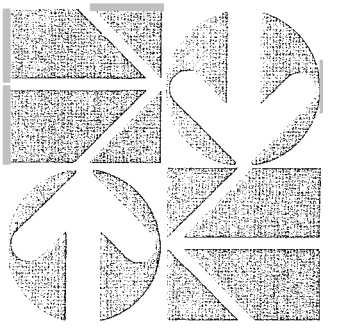

CONFERENCE OF
INTERPRETER
TRAINERS

NEW DIMENSIONS IN INTERPRETER EDUCATION: CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

November 6-10, 1986

Sixth National Convention Chevy Chase, Md.

CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND o **1986**

Conference of Interpreter Trainers — Sixth National Convention

NEW DIMENSIONS IN INTERPRETER EDUCATION: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

November 6 - 10, 1986
Co-Sponsors:
- **U.S. Department of Education**
- **Gallaudet University**
- **National Technical Institute for the Deaf**

Proceedings of the
Sixth National Convention

NEW DIMENSIONS IN INTERPRETER EDUCATION: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Edited by Marina L. McIntire

Copyright 1987 RID Publications
All rights reserved.
minted in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

McIntire, Marina L. Editor
New Dimensions in Interpreter Education:
Curriculum and Instruction

First edition 1988

Library of Congress
ISBN 0-916883-01-9

EVALUATING PERFORMANCE: AN INTERPRETED LECTURE

Cynthia B. Roy
Gallaudet University
Georgetown University

Introduction

Evaluating interpreted ieces of talk is one of the most difficult tasks we undertake as interpreters, evaluators and educators? This study proposes that one major reason we are unable to evaluate interpretations effectively or accurately is that we have not identified the combination of levels of meaning that constitute talk. As interpreters and teachers, our evaluations tend to focus on the transfer of the content of word and sentences to the exclusion of levels of meaning concerned with how language gets used and levels of meaning derived from discourse structure and style. These higher level sorts of meaning are as important to judgments of appropriateness as is accuracy of sentence content. These levels must be considered in the search for equivalents because they contain cues that tell listeners what kind of message they are hearing, how to identify the salient points of the message, and how speakers are projecting their involvement with the audience. We need to identify, describe and talk about the larger-than-sentence-levelpieces of language before we judge the effectiveness of transfers of meaning in interpreted message.

Many studies of translation or interpretation which evaluate interpreted messages focus on mistranslations (or errors) by comparing the original text (written) or discourse (spoken) with the interpretation, through an analysis of the propositions of the original message. That is, they judge the content or the form of individual utterances (sentences) of the interpreted message against that of the original message. Then the evaluation becomes: do the words, phrases, sentences of the interpreted message have the same meaning as the original words, phrases, and sentences?

This study follows a different course. Rather than focusing on the congruence or compatibility of the source language (SL) message and the target language (TL) message, it evaluates the TL production in its own right. That is, it asks the question, if this were a naturally occurring piece of discourse, would it be an appropriate one? The interpretation I will look at in this paper is a monologic, content-oriented lecture in American Sign Language (ASL) given to young adults and interpreted simultaneously into a talk in spoken English. The analysis took its form when I discovered a subtle inappropriateness in the production of the TL. This inappropriateness becomes clear when monolingual native English speakers who listened to an audiotape of the interpretation reported being "turned off' and felt that the talk was meant for children. This study will demonstrate that the discourse markers used by the interpreter did not convey information about the nature of the discourse event or the level of audience for which it was intended. Failure at this level of communication results in a negative response to the talk and a lack of attention by the people for whom the interpretation is intended. In addition, the speaker is viewed in a pejorative sense, while the interpreter is assumed to have done an adequate job.

This kind of mis-communication is probably more common than one might think. The result is either a failure to communicate or a reduction of communicative success. Participants are thus less easily able to accomplish their respective communicative goals. If intelligent and articulate speakers, like the one in my study, can fail to communicate effectively to another language group, it is easy to see how other speakers, perhaps less articulate, fail over and over again in their communicative efforts.

