

Video Relay Services Interpreting Task Analysis Report

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Project Background

- Related to the DO IT Center
 - RSA Grant of National Significance (#H160A00019)
 - Forging collaborative partnerships
 - Sorenson Communications
 - Communication Services for the Deaf

- Related to field of ASL-English Interpretation
 - VRS emerging at unprecedented rate
 - Important questions to answer
 - VRS Vendors
 - Interpreters
 - Interpreter Educators
 - Consumers

Purpose and Goal of Project

Oct 2004 - Feb 2005

Gather & analyze empirical evidence to determine what interpreters require to effectively work in VRS call centers:

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Personal attributes

VRS: What it is not

VRI

Interpreter is at a different location than consumers.



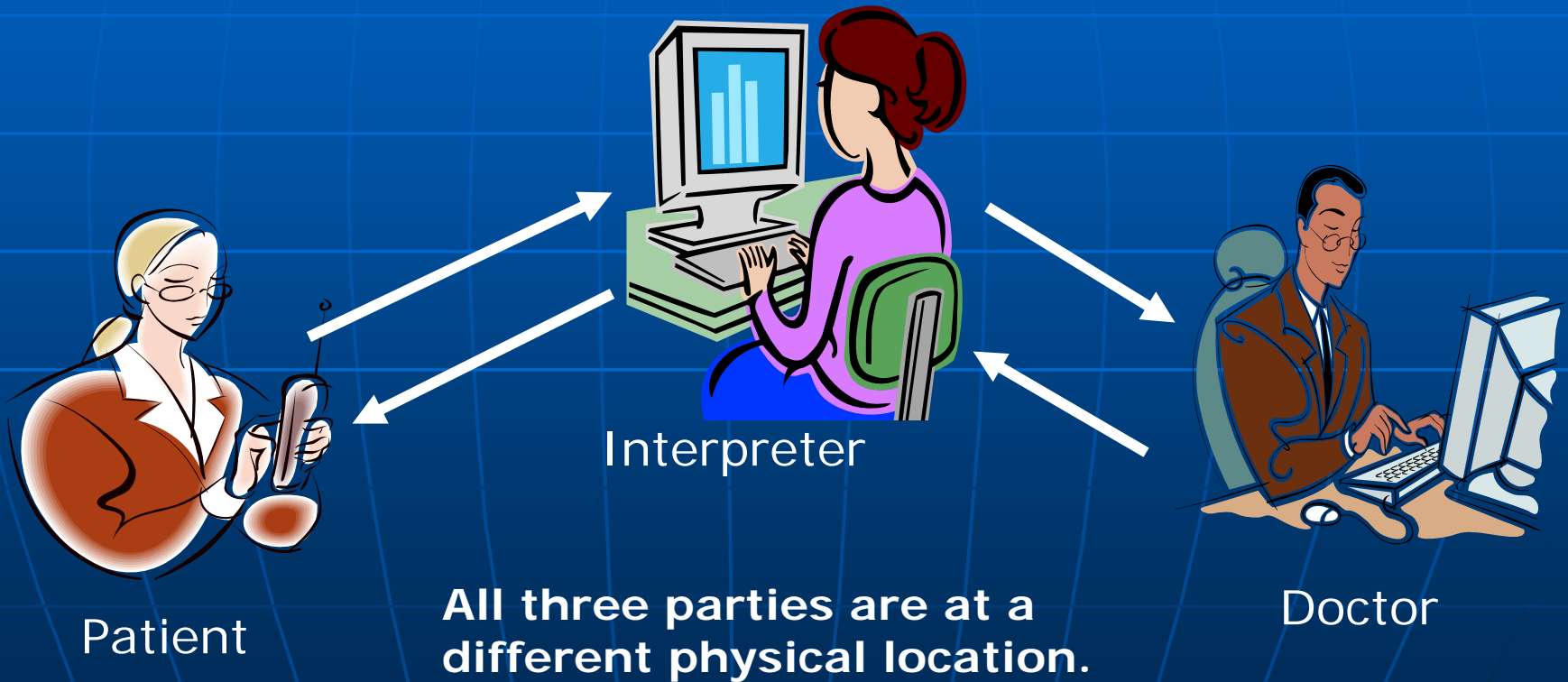
Doctor and patient



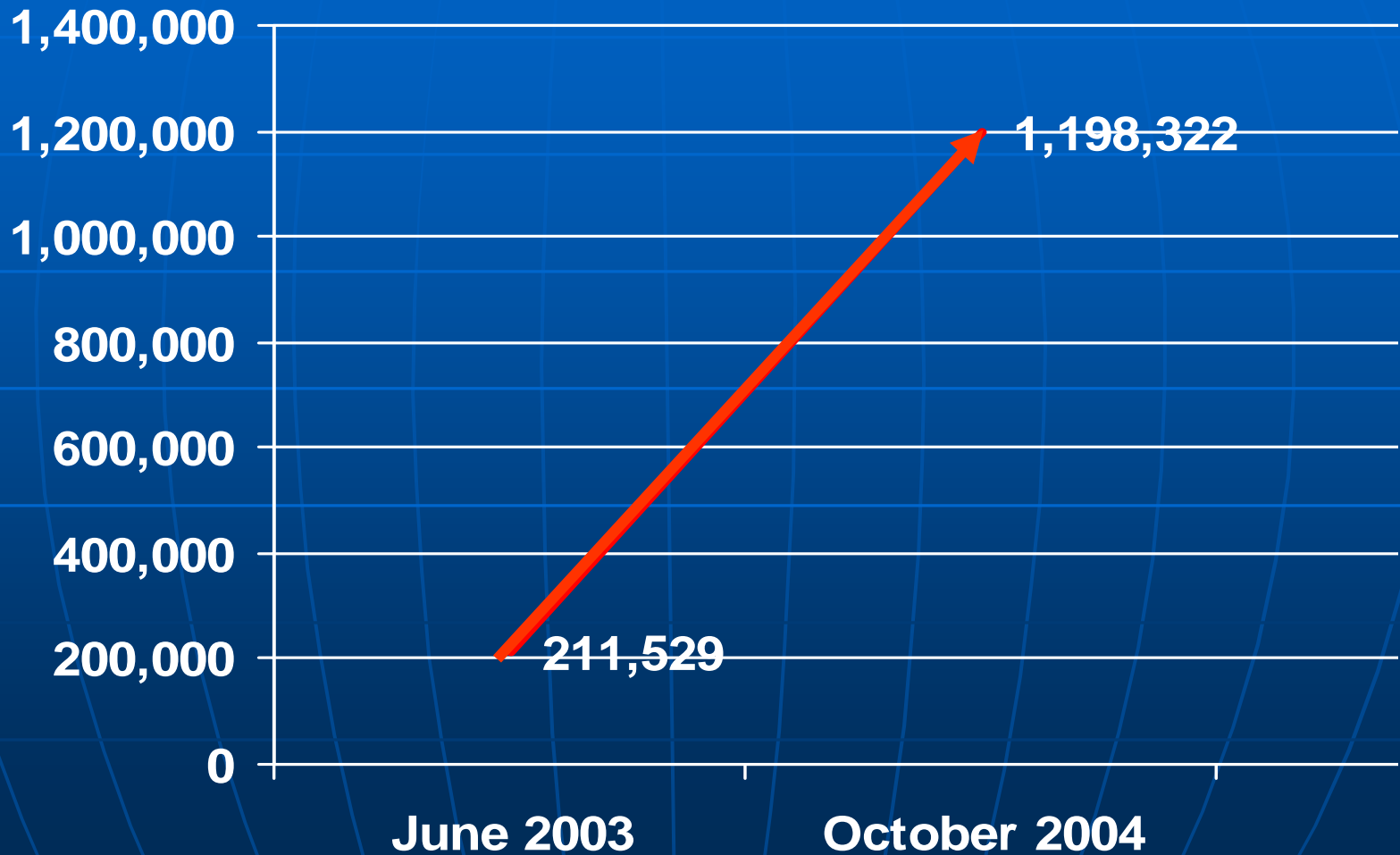
Interpreter

VRS: What it is

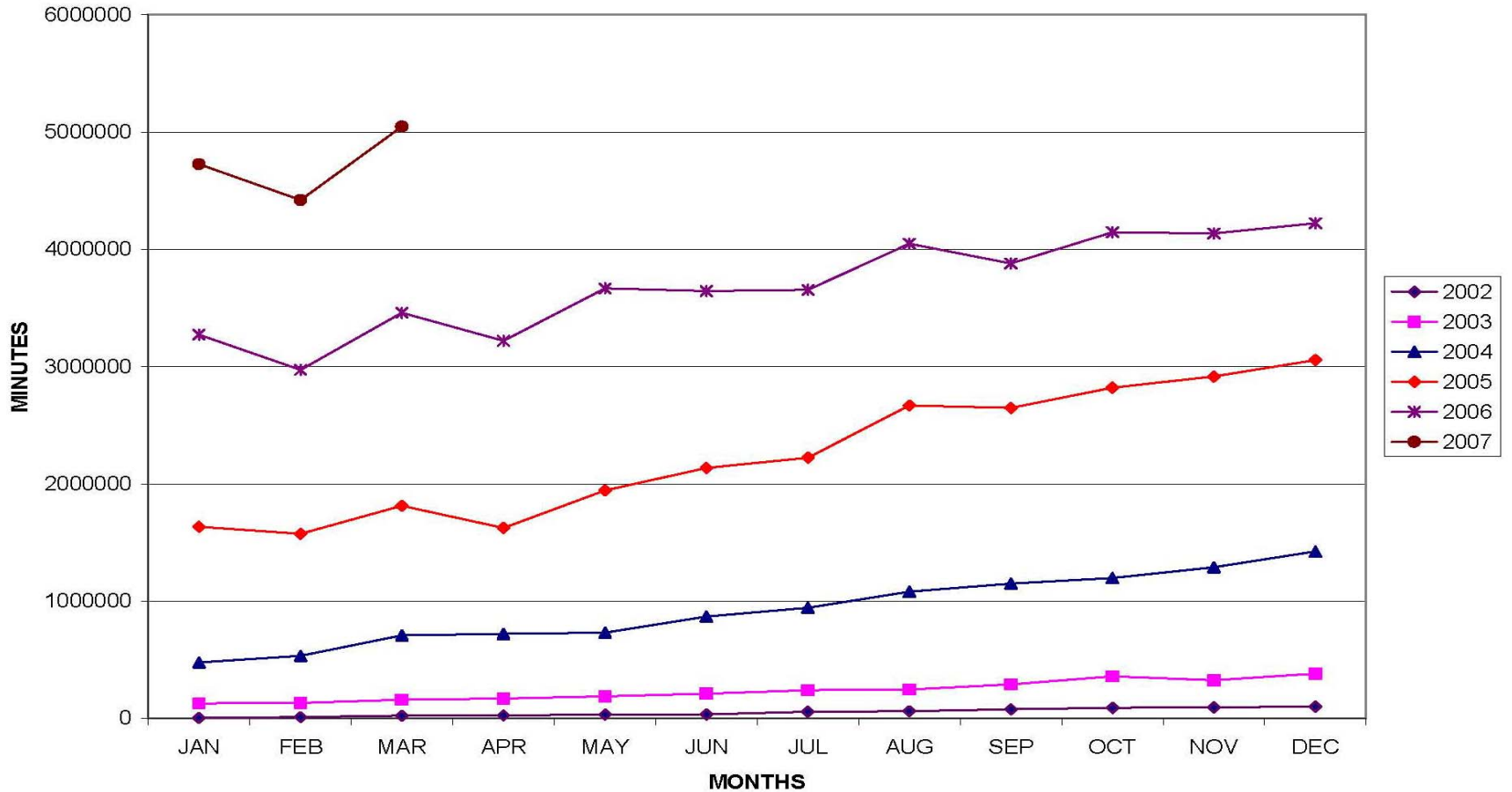
