Identifying Effective Practices in Video Interpreting

Overview

- Introduction/goal
- Project
  - Research process and methodology
  - Effective practices in VRS & VRI
  - Consumer and practitioner perceptions
  - Areas of future research
- Conclusions

Interpreting via Video

VRS & VRI should be a priority for interpreter education

~NCIEC Needs Assessments, 2005-2009

Funding & Support

Interpreting via Video Work Team

Vision:
Field of interpreters working effectively via video

Goals:
- Document standard practice
- Identify best practices
- Identify effective practices
- Develop and promulgate curriculum

Outcome:
- Network of stakeholders
- Develop training/curriculum

Effective interpreting via video

- Changing technology
- Increasing consumer sophistication
- Increasing regulations
- New vendors / companies
- New & different markets

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**Stakeholder input**
- Collaborative process
  - Educators
  - Interpreters
  - Consumers
  - VRS & VRI providers
  - FCC and government

**Video Relay Services**

**Project Findings**

**VRS research project overview**
- Domains & competencies
- Nationwide data collection
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups
  - Interviews

**2007 VRS Summit**
- Hands-On VRS
- Go America VRS
- Birnbaum VRS
- CAC VRS

**2007 VRS Summit Domains & Competencies**
- VRS systems
  - Ethics
- Socio-Political
  - Interpersonal communication
  - Relationship & communication management
- Business
  - Customer service
  - Problem solving
  - Flexibility

**2007 VRS Summit Domains & Competencies Con’t**
- Interpreting
  - Teaming
  - CDIs
  - Theories & models
- Language & Culture
  - Ethnic
  - Generational
- Self-care
  - Stress management
  - Vicarious Trauma
Collaborating stakeholders

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Interpreter practitioner data

- 7 Focus Groups (38 participants)
- Hosted: Boston, Denver, Houston (2), Minneapolis, Portland, Washington, DC
- Gender: 70% female; 30% male
- Ethnicity: 59% White; 21% African American; 15% Latino; 5% Asian
- Education: 71% college grads (BA, MA, PhD)

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Practitioner reported demands

- Message
- Setting
- Diversity

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Practitioner identified competencies

- Interpreting Skills
- Language Skills
- Role & Boundaries
- Self-Care
- Ethical & Professional Knowledge
- Cultural & Diversity Knowledge
- Human Relations
- Knowledge of VRS System
- Professional Development
- Technology Preparation
- Knowledge of laws that govern...Leadership

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Attributes of successful interpreters

- Patience
- Open minded
- Confidence
- Ability to multitask
- Ability to prioritize
- Ability to ask for what need/want
- Humility
- Problem-solving skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Responsible for mistakes
- Thick-skinned

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Reported benefit / impact

- Greatest benefit:
  - More confidence when working in the community

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Identifying Effective Practices in Video Interpreting

Beverly Hollrah, Mary Lightfoot, Leilani Johnson, Richard Laurion, & Julie Simon
Reported benefits / impact

- Greatest drawbacks:
  - Less work in local community
  - Disconnected from Deaf Community
  - Sense resentment from individuals of local Deaf Community

Consumer data

- 25 individual interviews
  - Status: 92% Deaf; 8% Deaf-Blind; 8% Hard of Hearing
  - Gender: 52% female; 48% male
  - Ethnicity: 44% White; 20% Native American; 16% African American; 12% Latino; 4% Asian; 12% Other
  - Education: 72% college grads (BA, MA, PhD)

Consumer identified competencies

Consumer perceptions: Competence

- Skilled interpreters
  - CODA
  - Interpreter Education Program Graduate
  - Certified
- Fluency in language (English, ASL or Spanish)
- Sense interpreter able to match caller
- Demonstrate politeness and manners
  - Know to ask for clarification
  - Use facial grammar and eye contact appropriately

Factors impacting message

- Comprehension
  - Fingerspelling
  - Numbers
  - Register or Sign Variation
- Similarities with caller
  - Gender
  - Experience
  - Culture
  - Class / ethnicity

Caller perspectives

- Attitude
- Mood
- Comfort level

Reported negative perceptions

- Questionable language skills
- Interpreter inaccurate representation
- Familiarity or unfamiliarity
- Decreasing interpreter proficiency
Expectation of VRS interpreters

Attributes
- Master of many topics
- Skilled 2-D communicator

Skills
- Language fluency
- Familiar with rationality and dialects
- Competence with technical information