One outcome of looking at interpretations in this way is that it serves as evidence of a need for evaluations about interpretations by monolingual judges in monolingual contexts. There is no question that what is going on is problematic, but there is some doubt that a bilingual judge would notice the problem,

© 1987, RID Publications

Another outcome of this approach to studying interpretation is that, although interpreters must be bilingual, interpretation requires more than the ability to speak another language; it requires both overt knowledge and mastery of the discourse styles of both languages. As I will show, the notion that interpretation should be judged solely through propositional analysis is a simplistic one which obscures the multitude of factors that are used by listeners in deciding the appropriateness of what they receive.

A Communicative Breakdown

Two years ago, I asked two interpreters to interpret into spoken English a videotape of a talk in ASL about the mating habits of the stickleback fish. The lecture in ASL is content-oriented; that is, the focus is on conveying information and is geared towards college freshmen. The interpreting students for whom the interpretations were intended were in an associate of arts program at a four-year college. Both interpreters are certified and both have deaf parents. Their combined professional experience is almost 35 years.

The interpreters viewed the videotape before the class met, and were given the chance to ask about the lecture and particular signs that may have been unknown to them. Their interpretations, with the interpreting students as the audience, were recorded over a videotape of the ASL lecture and were later re-recorded on audiotape. This paper presents the results of investigating one of those interpretations.

At first, the interpretation seemed adequate; the students complimented the interpreter on a difficult assignment. Single units of an utterance in **ASL** often have numerous morphemes and are difficult to interpret. Such ASL constructions may require lengthy utterances in English in order to translate the whole meaning. We should note here, however, is that, as the interpreter herself pointed out later, the students were listening "for all those English words and sentences." That is, they were listening for interpretations of specific lexical items and clauses. What they were not doing was listening to the interpretation as a discourse on its own. In other words, they were not listening for how the interpretation sounded.

The question I then had to ask myself was, "How would the interpretation sound if you did not know ASL?" I knew that the judgment of the interpretation as a talk in English had to come from observers for whom interpretation is ordinarily intended, that is, from observers who do not know the SL. I played the audio tape of the recording for twenty English observers who did not know they were listening to an interpretation.

The interpretation into English included the important content or the facts; a propositional analysis revealed that, out of 39 propositions in the original talk, the interpreter deleted only two. When the monolingual observers were asked for a title of the talk they had just heard they correctly identified it as, "The stickleback fish and its mating habits." They were also able to provide many of the relevant details. However, when asked who the speaker was talking to, the unanimous answer was "children." Eleven people commented that the talk was like telling a story to a child.

This must be viewed as a communicative breakdown. While those who were listening seem to have acquired the information being presented, it is far from being what we would think of as a successful interpretation. Given that the intended audience was young adults, the speaker in the interpretation sounded condescending and foolish, and appeared to be a poor communicator. If how something is said gets in the way of what is said, we have a communicative breakdown.

Moreover, the breakdown must be seen as a problem with the interpretation rather than with the original speaker, for when native Deaf signers were asked the same question, none of them indicated that the lecture was intended for children. Now let us turn to a more detailed analysis of the interpretation, to uncover exactly what went wrong.

Contextualization Cues

The interpretation, for most of the talk, is informative and descriptive in intent. That is, the interpreter tries to present the same information that the speaker presented the fish, springtime mating and fertilization rituals, peculiarities in behavior that do not occur any other time of the year, and other biological facts. Questions about the title of the talk and its important points show that this information was acquired by the listeners. So at the level of words, phrases, and sentences, which is what we would call surface content, the interpretation could be considered "correct" or "good." But something went wrong.

One way of examining what goes awry in this attempt to inform is to look at the paralinguistic cues used by the interpreter for her presentation of the information. That is, we can profit by examining the ways she used intonation, rhythm, stress, and other prosodic cues that signalled the kind of talk this was and the intended audience.

The notion I use to describe the interpreted talk is one which is based on the features by which speakers signal and listeners interpret how semantic content is to be understood. Gumperz (1977) identifies these features as "contextualization cues." Contextualization cues are prosodic and paralinguistic signals which co-occur with the surface content of a message and which listeners use to evaluate message meaning. For the most part, they are habitually used and perceived, but rarely consciously noted and almost never talked about directly. This level of meaning becomes significant and crucial when the meaning of the words and the meaning of these features conflict (Gumperz and Tannen 1979). Listeners unconsciously choose to interpret the meaning of these subtle contextualization cues as the most important part of the message.

