An investigation of educational interpreters in the classroom:

Are there more instances of the ASL feature “Constructed Action” in elementary than secondary settings?

By

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Introduction

Educational interpreting involves interpreting for Deaf or hard of hearing students in the classroom, throughout their education and this particular setting has unique demands.

In some instances the interpreter may be the student’s bridge to the Deaf community and the student’s only model of American Sign Language (ASL).

An investigation of educational interpreters in the classroom incorporating the ASL feature Constructed Action was explored. Are there more occurrences in elementary classrooms than secondary classrooms?

Literature Review

• Constructed action or constructed dialogue can be seen when an interpreter depicts actions of a scene as if she or some other entity is part of that scene which may or may not include a dialogue or discussion (Metzger, 1995; Winston, 1991, 1992).

• More specifically, depiction of action has sometimes been called ‘constructed action’ (CA) and depiction of dialogue has sometimes been called ‘constructed dialogue’ (CD).

• Metzger describes the use of CD and CA as a way for signers to incorporate their body, eye gaze, and head to show a character’s thoughts and actions.

• Since CD and CA processes differ significantly in ASL an English, both in production and comprehension, in conjunction with many of the other ASL features; CD and CA have been identified as problematic for second language learners of ASL (Quinto-Pozos, 2005; Taylor, 2002).

Data Sources

• DVD 3 & 4 Educational classroom interpreting practices
• DVD #INT-EL: Elementary School Sample with Interpreting Models
• DVD Giving a hand to good education: 1F A Lesson With Heart

Results from Individual Elementary and Secondary Classroom Lessons

<table>
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<th>Occurrences</th>
<th>Storytelling</th>
<th>Storytelling</th>
<th>Open Activity</th>
<th>Open Activity</th>
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<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>64</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

The data collected using the resource DVDs show more instances of CA overall in secondary settings than in elementary settings.

The difference of CA in each setting was marginal.

The content in each setting may have possibly had more influence than the setting in which was interpreted.

Limitations

• No live client
• Insufficient data sources
• Mock setting for data sources
• Interpreters were not educational interpreters

Recommendations

Continued research with more corpus samples of educational interpreting could validate these preliminary findings.

References


Acknowledgements

Dr. Keith Cagle
Phyllis Rogers
Janis Cole
My peers in the DOI