

Student Transitions

Learning and Teaching Enhancement Project Report, June, 2015

Project Title: BSL Interpreter Repository (BSLIR) “Why wait, when you can bring the real world into the classroom?” Improving the student transition

School & department: School of Management and Languages

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1	<u>Names and Heriot-Watt University contact details of project team (please identify the project lead/ report author):</u> Stacey Webb (Report Author) Sw288@hw.ac.uk 07984999773 Other members of team: Yvonne Waddell (PhD Student yew1@hw.ac.uk) Gary Quinn (BSL Course Coordinator G.A.Quinn@hw.ac.uk)
2	Key words: <i>Sign Language Interpreting; Translations; developing teaching materials, video, work-based simulation</i>
3	The problem being addressed, with background and context: There are no resources available that are aligned with student learning outcomes for the BSL/English Interpreter education. Therefore, all educators of interpreter education have been limited on what resources they have available to utilise in teaching.
4	Project overview & aims: Considering the great need for the development of such materials the BSLIR project intends to develop video materials that include interactive role-plays, formal speeches, narratives and translations replicating real life situations that sign language interpreters experience. These materials will be edited and archived on a database accessible to educators at Heriot-Watt University, such as the Vision site. Developing such materials will enhance teaching and learning. It is our goal that by replicating real life situations in the classroom, students will have smoother transitions into the workforce upon graduation. The interactions developed through the BSLIR project intend to allow students to practice interpreting the interaction while also being able to see how a professional interpreter handles the interpretation as well. The modelling process is critical for sign language interpreting students to gain exposure to how interpreters handle real life situations (Crezee 2013). Although during students fourth year of study they are able to work with and be mentored by professional interpreters, these situations are limited. Many environments will go unobserved, due to the sensitivity of the assignment and/or confidentiality matters. The ramifications of this means students will not be exposed to such situations until they are in fact working in them as the professional interpreter upon graduation. Examples of these situations are counselling sessions, emergency health appointments, or other forms of therapy. By developing the BSLIR students will have exposure to such environments prior to working in them giving them an increased understanding of the dynamics and nature of the assignments they will face improving their transition into professional work.

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	The BSLIR project also aims to develop multiple translations for students to have access to. Our students do not have the same experiences of students studying foreign spoken languages, as they have access to many books and other texts previously translated and published. These translations simply do not exist for BSL owing to: the status of Deaf people in society, and the extent to which British Sign Language is recognised as a national language. By having multiple source texts be translated in by a few translators students can see how translators go about the work differently and although the source text remains the same the translation will differ based on the process and decision making of each translator. At the end of the project we aimed to have: 5 interactions 3 BSL-English Translations, translated 3 times 3 English-BSL Translations, translated 3 times
5	Activities and details of project steps taken to achieve aims: • 4 filming dates were set with the Media Centre at Heriot-Watt Campus (May 21, June 1, June 4, and June 11) • Participants were recruited and scheduled • Materials were identified or developed and sent to the translators 3 months prior to filming • Briefs/scripts were collaborated with “interactive” participants 3/4 filming days complete
6	Key points including challenges your team may have encountered: The following challenges were faced during the course of the project 1. Scheduling 2. Participant Commitment 3. Funding 1. To successfully achieve this project numerous participants were needed, both Deaf and Hearing. A doodle poll was sent out to all participants to arrange dates. There were a total of 10 participants needed for the 5 interactive role plays, 5 interpreters, and between 3-4 translators. Although this was a challenge initially it was overall successful. 2. Participant commitment was a challenge. After originally scheduling all individuals with several emails to confirm not all participants followed through. One interpreter backed out for the June 11th filming and we are struggling to find an additional person. Two of the paid translators also didn't complete their agreed upon translations. Four source texts were agreed upon in March and come the filming day or week of filming each could only complete two of the four translations. Our team is seeking other translators to complete this work but will have to reschedule for filming days with the media centre. Additionally, to no fault of their own, one interpreter called in sick the day of filming. Although this was covered by another interpreter the variety of interpreters used for the interactions is now limited.

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	3. There were not clear guidelines on what funds can cover and what they cannot cover. We believe it is important to compensate people for their time whether it be monetarily or through a gift of some kind. When we submitted our proposal these compensations were budgeted for. However, once funds transferred how we proposed to use the funds was different than what we could actually do. E.g. paying a deaf participant for their time was not permitted. We wanted to then provide them a gift voucher to a place of their choosing but were instructed we could only do so through amazon.com. Although all participants appreciated the gesture we do believe it is important to keep reciprocity between Heriot-Watt University and the Deaf Community, as they are key stake holders in the success of our programme.
7	Describe specific project outputs so far: • 4 filming days scheduled (May 21st, June 1st, June 4th, June 11th) • Recruited 10 participants (5 Deaf 5 Hearing) to participate/develop scripts for the scenario clips • Recruited interpreters/translators to participate in the project • Developed/identified materials to be translated from English-BSL (Medical Leaflet, Court Leaflet, Creative Piece) • Wrote translation briefs to provide translators with information on translation • Filmed BSL-English translation source texts on May 21 • Filmed 3/5 interactions, 6/12 translations • Filmed interview/reflections of all participants in the 3 interactions, and 2 of the translators • Filmed two English speeches for interpreting practice • Began recruiting translators for the BSL-English translation
8	Please describe how your project has contributed to the to the Heriot-Watt University strategy and priorities for Enhancement: 1. Student transition These materials have been developed to supplement students' progression through their 4th year and preparing them to undertake interpreting work on successful completion of their degree course. We aim to accurately reflect the challenges in the workplace by giving them simulated examples that mirror real life examples. This in turn will prepare them for the transition into the workplace, and this enhanced experience should also improve their employability chances on completion of their degree. 2. Innovation This project is innovative as it brought professionals, community members and the academic community to develop the resources to best replicate real world experiences aiming to enhance teaching and learning. E.g. we included a researcher from Edinburgh University, a local Edinburgh GP, the adult learning and health access officer from Deaf Action, a Deaf Educator, and a professor from Heriot-Watt university in Business management. It was through the expertise and experiences of these individuals that the project has been successful. By these three communities working in partnership to develop the BSLIR materials, instructors and students will have the most current and accurate resources to work with. Additionally, this collaboration will also serve as an investment into future working relationships, as if students are better prepared for the workplace they will be able to

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	better manage communication interactions between professionals and community members when working as professional sign language interpreters. 3. Impact & Dissemination We aim to develop materials that are designed considering the needs of current educators at Heriot-Watt University. Upon completion of these resources we plan to develop activities for the educators on how to use them in a variety of ways in their classroom. Once they are used in the semester we will have an educator and students complete an evaluation to assess effectiveness. We plan to continue to grow our database over time and will continue to incorporate feedback from both students and educators.
9	<i>Describe how you are sharing good practice within Heriot-Watt and beyond (e.g. plans for papers, attendance at conferences):</i> Once these materials are implemented, we plan to explore ways to research their pedagogical uses in the classroom.
10	<i>Next steps:</i> June 11th is our last official filming day. We will be filming 2 interactions and two translations. If we are able to find another translator to make up for the lost translations we will attempt to film them on that day. We will also finalize the recruitment for the BSL-English translations. We will then work closely with the media centre on how to best edit the materials to be used.
11	<i>Additional information:</i> *Although we had planned on completing everything within a 6-month time frame, due to availability of the media centre only available the first two weeks of June this changed our deadlines. However, our materials are to be ready by the start of the semester in September and this remains on track.