Several kinds of contextualization cues may be important in this way. Prosodic cues include intonation and stress; paralinguistic cues include pitch, rhythm, and loudness. In addition, there are other cues such as lexical choice, use of formulaic expressions, and others. Gumperz (1977) demonstrates that such cues function in signalling frames of interpretation, that is, how utterances and larger chunks of discourse are to be understood by their hearers.

For example, these contextualization cues, along with expectations based on content, serve to contrast jokes and sarcasm or to distinguish sermons from lectures. Because linguistic elements (what we traditionally think of as words and sentences) and paralinguistic elements work together, these contextualization features are crucial for understanding the meaning of any interaction.

The analysis

The contextualization cues of pitch, intonation, stress, elongated vowels and particular word choices co-occur in different combinations throughout the interpretation. It is this combination of contextualization cues that contributed to the assessment of the interpretation as talk to children. First, a contrastive study of the pitch contours from the interpretation and from an ordinary talk the interpreter later gave to the interpreting students revealed that her overall pitch during the interpretation was higher than her normal overall speaking pitch. Secondly, at specific points in the interpretation, the intonation rose and fell as if to signal excitement about the information that accompanied it. This intonation, along with marked stress on selected words and lengthened vowels, contributed a particular rhythmic sense to the discourse.2 Third, accompanying these rhythmic and pitch patterns are utterances with connected meaning which occur in triplet sequences. (Triplet sequences are meaning-connected utterances which come to an intonational stop after two sequential breaks, thus becoming a three-part sequence.)

These three features (high pitch, exaggerated intonation contours, and triplet sequences) appear not just once, but repeatedly throughout the discourse. If these contextualization cues were present infrequently, the effect would be less marked. The sense of talking to children in a story-telling way emerges as a cumulative effect of these three features in the discourse.

Some of the utterances that contain these features are presented below [see Key, p. 146 for an explanation of notations]:

(1) Scientists have been studying it for má:ny

(2) their beha:viors and everything.

The words 'many' and 'behaviors' occur with a lengthened vowel (represented by a colon) coupled with a quickly rising and then falling intonation. Gumperz has noted that tone, which is a feature of intonation, is a prosodic mechanism that distinguishes between two levels, high and low: "A shift to high level generally calls special attention to the segments so marked; a shift to low level often indicates that an item of information is known orexpected" (Gumperz 1977, p. 200). In (1) and (2), the high tone co-occurs with lexical items which contain the lengthened vowel /a:/ thus giving them additional marking. These prosodic features —rising and falling intonation, stress, and lengthened vowels — are typical of the discourse used by adults talking to children to emphasize important or significant details. Coupled with the overall rise in pitch, it is not surprising that the listeners thought the speaker was talking to children.

Another set of utterances, unlikely for content-oriented discourse, is:

(3) Now the female fish they look for,

(4) someone with big belly,

(5) where the eggs are in there.

The lexical choice of 'big belly' is in itself out of place in a discourse such as this lecture. With primary stress on 'big,' the phrase tends to signal

a different kind of interpretative frame from a talk on biology for college freshmen. The phrase, 'where the eggs are in there,' is an unacceptable utterance in spoken English. When 'the eggs are in there' is closed off or stopped by the falling intonation [shown here with a period '.'], the utterance composes into three parts, or a triplet sequence.

A similar pattern is apparent in the following:

(6) So the female fish lá:ys the egg,

(7) THOUsands of eggs,

(8) and then leaves the nest.

In this group of utterances, the interpreter has an abrupt falling intonation after 'fish,' lengthens the vowel of the verb, pauses after the first clause (6) and then with emphatic stress says 'thousands of eggs.' Again, there is unusual stress, and intonation and the utterance is composed of three parts. The combination of prosodic features and the triplet structure of the utterances creates a kind of rhythmic pattern reminiscent of children's rhymes and the way adults tell stories to children: 'da-ta-ta:-da, ta-da-da, ta-da-ta-da.'

Here is this story-telling rhythm overlaid on the utterance above:

da - ta - ta: - da
(6) So the female fish la:ys the egg,

ta - da - da
(7) THOUsands of eggs,

ta - da - ta - da
(8) and then leaves the nest.

Here is yet another example of the triplet sequence and a similar rhythmic pattern:

(9) He waits . . .

(10) til a:ll the little baby fish are born.

(11) There's THOUsands of them.