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Video Remote Interpreting

Project Findings

VRI research project

Identification of domains & competencies
Use of expert group
Nationwide data collection
Practitioners & Deaf consumers
Survey & interviews
Development of effective practices

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Practitioner data - survey

- 43 Surveys
  - Gender: 41 Female; 2 Male
  - Ethnicity: 74% White; 7% Asian; 5% Latino; 2% African American; 2% Native American; 9% Prefer not to indicate
  - Education: 68% college grads (BA, MA, PhD)

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Practitioner data - interviews

- 6 Interviews
  - Gender: 4 Female; 2 Male
  - Status: 5 Hearing; 1 Deaf
  - Trilingual: (ASL/English/Spanish)

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General training needs

- Business practices
- Consumer advocacy
- Turn-taking management
- Cultural competency
- Customer service
- Ethics & decision making
- Interpersonal relations
- Language skills
- Role & boundaries
- Team interpreting

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Self training needs

- Laws and statutes
- Audio & video management
- Environmental management
- Ergonomics
- Interpreting skills
- Preparation
- Professional development
- Hardware and software
- Self-care
- Technology
- Working conditions (i.e., breaks)

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Factors impacting remote work

- Background and familiarity with consumers
- Background and familiarity with subject matter
- Clarity of audio/visual connection
- Competence & effectiveness of interpreting team
- Interpreter's cultural competence
- Interpreter's linguistic competence
- Prior access to pertinent materials
- Use of other media

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Technology impacting remote work

- Quality of video
- Quality of audio
- Stability of connections
- Availability of personnel to troubleshoot technology issues
- Ease of using VRI hardware
- Ease of using VRI software
- Availability of technology training

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Situational factors impacting work

- Scheduling
- Billing
- Preparation
- Team interpreting
- Cultural and linguistic variations
- Models and methods of interpreting
- Interpersonal skills
- Business practices

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Top 10 - Knowledge and skill sets

- Interpreting skills - 70.5%
- Conversation turn-taking management - 45.5%
- Language skills - 43.2%
- Ethical and professional decision-making - 40.9%
- Cultural competency - 40.9%

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Top 10 - Con’t

- Customer service - 38.6%
- Audio & video management - 34.1%
- Applicable laws & statutes - 29.5%
- Remote video hardware & software - 29.5%
- Role & boundaries - 25.0%

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Consumer data

- 244 Surveys
  - Gender: 55% Female; 45% Male
  - Status: 85% Deaf; 12% Hard of Hearing; 3% Deaf-Blind
  - Ethnicity: 78% White; 5% Latino; 5% Native American; 3% Asian; 3% African American; 3% Other; 6% Prefer not to indicate
  - Education: 55% college grads (BA, MA, PhD)

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Consumer data

- 4 Interviews
  - Gender: 50% Female; 50% Male

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Consumer frequency of use

- Once a month - 37.6%
- 1-5 hours per week - 30.9%
- 5-10 hours per week - 10.7%
- More than 10 hours per week - 9.0%
- More than 3 times a month - 8.4%
- Three times a month - 3.4%

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Consumer reasons for use

- Last minute event
- Unavailability of community interpreter
- VRI as sole option
- Preference
- Other

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VRI Settings

Scheduling of VRI services

- Never schedule in advance – always last minute
- 1-3 days in advance
- Less than 24 hours in advance
- More than one-week in advance
- 4-6 days in advance

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Top 10 - Consumers perceptions

- Interpreting skills - 73.0%
- Language skills - 53.4%
- Conversation turn-taking management - 39.9%
- Cultural competency - 33.1%
- Ethical and professional decision-making - 29.2%

Top 10 – Con’t

- Environmental (i.e., lighting, background, ventilation) - 28.7%
- Customer service - 27.5%
- Applicable laws & statutes - 25.8%
- Role & boundaries - 24.2%
- Technology - 21.9%

Consumer situational considerations

- Scheduling
- Billing
- Preparation: briefing & debriefing
- Technology considerations
- Participation
- VRI vs.. other situations
- Challenges of using a Video Remote Interpreter

VRS vs.. VRI

What’s the difference?

