5

Interpreters, Conversational Style, and Gender at Work

Elizabeth F. Morgan

A DESIGNATED interpreter in a work environment encounters a variety of linguistic styles and rituals while interpreting between the deaf professional and other individuals. The designated interpreter has many options when considering how to frame the communication of the deaf professional, especially when interpreting from American Sign Language (ASL) to English. Using information gleaned from studies and texts with respect to the topic of gender discourse, workplace communication, and other pertinent sociolinguistic phenomena, this chapter will examine powerful and powerless language, gender and language, conversational style, and rituals—all of which affect the providing of ASL to English interpretation in the workplace. The discussion of characteristics of language and conversational rituals in which men and women engage will assist the reader in categorizing his or her own tendencies because features and participation in these rituals vary from person to person, whether male or female. This chapter will also give interpreters the tools to frame discourse used by deaf professionals in a way that gives the deaf professional every advantage possible in the workplace while the designated interpreter remains fully faithful to the source language message.

Consider the following scenario: A panel of individuals is considering candidates for an entry-level manager position. Their decision may be based on objective criteria such as the candidate's past performance, knowledge of the product or service their company offers, and the candidate's ability to apply concepts learned from specific training, among other things. This decision can also be made on the basis of subjective criteria or how successful the interviewer feels the candidate will be, including speculation about the candidate's potential to lead others. The panel may consider the candidate's persuasiveness, confidence, ability to motivate others, and inherent intelligence. The criteria evaluated when selecting a candidate generally include both objective and subjective elements.

If a deaf professional is among the candidates under consideration, then the panel members may not be able to accurately gauge the persuasiveness and level of confidence the deaf person truly possesses—a possibility when the interpreter provides ASL-to-English interpreting. If the interpreter is unaware that he or she uses powerless language, uses linguistic strategies that serve to portray the deaf professional as subordinate, or fails to recognize the ritual nature of particular communication events, then the negative effect to the deaf professional can be considerable, albeit unintentional.

Male Deaf Professional and Female Designated Interpreter

I was a designated interpreter for a male supervisor who was a mid-level manager in a large organization. I was paired with him for forty hours a week. At that time, he supervised more than twenty people, 90 percent of whom were male. At most meetings, I was the only woman in the room. I performed both English-to-ASL and ASL-to-English interpretation services for him. I refer to him using the pseudonym "John." The culture of his organization valued managers who were dominant and individualistic and who were high performers. Commands were given readily and were received with military-type deference. Power was structured in a hierarchical manner.

In most interpreter training programs, students school themselves in the ways that Deaf culture differs from "hearing" culture. When studying another culture, it is natural to use one's native culture as a baseline against which to compare the culture being studied. However, if the interpreter is unaware that gender has an effect on conversation styles in his or her native culture, then a piece of the puzzle is missing. The interpreter who is unaware of strategies and rituals she uses when communicating in her native language will not recognize those same strategies and rituals when used by others, and the interpretation can suffer not only in content but also in expression of the speaker's intent. In this case, my lack of awareness about the influences of gender on communication was a missing puzzle piece that was affecting John's success.

After some time, I began to notice that when I interpreted from ASL to English during the staff meetings that John would conduct, the male employees seemed to take their assignments from John with less seriousness than I thought appropriate. It was not out-and-out insubordination in any sense of the word, simply that they seemed to view what I understood to be orders as an option rather than a mandate.

I interpreted other meetings where John was lower or equal in status to most participants. These meetings were similar to meetings where branch managers report to a district manager. While interpreting in those meetings, I noticed participants writing the tasks assigned by the district manager on their individual notepads, often verbatim. There was also a note taker who made a record of all assignments on a piece of paper in the front of the room. Participants vied for the opportunity to be given an assignment, and the meetings began with brief status updates and group troubleshooting of previous assignments.

In meetings that John ran, his subordinates did not write down his task assignments verbatim on individual notepads. John wrote a task list on a paper at the front of the room. The posture and way that they carried themselves during the meeting portrayed a much less formal manner. Often, discussion included different opinions with respect to how the tasks were to be carried out. When an assignment was not completed, John's subordinates reported that fact but did not seem to be overly concerned about it. An element of John's performance evaluation depended on his ability to motivate and lead his subordinates. I now know

that I often used a style that had elements of powerless language and communication rituals common to the discourse of women.

CONVERSATION STYLE

The belief that we can be categorized into communication patterns solely by gender has been proven over the years to be false. Instead, it is more accurate to think of each gender being a class (class as in group and not necessarily as in status) and a conversation style being linked to a specific class of people (Goffman 1977). However, it is important to remember that individuals choose the way they communicate based on many different factors, including the environment where the communication event takes place, the individuals involved, and the goal of the communication.