VRS



Rapid Growth: Caller Minutes

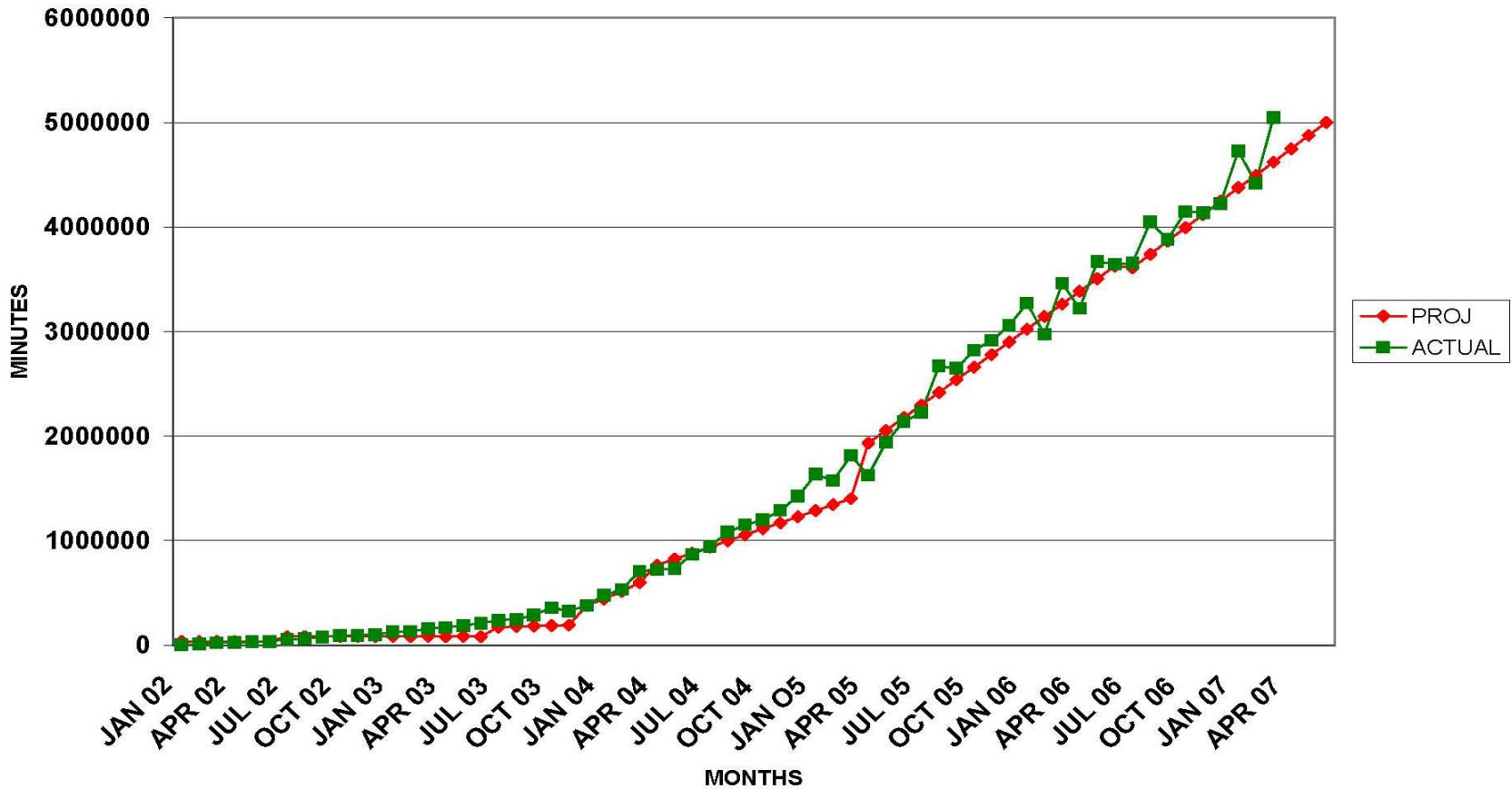


VRS MINUTES JANUARY 2002 - MARCH 2007



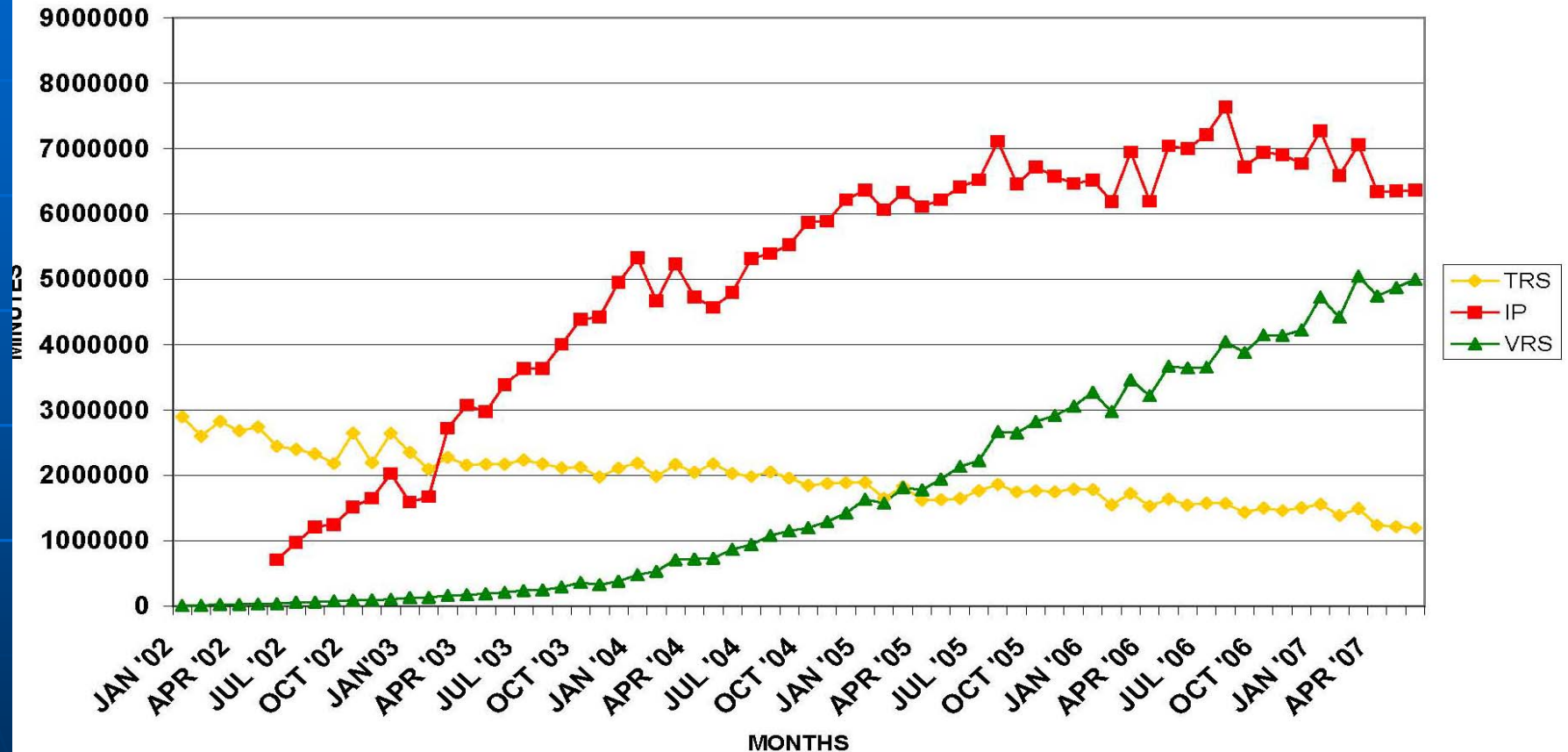
0106 VRS GROWTH Chart3 5/1/2007

VRS MINUTES PROJECTION VS ACTUAL JANUARY 2002 - JUNE 2007



0106 VRS GROWTH Chart6 5/1/2007

INTERSTATE TRS, INTERNET AND VRS MINUTES ACTUALS JANUARY 2002 - MARCH 2007 PROJECTION APRIL 2007 - JUNE 2007



0106 IP GROWTH Chart15 5/1/2007

Interpreting Considerations

TRADITIONAL	VRS
