

How Do Interpretations Alter Perceptions of Speakers and Signers?

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Abstract

This pilot study explored how perceptions of speakers and signers are altered when their message undergoes the process of American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpretation. Bucholtz & Hall (2005) examined the role of identity, saying it is an aggregate of perceptions that are influenced by surroundings and social players. An individual's perceived identity is constantly in flux and can be altered by even the most subtle lexical and syntactic decisions. Furthermore, as explained by Cokely (1981), perceptions of identity do not solely depend on linguistic factors, but can also be altered through extra-linguistic components, namely metanotative qualities. The metanotative qualities of interpreters may remain as artifacts through the interpretation process and impact the perception of the original presenter. Feyne (2015) discussed the implications of this possibility through the lens of Deaf professionals. The current study expanded on Feyne's approach as it applies to both speakers and signers. By means of an online survey, Deaf participants were provided two video clips in ASL and non-Deaf participants were provided two audio clips in English. For each, participants were asked to indicate their perceptions of a presenter. We found that perceptions of presenters were negatively skewed when presentations underwent the interpretation process versus when they had not been interpreted. Our research revealed that these discrepancies have real-world implications for speakers and signers, particularly in the realm of employment.

Keywords: American Sign Language, ASL, English, Deaf, non-Deaf, interpretation, interpreter, perceptions, implications, identity, speakers, signers, metanotative

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In addition to interpreting the content of messages, American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters are also responsible for accurately representing the identities of the speakers and signers who are producing those messages. This is achieved through interpreters' overt word/sign choices as well as their message delivery. Thus, a scenario exists in which recipients of a message only have access to the version of the original speaker/signer's identity that has been filtered through an interpreter. According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005), identities are constructed through relations between or among participants. Both intentionally and involuntarily, people project a certain image and identity, and even the most subtle lexical and syntactic decisions can alter the perceived identity of an individual.

Interpreters are not always aware of the conscious and subconscious decisions that people have made in order to connote a certain identity. Although the interpreting process often highlights lexical choices, words and sentences alone do not provide insight into a speaker or signer's identity. Whether the *source language*, or the language in which a message is originally produced, is English or ASL, myriad nuances blend together to form a comprehensive assessment of an individual's background, education level, and personality. Given this reality, it is crucial to assess how interpretations impact perceptions, and what implications these altered perceptions may have. With the knowledge gained from this study, the interpreting community as a whole can begin to take steps to lessen the discrepancy between perceptions of speakers and signers based on direct access and those based on interpreted access.

Review of Literature

Considering the symbiotic relationship between lexical and non-lexical decisions made by speakers/signers, Cokely (1981) carried out a pilot study focused on metanotative qualities as

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they relate to interpreters when interpreting from spoken English to ASL. Metanotative qualities are defined as the extra-linguistic additives that influence how people make judgments about speakers on dimensions such as social status, educational level, and degree of friendliness.

Cokely suggested that by representing the metanotative qualities of an original presenter while communicating his/her content, all parties can have reasonably parallel experiences.

In his study, Cokely (1981) used short clips of presentations conducted in spoken English as well as interpretations of those segments in ASL. Participants included Deaf and non-Deaf graduate students. Deaf participants watched the stimuli while non-Deaf participants listened to them. After watching/listening to the stimuli in full, participants provided ratings in a survey consisting of questions regarding bipolar adjectives (e.g., *organized/disorganized*), the speaker's educational background, and the speaker's occupational status. Ratings were converted to numbers, which were then compared between Deaf (experimental group) and non-Deaf (control group) participants to measure the divergence between what a given speaker conveyed and what the interpreted version of that speaker conveyed. The difference between the ratings showed the extent to which the interpreters conveyed their own metanotative qualities and failed to convey those of the original speaker.

Cokely (1981) found that metanotative qualities of the interpreters both positively and negatively skewed the ratings. The author analyzed possible reasons for the different ratings from Deaf and non-Deaf raters, with the following two being the most probable. First, the interpreters were not aware of the metanotative qualities they were conveying through their subconscious behaviors. Second, the interpreters were not aware of the range of metanotative qualities conveyed by certain linguistic features of ASL. Thus, their behaviors and their own

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expressions of metanotative qualities were not always congruous with those of the speakers.

While this study showed that perceptions of speakers based on metanotative qualities were altered when the message underwent the process of interpretation, this study failed to provide the implications of this phenomenon.

Feyne (2015) examined these implications with her research on Deaf professionals, asking how interpreter-mediated discourse affects perception. More specifically, her research related to perception within potential employment opportunities. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) noted that each Deaf professional has their own identity, which will constantly vary as a function of situational dynamics and social players. Ideally, it is the duty of the interpreters to convey, either overtly or through metanotative qualities, these facets of the Deaf professional's identity. Feyne tested the degree to which this transference of identity and competency was successful within the context of Deaf museum docents.

When non-Deaf museum patrons wish to access a Deaf docent's lecture, an interpreter is needed to provide access. Assuming non-Deaf patrons perceive the interpreter's spoken English interpretation to be an accurate representation of the docent's lecture, assessments made by each patron about the interpretation would shape the perception of the docent (Feyne, 2015).

To test the extent to which interpreter-mediated discourse affects perception of a Deaf museum docent, and the possible implications that can be attributed to this practice, Feyne (2015) videotaped two Deaf museum docents, each reprising a different lecture in ASL. These presentations were subsequently interpreted by four interpreters into spoken English. These interpretations were then judged by three non-Deaf raters who were responsible for hiring museum docents.

The results revealed low ratings from all raters. Additionally, although all Deaf individuals were already employed as museum docents, the results conveyed that none of the raters would have been willing to employ them. As raters based their judgments on interpreters' language choices and execution of the interpreting process, it was evident that perceptions of the Deaf docents were affected when their messages were accessed via interpretation.

Questions for Analysis

In the current study, we investigate how interpretations alter perceptions of speakers and signers, addressing the following: Is there a difference between perception of a speaker or signer when their message is directly accessed and when it is accessed via an interpretation? Is there a difference depending on the source language? Does an interpreter's number of years of experience play a role in influencing perception of a presenter?

We predict that there is a difference between perception of a speaker or signer when his/her message is directly accessed and when it is received via an interpretation. Based on Feyne's (2015) findings, we expect this divergence to come in the form of a less favorable perception when a message is received via an interpretation, and for this effect to be even greater when ASL is the source language. The latter of these two expectations is based on the assumption that non-Deaf individuals are unlikely to have extensive experience with interpreted discourse and, therefore, have no compensatory strategies when faced with less-than-ideal interpretations. Their Deaf counterparts, however, may have more insight into the interpreting process, which may facilitate their ability to compensate accordingly. The final prediction is that interpreters with more years of experience are likely to produce interpretations that lead to more accurate perceptions.