There is a more "typical" presentation of discourse among women, but this presentation can be used or disregarded on an individual level. A man may chose to adopt a style that more closely approximates the discourse style of women or one that is more aligned with the discourse style of men (Palomares 2004). Some researchers also argue that the style routinely ascribed to women is actually a result of social roles or status as opposed to gender alone (Aries 1997).

For purposes of this chapter, it is helpful to organize choices with respect to patterns of language use, conversational rituals, and behavior surrounding communication (e.g., tendencies with respect to directness) as parts that make up a "conversation style." This approach is essential because interpreters, while remaining aware of the effect their communication choices have on the process, may not necessarily conform to all characteristics associated with a specific gender. It is important for an interpreter to be able to recognize his or her personal conversation style and how it comes to bear on the way he or she provides interpretation.

POWERLESS LANGUAGE AND ITS EFFECT

Lakoff (1975) labeled the use of a particular set of linguistic features as female language. But in 1978, Erickson and colleagues were among the first to use the terms *powerful language* and *powerless language* in their study on the effects of speech styles in the court setting. They posited that social power and status were more closely linked to the use of the powerless style than was gender. This notion was affirmed in the work of several researchers who also attributed the different uses of powerful or powerless language to the influence that status had on the style of communication, while noting that gender differences may co-occur (Carli 1990; Hosman and Siltanen 1994; Mulac and Bradac 1995). Over time, linguistic features that originally had carried the label of "female" gradually came to be known as a powerless linguistic style (Blankenship and Holtgraves 2005).

Powerless language has been documented to include several features. Some of the features that have been categorized by researchers as markers of a powerless language style are listed as follows, although this list is not exhaustive:

- *Tag questions*—A question added at the end of a declaration that refers to the previous statement, for example, "It's terrible that she was overlooked for a promotion, isn't it?" Such questions give the impression that the speaker is seeking the affirmation or corroboration of the listener (Lakoff 1975).
- *Intensifiers*—Adverbs that are used to provide emphasis but are considered by some researchers to be weaker than absolute superlatives, for example, *so*, *very*, *surely*, and *really* as in "I *really* found that offensive" (Erickson et al. 1978; Lakoff 1975).
- *Hedges*—Additions to sentences in the form of adverbs or adverb phrases such as *I think*, *kinda*, *sort of*, and *perhaps* that serve to weaken the strength of a statement, for example, "I'm *sort of* an aggressive salesperson" (Erickson et al. 1978; Lakoff 1975).
- *Hesitation forms*—Phonemes such as *uh*, *ah*, or *um* and morphemes such as *okay*, *well*, or *you know* when they add meaning that is not important for the intended message (Erickson et al. 1978; Bradac, Hemphill, and Tardy 1981).
- *Gesture forms*—Phrases such as *over there* or *like this*, which are usually used in combination with a gesture (Erickson et al. 1978).
- *Questioning intonation*—Rising inflection in the voice of the speaker at the end of a statement, making it sound more like a question (Erickson et al. 1978).
- *Question statements*—An avoidance of an imperative or command by the use of question, for example, "Could you please put down that stapler?" (Lakoff 1975).

Powerful language is defined as language that lacks the above features. Holtgraves and Lasky (1999) concluded that when a speaker uses powerless language, the listener has a more negative perception of the speaker and of the speaker's main arguments. If it is important for a deaf professional to persuade audience members, then it would be best for the designated interpreter to use powerful language. Possible exceptions to this rule may depend on the gender of the speaker and the gender of the audience members the deaf professional wishes to persuade.

Parton and colleagues (2002) compared interviewees who used powerful or powerless language styles during a job interview. The authors state that research on speech style proves that the style a person chooses to communicate significantly affects the impression people have of him or her. Listeners believe that speakers who use powerful speech styles are dynamic, competent, and superior and have control over themselves and others.

When I examined my own communication style for features of powerless language, I found that I was uncomfortable with silence or lulls in conversation and used my ability to "fill the air" with hesitation forms as a way to keep the floor when providing ASL to English interpretation. I also used hedges when I wasn't exactly sure what John was saying at the moment to buy myself time to perfect the interpretation. In retrospect, these uses of language contributed to the view that John's subordinates developed about his ability to command respect.

Carli (1990) examined how language use differed when groups were composed of members of a single gender compared with groups comprising members of both genders, how a speaker influenced members of the same and opposite gender depending on the speaker's linguistic style, and whether or not that style was powerful or powerless. Carli noted that powerless language is tentative and labeled it as such. In her study, women were found to use more features of powerless language than did men, but only when in mixed-sex groups. When a woman used powerless language in a speech intended to be persuasive, the woman was rated as more influential by males but less influential by females. If the speaker was male, his rating of influence remained the same whether or not he used powerless language. Men perceived a woman who used powerless language to be more trustworthy and likable than an assertive woman, but women judged the same woman to be less likeable and trustworthy.