Face-to-face communication	No in-person contact
Three-dimensional perspective	Two-dimensional perspective dependent on high speed compression...times quality decays
No physical limitation on space	Technology restricted signing space
Uses contextual/environmental cues for meaning	Lacking contextual/environmental cues for meaning
Relationship between callers commonly known	Relationships between callers often unknown
Sociolinguistic factors more overt	Sociolinguistic factors not always known

Interpreting Considerations

TRADITIONAL	VRS
Assignments made in advance	“Immediate” assignments
Accept/decline assignments	Must accept all calls
Generally works alone	Team environment
Often self-employed	Works for a corporation
Potential to prepare	Must rely on prior experiences
Interpretation the only role	Multiple roles simultaneously
One locale with relatively limited & predictable number of deaf/HH callers	Wide variety of callers and content from different locales
Number of “jobs”/day = 1-5	Number of calls/day = 100+

Interpreting Considerations

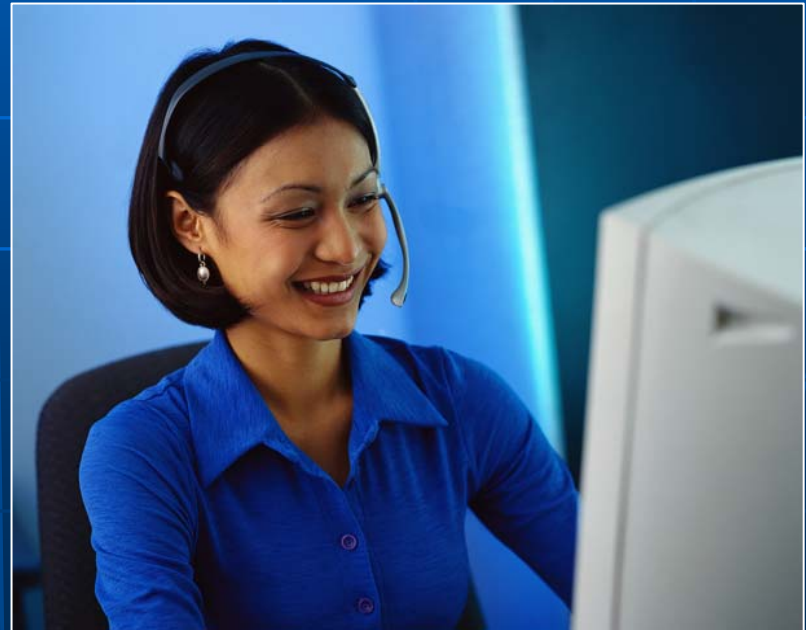
TRADITIONAL	VRS
Often regional signs known	Often regional signs unknown
Consumers see each other and are able to monitor reactions visually and auditorily	Callers are not able to see or hear each other or monitor reactions
No special need for technology competence	Technology competence a necessary skill
Dual-tasking at linguistic, physical, and cognitive levels	Multi-tasking at linguistic, physical, cognitive and mechanical levels