To date, little research has been conducted on this topic, especially when the source language is English. Therefore, the goal of the current study is to identify perceptions based on interpretations using both ASL and English as source languages. As mentioned, perceptions stem not only from the content of messages, but also from metanotative qualities conveyed by those who are producing them. Thus, once perceptions have been identified, we discuss and compare them through both of these lenses.

Method

Participants

Two categories of participants were involved in this research. The first category was comprised of individuals who self-identify as Deaf or hard of hearing, hereafter referred to as *Deaf participants*. The second category was comprised of individuals who self-identify as hearing, hereafter referred to as *non-Deaf participants*.

The average age for all participants ($n=136$) was 33.6 years old; 64.5% were female, 33.5% were male, and 2% self-identified as neither. Nearly 80% of the participants resided within the northeast region of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. For Deaf participants ($n=42$), the average age was 32.5 years old; 60% were female, 37% were male, and 3% self-identified as neither. For non-Deaf participants ($n=94$), the average age was 34 years old; 69% were female, 30% were male, and 1% self-identified as neither.

When recruiting Deaf participants, college students and graduates were targeted in order to ensure sufficient English competency for understanding the survey, which was written in English. College education was not a requirement when recruiting non-Deaf participants, since English-language competency was assumed for the 18+ demographic.

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Participants were recruited through email and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/>). Standard Facebook posts were augmented with individual messages to group leaders (e.g., administrators for various chapters of Toastmasters International and Director of Alumni and Constituent Relations for National Technical Institute for the Deaf) as well as personal contacts (e.g., the researchers' friends, families, and co-workers) to seek out the largest pool of participants. On all platforms, researchers encouraged grassroots marketing. Participation requirements were made clear, and within those guidelines, it was requested that group leaders distribute the survey to their current members and personal contacts forward the recruitment email to Deaf college students/alumni and all non-Deaf connections.

While no direct compensation was provided to participants, upon completion of the survey, participants were eligible to enter a drawing to win one of two \$50 gift cards. The opportunity to participate in the drawing was made overt within the recruitment email.

Development of Video Stimuli

Video stimuli were taken from the 2009/2010 data pool collected by the ASL Program at Northeastern University. Four presentations were available within this data pool: two that were narrative in nature and two that were expository in nature. For each presentation, multiple interpretations were also available. To more easily compare stimuli, the two narrative videos (hereafter referred to as *texts*) were chosen for use in this study. The ASL text was *European Travels*, an anecdotal recanting of the presenter's experiences while traveling abroad. The English text was *The American Revolution*, a historical account of the events surrounding the American Revolution. Although both were narrative presentations, the former could be categorized as interest-based, while the latter could be categorized as academic in nature.

Additionally, three different interpretations of each text were selected based on interpreters' experience levels. All interpretations were produced by Northeastern University alumni who graduated between 1997 and 2009. For this study, experience level was defined as number of years since graduation. The three levels of experience were: *low* (0-3 years), *medium* (4-7), and *high* (8+). Interpreters were matched based upon demographic information and self-reported socialization within the Deaf community (as described below). The three videos chosen for each interpreted stimulus featured interpreters who had 0, 5, and 9 years of experience, respectively, and had interpreted both the ASL text and the English text.

Using iMovie editing software, each 20-minute source text and interpretation was edited to roughly three minutes (Version 10.1.1; Apple, 2016). Since the middle portion of presentations tends to be semantically and syntactically dense, but the beginning and end typically are predictable in nature, each three-minute segment was comprised of the first and last 90 seconds of each presentation. With a decreased complexity of content, interpreters were afforded the greatest opportunity to most faithfully depict the speakers/signers. Due to each interpreter's processing time, or lag time, each interpretation video/audio was slightly different in length. Clips were cut when the interpretation of an entire concept was completed, which in some cases, exceeded the 90-second cutoff. The time frames chosen allowed the interpreters to "warm up" and, by the end, be comfortable with the topic and language style of the presenter. Before these interpretations were filmed, interpreters had also been shown a five-minute clip of each original speaker/signer presenting on a related topic in order to become familiar with their presentation style.

Screens with titles and brief instructions were added to the edited stimuli. For Deaf participants, the audio was stripped and the stimuli were only accessible via video. For non-Deaf participants, the visual component was stripped and the stimuli were only accessible via audio. While audio was playing, a blue screen was present. At the end of the segments, a screen appeared letting participants know that they were to close the video and return to the survey.

Development of Survey

Two versions of the survey were created: one for Deaf participants, who were asked to watch two ASL stimuli and answer 32 questions, and one for non-Deaf participants, who were asked to listen to two English stimuli and answer 30 questions. Both surveys allowed participants to skip questions that did not apply to them. (See Appendix A for an example of one of the surveys taken by Deaf participants.)

Both surveys contained three main sections: *pre-questions*, *post-questions*, and *demographic questions*. The purpose of *pre-questions* was to gauge the participants' knowledge about and interest in both European travels and the American Revolution. Participants were not given any other information about either topic prior to answering *pre-questions*. *Post-questions* were separated by source text language. Deaf participants first accessed and answered *post-questions* about an ASL interpretation of the English text and then the original ASL text. Non-Deaf participants first accessed and answered *post-questions* about an English interpretation of the ASL text and then the original English text. The final section of each survey was devoted to *demographic questions*. *Demographic questions* were based on a series of questions used by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) for the Interpreter Practitioner National Needs Assessment (2012).

Procedure

Participants accessed the Qualtrics survey platform and corresponding video clips via computer, tablet, or smartphone (Qualtrics, Provo, UT). The recruitment email stated that the survey had to be completed in one sitting and would take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participants were only given access to two videos: one interpretation (randomly-assigned from the *low*, *medium*, or *high* experience level) and one source text. Participants answered qualitative and quantitative *pre-questions*, watched/listened to the videos (answering *post-questions* following each), and then self-reported responses to *demographic questions*.

After *pre-questions* were asked, the first video link was presented and would appear in a new window. For all participants, the interpreted video/audio would be the first link. In order to ensure that participants were not privy to each interpreter's level of experience, a color-coded naming convention was used when titling videos per experience level (*red* = low; *yellow* = medium; *green* = high). Once the video segment was finished, participants were told to close the video window and return to the survey. They then answered *post-questions* related to their perceptions of the first presenter.

Upon completion of the first section, the second video link appeared. In all categories, this was a source text, not an interpretation. As with the first video link, participants watched/listened to the stimulus and then answered corresponding *post-questions*.

The final section of questions was comprised of *demographic questions*. Questions ranged from participants' location, age, and gender, to their previous experience working with interpreters.

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At the end of the survey, participants had the opportunity to enter their email into a drawing for one of two \$50 Amazon gift cards (<https://www.amazon.com/gift-cards>). Email addresses were entered into a separate and password-protected Google Form (<https://www.google.com/forms/about/>), which allowed the researchers to use a randomization website to generate winners. Once all surveys were deactivated, the two randomly-selected winners were contacted and all responses to the Google Form were deleted.