Again we can find rising intonation, pausing, and a lengthened vowel, accompanied by particular word selections such as we see in (10) 'all the little baby fish.' What we can now confirm is the recurrent pattern of triplets. The repetition of this pattern of three, coupled with a similar rhythm, accumulates over the discourse to lead hearers to decide this talk is not intended for adults.

Other triplets with similar intonation, pausing, and rhythmic patterns occur elsewhere in the interpretation. The presence of such patterns and the reoccurrence of inappropriate lexical choices, I suggest, creates a sense of confusion and imbalance. The listener becomes confused because the words and sentences signal an informational talk on the reproductive habits of a fish, but the contextualization cues signal that the talk is not meant for adults. Listeners are left with only one solution: they create a frame (Goffman 1974) that will make sense of this talk. The frame they create is that of talking to children. When instances of these triplets recur, listeners become convinced of the "rightness" of the frame they have selected and so when asked who the speaker is talking to, they reply, "children."

Such anomalies occur outside triplet structures as well. For example, in the utterance:

(12) Scientists have been studying it for má:ny

màːny years

primary and secondary stress on repetitions of the same word add to the sense of non-adult discourse. Although adult speakers might say 'many, many' in casual conversation, its use in a semi-planned lecture would probably be inappropriate, especially with vowel lengthening and the primary stress.

Similarly, the interpreted talk ends with:

(13) And that's the story about the stickleback

fish.

The phrase, 'and that's the story about...', is a traditional story ending for young children. Again the intonational pattern found in combination with this phrase contributes to a sense of storytelling. In combination with the other patterns we have observed, it is a final and confirming reason for the response of addressees that the story is meant for children.

To be understood, all utterances must *carry* some kind of intonation, rhythm, and stress. As Gumperz (1977, p. 203) points out, "...they are our primary means of distinguishing various degrees of formality of talk and degrees of interspeaker involvement...." When paralinguistic cues are in keeping with expectations based on content, there is no conflict. The monologic presentation, the subject matter, and the informational content of this talk led hearers to expectations of a lecture which, coupled with the fact that they

were adults themselves, made them also expect that it would be a lecture for adults. However, when confronted with a conflict in how the speaker meant what was said, the frame could not be easily identified. Listeners had to choose and they chose the frame represented by the contextualization cues I have identified. These cues signalled the frame "talking to children," and adults were "turned off."

Looking at the interpretation event, we can say that the content was, for the most part, correctly interpreted, but how the utterances were spoken was inappropriate. This message did not make sense in terms of what adults expect in monologic talks and what they perceived. Contextualization cues lead listeners to evaluate message meaning in relation to the prosodic and lexical surface representations and to reject this style of speaking as incongruent with expectations about semi-planned, content-oriented discourse for adults.

What happened?

The question we can ask now is where did these intonation, rhythm, stress marking and other inappropriate features come from? What accounts for this? Why should an interpreter with years of experience and native-like fluency in both languages seem to give such a poor interpretation, to the extent of choosing paralinguistic features that failed in this context? The foregoing description of the interpretation is based on an analysis of the contextualization cues that actually appeared as opposed to those that the listeners expected to hear. While this analysis explains what was wrong for persons listening to the interpretation into English, it does not explain how the interpreter came to use these cues.

After considering several possible explanations that might account for the interpretation, I shall return to the original discourse and examine the ASL discourse to account for the interpretation. I then suggest that certain features of this ASL discourse mark it as a lecture and indicate that the speaker is interested in his topic. These details are marked in ASL by means of different features than are employed to mark the same phenomena in English. This difference creates difficulties for the interpreter that lead to a rendering of an adult ASL lecture into a child-like English story.

Possible explanations

One possible explanation is that the interpreter herself was focused on content, i.e., the words and sentences. During her talk to the interpreting class immediately following her interpretation, she indicated that she thought the students were listening "for all those English words and sentences." If she thought that was what the students were listening to, she too might have been paying special attention to the surface meanings of the words and sentences.

In addition, there is the possibility that, though she is an experienced interpreter, she may be inexperienced at lecturing and is thus not in control of the markers lecturers use to lead an audience through a set of ideas. Both lexical and paralinguistic cues are habitually used as markers for segmenting discourse, pointing out main ideas, and establishing crucial information in both English and ASL; yet they are rarely discussed directly. If interpreters could become aware of these subtle cues that lead listeners through discourse, then we might be better able to produce them while interpreting. This explanation accounts for the cues' absence in English, yet it does not explain why the spoken English sounded as it did.

