

University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg - Stendal

Austrian Perspectives of Team Interpreting

The Views of Deaf University Students and
their Sign Language Interpreters

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MA-Thesis for the
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the views of eight Deaf consumers and eight of their sign language interpreters on team work in interpreting. Open interviews have been conducted with both groups in which they were asked about various aspects of team interpreting: composition of interpreter teams, behaviour and characteristics of good and poor team interpreters, factors of successful team work and factors disturbing/compromising team work. The answers of the customers and their service providers were then analysed and compared.

This study also presents the state-of-the-art of current research on team work, simultaneous interpreting and interpreting in teams. Some background information on the situation of Deaf consumers and that of sign language interpretation in Austria will be provided as well. In addition to offering suggestions for improvement of team work amongst Austrian sign language interpreters, this study also points out areas for further research.



Declaration.

I declare that the thesis embodies the results of my own work and has been composed by myself. Where appropriate within the thesis I have made full acknowledgement to the work and ideas of others or have made reference to work carried out in collaboration with other persons. No other sources or tools have been used other than those cited in the bibliography. I understand that as an examination candidate I am required to abide by the examination regulations and to conform to my university's regulations, discipline and ethical policy.

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List of Abbreviations

- SL: source language
- SLI: sign language interpreter
- ST: source text
- TL: target language
- TT: target text



Preface

The idea of looking into team interpreting was inspired by a seminal work on team interpreting that I conducted in my EUMASLI studies in November 2009. When I sifted through the literature and could not find much on the subject of team interpreting, I felt the need to shed more light on the topic. As I have seen so many different ways of teamwork from my personal experience as a sign language interpreter, I was interested in finding out what attitudes my fellow interpreters and - even more important -, what attitudes Deaf customers hold towards teamwork. Do they take notice of these different ways of working together? Do they even mind? What do interpreters expect a team interpreter to do or to be? Why would they refrain to team with another interpreter?

I have chosen the higher educational setting for my investigation because I was able to collect data by interviewing Deaf customers and their interpreters via the pilot project GESTU which is currently located at the Vienna University of Technology. This project provides sign language interpreting for Deaf students in higher education. In these settings, most lectures and seminars are assigned to team interpreters. Because of the complexity of the scientific language and the length of the lectures/seminars (1,5 hours on average) it is necessary to assign the interpreting to teams of two interpreters to guarantee the interpreting quality.

My aim was to collect information on team interpreting and look at it from two sides: from the angle of the Deaf consumers and from that of their interpreters. I wish to make our consumers' wishes accessible to us interpreters and to make our consumers understand how we work.

I also hope that this study can also contribute to the GESTU project by documenting the importance of team interpreting in higher education and by providing sign language interpreters working there with orientation on the needs and wishes of their clients.



In general, I sincerely hope to contribute to the mutual understanding of the Deaf consumers and their interpreters. This, in the end, should improve our services in the future.

Acknowledgements

First and above all, I would like to express my gratitude to my partner, Chris Egger, for his unrelenting support (IT and catering, psychological and physical care) and his patience with my immersion into this kind of research and the studies for the EUMASLI programme during the past three years.

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I thank Bruce Clarke, Gabriele Matzner-Holzer and Lotte Sommerer for their availability and the effort they have put in the editing of this thesis. They provided a fresh and unbiased look from outside the field.

I wish to thank the GESTU-team who gave me the opportunity to record the interpreted lecture (which I did not use in the end).

Finally, I owe my gratitude to the participants of the study who sacrificed their time and energy to think about team interpreting and answered all my questions openly.



1 Introduction

Extensive research on spoken and sign language interpreting has been conducted in the last three decades. All these studies analyze interpreters' roles, the process by which a source message is translated into a target message, the quality of interpreting, the accuracy of the interpreted message, the ethical decision making of interpreters in various settings, the psychological features of interpreting, the change of communication when going via interpreters, gender features of interpreting or several other aspects.

One aspect that has not been researched in depth is interpreters' teamwork. Interpreters work in teams in very challenging or lengthy settings to ensure quality and accuracy over the whole length of the assignment. They work together and support each other and, ideally, their collaboration results in synergy effects. This study is meant to enrich the small corpus of studies on teamwork in sign language interpreting by looking at Deaf customers' and their interpreters' views on team interpreting. Till now, team interpreting has mainly been analysed from the interpreters' perspective (Cokely & Hawkins 2003, Stehr 2004, Napier, Carmichel & Wiltshire 2008, Bauer 2009, Hoza 2010). As far as I know, this is the first study that concentrates on Deaf customers' views on team interpreting although studies on the expectations of Deaf students and interpreting in educational settings exist (Bremner & Housden 1996, Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer 2004, Marschark & al 2004, Napier & Barker 2004). Detailed accounts of the consumers' views, from my point of view, are of utmost importance for a service trade like interpreting. It will be shown that Deaf consumers wish their team interpreters to collaborate to achieve a harmonious team product that enables them to concentrate on the message without being disturbed by its form.

The following thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 will lay out the theoretical basis for this study. Section 2.1 will define the terminology used, section 2.2 provides theoretical background on teamwork in general. The following section 2.3. deals with interpreting studies, special fields of interpreting



like educational interpreting and conference interpreting and, of course, team interpreting in spoken and signed languages.

Chapter 3 reports on the Austrian Situation. Here, section 3.1 gives an overview of the Deaf population in Austria. Then, the pilot project GESTU will be presented (3.2) and finally sign language interpretation will be discussed (3.3).

The second part of this thesis constitutes the empirical part. Chapter 4 reports on the setup of the study and its results. First, the research questions that inspired the study will be listed (4.1), 4.2 will explain the research methodology. 4.3 looks into the drawbacks of the method applied, 4.4 will provide information about the data and the respondents. Due to privacy reasons not all the information about the respondents will be given. Chapter 4.5 shows the results of both groups and discusses them while contrasting them.

Chapter 5 concludes this study. While section 5.1 summarizes the most important findings once again, section 5.2 gives suggestions for the improvement of team interpreting. Finally, suggestions for further research will be made (5.3).

Chapter 6 contains the references used.

The two evaluation tables of the interviews (Deaf students and Sign language interpreters) are attached in the appendix.



2 Theoretical background

This chapter will define the technical language used in the field and will provide some theoretical background which can be necessary to interpret the research results that will be presented in the second part of this thesis.

2.1 Terminology

Some special terminology used in the field needs to be defined in advance to assist the reader. I will now briefly review and discuss some basic terms and provide some working definitions which will be used in the study.

Interpreting being a service for Deaf and hearing people, I will address them as *customers* or *consumers*. They will be called *people*, if I refer to them as a whole group such as 'Deaf people' or 'hearing people'.

I will use '*deaf*' to designate persons who have severe to profound hearing loss, '*Deaf*' (with capital D) as the term for deaf people who are part of the Deaf community using Austrian Sign Language, '*hard-of-hearing*' for those who have a moderate or mild degree of hearing loss, and '*hearing*' for people without hearing loss and allegiance to the Deaf community. 'Hard-of-hearing' persons may also be addressed as 'Deaf' if they use sign language and are part of the Deaf community.

Additionally, several terms exist which describe the roles of the two SLIs in the team. The person currently producing the interpretation (signing or voicing over) is called the '*lead*' interpreter (keeping with Cokely & Hawkins 2003 and Hoza 2010). In Austria, she¹ is normally called the '*active*' interpreter. The second interpreter who is monitoring and providing support is called the '*monitor*'

¹ The majority of SLIs being women, I have decided to address interpreters as women and will use the female personal pronouns to refer to them. I will also use this convention for the translation of the interviews of the Deaf respondents, as sign language does not address the gender of a person unless it is a relevant part of the information.

This convention will be applied when general addressing interpreters. When referring to the answers of my interviewees, I will stick to 's/he' and 'her/his' and 'her/him' because I talk about real people and not about a group of professionals.



interpreter, Austrian interpreters have called her the '*passive*' interpreter, reflecting the 'independent' model of interpreting where the interpreter who was not active was taking a rest or even leaving the room. Nowadays, that term no longer describes what the second interpreter does, but it still is widely used, even among those interpreters who follow the 'monitoring' or the 'collaborating/interdependent' style of teamwork (Hoza 2010). As Deaf students do not use the term 'active'/'passive' I have translated their signs PERSON SIGN/SPEAK and PERSON SIT-opposite by 'lead interpreter'/'monitor interpreter'.

Furthermore, the terms used for the activity of interpreting are: '*signing*' (producing the target text in sign language) and '*voicing over*' (producing the target text in spoken language). For '*source language*' (the language of the original text) I will also use the initials SL; for '*target language*' (the language that the interpreter is producing into), I use the initials TL. The 'source text' is the original text that interpreters work from, the 'target text' is the output of the interpreter, the text she produces. I will use the initials ST and TT for them.

The monitor interpreter is '*monitoring*' the output for accuracy (comparing the source and target texts and looking for omissions or other miscues) as well as the environment to shield the lead interpreter from logistical problems like disturbing sound or poor lighting, speakers interjecting, or other disturbances.

The term '*support*' is an umbrella term for all activities in support of the lead interpreter as she produces, and the fill in of information she may have missed/misheard etc. This support can take the form of '*feeding*' signs, spoken words/phrases or mimic information to the lead interpreter (showing signs, whispering words, fingerspelling proper names, abbreviations or technical terms or giving mimic information) to help her to continue her interpretation.

After a certain period, in most of the cases 15 to 20 minutes, the interpreters '*switch*' their roles, '*spell each other*' or '*rotate*' which means that they change roles with the lead interpreter becoming the monitor interpreter and *vice versa*. If the lead interpreter is no longer able to continue, although the agreed interval



is not over yet, the monitor interpreter '*takes over*' and switches into the producing role. Reasons for such a change, for example, could be fits of sneezing or cough or a complete loss of concentration. Sometimes, such a 'take over' would only be necessary for a short time until the monitoring colleague has interpreted the thought/idea that has not been understood by the lead interpreter. She can take her turn back, when she is "on solid ground" again.

Finally, the term '*process*' will be used for the interpreting process referring to the many tasks that have to be completed when interpreting. The time an interpreter can hold the source text in her mind to produce a most natural target text is called '*lag time*'. This lag time differs from interpreter to interpreter and grows with the interpreter's experience and competence. Having a longer lag time means that the interpreter can take more distance from the source text and its grammar which may serve to improve the quality of the target text.

The term '*process*' may also be used for the team process, describing the strategies team interpreters use when working together. Moreover, the term '*process*' will also be used in the context of preparing and reviewing an assignment, giving feedback and trying to improve teamwork for the next assignment.

2.2 Teamwork

Some general characteristic features of teams have been identified: First of all, a team is not just a group of two or more people. Moreover, a team has to be made and finally, a team has a common goal. Several definitions of a team can be found:

- a group of people who work together
(Merriam Webster's Learner's Dictionary at <http://www.learnersdictionary.com/search/team%5B1%5D>)
- a number of persons associated in some joint action
(Dictionary.com | Free Online Dictionary for English Definitions at <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/team>)



- a group of people who have been chosen to work together to do a particular job
(Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online at http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/team_1)
- people working together as a group in order to achieve something
(Cambridge Dictionaries Online at <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/team>)

2.2.1 Team Formation

Before a team can work together, it has to be formed. Being composed of people who keep changing, a team keeps developing. Tuckman (1973) describes the four stages of group formation as 'forming', 'storming' (conflicts about the positions and ranking of the team members), 'norming' (setting up rules for team working) and finally 'performing' (working and fulfilling the task at hand). The fifth stage that he adds later, 'adjourning or transforming', only applies to teams that are composed of more than two people where members may be replaced and the new member has to find his/her place in the system.

2.2.2 Team Performance

According to Katzenbach and Smith (1993), teams have to be formed through disciplined action. They share a common purpose, agree on performance goals, define a common working approach, develop complementary skills, and hold themselves mutually accountable for results. If they succeed, they may form a "high performance team" whose members "are also deeply committed to one another's personal growth and professional success." (Katzenbach & Smith 1993:92).

Clutterbuck (2007:133) states that a high-performing team needs to focus on three foundations: tasks, relationships and team learning.



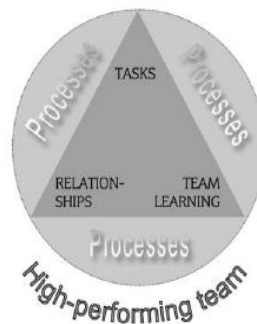


Figure 1 Foundations of the high-performing team

(Fig. 4.3, taken from Clutterbuck 2007:133)

If these aspects are evenly balanced, a team can collaborate smoothly and effectively. If the balance is dipped and one of the aspect given more attention to, team efficiency decreases.

"A team where everyone puts massive energy into being nice to each other is unlikely to face up to the issues that it most needs to address. A team that is overly focused on the task, , is equally problematic. ... A strong learning goal orientation will lead to more task-focused, adaptive, mastery-oriented behaviours, whereas a performance goal orientation will lead to more ego-focused, instrumental and defensive behaviours." (Clutterbuck 2007, 133)

Considering all these aspects of team work, efficient team work can only be conducted by balanced and mature personalities who are ready to change and evolve and contribute to the common goal. To open one's mind and heart, build trust and tackle the real issues that may be the catches in team work the team members have to put effort into creating awareness of team processes, evolving and distancing themselves from their personal problems and conflicts. One model proposed to reach this goal is the 'learning team'.

2.2.3 The Learning Team

Clutterbuck (2007) has defined the 'learning team' as follows: "a group of people with a common purpose who take active responsibility for developing each other and themselves" (p. 125). He proposes the method of DIALOGUE, first



proposed by Bohm (2004) and applied to institutional learning by Senge (1990) and others to be used as a means to foster learning in a team.

Dialogue is a setting of the mind and aims at

"approaching an issue with as open a mind as possible, with a view to understanding other people's perspectives and perhaps creating a new perspective. Dialogue typically leads to commitment and willingness to change." (Clutterbuck 2007:129)

To make people open their minds, objectively consider the different views of others, and reflect their views in the context of the views of others, the three basic conditions have to be fulfilled:

- All participants must "suspend" their assumptions, literally to hold them "as if suspended before us";
- All participants must regard one another as colleagues;
- There must be a "facilitator" who "holds the context" of dialogue. (Senge 1990:243)

Senge (1990) is convinced that team members who hold regular dialogue sessions develop a unique relationship and a deep trust. He states that "dialogue that is grounded in reflection and inquiry skills is likely to be more reliable and less dependent on particulars of circumstance, such as the chemistry among team members" (p. 249). Dialogue can therefore be used as a powerful tool for learning in a team that may not always be composed of friends.

A learning team which uses methods like Dialogue to reflect and develop its teaming and working strategies can improve and focus on the task, its learning and the social relationships of its team members.



2.3 Interpreting Studies

As sign language interpreting, especially in the monologic version of interpreting in higher education, is simultaneous interpreting, I will first look into spoken language interpreting where much research has been conducted on simultaneous interpreting.

2.3.1 Spoken Language Interpreting

Interpreting research has always concentrated on psycholinguistic processes of interpretation. In the early 1950s, conference interpretation was more and more practiced in simultaneous mode and started to be thoroughly investigated.

The first academic work on the topic of simultaneous conference interpreting was written by Eva Paneth in 1957. She concentrated on the lag between source-language input and target-language output and states: "The interpreter says not what he hears, but what he has heard." (Paneth 1957/2002:32) She also looked into the use of pauses by the interpreters: "... the interpreters made the maximum use of them [*the pauses*] by speeding up their own delivery and thus fitting a great deal of the translation of a phrase into a period of rest, reducing the overlap." (Paneth 1957/2002:33). In his 1971 doctoral dissertation David Gerver examined the factors likely to affect the short-term memory capacity of the interpreter. His work inspired other scientists to work on interpreters' performance on post-task recall tests and on working memory (e.g. Schlesinger 2000). Gerver showed that the task of interpreter's self-monitoring² is intrinsic to the interpreting process and that the energy put into self-monitoring has to be decreased whenever the task becomes more demanding. If other parallel activities demand more attention (e.g. understanding needs more resources due to noise interference), self-corrections decrease. He also

² Parallel to listening to the source text, conceptualizing the message and producing it into the target text the interpreter has to monitor her/his output for accuracy. This monitoring of one's own production is called 'self-monitoring'.



investigated the effect of noise on simultaneous interpreters' performance (Gerver 1971, 1974).

Looking into consecutive interpreting and its notetaking, Dana Seleskovitch found out that the linguistic units in the SL were first converted into "deverbalized" structures or units of sense to be then reformulated into the TL (Seleskovitch 1978). Her work inspired many followers that graduated at the *École Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs* of Paris University III/Sorbonne Nouvelle. Among them Marianne Lederer who formulated a model of the mental operations comprising the task involving 'cognitive complements'. For her, 'cognitive complements' encompass the interpreter's knowledge of the world, of the setting and the broader circumstances (Lederer 1978).

Barbara Moser-Mercer (1997) proposed a model of the simultaneous interpretation process based on the information-processing model of understanding speech by Massaro. It was adapted from Gerver's model developed in 1976 and included 'prediction' (= anticipation of what the speaker is going to say before s/he has actually said it) as an important part of interpreter's strategy.

Daniel Gile developed the *Efforts Model* (Gile 1985). According to this model, interpreters' efforts go into 'listening and analysis of the ST' (L), 'production' (including representation of the message, speech planning and implementation of the speech plan) (P), 'memory' (short term memory) (M), and 'coordination' (C): Simultaneous interpretation thus equals $L + P + M + C$. For Gile, by using this model, cognitive constraints, not lack of knowledge are responsible for interpreter's performance limitations and 'errors'. Gile looks into 'processing capacity' and its limitations by focusing on interpreter's processing failures linked to attention management.

2.3.1.1 Sociolinguistic Aspects of Interpreting

Interpreting studies have been conducted for many decades now and have mostly concentrated on the interpreting process of simultaneous interpreting.



Albeit, there have been scientists who took a social science approach and looked into other aspects of interpretation, like the role of the interpreter. R. Bruce W. Anderson (1976) lists many aspects influencing the interpretation (e.g. the degree of interpreter's bilingualism, interaction constellations, the status and power differential between the interpreter's two clients, the 'gatekeeping' functions of interpreters in community interpreting. In her groundbreaking work on the role of the interpreter in dialogue interpreting, Cecilia Wadensjö compares the dialogue interpreter to "a cook who, striving to preserve taste, prepares goods to make them digestible for a particular consumer." (1993/2002:357) By this metaphor she underlines the key role of the interpreter in a successful interpreter-mediated dialogue: she has to adjust the message to the recipient while relaying the message of the sender. Or in other words: "Comparing people taking part in a conversation with dancers, ..., the interpreter-mediated encounter can be seen as a special kind of dance for two with an additional third person; a communicative *pas de trois*" (Wadensjö 1998:12).

Kyra Pollitt refers to the interpreter's role in the communication process: "I offer the notion ... that we should view our role more as arbitrators at sites of discursal conflict than either robotic conduits or paternalistic advocates..." (Pollitt 1997: 24).

Another renowned researcher in the field is Cynthia Roy who looked at interpreting using the tools of discourse analysis:

"All primary participants within any discourse event interact in complex ways. Together, speakers and interpreters create pauses, overlapping talk, and turns. Although speakers attend to the interaction because of the reasons that brought them together, interpreters attend to interaction management and make decisions about the discourse process itself." (Roy 2000:99)

She concludes that interpreting is a very straining task: "If communication requires a great deal of effort on the part of the participants, then interpreting such communication requires even more effort and energy." (Roy 2000:128)



Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1990) applied a discourse processing model and distinguished between texture, structure and context of a discourse all of which address different competences of an interpreter. Here, the term 'context' includes rhetorical purpose, register, politeness, power and ideology that are particularly important for community-based settings. They tried to give an impulse to investigate into the discursive nature of the interpreting process.

The sociolinguist Susan Berk-Seligson published her ground-breaking work on interpreting in a courtroom in 1990. She investigated the impact of politeness on the jurors' appreciation of witness testimony and found out that the interpretation has a strong influence on the process of the interaction.

2.3.1.2 User Expectations

In 1989, Ingrid Kurz published her first work comparing interpreters' views on the quality of their interpretation to the user's views. She found out that different user groups had different quality criteria that diverged from those of the interpreters. These results made her conclude that situationality and communicative context are important for an intercultural communication process such as interpretation.

In his survey on expectations of users of conference interpretation for AIIC, Peter Moser (1995) found out that users do not like asynchronicity, hesitant delivery, pauses, monotony and irregular delivery to name the most relevant. Asked for the particular difficult aspects of the profession of conference interpreters, users listed concentration, updating knowledge, simultaneous listening + translating + speaking, speed of the speakers, adaptation to speaker, cultural mediation, general knowledge.

2.3.1.3 Team Interpreting

In the field of spoken language interpreting, team interpreting has not been researched as much as in sign language interpreting. The literature available is



about court interpreting as in jurisdiction interpreter's accuracy is most important not to damage evidence.

Henry McIlvaine Parsons from the *Institute of Behavioral Research* in Silver Spring, Maryland who, in 1975, had worked as a consultant for the UN conducting a survey on UN interpreters who had gone on strike for their poor working conditions describes the following aspects that contribute to input load on the interpreter:

"speaker's speed, tempo, accent, vocal characteristics, use/misuse of microphone; availability of advance text, speakers' reading from text, changes from text, provision of background material, and novel content or terminology; differences between languages, and relaying; background noise in meeting room and reactions of audiences; and such temporal factors as number of preceding meetings interpreted, recovery time, length of meeting, on-air time, and durations of speakers' utterances". (Parsons 1978:315)

He also mentions their stress of having to team with an incompatible colleague (Parsons 1978:317).

Stern (2001) conducted a series of interviews with members of the Tribunal, interpreters, translators, investigators, prosecutors, legal officers, and judges at the *International Criminal Tribunal* in The Hague to investigate the linguistic and cross-cultural practices adopted there. As communication problems are a big issue and accuracy of interpretation is of utmost importance, the Tribunal has resorted to the practice of team interpreting:

"As simultaneous interpreting requires high concentration and can be stressful, it is helpful for interpreters to be assisted by their booth mates for numbers, difficult words and terms, and words used originally to re-use in cross examination for consistency. ..., ICTY court interpreters can rely on a colleague to consult the Tribunal Basic Documents, dictionaries or even consult the Translation unit using a telephone receiver installed in the interpreting booth. Being placed in booths allows interpreters access to hand-written notes with glossaries of commonly used but difficult words and phrases." (Stern 2001:22)



There is also some collaboration with the Translation unit which is very well received by the interpreters who express their wish to have a regular exchange for their benefit.

Moreover, in a position paper on team interpreting in the courtroom, the US National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators (NAJIT) defines the working conditions for court interpreters. The 'support' interpreter's task is

" (1) interpret any conversation between counsel and defendant while the proceedings are taking place; (2) assist the active interpreter by looking up vocabulary, or acting as a second ear to confirm quickly spoken names, numbers or other references; (3) assist the active interpreter with any technical problems with electronic interpreting equipment, if in use; (4) be available in case the active interpreter has an emergency; and (5) serve as an impartial language expert in the case of any challenge to interpretation at the witness stand."

(NAJIT 2007:1)

They recommend rotation every 30-45 minutes (general court proceedings) and every 45-60 minutes (interpreting for non-English speaking witnesses).

The latter rule seems strange to me, as interpreting for a non-native speaker is very tiring. Apart from accuracy of the message they justify team interpreting "with the long-term effectiveness of interpreter departments by encouraging cooperation, sharing responsibility and preventing burnout or attrition". (NAJIT 2007:3).

Finally, Tiselius (2010) conducted a case study on ten Swedish conference interpreters. When asked if conference interpreting was teamwork or individual performance, they answered, that "interpreting 'is a bit of both' ..., since "the performance is individual, but you need your colleagues to write down figures and find documents for you." The interpreters were aware of the fact that "you are responsible for your own performance, but from a client perspective you are judged on the performance of the whole team" They all agreed that "if the team work is not good in the booth it affects the individual interpreter's performance.", they complained that "it takes a lot of energy to mentally deal



with somebody who is not behaving as he or she is expected to in the booth' and [*that*] 'it is a very good atmosphere in the booth when everybody is co-operating'".

2.3.2 Sign Language Interpreting

In this section I will look into conference interpreting, educational interpreting and team interpreting in the field of sign language.