Results

Scoring

Throughout each survey, the majority of questions utilized a rating scale with four response options: *very*, *moderately*, *somewhat*, and *not at all*. This rating scale was used to collect data for categories such as *prepared*, *confident*, and *comfortable*. In order to determine means, numerical values were assigned to rating scale responses as follows: *very* = 4, *moderately* = 3, *somewhat* = 2, and *not at all* = 1. Means were then calculated, with higher numbers representing more positive perceptions and lower numbers representing less positive perceptions.

Answers to qualitative questions that did not lend themselves to the rating scale convention were converted to percentages for analysis. These included a portion of *demographic questions* as well as questions, such as “[b]ased on the interpretation you have just seen, what do you think is the highest level of education that the original presenter has completed?”

The third category of potential responses was text responses. Selections from this category were kept in their original form and added to the analysis as qualitative data in Appendix B.

For both groups of participants, the variables being manipulated were: source text (English or ASL), access type (direct or interpreted), and, for interpretations, each interpreter's experience level (*low, medium, or high*).

Analysis

The analysis is broken into three subcategories. The first two focus on rating scale responses related to perceptions and responses to the presumed educational background of presenters. The third subcategory includes responses for the remaining *post-questions* as well as the differences in perceptions based on source language.

Tables 1, 3, 5, and 7 show all means reported for the English text and Tables 2, 4, 6, and 8 show all means reported for the ASL text. In all cases, data were collapsed over all direct access participants to find direct access means (Deaf participants for the ASL text and non-Deaf participants for the English text). These served as the controls for the respective sources. As for the three experience levels, no significant patterns were found. Thus, the analysis compared direct access (means collapsed over participant) to interpreted access (means collapsed over experience level).

As shown in Table 1, all rating scale means for direct access to the English text were nearly 1 full point, or more, higher than those for interpreted access. The difference in responses to the question related to grammar fell just under 1 point (.92), but all others were well above 1 point (average discrepancy of 1.3). If numerical means are converted back to their original rating scale responses, perceptions via direct access were on the higher side of *moderately to very*, while perceptions via interpreted access were largely on the lower side of *somewhat to moderately*.

Table 1: Perception Ratings for English Text Presenter Shown as Means by Presenter Characteristic, Access Type, and Interpreter Experience

Presenter characteristic	Direct access	Interpreted access by experience level			
		Low	Medium	High	<i>M</i>
Prepared	3.86	2.60	2.00	3.09	2.56
Confident	3.89	2.15	1.73	3.09	2.32
Comfortable	3.86	2.05	1.64	3.00	2.23
Passionate	3.55	2.00	1.55	2.82	2.12
Complexity of vocabulary	3.20	2.15	2.18	2.18	2.17
Complexity of grammar	3.14	2.10	2.27	2.27	2.22

Note. Means out of a possible 4.0. Presenter characteristic refers to the particular trait featured in the survey question for which participants provided responses. Responses were converted into values from a rating scale, which ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very*).

As shown in Table 2, the responses for the ASL text were somewhat closer, but the average discrepancy was still .96. This indicates that while those who directly accessed the ASL text may have perceived the presenter to be on the verge of *very confident* and *comfortable*, those who accessed the presentation via an interpretation might not have considered the signer to be even *moderately confident* and *comfortable*.

Table 2: Perception Ratings for ASL Text Presenter Shown as Means by Presenter Characteristic, Access Type, and Interpreter Experience

Presenter characteristic	Direct access	Interpreted access by experience level			
		Low	Medium	High	<i>M</i>
Prepared	3.20	2.39	2.52	2.16	2.35
Confident	3.75	2.65	2.60	2.37	2.54
Comfortable	3.78	2.65	2.72	2.42	2.60
Passionate	3.64	2.81	2.40	2.82	2.67
Complexity of vocabulary	2.66	2.10	1.92	1.79	1.94
Complexity of grammar	2.84	2.19	1.92	1.89	2.00

Note. Means out of a possible 4.0. Presenter characteristic refers to the particular trait featured in the survey question for which participants provided responses. Responses were converted into values from a rating scale, which ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very*).

Tables 3 and 4 focus on the perceived highest level of education completed. As shown in Table 3, the most conflicting perceptions were found when comparing the direct access responses and interpreted access responses for the English text. In the former group, 71% of the

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participants perceived that the presenter (who, in truth, holds a PhD) had at least completed a master's, if not a doctoral degree. Yet, in the latter, only 20% perceived any sort of graduate-level education, with 28% guessing that the highest level was a high school diploma/GED. As shown in Table 4, discrepancies between direct and interpreted access responses for the ASL text were not as drastic.

Table 3: Assumed Level of Education for English Text Presenter Shown as Percentages (%) by Access Type and Interpreter Experience

Education level	Direct access (n=94)	Interpreted access by experience level			
		Low (n=20)	Medium (n=11)	High (n=11)	M (n=42)
Doctoral	29	0	0	0	0
Master's	42	15	27	18	20
Bachelor's	19	25	36	36	32
Associate / Vocational Training	1	0	0	18	6
High School Diploma / GED	0	40	36	9	28
Cannot Determine	9	20	0	18	13

Note. Percentages out of a possible 100. Education level refers to the assumed highest level of education completed by the presenter in the survey question for which participants provided responses. Only one response could be chosen.

Table 4: Assumed Level of Education for ASL Text Presenter Shown as Percentages (%) by Access Type and Interpreter Experience

Education level	Direct access (n=42)	Interpreted access by experience level			
		Low (n=31)	Medium (n=25)	High (n=38)	M (n=94)
Doctoral	3	0	0	0	0
Master's	14	6	12	5	8
Bachelor's	50	61	44	47	51
Associate / Vocational Training	12	6	8	18	11
High School Diploma / GED	8	13	20	13	15
Cannot Determine	13	13	16	16	15

Note. Percentages out of a possible 100. Education level refers to the assumed highest level of education completed by the presenter in the survey question for which participants provided responses. Only one response could be chosen.

Tables 5-8 pertain to the final set of responses, which was comprised of “implications” questions. Table 5 reveals that when participants were asked if they would be interested in watching/listening to the full 20-minute narrative, 69% of those with direct access to the English text selected “yes.” However, when the English text was accessed via an interpretation, the

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response was “yes” only 31% of the time. When asked about whether or not their level of interest in the topic had changed from their baseline response in *pre-questions*, 45% of those who received the presentation directly were *more interested*, 3% were *less interested*, and 52% indicated an *unchanged* level of interest. When asked of participants who received the presentation via an interpretation, 21% were *more interested*, 17% were *less interested*, and 62% indicated an *unchanged* level of interest.

