InterpreT-ED

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Video Remote Interpreting 2.0: Crossing the Threshold from Technology Adoption to Internalization



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Video Remote Presentation

Irvine Auditorium, McCone Building, MIIS Monterey, California, USA



Barry Olsen, Organizer Co-President, InterpretAmerica

Conference Room, Law Offices of Arnold M. Weiner Baltimore, Maryland, USA



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Video Remote Interpreting 2.0 Introduction and Opening

Please click image for video (time 3:21)



Transcription of Frank's opening is on Slide 4 (not 3).

Video courtesy of Marcus Rosenthal. It has been edited and captioned.

Video Remote Interpreting 2.0 Opening

At the 2013 InterpretAmerica Summit, Barry Olsen took a survey of the audience's views on technology. He read technology quotes, asking those in agreement to clap. One quote was:

"When people adopt technology, they do old things in new ways. When people internalize technology, they find new things to do."

I am pleased to announce that at the HASA Video Remote Interpreting program (HASA VRI) in Baltimore, Maryland, we internalized technology for Video Remote Interpreting in American Sign Language (ASL VRI). We found new things to do – devised new *techniques*, developed new *tools* and forged new partnerships (*teamwork*). The result – we found and fulfilled new assignments. I am here to share that story with you this afternoon.

Technology in VRI is not new. VRI companies use technology in the organization, delivery and business of VRI. At HASA VRI, we uniquely focused on how technology internalization could ease the interpreting process for the interpreters and make the overall experience highly beneficial for all parties.

Our goal was to develop a formula consisting of *technology*, *technique*, *tools* and *teamwork*. This formula allowed us to create the *opportunity* for the Deaf consumers, in cooperation with all parties, to fully *comprehend*, *interact* and *participate* at events on par with their non-deaf counterparts.

I am presenting cases from ASL VRI, though the same formula applies equally to traditional on-site ASL interpreting and both remote and on-site forms of spoken language interpreting. Now, I am glad to present our first case study that demonstrates how HASA VRI internalized technology for ASL VRI.

ASL VRI Technology Internalization: *Guam Workshop Case Study* (Slide1 of 2)



Participant View on Guam

Placeholder for Presentation in ASL





VRI Workstation View

HASA VRI remotely co-interpreted a workshop on <u>Guam</u> – 8,000 miles and 14 time zones away. The <u>Guam System for Assistive Technology</u> showcased VRI at their annual AT workshop for Guam organizations that serve deaf and hard of hearing people. There is an interpreter shortage on Guam, and VRI was a way to meet the growing demand.

Above left is an audience-view picture of the Guam presenter, her slide and our interpreter. Above right is a picture of our VRI monitor in Baltimore. We set up a live video feed between the two sites; two laptops (*A and B*; not pictured) on Guam linked with our workstation on a multi-party video session.

ASL VRI Technology Internalization: Guam Workshop Case Study (Slide 2 of 2)



Participant View on Guam





VRI Workstation View

The three windows on the VRI monitor (right) are:

- 1. interpreter self-view
- 2. four deaf attendees seated
- 3. a view of the presentation area

The real-time view **(3.)** of the presentation area via the camera on *Laptop B* **IS** essential and **THE** core of our VRI technology internalization. It enabled us to give the Guam deaf attendees a chance to *participate* fully. The process of setting up the VRI devices helped us and the deaf attendees to build a mutuallyrespectful and cooperative rapport with the organizers and nondeaf attendees.

ASL On-Site Interpreting vs. VRI 1.0 Technology Adoption: *Healthcare*



ON-SITE Interpreting

VIDEO REMOTE Interpreting

Back to Barry Olsen's quote about technology adoption and internalization. This and the next slide compare traditional **ON-SITE** interpreting with **VRI**. I describe this VRI application as the technology adoption phase, and I refer to it as *VRI 1.0*.

At a medical exam (upper left), the interpreter is physically standing next to the medical personnel. In a similar exam room (upper right) there is a monitor with camera and a VRI interpreter on screen. VRI does a 1-1 swap out of the physical interpreter. This slide illustrates technology adoption – "doing old things in a new way." Albeit, the new way is instant and effective, until an on-site interpreter arrives.

ASL On-Site Interpreting vs. VRI 1.0 Technology Adoption: *Education*



ON-SITE Interpreting

VIDEO REMOTE Interpreting

VRI for education is prevalent nationwide. Generally, there is 1-for-1 substitution of the on-site interpreter by the video remote interpreter. My concerns are that the VRI interpreter, not seeing the whiteboard, may hear the instructor say, "Look at this chart." The interpreter is at a loss for how to sign *chart* since there are many types of charts; line, bar, pie. The signs for each type are different.

The deaf person sees the line chart, though when the instructor elaborates his point by saying "this trend flattens out," the interpretation will be incongruent – causing confusion to the deaf person. This makes her expend precious brain power on deciphering the real meaning. I call this *interference*.

ASL VRI 1.0 Technology Adoption: Interpreter Workstation



VRI Interpreter View

Deaf Consumers On-Site

Top left is a photo of a VRI 1.0 workstation with a yellow box around the single monitor in use. Top right is a close-up of the monitor screen. The view of the two deaf people takes up 80% of the screen and in the top right corner is a small self-view of the interpreter.

In this case, the VRI interpreter is interpreting from English to ASL solely off of the audio feed from the non-deaf speaker (not pictured). Therefore, he does not have visual access to meaningful non-verbal cues, gestures, manual demonstrations and the like. Thus, I incorporate hesitation, miscues and inaccuracies in to my interpretation. These are other examples of *interference*.

ASL VRI 1.0 Technology Adoption: Context and Content (Slide 1 of 3)



Prior to presenting *VRI 2.0*, I would like to take a break for interpreter levity.