2.3.2.1 Conference Interpreting

According to Turner (2007) conference interpreting in the context of sign language interpreting means platform interpreting, "i.e. standing at the side of a stage listening to a speaker who holds the floor from the podium" and producing in sign language "a simultaneous rendition of the speech accessible to Deaf members of the audience." (Turner 2007:199) Platform interpreting usually is uni-directional, rarely interrupted for question-and-answer sessions, mostly interpretation of monologic discourse.

According to Napier, Locker McKee and Goswell (2006), monologic discourse is more formal in register, designed for reading and more complex than spoken discourse. In addition, presenters tend to read them:

"A disadvantage is that when speakers (deaf or hearing) read from a written text, their pace and structure of expression generally becomes more difficult to interpret than spontaneous speech. This is because written sentences tend to be longer and more grammatically complex, there is less redundancy ('filler' material) and hesitation in the delivery, and speakers often read quickly, with fewer pauses for breathing and organising their thoughts." (2006:90)

For that reason, "interpreters are under extra pressure when they cannot interrupt the speaker for clarification". In addition, the content of the lecture can "often go beyond the interpreter's knowledge and language comfort zone".



The third problem is that "the interpreter gets little ongoing audience feedback" (Napier, Locker McKee & Goswell 2006:90-1).

Another problem that the SLI has to face while platform interpreting is presenter's and the audience's reactions that go from awe (because sign language is so wonderful and complicated) to overt resentment.

Some presenters even mock interpreters to overcome their unease ("let's see how she is going to sign 'term x'!") (Turner 2007:208).

Conference interpreting usually is done by a team of two or even more interpreters, depending if Deaf participants are present in the audience and/or on the stage.

"The platform SLI will usually be standing opposite one or more colleagues (seated in the front row of the auditorium and therefore effectively invisible to the audience) who 'feed' and support by pointing out when information is shown on overhead slides, using notes to supply accurate spellings of names which can then be relayed to the audience, assisting in the recall of streams of unwritten numbers, and so forth." (Turner 2007:209)

Under this strain, team work needs to go smoothly or the interpretation can only fail. The interpretation should be "a joint effort where ego has no place" (Turner 2007:209) and can only succeed if interpreter teams collaborate and strive for a team product.

2.3.2.2 Educational Interpreting

In 1998, Brenda Chafin Seal published her book called 'Best Practices in Educational Interpreting'. In this book, she investigates special problems of sign language interpreting in educational settings. In the chapter on higher education, she describes the challenges and problems interpreters in university settings have to face.

"A professor who is unintelligible; who uses incomplete sentences; who lectures above the heads of the students; who talks about



irrelevant information; who uses inappropriate language in his or her communication; who has little interest in communicating with the students; and/or whose cultural, social or gender orientations toward communicating are different from the students' is likely to generate breakdowns for the interpreter and for the students. Similarly, an interpreter who cannot comprehend the complexity of the message, or a student who demonstrates an absence of mutual attention can generate communication breakdowns." (Seal 1998:180)

"I have witnessed excellent interpreters misread fingerspelled words, misrepresent a negative statement as a positive statement, misunderstand the intent of a speaker, miss whole sections of a presentation. I have been seriously embarrassed at my own lapses in concentration, my own errors in interpreting. ...The point is, interpreters make errors; some are inconsequential, some are embarrassing, some are humorous. When learning is at stake, interpreter mistakes can be serious." (Seal 1998:178-9)

To avoid these miscues and to reduce their negative impact, Seal recommends the use of interpreter teams.

Also Bremner and Housden published a study on 'Issues in Educational Interpreting' in 1996. They took their results from interviews with 16 deaf students, a survey with 110 interpreters and a panel discussion with Deaf community workers. They reported that Australian deaf postsecondary students want their interpreters to produce sign language framework peppered with English terms. Moreover, they do not like interpreters to improvise and make up signs for vocabulary they do not know, but to fingerspell technical or subject-specific words instead. They also complained about the lack of training for interpreters in educational settings.

In one of their studies, Sanderson, Siple, and Lyons (1999) dealt with interpreting for postsecondary Deaf students. They set up guidelines for the choice of interpreters and the organisation of interpreter management (for university personnel) and for the use of interpreters in the classroom (for instructors). Interestingly, they strongly advocate team interpreting and



distinguish it from 'relief interpreting' which would be 'independent interpreting' according to Hoza (2010).

In 2004, Marschark, Sapere, Convertino, Seewagen, and Maltzen conducted a study on access to higher education via sign language interpreting. Among other issues, their focus was on Deaf student's comprehension of interpretation and transliteration. They compared comprehension of 105 Deaf students to their reported sign language skills and preferences. The results showed that the students could comprehend interpretation as well as transliterations and that their comprehension was lower than that of their hearing peers. Contrary to common belief saying that native-speaking Deaf people are on equal footing with hearing peers, this is also true for deaf students with deaf parents.

Napier and Barker (2004) published a study on Deaf students perceptions, preferences, and expectations for Interpreting at University level. They showed segments of a team interpreted university lecture to a panel of four Deaf students and asked them questions referring to style, educational background of the interpreters as well to their expectations in university settings: e.g. fingerspelling of new terms, translations style. The results showed that the students preferred "interpreters with the appropriate subject knowledge" (Napier & Barker 2004:235), who were "able to code-switch between free and literal interpretation ... using clear mouth patterns and fingerspelling when appropriate" and who were "expressive, confident and assertive" (Napier & Barker 2004:236).

Brown Kurz and Caldwell Langer (2004) have published an article on the students' perspectives on educational interpreting that is based on the interviews with twenty Deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The students expressed concern about negative impact of their interpreters' poor performance. They also were concerned about the problem of time lag which is a barrier for students to participate when questions are asked. Many of them complained about having to simplify their signing and register to be understood by their interpreters. They were disturbed by their interpreter's style, dress, their



wearing of bright colours or patterns. They also complained about their interpreters wanting to pay attention (to them): " I don't like it when the interpreters tap on my desk and tell me to pay attention to them. I feel like that is my choice, not the interpreter's. I don't like it when they tell me what to do." (Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer 2004:25). They want their interpreters to have good facial expression not to get bored.

2.3.2.3 Team Interpreting

Team interpreters have been compared to teams of successful actors, attorneys, architects or co-authors (Kinsella 1997), airplane pilots (Festinger 1999), relay runners (independent model) and mountain climbers (Hoza 2010), pair figure skaters (Hillert 1999), ball game players (Snyder & Snyder 2011). Most of these professions are highly challenging and may involve quick decisions in very complicated situations that involve a lot of responsibility and may even be dangerous.

Team members need to be attuned to each other to be able to anticipate the team members' thoughts and react correspondingly. To find the same 'wave length', they need to have time to get to know each other and to adapt. Successful teams need to be built to make a team out of a group (see Section 2.2.1. Team Formation:8):

Successful pilots, it was discovered, always took extra time to establish team rapport before taking their positions in the cabin. Most flight teams are newly-created groups of co-workers who have seldom worked together before. It was the pilot's approach to teamwork that really mattered— no matter how experienced the crew. (Festinger 1999:3)

Most of the literature on team work in the field of sign language consists of anecdotes or guidelines that were meant to define the conditions under which the interpretation should be assigned to a team of interpreters, instead of one single interpreter. The majority of authors mentioned fatigue (Brasel 1976, Fisher 1994, Frishberg 1990) and the danger of Repetitive Strain Injury. SLIs,



like typists, belong to a profession that has high risks of overuse syndrome of upper extremities (AIIC 2002, Brasel 1976, Castle 1991, Cergol 1991, Hillert 1999, Jones 2006, Qin et al 2008, Sanderson 1987, Schoenberg 1999, Vidal 1997).

"Overuse Syndrome is a condition, which develops when a group of muscles are repeatedly used without allowing adequate rest periods. Excessive repetitive movements without adequate rest breaks cause micro-traumas to the tissues. With a rest break, the body can heal itself."
(Sanderson 1987:74)

Overuse Syndrome or Repetitive Strain Injury may also be exacerbated by the so-called 'vicarious trauma'. According to Michael A. Harvey (2001a, 2001b), a clinical psychologist specialized in Deafness who has worked a lot with SLIs, many of the interpreters deplore depreciating behaviour of their fellow interpreters. This behaviour which may negatively affect team interpreting is the projection of their 'vicarious trauma'. In his article 'Vicarious Emotional Trauma of Interpreters: A Clinical Psychologist's Perspective' (2001a) he reports that interpreters for the Deaf are often witness to oppression and discrimination of their Deaf customers who tend to be underprivileged within hearing society. Neuroscientists have found that witnessing pain, torture or oppression of others triggers the pain centres in the brain of an empathetic person as if the person witnessing was suffering the pain her/himself. SLIs are especially affected because they tend to be 'empathetically attuned' to their Deaf customers to understand her/his feelings during the communication they are interpreting (Harvey 2001a:87). In addition to that, they serve as the tool to inflict that pain because they interpret the oppressive exchange. Wadensjö reports a situation where an interpreter had to interpret a conflict between a woman whose child had been taken and a social worker. After a lot of screaming on both sides, the social worker finally ordered the interpreter to stay with the woman and to calm her down and went away. The feelings of the interpreter were reported as follows:



"He felt sorry for the mother, so he tried to comfort her, but at the same time he felt it to be unfair that he thus became associated with the authorities that had put her in this despairing mood."

(Wadensjö 1998:194)

It was his interpretation that had made the woman suffer. Unfortunately, many SLIs are unaware of this aspect of their professional reality and do not reflect but project their pain on to others:


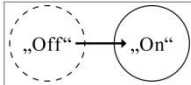
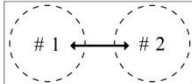
If an interpreter is unable to tolerate his/her own our discomfort and sense of inadequacy - perhaps about one's inability to eliminate oppression or ordinary evil - that individual may project those feelings onto other interpreters by deeming them as incompetent. I'm okay; you're not okay. Note the frequent observation of backbiting in the interpreting community - i.e. "S/he signs ASL poorly, is lazy, ill-intentioned or has an attitude." Much like many groups who are under stress or oppressed themselves, there is marked competition and tension among its members, largely because of the heretofore uncharted effects of vicarious trauma. (Harvey 2001a:92)

And the fact that SLIs themselves are not at all a professional group that enjoys high esteem in society - esteem being mainly manifested by adequate payment - does not help either and adds to the stress of the daily working situation. Clare (2000), Hetherington (2010), and Seiberlich (2004) have also concluded that 'vicarious trauma' in sign language interpreting that can seriously affect the psychological balance of interpreters and thus impede their team work with fellow interpreters.

Other authors, all of them SLIs themselves, have written about various issues concerning teaming: teaming strategies, team composition, and favourable frameworks for teaming (Bar-Tzur 2004, Carnet 2008, Hillert 1999, Labath 1997, Lewis & Stager Mukoski 2003, Russell 1988-96, Snyder & Snyder 2011, Walker 2006), written feedback notes from assignments (Shaw 1995b), problems with team partners (Cartwright 2009), miscues in interpreting (Cokely 1992), post-assignment sessions between team members (Birr 2008), participation in interpreter-mediated communication (Mitchel 2002).



As the research into team interpreting is still young, there are many different terms that have been used for the two interpreter roles in team interpreting: target/feed, lead/monitor, active/support, producing/supporting, on/feed, hot seat/cold seat, up/down, working/off, on/off, primary/secondary. According to Hoza (2010:4-10) these different definitions reflect the different views of team interpreting. He distinguishes three kinds:

- 'independent'  (taken from Hoza 2010:5)
interpreters rotate after 15 or 20 minutes to relieve each other from the strain, no monitoring/support
- 'monitoring'  (taken from Hoza 2010:6)
interpreters rotate, the lead interpreter is monitored by the second interpreter and supported if needed and
- 'collaborating/interdependent'  (taken from Hoza 2010:8)
interpreters switch, monitor and support each other, they collaborate to produce a team product

It depends on the team interpreting approach how far collaboration between the interpreters goes. To understand the interpreting and the monitoring process, it is useful to look at the different steps of the lead and monitor interpreter's processing.

The tasks of the lead interpreter's role are similar to those of a single interpreter working alone: listening to the ST, understanding its message, making a mental picture without form; moulding the picture into the TL form and producing it. Of all models of interpreting processes I prefer Hoza's (2010) because of its simplicity. He uses the model of Colonomos (1992) to explain and deduct the process a monitor interpreter goes through. To describe the process steps, he uses the concepts of 'concentrating' (C) = understanding the message, 'representing' (R) = forming a mental picture (without the form of any language) of the message, and 'planning' (P) = formulating the message in the TL taken from Colonomos.



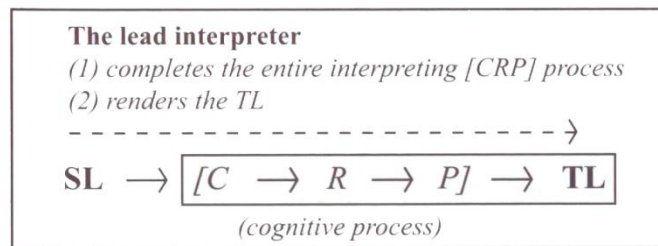


Fig. 5.3. The lead interpreter's processing includes completing C , P, & R and producing the target language (TL)

(Hoza 2010:78)

Figure 2 Lead interpreter's processing

The monitor interpreter does not complete the process, but stops with representing the message in her mind.

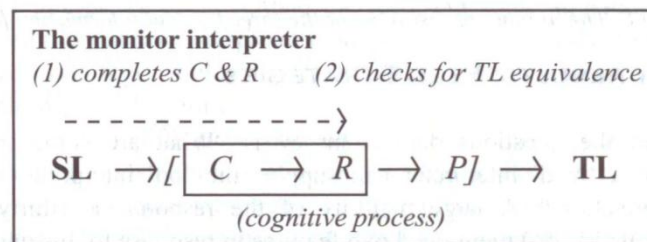


Fig. 5.4. The monitor interpreter's processing involves (1) completing C and maintaining a mental representation of meaning (R), and (2) checking that the lead interpreter's TL rendition is dynamically equivalent to the SL (based on the monitor's R) (Hoza 2010:79)

Figure 3 Monitor interpreter's processing

The resources that are not used for planning and producing the TT are used to fulfil a whole list of other tasks. In her essay on teaming, Barbara Walker (1994) lists the following tasks of the monitoring SLI:

- being aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the teamer
- keeping the speaker's goals in mind
- analyzing the meaning of the source language for possible problems (proper names, numbers)
- comparing ST to TT and check for equivalence
- "looking for places where the meaning carried is different from what was stated in the original"



- "taking decisions about the importance of chunks of information and the intrusion the addition might make"
- assisting to working interpreter (this, there)
- feeding information that has been omitted
- being ready to take over if needed
- managing environmental influences (e.g. close door because of noise)
(p. 21, *order changed*)

Plant-Moeller (1991) also mentions relieving the target interpreter at the appointed time and informing the target interpreter if one has to leave. Jones (2006) additionally mentions assistance to the lead interpreter by conveying information that is shown on visual displays. Napier, Locker McKee, and Goswell (2006) also mention note-taking of information difficult to retain for the active interpreter to glance at. Snyder and Snyder (2011) have added 'specific support functions' like:

- cultural and/or linguistic adjustments
- predictions and degree of certainty
- transitions (to new points)
- reminders of the speaker's main points
(to improve organization and flow)
- textual adjustments (culturally adequate rendition in TL)

Up to 2011, some empirical studies on team interpreting have been conducted which I will refer to in detail in the following section.

2.3.2.4 Empirical Studies on Team Interpreting

Cokely and Hawkins (2003) conducted a study on requesting and offering support in team interpreting. They had five teams of interpreters meet in a pre-conferencing session of 15 minutes to agree on support modalities. Then the interpreter teams were asked to do a voice over of a video tape. The most interesting result was that there was a discrepancy between behaviours to request support agreed on by the interpreters before the assignment and those actually used by the interpreters. There were instances of requests of support that were not answered, either for lack of reception of the signal or because support was impossible.



Edeltraud Stehr (2004) conducted a survey on 20 German sign language interpreters where she tried to analyse problems and proposed solutions for successful team work.

Her findings suggest that teamwork is built on trust, shared wavelength, mutual support, regular exchange, open communication.

The tasks of the monitor interpreter mentioned were recovering from physical strain, active listening, monitoring TL text and feeding, monitoring of environment, interaction with participants/problem solution, post session processing, and control for good quality output.

The problems identified were monitor interpreter's lack of feed, doing other things (text messages, e-mails etc), leaving of the room, not paying attention to the ST, excessive feed, and irregular spelling.

Napier, Carmichel and Wiltshire (2008) investigated the team work between a Deaf presenter and his interpreters. They filmed preparatory briefing, interpretation of the presentation and post-assignment debriefing. In the briefing the participants defined which cues to use for holding, pacing, monitoring and the use of nods, eye contact and waving of the monitor interpreter. The main signals used were eye contact, pauses and nods. The participants were all convinced that these cues only work when negotiated and agreed upon beforehand. The team members need to be familiar with their use, confident and trustful in their mutual relationship to efficiently apply them for controlling the pace of the interpreter-mediated communication.

In 2009, Stefanie Bauer, an Austrian interpreter, conducted a study on team interpreting. She set up a laboratory experiment with two interpreter teams, one team composed of students and one of professional interpreters. Their task was to interpret a 45 minutes technical speech into Austrian Sign Language. She found out that the more (team) experience a team has, the less the team partners need feeding and the more efficient the feeding gets.

As I have heavily leaned on Hoza (2010), I will present his work in more detail. Hoza has recently conducted a study and a survey on team interpreting and



has developed a model for successful teamwork. In his study, he investigated the interpretation of three interpreter teams who were giving a voice over of a videotaped presentation by a Deaf presenter. The survey was conducted with 46 interpreters.

According to his results, team interpreting ideally consists of three stages, if you use the collaborating/interdependent approach. These stages are pre-session, team interpreting process, and post-session.

The pre-session [collaborating] Discussing the team's upcoming work	The team interpreting process [collaborating and interpreting interdependently] Negotiating the team's work	The post-session [processing] Processing the team's work (process & product)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building rapport/Connecting - Gathering/Sharing information - Building a schema - Predicting/Anticipating - Sharing needs - Discussing strategies & making decisions - Discussing monitor & lead roles (information feeds & other teaming strategies) - Managing logistics - Determining placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintaining rapport/connection - Working interdependently and collaboratively on the interpreting (CRP) process to achieve dynamic equivalence and information accuracy - Negotiating & performing monitor & lead roles (information feeds & other teaming strategies) - Using interpreter-initiated utterances (interacting with speakers) - Making accommodations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintaining rapport/connection - Reviewing/Processing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the pre-session 2) the teaming process 3) strategies & decisions 4) the SL & TL product - Thinking ahead/Progressing forward <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) what was learned about oneself, the other interpreter, & teaming 2) strategies & insights for next time

Fig. 10.2., 10.5., 10.7. Key features of the team interpreting process (Hoza 2010:156,173,176)

Figure 4 Hoza's model of team interpreting (reduced version)

Hoza advocates the building of trust to make this efficient form of team work possible. This building of trust can be supported by the 'six major deposits on the personal account' (adapted from Stephen Covey 2004):

1. Understanding the individual (respect, needs, goals, desires)
2. Attending to the little things (little acts of kindness and courtesy)
3. Keeping commitments (following through with strategies)
4. Clarifying expectations (on how to signal and to offer support)
5. Showing personal integrity (being honest)
6. Apologizing sincerely when you make withdrawal



To obtain collaboration and interdependence "three aspects of the team need to be in place, like links of a chain" (Hoza 2010:148): The personal level, the discussion level and the abstract/framing level.

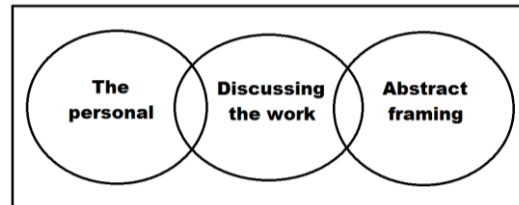


Fig. 9.1. Three links of the chain: Achieving and maintaining collaboration and interdependence

(Hoza 2010:148)

Figure 5 Three aspects of teaming

The personal level is about beliefs and convictions, about past pain and mixed feelings. The team members need to know themselves and their problems. On the discussion level, the act of interpreting and the interpreter involved should be separated. Such a separation can only succeed if a good personal relationship has been established and does not need negotiating every time. It is interpreting and its process that should be discussed, not the particular behaviour of an interpreter: "The focus on *processing* rather than *critique* is key" (italic print by the author) (Hoza 2010:149). The third level, abstract framing, is defining the terminology and the models interpreters use when discussing their work.

According to Hoza, successful team work in interpreting consists of the three stages of pre-session, the team interpreting process and the post-session. The Pre-session is about setting up the rules, the exchange of information, harmonization of working styles and sharing needs etc. In the team interpreting process, there is a common strive for a team product by ongoing collaboration and communication between the teamers. The post-session is about processing and reviewing the assignment and about planning future assignments and the strategies to apply. To make teaming possible the three aspects 'the personal', 'discussing of work', and 'abstract framing' need to be taken into account.



3 The Austrian Situation

In order to picture the situation of sign language interpreting in Austria, it is necessary to offer some background information on the Deaf and on the SLIs' communities. This chapter is meant to prepare the reader to understand the research results laid out in chapter 4 and discussed in chapter 5.

3.1 Deaf Education

Austria is a small country with 8,000,000 inhabitants and a Deaf community of about 10,000 people. They are not evenly distributed over Austria, about 25% live in the capital of Vienna where they find the best opportunities for their education and the widest choice of potential professions.

For historic reasons, education for the Deaf has mostly been given in special Schools for the Deaf or Hard-of-hearing following the oralist approach that only uses spoken language in class. Having finished compulsory school (at the age of 15 or 16), Deaf students have a competence of written language comparable to a 8 year old hearing child. Their lexicon is much smaller than that of a hearing student at their age. Few of them continue their education and successfully take their A-level which would enable them to study at a university (*Zentrum für Gebärdensprache und Hörbehindertenkommunikation*).

Professional education opportunities for Deaf students are scarce and more oriented toward skilled crafts and trades like painter and decorator, tailor, plumber, mechanical engineer or electrician, all of them professional educations provided at Deaf schools.

Since 1991, several pilot projects of bilingual classes have been conducted in Klagenfurt, Graz, and Vienna. They have shown that apart from the sign language competence of the teachers, the institutional framework and the composition of the team of teachers are most important for the project's success.



In recent years, integration of disabled students into mainstream schools has become more and more common. Unfortunately, there is not enough support in sign language provided by the state to make up for the lack of communication with peers and teachers: The assistant teachers work in several schools. Each student is entitled to only four hours of support per week (!). Many of the assistant teachers are not competent in sign language. At the moment, few SLIs are working in the educational school-type settings as interpreting in primary and secondary school has not yet been established. Although their educational level is better than that of Deaf schools, mainstream schools do not provide adequate support for their Deaf students who often are isolated among hearing students and teachers who cannot communicate in sign language. If they want to succeed, they have to pay a high price: they have to study much harder at the cost of their free time, leisure activities and social relations. Nevertheless, some of them lack the elementary skills necessary to continue their education: the competence in written German that would enable them to access information from written or digital material, a precondition for all kinds of professional education.

As Krausnecker & Schalber (2007) found out in their study on the situation of Deaf and hard of hearing students the lack of linguistic basics is a huge barrier for Deaf people's professional and educational career. This barrier can hardly be lowered by the use of interpreters or tutors, especially as funding for interpreters in educational settings is lacking.

Recently, this situation has begun to change. Since Austria signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in 2007, public education authorities have started to become aware of their obligation to provide access to Deaf students and have initiated talks with the stakeholders to establish regular interpretation in primary and secondary level of general education as well as in professional education.

At university level, little interpreting has been done until recently because public funding was so restricted that a Deaf student could only afford one (!) lecture to



be interpreted per semester. This lead to prolonged study time and discrimination of Deaf students. Since the signature of the UNCRPD, the Ministry of Science has funded some small projects like *Study Now* (provision of tutors/note takers for university lectures) or *erfolgreich studieren* (awareness raising for Deaf students and university personnel). Finally, they decided to fund GESTU, a bigger project providing and organizing SLIs for Deaf students.