Table 5: Implications for English Text Presenter Shown as Percentages (%) by Access Type and Interpreter Experience

Question	Direct access (n=94)		Interpreted access by experience level			
			Low (n=20)	Medium (n=11)	High (n=11)	M (n=42)
Are you interested in listening to the full 20 minute lecture?	Yes:	69	20	18	55	31
	No:	31	80	82	45	69
Are you more or less interested or has your interest remained constant?	More:	45	10	9	45	21
	Less:	3	5	36	9	17
	Unchanged:	52	85	55	45	62

Note. Percentages out of a possible 100. Question refers to a simplified version of *post-questions* in the survey for which participants provided responses. Only one response per question could be chosen.

As shown in Table 6, when participants were asked if they would be interested in watching/listening to the full 20-minute narrative, 61% of those with direct access to the ASL text selected “yes.” However, when the ASL text was accessed via an interpretation, the response was “yes” only 23% of the time. When asked whether their level of interest in the topic had changed from their baseline response, 45% of those with direct access were *more interested*, 0% were *less interested*, and 55% indicated an *unchanged* level of interest. When asked of participants who accessed the presentation via an interpretation, 11% were *more interested*, 8% were *less interested*, and 81% indicated an *unchanged* level of interest.

Table 6: Implications for ASL Text Presenter Shown as Percentages (%) by Access Type and Interpreter Experience

Question	Direct access (n=42)		Interpreted access by experience level			
			Low (n=31)	Medium (n=25)	High (n=38)	M (n=94)
Are you interested in listening to the full 20 minute lecture?	Yes:	61	23	28	18	23
	No:	39	77	72	82	71
Are you more or less interested or has your interest remained constant?	More:	45	16	8	8	11
	Less:	0	13	8	3	8
	Unchanged:	55	71	84	89	81

Note. Percentages out of a possible 100. Question refers to a simplified version of *post-questions* in the survey for which participants provided responses. Only one response per question could be chosen.

The last two questions employed the rating scale convention; therefore, as noted above, numerical values were assigned to descriptive response options (*very* = 4, *moderately* = 3, *somewhat* = 2, and *not at all* = 1). Both questions asked participants to rate the likelihood that they would hire each of the presenters for two hypothetical hiring scenarios: one was more academic and the other was more interest-based.

Table 7 reveals the responses for the English text, for which the academic option was a presentation to graduate students majoring in American History and the interest-based option was a presentation to high school students in an American History Club. The academic option yielded the largest discrepancy among all “implications” questions, with the following means regarding the likelihood that the participants would hire this presenter: 3.52 (*moderately-to-very likely*) for direct access and 1.65 (*not at all-to-somewhat likely*) for interpreted access. This is in contrast to the interest-based option, which yielded means of 3.41 for direct access and 2.38 for interpreted access.

Table 7: Implications for English Text Presenter Shown as Means by Access Type and Interpreter Experience

Question	Direct access	Interpreted access by experience level			
		Low	Medium	High	<i>M</i>
Would you hire this presenter for a graduate-level presentation?	3.52	1.30	1.64	2.00	1.65
Would you hire this presenter for a high school presentation?	3.41	2.15	2.00	3.00	2.38

Note. Means out of a possible 4.0. Question refers to a simplified version of *post-questions* in the survey for which participants provided responses. Responses were converted into values from a rating scale, which ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very*).

Table 8 reveals the responses for the ASL text, for which the academic and interest-based options were a presentation to college students preparing to study abroad in Europe and a presentation to a Senior Citizen's Club planning a trip to Europe. The academic option yielded the following means regarding the likelihood that the participants would hire this presenter: 2.79 (*somewhat-to-moderately likely*) for direct access and 1.87 (*not at all-to-somewhat likely*) for interpreted access. As opposed to the English text, the interest-based option yielded a larger discrepancy, with means of 3.54 for direct access and 2.15 for interpreted access. This is the second largest discrepancy reported among the “implications” questions.

Table 8: Implications for ASL Text Presenter Shown as Means by Access Type and Interpreter Experience

Question	Direct access	Interpreted access by experience level			
		Low	Medium	High	<i>M</i>
Would you hire this presenter for a college presentation?	2.79	1.81	2.04	1.76	1.87
Would you hire this presenter for a presentation to Senior Citizens thinking about traveling?	3.54	2.10	2.36	2.00	2.15

Note. Means out of a possible 4.0. Question refers to a simplified version of *post-questions* in the survey for which participants provided responses. Responses were converted into values from a rating scale, which ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very*).

After watching/listening to the source text and interpretation, participants had the opportunity to write their overall impressions of the speaker/signer. For the English text, sample responses include “[h]e was well versed and engaging” (direct access) and “[v]ery confusing, dry, and uncomfortable to watch” (interpreted access). For the ASL text, sample responses

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include “[t]oo short, I want more...” (direct access) and “[b]oring! Almost fell asleep...”

(interpreted access). Additional selections of these responses are presented in Appendix B.

The last element that was analyzed utilized rating scale responses to determine the overall impact of perception for direct access versus interpreted access, and whether the difference was greater for the English text or the ASL text. Figure 1 shows that for each category, regardless of source language, all perceptions of presenters were depressed when the presentation was accessed via an interpretation. Even through direct access, perceptions of the ASL source presenter were lower than the English source presenter in all but one category (level of passion about the topic). When accessing the presentation via an interpretation, perceptions of both presenters varied without a pattern.

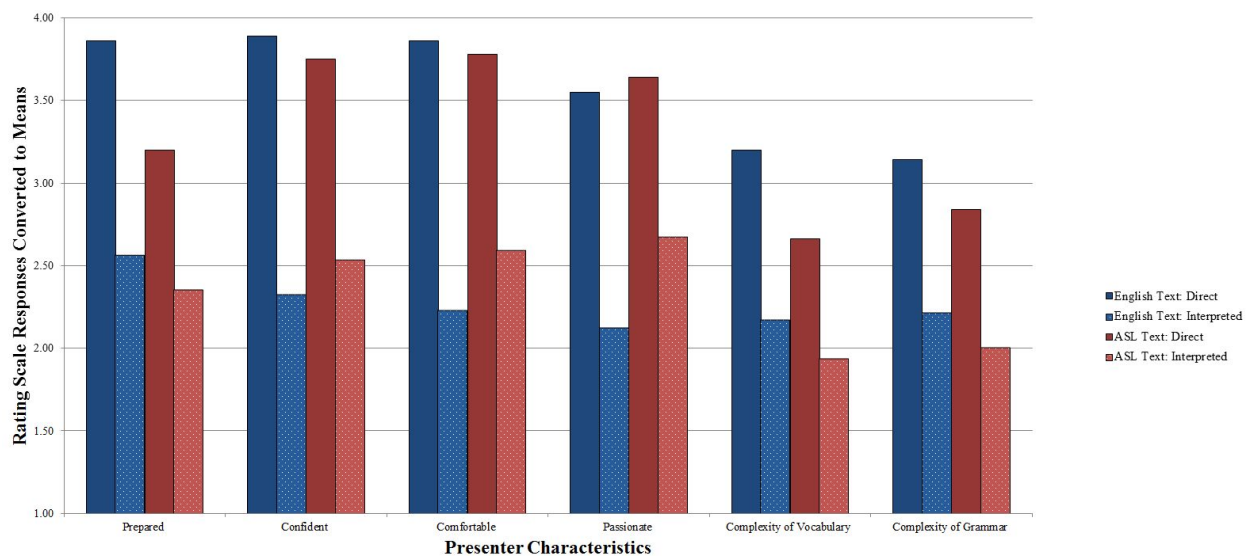


Figure 1. Differences in response means by presenter characteristic, access type, and source text (collapsed over participant and experience level)