GENDER-LINKED LANGUAGE EFFECT

Vocal pitch and tone are not the only features one can use to determine the gender of a communicator. Empirical studies have found that there are particular language features that can reliably predict the gender of the author (Mulac 2000). Some features in Table 5.1 are also used when describing powerless language. The examples in this table are shown to be linked to use by one gender more often than another.

Although it is important to remember that these language variables have been proven to be reliable indicators of the speaker's gender, Palomares (2004) has concluded that men and women will use these variables to a greater or lesser degree depending on whether or not they identify as being male or female and whether or not they believe that fact to be salient to the current discussion.

An interpreter might use Table 5.1 when examining his or her own speech patterns. An appropriate sample of speech patterns could be taken from a tape-recorded sample of ASL-to-English interpreting, a recorded sample of speaking in English to one person or a group, or a written sample.

COMMANDS AND DIRECTNESS

Commands can be phrased in different ways without altering the message. Lakoff (1975) cited the following:

Direct order = Close the door.

Simple requests = Please close the door.
Will you close the door?

Compound requests = Will you please close the door?
Won't you close the door?

Each of these choices is an accurate interpretation of the gloss DOOR CLOSE. All but two examples (the direct order and first example of the simple request) include features of powerless language.

Table 5.1. Gender-Influenced Language Features

Language Variable	Definition	Examples	Gender Indicated	Citation
Elliptical sentences	Wording in which the subject or predicate is understood	• Perhaps • "Not only technological but also political, social, and religious"	Masculine	Mulac and Lundell (1986); Mulac and Lundell (1994)
Questions (Directives in question form were not counted.)	A sentence asking a question	• "What will happen to these people? • "What do you do?"	Feminine	Mulac et al. (1988)
Directives	Wording telling others what to do	• "Think of another." • "Society needs to . . ."	Masculine	Mulac et al. (1988)
Negations	Wording indicating what something is not	• "I don't think that . . ." • "It doesn't come up to par . . ."	Feminine	Mulac, Lundell, and Bradac (1986)
Sentence initial adverbials	An adverbial phrase at the beginning of a sentence that answers how, when, or where with respect to the main clause	• "Instead of being the light blue . . . , it is . . ." • "However . . ."	Feminine	Mulac and Lundell (1994); Mulac, Studley, and Blau (1990)
Dependent clauses	A clause that serves to specify or qualify the words that convey primary meaning	• "which is mostly covered . . ." • "those who do not will be . . ." • "where the shadows are . . ."	Feminine	Mulac, Studley, and Blau (1990)
Oppositions	Wording that counters one statement against another	• "More people will be poorer, but more will be rich also . . ." • "The snow must have fallen fairly recently, but it has been a while . . ."	Feminine	Mulac and Lundell (1986); Mulac, Lundell, and Bradac (1986)
Judgmental adjectives	An adjective that indicates personal evaluation or opinion rather than mere description	• "much lazier" • "nice" • "bothersome"	Masculine	Mulac and Lundell (1994); Mulac, Studley, and Blau (1990)
Uncertainty verbs	A verb phrase that indicates a lack of certainty or assuredness	• "I wonder if . . ." • "I highly doubt . . ."	Feminine	Hartman (1976); Mulac and Lundell (1994)
Intensive adverbs	An adverb that attempts to increase intensity of what it modifies	• "a *very* changed place" • "*strongly* pushed for . . ." • "*really*"	Feminine	Mulac and Lundell (1986); Mulac et al. (1988)
Hedges	Modifiers that indicate lack of confidence in, or diminished assuredness of, the statement	• "sort of" • "kind of" • "possibly" • "maybe"	Feminine	Mulac, Studley, and Blau (1990)
References to quantity	Any mention of an amount or quantity	• "in 10 years" • "most of the area" • "6-8 thousand feet elevation"	Masculine	Mulac and Lundell (1986)
Locatives	A word that indicates the position or location of objects	• "right next to the . . ." • "in the background"	Masculine	Mulac and Lundell (1994)
"I" references	First person singular pronouns in the subjective case	• "I think society will have . . ." • "I believe that . . ."	Masculine	Mulac and Lundell (1994)
Vocalized pauses	Phonemes used superfluously to meaning	• "uh"	Masculine	Mulac, Lundell, and Bradac (1986)
Number of words	Total number of words spoken or written in the sample studied	• "ummm" A larger number of words	Feminine	Mulac (1989)

Tannen (1994b) gives an example of a female university president giving orders to her secretary: "I've just finished drafting this letter. Do you think you could type it right away? I'd like to get it out before lunch. And would you please do me a favor and hold all calls while I'm meeting with Mr. Smith?" Tannen also notes that women often avoid giving direct commands because it can be perceived as "bossy."

