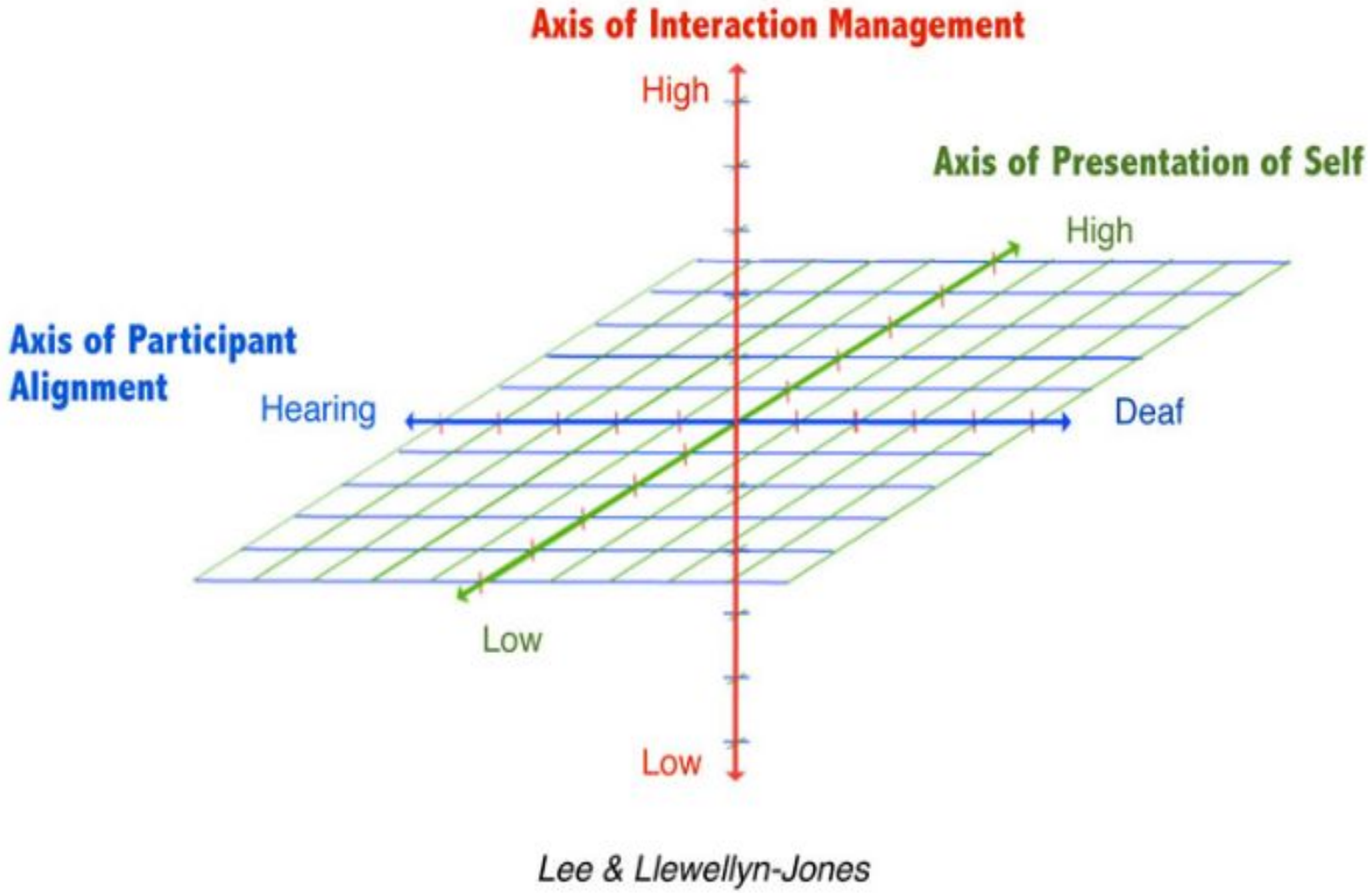


UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN COLORADO

Project CLIMB

Cultivating Legal Interpreters from Minority Backgrounds

Legal Interpreter Training



Role-Space

Module content developed by the Graduation to Certification Project at St. Catherine University's CATIE Center and Project CLIMB ASL Lecture by: Kristina Miranda and Amy Williamson
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Module Overview