Discussion

This study was designed to investigate the question of how interpretations alter perceptions of speakers and signers. The following questions were the lenses through which data were analyzed: Is there a difference between perception of a speaker or signer when their message is directly accessed and when it is accessed via an interpretation? Is there a difference depending on the source language? Does an interpreter's number of years of experience play a role in influencing perception of a presenter?

The analysis revealed that not only were perceptions skewed when messages underwent the process of interpretation, but the effect was indeed greater when ASL was the source language. When considering the earlier prediction that this would be influenced by Deaf individuals having more exposure to interpreters than their non-Deaf counterparts, it may be worth noting that 24% of the non-Deaf respondents self-reported that they were, or have been, ASL/English interpreters. Although there is no way to know definitively, had interpreters' responses not been included in the analysis of the results, the discrepancy between responses from Deaf and non-Deaf participants might have been even more drastic. This assumption is supported by excerpts of text responses included in Appendix B (*ASL Text: Interpreted Access*), which exemplify a lack of understanding of the interpreting process by non-Deaf participants. These include: "...[i]t almost felt like they were reading it from a script that they had just gotten 2 seconds before recording," "...sounded like she was telling someone else's story which was slightly awkward given that it was in first person," and "[d]id she say that she was also deaf when talking about the students from the school for the deaf in Paris?" When data from interpreters was initially analyzed and compared to data from non-interpreters, no significant

differences were found. Therefore, further examination was not pursued, as it was beyond the scope of this study to thoroughly analyze and compare the two sets of data.

With respect to the three experience levels, no significant patterns were found. For instance, regarding the English text, except for one tie between the *medium* and *high* conditions for complexity of vocabulary, *high* consistently yielded means that were most comparable to direct access means. This is in contrast to the ASL text, in which *high* only yielded means most comparable to direct access in one of the six categories of presenter characteristics. In no realm was *high* exclusively the most faithful when compared to direct access, nor was *low* exclusively the least faithful. Therefore, when considering the data in its entirety, the overarching theme is accessing a presentation via an interpretation negatively alters perceptions of speakers and signers.

In regards to perceived level of education held by the original presenter, through all levels of interpreter experience and for both texts, participants allotted a higher level of education to presenters when directly accessed as opposed to when they were accessed via an interpretation. For the ASL text, discrepancies between direct and interpreted access responses were not as drastic as they were for the English text. This was likely due to the nature of the ASL text topic. As anecdotal presentations are intended to be personable, academic jargon and institutional talk are rarely utilized. Therefore, conveying a high level of education may not have been the primary goal for either the original presenter or the interpreters. Here, too, cultural differences may come into play. A large portion of the current study's non-Deaf participants self-reported that they are Caucasian and live in the northeast region of the United States, where pursuing higher education is not only typical, but somewhat expected. Therefore, it may have

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been a default response when 51% of participants selected “bachelor’s” when asked about the presenter’s perceived highest level of education completed. This aligns nicely with the 50% of Deaf participants who also selected “bachelor’s” as the highest level of education; yet, the latter group’s responses likely may be due to a holistic assessment of the presenter rather than cultural norms. As a side note, the logo of a well-known Deaf residential school was on the polo shirt worn by the presenter of the ASL text during his presentation. Subconsciously, Deaf participants may have taken the logo into account when assuming highest level of education, as those who are associated with this school are highly regarded and, in general, considered well-educated.

This study also focused on the implications of interpreter-mediated discourse through targeted “implications” questions included in *post-questions*. For the first group of “implications” questions, baseline *pre-questions* were asked and answered at the very start of the survey (e.g., levels of interest in and knowledge about topics being presented). These *pre-questions* were the basis for analyzing participants’ interest in watching/listening to the full 20-minute narrative and evaluating whether or not their level of interest in the topic had increased, decreased, or remained unchanged.

For the English text, when collapsed over experience level, Deaf participants had a higher level of interest in and knowledge about both American history and the American Revolution. After accessing the stimulus, 62% of Deaf participants and 52% of non-Deaf participants indicated that their interest level had not changed. Although those numbers are comparable, there was a more noticeable difference between the 17% of Deaf participants and 3% of non-Deaf participants whose interest lessened. Perhaps the most striking comparison is, when asked if they would like to watch/listen to the full 20 minutes, responses of the two groups were exactly

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opposite: 69% of Deaf participants responded “no,” while 69% of non-Deaf participants responded “yes.”

When analyzing the ASL text responses, non-Deaf participants came into the survey with a lower level of interest in international travel. As can be seen in Table 6, 8% indicated that their interest lessened even more after accessing the stimulus. Based on this, it makes sense that only 23% of non-Deaf participants responded “yes” when asked if they would like to listen to the full 20-minute presentation. However, this finding is telling when it is compared to the 61% of Deaf participants who responded “yes.” From this nearly 40% discrepancy, it can be deduced that what was so special about the presentation when it was accessed directly was “lost in interpretation.”

As Feyne (2015) exemplified, when the identities of Deaf individuals are poorly represented, there are serious real-world implications. This is especially apparent in the area of employment. While Feyne focused on museum docents, the current study asked participants to rate the likelihood that they would hire each of the presenters for two hypothetical hiring scenarios: one was more academic and the other was more interest-based. As can be seen in Tables 7 and 8, participants with direct access to the ASL text were more likely to hire the presenter for the interest-based option (direct access mean: 3.54) than for the academic option (2.79). Due to the anecdotal nature of this text and the fact that the presenter’s register and presentation style are better suited for a more informal setting, this finding was predicted. For the English text, the data revealed a similar correlation. As the text itself was more academic in nature, participants with direct access were more likely to hire the presenter for the academic option (3.52) than for the interest-based option (3.41).