When I was working with John, if he signed, TAKE-DOWN IDEA. START LIST, I would voice, "Please write that idea down. Let's make a list." I was attempting to provide an interpretation that was accurate and also most likely to make John's subordinates respond positively to his command. I sought to accomplish this task by making John's request indirectly, which was my way of seeking to have him appear as polite as I perceived him to be, based on our prior interaction. When I voiced, "Let's make a list," I included John in the group making the list to lessen what I perceived as the boldness of such a command. In retrospect, I am now aware that I framed John's commands in ways that made me most comfortable speaking as a female: indirectly, and with careful attention to the needs of others so they would not feel "ordered."

Holmes and Stubbe (2003) found that in New Zealand workplaces, direct and explicit directives were most frequent when superiors gave routine instructions to subordinates. However, if the superior's request could be described as "beyond the call of duty," then more sensitive and subtle negotiation language was used, including indirect directives. The approach using more negotiation is often used by workers who are unfamiliar with one another but are equal in status (e.g., new colleagues) or when subordinates try to convince a superior to take a particular course of action. This pattern would also be consistent with the "interactive leadership style" described by Rosener (1997) when studying U.S. workplaces.

Communication Logistics

Men and women have different preferences in physical setup for communication interactions (Tannen 1990). Having an awareness of the physical setup of a situation may make it possible to optimize an interpreting interaction. Hearing men and boys are most often comfortable talking while sitting side by side whereas hearing women and girls will typically sit across from one another in one-on-one conversations. Although the sightline between the designated interpreter and the deaf professional must be prioritized, following these gender-specific physical arrangements, if possible, may be beneficial because hearing participants in particular will be physically aligned in an intuitively familiar configuration, which will keep communication as natural and comfortable as possible.

Choice of Conversation Style

A study of a group of female managers in Australia (Barrett 2004) reported that the managers selected masculine or feminine communication strategies based, in part, on whether the effect of the situation would be short-, medium-, or long-term with respect to their career. In situations where the effect would be generally short-

term (e.g., attempting to regain the floor after an interruption during a meeting), the managers generally preferred a masculine approach, although the particular approach favored was not the most masculine approach presented. Highly masculine strategies were not considered particularly effective, and strategies with a more indirect, feminine element were held to be more effective. Women at higher corporate levels, whose colleagues are men rather than women, were not found to embrace a more masculine view of communication strategies as their preferred method, regardless of the fact that many assertiveness training courses for female managers have suggested this very approach.

When a designated interpreter is considering how to frame the deaf professional's message, the following factors are important to consider: the relationship between the people involved, the length of time they have been working together, the setting of their discussion, the speaker's assessment of the likelihood of compliance, whether the conversation is with a group or between individuals, relevant aspects of the participants' social or professional identity, and the dominant culture of that particular workplace (Holmes and Stubbe 2003).

The following adapted example from the Barrett (2004) study demonstrates the different ways an interpreter can frame a specific utterance while using more masculine or feminine discourse strategies for problematic situations. During a staff meeting, a deaf professional (Lars) is having a discussion with a hearing coworker (Lois), and there is no chairperson.

Lars: What I think we should do with Regent is . . .
Lois: (interrupting him) We can deal with that issue later. On the Salem deal, though, we'll just move ahead right away—if we don't, our competitors will grab it.
Lars: I'd just like to finish this point . . .
Lois: (interrupting again) I want to be sure we get the Salem matter resolved today.
Lars: (gloss of his utterance) INTERRUPT BACK TO POINT. R-E-G-E-N-T . . .

At this point, the interpreter could voice Lars's statement using a strongly masculine strategy (MM), a more masculine than feminine strategy (Mf), a strategy that is equally masculine and feminine (MF), or a strategy that is primarily feminine in approach (Fm). These options are illustrated in the following example. In this scenario, the strongly female strategy (FF) was (according to Barrett) to say nothing, an option clearly unavailable to interpreters.

MM
Lars: Lois, You've just interrupted me. I insist on talking about Regent . . .
Mf
Lars: Lois, you may not have realized you were interrupting, but you were. What I was saying about Regent is . . .
MF
Lars: Lois, just a minute. Regent . . .
Fm
Lars: Lois, we were headed to a discussion about Regent. Now. . . .