This is the third in a series of mentor training modules designed to prepare you for the work you are doing as a facilitator for Project CLIMB. This module will cover the Role-Space Model, another framework that you can use to discuss ethical decision-making that allows us to analyze how the interpreter functions during an assignment. The Role-Space Model, created by Peter Llewellyn-Jones and Robert G. Lee, encourages us to reconceptualize how we discuss the role of the interpreter, and challenges the idea of interpreters "stepping out of role".

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the participant will be able to:

- Reflect on their own view of the interpreter's role
- Discuss interpreting through the framework provided by the Role-Space Model
- Identify where an interpreter's actions fall on the three axes of the Role-Space Model
- Apply the Role-Space Model to discussions about the work of interpreting when engaging with novice legal interpreters.

GoReact Discussion: Legal Interpreting Thought Question



Original post directions:

As part of Project CLIMB's legal interpreter training you were given the opportunity to learn and think about the interpreter's role and responsibilities in legal settings.

- Keeping that in mind, what does "stepping out of role" in the interpreting profession mean to you?
- Have you ever experienced a time where you felt like you were "stepping out of your role" whether in a legal environment or another setting?
    - If so, what led you to the feeling like you needed to "step out of your role" and what was the result? Please explain while also keeping any assignment specific information confidential.

Note: If you need to review the roles and responsibilities for legal interpreters, please go back and visit module 5 in Project CLIMB's legal interpreter training.

GoReact Discussion: Legal Interpreting Thought Question cont.



Response post directions:

Review the original post from several of your colleagues. Then, respond to at least one colleague with the following prompts in mind.

- What theme(s) if any did you see between the way you and your colleagues responded to the concept of the interpreter “stepping out of role”? Please explain.

Role-Space: Introduction

The basis of the Role-Space model is that interpreters are humans and very much present in all interpreted interactions. As humans, we are expected to follow certain behavioral norms, such as responding when asked a direct question. At the same time, we are operating as interpreters with the goal of fostering, supporting and effectively managing communication between people other than ourselves.

Role-Space gives us a way to show that those two expectations are not mutually exclusive. At any given time, we are choosing how little and how much to interact, with whom we interact, and how much we manage the conversation. A discussion of how we make those choices and the resulting consequences is much more valuable than conceiving ourselves as simply being in or out of role.

Role-Space: Overview

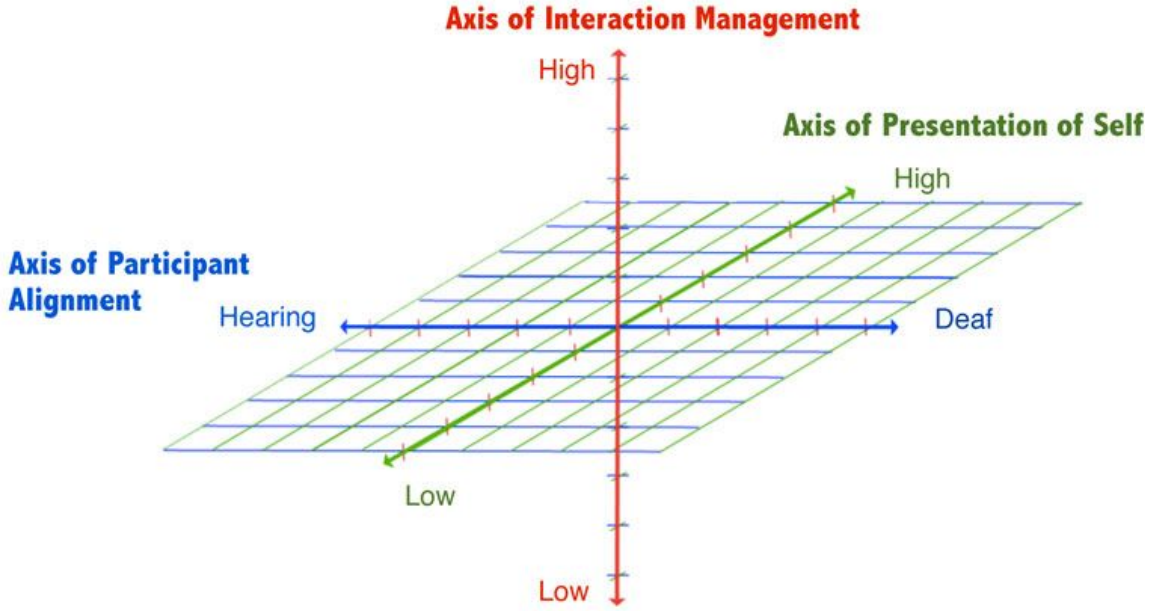
Axes
Lee and Llewellyn-Jones share a three-dimensional model of interpreter involvement, based on three axes. An interpreter moves into different positions along these axes throughout an assignment. By breaking down the position an interpreter may take along the axes during an assignment, an interpreter can explore ethical ramifications and actual consequences of their choices, as well as strategies for decision-making in future assignments.