3.2 The Pilot Project GESTU

The pilot project GESTU - *Gehörlos erfolgreich studieren an der Technischen Universität* (Successful Studies for the Deaf at the University of Technology) offers several kinds of services for 8 to 11 Deaf and hard of hearing students at institutions of higher education in Vienna. GESTU set up an information centre for Deaf students where information is given in sign language. The project organizes tutors, note takers and SLIs for the lectures/seminars, conducts research on the use of technical support for the Deaf (remote interpreting, recording of lectures with interpreters) or works on developing technical vocabulary in various fields where Austrian Sign Language has not developed yet.

The project started in July 2010 and is scheduled to last until June 2012. It is meant to establish best practice of sign language interpreting in higher education and there is an ongoing evaluation by experts from two different universities.

Unfortunately, there is a serious shortage of interpreters, especially for highly specialized settings like university lectures. The lack of interpreters is due to the general shortage of SLIs and to the fact that the interpreters are self-employed, i.e. not on the regular payroll of the University of Technology. University lectures and seminars tend to be scheduled, postponed or cancelled at short notice. By that time, the free lance interpreters may have already taken other assignments and are no longer available. Therefore, interpretation by interpreting teams or even by one single interpreter cannot be provided for all



lectures/seminars of Deaf students. For some assignments, it is simply impossible to find interpreters who are experts in the field and have the necessary educational background. Sometimes, the GESTU team even has to give assignments to teams of a certified interpreter and an uncertified interpreter trainee which is still better than one interpreter on her own or no interpreter at all.

To alleviate this shortage, the GESTU project intends to build a regular staff of employed interpreters to complement the self employed interpreters for the second year of the project.

3.3 Sign Language Interpreting

In Austria, sign language interpreting is a very young profession: the SLIs' Association (*Österreichischer GebärdensprachdolmetscherInnen-Verband - ÖGSDV*) was founded in 1998 by 24 graduates of the first SLI Education (HORIZON) that was set up in the wake of the 1995 WFD Conference in Vienna. Until then, interpreting had been mostly done by hearing children of Deaf adults or by clergymen who worked *pro bono*. It was the so called 'helper model' that prevailed. With the advent of education opportunities, the helper model was replaced by the 'conduit model' (Mindess 2006:205, Roy 1993:138-47) and the keyword became "professionalization" - a development which could be observed in many countries in the world - with Austria lagging behind.

Several Interpreter trainings were installed as HORIZON only was conducted for two years. Nowadays, three roads lead into the profession: a BA- or MA-study programme at Graz University (Styria), a three years full-time education in Linz (Upper Austria) and an educational scheme organized by the ÖGSDV. The latter consists of one and a half year of weekend seminars for students who are competent in sign language and need to learn the profession. After having completed the seminars and the obligatory hours of internship, the students have to pass the qualifying examination that enables them to work in the field (ÖGSDV).



Today, the interpreter community in Austria consists of about 100 interpreters. Most of them passed the qualifying examination and are members of the ÖGSDV (July 2011: 90). They are entitled to work as "certified" interpreters and are paid by the federal government or the nine provincial governments.

Although the number of sign language interpreters keeps growing at a slow pace, densely populated areas like Vienna still suffer from a lack of qualified interpreters. While this study was conducted, there were 35 certified interpreters working in the eastern part of Austria (Lower Austria, Burgenland and Vienna) where the Deaf community approximates 3.700 Deaf people. There is a pronounced shortage of interpreters. Deaf consumers have to book interpreters 4 to 6 weeks in advance to be sure to have interpreters for their assignment.

The practice of team interpreting is widely spread for all assignments exceeding one hour or for assignments being very important or challenging (for example exams or lectures for/of Deaf speakers etc.). Thus, as one of the Deaf students reported, teamwork quality has evolved:

" If I think back some years, I can say that the support within the team has increased. In the beginning, they were not supporting each other very much. You can see that there has been progress, amongst the interpreters, if you compare it to the beginning of interpreting in Austria. Most interpreters were working alone then; the team concept came later. And they had to learn how to deal with each other. If I remember correctly, they switched roles, but they rarely supported each other. Now they do this more than before."

(Student 1)

Unfortunately, the necessary funds are not always available and interpreters are expected to work alone. Still, most of the lectures and seminars of the students participating in GESTU are interpreted by teams. If interpreters have to work alone it is only because of the lack of an available team partner.



4 Investigating Team Interpreting

As has already been mentioned in the introduction, this study aims to identify and analyze characteristic features of teamwork in the field of sign language interpreting. The method which was used - interviews composed of open questions - has revealed a vast number of features.

The overall goal of this investigation has been to find out what Deaf customers and their interpreters think of team interpreting. This thesis tries to make the views of both groups transparent to each other by comparing them. Therefore, I have made ample use of quotes from the interviews to give both groups a platform to present their views. In general, I intend to find out whether there is a need to explain ourselves to each other.

4.1 Research Questions

These are the research questions I set out to answer:

- Do Deaf consumers perceive differences between interpreter teams?
- Is it important for SLIs whom they team with? Which are the reasons for their choice?
- What do Deaf customers consider as successful team interpreting?
- What do SLIs need for good teamwork?
- What do Deaf customers consider as qualities/attitudes of a good teamer?
- What do interpreters consider as qualities/attitudes of a good teamer?
- What do Deaf customers experience as disturbing in team interpreting?
- Which attitudes/behaviour do interpreters consider characteristic of a poor teamer?
- What do Deaf customers consider as disrupting in team interpreting?
- What factors interpreters believe to disrupt teamwork?
- Which tasks do Deaf customers assign to the role of the monitor interpreter?



- What do SLIs consider as part of their tasks as monitoring/collaborating interpreter?

4.2 Research Methodology

This thesis represents a qualitative research as it includes signed and oral data from interviews conducted with Deaf students enrolled at Viennese universities and institutions of higher education as well as with their SLIs (eight interviews for Deaf and interpreters).

The interviews were composed of open questions on several features of team interpreting (good teamwork, poor teamwork, customer expectations, teaming strategies etc.). They were conducted in Austrian Sign Language (Deaf participants) and in German spoken language (interpreters), recorded on video and directly translated into English. The original data are available upon request.

The questions for the Deaf students were the following:

1. Do you perceive differences between the different interpreter teams?
2. What would you consider to be successful teamwork?
3. What do you consider to be qualities and attitudes of a good team interpreter?
4. What do you consider as especially disturbing in the teamwork of interpreters?
5. Can you think of other factors that may disrupt the teamwork?
6. What are the tasks of the monitor interpreter in the team?

These are the questions for the interpreters:

1. What are three things that are most important for team interpreting work to be successful?
2. Do you generally prefer to team interpret with the same interpreters or not? Please, explain.
3. What makes for a good team interpreter?



- ~~4. Which are the aspects that need to be considered when interpreting in a team? (e.g. spelling times) (data not analyzed in this thesis)~~
- ~~5. How do you negotiate these with your teamer? (data not analyzed in this thesis)~~
6. What do you consider being the tasks of the supporting/monitor interpreter?
- ~~7. Do you usually process the product/team work after the assignment? (data not analyzed in this thesis)~~
8. What are three things that can lessen the effectiveness of team interpreting work?
9. Are there any interpreters that you would rather not team interpret with? Please, explain.
10. What makes for a poor team interpreter?

The answers of all respondents were tagged. For example, one respondent - when asked for the factors of successful team interpreting - answered:

"... if visual media are used, PowerPoint for example or a projection of transparencies, where the speaker shows some graphs or tables, the monitor interpreter would indicate where to locate the item in signing space (left or right)" (Student 2)

This answer was tagged as '*visual orientation*' (see blue arrow below). For each group of eight participants (Deaf and SLI) these cues were put into a worksheet (one for the Deaf students and one for the SLIs) with eight columns each (one column for each person). If, for example, two students gave a similar answer, the corresponding cues were inserted into the same row, new ideas were put into new rows:



Tasks of monitoring interpreter							
					adjust signing/speaking s	1	
					merge into one interpret	1	
		explain/sum	up to deaf consumer if D has lost track			1	
watch time	watch time	and initiate switch				2	
	listen attentively	listen attent	listen to source	tax and compare to TL production		3	
monitoring		monitoring	monitoring	monitoring		3	
		notice background information				1	
visual orient	visual orientation			visual orientation		3	
	support		support	support	support	inobtrusive support	5
feeding	feeding sign	feeding sign	feeding signs	feeding	feeding	feeding	7
	fingerspell names		fingerspell n	fingerspelling			3
	show numbers						1
	help to find	help to find	help to find the thread again		help to find the thread again		4
correct mistakes	correct mistakes/mishearings		correct mistakes	correct mistakes/mishearings			4
			propose a better solution (sign language grammar)				1
		feed background information to colleague and deaf					1
	working		working	working	stay in the room/support		1
		rest			working		4
	take over if necessary				take over if necessary/give it back		1
			take notes o	take notes of technical terms			2
			monitoring the environmental logistics				1





(three respondents mentioned 'visual orientation')

Figure 6 Example1 of evaluation table




In each row I calculated how many fields were occupied to count the occurrences of the same or similar items. For example, three students mentioned visual orientation (see Figure 6 above).

To make Deaf participants' and interpreters' views comparable, I grouped these answers into the following categories which I colour-coded to facilitate classification.






Personal features:

- character  = characteristics of the interpreter (e.g. reliability, flexibility, punctuality)
- fitness  = physical and psychological constitution of the interpreter (e.g. awareness of limits)
- appearance  = outward appearance of the interpreter (e.g. big jewellery, clothing with patterns)
- competence  = professional skills and experience (e.g. signing, voicing, interpreting experience)



- attitude = professional attitude towards one's work, one's colleagues and one's D customers
 - towards interpreting ,
(e.g. neutrality, fidelity to ST)
 - towards team interpreter ,
(e.g. trust, shared goal)
 - towards customer ,
(e.g. leaves D alone in the break, talks to other people)

Teamwork = team working strategies or problems in relation to team working strategies - what interpreters do when they actually work

- switching  = changing roles between lead and monitor interpreter
(e.g. irregular switching, agreement on switching intervals)
- monitoring  = comparing ST and TT accuracy
(e.g. monitoring TL text)
- support  = all activities of the monitor interpreter to support the lead interpreter
(e.g. feeding, fingerspelling, showing numbers, visual orientation)
- collaboration  = collaborative strategies on site to work towards a team product or problems in relation to collaboration
(e.g. share knowledge on site, consult each other, abandon the teamer, take over)
- processing  = preparation, pre-session meeting, post-session meeting, taking notes on site and discussing them later
(e.g. share information, briefing on the setting, feedback => no change)

Within the category 'teamwork' I follow Hoza's (2010) definition of team working types (independent, monitoring, collaborating/interdependent) by having the five subcategories 'switching' (occurs in all types of teamwork), 'monitoring' (the precondition for support), 'support', 'collaboration' (going beyond mere monitoring/support and including several features like sharing information on site, preparing together, agreeing on working terms, adjusting to each other to present a homogeneous product) and 'team processing' (preparing and reviewing the assignment, developing further). Unlike him, I have put pre-session and post-session under the same heading, namely 'processing', because I am convinced that they belong together and that pre-session passes over into post-session and post-session passes over into pre-session processing, especially in regular assignments.



Logistics = environment of the setting
(e.g. lighting, sound, water for interpreters, position of interpreters)

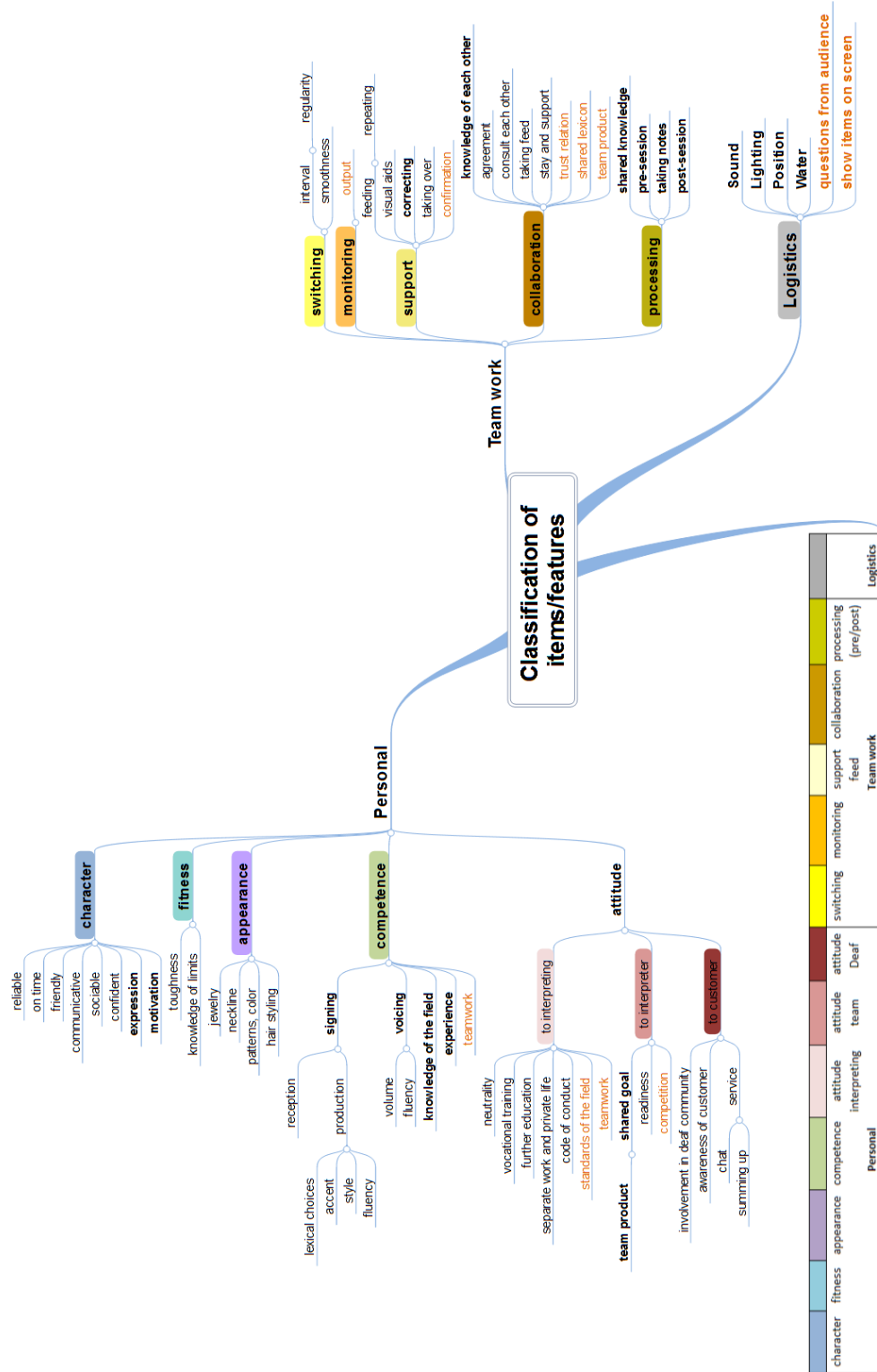


Figure 7 Classification of items/features



Below each chart the reader will find the key to the colour code to make the visual information easier to access:

character	fitness	appearance	competence	attitude interpreting	attitude team	attitude Deaf	switching	monitoring	support feed	collaboration	processing (pre/post)	
Personal							Team work					Logistics

As each of the items could only be put into one category, I had to make decisions that are definitely subjective.

If the same item was mentioned twice by the same respondent (e.g. 'further vocational training' as an indicator of successful teamwork and as something a good team interpreter should do, I only counted it once - in this case as something a good team interpreter should do).

If there were several items that I considered to be a similar message, but expressed by different concepts/words, I grouped them (e.g. 'smoking in working time' and 'leaving the room' were counted as two occurrences of 'leaving the room').

smoking in working time					leaving the room	2
-------------------------	--	--	--	--	------------------	---

Figure 8 Example2 of evaluation table


The interviews were composed of six (for the Deaf students) respectively ten (for the interpreters) open questions. From the ten questions asked to the interpreters, I only took the seven that matched the data I got from the Deaf customers. To compare them turned out to be especially fruitful. In this thesis, I will not investigate the questions concerning pre-session and post-session processing (4., 5., and 7. of the questions to the SLIs) because discussing these issues would have gone beyond the scope of this thesis.

The method of open questions was chosen to collect as many ideas as possible and to avoid any biasing by offering choices. That way, the respondents were free to answer what came to their mind. By working their way through the interview, more and more features surfaced that had not been thought of



before. This side effect of the method was noted and seen as positive by some of the respondents (Deaf and interpreters).

The respondents had no preparation and answered spontaneously. Some of the Deaf respondents admitted not having thought about the issue of team interpreting before. When I asked the first questions, they just answered what came to their minds first. Later on, they added some features, e.g. when thinking about poor teamwork, they mentioned features that they had not thought of when answering questions on good teamwork. I took the freedom to add these features to the answers to the earlier corresponding question. I made sure to mark these indirect answers by using grey colour for the font in the evaluation tables. In the graphs, I visualized them by using a flow fill for these

items (e.g.: ).

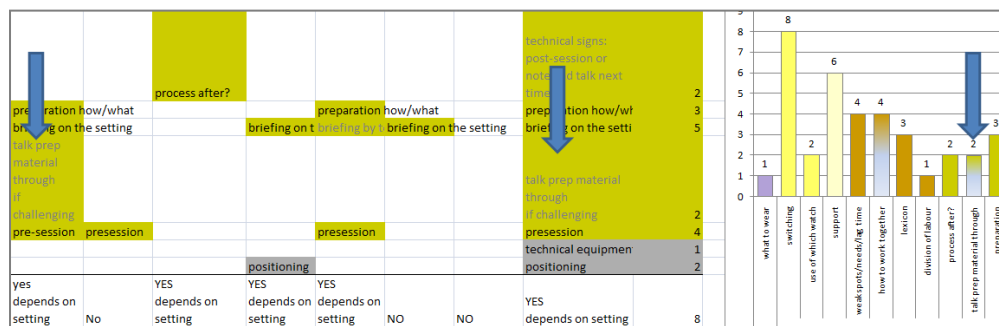


Figure 9 Example 3 of evaluation table

Choosing a category was done intuitively. I tried to choose the most obvious category. Still, it is a very subjective choice that could be challenged by others.

4.3 Drawbacks of the Method Applied

In the process of writing this thesis and analyzing my data, I became aware of the 'mistakes' I made when choosing the questions for the interviews. Part of these were due to the detours I had to take to arrive at the "nut I finally tried to crack".



My initial plan was to record a team interpreting situation in a political setting, but was refused to do the recording it after having waited more than two months for the permission that was supposed to be "only a formality". I then was given the opportunity to use the GESTU project as source for my investigation. So, I recorded an interpreted lecture and interviewed the two team interpreters. I also conducted an interview with the Deaf student of this lecture in order to complete the data. As a follow up to these pilot interviews, I decided to conduct more interviews with other Deaf customers of the GESTU project. When I had six students interviewed, I had become so interested in comparing Deaf views to interpreter views that I changed course and started to run interviews with the interpreters, as well. As I had already recorded interviews (with the first two interpreters and the the Deaf student) and lacked the time to start all over again, I continued work based on the initial set of questions.

This is the reason, why not all the questions were asked in both groups: I did not ask Deaf consumers about their choice of team interpreters when giving assignments, I have not asked them about poor team interpreters.

The interpreters were asked to give only three answers to the questions on favourable/disrupting aspects of teamwork whereas the corresponding questions for the Deaf participants were not limited in number of items to list. This could explain why Deaf participants listed more features than interpreters. Therefore the result are difficult to compare quantitatively. In my case, the comparison is of a qualitative nature where the focus lies on the pointing out the differences of the various features mentioned and not on the exact number of occurrences, nor the number of features listed.

The interviews based on open questions invited the participants to say what came into their minds, but it did not probe them for all the aspects that would have been interesting to know. The advantage of the method is that you do not bias the answers, the disadvantage is that one may not get views on all aspects you deem important because respondents might not think of them (e.g.: only one interpreter mentioned that s/he dislikes a lead interpreter who refuses to



take her/his feed - does this imply that the others do not mind? or have they just not thought of that part of teamwork when they answered the questions?).

Finally, a major drawback of the method applied is that each item has to be linked to only one category. Some of the behaviours mentioned could easily fit into two or even more categories (see Section 4.5.1.2. Factors of Successful Teamwork: 46, paragraph 3).

4.4 Data/Respondents

The eight deaf and hard-of-hearing students (later on addressed as Deaf students) participating in this study are 23 to 41 years old and have two to ten years of experience with interpreting and interpreter teams. They are enrolled at several institutions of higher education in Vienna and participate in the pilot project GESTU (see Section 3.2 The Pilot Project GESTU: 32) providing them with sign language interpretation for all their lectures and seminars. The eight students are the entire population of Deaf/hard of hearing students of the project who have enough experience with interpreter teams to contribute to the study.

The SLIs are eight out of 15 interpreters working in the project. They have an interpreting experience from two to 13 years. This means that some have been among the first interpreters who started the profession in Austria.

Due to the fact that the Austrian interpreting community is so small, I will neither disclose age nor gender of the participants of my study. Giving these details would compromise their identity.



4.5 Results of the Interviews

The following chapter will present the results of the interviews from Deaf students and interpreters separately. Due to the amount of features reported they have been put into colour-coded categories. The key to the code will be given below each of the charts.

4.5.1 Deaf Students

The interviews with the Deaf students were conducted in Austrian Sign Language and recorded on video. I have translated them into English.

4.5.1.1 Differences between Interpreter Teams

When asked for the differences between interpreter teams (Question 1), seven of the respondents reported pronounced differences between interpreter teams. As can be seen in Figure 10 below, the features mentioned were *character* (1), *expression* (3), *signing/style* (6), *quality of voicing* (2), *amount of information in TL text* (an interpreter who has to reduce information is unable to keep up with the speaker's pace and has to drop information) (1), and *interpreting experience* (2). All these features refer to the single interpreter. They may not only apply to comparisons of interpreter teams but also when comparing one interpreter to another.

Different levels of competence in a team were mentioned on several occasions, as some of the students felt that it has a negative effect on their performance.

Note that only two respondents mentioned features of teamwork: *attitude towards teamwork* (1) and *switching/support* (1).



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

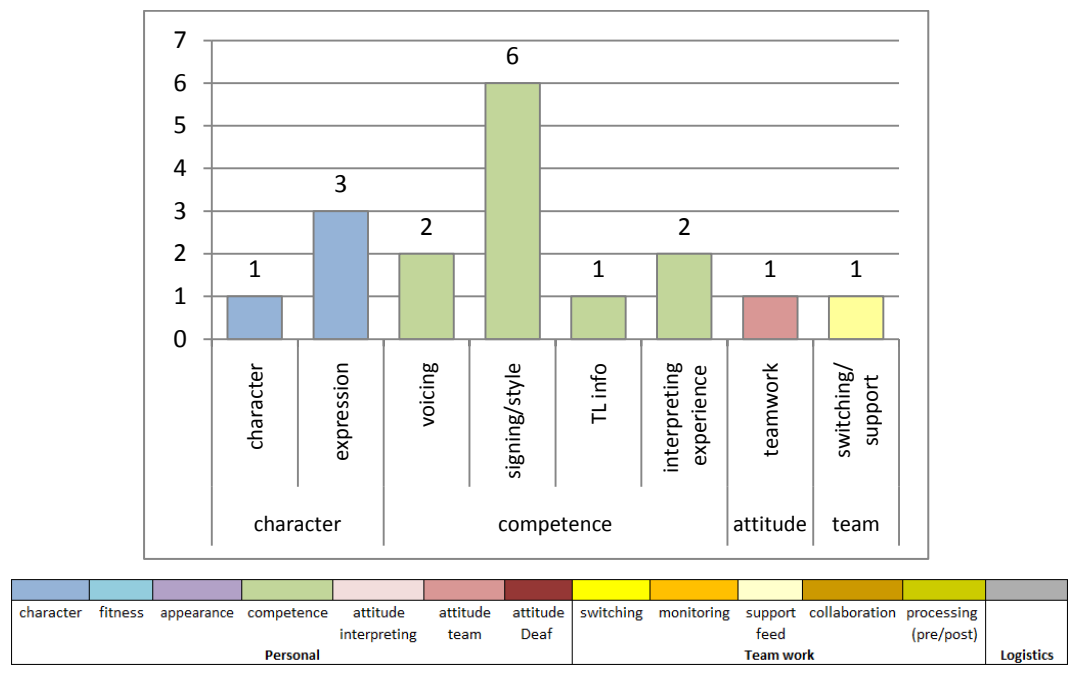


Figure 10 Differences between/in interpreter teams

The charts are to be read as follows: the horizontal axis has all features mentioned by the respondents in the order of the categories (see key below chart). The vertical axis shows the frequency of the occurrence (e.g. *interpreting experience* was mentioned twice as an obvious difference when comparing the quality of interpreters or interpreter teams).