Another explanation may be the personal stress of interpreting before a group of potentially critical students. This could account for the rise in pitch. Rick Hernandez (personal communication) has suggested that interpreters often "apologize" as they interpret, especially when interpreting from ASL to English. It is as if they are saying, "Am I getting it right?" This explanation could account for pitch and intonational features, but does not account for the elongated vowels, stress, and the repeated pattern of triplets. Again we must look for another explanation.

The interpreter may be unaware of the discourse markers in ASL that mark formality. This particular talk in ASL, for example, is marked formally with discourse markers that separate "chunks" of talk (Roy, 1985): two-handed signs, large non-manual signals, and by a suspension of phonological rules whereby signs are intentionally not blended as they would be in casual talk. Thus, we might suggest that the interpreter thought the talk was casual and did not require the necessary level of formality. But that still does not account for "talking to children," because casual talks may be directed toward adults.

Although each of these possibilities may contribute to the overall final effect, none of them adequately and sufficiently explains the contextualization cues that appear in the interpreted discourse. In searching for other possibilities, I returned to the original discourse in ASL and noticed a feature that seems to occur frequently. Others (Baker-Shenk 1984; Liddell 1980) have commented on this feature, but it has yet to be adequately described in terms of function and

form. I turn now to an examination of this feature, and a discussion of its role in the interpretation discussed here.

Constructed Dialogue

Talks which are descriptions of knowledge and impart information are generally expected to provide a presentation of the known facts, and thus to be more content-oriented, and to be organized in a predictable way. Content and the structure of organization, however, are not a sufficient explanation of why a speech is "good" or "interesting," since well-organized, content-filled lectures may be quite dull. There is a third criterion: what is it that makes it vivid and interesting? It is a sociolinguistic assumption that strategies and devices typical of ordinary conversation and elements of good story-telling are used to create this impression. The use of constructed dialogue, as Tannen (1985) convincingly points out, is one such device that functions to create involvement between the audience and the speaker, and the audience and the talk itself.

Tannen (1985) has introduced the term 'constructed dialogue' to replace 'reported speech,' a term used when speech is represented as first-person dialogue. She argues that lines of dialogue in conversation, in consideration of the abilities of human memory, are probably not the same as those that were actually spoken. Thus the lines of speech are not actually reported verbatim, but rather constructed by speakers based on real people and events.

Lines of dialogue also appear in lectures. Ingrid Pufahl (1984) has shown that the constructed dialogue in a technical lecture (in English) about chemical compounds was "by and large different from the one found in narratives." Most of the dialogue she found was used to verbalize possible hearer questions or responses to information, such as "and you say, 'this looks like a mess.' " She suggests that these lines are strategies used by speakers to create interesting lectures. They serve a function of making lectures interesting or vivid. Note, however, that the dialogue in English is not ordinarily dialogue among the elements or instruments under discussion, nor is it ordinarily an expression of the feelings of those elements or instruments. Dialogue which would do this in English would be unusual in a lecture.

There are several instances of constructed dialogue in the ASL talk, instances where the fish actually say something. The constructed dialogue in this ASL lecture is different from the dialogue found in ASL narratives. As one would expect in a content-filled talk, these instances are brief and generally only one or two manual signs accompanied by non-manual signals. There is no actual exchange of talk between the fish. In this talk, the dialogue is marked by ordinary ASL markers of constructed dialogue: a difference in head orientation whereby the head is turned and sometimes also tilted, and by a change in eye gaze.3

All of the dialogue in the lecture is attributed to the fish and all of the utterances are human-like expressions of feeling or thoughts. For example, the male fish has focused on a particular female, the female notices and responds "FINE(wg)." Accompanying this manual gesture is a facial expression reminiscent of a Mae West impression (repeatedly raising the eyebrows). Thus, a translation might be, "Ooh, I like this," or "This feels good." As we can see, this segment of talk in not informative; it must be there to serve another function. I suggest it is there to serve the function of creating involvement between the audience and the talk and the audience and the speaker. To confirm this determination I asked deaf people, ranging in age from eighteen to forty, to evaluate this speaker. It was unanimously agreed that the ASL speaker was "good," "interesting," "terrific."