Interpreting Consideration

TRADITIONAL	VRS
Greater demand for English to ASL interpretation	Greater demand for ASL to English interpretation
Most consumers experienced using interpreters	Many inexperienced callers placing phone calls
Little use of intimate register	High numbers of calls use intimate register

Purpose and Goal of Project

Gather, analyze, and report empirical data regarding skills, knowledge and personal attributes required to effectively work as an interpreter in VRS call centers.



Methodology

- Visited 2 call centers
 - 2 different vendors
 - Sorenson Media Inc
 - Communication Services for the Deaf
 - 2 different states
- Observed calls & interpreters in action
- Interviewed interpreters, managers, directors, and deaf consumers
- Facilitated focus group for deaf and hard of hearing consumers

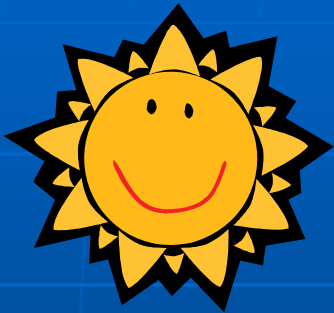
Focus Group: Deaf Consumers

- Primarily call from home
- Choosing VRS vendor
 - Waiting time
 - Quality and reliability of service
 - Opportunity to reserve interpreters at pre-determined times

Interview: Interpreters

- N=55
- All certified
- 38 held degrees (9 held more than one)
- Experience non-VRS
 - 2-45 years (ave =18 years)
- Experience in VRS
 - 1 day to 4 years
- VRS work experience
 - Worked with different VRS vendors
 - Worked with same VRS vendor in different locations

Findings: Call Patterns



Daytime calls
Goal driven, business calls



Night calls
Social, order food



Children called family and
friends, not business

Findings: Competencies

Skills

Knowledge

Personal
Attributes

Finding: Competencies

Skills

Knowledge

Personal
Attributes

- Experience
- Adaptability
- Linguistic
- Telephone Protocol and Voice Control
- Customer Service
- Decision Making
- Impartiality
- Technology



Findings: Competencies

Skills

Knowledge

Personal
Attributes

- World Knowledge
- World Knowledge – deaf related
- VRS Knowledge



Findings: Competencies

Skills

Knowledge

Personal
Attributes



- Physical
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Conduct
 - Professional
 - Ethical

Recommendations

- Increase pool of non-certified interpreters
- Increase pool of certified interpreters
- Design, develop, and implement model curriculum
 - Scope and Sequence
 - Materials
 - Assessment

Implications for Programs

- IPP 'product' not in sync with current growth segment of the market
 - Similar to what happened with K-12 demands
- The gap still exists
 - Lack of empirical data demonstrating field of interpreter education can successfully teach linkages between theory and practice

Implications for Programs

- Demand exceeds supply
 - pressure to produce 'more graduates'
- Limited resource capacity
 - no reserves on hand
 - what incentives exist?
- Fast Track' approaches unproven
 - counter to our collective experience
 - perception of increased risk
 - potential increase to the 'gap'

Implications for Instruction

- Competencies generalized to other settings?
- Competencies currently addressed in curricula?
 - Where?
 - Immediate expansion?
 - Long-term attention?

Implications for Instruction

- Curricula infused with critical-thinking & decision-making skills?
- Competencies to be addressed where in scope & sequence?
- Resources to develop
 - Vignettes formatted for student learning
 - Model interpretations
 - Customer Service modules

Continue Research into...

- Best practices in VRS interpreting
- Industry standards & expectations
- Interview greater number of deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers
- Interview non-deaf consumers
- Analyze VRS interpretations for “patterns”

Questions?



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Products and Resources www.unco.edu/DOIT/