4.5.1.2 Factors of Successful Teamwork

When asked what successful teamwork means for them (Question 2), the eight interviewees answered as follows: the most important element is *mutual support* (6), followed by *smooth and regular switching* (5), *feeding* (prompting the lead interpreter by showing signs, fingerspelling, whispering) (3), *monitoring* (2), *taking the feed* (using the cues provided by the monitor interpreter for the production of the target language text) (2) and *knowledge of the teamer* (2). Two students mentioned that *invisible communication* between the teamers and an *uninterrupted interpretation* were indicators of good teamwork. One mentioned *visual orientation*, i.e. when a monitor interpreter gives her lead



interpreter indications to locations on an overhead transparency or a picture projected behind her back.

Features of collaboration like *consulting* with each other, *meeting in pre-session* and *taking notes of problems to discuss them later* were only mentioned once. The same goes for personal features of interpreters like *motivation*, *fitness* (good physical and psychological condition), or *knowledge of topic* (how much background information does the interpreter have on the topic of the lecture).

Two items were classified as features of personal competence, *knowledge of the topic* and a *balanced performance*. The latter could also be classified into two other categories: collaboration and attitude. An interpreter may fail to adapt to her teamer because of lack of sign language repertoire or because she is so convinced of her product that she would not think of adapting to her teamer. Another reason may also be that her concept of team interpreting does not include collaboration.

The item '*no involvement of the Deaf customer for signs*' was mentioned once. It is about the interpreter not bothering the Deaf person by asking her/him for signs. Asking the Deaf person for sign vocabulary is a behaviour SLIs tend to adopt. There are multiple reasons: SLIs who are no native signers tend to ask native speakers for signs they do not know. Some Deaf people they interpret for have been their teachers when they learned sign language. And asking about signs could also be good customer care because the interpreter wants to make sure to use the sign that will be understood by the Deaf person³.

³ Another Deaf student explicitly expressed this wish (see Section 4.6.5 Good Team Interpreters:82).



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

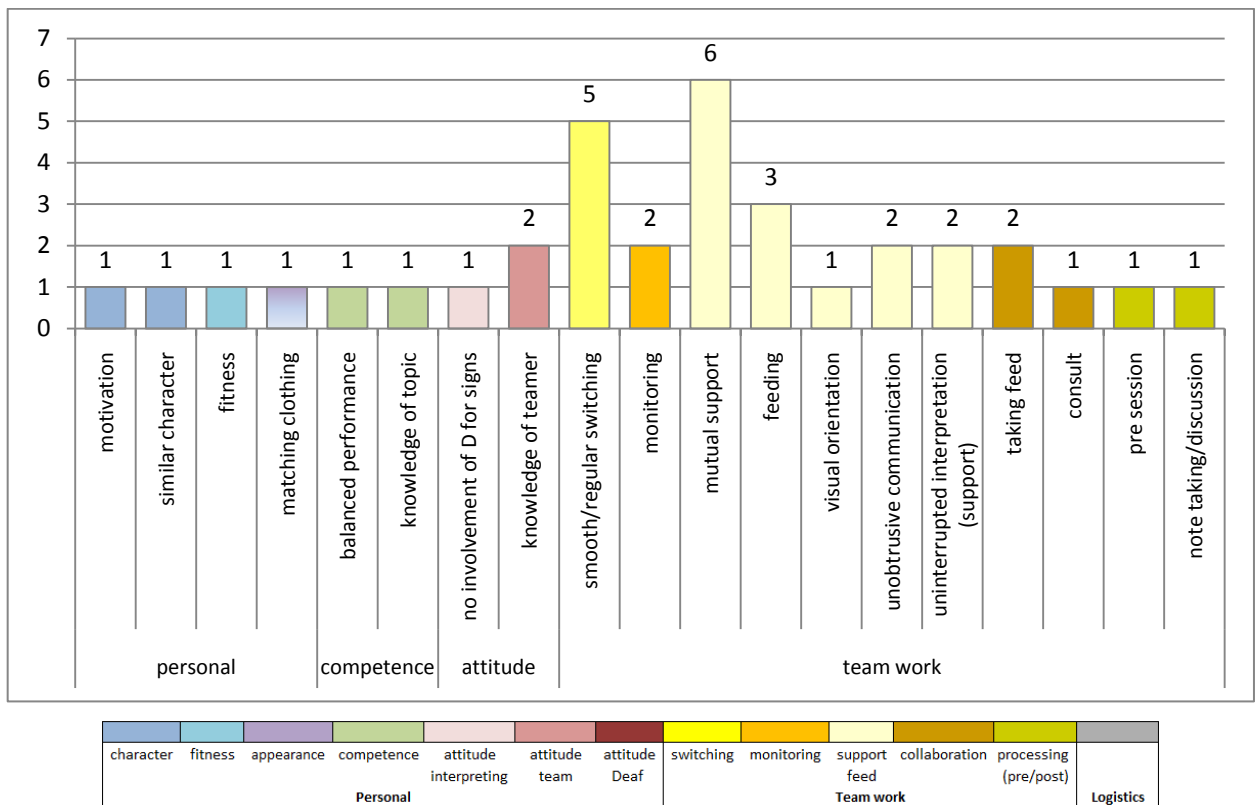


Figure 11 Indicators of successful teamwork

4.5.1.3 Disruptions in Team Interpreting

This sections deals with disruption in team interpreting and analyses the answers given to questions no. 4 and no. 5 of the interview guideline together:

4. What do you consider as especially disturbing in the teamwork of interpreters?
5. Can you think of other factors that may disrupt the teamwork?

I have decided to present results for both questions together because it was difficult to clearly distinguish between them. The second question (no. 5) just made the respondents think again and name what else could go wrong in a team interpreting setting. I pooled all the answers and grouped them into personal features, team features and other factors/external effects.



Personal Features

The character traits mentioned that would disturb smooth teamwork were: *tardiness* (1) and *low motivation* (that would add to the Deaf costumer's strain of motivating her/himself) (1). As to the outward appearance of the interpreter the students mentioned *clothing with patterns/light colours* (3), a *low neckline* (1) and *big jewellery* like rings or several strands of necklaces etc. (1).

Dissimilar signing style (5), *change of signing rhythm* (2) and *dissimilar quality in interpreting* (3) appear to be big issues for the Deaf consumers: these were the most salient factors among the personal features. One of the students was worried about her/his image in the institution and signed as follows:

"It is disturbing if the two teamers do not have the same level of competence, if their interpretation is not on the same level, or if they produce a different target text from the same source text in sign language. This may also be a nuisance for the teacher, if I want to comment on something. One interpreter may interpret my contribution well, the second may not be able to formulate my utterances. This may make the teacher suspicious. S/he may wonder, if the first interpreter had given me support and had not only translated my signed text. So they may suspect me of cheating, although I am not guilty. This aspect of team interpreting is really disturbing to me, it is a really awful situation to be in. Furthermore, it is not only the teacher wondering about my actual level of competence, but also the other students are puzzled. They do not know if it is my performance or the interpreter's and I do not like the puzzled expression on their faces. This is one of the most disturbing features of team interpreting for me." (Student 7)

Another student signed that s/he has problems concentrating when the signing level is too heterogeneous:

"Talking about teamwork, I have experienced interpreters who sign beautifully and elegantly and I am drawn into the text. When it is the second interpreter's turn, her signing is completely different as to the style and expression, she wears different clothes. Her aura is weak. It is boring to watch. Then the first interpreter comes again. It is



interesting again. And then the second comes again and I fall asleep again. So I miss a lot of information and lose the thread. If the two interpreters have a similar style and are equally competent I do not mind that they are spelling each other. But I remember many times where I lose the thread when the second interpreter comes in. I prefer one interpreter and not two, because it does not work most of the times. Their way of signing is different, their behaviour need not be the same, but their signing should be harmonious. If their style is different, their grammar, their lexical choices... If their level of signing is so different, one draws me into the topic and the other throws me out, I do not understand what she wants to tell me." (Student 6)

Other features mentioned that relate to sign language competence are *different syntax* (1) and *different handshapes* (1). Items mentioned referring to interpreting skills are: *summing up* (thereby shortening TL text and dropping information) (1), *loss of thread* (2), *long pauses for processing* (1) and *Deaf consumer has to adapt to interpreter* (to be understood when signing) (1):

"If I work with interpreters, I can adapt. I do not sign freely and in my natural way with them, I adapt to them. So if they have to do a voice over for me, I bear that in mind and adapt to their pace. There are some interpreters of whom I know who manage to do the voice over if I sign just as quickly as I please. And they do not lose the thread and keep on talking. I like to sign without having to think of them. With others I know that they may lose it and I stay aware of signing slowly." (Student 6)

The following items belong to the category 'attitude': The disturbing features of interpreters' attitude toward their profession mentioned are: *dissimilar attitudes* (2), *complaining* (because of pain or exhaustion) (1), and a *lack of neutrality* (1).

Overall, three students would prefer to have *only one interpreter and not two* of them. The reasons given were that their styles were so dissimilar that concentration is difficult (see above) and that the role switching was disturbing in many settings.

As to the attitude towards the team interpreter, the Deaf respondents mentioned *competition or conflict in the team* (2) being a cause for disruption.



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

The items *interpreters talking* (between themselves and to other hearing people without informing the Deaf customer) (2) and *breaking of eye contact* (1) refer to the attitude towards the Deaf customer and also disturb the process.

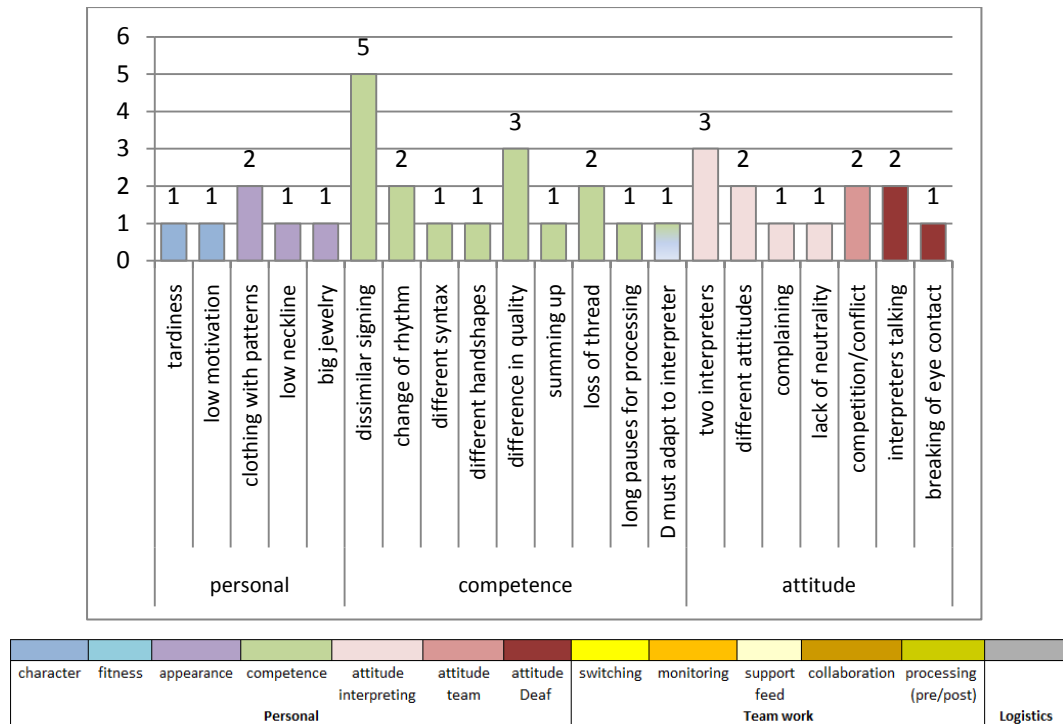


Figure 12 Disruptions in team interpreting: personal features

Team Features

Also some team features were mentioned as problematic and disturbing. Some of these referred to the role switch of the team interpreters: Students complained about *slow switching* (3), *premature switching* (monitor interpreter initiating the switch too early) (1), *switching of two interpreters in a small room* (1).

For example, one student feels distracted by *too much feeding*, another one by the *lead interpreter asking questions to the speaker* if she has not understood instead of the monitor interpreter feeding the missing information. Another student feels disturbed by *too much fingerspelling* because reading is a lot of effort.



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

The items classified as 'collaboration' are the following: monitor interpreter *leaving her team partner alone* (6), monitor interpreters *doing other things* (texting, checking their mobiles etc.).

As to 'preparation' students think that a *lack of preparation* (1) or a *lack of information on the particular setting* (1) were detrimental to team interpreting.

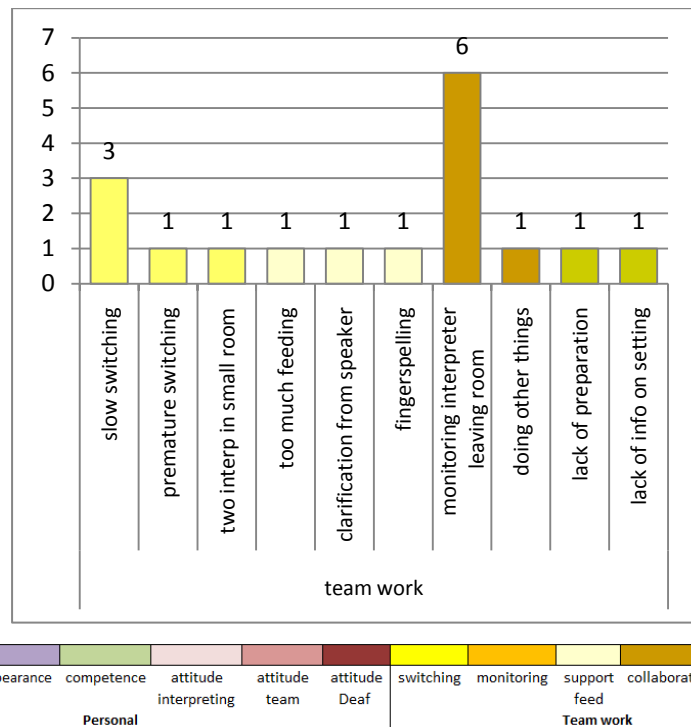


Figure 13 Disruptions in team interpreting: team features

Other/External Factors

The additional personal factors mentioned that could disrupt team interpreting were: (physical or psychological) *exhaustion* (1), *clothing that does not match* (the other interpreter's or the occasion) (1), *bad mood* of interpreter (2), *leaving the Deaf customer alone in the break* (1).

On top of that, students mentioned the following external factors that could have a negative effect on team interpreting: *glare/bad lighting* (1) and *lack of funds* (low hourly rates for interpreters and limited resources for interpreting from public authorities) (1).



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

One student signed that also the *behaviour of the Deaf customer* has an influence on the team interpreting situation:

"It could also be the influence of the Deaf customer that causes problems in the team. It may be her/his behaviour or comments that have a negative impact on the team because of the strong interdependence between the interpreters and the Deaf customer. Interpreters are involved in the Deaf community. That's why the factors that may influence an interpreting assignment are manifold."

(Student 4)

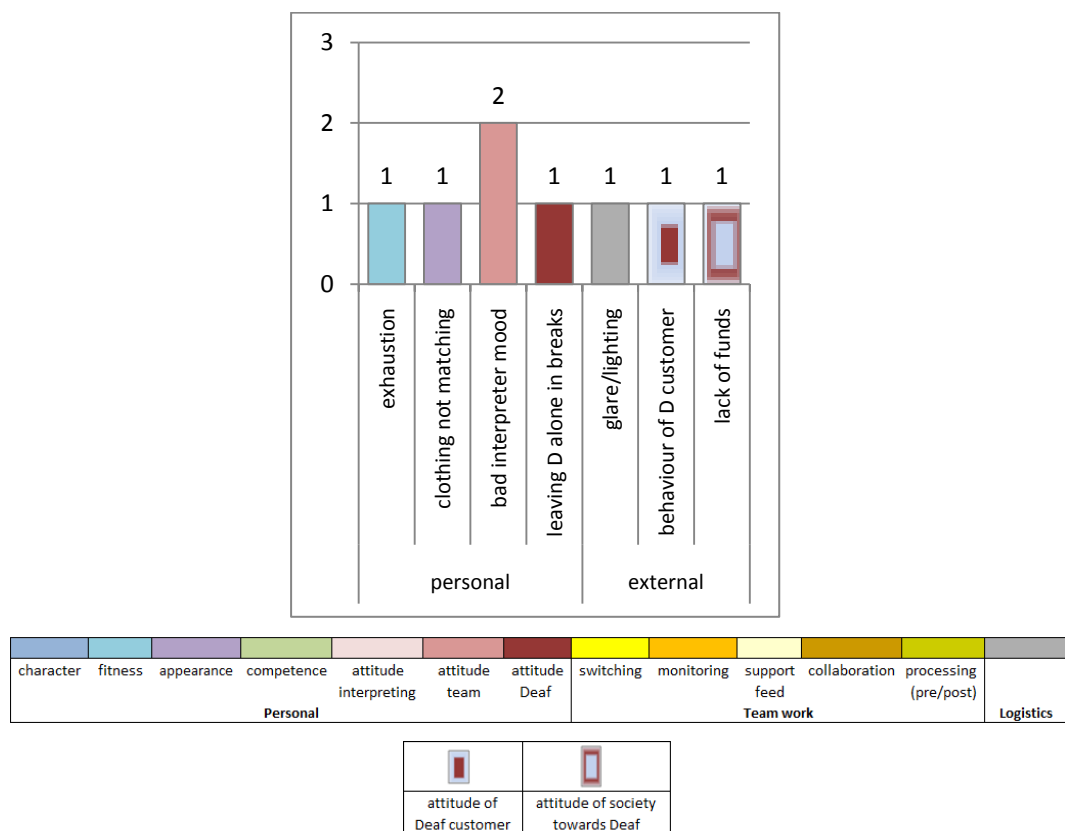


Figure 14 Disruptions in team interpreting: other/external features

4.5.1.4 Good Team Interpreter

The answers to the question no. 3 asking for indicators of a good team interpreter covered all features of team interpreting, from personal to teamwork. Due to the multitude of items mentioned, I split them into two groups: 'personal features' that describe character, competence, and attitude as well as



appearance and constitution, and 'team features' that encompass the interpreting process in a team. Most of the personal features would also characterize a good interpreter working alone, without a team colleague. For obvious reasons, the respondents automatically thought of these general features and could not leave them out.

Personal Features

Four of the respondents mentioned *sign language competence* as a very important aspect of a good team interpreter, two answered that they would like their interpreters to be *knowledgeable in the field*. Three of them want their interpreters to be *confident in their behaviour*. The items *friendly/sociable*, *flexible*, and *punctual* were mentioned only once.

One student mentioned that the interpreter's *fitness* and her *awareness of her (physical and psychological) limits* was important. Three students would prefer their interpreters to *wear dark colours for the contrast* (to be easier to understand), one of them mentioned that s/he would like them to *wear matching clothes*.

The remainder of the items are all referring to attitude: The interpreters' attitude toward their profession was mentioned six times: respect the *Code of Conduct*⁴ (1), attend *further vocational training* (1), *stay neutral* (not taking sides and just relaying the message) (2) and *transfer as much of the message as possible* (goal: 100%!) (1).

One student wants a good (team) interpreter to separate work and private life:

"Another important aspect is to be able to separate work from private life. If interpreters are close friends it should not be obvious in the interpreting situation when they work in a team. They should really be

⁴ Codes of Conduct are codified professional ethics, professional standards that describe attitudes and behaviours. They are intended to define the rules and tenets of the profession, they try to offer guidance for ethical behavior and explain professional conduct towards the customers, the colleagues (fellow interpreters) and the professional association. The code communicates guiding principles and expectations for ethical behavior to professionals and their consumers alike.



able to act professionally and should behave like colleagues. The Deaf client need not know that they are friends, this is a private issue between them. This also goes for a friendship between an interpreter and a Deaf client. In an interpreting situation, an interpreter friend should act neutral and treat me as a customer. So in a team interpreting situation the limits should be clearly cut and everybody should know how to behave professionally." (Student 4)

One of the students is convinced that any interpreter can work in a team with any other interpreter.

Items of the category 'attitude towards the teamer' mentioned were: *knowledge of the teamer* (2), *stays until the end of the assignment* (1) and *good climate/no conflict* (1): "if one of them is angry at the other, this is disturbing and I can see it." (Student 6)

Referring to 'attitude towards the Deaf customer', three students want their interpreters to be *well informed about the Deaf community*, two wish their interpreters to be *aware of them as customers* (e.g. asked which sign to use, if they have understood etc.). Two students would like some additional services provided: one would like to have the *monitor interpreter to sum up what has been said* if the student loses concentration or has to take a mental break and shuts off to recover.

"And what I would really appreciate is that if I lose track and do not understand I could turn to the monitor interpreter for a short explanation that helps me to understand. I know that this is not done by any of the interpreters who work in Austria. I would like the lead interpreter to continue to interpret and could take up the thread again after having got in the missing information. I know that it is not done this way, but it happens often that I lose the thread for example because I have looked away for a moment. It would be nice to have the monitor interpreter summing up what I have missed and help me to get on the right track again. This would be very convenient for me and a big help in understanding the lecture. It happens quite often that I miss information or cannot concentrate any more - my attention span is also 20 minutes. After fifteen minutes I am feeling worn out, too. But if I look away, I miss so much, when my mind drifts off... For me it would be great, if the monitor interpreter could offer support to



me when I need it. And the lead interpreter could go on interpreting uninterrupted. So if the Deaf customer needs explanation or a wrap up and asks the monitor interpreter, she could sum up what had gone missing and provide the Deaf customer with the information. Of course, the monitor interpreter has to have her break and does not pay that much attention, but she should know what is going on."
(Student 5)

Another student would like this mental break signalled to the lead interpreter who would then also shift into a lower gear and just sum up what the speaker says:

"But if I am very tired and I have to shut off for some minutes I would like the interpreter to continue interpreting but at a reduced level, not fully engaged. At a lecture for example, I may be tired and unable to pay full attention for some time. So I tell the interpreter that I "am taking a break" somehow and try to recover my concentration. I inform the interpreter so that she may also shift down a gear, but continue interpreting so that I can take up the thread again when I am intrigued by something and find my way back in. So if I "step back" in my mind, the interpreter can do the same and reduce to 50% but continue interpreting. She could, for example, sign the important words and produce a summed up version of the spoken text. And if there is an interesting sign there, I take up the thread again and concentrate."
(Student 2)



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

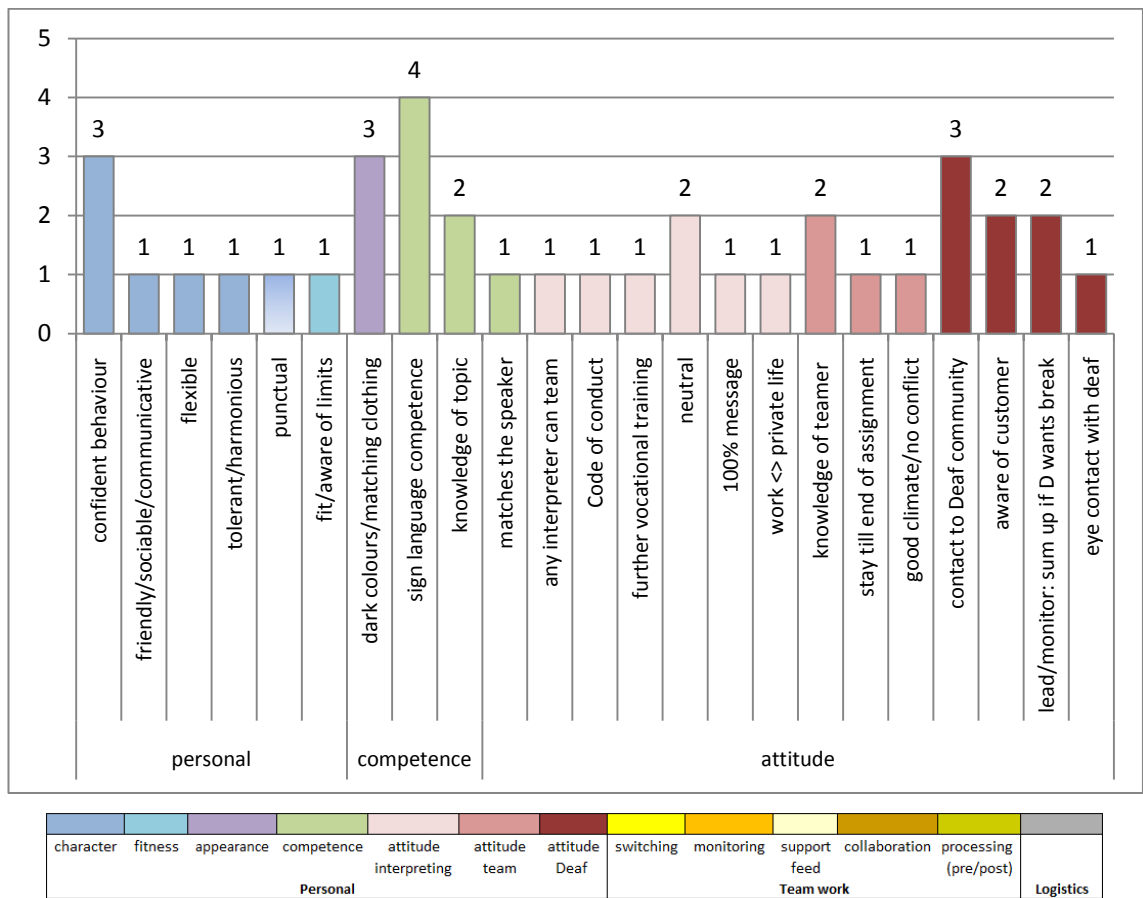


Figure 15 Good team interpreter: personal features

Team Features

Referring to teamwork, the respondents covered all features of the interpreting work in a team: Good team interpreters *agree about how and when to switch roles* (2) and the *spelling goes on smoothly and in regular intervals* (3).