- Need to educate consumers and practitioners regarding VRS vs. VRI
  - Differences
  - Similarities
- Need to understand how technology is changing the way people communicate

Areas for future research

- Definition of cultural & linguistic competency
- Issues around regional & geographic diversity
- Input from Hearing consumers
- Demands and competencies of practitioners working between English, ASL & Spanish

Areas for future research

- Role of Deaf Interpreters in VRS & VRI
- Considerations when working with people who are Deaf-Blind
- Issues of confidentiality and access to personal information (i.e., HIPAA, FERPA)
- Consumer education about VRS & VRI differences
Outcomes of this work
- Articles
- Report of VRS findings
- Report of VRI findings
- Validated domains & competencies
- Identified resources
- Wide dissemination
- Curriculum
- Programs implemented

Resources
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VRS Implications: New Demands on Interpreters
Marty M. Taylor, Ph.D.

Plan for the Presentation
- Describe current research
- Information from interviews & surveys
  - Deaf and hard of hearing participants
  - Interpreters and managers
- Competencies for VRS Interpreters
- Implications

Research provided for Sorenson
- Very large sample base
  - Over 1,000 employees
  - Centers in US only
- Findings and results are the researcher’s

Broader Scope than 2005 Research
- Greater number of centers (5 vs. 2)
- Greater number of locales (5 vs. 2)
- More individual interviews & observations (107 vs. 80)
- More focus groups of Deaf and hard of hearing callers (5 vs. 1)
- Individuals have worked longer in the industry

Data Collection
- Five centers in five states
  - California, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, Texas
- Participants (143)
  - Deaf caller Focus Groups (36)
  - Manager and Interpreter interviews (64)
  - Observations of interpreters relaying calls (43)

Research Questions
1. What skills, knowledge, and personal attributes must VRS Interpreters possess in order to work effectively in their jobs?
2. What do Deaf and hard of hearing callers report about their use of VRS?
3. What work conditions support or detract from the Interpreters’ work?
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Questionnaire Results

Educational Level
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

Ethnicity
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

Weekly VRS Use
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

Who Participants Call
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

- 28 (77.7%) called friends
- 26 (72.2%) called professionals (doctors, lawyers, accountants)
- 24 (66.6%) called businesses
- 22 (61.1%) called family members
- 12 (33.3%) called their own customers
- 11 (30.5%) called government offices
- 8 (22.2%) called work colleagues

Frequency of Using Community Interpreters per Month
VRS Implications: New Demands on Interpreters

Marty M. Taylor

Liked most about VRS
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

- Using our first language, ASL
- Enjoy seeing the interpreter’s face and ASL
- Speed, easy to converse, saves time
- Convenience
- Smooth conversation, less frustrating
- Functional equivalent to hearing callers

Liked most about VRS Interpreters
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

- Their professionalism & skill
- Attitude, manners
- Awareness of Deaf culture and community
- Confidentiality
- Open, relaxed, friendly, lively, sense of humor
- “CODA interpreters”

VRS Interpreter Attributes
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Number of “Viewers”</th>
<th>Percentage of “Viewers”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good interpreting skills</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work with a variety of people</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps me make calls</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lets me make the call</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Need for Interpreter Education
(Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Need for Advanced Education for Video Relay Interpreters</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percent of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Bachelor’s Certificate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpreters and Managers Questionnaire Results

Age
(Interpreters & Managers)

- [Age distribution chart]

- [Age distribution chart]
Educational Level
(Interpreters & Managers)

Ethnicity
(Interpreters & Managers)

Interpreting Experience
(Interpreters & Managers)

VRS Interpreter Experience
(Interpreters & Managers)

Frequency of Interpreting in the Community Setting

Effective Practices for VRS Interpreters
(Interpreters & Managers)

Interpreting Skills 55
Self-Care 81
Ethical and Professional Decision Making 40
Cultural Competency 20
Role & Boundaries 52
Professional Development and Continuing Education 18
ASL and English needed for interpreting in specialized settings such as medical, legal, social services 9
Technology 8
Other* 8
Preparation 4
Advocacy 2
Leadership 1
Knowledge of laws that affect interpreters 0
Need for Specific Advanced Education
(Interpreters & Managers)

VRS Interpreter Competencies (Expanded)

VRS Interpreter-Skills
- Metacognitive skills
- Language fluency
- Teaming strategies
- Call management
- Telephone protocol

VRS Interpreter-Knowledge
- Experience
- Practical knowledge
- Ability to learn
- Ethics & professional conduct

VRS Interpreter-Personal Attributes
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Tolerant of changes in technology
- Ability to accommodate and adjust
- Takes care of self (emotionally, physically)
- Ability to set boundaries

Current and Future Needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Callers
- Continue VRS
- Retain qualified interpreters
- Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing callers on how to use VRS
- Technology
Growing Demands