DIALOGUE ABOUT CONVERSATION STYLE

When acting as a designated interpreter, it is important to consider the desired impression the deaf professional wants to achieve. Although the following quote was written with respect to speakers and not interpreters, it is helpful to understand the possibilities from which interpreters may choose when framing the communication of the deaf professional and the potential outcome of the designated interpreters choice.

> While physical gender may not be manipulated, a person may strategically use his or her speech style to form the desired impression for a particular situation. For example, if a woman desires to be perceived as socially attractive, she should use a powerless speech style to fit other's expectations and thus be evaluated positively. On the other hand, if a woman desires a potential employer to perceive her as competent, then she should use a powerful speech style. If a person understands how his or her gender interacts with a particular speech style, then that person can use these variables to form the desired impression (Parton et al. 2002, 155).

Because speakers have such a wide range of impressions to choose from when framing communication to fit the situation, it is important to dialogue with the deaf professional about the kind of impression he or she wishes to give to colleagues, subordinates, or superiors and the goals of his or her communication. When a designated interpreter understands the different choices available with which to frame the deaf professional's language, the designated interpreter will be able to select a speech style based on the desired effect of the deaf professional.

After presenting what I had learned about communication styles to John, I asked him questions about his desired general impression and related questions for specific interactions whenever possible. A discussion of this type, in which the designated interpreter asks open-ended questions to help guide his or her choices of future conversational style while interpreting for the deaf professional, can be invaluable. Some examples of those questions might be, Is it more important to you that the men perceive you as powerful in this meeting? How do you feel if the women perceive you as giving them commands? Is it more important to you that the relationship stays intact or that the work be accomplished? Do you want to emphasize the difference in status between you and your subordinates or do you want to emphasize the similarities?

An area for further research would be to compare discourse and conversation styles of male and female Deaf Americans with those of hearing Americans of diverse ethnic backgrounds and gender. To date, much of the research conducted assumes a "white face" (MacDougall 2007), limiting the findings to extrapolate to those in Deaf culture.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS

Other behaviors and beliefs are not expressly identified in specific features of speech, but nonetheless differ between the discourse of men and women. Women often phrase ideas as suggestions rather than orders, and the suggestions are justified by their potential for good to the group as a whole. Men talk about action whereas women discuss emotions and relationships (Levine 2007). Men generally have learned to blow their own horn and speak with confidence about their accomplishments whereas women may characterize this behavior as bragging. Women will often use "we" instead of "I," even when they have done most of the work themselves. The opposite has been found to hold true for men (Tannen 1994a). Women often use interruption to affirm their support of the speaker but not as a way to claim the floor (Tannen 1990).

I have interpreted for a female deaf professional in meetings where only women were present, and I found it quite comfortable to insert the comments of that deaf professional in an overlapping fashion, without trying to take the floor. The same deaf professional shared with me how different this experience was when she had a male interpreter, who caused everyone to look at her and wait for further input when she had nothing more to say. I suspect this reaction was prompted because her previous comments had been interpreted in a way that suggested, through vocal tone, framing, and urgency, that the deaf professional wanted the floor and not a way that suggested being supportive of and connecting with the speaker.

Conversational Rituals

Conversational rituals are recurring patterns of conversation where meaning or social function is not apparent to the uninitiated observer. If an observer was watching two people pass a closed box back and forth between them, opening it only to add and remove contents based on an agreement made outside of the presence of the observer, then when the observer was asked to participate, he or she would not know what meaning the items in the box had, what he or she was supposed to select to send next, and what he or she would likely receive in return. I believe that within gender discourse, conversational rituals can be likened to wild cards. One ritual used equally by men and women is the classic American greeting, "How are you?" Although one's great-aunt may be an exception, most do not view this question as an invitation to give an update on their general health. The standard types of responses to that greeting reveal important implicit information.

Women have been socialized with a conversation style that views the sharing of a weakness as either a compliment or evidence that one is trusted. One conversational ritual is for a woman to admit a weakness at which point the other woman either reveals a similar weakness or minimizes the weakness that was shared. This type of interaction could be the basis of the "I'm sorry" ritual where the first woman says she is sorry and the second participant in the conversation is expected to respond by also apologizing and explaining why it was her (the second person's) fault or else something that the first woman could not have controlled (Tannen 1990). A female interpreter may be unaware of the number of times she says "I'm sorry," when providing a repair to an interpretation or as a mechanism to buy herself time to further perfect an interpretation. This type of expression can lead hearing clients to view the interpreter as less competent and may also have an effect on their impression of the deaf professional's competence. I used this device many

times when interpreting for John, and it did not lead his subordinates to view him more competently.