A good team interpreter is an *attentive in the monitor role* (1) and *supports her team colleague* (4). She would *feed preferably in spoken language* (not to distract the Deaf customer) (1).

Two students believe that *compromising and adjusting to the team colleague* is important for working in a functioning team. Other features of good teamwork mentioned are: *contributing* to the common product (1), *taking the feed* from the monitor interpreter (1), *taking over* (if the team partner cannot continue) (1), and

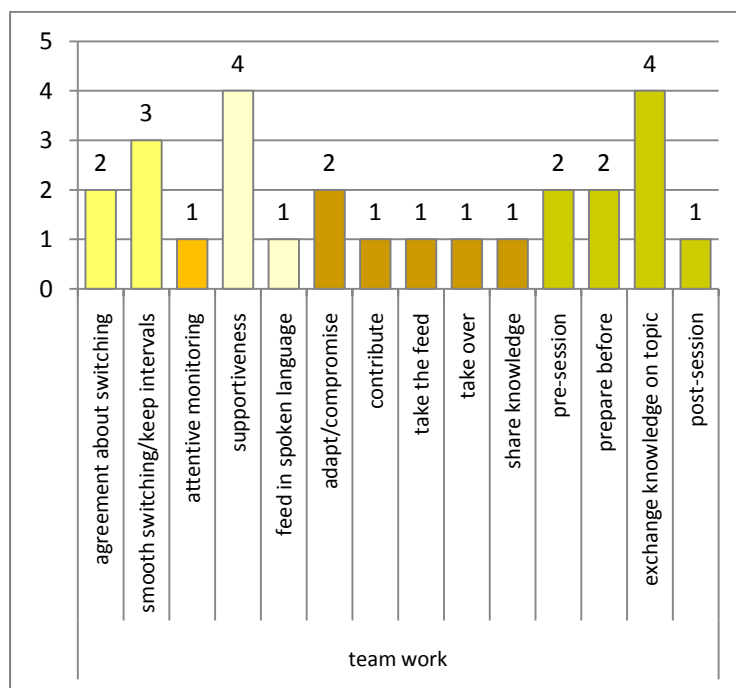


Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

sharing the knowledge on the setting (informing the team partner about the setting, if one of the interpreters has already worked there) (1).

Two students think that *meeting before the assignment* and *talking the issues through in pre-session* is characteristic for good team interpreters. Two Deaf respondents expect good team interpreters to *read preparation material*.

Four students think that a good team interpreter should *exchange her knowledge on the topic* with her teamer (in a pre-session). One student believes that good team interpreters should *process the assignment in a post-session*.



character	fitness	appearance	competence	attitude interpreting	attitude team	attitude Deaf	switching	monitoring	support feed	collaboration	processing (pre/post)	Logistics
Personal						Team work						

Figure 16 Good team interpreter: team features

4.5.1.5 Tasks of the Monitor Interpreter

Question no. 6 of the interview was directed at the task of the monitor interpreter. The respondents mentioned only a few personal, but many team features.



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The personal features were: *adjust to the speed of the speaker* (1), *merge into one interpreter* (harmonizing their styles) (1) and *explain/sum up to Deaf customer*, if the Deaf has lost track (1).

As to actual teamwork, the Deaf students mentioned the following monitoring tasks: *check time and initiate switch* (2), *listen to SL text* (3), *monitor TL text* (3), *monitor background information* (1).

The items related to support/feed mentioned were: *support the teamer* (4), *feed her* (7), *fingerspell* (3), *show numbers* (1), *correct mistakes* (4), *help with visual orientation* (3), *help teamer to find the thread again* (4), *propose better solutions* (1), and *feed background information to Deaf customer and lead interpreter* (1).

As to the features of collaboration and processing (pre- and post-session) the students mentioned the following features: *stay in the room* (1), *do your work* (4), *rest/recover* (1), and *take over, if necessary* (1). Only one student mentioned *monitoring of the environment* (sound, lighting etc.).

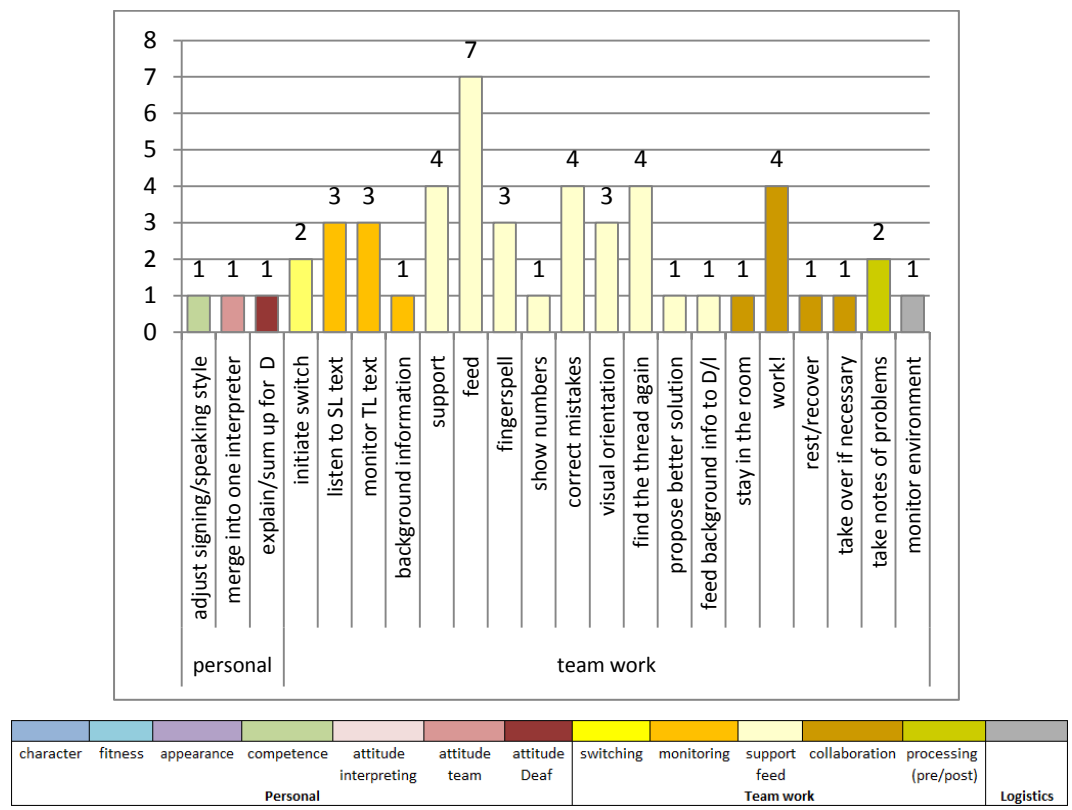


Figure 17 Tasks of the monitor interpreter



4.5.2 Sign Language Interpreters

In the following section the data gathered from the sign language interpreters will be presented. The information has been taken from personal interviews with eight interpreters. The interviews were conducted in spoken language and recorded on video. For two of the interpreters, no video data is available: one of the interviews was conducted over the telephone, another interviewee refused being videotaped and only agreed to the recording of her/his voice. The interviews were translated from German audio into English.

4.5.2.1 Factors of Successful Teamwork

The eight SLIs were asked to list three important features of successful team interpreting (Question 1).

According to them, the following personal features are important for successful teamwork: *punctuality* (2), *balanced competence* of the team members (1), being able to *communicate non-verbally* (by body posture and mimics) (2).

In addition, one interpreter pointed out that a *shared concept of the interpreting profession* helps to attune to each other.

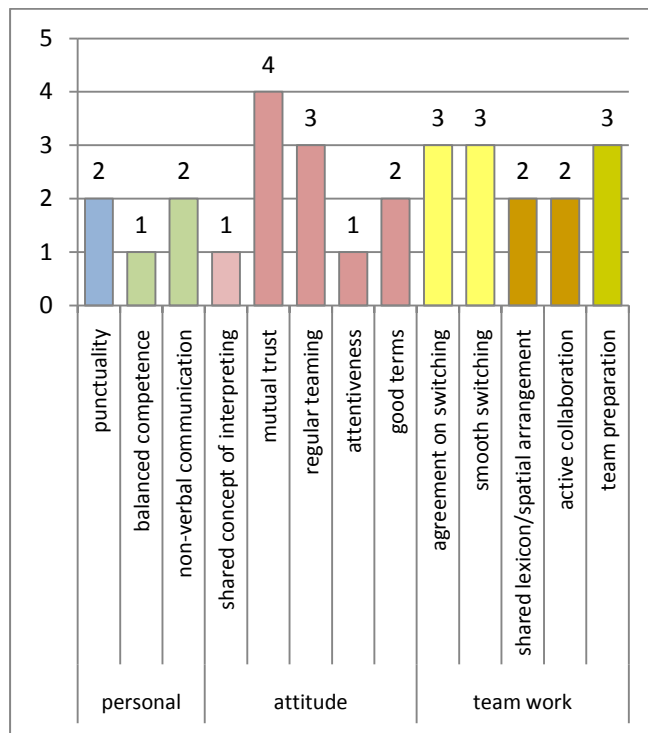
Overall, the items most frequently listed are *mutual trust* (4) and *regularity in teaming* (3). Also *attentiveness* (1) and *being on good terms* with each other (2) were mentioned as important items for successful teamwork.

The team working features listed were *agreement on switching* (3) and *smooth switching* (as unobtrusive as possible) (3), *the use of a shared lexicon* and *shared spatial arrangement*⁵ (2), and *active collaboration* (feed/use of feed etc.) (2). Three SLIs are convinced that *team preparation* (both interpreters preparing together) is a key to successful team interpreting.

⁵ Sign language is a visual language and uses the signing space in front of the signer as a kind of 'scene' to place objects/persons and to represent relations between them. Movements and placement have syntactic and semantic meaning. It is important where a sign is placed in this signing space. And it is important to be consistent with the choice of place that has been made. If a team of interpreters uses different places for the same entity, a deaf consumer may be completely confused and not realize that both interpreters are signing about the same thing. (cf. Boyes Braem 1995:55 ff).



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews



character	fitness	appearance	competence	attitude interpreting	attitude team	attitude Deaf	switching	monitoring	support feed	collaboration	processing (pre/post)	Logistics
Personal						Team work						

Figure 18 Factors of successful teamwork

The low frequencies of these features (max. 4) may be due to the fact that the respondents were asked to list the three most important features (see Section 4.3 Drawbacks of the Method Applied: 42).

4.5.2.2 Factors Compromising Teamwork Efficiency

The results presented in this chapter are derived from question no. 8, namely what the interpreters believe to be compromising factors of team interpreting. The interpreters were asked to list the three most important features which have a negative impact on the teamwork's efficiency.

The majority of answers can be put into the category 'personal features', especially to 'attitude'.

For example, two interpreters mentioned *tardiness* (coming late to the assignment and leaving early) as a problem in team interpreting.



One of them formulated as follows:

[I dislike it when] the team interpreter arrives late or leaves early. Or if s/he informs you of her/his immediate leaving, e.g. 'I leave 15 minutes earlier, please continue to interpret alone for the last 15 minutes.' I think this is rude and impolite behaviour towards the second team interpreter. The assignment has been taken for a certain time, if you leave early where is the benefit of having two interpreters? And it is not fair. The other interpreter has to spend the time as well, stay till the end and serve the last 15 minutes because that is the extent of her/his assignment. I do not like such a behaviour. If I am informed immediately before the start - e.g. my team mate whispers: 'I have to leave 15 minutes earlier today..' - the whole assignment has gone wrong and I am peeved." (Interpreter 2)

Additionally, three interpreters said that *diverging levels of target language performance* were problematic. One interpreter mentioned the negative influence of an interpreter's *bad condition* on an interpreting setting.

Two other items mentioned referred to the professional attitude: *dissimilar quality criteria* (1) and *chitchatting* (which distracts from interpreting) (1).

The features listed in the category 'attitude towards team interpreter' were: *lack of involvement/adjustment* to team partner (3), *lack of team responsibility* (1), *tensions or conflict in the team* (3), interpreters *feeling judged by their team mates* (3).

"If one gets the feeling not being considered as an equal match by the teamer, e.g. one feels classified as a beginner and as not being not good enough yet. Such an emotional 'message' from the team partner increases nervousness and in fact has a negative impact on one's performance. It has something to do with trust, I would say."
(Interpreter 3)

As to teamwork, the interpreters listed the following items: *continuous feed* (distracting and irritating the lead interpreter) (1) and *uneven distribution of work load* (one interpreter working more than the other) (1). Only one interpreter mentioned having *no problem with irregular shifts or interpreters leaving the room* for a break:



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

"I do not mind colleagues who do not switch in regular shifts, I can work 10 minutes and then 20 minutes, no problem for me. I do not mind colleagues who go to the toilet or leave the room while I am working. No problem at all." (Interpreter 6)

One interpreter said that an *information imbalance* (one interpreter being informed and the other not) would compromise the success of a team interpreting situation. Another interpreter mentioned that a colleague who had *not prepared for the assignment* was a risk.

The items assigned to the category 'logistics' were *lack of preparation on site* (arrangement of chairs, water etc.) (1) and *bad circumstances at the setting* (2).

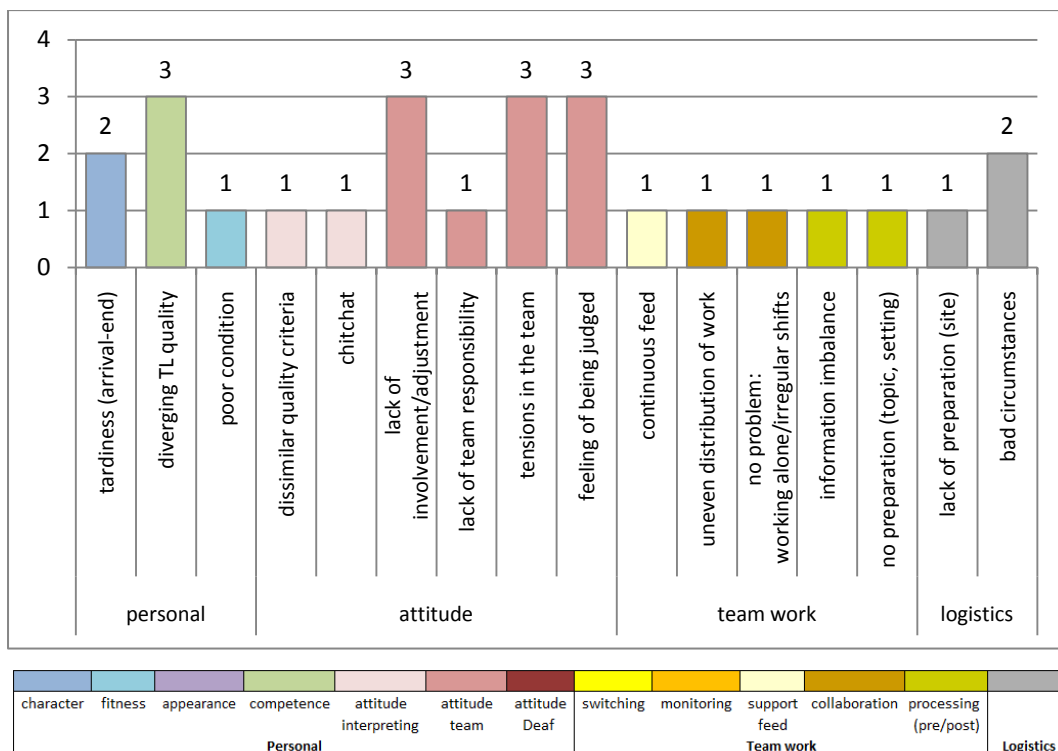


Figure 19 Factors compromising teamwork efficiency

The low frequencies of these features (max. 3) may be due to the fact that the respondents were asked to list the three most important features (see Section 4.3 Drawbacks of the Method Applied: 42).



4.5.2.3 Good Team Interpreter

When asked to think of the characteristics and behaviour of a good team interpreter (Question 3), the interpreters mentioned various items. The majority of them depicted personal traits, referring to character, competence and attitude. The highest score was 4.

Personal Features

The personal features mentioned were: *reliability* (3) and *punctuality* (3). In general, many items listed can be categorized as features of competence. Interpreters wish a team partner to have an *equal level of competence* (2). They want them to be able to produce a *harmonious product* (3) and to possess *enough processing capacity* to use the feed of the monitor interpreter and work on a *team product* (1). One interpreter expects her/his teamer to dispose of a *extensive lexicon* to be able to adapt to the colleague. Another interpreter wanted her/his teamer to have interpreting experience to add: "I like her to dispose of a lot of interpreting experience to complete mine. This would give a huge pool of shared knowledge to use in the situation" (Interpreter 6).

The majority of items listed by the SLIs are related to attitude. They expect a good interpreter to have a *shared concept* (of service, quality, professionalism, and customer relations) (3) and *invisibility* (not to bias the setting) (1).

Referring to 'attitude towards team interpreter' they expect that the team interpreter is ready to *adapt to her team partner* (5) and follows the rule '*the passive interpreter is always right!*' (2):

" ... there is a basic rule that I have always kept - and there was no need to discuss it very often with my teamer: 'The passive interpreter is always right.' If I am the active interpreter, I do not discuss any sign that is thrown at me, I just take it without asking. If I am irritated or wondering about it, I can discuss it after the assignment."

(Interpreter 7)



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

The preferred team partner has an *ongoing exchange with her team partner* (1), feels *solidarity* towards her team partner and *cares for a good team climate* (1), *appears* (in public) and behaves as *a member of the team* (1), has *trust and confidence* in her team partner (1), *can take feedback without feeling attacked and having to retaliate* (1).

One interpreter mentioned that *Deaf customer care* (chatting with the Deaf customer when being in the monitor role and adjusting the lexicon to the client's wishes) was part of a good team interpreter's attitude towards the Deaf customer (see Section 4.5.1.5. Tasks of the Monitor Interpreter:58).

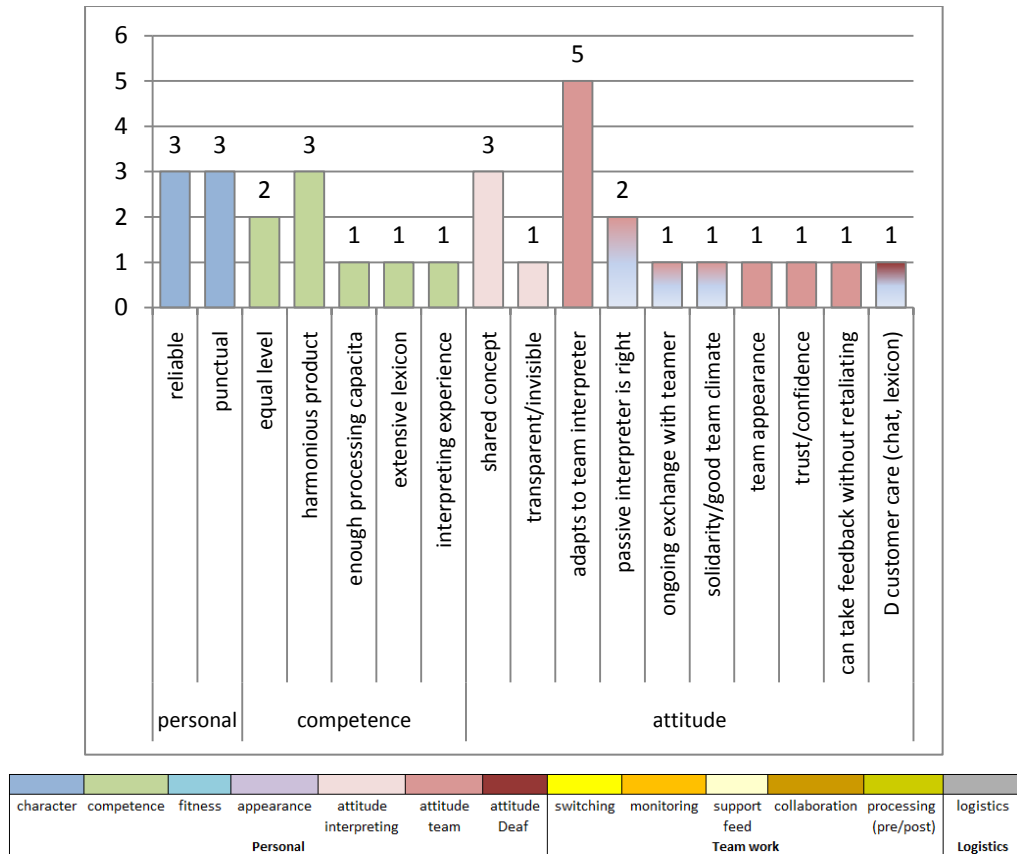


Figure 20 Good team interpreter: personal features



Team Features

The items listed are almost equally distributed over all subcategories of teamwork.

Only one interpreter mentioned *smooth switching* as an important behaviour of a good team interpreter.

The answers referring to 'support/feed' were the following: *efficient support* (2), *uninterrupted support* (the monitor interpreter no leaving the room or 'drifting off') (1), *unobtrusive support* (that is not noticed by the audience) (1), and *confirmation* (by nodding or 'thumbs up') (3).

The features classified under 'collaboration' were: *focus on the team product* (being ready to contribute to a common product and not focussing on an individual performance) (4), *harmonization of the lexicon* with her team partner (1), *taking over, if needed* (1), and *bringing chocolate* (1).

Features of 'processing (pre-/post-session)' listed were: *sharing of preparation material* (1), *pre-/post-session* (processing the assignment before and afterwards) (1) and *asking the Deaf costumer for her/his feedback* (1).

The SLIs mentioned two features that can be classified as belonging to 'logistics': *preparation of site* (arrangement of chairs and provision of water by the first interpreter on site) (1) and *shielding from intrusions* (questions from the audience, noise, etc.) (1).