- Placing 9-1-1 calls
- More children (8 and 9 year olds)
- National and international callers
- Callers’ language fluency
- Supply and demand
  - Demand is very high in all sectors
  - Interpreters must preserve their energy over the long haul

Implications for:

- Interpreting programs
- Deaf community
- Interpreting organizations
- Government
- VRS providers
- Further Research

Interpreting Programs

- Prepare bilingual interpreters
- Focus part of the education on language and interpretation related to everyday situations (buying a house, planning social events, talking about sports, technology)
- Teach soft skills: boundaries and personal awareness
- Teach about contracts and workload
- Practice calls with video phone equipment

Deaf Community

- Develop “how to use VRS” guide
- Discuss strategies for placing effective calls
- Discuss ways in which VRS can enhance one's life
- Host workshops with interpreters
- Discuss non-deaf caller norms
- Practice different strategies for placing calls with interpreters

Interpreting Organizations

- Collaborate with the Deaf community in meeting their needs in using VRS
- Encourage members to seek degrees and national certification
- Develop pathways for people to become highly skilled interpreters

Government

- Provide funding for interpreter education
- Undertake education of public personnel in effective use of VRS
- Provide funding for VRS providers to maintain their standards
**VRS Providers**

- Maintain the practice of hiring qualified interpreters
- Define and work with interpreting programs to teach to your standard
- Develop a standardized VRS interpreter training curriculum to include in interpreting programs
- Reward longevity, loyalty and talented employees

**Further Research**

- Investigate customer satisfaction among non-deaf callers
- Interview young deaf and hard of hearing callers
- Determine the emotional and psychological load for interpreters over the long term
- Investigate how injuries are affecting interpreters’ work, and what kind of injuries are occurring

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*Elegance, accuracy, and efficiency are never accidents but are instead an exquisite combination of experience, attention to detail and skill that only highly competent and qualified interpreters can accomplish.*

~Marty M. Taylor
Toward a Sociology of Interpreting

Jeremy L. Brunson
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Gallaudet University
VRS 2010 Presentation

Overview

- Introduction
  - Traditional foci in Sign Language Interpreting Research
- Institutional ethnography as an approach of inquiry
- Applying IE to the field of interpreting through an examination of VRS.
- Conclusion/Questions

Traditional Starting Place and Foci of Sign Language Interpreting Research

- Feminism
  - Standpoint (Smith 1987; 1990a; 2005; DeVault & McCoy, 2002; DeVault 2006).
- Texts (Smith 1990a; McCoy 1995; 1998; 2006)
- Generalizability vs. Generalizing Effect (Smith 2006)
- Our participation in society’s (and our own) organization

Applying Institutional Ethnography

- My study problematic:
  - “We are providing access.”

My Study

- Methodology
- Setting
- Interpreters
- Deaf People
- Texts
- Conclusion
Methodology
- Participant observations
- Auto ethnographic
- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Examination of Texts (not a textual analysis)

Background Information
- I have worked for 3 different VRS providers, in 5 different centers, located in 4 different states.
- My focus here examines data collected while I worked for one provider.

Setting
- Architecture
- Technologies
- Space as a commodity

Focus Groups
- Recruitment of Participants
- Participant Demographic Information

Interviews
- Recruitment of Informants
- Focus of Interviews

Interview Excerpts
Examination of Texts

- Local texts
- Ruling Texts
  - ADA
  - FCC guidelines

Conclusion

- We need to begin to teach current and future interpreters to see the work of interpreting as part of a larger social structure. One that I have called “institution of access” (Brunson 2008). By doing this, interpreters can identify the influence this structure, through texts, exerts over us in order to counter or promote this type of organization. We can then determine the trajectory of the field rather than having it determined for us.

Questions/Comments?

Thank you.

Bibliography

Available upon request.
Examining the Challenges of Trilingual (Spanish-English-ASL) VRS Interpreting

Brief History of Trilingual VRS
- Pilot in Austin
- Approved in Texas
- FCC reimburses VRS

2000

1995

2002

Request for compensation

2005

2004

2006

Spanish-ASL Not Compensable

FCC Reverses its Decision

Providers must offer services 24/7

Background on Interpreters
- 37 Responded
- Language Proficiency
- Experience in Interpreting
- Assessment of Skills

Language Proficiency of Interpreters
- Self reported "A Language" and "B Language"

Spanish A Language

English A Language

ASL A Language

Spanish B Language

English B Language

ASL B Language

Years of Experience of Interpreters

Interpreters’ years of experience
- More than 1 year: 11%
- 6-12 months: 26%
- 1-2 years: 36%
- More than 5 years: 13%
- 2-5 years: 4%
- 0-5 weeks: 28%
Assessment of Skills

ASL

Interpreting

English

Spanish

Survey: Spanish Gendered Nouns

If your Deaf client uses signs whose Spanish counterparts have gendered variants, which variant do you choose if you do not know the sex of the person who is being described?