Interpreters for whom ritual apology is a device that is used consistently to repair mistakes in interpretation can consider these strategies instead: "The interpreter needs to rephrase that . . ." "Said differently, . . ." or "A better way to state that is . . ." These statements indicate that a change has been made without the admission of a mistake. Of course, it is imperative that the deaf professional be consulted with respect to the designated interpreter's choice of words when these situations occur. I spoke with John, and we agreed on three or four phrases that I would use when correcting an interpretation.

Conversational rituals for men can include the use of opposition in banter, jokes, teasing, and playful put-downs, all of which are part of ritual opposition (Tannen 1990). In these interactions, there is a concerted effort to avoid the one-down position, to jockey for status, and to challenge the authority of others (Tannen 1990). Strategies such as playing devil's advocate or attacking an idea can be used to see whether the person suggesting the idea can adequately defend it. Men often want to win an argument (Melton 2007). These approaches may be explained by the observation that male communication has a "battlefield" quality to it (Ong 1981).

John used ritual opposition when discussing ideas with the employees he supervised. When he used this conversational ritual, I felt uncomfortable while rendering the interpretation, thinking that the employees would become discouraged and not contribute because he was stating things that, to me, seemed absolute and sometimes argumentative. However, the end result accomplished John's goal—to help the employees see other perspectives on their ideas and where those ideas could be improved.

Profanity

Males, more often than females, report that profanity provides a demonstration of social power and serves to make the user socially acceptable (Selnow 1985). Interpreters who are aware that they rarely use profanity in this fashion may want to consider incorporating profanity into the interpretation if that sort of strong language is clearly used by a male deaf professional and if it seems appropriate after careful consideration of the discourse norms evident in that particular situation. It can be a device that signifies not only power but also solidarity. Further, on an anecdotal level, I have noticed that if I am the only female interpreting in a room full of males and the male deaf professional uses profanity, then after that profanity is voiced, there can be a shift in the way the interaction plays out, as though the men realize at that point very clearly that I am interpreting, not speaking for myself, and they begin to speak more freely.

Implementing Changes in Conversational Style

Before beginning an assignment with John, I would take a moment to think about the pitch of my voice and intentionally lower it to a level that was slightly lower

than my everyday pitch, yet not so noticeable that it became a caricature of a man's voice. This shift helped me to provide an interpretation that was consistent with the agreement we had made to interpret in ways that reflected his gender and communication style. I chose to use fewer words when voicing. I attempted to eliminate all superfluous words and sounds. While interpreting, hearing my own voice speak in this way, which was different from my usual speech patterns, I was better able to remember to avoid powerless language, put aside my personal aversion to speaking in a direct manner to a superior, and state John's commands directly. I also paid particular attention to whether or not I actually had the floor before I began to speak. I sometimes would ensure this position by saying the name of the person who currently had the floor and then pausing, which can be an accurate interpretation of the deaf professional's eye gaze toward an individual.

It is advisable to learn to process silently before beginning to render an unsure interpretation (MacDougall 2007) and to place the main point at the beginning of an utterance. ASL and English handle details differently, so placing the main point at the beginning of an utterance may pose a challenge. If the deaf professional will give the designated interpreter permission, some details may be reduced to keep focus on the main point in the English rendering. Woodall (1990) says that people who have subordinate behavior tend to close a statement with a question rather than with a statement and that powerful people tend to tell whereas subordinate people tend to ask.

When John was later called to have a meeting with his superior, he was asked to comment on his own performance. John had a very positive appraisal of his own abilities and past performance. In the past, I would have interpreted this self-appraisal in a manner that was as indirect as possible while hedging, using hesitation forms, and phrasing many statements in the form of a question. Because of my change in understanding and the agreement between John and me about his intent, I boldly stated his analysis of his abilities. Although, internally, I felt like he was bragging, John later remarked that the meeting went better than previous meetings with the same man, an effect that continued in subsequent interactions.

A designated interpreter who elects to implement some of these practices during an ongoing assignment when a different style was used in the past may notice new reactions from the hearing clients, who may have difficulty understanding that the message has not changed, simply the way it is framed. The designated interpreter may need to be less accessible to the hearing individuals in an attempt to more clearly align him- or herself with the deaf professional and make it clear that changes are happening with the permission of the deaf professional.

John and I had agreed previously that when he was otherwise occupied, it was acceptable for me to engage in short periods of office small talk. I also typically reported the contents of these conversations back to John at his convenience for him to benefit from the office grapevine. This arrangement ceased to be effective once I made these changes in my interpreting style. By keeping to myself more, the changes we were making were easier for his coworkers to accept, even with-

out explanation. The designated interpreter may need to make a similar choice, which could include avoiding eye contact, arriving at and leaving meetings with the deaf professional, and physically locating oneself closer to the deaf professional, thus discouraging participation in small talk.

