

Work Plan for Authoritative Voice

SMU Interpreting Services

One interpreting skill that is important when working with Deaf professionals is that of 'authoritative voice'. In our ASL to English interpretations we need to be cognizant of the quality of our voice to accurately represent the signer's message, and this includes the tone, prosody, vocabulary choices, etc.

Work Plan 1: Improving Authoritative Voice for A-E Interpreting

Here is a list of resources to review and reflect upon, considering these features can be included during A-E interpreting.

[How Female Leaders Can Claim Power Through Body Language](#)

Notes from Dr. Campbell: I don't agree with #6 or #10 -- there are cultural aspects and the article is very much focused on White western culture. For example, I am not going to shake hands "firmly" with people from many eastern African or south African countries as it is very rude, while people from south Asia and some parts of Europe will nod a lot. But there is a lot of truth in this, e.g., interpreters who establish their own authoritative body language will tend to modulate their interpreting as a result.

[10 Examples of How Power Posing Can Work to Boost Your Confidence](#)

Notes from Dr. Campbell: Again, very White western culture, but there is a lot of truth underlying those messages.

Interpreters, Conversational Style, and Gender at Work

Note: Chapter in book "Deaf Professionals and Designated Interpreters".

[Designated or Preferred? A Deaf Academic and Two Signed Language Interpreters Working Together for a PhD Defense: A Case Study of Best Practice](#)

Note: This article has nice video examples of teaming and interpretations.

[The Interpreter's Role in the Workplace](#)

Note: Set in British workplaces. This publication is a part of a larger PhD research about Deaf people's experiences working with interpreters in hearing dominated workplaces.

[Hearing People Perceiving Deaf People Through Sign Language Interpreters at Work: On the Loss of Self Through Interpreted Communication](#)

[Impoliteness in Interpreting: A Question of Gender?](#)

Note: Not specifically for signed language interpreting but still relevant.

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[Blog: Are You Friends with the Deaf Person Networking with Sign Language Interpreters in Academic Settings](#)

Note: Not necessarily specific to 'authoritative voice', however does provide experiences of working with interpreters as a Deaf academic.

[Gendered Communication and Speaking Styles Related to Sign Language Interpreting](#)

[Working With Active Interpreters: A Commentary About Interpreting Terminology and Concepts](#)

Note: This article is not necessarily directly related to 'authoritative voice', however I really like this concise publication about how we as interpreters need to improve how we talk about our work.

Work Plan 2: Recording Interpretation Work for Review

After reviewing the preceding resources, select a sample of ASL source material and record the interpretation into English. Review the English target for areas when authoritative voice was and was not present, and where it was not utilized reflect on how to make improvements for the next recorded interpretation.

The following videos are provided as examples but not an exhaustive list. Feel free to use other ASL videos for this work. Options for **ASL source**:

Dr. Carrie Solomon

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?427315-1/advocates-hold-march-science-washington-dc>

Dr. Evan Hibbard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RhGILOBhNyU>

Bobbi Cordano

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=154&v=HiPYx7mw7EE&feature=emb_logo

Heather Harker

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qK5tz1UHSM>

Dr. Octavian Robinson

<https://journalofasl.com/special-issue-music/>

For examples of **English source** authoritative voice, to assist in comparing to your recorded interpretations, refer to the following examples (not an exhaustive list):

Dr. Mary Frances Berry, interviewed on The Daily Show

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=846134359242885>

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Dr. Judith Butler, 2013 McGill Honorary Doctorate Address

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFIGS56iOAQ>

Molly LeBlanc, 3MT presentation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1aDgvS0yqM>

Dr. Erin Adlakha, Uranium in NS talk for the Mining Association of Nova Scotia

<https://tmans.ca/uranium-in-nova-scotia>