What we have, then, is a difference in discourse style between ASL and English. English lecture style allows a kind of constructed dialogue that frames possible audience reactions, and ASL allows a kind of discourse style that might have constructed dialogue among the central elements or characters of the talk.4 We have also ascertained that the dialogue in both styles serves the function of making the talk "interesting" or "vivid."

What did happen

The dialogue constructed by the ASL speaker is, to speakers of English, suggestive of story-telling, like the kind of dialogue that is found in narratives. It is also the kind of English dialogue found only in jokes or in children's stories, because the fish are the ones who do the talking. The interpreter knows that the lecture is for an informational or content purpose but it also seems like story-telling to her. She appears to face a conflict in the purpose and style of this lecture. Thus the interpreter gets caught in the "double bind" of language translation.

Bateson (1972) explains the double bind as being placed in a situation where two simultaneous and contradictory messages are readily apparent, leaving the situation is impossible. The interpreter faces one message that says, "This is a story-

like element which cannot be interpreted literally into English" and another that says, "You must interpret everything that is said." A third constraint exists in the sense that the interpreter cannot spend time musing over this dilemma; she must make a decision and continue with the interpretation or she will miss the next thing being said.

Interpreters are frequently caught in this double bind, as well as others that arise due to other discourse differences. If she interprets the dialogue as it is presented, she'll be accused of sounding like she or the speaker is talking to children. If she does not interpret the dialogue, she will be accused of eliminating information. So, in many cases, she attempts to do both. In part, she changes the dialogue into an appropriate lecture style for English, and reaches for an interpretation that does not include the constructed dialogue. But her perception of the narrative-like quality of the dialogue causes her to produce utterances unexpected in adult discourse.

Let us return to the example of constructed dialogue in ASL. When the ASL speaker says "FINE(wg)," the interpretation is, "The fish will start nuzzling up to each other." Here the interpreter aims for an appropriate lecture-style utterance and achieves something that is a partial resolution of the equivalency requirement in interpretation. That is, she reaches for an interpretation that does not include the constructed dialogue. Certainly, the interpreter's use of declarative utterances maintains that sense of an adult, content-oriented talk that she has to interpret. But she does not achieve it entirely, due to her lexical choice of 'nuzzling'; this does not conform to adult discourse. And, most importantly, as the producer of utterances that are supposed to create involvement with the audience, she fails.

I would like to suggest further that the interpreter faces conflicting notions as to the kind of discourse style permissible in content-filled formal talks. Moreover, she is faced with a difficult and immediate decision: first, the constructed dialogue does seem narrative-like to her and she also recognized she cannot produce that kind of dialogue in English. So, she translates it into declarative statements without the dialogue. Second, at a deeper level and with more important consequences, she translates the narrative-like features of constructed dialogue into prosodic level features and thus seems to be talking to children or telling a story, the quality of which is found in the intonation, stress, marked vowels, pitch, triplet patterns, and lexical choices.

Now we can see how interpreters are faced with difficult decisions about levels of meaning and their equivalencies across languages. In this particular situation, the interpreter must determine:

1) what to do with the ASL surface features of dialogue, and
2) what to do with the function of such dialogue, that is, how to create the sense of this speaker as a vivid and interesting speaker.

Baker-Shenk (1983) has suggested that indirect speech in English is a more appropriate equivalent for constructed dialogue (or direct speech) in ASL. Her reasoning was to look at the form of the constructed dialogue in a narrative, noting the frequency of its use, whereupon she determined that in English its related form, indirect speech, was used more often, especially in narratives. Using this equivalence in this lecture situation, the interpreter might have said: "she said that it felt good." This is a conversion of form, but where is the vividness? Will the use of indirect speech in English make an audience reach a similar judgment about the speaker, i.e., that he is a "good" speaker? I think not. My point is to look at the function of these uses of constructed dialogue and ask ourselves what is this form doing? How does it work to make a story or a lecture interesting or exciting? It may be that structural equivalents are not necessarily functional equivalents.

Conclusion

What does all this mean for evaluation and training? First, it means that interpretation requires more than the ability to speak another language; it requires recognition, mastery, and explicit knowledge of the discourse markers and styles used by both languages. It is not enough to say that interpreters must be bilinguals. Their training requires an intensive study of the languages they speak and how language is used by speakers. Language is not used simply to convey information; it is used to display the attitudes and motivations of the speaker, his involvement with the lecture, the topic, the audience, and the like. Language study must include a study not only of what is said, but how it is said and how that notion conveys an immense amount of information about speakers.