The three axes of the model are:

X Axis of participant alignment

Y Axis of interaction management

Z Axis of presentation of self



Lee & Llewellyn-Jones

Role-Space: The 3 axes

Participant Alignment

This is the extent to which the interpreter engages with any of the participants in the interaction. This engagement isn't about expressing the interpreter's opinion. Rather it is about simple things such as introducing themselves, checking in with eye-gaze and using facial expression or sounds to indicate that communication is happening, as well as positioning themselves in the space in ways that show a connection to a participant.

Interaction Management

This includes control of the turn-taking process. An interpreter is constantly choosing to work more "simultaneously" (even though simultaneous is a misnomer, as we always have some process time) or more consecutively to allow more time to get the message before beginning the interpretation. The axis of interaction management graphs how much or how little the interpreter intervenes to manage that process. This includes managing overlapping speech and using overt/covert management strategies.

Presentation of Self

This axis is the degree to which the interpreter speaks or signs (also called "authoring") their own thoughts instead of the content of the interpretation. Most of our field's discussion of "role" seems to be about this axis. Our history and some previous codes of conduct make it seem as though we should never speak for ourselves in our work. In reality, we do so all the time. We introduce ourselves, we indicate errors, we ask for clarification and, in many cases, we engage in direct conversation with participants because if we did not, the relationships in the interaction would be damaged.

Role-Space: A closer look at role-space

Please watch this video from Amy Williamson that gives us a deeper understanding of the concept or role-space and the three axes that are a part of this model.



Role-Space: Application of the Role-Space Model

Case Scenario

Now that you have a better understanding of the Role-Space model it's time for you to apply what you have learned about the 3 axes by analyzing a real interpreting scenario.

Start by watching the video below. Jan Nishimura originally shared this experience as a part of the National Multicultural Interpreting Project (1996-2000). Project CLIMB reached out to Jan to have the clip reproduced in ASL. Jan graciously recounted this experience for us and added additional context. Below is Jan's retelling. On the next slide you will see the original clip from the National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP).



Role-Space: Application of the Role-Space Model cont.

Case Scenario cont.

Case Scenario cont.

Below is the original video clip of Jan Nishimura discussing the same interpreting situation you just watched. This clip is in English with captions. We are providing it here for additional context.



Role-Space: Application of the Role-Space Model cont.

Case Scenario Analysis.

Please view this sample Role-Space case analysis that uses the video on Asian Values and Interpreting Issues from Jan Nishimura that we just watched.

This example is provided for you as a model so that you may complete the Role-Space analysis activity on the next slide of this module.