For both texts, participants with interpreted access were more likely to hire the presenters for the interest-based options than for the academic options. This finding is not surprising for the ASL text; however, it is significant for the English text, which was originally intended for a high-level academic audience. Despite the fact that the original presenter's register, manner of speaking, and experience as a college-level professor were better matched to a more formal, academic setting, participants who had interpreted access would only hire him for interest-based presentations. This finding holds even more weight when viewed in conjunction with the responses regarding the presenter's perceived highest level of education. Even though the original presenter holds a PhD, when his identity was filtered through an interpreter, only 20% of participants perceived any sort of graduate-level education and 28% guessed that the highest level he had achieved was a high school diploma/GED. This is in contrast to the 71% of participants with direct access who perceived that the presenter had at least earned a master's, if not a doctoral degree. As always, sociolinguistic factors do come into play here: those who had direct access to the English text heard an older gentleman's authoritative voice, while those who had interpreted access saw a young female. Yet, while it may not be reasonable to expect that the perceptions and judgments made by the two groups would perfectly align, we had not predicted such a drastic divergence.

When viewing these findings in conjunction with Feyne's (2015) research, it is clear that there are serious real-world implications, especially in relation to employment opportunities, when accessing a message via an interpretation. Whereas Feyne solely explored these implications as they impact signers, the current study included the real-world implications of negatively representing the identities of both speakers and signers. What can be deduced from

this study is that, despite the experience of an interpreter, the nature of the interpretation process may significantly skew perceptions in a negative way. The importance of this finding is the fact that interpreters with greater experience are generally offered higher level interpreting assignments. Experience level is often equated with skill level. Newer interpreters might be offered more interest-based options, while more experienced interpreters might be offered more academic options. Yet, as the data reveal, this study found no significant correlation between years of experience and skill level.

This study is especially pertinent today, as the number of Deaf professionals is quickly growing. Historically, Deaf professionals have not been offered the same high-level positions as their non-Deaf counterparts, so now is the time when interpreters need to be sure that Deaf individuals are being accurately represented (Pepnet 2). Thus, the following questions must be considered: What does this mean for professional development for interpreters? What does this mean for testing/assessment/certification? What are the implications for Interpreter Training Programs (ITPs)? Although the current study did not lend itself to answering these questions, the next step would be to use the information collected to ensure that the identities of Deaf and non-Deaf individuals are being represented as accurately as possible. Whether this requires individual interpreters to assess their work on a personal level, or needs to be addressed at the institutional level, is perhaps for future researchers to decide.

Limitations & Future Research

Limitations

Many of the limitations of this study stem from the finite time in which to prepare and conduct the research and the limited pool from which to choose stimulus materials. This meant

that none of the English survey text was translated into ASL. If ASL translations had been available for surveys intended for Deaf participants, there would have been no need to require that Deaf participants be college students or graduates, as a level of proficiency in English would not have been necessary. This would have widened the pool of possible participants and allowed for responses from individuals with more diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Moreover, each experience level analyzed was represented by only one interpretation. This limited the comparisons and generalizations that could be made among different experience levels, as it is impossible to know whether judgments varied based on experience level or based on the actual interpreters. A larger pool of interpreters per experience level might have provided more comprehensive results. Additionally, all interpretations were produced by interpreters who graduated from the same interpreting program. They all went through similar courses, were taught with generally similar methodologies, and generally had similar professors. If interpreters from varying interpreting programs as well as others who did not attend an interpreting program at all were included, the results may have been quite different.

Another limitation of this study was the fact that all of the interpreters were female and both presenters were male. Had the interpreters been male, there might have been a gender-based perception difference. Additionally, none of the interpreters at the time of their taping possessed a graduate degree. This might have significantly contributed to the depressed perceptions of the English source presenter.

A further limitation of this study was the fact that the researchers were not able to control for extraneous variables. This includes the different lengths of time it took individuals to understand and carry out the task they were being asked to complete, the mental state of each

participant, the environment in which they completed the survey, and the prior knowledge that may have impacted their responses.

Finally, although presentations and interactions with interpreters are normally carried out live, and in person, the fact that that the survey was virtual provided Deaf and non-Deaf participants disparate levels of access (non-Deaf participants had auditory access, Deaf participants had visual access) to the individuals about whom they were asked to make judgments. Appearance and other aesthetics that come with in-person encounters could not be included, and judgments that were made could not be accounted for via these other levels of access. Thus, reducing the artificial and virtual nature of the research would have allowed the current survey to yield results with greater external validity.

Future Research

This study, which is the first of its kind to compare results from both Deaf and non-Deaf participants, has opened the door for many areas of future research. Future research could include a wider range of interpreters so factors such as experience level, gender, and frequency of socialization within the Deaf Community could be explored. Additionally, although both texts are narrative in style, the English text is a historical presentation and the ASL text is an anecdotal presentation. For the current study, the original intent was to compare the two source texts; however, it was quickly realized that there were insufficient stylistic similarities between the selected texts to yield proper comparisons. If future research included more closely-aligned texts, further data could be extrapolated, especially as it relates to the main effect of source language.

Carrying out future research in a live setting with all participants in one room would control for a majority of the limitations in the current study. One presentation could be conducted

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in English with multiple ASL interpretations being produced by a variety of interpreters separated by dividers. Non-Deaf participants could directly access the presentation, while Deaf participants could be separated into groups and instructed to access the presentation via a particular interpretation. The process could then be repeated with a presentation conducted in ASL. The only modification might be that the interpreters would wear noise-cancelling headphones to avoid the distraction of overhearing the other interpretations. Each interpreter would transmit their interpretation to a particular group of participants via an FM system. Research being carried out in this fashion would result in higher external validity for the study as a whole and would allow for questions outside the scope of this study to be addressed.

For example, future research could explore the extent to which the following factors impact perceptions of a speaker or signer when their message is received via an interpretation: sociolinguistic aspects (e.g., gender similarities/differences between the presenter and interpreter), the interpreter's background knowledge about the topic (e.g., institutional talk, access to prep materials), and linguistic features of the interpretation (e.g., informality markers). Moreover, the current study was more representative of a freelance setting, as the interpreters had not previously interpreted for the assigned presenters nor had they been allowed prep time to become familiar with the material. Future research could utilize an approach that more closely mirrors a staff interpreting setting, in which interpreters are constantly surrounded by the relevant vocabulary, power dynamics, and mannerisms of the parties involved.

Although the current study did not address the above questions, it took an important first step toward providing detailed information about how interpretations alter perceptions of speakers and signers. Now that it has been discovered that perceptions were skewed in a negative

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light when messages were accessed via interpretation, the next step is to search for the causes of those altered perceptions and determine how interpreters, and the field as a whole, can lessen those discrepancies. If the current study is used to inform future research and implement the knowledge found therein, there could be myriad benefits to both the Deaf and interpreting communities.

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Narrative Survey: Version A-Red

Q1 Northeastern University, American Sign Language Program

Dennis Cokely, P.I.; Gillian Gipson, Student Researcher; Erica Kramer, Student Researcher

Title of Project: How do interpretations alter perceptions of speakers and signers?

