

## What They Hear: The Impact of the Female Voice in Interpreted Deaf/Hearing Interactions

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“Sad to say... the museum supervisors relied on the interpreter to know the message I transmitted and they now no longer trust me to give me more work - because they think what they heard from that interpreter is the measure of the quality of my work.”

Deaf Museum Educator  
Art & ASL panel, NYC 2011

**87% interpreters in RID are women (RID, 2010)**

### Linguistic Anthropology Theoretical Framework

**Kroskrity (2000)** – “Identity is defined as the linguistic construction of membership in one or more social groups or categories.”

**Bailey (2000)** – “Indirect constitution of identity through language is an interactional process.”

**Bucholtz & Hall (2005)**– “Identity may be in part intentional, in part habitual and less than fully conscious, in part an outcome of interactional negotiation, in part a construct of others’ perceptions and representations.”

**Irvine (1989)** - Beliefs are “informed by a framework of ideas about language and about the kinds of people who speak in certain ways.”

### Research on Interpretation

**Blommaert (2001)** – Message is “recontextualized” through interpretation

**Angermeyer (2005), Davidson (2000), Roy (1999), Wadensjö (1992)** - Interpreters are conversational participants

**Metzger et al (2004)** - Originator is the principal; Interpreter is both animator and author

**Feyne (2012)** - Interpreter relies upon her own linguistic repertoire for determining lexical, syntactic and discourse markers in target language.

### Consumer Ideology of Interpreter as Animator

“You’re supposed to be saying just what they’re saying”

Non-interpreter  
Interview, NYC 2011

### Authenticity

**Bucholtz & Hall:** Authentication: the processes by which people actively construct an identity is based on ideas of genuineness or credibility (Reyes, 2005)

- ❖ Interpret “as” not “for”  
In first person
- ❖ **Geil (2012)** Interpreter performs own identity while interpreting someone else’s)

### Salient Features of Interpreters’ Talk

- ❖ Prosodic variation
- ❖ Additions of hedges
- ❖ Additions of fillers (“you know,” “um”)
- ❖ Shifts in genre or register
- ❖ Repetition and repair
- ❖ Discohesive utterances
- ❖ Strategies for interpreting constructed discourse
- ❖ Strategies for interpreting constructed action

### Authority

**Rudman (2000)** Negative reactions to female authority... implicit prototype for male leaders and the attendant belief that it is more natural for men to take control.

- ❖ Respondent rated Deaf educator with female SL interpreter: **Doesn’t sound confident**
- ❖ Respondent comment on Deaf man with female SL interpreter: **Lost his authority**

### Layering of Identities

**Deaf individual:** class, race, situational footing, language ideology, Deafness, disability, gender, sexual identity

**Interpreter:** class, race, gender norms

**Hearing interlocutor:** auditory information coming only from the interpreter; disability construct; the social status of Deaf people; linguistic ideology of female voices; interactive construction of identity