Responses: Spanish Gendered Nouns

#1
• Use masculine variant (n=17, 46%)

#2
• Request clarification (n=13, 35%)

Other
• Avoid using gendered nouns
• Use "traditional" variant
• Context clues

Some Dialects of Spanish

• Bolivian Spanish
• Caribbean Spanish
• Central American Spanish
• Colombian-Ecuadorian Spanish
• Mexican Spanish
• Northern Mexican Spanish
• Puerto Rican Spanish

Differences at the Lexical Level

General
 refresco

English
 "soda"

Peru
 gaseosa

guagua

differences

torta

queue

pastel

biscocho
Survey: Lexical Differences

How do you handle words that have one meaning in one Spanish-speaking country and another meaning in a different Spanish-speaking country?

Responses: Lexical differences

1. Context clues (n=14, 38%)
2. Request clarification (n=12, 32%)
   - Use a generic term
   - Explain and compare

Survey: Pronunciation

If your Deaf client has a Spanish or Spanish-influenced name, how do you normally pronounce that name to hearing individuals who speak English on the VRS calls?

Responses: Pronunciation

1. Spanish (n=14, 38%)
2. English (n=13, 35%)
   - Use suggestion from caller
   - Listening for clues

Model of trilingual VRS interpretation

From: Quinto-Pozos, Casanova de Canales, & Treviño (2010)

Interpreters’ Working Conditions

- Length of calls
  - Average length based on survey results
  - Compared to English
  - Multiple calls with the same caller
Interpreters' Working Conditions

• Average percentage of time spent teaming with another interpreter

VRS Providers' Input

• How Spanish competency is assessed
  - Third party assessment
  - In-house assessment

VRS Providers' Input

• Trilingual-specific Training
  – Mentoring workshop
  – Observations

VRS Providers' Input

• Compensation
  - Three out of four providers interviewed say trilingual interpreters receive more compensation

VRS Providers' Input

• Length of calls
  - Compared to English-ASL calls
  - Average times cited

Interpreters' Working Conditions

• Transferring calls
  – Technological limitations
  – Supply and demand issues

Interpreters' Working Conditions

• Impact on trilingual VRS work on interpreter health
  - Mental
  - Physical
  - None
VRS Providers’ Input

• Teaming
• Transferring

VRS Providers’ Input

• Where do calls originate or terminate?
  – Mexico
  – Colombia
  – Puerto Rico
  – Cuba
  – Costa Rica

VRS Providers’ Input

• Additional comments or concerns
  - This field is growing
  - Need for RID’s support of this specialization
  - Demand exceeds supply, Hispanic community underserved
  - Need certification exams and training opportunities for trilingual interpreters

• We would like to thank the interpreters, VRS agencies, and Deaf consumers who participated in this research
DEMYSTIFYING THE “IT”: WHAT A SUPERIOR VRS INTERPRETER DOES

Norma Lee Oldfield, PhD

Introductions
- Me
- You

Workshop Objectives
- Present the findings of this research and:
  1. Implications for current practitioners
  2. Implications for interpreter education

Structure of the Study
- Groups of VRS Managers & Trainers to brainstorm around VRS qualities
  - Identified competency clusters
  - Nominated VRS interpreters for interviews
- VRS Interpreters (Novice, Competent, Expert)
  - Verbal Protocol Analysis vs Behavioral Event Interview
  - Descriptions of competencies

Managers and Trainers
- Discussions transcribed and coded for common themes
- Ex: Flexible, able to work without context and manage stress = personal effectiveness as a professional (not necessarily interpreting)
- Ex: Keeping callers’ preferences throughout the call, need for a VI who can have fun and enjoy the performance part, VI who lets the caller feel the charisma, VI with a strong human compassion component = customer service skills.
- Clusters prioritized: possible to enhance interpreting skills via workshops or mentoring but not as simple to develop professional effectiveness or customer service skills.