Request to participate in an online survey:

We would like to invite you to participate in an online survey. The survey is part of a case study being conducted in order to analyze various aspects of interpreter practitioners' work. The survey questions are based on two short video segments you will be asked to watch. Between the questions and the videos, this survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Note: If you are taking this survey via your tablet or smartphone, please copy and paste the survey URL into your web browser (such as Safari, Firefox, or Chrome). If you try to participate directly within the email app, you will not be able to navigate through the entire survey.

You must be at least 18 years old to take this survey.

The decision to participate is voluntary. You do not have to participate and even if you begin the online survey, you can stop at any time. However, if you decide to leave the survey you cannot save and return at a later time. The survey must be taken in a single sitting.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you for taking this survey.

There are no direct benefits to you from taking this survey. However, your responses may help us learn more about the work of interpreters and the impact their work may have on the Deaf Community.

You will not be paid for taking this survey.

Your participation is anonymous. However, because of the nature of online surveys, it is possible that respondents could be identified by the IP address or other electronic record associated with the response. No one involved with this survey will be capturing those data. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you or any individual as being affiliated with this project.

If you have any questions regarding electronic privacy, please feel free to contact Mark Nardone, IT Security Analyst, via phone at 617-373-7901, or via email at privacy@neu.edu.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Gillian Gipson and Erica Kramer, the students mainly responsible for the research, at gipson.g@husky.neu.edu and kramer.e@husky.neu.edu. You can also contact Dennis Cokely, the Principal Investigator, at d.cokely@neu.edu.

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If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, please contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection (490 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115), via phone at 617-373-4588, or via email at irb@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

This study has been approved by the NU Institutional Review Board (IRB#16-02-23).

Please screenshot or print out a copy of this consent form for your records.

Thank you for your time.

Dennis Cokely, Gillian Gipson, and Erica Kramer

I choose to participate

I choose not to participate

If I choose not to participate Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Please rate your interest in the following:

	Extremely interested	Moderately interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
American History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The American Revolution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3 Please rate your knowledge about the following:

	Extremely knowledgeable	Moderately knowledgeable	Somewhat knowledgeable	Not at all knowledgeable
American History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The American Revolution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 How many times in the past 10 years have you:

	10+	5-9	1-4	0
Traveled outside the United States?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traveled to Europe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5 Please rate your interest in learning about international travel experiences.

Extremely interested

Moderately interested

Somewhat interested

Not at all interested

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Q6 Please watch the first narrative. This video consists of two clips taken from an interpretation of a 20-minute presentation titled The American Revolution. Each clip is approximately 1:30 in length. Together they represent the opening and closing of the presentation. Altogether you will be watching three minutes. Click here to watch the first narrative.

Q7 Now that you have watched the video on The American Revolution, please answer the following questions.

Q8 Based on the interpretation you have just seen, how prepared, confident, and comfortable would you consider the original presenter to be?

	Very	Moderately	Somewhat	Not at all
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confident	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Consider the following statement: The original presenter is extremely passionate about The American Revolution. Based on the interpretation you have just seen, how accurate is this statement?

- Extremely accurate
- Moderately accurate
- Somewhat accurate
- Not at all accurate

Q10 Based on the interpretation you have just seen, how would you rate the complexity of the original presenter's vocabulary and grammar?

	Extremely complex	Moderately complex	Somewhat complex	Not at all complex
Vocabulary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 Based on the interpretation you have just seen, what do you think is the highest level of education that the original presenter has completed?

- Doctorate
- Associate degree/Vocational certificate
- Master's degree
- High school diploma/GED
- Bachelor's degree
- Cannot determine

Q12 Based on the delivery and style of the interpretation, what other impressions do you have about the original presenter?

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Q13 Suppose you are coordinating the following presentations on the topic of The American Revolution. Based on the interpretation you have just seen, how likely would you be to hire the original presenter?

	Extremely likely	Moderately likely	Somewhat likely	Not at all likely
A presentation to graduate-level students majoring in American History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A presentation to high school students in an American History Club	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 Based on the short clips you have just seen, would you be interested in watching the full 20-minute narrative?

- Yes
- No

Q15 Please complete the following sentence: After watching clips from the presentation on The American Revolution...

- I am more interested in learning about The American Revolution.
- I am less interested in learning about The American Revolution.
- my level of interest in learning about The American Revolution has not changed.

Q16 Please watch the second narrative. This video consists of two clips taken from a 20-minute presentation titled European Travels. Each clip is approximately 1:30 in length. Together they represent the opening and closing of the presentation. Altogether you will be watching three minutes. Click here to watch the second narrative.

Q17 Now that you have watched the video on European Travels, please answer the following questions.

Q18 How prepared, confident, and comfortable would you consider the presenter to be?

	Very	Moderately	Somewhat	Not at all
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confident	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 Consider the following statement: The presenter is extremely passionate about European Travels. Based on what you have just seen, how accurate is this statement?

- Extremely accurate
- Moderately accurate
- Somewhat accurate
- Not at all accurate

Q20 How would you rate the complexity of the presenter's vocabulary and grammar?

	Extremely complex	Moderately complex	Somewhat complex	Not at all complex
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Vocabulary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 What do you think is the highest level of education that this presenter has completed?

- Doctorate
- Associate degree/Vocational certificate
- Master's degree
- High school diploma/GED
- Bachelor's degree
- Cannot determine

Q22 Based on the delivery and style of the presentation, what other impressions do you have about the presenter?

Q23 Suppose you are coordinating the following presentations on the topic of European Travels. How likely would you be to hire this presenter?

	Extremely likely	Moderately likely	Somewhat likely	Not at all likely
A presentation to college students preparing to study abroad in Europe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A presentation to a Senior Citizen's Club planning a trip to Europe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24 Based on the short clips you have just seen, would you be interested in watching the full 20-minute narrative?

- Yes
- No

Q25 Please complete the following sentence: After watching clips from the presentation on European Travels...

- I am more interested in learning about international travel.
- I am less interested in learning about international travel.
- my level of interest in learning about international travel has not changed.

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Q26 Do you have any previous experience with either of the two individuals you have just watched?

- Yes
- No

Q27 Answer If Do you have any previous knowledge about / experience with either of the two presenters whose narratives you viewed today? Yes Is Selected
Please explain.

Q28 Please rate your current fluency in written English.

- Native-like
- Quite proficient
- Moderately proficient
- Marginally proficient

Q29 Which of the following is true for you?

- I am Deaf
- I am Hard of Hearing
- I am Hearing

Q30 Which of the following is true for you?

- One of my parents is/was Deaf
- Both of my parents are/were Deaf
- Neither of my parents is/was Deaf

Q31 How many times in the past 3 years have you worked with an interpreter in a presentation setting?

