



Improving Rural Interpreter Skills

Copyright & Disclaimer

This product was developed by the [University of Northern Colorado \(UNC\) Improving Rural Interpreter Skills \(IRIS\) Project](#). The contents of this course were developed under a grant (#H160D210006) from the Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. The contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement from the Federal Government (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474).



Permission is granted to copy and disseminate this product for noncommercial educational purposes provided UNC-IRIS is credited as the source and referenced appropriately on any such copies. [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](#). Suggested citation: UNC-IRIS. (2024). *Name of Resource*. URL (if applicable).

Module 14: Your Interpreting Process: Who's the Boss?



Module content developed by Betty Colonomos & Kelly Decker
[ASL lecture](#) by Chris McQuaid

Module Overview & Objectives

Overview: This module will develop and enhance supervisory functions in the brain while interpreting. These enhancements will assist interpreters in the identification of competing cognitive tasks in order to better manage their processes.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Upon Completion of this module participants will be able to:

1. Identify the factors exerting control over the interpreting process.
2. Analyze possible causes of loss of supervisory control.
3. Explain how the management of control affects interpreting performance.

Pre-Test

NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this pre-test

1. When the interpreter has strong feelings about the source message:

- A. the interpreting is not affected
- B. the interpreter needs to consider how that impacts their decisions
- C. the interpreter should tell the consumer

2. Managing the process of interpreting:

- A. depends on the strength of the supervisor
- B. depends on the speaker'/signer's speed and complexity
- C. depends on the context

3. Many of the problems that occur in interpreting occur because:

- A. the interpreter does not have enough ASL vocabulary
- B. the interpreter does not have experience with the material
- C. the interpreter is not in control of their cognitive process



Your interpreting cognitive process

Turning inward

Cognitive interpreting processes are driven and controlled by activating and suppressing various factors and operations (i.e. your Supervisor doing the work). As you progress thru this module (re)consider the following:

- An interpreter's bias and emotive filters may exercise control over some linguistic and analytic functions in the brain.
- If the perceptions of the source input are skewed due to emotive reactions or filters, the form of the output may be severely compromised.
- The interpreter's output should be decided based on the audience's ability to access the message.
- The competing tasks that exert control and consume energy for the Supervisor, impact the interpretation.

Building mastery

There are a number of external and internal factors (e.g. speed or density of source message, presence of peers, self-doubt, etc.) that control an interpreter's processes and decisions. The assignments and activities in this module will provide opportunities for you to explore and identify why these factors exercise power over your Supervisor.

These activities may be new for you and challenge your thinking about how you have and can make decisions in your interpreting processes. By slowing our process down, and looking at each step of our decision making we can improve and maintain control of our Supervisor and resulting interpretations. Continual practice and reflection builds mastery over your own interpreting work.

Building mastery continued

See these **three tips** in building interpreting mastery by the DE LA MORA Institute of Interpretation.

1. Record yourself
2. Pay attention to the source message
3. Interpret meaning, not words



GoReact Discussion: Loss of control



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

What creates a sense of “loss of control” on your interpreting assignments? For example:

- In what settings do you feel a loss of control?
- What types of content are difficult to control?
- What consumer behaviors or expectations diminish control of your decisions?
- What conditions set forth by employers, agencies, etc. reduce your ability to control your work?

Response post directions:

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

GoReact Discussion: Taking action



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

After reflecting on your own and reviewing your colleague's postings on the previous assignment

GoReact discussion: Loss of control answer the following question:

- In your experience, what actions can you take to reduce the sense of “loss of control” while interpreting?

Response post directions:

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

Depth of Processing

Reflecting back on *Module 11: Product & Process: A Closer Look*, transliterating, coding, and interpreting were explored as a precursor to thinking about how the Supervisor manages our depth of processing.

What is depth of processing?!

As outlined by the graphic below, there is a range of depth to our attention and comprehension of the source language. How deeply the interpreter is attending will impact the range (i.e. depth) of the processing directly influencing the product in the interpretation.

For example, if you were only given just a few words to interpret, most likely you'd need to know more information prior to being able to interpret something coherently with accuracy. This is because, in general, a few words does not represent an entire idea. Conversely, if you were interpreting consecutively an entire idea/question/thought would be conveyed prior to your interpretation thus your depth of processing may be at the sentential or discourse level.

There are various reasons as to why an interpreter may choose to process more shallow/deeply. The source text may be embedded with various proper names, acronyms, and numbers this will necessitate a lexical depth of processing. Other source texts may be narrative in nature, requiring a discourse level of understanding prior to production.

Depth of Processing continued

Who's the Boss?!

While these depths of processing decisions fluctuate over the course of any given interpreting task, questions to ask yourself are:

- Are you aware these decisions are being made in your interpreting process?
- How do you activate your internal metric of when to start interpreting? Is it based on the number of words, the amount of time that has passed, or after a complete thought?
- Is your Supervisor working to assist the task of interpreting?

Depth of Processing cont.

Depth of Processing

Morphemic	the units of processing are morphemes, eg. -ed, 's, -ing, affixes <i>note: consistent morphemic processing is considered coding</i>
Lexical	the units of processing are lexical items, eg. words (house, dog), idioms (nuts & bolts), phrasal verbs (take up, pick out)
Phrasal	the units of processing are phrases, eg. noun phrases (tall woman, fast runner), verb phrases (walk slowly, talk loudly), prepositional phrases (under the table, in the car)
Sentential	the units of processing are sentences or several sentences, a complete thought or point
Discourse	the unit of processing is a portion of the text that makes a point, part of the entire text that can stand alone
Textual	the unit of processing is the entire text, which includes goal/purpose, discourse structure, speech act (spoken or signed), genre

Note: The downloadable handout is available on Canvas.

References

- Colonomos, B. (1995; 2022). *Depth of processing* [Handout]. College Park, MD: The Bilingual Mediation Center, Inc.
- De La Mora Institute of Interpretation. (2013, March 7). 3 hacks to become a better interpreter. [Video] YouTube. https://youtu.be/FAUxzW_gyKw

Post-Test

NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this pre-test

1. When the interpreter has strong feelings about the source message:

- A. the interpreting is not affected
- B. the interpreter needs to consider how that impacts their decisions
- C. the interpreter should tell the consumer

2. Managing the process of interpreting:

- A. depends on the strength of the supervisor
- B. depends on the speaker'/signer's speed and complexity
- C. depends on the context

3. Many of the problems that occur in interpreting occur because:

- A. the interpreter does not have enough ASL vocabulary
- B. the interpreter does not have experience with the material
- C. the interpreter is not in control of their cognitive process

Correct responses: 1.B, 2.A, 3.C





Improving Rural Interpreter Skills

UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN COLORADO

The contents of this communication were developed under a grant (#H160D210006) from the Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. The contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement from the Federal Government (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474).