The Competency Clusters
1. Personal Effectiveness Skills
2. Customer Service Skills
3. Interpreting Skills
4. Technology Skills
5. Telecommunication Skills
1E-Organizational Commitment

- **Novice**
  - “I show up on time...”
  - “it is a great atmosphere...we laugh, we enjoy the company...”

- **Competent**
  - “...(my responsibility) is the overall mission of the company as a whole...
  - “...a social responsibility for the company...”

2D: Use of Unilateral Power/Autonomy

- **Competent**
  - “…what happens is it’s a trust thing. They trust me to do my job so I can do it as I see fit.”
  - “because I feel some responsibility for my goal as the communication
  - specialist to make that barrier go away to some extent.”

- **Expert**
  - “…and the ability to do something right and not have to question yourself all of the time...
  - “…if they challenge you on something you thought was an acceptable decision...”

Competency Dictionary

Interesting Correlations

- Managers and Practitioners (as a whole) : yes
- Managers and Expert group: yes
- Managers and Novice group: yes
- Managers and Competent group: no...hmmm

Rating sheet to validate Competency Model

- Managers chose Novice/Competent/Expert VIs and used the rating sheet to measure their work behavior
  - Novice scores were entry level (1-2)
  - Expert scores were expert level (4-5)
  - Competent scores were higher than average level (4-5)...hmm.

What does this mean for you?

- Manager/Trainer
- VRS Interpreter
- Interpreting Educator/Student
Moving from deontological (rule based) to teleological (goal based)
- Adding more elements to the basic linguistic approach (environment, participants, dynamics, etc)
- Motives of doing right (following rules) vs doing good (adding value and having virtue) is causing conflict in VRS/Corporate relationships
- Rhetoric vs defacto (what we say we do vs what we really do) is surfacing in VRS

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Today’s Presentation

• Introduction

• Role of RID Standard Practice Papers

• Development Process for general RID Standard Practice Papers

• Development of VRS Standard Practice Paper

• Implications of the VRS Standard Practice Paper

• Development of VRI Standard Practice Paper

• Conclusion

THANK YOU!!
VRS and VRI: Benefits and Challenges for Consumers

Claude Stout

What is VRS?

Video Relay Service is a form of a federal service mandated by Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A deaf or hard of hearing caller who uses sign language calls a VRS interpreter, who then calls the hearing person and relays the dialogue between sign language and voice. This service is funded by a small surcharge collected by phone companies and paid by the FCC to providers based on minutes incurred.

Benefits (Empowerment)

- Natural seamless conversation in sign language/voice
- 200 wpm spoken vs. 200 wpm signed
- We are most comfortable using sign language than typing
- We improve more in understanding and expressing in English from using VRS (literacy and language development)
- We are less hesitant in communicating with hearing people

Challenges

- Some of us use laptop with built in cameras in hotspots
- Use it only at home or at work
- We can’t wait to get mobile VRS - depends on how much broadband is required
- We do 80% peer-to-peer chats and 20% VRS
- No video relay service exists for deaf-blind users
- Fraud issues, rate issues, some vendors need to respect us more as consumers and not get us caught in the crossfire between industry and government

About the Speaker

- Claude L. Stout
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VRS

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Interpreting Profession

- A migration never experienced before
- 150 call centers across America

Video Technology

- Firewalls and routers

Government Legislation

- Title IV of the ADA
- Do not discourage innovation in technology
**VRS**

**Demand vs. Supply**
- Demand exceeds supply

**Training**
- 150 interpreter training programs
- 160+ universities accept ASL as a foreign language
- Explosion of noncredit and online ASL classes

**Outreach**
- We must do better at explaining VRS to the public
- Explain 10-digit numbering system better to deaf and hard of hearing people

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**VRI**

**What is VRI?**

Video Remote Interpreting is a form of auxiliary services eligible as an accommodation under Titles I, II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Upon request from a deaf or hard of hearing person, employee or customer who uses sign language the company or agency calls a sign language interpreting agency, who then arranges a videoconferencing session using a computer and a webcam over the Internet to interpret the dialogue between sign language and voice. This service is offered by interpreter agencies and billed to the company or deaf person.

