
• Clarification with VR client – 5
• Explanation to VR evaluator – 3
• Explanation to client- 4
• Confirmation to client – 6
• Confirmation to VR evaluator - 7
• Asks additional questions of VR client – 4
• Expands SL message—8

NOTE: Certified Deaf Interpreter in this interaction is the same Deaf Interpreter as in Team 1 in Table 1.

**Table 3: Interpretation of Meeting between Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Deaf VR client--Goal Setting
Coordinating activity analysis
(Interpreter-initiated utterances)**

Team: Certified Deaf Interpreter	Team: Certified Hearing Interpreter
23:33 Duration	23:33 Duration
• Clarification with VR counselor – 2	• Asking VR counselor for time – 2
• Clarification with VR client – 4	• Asking VR counselor to continue – 0
• Intra- team clarification – 1	• Clarification from VR counselor – 0
• Intra-team cue or confirmation – 6	• Intra-team clarification- 2
• Confirmation to VR client – 5	• Intra-team cuing or confirmation – 5
• Asks additional questions to VR client – 2	• Intra-team feed- 3
• Expands SL message – 3	

NOTE: Certified Deaf Interpreter in this interaction is the same Deaf Interpreter as in Team 1 in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 4: Interpretation of Meeting between Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluator and hard-of-hearing VR client--Intake
Coordinating activity analysis
(Interpreter-initiated utterance**

Certified Hearing Interpreter (working alone)
14:29 Duration
• Asking VR counselor for time – 0
• Asking VR counselor to continue – 2
• Clarification from VR counselor – 1
• Clarification from VR client – 0
• Explanation to VR counselor -- 0
• Explanation to VR client - 0
• Expands SL Message -- 0
• Laughs along with VR client after counselor makes joke – 1