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

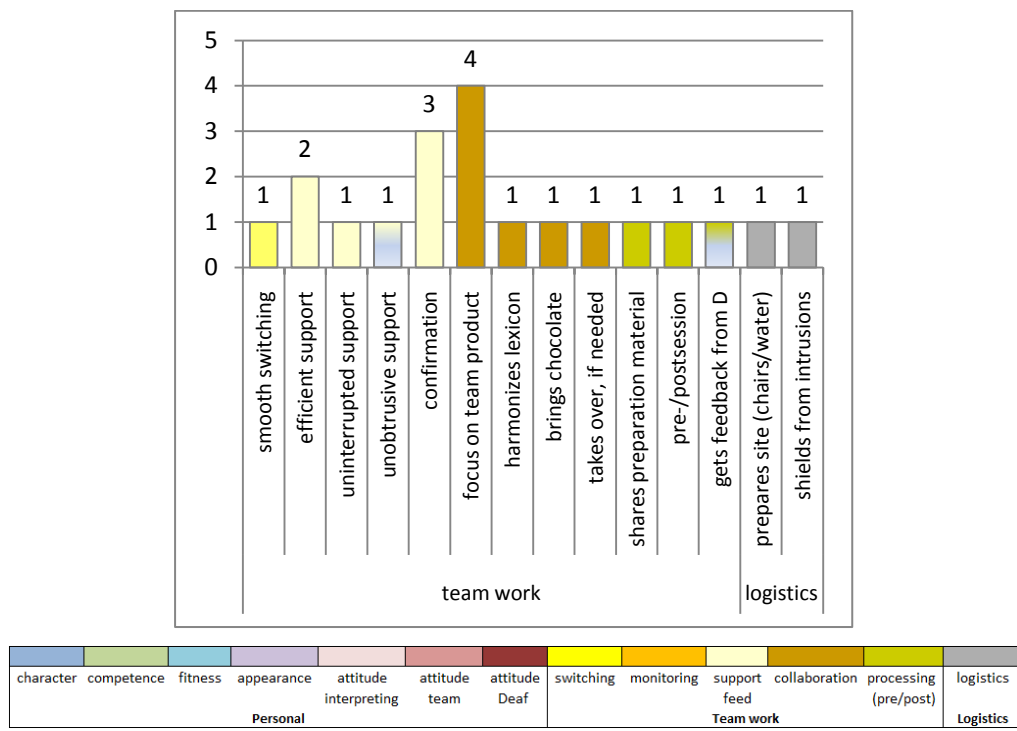


Figure 21 Good team interpreter: team features

4.5.2.4 Poor Team Interpreter

For this section I used the answers to the questions no. 9 and 10 of the interviews.

No-go Teamer

Question no. 9 asked whether the interpreters had colleagues with whom they would not want to work in a team. Although some of the respondents answered that they would team with any certified interpreter, all of them gave reasons for not teaming with some particular interpreter.

Six interpreters answered that there are colleagues they would not team with. One said that there are none s/he would not team with and one could not decide and answered YES/NO. Three interpreters reported that they would work with any interpreter, if necessary.



The reasons given for not teaming with an interpreter were mainly personal, features referring to an interpreter's attitude. Only few can be categorized as character or team working features: Three interpreters reported to refuse teaming with an interpreter for her *lack of competence*.

One interpreter would not team with somebody who had *another concept of the interpreting profession*, one would not work together with somebody who had *no respect for the standard practice of the trade*.

Referring to the 'attitude towards team interpreters' the respondents listed the following features: *lack of trust* (1), *dislike of teamer* (3), *bad experience with a teamer* (2), *lack of team spirit* (2) and *competition/criticism* (2).

The features of teamwork that the SLIs mentioned were the following: (working with a particular interpreter) was *no relief of the tension in the monitor role* (2), (teaming meant) *added stress because of the need of correcting the teamer and the resulting conflict* (2). As one interpreter formulated:

"Teamwork is poor if the team interpreters experience that working in that team takes energy instead of providing it. Energy drain can be caused by ill feelings towards the team partner, or if there are interferences between them that may capture the energy needed for interpreting."
(Interpreter 1)

One interpreter said that a teamer who withholds information was a no-go: "S/he does not give additional information even though s/he has some."
(Interpreter 2).



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

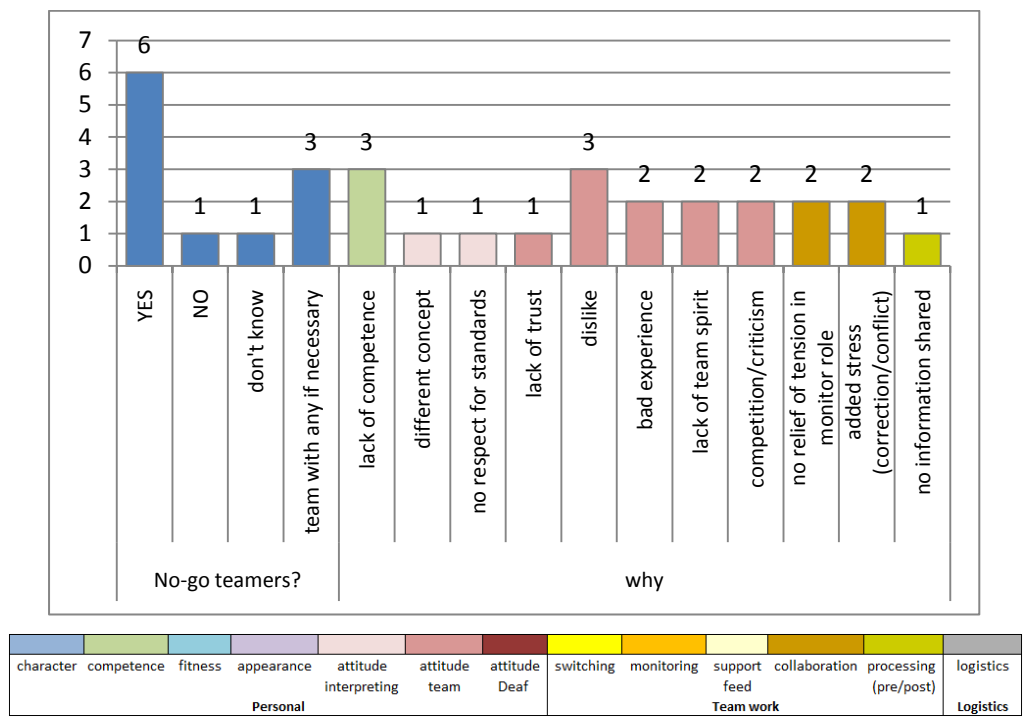


Figure 22 Reasons not to team with an interpreter⁶


Question no. 10 asked for characteristics and behaviours of poor team interpreters. The answers were grouped into personal and teamwork features.

Personal Features

Again, most of the items listed and mentioned by several of the respondents were connected to 'attitude towards the team interpreter'.

The items reported as significant for a poor team interpreter's character were *unreliability* (2) and *tardiness* (2). The issues related to (poor) competence were: the monitor interpreter *has to take over too much* (because of the poor performance of her colleague) (1) and (the monitor interpreter has to) *support a lot* (because of lack of competence of her teamer) (1).

One interpreter would consider it a characteristic of a poor team interpreter, if she *ignored the professional standards*.

⁶ The dark blue columns  were used for representing scores for polar questions like "Are there interpreters you would not team with?".



Referring to the 'attitude towards the team interpreter' the respondents listed the following items: a poor team interpreter *behaves as if she were alone* (in the setting) (3), she *does not feel any responsibility for the team* (4), she *does not inspire trust* (3), she is *preposterous* and treats colleagues in a *know-it-all-manner* (6), she *waves her business card* wherever she goes (2) and provides *support only to show off* (3). For one of the respondents a poor interpreter is

"a person who wants to make her mark and does not focus on the joint product. Somebody who wants to make use of the assignment as a stepping stone and tries to leave her business card. Someone who wants to endear herself to the hearing and the Deaf customer."
(Interpreter 5)

One interpreter mentioned that a poor team interpreter intentionally *depreciates her teamer's performance* (to shed light on her own brilliance) or *oppresses novice interpreters*.

"[I was] the active interpreter [and] made a mistake and my co-interpreter said out loud: 'I cannot stand that any longer. That is how it should be translated: "...."'. And everybody in the audience had heard that."
(Interpreter 3)



Investigating Team Interpreting: Results of the Interviews

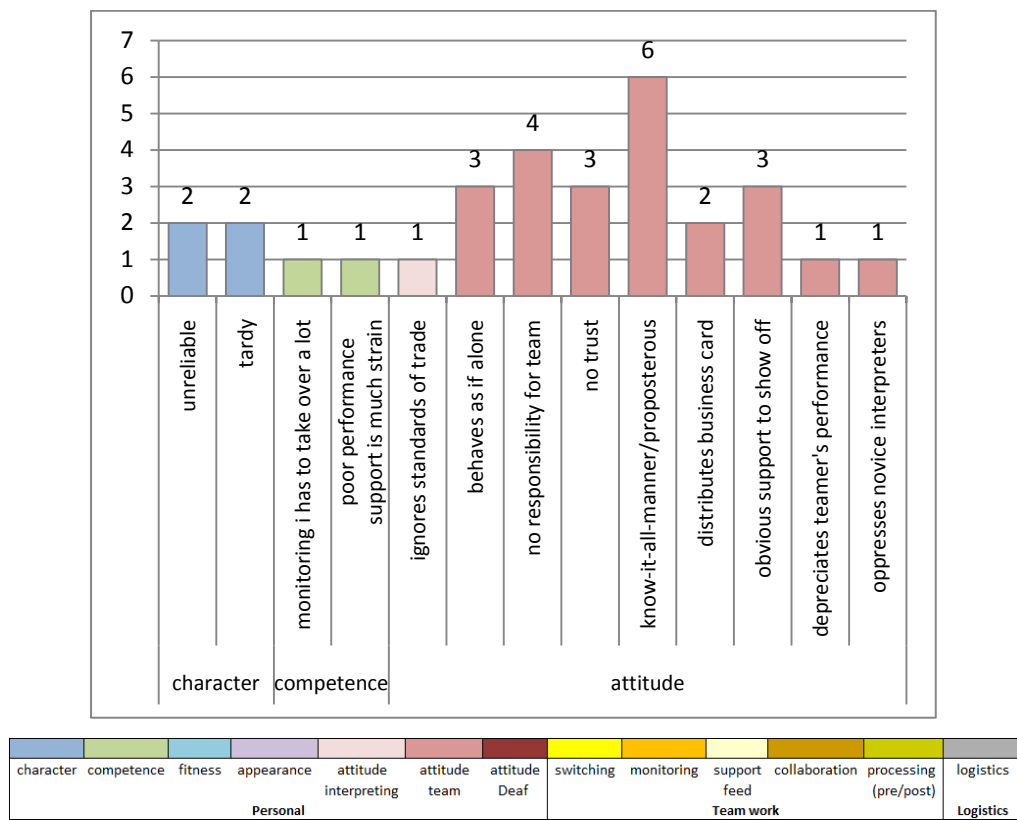


Figure 23 Poor team interpreter: personal features

Team Features

The items referring to teamwork that were listed cover the whole range of subcategories.

The respondents named *irregular switching* (2) or a teamer who *does not monitor* the TL text (2). A poor team interpreter *does not provide (useful) support* (4). As one interpreter described a poor colleague in the monitor role:

"For me as the producing interpreter there is no input from the poor team mate. Even when I signal my need for support by looking at her/him, s/he may not even look at me or does not know where I am in the process because s/he has not paid attention." (Interpreter 4)

A poor monitor interpreter *does not take the feed* of the monitor interpreter (1).

The same interpreter stated:



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"From the supporting interpreter's perspective that means that you try to give a feed, but the producing interpreter does not even look at you, does not pay attention to your support, does not make use of it."
(Interpreter 4)

On top of that, a poor teamer *corrects where correction is not needed* (2), *does not stop feeding and keeps a sharp eye* (on the lead interpreter) (1).

A poor team interpreter *does not share information* (1), *does not prepare* (for an assignment) (1) and *neglects (constructive) feedback*.

As to logistics, the SLI mentioned the following: (while trying to solve logistical problems) the monitor interpreter *disrupts the interpretation* of the lead interpreter (1) and *does not shield the lead interpreter from interruptions* (1).

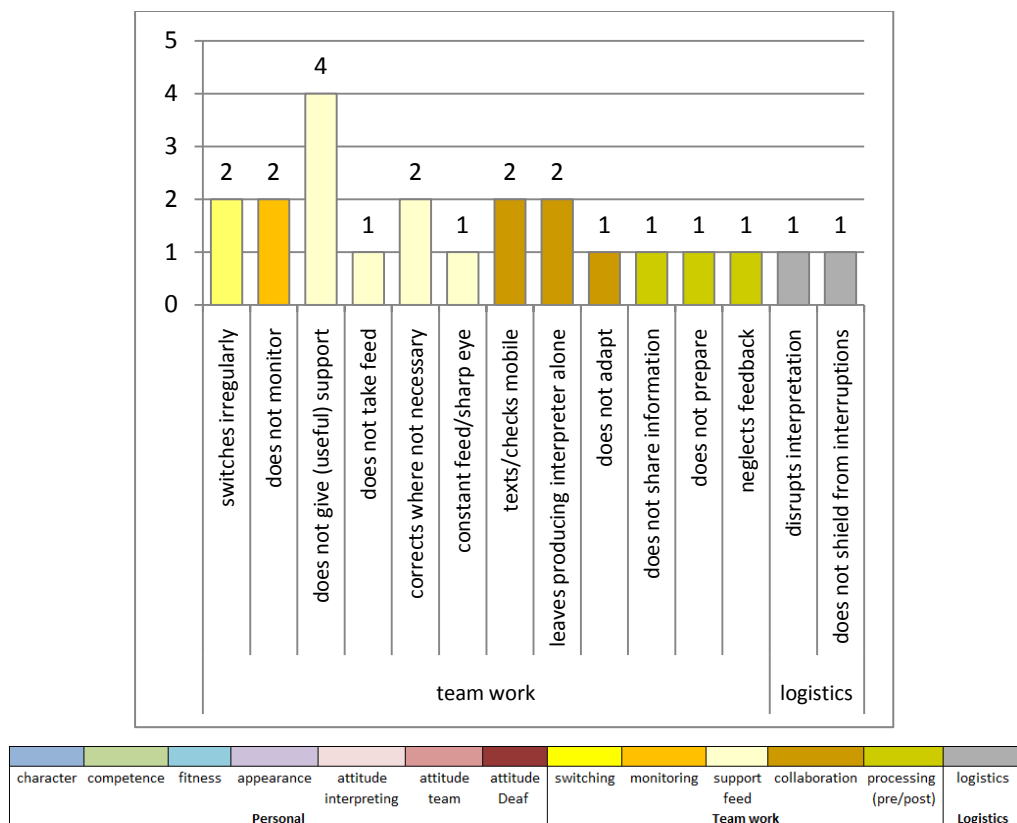


Figure 24 Poor team interpreter: team features



4.5.2.5 Regular Teams or Not?

This chapter looks into the answers to question no. 2 of the interview. It asked for the reasons why an interpreter would prefer a regular team partner to any other interpreter for teaming.

Generally, the SLIs were not very clear on that matter: Three of them answered with an outright YES, two said that they would prefer to constantly team with one or several specific interpreter/s and three said, that they generally would team with any interpreter, but preferred to team with some of them.

Asked for the reasons for their preferences, some of the items listed were related to competence: being an *expert in teamwork* (1), being able to *communicate non-verbally* (1) and having *technical knowledge in the field* (1).

Most items mentioned can be classified under 'attitude'.

One interpreter said that s/he preferred to team with always the same partner, because it helped her to *concentrate on the job of interpreting* (as all features of their co-operation had already be settled).

The rest of this group were features related to 'attitude towards the team interpreter': a kind of *'flow' between the team partners* (2), *knowledge of team partner* (2), *personal tie* (1), a *shared goal* (1), being a *good match* (1) and the unconditional *adaptation to the team partner* (1).

The items with the highest scores are from the category 'teamwork': *mutual support* (4), *less strain and more fun* (7), *regular assignments* (3), *quality of the team product* (1), *shared lexicon* (1) and *more efficient preparation* (as most issues have already been settled) (5).



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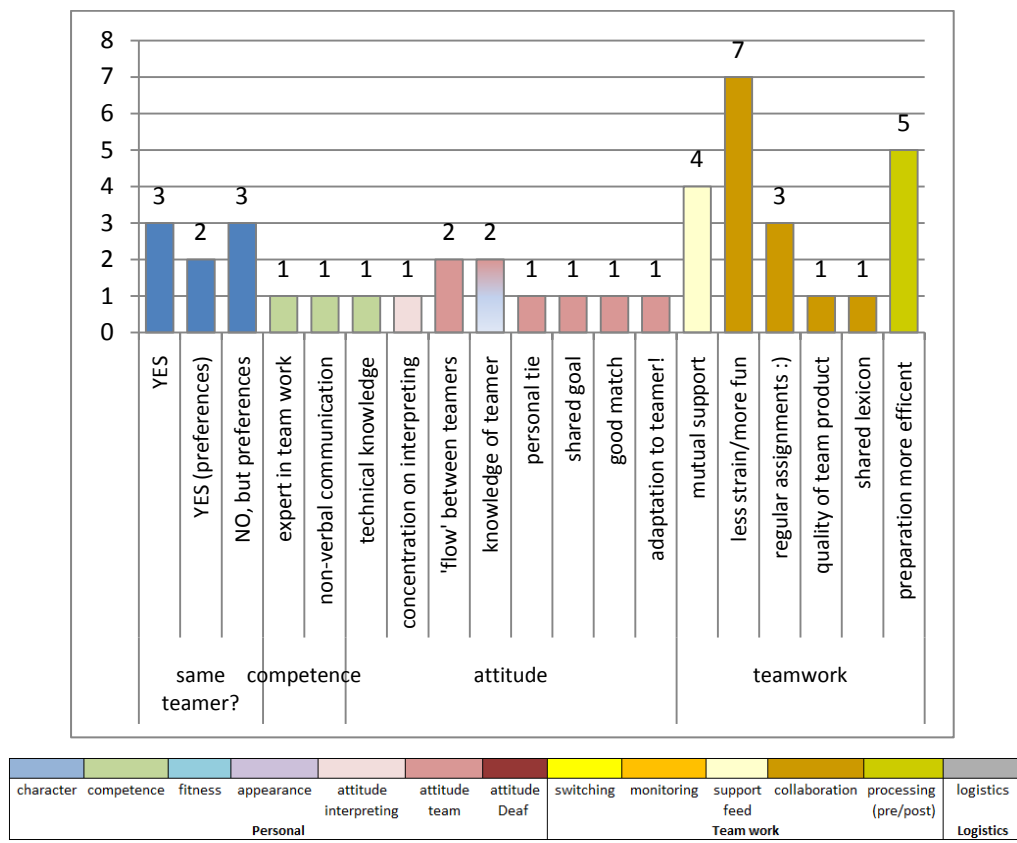


Figure 25 Advantages of teaming with the same interpreter

4.5.2.6 Tasks of Monitor Interpreter

The data for this section are taken from the answers to question no. 6. The SLIs were asked to list the tasks of the monitor interpreter.

Only two items referred to 'attitude': One interpreter mentioned that s/he would expect her/his team partner to have *trust in her/his competence*. Another interpreter thought that some kind of *Deaf customer care* should be part of the monitor interpreter's job and elaborated as follows:

"It is her duty to answer to the Deaf customer's questions. These questions are not related to the topic, but may address interpreting issues or be motivated by the Deaf customer's wish to relax and to release her/his attention. For me this wish is legitimate. Deaf customers may wish to chat with somebody but it should not be the lead interpreter. It is the co-interpreter's task who would then have a short chat with the customer. Afterwards, the situation goes on as



usual. It helps me to relax [*when I am in the monitor role*] and it is also a relief for the Deaf customer. They keep telling me that sometimes they need to ease their attention and look at the co-interpreter to ask her a question. What happens is that the co-interpreter cannot answer because she is so shocked. Deaf customers keep telling me that it is their personal choice if they want to pay attention or not or if they want to chat with a person who is competent in sign language. They want to have a chat with the interpreter during the setting. The hearing participants do alike and whisper to each other." (Interpreter 2)

As expected, the interpreters' answers were almost exclusively from the category 'teamwork'.

All of the respondents mentioned *support* (feed and help with miscues, loss of thread and fingerspelling of names etc.) to be the main task. One person answered that s/he wanted her/his team partner *not to feed too much* (because too much feeding would distract her/him). Four interpreters expect their team partners to give *visual orientation* (when visual media/projections behind their back are used). Three expect them to give them *confirmation and encouragement* (if they are right or following the right track).

Four interpreters think that the monitor interpreter should do everything the lead interpreter needs to go on interpreting (*enables production* - fill in missing information, shield from interruption). One interpreter mentioned that the monitor interpreter should *prevent the lead interpreter to switch language modes*⁷. Three interpreters mentioned that the monitor interpreter should *recover* while being in monitor role. Additionally, one respondent answered that *sharing preparation material* was amongst the duties of a monitor interpreter.

Another five items were mentioned from the category 'logistics': *monitoring of sound/lighting* etc. (8), *answering questions from the audience* (3), *shielding the*

⁷ An interpreter switching from sign language to spoken language or *vice-versa* while interpreting is executing a 'mode switch'. This strategy may become necessary because of utterances in the target language of the interpretation coming from the public. Mode switches are especially tiring and add to the challenge of interpreting. It may happen that interpreters do not succeed in switching at the right moment and continue interpreting into the wrong direction (e.g. from spoken language into spoken language, just repeating what the speaker uttered) (*personal experience and observation*).



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lead interpreter from intrusions (2), showing (items) on the Deaf customer's screen in IT trainings (1) and handling of papers and documents on site (to prevent documents from being put on the lead interpreter's lap distracting her from interpreting) (1).

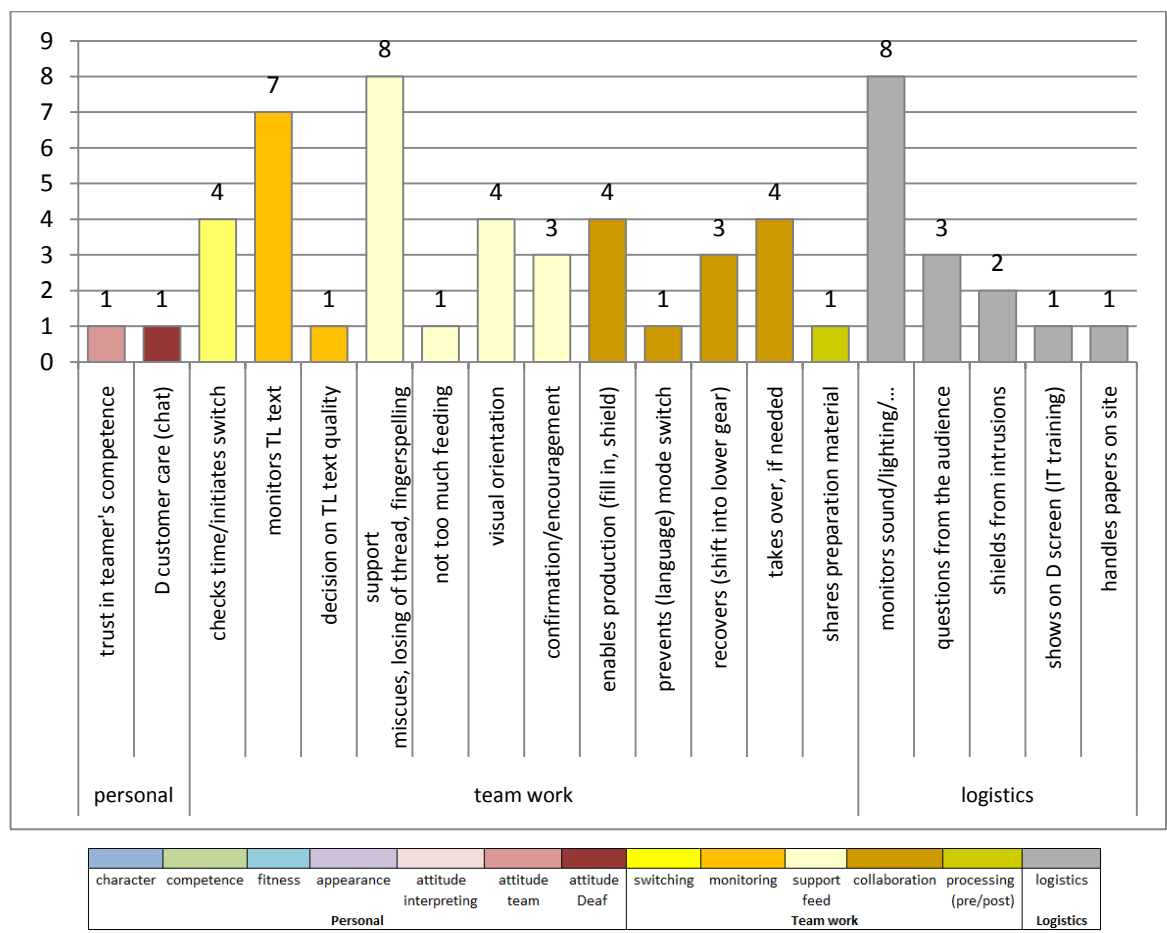


Figure 26 Tasks of the monitor interpreter



4.6 Discussion: Comparing Deaf customers' and Interpreters' Views

The following section will discuss the results of both groups, compare them and relate them to results of other scholars.