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**Challenges**
- Not applicable to all situations – cannot see if lying down in bed, if arms are immobilized or unable to concentrate due to severe pain or other distractions
- Deaf-blind who depend on tactile or close vision interpreting will not benefit
- If a lot of paperwork is involved – such as legal court cases or during major purchases like a house or a car
- On-site certified deaf interpreter (CDI) may be needed
- Maximize effectiveness of VRI via online scheduling and on-call assignments

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**Benefits (Empowerment)**
- Get interpreting support “instantly”
- Hard to find interpreters for community based situations
- Doctors and hospitals can serve our needs with minimal delay
- Maximize use of available interpreters in the community

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**Interpreting Profession**
- Small market in VRI

**Video Technology**
- Not many would buy video cameras and hook up with TVs. If they are, the savings from using VRI will be realized as adoption and usage increases

**Government Legislation**
- Titles I, II and III of the ADA
### VRI

**Demand vs. Supply**
- Demand exceeds supply

**Training**
- 150 interpreter training programs
- 160+ universities accept ASL as a foreign language
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**Outreach**
- Not many businesses and consumers understand the differences between VRS and VRI

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### VRS vs. VRI

**Any Questions?**

**Thank You!!!**

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### Research and Assessment
- Survey how much VRI is used in America
- Survey how much VRI is understood and applied correctly in the community
- Survey interpreter profession on its VRI experience

### Future Opportunities
- Work with Chambers of Commerce, small businesses, Independent Living Centers, Community Service Centers to promote VRI
- Increase employment, educational and other opportunities in the community

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Claude Stout

VRS & VRI: Benefits and Challenges for Consumers
Occupational Health Risks in Different Interpreting Work Settings: Special Concerns for VRS and K-12 Interpreters

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Thank You
This research was made possible by:
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
2009 Research Grant
2005 RID Conference Research Space

Data analyses by:
Vince Samar, Ph.D.
National Technical Institute f/t Deaf

Our research questions:
1. How does the risk of occupational health problems in the interpreting profession compare to other professions, especially practice professions vs. technical professions?
2. Does the risk of occupational health problems differ among these four primary interpreting work settings: VRS, community/freelance, K-12 and “staff?”

The two studies described were approved by the Research Subjects Review Board (IRB) of the University of Rochester Medical Center.

2005 Pilot Study: Limitations
- Conducted at 2005 RID convention
- Biases inherent in convenience sample
  - Possible socioeconomic bias
  - Possible work setting bias (e.g., time off)
  - Geographic proximity bias
- Imbalance in primary work setting (low VRS)
- VRS still somewhat new (Would practices affecting occupational health risks evolve?)

Our 2009 Study Goals
- Collect data via on-line format (Survey Gizmo)
- Larger participant sample
- Greater geographic diversity
- Greater balance between work settings
- Assess replicability of 2005 findings
Our Two Studies: Participants

2005 RID Convention
- 144 respondents
- 82% female
- Mean age 40 (s.d. 8.7)
- Mean years working 17.1 (s.d. 8.9)
- Primary work setting:
  - VRS (22)
  - Community/freelance (61)
  - K-12 (22)
  - "Staff" (39)

2009 On-line JCQ Survey
- 457 respondents
- 90% female
- Mean age 42 (s.d. 11.8)
- Mean years working 7.6 (s.d. 7.5, mode <2.5)
- Primary work setting:
  - VRS (84)
  - K-12 (110)
  - Community/freelance (156)
  - "Staff" (97)

Job Content Questionnaire

- Our DC-S work is an outgrowth of Robert Karasek’s demand control theory
- Karasek developed JCQ to study occupational health (o.h.) in the context of his DC theory
- 49 questions about various work topics
- Results associated with various o.h. outcomes
- JCQ is used/studied extensively:
  - International, translations
  - Large normative database (4,500) of occupations (85)
  - Extensive published research base

JCQ Scales

- **Decision latitude** =
  - Skill discretion +
  - Decision authority
- **Role constraint** *
- **Psych. demands**
- **Depression**
- **Physical exertion**
- **Job dissatisfaction**
- **Created skill**
- Supervisor support
- Coworker support
- Skill utilization
- Job insecurity
- Supervisory respons.
- Social support
- Hazardous conditions
- Toxic exposures
- Supervisory support

Key JCQ-DC Theory Scales

- Decision latitude (DL) = “controls”
- DL made up of:
  - Skill discretion (SD) = multi-faceted work experiences that build one’s skill base
  - Decision authority (DA) = influence, power

Data Reporting Conventions

- All differences noted are statistically significant
- 2009 data replicates 2005 data unless otherwise specified
- Notation conventions:
  - A > B =C
  - A = B > C
  - A > B > C
- Even when “equal,” order of group means preserved
- Look for repeated pattern of VRS and K-12 at highest risk with VRS usually highest of all
- All analyses controlled for years of experience, which never made a difference in the findings