APPLICATION

The nature of providing simultaneous or consecutive interpreting from ASL to English is complex. When a designated interpreter is providing this service, it is likely that he or she will interpret in the way that is comfortable for and resonates with the designated interpreter's own communication style, unless a conscious effort is made to do otherwise, thus creating a new pattern. If the designated interpreter is unfamiliar with speaking assertively or considering the feelings of others when speaking, then it will feel awkward doing so when interpreting.

It is important for the designated interpreter to use metalinguistic skills to analyze his or her preferred conversation style and to recognize conversation styles that are used by superiors, coworkers, and subordinates of the deaf professional. If the designated interpreter is a female, she may compare gender-linked language features with her own speech and examine her own communication for the use of rituals. Similarly, a male designated interpreter may examine his response when subordinates of the female deaf professional attempt to express sameness as a way to connect. Similarly, he may attempt to use strategies of politeness to convey his client's wish to convince subordinates to undertake a task.

A designated interpreter can analyze his or her conversation style by tape recording a conversation with someone identified (even if fictitiously) as a supervisor, coworker, or subordinate. Then record the same conversations, and use a style that is dissimilar to the one used in previous samples.

Whether female or male, designated interpreters must be aware of the range of conversational rituals and styles as well as how gendered language and conversational style can affect interpreted communication. Although problems with communication can be resolved with goodwill and a willingness to learn on both sides (Tannen 1990), one cannot assume that people always have this goodwill and willingness to learn, especially in public contexts such as work. The world of sign language interpreters is overwhelmingly female. Of the certified and associate members of Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf who chose to identify their gender, 12.5 percent were male (Wright 2007). However, Holmes (1995) stated that public contexts are traditionally male contexts and the rules of interaction are male rules. Nevertheless, potential pitfalls and communication misunderstandings may be mitigated or avoided altogether if the designated interpreter has an awareness of his or her own communication style and if the designated interpreter and deaf professional engage in an open dialogue about what communication style should be expressed in the interpretations. I, for one, will always be grateful to John for allowing me the opportunity to improve because of his willingness to partner with me in the interpreting process.

REFERENCES

Aries, E. 1997. Women and men talking: Are they worlds apart? In *Women, men and gender: Ongoing debates*, ed. M. Walsh, 91–100. New York: Hamilton Printing.

Barrett, M. 2004. Should they learn to interrupt? Workplace communication strategies Australian women managers forecast as effective. *Women in Management Review* 19: 391–403.

Blankenship, K. L., and T. Holtgraves. 2005. The role of different markers of linguistic powerlessness in persuasion. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 24: 3–24.

Bradac, J. J., M. R. Hemphill, and C. H. Tardy. 1981. Language style on trial: Effects of "powerful" and "powerless" speech upon judgments of victims and villains. *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 45: 327–41.

Carli, L. L. 1990. Gender, language and influence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59: 941–51.

Erickson, B., E. A. Lind, B. C. Johnson, and W. M. O'Barr. 1978. Speech style and impression formation in a court setting: The effects of "powerful" and "powerless" speech. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 14: 266–79.

Goffman, E. 1977. The arrangement between the sexes. *Theory and Society* 4: 301–31.

Hartman, M. 1976. A descriptive study of the language of men and women born in Maine around 1900 as it reflects the Lakoff hypotheses in language and women's place. In *The sociology of the languages of American women*, ed. B. L. Dubois and I. Crouch, 81–90. San Antonio: Trinity University Press.

Holmes, J. 1995. *Women, men and politeness*. London: Pearson Education.

Holmes, J., and M. Stubbe. 2003. *Power and politeness in the workplace*. London: Pearson Education.

Holtgraves, T., and B. Lasky. 1999. Linguistic power and persuasion. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 18 (2): 196–205.

Hosman, L. A., and S. A. Siltanen. 1994. The attribution and evaluative consequences of powerful and powerless speech styles: An examination of the "control over others" and "control of self" explanations. *Language and Communication* 14: 287–98.

James, D., and S. Clarke. 1993. Women, men and interruptions: A critical review. In *Gender and conversational interaction*, ed. D. Tannen, 231–81. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lakoff, R. 1975. *Language and women's place*. New York: Harper and Row.

Levine, K. 2007. Interpreting: Does the gender of the messenger really matter? *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf VIEWS* 24(3).

MacDougall, D. E. 2007. Gender diversity with the sign-to-voice interpreting process. *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf VIEWS* 24(3).

Melton, J. 2007. Does male speak vs. female speak = Apples to oranges? *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf VIEWS* 24(3).