4.6.1 Perception of Interpreter Teams

The data collected for this study permit the following conclusions: when the Deaf customers look at a team of interpreters they still perceive the two interpreters individually. They see strong differences in personal traits such as: character, expression, language competence and experience. Team work features like switching and support are hardly mentioned. Consumers do not consider preparation or processing of the assignment to be different⁸. For them, the teams they work with have not yet succeeded to "merge into one single interpreter" as one of the students puts it (Student 7). They are also worried about the negative impact of poor interpreter quality on their educational career. The same considerations can be found in one of Seal's studies. In an interview with a Deaf student we find the Deaf person stating: "I prefer consistency, someone who knows my thinking, my language, my communication style, etc. If you have different interpreters, it's hard." (Seal 1998:185). The fact that the most salient aspect Deaf students mentioned is divergence in signing and style implies that Austrian SLIs should concentrate on improving their performance by adjusting to each other and harmonizing their lexicon, rhythm and spatial arrangements to produce a more coherent product.

Although two students mentioned that a huge progress in sign language interpreting in Austria has been made in the last ten years, I am convinced that there is still ample room for improvement. "Instead of focusing on the 'product' of interpreting and two minds" they should work "in synergy focusing on the

⁸ As it has been mentioned before, some of the Deaf students had not yet considered team interpreting and were thinking about these issues for the first time when they were interviewed for this study. Later on, more aspects came to their minds that probably had not appeared as answers to the first question because it was the first question they were asked when they started to dive into the topic.



same interpreting process to deliver a successful result" (Walker 2006:45). Or they should have "a view of the message as our message, not my message" so that "both interpreters create the message and both interpreters have ownership of the message" (Hoza 2010:38).

4.6.2 Factors of Successful Team Interpreting

The interviews with the **Deaf students** revealed that the Deaf customers want to see the interpreters collaborate. Interestingly, Deaf consumers seem to attribute more importance to the taking of monitor interpreter's feed by the lead interpreter than the interpreters themselves (only one interpreter had complained about that). One of the students signed:

"I have seen many times that the lead interpreter missed some words of the spoken text and was fed by her teamer, but refused to take the feed and continued without correcting the error. I have seen examples of this behaviour, but I do not know, what was going on between them. Maybe the lead interpreter was disturbed by the feed and could not take it or she had understood it anyway or maybe she had taken the feed and used it differently." (Student 3)

The most salient feature mentioned was mutual support and smooth and regular switching. Consumers also mentioned that they want interpreters to communicate in an unobtrusive way and to have a fluent and uninterrupted interpretation. Their view is orientated towards the product they want to consume with the least effort possible.

The items listed by the **interpreters** were more concerned with attitude and team climate: mutual trust, regular teaming, being on good terms. This result is consistent with the team interpreting literature (Festinger 1999, Shaw 1995a, Shaw 2000, Sluis & DeWitt 2006, Swabey 2000, 2001, Turner 2007). To be able to attune to each other and open up to show all weak spots, interpreters have to build a strong relationship based on trust. A monitor interpreter needs to know her team mate very well to recognize if she needs feeding and to give her the feed at the right moment in her interpreting process.



As interpreter 4 put it:

"When I am in the supportive role I know my colleague well enough to assess her/his needs and to know if s/he needs support. I am able to identify mistakes and can correct/feed at the right moment in her/his interpreting process. It should go hand in hand."

To be able to build this kind of knowledge of the team partner interpreters have to trust each other.

Interpreters also mentioned aspects of teamwork that focus on collaboration: shared lexicon/spatial arrangement, active collaboration, team preparation and agreement on switching. These features suggest that there is awareness of the collaborative aspects of team interpreting.

4.6.3 Factors Compromising Effective Team Interpreting

The **Deaf interviewees** stressed two aspects as most disturbing for them in team interpreting. One was dissimilar signing/interpreting quality, a comment consistent with the results from the question on differences between interpreter teams (see Section 4.6.1 Perception of Interpreter Teams:77). It also corresponds with the results of Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer (2004) who questioned 20 Deaf and hard-of-hearing students on their perspectives on educational interpreting. They found out that "the majority of the students ..., at various times, ... needed to simplify, repeat, or alter their signs to make sure their interpreters understood them." (Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer 2004:22) and that "some participants feel that, when the interpreter makes mistakes in voicing for them, the results reflect poorly on them." (Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer 2004:23). They also found that it was "important for interpreters to have a good facial expression. If an interpreter shows no facial expression", the student "will become bored!" (Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer 2004:29).

This high score for poor interpreter quality seems to be the cause for the feature 'two interpreters, one would be better' that was mentioned by three students.



They explained that they preferred to have one interpreter for the whole assignment and that two interpreters were ok, if they are "attuned to each other and have the same style, use the same signs and syntax" (Student 8).

The second feature compromising effective team interpreting receiving a high score was 'support leaving the room', the most obvious indication that a team does not work together very well. If one considers that Deaf students have problems to get funding for two interpreters, it is understandable that they want to get what they are paying for. As student 8 formulated: "As I understand teamwork, they are paid for working and should support the lead interpreter while they are not interpreting themselves."

Consumers also mentioned other disturbing aspects like doing other things in the monitor role (texting, checking e-mails, etc.).

Also **Interpreters** focused on a lack of TL quality of the team interpreter which compromises the homogeneity of the product. Furthermore, it gives additional strain to the monitor interpreter. Interpreter 5 reported that s/he disliked her/his team interpreter not to "work on the same level for her/him [*monitor interpreter*] to release her/his tension in the passive role". If the team interpreter in the lead role is poor, the monitor interpreter has to keep up her tension and provide a lot of support or even has to take over to make sure the best quality is achieved.

The results also highlighted the importance of a strong relationship based on trust as mentioned before (see 4.6.2 Factors of Successful Team Interpreting: 78). Features referring to relationship got the highest scores (lack of involvement, tensions in the team, feeling of being judged).

4.6.4 Team Composition

The composition of an interpreting team is an important issue and may decide on the success of the team interpreting assignment. According to Shaw (2000), one should "take into account the usual factors for each individual interpreter (familiarity with the type of situation, the context and the persons involved,



linguistic and cultural fluency, interpreting skill levels, etc.)." (Shaw 2000:10)
In addition, one "need[s] to consider the compatibility of the potential team and the ways in which they may (or may not) complement each other in all of the above areas and more." (Shaw 2000:10). Due to the lack of interpreters, especially for challenging settings in higher education, choosing the ideal team is not realistic in today's situation in Austria. Deaf persons have to take the interpreter(s) who is/are available. As one of the Deaf students mentioned:

"I give assignment to almost all interpreters in Vienna. I am not that prickly. I do not care about their quality: good or bad, it's OK for me. The most important is that there is an interpreter at all." (Student 6)

As mentioned before (see Section 4.3 Drawbacks of the Method Applied: 42), the **Deaf students** were not asked to comment on their interpreter choices for teamwork. Nevertheless, one student referred to that issue and commented:

"It happens quite often that the Deaf customer chooses the interpreters and they meet at the assignment. They may not have had the chance to choose their team partner. That's what I do not really know. Is it better to choose the interpreters or have them choose their team partner? They may be forced to work together if I choose them." (Student 4)

One of the interpreters reported on team composition as follows:

"Of course, there are people you are more sympathetic with than with others. And this also goes for the Deaf customer as well. Sometimes they give an assignment to a certain group to form a team they have had experience with, that had worked well together, whose performance was clear to them and had met their expectations. Their choice may also be motivated by the technical knowledge of the interpreters, by the topic or the specific layout of the assignment." (Interpreter 7)

The data collected from the **interpreters** show that most interpreters prefer to only team with members of a subset of the interpreter community, although three reported to team with any certified interpreter. The reasons given were



reduced strain/more fun, higher efficiency in preparing and agreeing about how to work together and their preference for regular assignments.

The highest score for 'reduced strain/more fun' is consistent with literature. Festinger commented on this aspect: "Like a successful duet, a good interpreting team makes beautiful sense together. And the enjoyment factor increases twofold." (Festinger 1999)

The preference for regular teamers is also consistent with the findings of Charles Handy (1993). According to him, homogeneity tends to promote satisfaction.

4.6.5 Good Team Interpreters

When asked for the qualities and behaviour of good team interpreters the **Deaf students** answered consistently, compared to responses to other questions. They stressed the importance of sign language competence (see also Chapters 4.6.1 Perception of Interpreter Teams: 77 and 4.6.3 Factors Compromising Effective Team Interpreting: 79). They also attributed considerable importance to the interpreter's contact with the Deaf community and to their awareness of the Deaf as the customer of interpreting services:

"I like them to be aware of me as the customer, checking with me whether I have understood or if the sign they are using is OK for me, whether it is part of a technical lexicon or whether there are several signs for the same concept ... And if they use a special sign I like them to check with me whether I agree with it." (Student 2)

Two Deaf students mentioned their wish for special services like summing up of the speech by lead/monitor interpreter if the Deaf students had to switch off to regain their concentration (see Section 4.5.1.4 Good Team Interpreter: 53).

An interpreter has to muster high concentration and manage many tasks more or less simultaneously (Walker 1994:21) - both in the lead and the monitor role (see Section 4.5.2.6 Tasks of Monitor Interpreter: 74). Therefore, such



additional services are unlikely to fit the long list of duties of interpreters. This is especially the case in very challenging settings like lectures in higher education that may easily go beyond the interpreter's educational background.

The other important features for good teaming mentioned were supportiveness, smoothness of switching and an exchange of knowledge on the topic consistent with the data collected from other questions. These features document that the Deaf students perceive the improvement in quality when a team is collaborating and has had preparation on the topic.

The interpreters reported the importance of the team partner's character and personality as well as her attitude towards interpreting.

As expected the interpreters mentioned many aspects referring to 'attitude towards the team interpreter' which corresponds with the answers to other questions. The main focus was on adjustment to the partner which implies profound knowledge of and trust in her. Barbara Walker already stressed that teamwork with a good team partner both improves the quality of the product as well as reduces the stress for each member of the team (1994:3). To be able to open up to a team colleague and attune to her wave length an interpreter needs to rely on her teamer.

One way of expressing care for the team mate is, for example, to 'bring chocolate' to the assignment, as one of the interpreters mentioned. This care for the material well-being and the resulting release of endorphins relates to the list of characteristics of good team interpreting given at the EFSLI 2004 Conference held in Finland on co-operation and teamwork:

"Honesty, loyalty, communication, creativity, cooperation, trust, commitment, nice people, good atmosphere, sharing, having fun together, *Finnish pastries*, the common goal, respect for others, the sense of humour, professionalism, an urge to develop, confidentiality, ..." (EFSLI 2004:21, *italics added*).

Interpreters also mentioned their preference for encouragement and confirmation by the teamer which would give them orientation and recognition:



"What I really like is confirmation by nodding or thumbs up if I have found an elegant solution for a complicated source language text. It is a kind of recognition" (Interpreter 3). Receiving confirmation and encouragement builds trust and confidence that is essential to successful teamwork.

Another important aspect of a good team interpreter is the ongoing effort undertaken to produce a common product, a team product that should be as harmonious as possible. Interpreters are aware of this aspect and are working towards this goal: interpreters have to be flexible and their "flexibility has to be pushed further, because s/he has to adapt to the situation and step even more back from her/his own personality to make space for a coherent team product" (Interpreter 7).

4.6.6 Poor Team Interpreters

The views of **Deaf students** on that issue can only be taken from their answers to the question on disruptions in team interpreting as there has not been any question directly addressing poor team interpreter quality.

Overall, they complained about poor TL quality, attitudes (towards their teamers and towards the Deaf customer) and a complete breakdown of the team when the monitor interpreter leaves the room.

The issue of poor TL quality or misunderstandings of the interpreter that may be a reason for failure in the educational system mentioned is also found in Brown Kurz & Caldwell Langer (2004) who cite a Deaf student: "It scares me sometimes that the interpreters will make me fail my classes and pull me down in my educational process." (22)

They also deplore competition and conflict in team interpreters, problems that are also felt by Deaf customers elsewhere: "Deaf consumers have found ineffective co-working to be a distraction and cause more problems than they solve." (Walker 2006:41).



Their answers show that they are concerned about the interpreter's attitude toward the Deaf consumers: they want to be treated as a customer of the interpreting service (see Section 4.5.1.4 Good Team Interpreter:53) and expect their interpreters to have cultural knowledge about the Deaf community: "They should both be well informed about the Deaf community and be in regular contact." (Student 5)

Finally, the interpreters are expected to collaborate and do their best to produce a harmonious product.

Interpreters are aware of the problem of heterogeneity of interpreter teams:

"I am convinced that Deaf customers do not appreciate team interpreting if the product lacks homogeneity." (Interpreter 1)

"Deaf customers have frequently told me that a collaborative team is much better than two independent interpreters taking turns where you can see that there is a catch somewhere and that they are not used to working together. There is no 'flow'." (Interpreter 2)

Again, the results of the question on poor team interpreters relate to the answers given to corresponding questions: When working in teams interpreters focus on the good quality of the relationship and wish the team to be 'a good match'. They want their teamer to be reliable and ready to adjust to produce a homogeneous product:

"you can perceive the quality of a team, it is not that harmonious a product, it is not such a smooth process if the team does not match. And I am convinced that our Deaf customers are aware of tensions in a team and realize if a team does not work well together. They can feel it." (Interpreter 8)

This strive for a good team product is also found in a study on requesting and offering support by Cockely & Hawkins (2003) where it is stated that:

"interpreters have as a goal the success of the interpreted interaction and their functioning as a team" (p. 83). Moreover, the RID Standard Practice Paper on



Team interpreting states: "Interpreters are expected to collaborate with colleagues to foster the delivery of effective interpreting services." (p. 1).

The data from this study imply that 'collaboration/interdependence' is the view of team interpreting that has taken over, among the customers and the service providers themselves.

Looking at Figure 23 Poor team interpreter: personal features:71, the prevalence of features of the category 'attitude towards the team interpreter' becomes apparent. It is all about bad climate and not feeling well in the interpreting situation, about not being trusted or not thought of as equally competent. Sometimes this uncooperative behaviour may even take the form of oppression and intentional depreciation of the team partner's performance. The reason for such behaviour amongst sign language interpreters could be 'vicarious trauma' that has been investigated by Harvey (2001) and described by others (see Section 2.3.2.3 Team Interpreting: 21).

One way to deal with vicarious trauma is to attend 'consultative supervision' and accept that interpreting in emotionally stressful situations may traumatize the interpreter. Relying on their professional neutrality, many interpreters believe that they are not affected and do not take any precautions or measures to deal with it. But as Harvey put it "when you empathize with a Deaf customer who is oppressed, your nervous system becomes tense." (2001a:92). Denying this tension does not make it any less dangerous.

Vicarious trauma has not yet been discussed in the Austrian SLI community. It might be time to do so to increase interpreters' awareness, to reduce backbiting, and thereby improve the quality of interpreting services, especially in assignments where interpreters work in teams.

4.6.7 The Tasks of the Monitor Interpreter

As already stated and related in the literature, monitor interpreters are very busy in their role as support interpreter to the lead interpreter (Hoza 2010, Fisher



1994, Frishberg 1990, RID 1997, Walker 1994, see also Section 2.3.2.3 Team Interpreting: 21).

This is also what **Deaf customers** expect them to be: they mention support and feed, correction of mistakes, giving cues to visual orientation, helping the lead interpreter to find the thread again. Some formulate it very clearly: Do your work!: "I do not like team interpreters leaving the room and going to the toilet or getting food or drink while the team interpreter is working alone." (Student 8).

On the other hand, the Deaf consumers are aware of the high strain and challenge of interpreting and the need to recover:

"Mutual support is positive and should be a relief to the lead interpreter when you compare it to working alone. For example, if the lead interpreter loses the thread or needs to be spelled because after half an hour of interpreting the interpreter is worn out. If they work in intervals of 15 minutes, it is much better because the attention span is 20 minutes. After 20 minutes the attention goes down, so it is better to have an interval of 15 minutes. After having been spelled, the interpreter has a rest". (Student 5)

But how can one work and to recover at the same time? This seems to be contradictory and mirrors the different approaches to the role of the monitor interpreter (Hoza 2010:1-19). It is the very same student who is aware of the concentration span who wants the interpreter to add an additional task to her long list of duties to attend to when being in the monitor role. S/he wants her to help the Deaf consumer to find the track again by summing up of what has been said by the speaker (see Section 4.5.1.4. Good Team Interpreter:53). Sometimes, the tasks on the list are almost too many to tick off. If you add one, you have to reduce on another. And even managing the distribution of energy uses energy... (cf. the *Efforts Model* in Gile 1985).

But, beware! Excessive strain and repetitive movements like interpreters experience them may result in physical harm. (see Section 2.3.2.3 Team Interpreting: 21)



The **interpreters** are aware of these professional risks and expect to rest in the monitor role to recover. On the other hand, they know what their duties are:

"Of course, there has to be some recovery in the passive role. But it goes without saying that I would not read a newspaper or check my mobile for missed calls or text messages. Nevertheless I would try to reduce my attention not having to be all alert like when I am the producing interpreter. I certainly pay attention to the product of my teamer and the speech/content/situation, but not as much. *I do not think about how to produce into the target language. I monitor whether the source message is understandable in the target language and whether the active interpreter needs support.* I cannot tell which of the two roles is more challenging, it depends on the assignment." (Interpreter 8, *italics added*)

The description of the monitoring process (printed in italics) corresponds to the model described by Hoza (2010:78-9) based on Colonomos' model of the interpreting process (see Figure 3 Monitor interpreter's processing:25).

But the capacity freed has to be used for other tasks that cannot be fulfilled by the lead interpreter: all kinds of support (feeding, orientating, giving background information, confirmation and encouragement, etc), shielding off intrusions (answering questions from the audience, showing information on screen, controlling the pace of the speaker, talking to the janitor, etc.), remembering the choices of the team partner (spatial arrangements, signs, syntax), and monitoring environment. As one interpreter remarks: "The supporting interpreter has to take all the duties the productive interpreter cannot. She has to check what the producing interpreter needs to do to deliver a good performance." (Interpreter 4)

This is quite a challenge and not much of a rest. As Interpreter 8 makes clear: "I cannot tell which of the two roles is more challenging". At least, switching into the monitor role allows the interpreter "to relax physically, and at the same time provides a mental shift in task," (Fisher 1994:19) thereby reducing their physical and mental fatigue.



There is one aspect related to switching that contradicts the results of Stehr (2004). According to her survey among 20 sign language interpreters in Hamburg it is the monitor interpreter who signals readiness and the lead interpreter decides when to switch. The same procedure is reported by Napier, Locker McKee, and Goswell (2006:137). According to the results of this study, it is the monitor interpreter who initiates the switch, for SLIs as well as for the Deaf customers.



5 Conclusion

5.1 The Study

Interpreting in teams is a very complicated process that has to be well balanced. There are many factors that may throw the complicated communication system of an interpreter-mediated monologic discourse off balance.

This study shows that **Deaf customers** are very sensitive when it comes to the homogeneity of interpreter teams. A lack of harmony in the production or the teaming process can severely impede the Deaf consumer's comprehension of the target text. This heterogeneity concerns the quality of the team product (i.e. the TT itself and its presentation) as well as the appearance of the interpreters and their presence/transparency in the interpreting situation. Deaf consumers do not want the interpreters to take too much space and to bias the situation by their behaviour or presence.

The Deaf consumers insist on the undisturbed reception of the target text and its message and do not want to be distracted by interpretation-related interferences (e.g. lack of support for the lead interpreter, obvious switching, questions about signs, competition between the interpreters, etc.).

They prefer the team to collaborate to achieve the best team product possible. Therefore, they insist on their interpreters' thorough preparation of the topic, the setting and the overall framework of the assignment.

Despite the many common features mentioned, the results fall in line with Kurz (1989) who found out that user expectations vary and depend on individual preferences.

Most **interpreters** are well aware of the problem of heterogeneity. To be able to successfully interpret in a team situation, they stress their need for good team climate and a well established relation which helps them to concentrate on the task of interpreting and not to lose energy in the teaming process.



They prefer to work with regular team partners to reduce the strain of the stressful interpreting situation. They expect their team interpreters to collaborate, by providing support and feed and by sharing their knowledge on the topic and the setting. They expect their team interpreters to think "we" instead of "me" and to actively construct the team product.

Unfortunately, they do not regularly process the assignments in post-sessions. All but one interpreter wanted their team partner to stay in the room and fulfil the task of the monitor interpreter.

Ideally, an interpreter team is composed of equally proficient interpreters. Shared proficiency is a warrant for equal and fair distribution of the workload.

To meet user expectations and harmonize their services, Austrian team interpreters should invest into team building and teaming strategies like pre-session, preparation and post-session processing of their assignments to support the evolution of their teaming process.

5.2 Suggestions for Improvement of Team Interpreting

As already stated in Chapter 3.3 on sign language interpreting (33), teamwork is common practice in Austria, provided that there are enough interpreters available and enough funds to pay them. The interpreters are aware of the advantage of regular teams and use most of the teaming strategies suggested by literature. Nevertheless, improvement could be made in regard to some strategies that do not seem to be very common such as feeding or monitoring the TL text. Here, I would like to present some ideas how we could improve our teamwork and our interpreting services for the sake of our customers.

5.2.1 Take Regular 'Consultative Supervision'

As Michael Harvey (2001) found, untreated vicarious trauma can cause physical and psychological damage and poison the working atmosphere in interpreter teams and among colleagues. This may go as far as disrupting or incapacitating cooperation in professional associations which does not help a young



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profession like ours (cf. Seiberlich 2004:14). This study shows that interpreters are already aware of the importance of trust and good relations to be able to rely on the monitor interpreter, to take her feed without hesitation and to separate interpreting from the personal relationship to the interpreter which benefits the processing of the team interpretation. Working to improve these relationships and reduce tensions, conflict and competition would be a good way to approach this goal.

5.2.2 Harmonize style, lexicon, spatial arrangements Try to merge into one interpreter!

The Deaf interviewees of this study deplored dissimilar styles, sign choices, attitudes of their team interpreters and went so far as to prefer having one interpreter instead of two. We should take their views and wishes seriously and work on constructing better and more harmonious team products. This involves keeping to the sign and style choices our co-interpreter made, placing our persons/entities/buoys at the same side as she did and being as expressive or modest as she is.

5.2.3 Take notes of your problems and strategies during assignments

Notetaking has proved to be very helpful to remember things and to be able to process them further. I would recommend to write down switching times, vocabulary, sign choices (to be able to use a shared lexicon), spatial arrangements, questions to your teamer that arise during the assignment, things you want to remember or discuss, and very important: switching time. The latter helps to prevent confusion and is a guarantee for equal distribution of workload.

5.2.4 Process the assignments in post-sessions

As the interpreters have hardly mentioned post-session processing, one can deduce that they do not always process their team interpretation after the



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assignments. They may not have resources to do so because they work too much due to the chronic lack of interpreters. Many may not be ready to sacrifice their valuable free time. But this investment pays, because post-session can not only serve to 'wind the team down' but also to

- identify problems,
- develop better teaming strategies,
- plan team development,
- evaluate the teaming process and, in general,
- harmonize the interpreting work.