Our Practice Profession Focus

- Technical vs. practice profession topic important in our scholarship and teaching
- Used JCQ occupational database to create two comparison variables:
  - Practice professions (PP)
  - Technical professions (TP)
- PP examples: nurse, MD, teacher, police
- TP examples: architect, engineer, science

*This scale was devised by RKD & RQIP.*
Decision Latitude

- DL = Karasek’s “controls”
- Comprised of both SD and DA
- CF = staff > K-12 > VRS

Skill Discretion

- Skill discretion (SD) = multi-faceted work experiences that build one’s skill base
- One component of Decision Latitude
- CF = staff > K-12 > VRS
- Note all groups < both PP and TP
- What does this mean about interpreter preparedness for job demands?

Decision Authority

- Second component of Decision Latitude
- CF = staff > K-12 > VRS
- Note most interpreter groups > PP & TP
- Supports our concerns regarding “rhetoric vs. defacto practice” realities
- Underscores concerns about “invisibility”
- Contrast SD and DA components of DL: fewer control resources but more control “authority” than other professions
“Role Constraint”

- A variable we created
- SD/DA: your available skill repertoire in relation to your authority to employ it
- Larger numbers = more constrained
- VRS > K-12 = staff = CF
- VRS challenges consistent with DL, SD, DA
- PP and TP more constrained than most interpreters: rhetoric vs. defacto practice and “invisibility” implications again

Created Skill

- Learning, growth, creativity in your work
- Means order: CF > staff > K-12 > VRS
- Group differences a bit complex
- CF = staff > VRS
- Staff = K-12
- CF > K-12 = VRS
- All interpreter groups < TP and PP

Psychological Demands

- Work “pressures” (time, conflicting demands)
- VRS > K-12 = CF = staff
- 2005 study found no group differences
- Note interpreters’ psychological demands are equal to or greater than PP; implications for training and occupational health interventions
Depression

- Some caution here as to how we handled the JCQ depression variable. We created an improved, two-factor depression variable for interpreters, checked via several analyses.
  - Factor 1: low energy, irritability
  - Factor 2: negativity, anxiety, anhedonia
  - Both factors: depressed mood

Depression Factor 1

- VRS = staff = K-12 = CF (no differences)
- All interpreter groups > PP & TF
- Gender difference identified

Depression Factor 2

- Staff = VRS = K-12 = CF (no differences)
- All interpreter groups > PP & TF
- Age difference identified

Physical Exertion
**Physical Exertion**
- **VRS = CF = K-12 = staff (no differences)**
- All interpreter groups > PP and TP
- Practice professions generally more physically demanding than technical ones
- Interpreting #2 most physically exerting of 16 JCQ occupations; only nursing greater

**Job Dissatisfaction**
- **VRS = staff = K-12 > CF**
- VRS, staff, K-12 > PP
- Overall, more satisfaction than TP norm

**Summary of Findings**
- Work setting differences were **not** found on depression (both), exertion, however all groups had higher depression and exertion scores than PP and TP norms
- Work setting differences were found for:
  - DL, SD & DA: CF ≥ Staff > K-12 > VRS
  - SD/DA, \( \Psi \) demands†: VRS > K-12 = staff = CF
  - Created skill: CF > K-12 = VRS; CF = staff > VRS‡
  - Supervisor support: CF > staff = K-12 = VRS‡
  - Job dissatisfaction: VRS = K-12 = staff > CF

*In 2005, K-12 sometimes = VRS
† In 2005, no differences found
‡ Not examined in 2005

**Conclusions**
- In contrast to other professions, and regardless of work setting, interpreting is associated with more depression and physical exertion
- This could relate to data suggesting demand-control imbalance and/or rhetoric vs. defacto
- VRS setting associated with higher occ. health risks than K-12, CF and staff interpreters on six JCQ variables; never was VRS score “favorable”
- K-12 associated with second worst risk levels
- CF frequently in the most favorable position

**Questions and Discussion**
- The “what” vs. the “why” of these findings
- Addressing a demand-control “mismatch”
  - Through control considerations only
  - Through job redesign (demands-focused)
Questions and Discussion

- What do the results suggest for:
  - VRS employers and employees
  - K-12 employers and employees
  - Further research?
  - Interpreter education?
  - Other “action items” for the profession?

Reference


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