GoReact Discussion: Case Analysis



Original post directions:

Now that you've seen an example of how role-space can be applied to an interpreting scenario to analyze decision making, it's your turn to apply what you know about role-space to an interpreted interaction.

1. Watch the video in GoReact titled, "Examples of a Deaf Interpreters Work, English-ASL-Gestuno Part 2/ Mental Health." Note the video is also linked below for viewing outside of GoReact.
2. For this assignment, you will apply a Role-Space analysis to the first scenario in this video (0:00-6:30).
3. To complete this assignment, you will analyze evidence of decision making by the interpreters using each of the three axes in the role-space model and the prompts on the next slide as a guide.

Note: Avoid repeating what someone else has shared unless you are providing a different view of the decision.

GoReact Discussion: Case Analysis



Prompts:

1. Where do you see evidence of ***participant alignment*** that is NOT neutral? (When does the interpreter (either one) align with the deaf or hearing people? What do they do that indicates the alignment? What do you think the desired outcome was in this decision? Was the decision to align effective?)

2. Where do you see evidence of ***interaction management*** that is NOT neutral? (What does the interpreter (either one) say or do that manages the interaction? What do you think the desired outcome was in this decision? Was the approach to interaction management effective?)

3. Where do you see evidence of ***presentation of self*** that is NOT neutral? (What does the interpreter (either one) say or do that indicates that they are the author of what they are saying? What do you think the desired outcome was in this decision? Was the decision to author a message(presentation of self) effective?)

4. Do you see evidence of any decisions that one interpreter made that was different than what the other interpreter decided to do? Or were both interpreters placing themselves in the same places along each axis during the whole scenario? If you noticed any differences, what were they? What are your thoughts about these differences?

GoReact Discussion: Case Analysis cont.



Response post directions:

React to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

Role-Space: Decision Making

Autonomy: The power a person has to take action and influence or control a situation
Relational autonomy: A person's level of autonomy is context dependent. In some situations, people have more autonomy than other situations.

This is true for interpreters and the people we interpret between.

- Interpreters' decisions are influenced by the level of autonomy the participants have on a ***conservative*** (do little/nothing) to ***liberal*** (do more/much) scale. (Remember these terms from the previous module?)
- The more autonomy participants have, the more conservative the interpreter's decisions may be. Less balanced autonomy may lead to more liberal decision-making.
- Unethical decisions may be related to choosing to be either too liberal or too conservative in a given context

Watch one of these 2013 and 2014 StreetLeverage Live videos that discuss decision-making.







GoReact Discussion: Decision Making



Original post directions:

Watch one of the 2013 and 2014 StreetLeverage Live videos that discuss decision-making (linked below). After you watch the video you selected respond to the following prompts.

Prompts:

1. From the video that you chose to watch, what examples of role-space (i.e. participant alignment, interaction management, and presentation of self) do you see?
2. What about the video you watched from Anna, Carla, or Betty resonate for you?

GoReact Discussion: Decision Making cont.



Response post directions:

React to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

GoReact Discussion: Legal Case Analysis



Original post directions:

- Watch the video titled, “Defendant Testimony (Deaf Defendant)", linked here.
- For this assignment, select any 10-minute segment from the video and analyze evidence of decision making by the interpreters using each of the three axes in the role-space model as a guide. Note: When you share your analysis, be sure to contextualize your comments so we understand the basis of your analysis.

Prompts:

1. Where do you see evidence of participant alignment, interaction management, and presentation of self? Please describe.
2. Do you see evidence of any decisions that one interpreter made that was different than what the other interpreter decided to do? Or were both interpreters placing themselves in the same places along each axis during the whole scenario? Please describe.
3. How might understanding relational autonomy and role-space support you in the work you are doing with your COL participants?
4. What remaining questions do you have about role-space?

GoReact Discussion: Legal Case Analysis cont.



Response post directions:

React to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

References

- Llewellyn-Jones, P. & Lee, R. G. (2014). Redefining the role of the community interpreter: The concept of role-space. SLI Press: Carlton-le-Moorland.



Module Post-Test



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