Please read the cartoon to the right, and wait five seconds before clicking to the next slide. (continued)



ASL VRI 1.0 Technology Adoption: Context and Content (Slide 2 of 3)



ASL VRI 1.0 Technology Adoption: Context & Content (Slide 3 of 3)



I showed the interpreter cartoon as an example of what speakers tend to insert into their slideshows -for levity and to bring home particular points. That is like throwing us interpreters "a curve ball." Without notice or preparation, it is difficult to translate and interpret these surprise slides.

For an ASL VRI 1.0 interpreter, it is impossible to render an adequate translation so that the deaf participants would appreciate the levity equal to the non-deaf participants. This situation exemplifies an other type of interference that causes stress for and saps the energy of both the interpreters and deaf consumers.

ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: 2 iPads On-Site



Another case study is an assignment for Keyano College in northern Alberta, Canada at the Oil Sands.

A deaf bus mechanic was taking an 8-week *Heavy Equipment Mechanic Apprenticeship* course. The college needed a second interpreter every morning for two hours. We set up a live video feed between the two sites; two iPads at Keyano linked with our workstation on a multi-party video session.

iPad "A" is on the table at eye-level in front of the deaf student, and iPad "B" is on a rolling floor stand directed at the area of instruction. We used specialized mounts and stands to ensure, hands-free, proper camera and viewing angles. This dual-camera set-up is the core defining element of *VRI 2.0.*

ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: Interpreter Workstation



VRI Interpreter Workstation

VRI Workstation - Dual Monitors

In the VRI 2.0 interpreter workstation we doubled the number of functional monitors and active windows. The three windows on the monitor to the right are the same as the ones on Guam.

The windows on the VRI monitor are:

1. interpreter self-view; 2. deaf student seated;

3. real-time view of the presentation area

In addition, on the left monitor we displayed synchronously those slides of the powerpoint slideshow that the instructor was showing in class. Keyano sent us digital versions of the slides in advance.

ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: PPT Slides and Instruction Area (Slide 1 of 2)



PowerPoint Slide from Pre-Sent File

Instructor, Visual Aids & Team Interpreter – in Real-Time

The image on the right is an iPad "B" blown-up view of the presentation area. It displays essential information for rendering a smooth and accurate interpretation. I had visual access to the instructor's extra-linguistic cues, projection screen, white board *and* the on-site team interpreter. My view of her was unexpected and made for an innovative division of labor based on viewability and audibility.

I interpreted the instructor since he was wearing a wireless lapel microphone that gave me clear audio of his voice through one of the iPads. However, I could not hear nor see the students, including the deaf student. Therefore, the on-site interpreter signed and voiced the class's comments. (continued)

ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: PPT Slides and Area of Instruction (Slide 2 of 2)



PowerPoint Slide from Pre-Sent File

Instructor, Visual Aids & Team Interpreter – in Real-Time

What became critical was that the other interpreter and I had to signal to the deaf student when to shift his attention to the other interpreter. Sometimes the instructor would carry on conversations with the class and we needed to render the conversations and time our signing without overlapping.

The images above show that when the instructor pointed to a spot on the actual projection screen, I would shift my view to the up-close version on my left monitor. I was able to match the spots and interpret accurately using appropriate ASL signs, placement, classifiers, handshapes and movements that were congruent with what the deaf consumers were viewing on the projection screen themselves.

ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: Actual Video Example at Keyano



This two-minute video is a screen-capture recording of an actual class.



ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: Kubi Robotic iPad Holder (Slide 1 of 2)



The 2nd iPad "B" camera was an advancement in itself; however, the instructors frequently moved back and forth between the projection screen, whiteboard and lectern. Therefore, I lost the critical second view, and it was laborious for participants to manually re-adjust the static iPad camera angle.

This situation prompted us to pilot a robotic iPad holder called Kubi. We sent out a Kubi unit to Keyano. **A** shows the Kubi-iPad combination, **B** the rolling floor stand, **C** the Kubi in the classroom and **D** my desktop Kubi iPad "Driver." I remotely controlled iPad "B" camera's pan and tilt to follow the instructor's movements in the front of the classroom. The pilot was successful. (continued)

ASL VRI 2.0 Technology Internalization: *Kubi Robotic iPad Holder* (Slide 2 of 2)



In this video, the instructor is speaking, and the on-site team member is interpreting. I am controlling Kubi iPad "B" by touching the horizontal scroll bar. I am following advice of a European Parliament Greek interpreter, Panayotis Mouzourakis. In a 2000 interview about remote interpreting, he said:

"With remote interpreting it would be impossible to simply look around the meeting room [what I do onsite] picking out whatever cues are relevant to the situation at hand. Very often it is the reactions of specific participants rather than the face or body language of the speaker alone that give the interpreter the full story. As there is no way that interpreters can individually control the camera angle, this information will usually be lost."

Now 15 years later, there **IS** a way to individually control the camera angle with the Kubi Robotic iPad Holder and PTZ's or Pan-tilt-zoom cameras.



ASL VRI 2.0 A Means to Opportunity and a Goal



I have described how and why HASA VRI internalized technology for ASL Video Remote Interpreting. Technology internalization enables companies and people "to find new things to do." We added new *techniques, tools and teamwork* to the mix creating a formula that defines VRI 2.0.

The Keyano College assignment was the VRI 2.0 *Proof of Concept*. At Keyano we achieved our goal of creating the **opportunity** for Deaf and hearing consumers to *cooperate, comprehend, interact* & *participate* with each other on a level playing field, as if there was no language barrier *or* for the deaf student, as if the course was taught in ASL. Thank you for your attention.