Mulac, A. 1989. Men's and women's talk in same sex and mixed-sex dyads: Power or polemic? *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 8: 249–70.

Mulac, A., and J. J. Bradac. 1995. Women's style in problem-solving interactions: Powerless or simply feminine? In *Gender, power, and communications in human relationships*, ed. P. J. Kalbfleisch and M. J. Cody, 83–104. Hillsdale; N.J.: Erlbaum.

Mulac, A., and T. L. Lundell. 1986. Linguistic contributors to the gender-linked language effect. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 5: 81–101.

———. 1994. Effects of gender-linked language difference in adults' written discourse: Multivariate tests of language effects. *Language and Communication* 14: 299–309.

Mulac, A., T. L. Lundell, and J. J. Bradac. 1986. Male/female language differences and attributional consequences in a public speaking situation: Toward an explanation of the gender-linked language effect. *Communication Monographs* 53: 115–29.

Mulac, A., L. B. Studley, and S. Blau. 1990. The gender-linked language effect in primary and secondary students' impromptu essays. *Sex Roles* 23: 439–70.

Mulac, A., J. M. Wiemann, S. J. Widenmann, and T. W. Gibson. 1988. Male/female language differences and effects in same-sex and mixed-sex dyads: The gender-linked language effect. *Communication Monographs* 55: 315–35.

Ong, W. 1981. *Fighting for life: Contest, sexuality, and consciousness*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Palomares, N. A. 2004. Gender schematicity, gender identity salience, and gender-linked language use. *Human Communication Research* 30: 556–88.

Parton, S. R., S. A. Siltanen, L. A. Hosman, and J. Langenderfer. 2002. Employment interview outcomes and speech style effects. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 21: 144–61.

Rosener, J. B. 1997. Leadership and the paradox of gender. In *Women, men and gender: Ongoing debates*, ed. M. Walsh, 295–97. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Selnow, G. W. 1985. Sex differences in uses and perceptions of profanity. *Sex Roles* 12: 303–12.

Shuey-Morgan, E. F. 2004. The different ways men and women speak: Gender discourse and ASL to English Interpreting. *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf VIEWS* 21 (6): 18–19.

Tannen, D. 1990. *You just don't understand*. New York: Ballantine Books.

———. 1994a. *Gender and discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 1994b. *Talking from 9 to 5*. New York: William Morrow.

Woodall, M. K. 1990. *How to talk so men will listen*. Lake Oswego: Professional Business Communications.

Wright, R. L. 2007. Gender's impact on the field of interpreting. *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf VIEWS* 24(3).

6

Academic and Educational Interpreting from the Other Side of the Classroom: Working with Deaf Academics

Linda Campbell, Meg J. Rohan, and Kathryn Woodcock

SIGN LANGUAGE interpreting in universities and other postsecondary educational institutions typically involves the facilitation of classroom communications between Deaf or hard of hearing students and their hearing instructors. The interpreter can prepare for the classroom, laboratory courses, and student-instructor meetings by learning the course material and compiling technical signs that are associated with the material that generally is clearly defined by the classroom syllabi (e.g., Caccamise and Lang 1996). But there are two sides to every university classroom: one side concerns the student; the other concerns the instructor. What are the guidelines for interpreters who are working in universities, not at the student side of the classroom but at the academic side? The Deaf person in this academic role will have academic responsibilities other than teaching, and interpreters will have little or no experience or understanding of these often complex, high-level roles. At present, there is little or no direction or publications for interpreters who work with a Deaf academic.

Two types of settings are relevant to the Deaf academic who is working in mainstream universities. *Educational interpreting* involves facilitation of communication between an academic instructor and hearing students (or deaf students not familiar with sign language) within the particular context of a course. For interpreters who have experienced interpreting from the students' side of the classroom, the familiarity of the situation may be deceptive when they are interpreting from the academic's side of the classroom. The dynamics may involve one-on-one student meetings that may vary from oral examinations to academic counseling to investigations of cheating. *Academic interpreting* involves facilitation of communication in situations outside of the classroom. These activities do not generally involve students. This category, too, involves a wide variation of communication situations that may include staff meetings, conferences, data gathering in a wide

The authorship on this chapter is alphabetical. We wish to acknowledge all of the interpreters and fellow Deaf colleagues who have discussed their experiences with us. We are fortunate to have worked with numerous wonderfully flexible, committed, and expert interpreters who have shown us the real meaning of interpreter-academic teamwork. Correspondence concerning this chapter can be directed to the authors by e-mail: Linda Campbell (linda.campbell@queensu.ca); Meg Rohan (m.rohan@unsw.edu.au); Kathryn Woodcock (kathryn.woodcock@ryerson.ca).