Second, it demonstrates a need for monolingual judgments about the discourse we produce in ASL or English as coherent discourse in its own right. Many interpreters today are striving for interpretation into ASL. Most of the discussions I have observed center around appropriate equivalents between English and ASL at the utterance

level. One question we should be asking is: how are our interpretations equivalent at the discourse level? Is this appropriate and coherent discourse in ASL? The same questions pertain to English. This kind of evaluation must appear in our educational programs and in our evaluation systems.

Third, the notion that interpretations can be judged using propositional analysis is a simplistic one which obscures the multitude of factors that are responsible for the choices to be made in interpretations within specific situations. It is not enough to describe differences in interpretations on the basis of propositional analysis. The fact that two expressions are propositionally equivalent does not mean that they are synonymous in meaning. As Nida (1976) explains, propositional logic is inadequate to deal several aspects of meaning, including focus, emphasis, and foregrounding-backgrounding functions. Such a notion also ignores the essentially emergent nature of interaction.

Notes

[1]I would like to thank Robert E. Johnson for originally encouraging this research and for his continued support, ideas, editing skills and, most of all, for his interest in what I am doing and thinking about in interpretation.

[2]Erickson and Shultz (1980) have shown that talk is rhythmically timed to an underlying metric or tempo. In ordinary talk, people speak in a regular meter of regular beats, and time their pauses to the rhythm of these beats. Thus, rhythm has a significant, though unconscious and automatic, effect on the way we receive language.

[3]I would like to thank Scott Liddell for pointing this out.

[4]This style of **ASL** discourse seems to be a kind of analogic presentation of information I see in classrooms with deaf teachers. An analogic style in presenting information makes the attempt to associate the world that is being talked about with another world by having students make a lateral jump from the topic at hand to a set of terms in which the information can be seen differently. The relationship between the two is not always made explicit and not always a "logical" one (in the Western sense of the word): the fish in the talk is not really similar to a boy and girl flirtation. Rather, the listener is invited to imagine the idea of flirtatious behavior so as to understand the mating ritual of fish. This is the basic principle of metaphor. Analogic styles are certainly available to speakers of English in certain situations. The problem here is that a formal talk of content is not one of the situations in which speakers of English expect analogical strategies. Story-like elements seem out of place and not immediately relevant.

Key to Transcription Conventions

[´] indicates primary stress
[`] indicates secondary stress
[.] indicates sentence-final falling intonation
[,] indicates phrase-final intonation, i.e., "there's more to come"
[:3 indicates lengthened vowel

References

Baker-Shenk, Charlotte. 1984. Implications of linguistic research for interpreter training. In M. McIntire (Ed.), Proceedings of the Fourth National Conference of Interpreter Trainers Convention. Silver Spring, Maryland: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Bateson, Gregory. 1972. Steps to an Ecology of Mind. New York: Ballantine.

Erickson, Frederick and Jeffrey Shultz. 1980. The Counselor as Gatekeeper: Social Interaction in Interviews. New York: Academic Press.

Goffman, Erving. 1974. Frame Analysis. New York: Harper and Row.

Gumperz, John. 1977. Sociocultural knowledge in conversational inference. In M. Saville-Troike (Ed.), Linguistics and Anthropology: Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Gumperz, John and Deborah Tannen. 1979. Individual and social differences in language use. In C. Fillmore, D. Kempler, and Wm. S.-Y. Wang (Eds.), Individual Differences in Language Ability and Language Behavior. New York: Academic Press.

Liddell, Scott. 1980. American Sign Language Syntax. The Hague: Mouton.

Nida, Eugene. 1976. A framework for the analysis and evaluation of theories of translation. In R. Brislin (Ed.), Translation: Applications and Research. New York: Gardner Press.

Pufahl, Ingrid. 1984. "Show and tell": How a speaker creates involvement in a lecture. Unpublished paper. Georgetown University.

Roy, Cynthia B. 1985. Now I know. Unpublished paper. Georgetown University.

Tannen, Deborah. 1985. Introducing constructed dialogue in Greek and American conversational and literary narrative. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), Reuorted Speech Across Languages. The Hague: Mouton.