- 10+
- 5-9
- 1-4
- 0

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Q32 Are you, or have you ever been, an interpreter?

- Yes
- No

Q33 Answer If Are you, or have you ever been, an interpreter? Yes Is Selected

Please specify.

- DI, CDI
- ASL / English Interpreter
- Spoken Language Interpreter

Q34 In which region of the country do you live?

- CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
- NY, NJ, PR, VI
- DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WVA
- AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN
- IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI
- AR, LA, NM, OK, TX
- IA, KS, MO, NE
- CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY
- AZ, CA, GUAM, HI, NV
- AK, ID, OR, WA

Q35 What is your age?

- 18 - 20
- 21 - 30
- 31 - 40
- 41 - 50
- 51 - 60
- 61 - 70
- 71 - 80
- 81 - 90
- Above 90
- Prefer not to provide

Q36 What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Other gender
- Prefer not to provide

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Q37 How do you identify?

- Asian or Asian American
- Black or African American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American/Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Mixed Race/Option not provided
- Prefer not to provide

Q38 You have reached the end of the survey.

Before submitting your survey, please note that you will need a special code (referred to as an "entry code") to participate in the drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift card.

The entry code is: thankyou

The entry code is case sensitive and will be required in order to enter the drawing. Please take note of it and then click the red button below to complete the survey and submit your responses.

Appendix B

English Text: Direct Access

- They seem to be knowledgeable about the topic, and are able to articulate it in a way that is both easy to follow and engaging (or at least much more so than the previous presenter).
- This was a clear speech with a beginning, middle and end. Speaker is clearly knowledgeable and cares about the subject.
- He spoke with confidence and passion
- They were engaging, interested in the topic and prepared
- This person is passionate and knowledgeable about the American Revolution and I got the impression they have spent much of their life learning and presenting on the topic.
- The presenter was fluid in thought and his story-telling tone kept my attention...
- The speaker came across like he knew his material well and was able to present the information deliberately and with passion.
- Accomplished
- Perhaps a college professor, very specialized in American History.
- Engages the listener. I felt as if I were at a historical lecture.
- He was well versed and engaging.
- The presenter was passionate and prepared to share the knowledge on his subject. His delivery was direct and left me wanting to know more.

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- The presenter is well steeped in the history of the United States and specifically the American Revolution and Constitutional history. The speaker is thoughtful and serious about their topic, a skilled presenter with a fairly distinguished career.
- Confident, extremely knowledgeable, well-seasoned public speaker or lecturer. Engaging presenter, cares deeply for the topic.
- This was a very prepared presenter, perhaps even working off of a script. This was not conversational -- It was very formal, paced, structured.
- They love history, they know their stuff...and they also know how to present/teach well. The way the subject matter is taught is engaging and interesting.

English Text: Interpreted Access

LOW:

- ...my first guess is of a new-ish history teacher giving an early lecture to a class of teenage students (middle school through early college), or one of those teenage students giving a presentation to the class.
- Maybe this isn't a topic in which they have any particular expertise - the information seems at once basic and also a bit "off-hand" in some ways.
- Basic

MEDIUM:

- Slow, jumbled, hesitant

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- Strikes me as someone who was having a hard time reading the facts of the events leading up to the American Revolution and perhaps something about a war, which was not well presented into details...Very confusing, dry, and uncomfortable to watch.
- Boring! Almost fell asleep.. I rather direct from Teacher than thru this interpreter.

HIGH:

- ...the interpretation did not seem clear and extremely vague, so it gave the appearance that the presenter was not fully prepared.
- Simple lecture. Feels like watching middle school history teacher giving a lesson.
- It seemed that while the original presenter had a good grasp and understanding of the subject matter, the organization of the presentation was not optimal or streamlined...

ASL Text: Direct Access

- It was very easy to watch the presenter; it was clear that he was a native signer (or signed for a long time); and he incorporated the storytelling elements into his presentation, which made it very enjoyable.
- Wow, very good. He carries a strong command of the ASL language.
- The presenter was indeed passionate about his European travels with his facial expressions, body language, and expressive sign skills.
- He's a fluent ASL signer. He is a good storyteller. I was glued to him [until the end].
- Confident in knowledge, spontaneous quality to story, doesn't seem "memorized"
- I was beyond impressed with the grammars, facial expression and etc.

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- Too short, I want more.... background drop is easy on the eyes. Full of grammar on face, body. I rather learn American Revolution from him.
- Smooth ASL signer. Great facial expression. This guy make you feel involved with his world.
- This is hard to compare to the [interpretation of *The American Revolution*] (and I know I am not being asked to do so...) but it is just so much more comfortable to watch - it seems like a really cogent personal narrative. The presenter seems far more interested and, as a result, I am also far more interested in his story.
- He was pretty clear in this presentation- made it seem interesting.
- The presenter was quite comfortable sharing his experiences, and the non-manual markers throughout the video clearly indicated his feelings and strong advocacy for a multitude of cultural experiences. The overall quality of the presentation clearly indicated a very strong, native signer.

ASL Text: Interpreted Access

LOW:

- The interpreter voicing the presenter did not seem very confident in her translation. This and the large gaps between her sentences both make me feel that she was not comfortable during the translation.
- She's boring
- The person did not speak fluently as if they knew what they wanted to say. It almost felt like they were reading it from a script that they had just gotten 2 seconds before recording.

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- Soft-spoken, somewhat lacking in enthusiasm or emphasis, sounded like she was telling someone else's story which was slightly awkward given that it was in first person.
- Boring
- NOT VERY KNOWLEDGABLE OR PASSIONATE ABOUT THE TOPIC OR PRESENTATION
- not very bright or articulate

MEDIUM:

- It seemed at the intro they may have been nervous or were slightly disorganized in the way they wanted to present the finish. By the end they seemed to be almost "over it" as in they ran out of things to say and wanted the presentation to end.
- Just wings things and rambles.... Scatterbrain
- It seemed a little slow or spaced out
- Not very passionate or excited about what they are presenting

HIGH:

- They seem just not very strong at presenting.
- Did she say that she was also deaf when talking about the students from the school for the deaf in Paris? It was hard to hear and I wasn't sure if I was allowed to replay the clip. Her recall seemed a bit off. Plus, it couldn't keep my attention
- She sounded tired.
- She could have been more prepared and refreshed her memory before speaking.

ALTERED PERCEPTIONS

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- ...she is young, disinterested in the presentation and that she isn't used to this type of situation.
- Details were not clear. Possibly could not remember specific things. Trip may have been years ago. Somewhat lacking in confidence or unsure of themselves.
- Thoughts somewhat scattered. Not a good memory. Not an engaging presentation. Presentation not delivered well.
- She seemed nervous, unsure, and not completely prepared.

*Items within brackets were modified/inserted by researchers for clarification.