Notes taken during the assignment can be of much help for this processing. The method of Dialogue may be a useful tool to apply (see Section 2.2.3 The Learning Team:9).

5.2.5 Exercise with your regular teamers

Team interpreting has evolved in Austria, our Deaf customers bear witness of it. Nevertheless, there are still a lot of teaming strategies that could be improved like switching, reading the co-interpreter's mind, communicating non-verbally, feeding at the right time for the lead interpreter to be able to process it, feeding in the right mode, taking the feed without hesitation etc. Practicing together would be a good means to improve these aspects of teamwork. As a matter of fact, merging into one interpreter needs many years of routine and training. An experienced team of sign language interpreters like Snyder & Snyder compared team interpreting to playing a ball game and stated:

"Although we have worked for 30 years to set up points and pass the microphone, we sense that we are just beginning to play ball. We hope you will practice your teaming ... and hit the goal of providing high-quality interpretation that promotes equal access for Deaf and hearing participants." (Snyder & Snyder 2011:36)



5.3 Further Research

This small scale study is just a small contribution to the general investigation of Austrian team interpreting. As Snyder and Snyder (2011) insinuate, the field is vast and needs a lot of exploring. Some of the issues I consider worthy of a thorough examination are:

- 'Vicarious trauma' and its effects on team interpreting
- Dialogue strategies applied to sign language interpreters' teaming process
How can Dialogue methods be applied to team building?
- Methods for harmonizing the team product like spatial arrangements, sign choice, adjustment of register
How do monitor interpreters retain the spatial arrangements and sign choices of their team mates? What strategies help them to stick to them? How do they feel about these choices when they contradict their own concept?
- Non-verbal communication between team interpreters
What kinds of non-verbal communication is there in team interpreting? What do interpreters actually do? What do they believe that they do? How could they improve their non-verbal communication?
- Co-construction of TL text by interpreters
How do the two interpreters negotiate the team product between them? What are their strategies? How do they feel about this team process?

All these possible lines of investigation are just some of the interesting issues I could identify when looking into the data of this study and reading the literature. I believe it worthwhile to follow these lines of investigation in the future.

As I have already mentioned before, I have gathered data that I could not use for this thesis. These data are the answers to the questions 4., 5., and 7. of the interviews of SLIs referring to pre-session and post-session processing. These data have been collected and analysed but could not be used for this thesis. However, I am very interested in investigating pre- and post-session processing further. The following questions should be answered: What do SLIs talk about in pre-session meetings? Do they stick to what they have agreed (cf. Cokely &



Hawkins 2003)? How do they process the team work after the assignment? Which strategies do they use to remember the issues to be processed? I intend to continue in this line of work.

Team interpreting is a very complicated process that is affected by many external and internal (f)actors. I would say that it is not a *pas de trois* (Wadensjö 1998:12), but a '*pas de quatre*' and our goal as interpreters should be to reduce their number to three by 'merging into one person'. To find out how this merge can be accomplished the most efficient way, a lot of research will have to be conducted.

So let's get started!



6 References

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Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6	Student 7	Student 8
Differences between Teams							
individual character							1
	expression	expression	expression				3
					interpreting experience	interpreting experience	2
	sign accents		signing	signing	signing	signing	5
					voicing	voicing	2
	style	style	style				3
	sign choice						1
				rhythm			1
				amount of information of TLText			1
				attitude to teamwork			1
switching interval							1
support							1

Differences between Teams		
character	character	1
	expression	3
competence	voicing	2
	signing/style	6
	TL info	1
	interpreting experience	2
attitude	teamwork	1
	switching/support	1

Successful teamwork

				motivation			1
				similar character of teamers			1
		matching way of dressing					1
			robust and fit to keep concentration in support role				1
	knowledge of topic						1
				harmonious signing in the team			1
				balanced performance			1
					involvement of deaf		1
	teamers know each other well					teamers know each other	2
smooth switching	smooth switching	smooth switching	smooth cooperation				4
		regular intervals		switching after 15'			2
			monitoring of output	monitoring			2
support	support		mutual support	mutual support	mutual support	teamers know how to	6
	feeding			feeding	feeding		3
	repeat fingerspelling, if not understood						1
	indication if visual aids						1
						support knows the job	1
					unobtrusive communication	unobtrusive communication	2
					uninterrupted interpretation	uninterrupted interpretation	2
taking the feed of the supporting interpreter	taking the feed of the supporting interpreter	taking the feed of the supporting interpreter					2
				consult with each other			1
					pre-session meeting		1
					share knowledge		1
					well prepared		1
					take notes of errors		1
					discuss afterwards		1

Successful teamwork

personal	motivation	1
	similar character	1
	fitness	1
competence	matching clothing	1
	balanced performance	1
	knowledge of topic	1
attitude	no involvement of D for signing	1
	knowledge of teamer	2
team work	smooth/regular switching	5
	monitoring	2
	mutual support	6
	feeding	3
	visual orientation	1
	unobtrusive communication	2
	uninterrupted interpretation (support)	2
	taking feed	2
	consult	1
	pre session	1
note taking/discussion	1	



Student 1 Student 2 Student 3 Student 4 Student 5 Student 6 Student 7 Student 8

Good team interpreter

nice and friendly								1
communicative								1
sociable								1
			flexibility					1
						tolerant		1
						harmonious		1
confident behavior	confident behavior					confident behavior		3
	punctual							1
-arrogance								1
	competence in the	knowledge of topic						2
competent signer	competent signer		signed German	competence in SL				4
			adapt her/his working speed to the speed of the speaker					1
			physical and psychological fitness					1
			awareness of limits					1
		matching way of d	dark colors for contrast	dark colors for contrast				3
contact with deaf	community			knowledge of deaf	contact with deaf	community		3
	awareness of customer				knows how to deal with deaf and interp			2
	lead: sum up if D wants break			monitor: sum up if D wants break				2
			eyecontact with deaf					1
				Code of conduct				1
				further vocational training				1
			concentrate on message					1
	neutrality		neutrality					2
			interpret as close to 100% as possible					1
			separate work from private life					1
						any interpreter can v		1
						stay till end of assignment		1
						good climate/no conflict		1
		knowledge of the team partner				knowledge of the team partner/telepathic		2
		agreement about switching interval	agreement about switching interval					2
		smooth switching	keep agreed inter	keep agreed intervals				3
		attentive monitoring						1
		good team player	cooperative/mutual support	supportive	supportive			4
	feed in spoken language							1
						ready to contribute		1
			share knowledge					1
						accepts support		1
			adapt to team partner and needs			ready to compromise		2
			take over if teamer cannot continue					1
	preparation work	preparation work before assignment						2
		pre-session meeting			pre-session meeting			2
		before: exchange vocabulary/signs						1
	before: exchange	before: exchange knowledge on the t	before: exchange knowledge on the	before: exchange knowledge on the	before: exchange knowledge on the topic			4
			feedback session					1

Good team interpreter

personal	confident behaviour	3
	friendly/sociable/communi	1
	flexible	1
	tolerant/harmonious	1
	punctual	1
	fit/aware of limits	1
competence	dark colours/matching clot	3
	sign language competence	4
	knowledge of topic	2
attitude	matches the speaker	1
	any interpreter can team	1
	Code of conduct	1
	further vocational training	1
	neutral	2
	100% message	1
	work <> private life	1
	knowledge of teamer	2
	stay till end of assignment	1
	good climate/no conflict	1
	contact to Deaf communit	3
	aware of customer	2
	lead/monitor: sum up if D wants break	2
	eye contact with deaf	1
team work	agreement about switching	2
	smooth switching/keep int	3
	attentive monitoring	1
	supportiveness	4
	feeds in spoken language	1
	adapts/compromises	2
	contributes	1
	takes the feed	1
	takes over, if necessary	1
	shares knowledge	1
	pre-session	2
	prepares before	2
	exchanges knowledge on t	4
	post-session	1



Student 1 Student 2 Student 3 Student 4 Student 5 Student 6 Student 7 Student 8

Disruptions in team interpreting

	punctual							1
			low motivation of interpreter					1
	different signing style	different signing style (need time and	dissimilar style		dissimilar style	different signing style		5
				change of rhythm	change of rhythm between interpreters			2
						different handshap		1
						different syntax		1
				loss of information	by summing up			1
			bad match (quality	bad match (quality	marked difference in quality			3
				one has to support	much more than the other			1
	long pauses while processing							1
	loss of thread		loss of thread					2
					(need to adapt to interpreter)			1
				two interpreters	two interpreters (one is better)	two interpreters (one		3
	lack of neutrality							1
			complaining about pain					1
	different attitude					different attitude		2
			competition/confl	teamers dislike each other				2
			breaking eye-contact with deaf					1
			interpreters talking between them v	teamer talks to other people				2
			clothing (patterns, colors)		clothing (patterns, colors)			2
			low neckline					1
			jewelry too eye-catching		rings/necklaces/hair			2
	interruption by switching	slow switching (loss of information)				slow switching (loss of information)		3
		premature initiation of switch						1
		Two interpreters in a small room (switching is disturbing)						1
	distraction by much feeding							1
					ask the speaker to repeat instead of teamer feeding			1
			fingerspelling					1
	support leaving the	support leaving the	support leaving the	support leaving the	support leaving the room		support leaving the ro	6
				doing other things	during assignment			1
	prepared							1
	informed about process							1
				exhaustion of interpreter				1
		clothing that does not match the other interpreter						1
			bad mood	moody interpreter				2
			behaviour of deaf customer					1
					break: interp talk to hearing people, leave deaf alone			1
			glare/poor lighting					1
			too little money for interpretation: 2 too much?					1

Disruptions in team interpreting

personal	tardiness	1	
	low motivation	1	
	clothing with patterns	2	
	low neckline	1	
	big jewelry	1	
	competence	dissimilar signing	5
		change of rhythm	2
		different syntax	1
		different handshapes	1
		difference in quality	3
summing up	1		
loss of thread	2		
long pauses for processing	1		
attitude	D must adapt to interprete	1	
	two interpreters	3	
	different attitudes	2	
	complaining	1	
	lack of neutrality	1	
	competition/conflict	2	
	interpreters talking	2	
	breaking of eye contact	1	
	team work	slow switching	3
		premature switching	1
two interp in small room		1	
too much feeding		1	
clarification from speaker		1	
fingerspelling		1	
monitoring interpreter			
leaving room		6	
doing other things		1	
lack of preparation		1	
lack of info on setting	1		
personal	exhaustion	1	
	clothing not matching	1	
	bad interpreter mood	2	
	leaving D alone in breaks	1	
	external	glare/lighting	1
behaviour of D customer		1	
lack of funds		1	



Student 1 Student 2 Student 3 Student 4 Student 5 Student 6 Student 7 Student 8

Tasks of monitoring interpreter

						adjust signing/speaking style	1
						merge into one interpreter	1
					explain/sum up to deaf consumer if D has lost track		1
watch time and initiate switch	watch time and initiate switch						2
listen attentively			listen attentively			listen to source text a	3
	monitoring		monitoring		monitoring		3
				notice background information			1
visual orientation	visual orientation				visual orientation		3
support		support	support		support	inobtrusive support	5
feeding signs	feeding	feeding	feeding signs	feeding signs	feeding	feeding	7
fingerspell names					fingerspelling	fingerspell names	3
show numbers							1
help to find the thread again		help to find the thread	help to find the thread	help to find the thread	help to find the thread again		4
correct mistakes/mishearings	correct mistakes/mishearings				correct mistakes/mishearings	correct mistakes/mishearings	4
						propose a better solution	1
				feed background information to colleague and deaf			1
		stay in the room/support					1
working		working	working			working	4
				rest			1
	take over if necessary	take over if necessary	ary/give it back				2
					take notes of technical terms	take notes of technical	2
			monitoring the environmental logistics				1

Tasks of monitoring interpreter

personal	adjust signing/speaking style	1
	merge into one interpreter	1
	explain/sum up for D	1
team work	initiate switch	2
	listen to SL text	3
	monitor TL text	3
	background information	1
	support	4
	feed	7
	fingerspell	3
	show numbers	1
	correct mistakes	4
	visual orientation	3
	find the thread again	4
	propose better solution	1
	feed background info to D/	1
	stay in the room	1
	work!	4
	rest/recover	1
	take over if necessary	1
	take notes of problems	2
	monitor environment	1



	Interpreter 1	Interpreter 2	Interpreter 3	Interpreter 4	Interpreter 5	Interpreter 6	Interpreter 7	Interpreter 8	
Successful teamwork	punctuality (in time-end)				punctuality				2
					equally competent				1
		non verbal communication			non verbal communication				2
	shared concept of interpreting process								1
	mutual trust		mutual trust	trust relationship		personal preparation (mood)			4
	regularity in teaming	regularity in teaming				regularity in teaming			3
				attentiveness - both					1
	being on good terms		right chemistry						2
		smooth switching = homogeneous				efficient role switching	smooth switching = homogeneous		3
		agreement on switching intervals				agreement on switching intervals/support	agreement on switching		3
						shared lexicon same register same localisation	shared lexicon same register same localisation		2
				supportiveness - feed/use				active collaboration	2
			team preparation	team preparation		team preparation			3

Successful teamwork		
personal	punctuality	2
	balanced competence	1
	non-verbal communication	2
attitude	shared concept of interpreting process	1
	mutual trust	4
	regular teaming	3
	attentiveness	1
	good terms	2
team work	agreement on switching	3
	smooth switching	3
	shared lexicon/spatial arrangement	2
	active collaboration	2
	team preparation	3

Same teamer?

	Interpreter 1	Interpreter 2	Interpreter 3	Interpreter 4	Interpreter 5	Interpreter 6	Interpreter 7	Interpreter 8	
NO but regular group	YES	YES (preferences)	YES	YES	YES (preferences)	NO but preferences	NO but preferences		3/2/3
		also teaming with others			also teaming with others	on good terms with all sli			3
			knows how to team work						1
							technical knowledge		1
	non verbal communication								1
				concentrate on interpreting					1
	shared goal								1
			flow between teamers = good feeling		flow between teamers = good feeling				2
					personal tie				1
						adaptation!!			1
	knowledge of teamer				knowledge of teamer				2
			good match						1
	mutual support/acknowledgment		mutual support/acknowledgment		mutual support/acknowledgment	mutual support/acknowledgment			4
		regular assignments: same teamer :)			regular assignments: same teamer	regular assignments: same teamer			3
	less straining/more pleasant	less straining/more pleasant	less straining/more pleasant	less straining/more pleasant	less straining/more pleasant	less straining/more pleasant	less straining/more pleasant		7
					more challenging to team first time	more challenging to team			2
quality of team product									1
						shared lexicon			1
	more efficient prep/agreement		more efficient prep/agreement	more efficient prep/agreement	more efficient prep/agreement	more efficient prep/agreement			5

Same teamer?

Same teamer?		
same teamer?	YES	3
	YES (preferences)	2
	NO, but preferences	3
competence	expert in team work	1
	non-verbal communication	1
attitude	technical knowledge	1
	concentration on interpreting	1
teamwork	'flow' between teamers	2
	knowledge of teamer	2
	personal tie	1
	shared goal	1
	good match	1
	adaptation to teamer!	1
	mutual support	4
	less strain/more fun	7
	regular assignments :)	3
	quality of team product	1
shared lexicon	1	
preparation more efficient	5	



Interpreter 1	Interpreter 2	Interpreter 3	Interpreter 4	Interpreter 5	Interpreter 6	Interpreter 7	Interpreter 8
Good team interpreter							
reliability				reliability	reliability		3
punctuality				punctuality	punctuality		3
			homogeneous sig	same level of competence			2
		harmonious product	homogeneous style			harmonious product	3
			enough processing capacity				1
					extensive lexicon		1
					interpreting experience to add		1
shared concept of professionalism team work = team product		shared concept of service quality professionalism	shared concept of service quality professionalism customer relations				3
						transparency/invisibility	1
		trust/confidence					1
		mutual adjustment	mutual adjustment		mutual adjustment	adapts quickly	5
			takes support				1
		The passive interpreter is always right!				The passive interpreter is always right!	2
						discuss problems in post session processing	1
	appearance as a team						1
					takes feedback without insult		1
	solidarity/good climate						1
			ongoing exchange with teamer				1
	deaf customer care (chat, lexicon)						1
						smooth switching	1
			knowledge of how	knowledge of how and when to support			2
		continuous support					1
	obvious support						1
encouragement/confirmation		confirmation			confirmation		3
						spelling of colleague if n	1
		ready to harmonize product	focus on team prod	flexibility => space	flexibility => space for team product		4
				chocolate			1
		shields off intrusions					1
					asks feedback from D		1
	share preparation material						1
		exchange lexicon					1
		pre-/post-session					1
	prepares the site						1
Good team interpreter							
personal	reliable						3
	punctual						3
competence	equal level						2
	harmonious product						3
	enough processing capacity						1
	extensive lexicon						1
	interpreting experience						1
attitude	shared concept						3
	transparent/invisible						1
	adapts to team interpreter						5
	passive interpreter is right						2
	ongoing exchange with teamer						1
	solidarity/good team climate						1
	team appearance						1
	trust/confidence						1
	can take feedback without r						1
	D customer care (chat, lexicon)						1
team work	smooth switching						1
	efficient support						2
	uninterrupted support						1
	unobtrusive support						1
	confirmation						3
	focus on team product						4
	harmonizes lexicon						1
	brings chocolate						1
	takes over, if needed						1
	shares preparation material						1
	pre-/postsession						1
	gets feedback from D						1
logistics	prepares site (chairs/water)						1
	shields from intrusions						1



Interpreter 1	Interpreter 2	Interpreter 3	Interpreter 4	Interpreter 5	Interpreter 6	Interpreter 7	Interpreter 8	
Tasks of monitor interpreter								
	trust in teamer's competence							1
	deaf customer care (chat)							1
		checking time	checking time		checking time		checking time	4
		initiating switch	initiating switch		initiating switch			3
	monitor TL text	monitor TL text	monitor TL text	monitor TL text	monitor TL text	monitor TL text	monitor TL text	7
						decision on quality of TL text		1
		correct omissions/errors	correct omissions	correct omissions/errors	correct omissions/errors			4
support (omission, solicited support only)				support	support (omission,	support (omission, misunder	support	6
		fingerspelling						1
					too much feeding			1
visual orientation	visual orientation	visual orientation					visual orientation	4
encouragement/confirmation		confirmation			confirmation			3
	spelling of active i if needed	spelling of active i if needed		spelling of active i if needed			spelling of active i if needed	4
everything prod i cannot			everything prod i cannot					2
enable active i to produce			enable active i to produce		enable active i to produce		enable active i to produce	4
			prevent mode switch					1
		recovery (shift into lower gear)		recovery (shift into lower gear)			recovery (shift into lower gear)	3
							share prep material	1
logistics	logistics	logistics	logistics	logistics	logistics	logistics	logistics	8
	sound/light/...	sound/light/...	sound/light/...	sound/light/...	sound/light/...	sound/light/...	sound/light/...	7
		questions from the audience	questions from the audience			questions from the audience		3
						It training: show on screen, feedback to trainer		1
							handle papers on site	1
			hold off disturbances				disrupt situation	2

Tasks of monitor interpreter		
personal	trust in teamer's competence	1
	D customer care (chat)	1
team work	checks time/initiates switch	4
	monitors TL text	7
	decision on TL text quality	1
	support	
	miscues, losing of thread, fingerspelling	8
	not too much feeding	1
	visual orientation	4
	confirmation/encouragement	3
	enables production (fill in, stop)	4
	prevents (language) mode switch	1
logistics	recovers (shift into lower gear)	3
	takes over, if needed	4
	shares preparation material	1
	monitors sound/lighting/...	8
	questions from the audience	3
	shields from intrusions	2
	shows on D screen (IT training)	1
	handles papers on site	1



Interpreter 1	Interpreter 2	Interpreter 3	Interpreter 4	Interpreter 5	Interpreter 6	Interpreter 7	Interpreter 8
Factors compromising team work efficiency							
	tardiness (arrival-end)				tardiness (arrival-end)		2
too strong difference			poor interpreting performance			too strong difference of TL quality	3
						personal condition	1
			no agreement on quality criteria				1
			chitchatting				1
	lack of team responsibility						1
tensions in the team		tensions in the team				tensions in the team	3
lack of involvement	lack of adjustment (teamer, setting)					cooperative behavior	3
		being judged = distrusted/competition	being judged = distrusted/competition	being judged = distrusted/competition			3
					continuous feed		1
					no problem: leave room/irregular shifts		1
		inequality of work load					1
						information imbalance	1
		preparation					1
	preparation on site by teamer						1
			bad circumstances on site				2
						bad circumstances on site	2

Factors compromising team work efficiency		
personal	tardiness (arrival-end)	2
	diverging TL quality	3
attitude	poor condition	1
	dissimilar quality criteria	1
	chitchat	1
	lack of involvement/adjustment	3
team work	lack of team responsibility	1
	tensions in the team	3
	feeling of being judged	3
	continuous feed	1
	uneven distribution of work	1
	no problem: working alone/irregular shifts	1
	information imbalance	1
logistics	no preparation (topic, setting)	1
	lack of preparation (site)	1
	bad circumstances	2

No-go teamers?

YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES/NO	6/1/1
					team with any if necessary	if cannot avoid Business as usual	team with any if necessary	6
	lack of competence (field, voice over)		meet criteria	meet criteria				3
					different concept of service, quality, professionalism, customer relations			1
			trust			reject standard ways of our trade		1
interpersonal differences			sympathy	dislike				3
		bad experience				bad experience		2
	team member						team product	2
	harmonious product							1
		competition/exposure to the audience				competition/criticism		2
				no relief of tension	no relief of tension	in passive role		2
adding stress (correction, conflict)	adding stress (correction, conflict)							2
	information shared							1
some teamers preferred (see above)								1

No-go teamers?

No-go teamer	YES	
	YES	6
	NO	1
	don't know	1
why	team with any if necessary	3
	lack of competence	3
	different concept	1
	no respect for standards	1
	lack of trust	1
	dislike	3
	bad experience	2
	lack of team spirit	2
	competition/criticism	2
	no relief of tension in monitoring	2
added stress (correction/conflict)	2	
no information shared	1	



Interpreter 1	Interpreter 2	Interpreter 3	Interpreter 4	Interpreter 5	Interpreter 6	Interpreter 7	Interpreter 8
Poor team interpreter							
				reliable	reliable		2
	keeps agreed time of assignment						punctuality > informatio
	have to take over for teamer						1
					lack of competence > support too much strain		1
						ignores standards	1
behaves as if alone		behaves as if alone	behaves as if alone				3
boasts how good	know-it-all manner	wants to prove supremacy		makes her mark	know-it-all manner	wants to prove supremacy	6
	distributes her/his business card			distributes her/his business card			2
responsibility for team product	responsibility for team product	responsibility for team product					team product
obvious support to show off	obvious support to show off	obvious support to show off					3
	trust	trust	trust				3
		intentional depreciation of teamer's performance					1
		oppression of a novice interpreter					1
		switching (agreement not fulfilled)					switching (!)
		monitoring		monitoring			2
		support	support given	useful support			4
			feed taken				1
	correct where not necessary				correct where not necessary		2
	constant feed/sharp eye						1
	adding stress (correction, conflict)						1
		texting/checking mobile				texting/checking mobile	2
		leaving the room				smoking in working time	2
						adapt to team partner	1
		abandoning of teamer					1
		preparation					1
	information shared						1
			feedback => no change				1
						handout on lap of active	1
						disruption of interpretin	1

Poor team interpreter		
character	unreliable	2
	tardy	2
competence	monitoring i has to take ove	1
	poor performance	
	support is much strain	1
attitude	ignores standards of trade	1
	behaves as if alone	3
	lack of team responsibility	4
	lack of trust	3
	know-it-all-manner/propost	6
	distributes business card	2
	obvious support to show off	3
	depreciates teamer's perform	1
team work	oppresses novice interpreter	1
	switches irregularly	2
	does not monitor	2
	does not give (useful) suppo	4
	does not take feed	1
	corrects where not necessar	2
	constant feed/sharp eye	1
	texts/checks mobile	2
	leaves producing interpreter	2
logistics	does not adapt	1
	does not share information	1
	does not prepare	1
	neglects feedback	1
	disrupts interpretation	1
	does not shield from interru	1

