Deaf Interpreter Critical Issues:
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Consumer Assessment, Part 2:
Decision-making Criteria for Cultural Mediation

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Areas to be discussed

- Pre-assignment
- During assignment
- Post assignment
Pre-assignment

- Discussion with referring agent/agency regarding client
  - Background info
    - demographic
    - experience w/interpreters
      - CDI
    - need CDI?

- Discussion with team member (past experience w/client)
  - goal for interaction
    - CDI?
      - purpose?
      - other relevant info

- “Play detective”
  - Field research on consumers communicative environment
    - Case files
    - Portfolio
    - IEP notes
    - (Mental Health, Medical files typically not accessible due to confidentiality)
Pre-meeting w/consumer to determine:

- **Linguistic factors**
  - formal signed language system
    - ASL
    - LSM
    - LSQ
  - semi-lingual/alingual
    - home signs
    - pantomime
    - gestures
    - Props

- **Socioeconomic factors**
  - environment
    - access to language models
    - access to peers
  - Social status
    - poor
    - middle class
    - wealthy
During assignment, cont’d

– Cultural factors
  • deaf community involvement
    – school for the deaf
    – mainstream program
    – extracurricular activities
  • cultural involvement
    – primary cultural influence
    – secondary cultural influence
    – other cultural influence
      » religious
      » gang affiliation

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During assignment, cont’d

- Physical factors
  - visual issues
    - tactile interpreting
  - Style
    » Facing vs. side-by-side
    » dominance
  - close vision interpreting
    » Range of vision
    » Lighting
  - Mobility
    » paralysis
During assignment, cont’d

• Client responses
  – Visual
    • blank stare (not medication induced)
    • “oral nod” (for lack of a better term)
    • confused look
    • Eye gaze shift
    • Elongated visual processing*
  – Physical
    • Shrug shoulders
    • Restless
      – Moving around in chair
      – Fidgeting
      – agitated
• **Client responses**
  – **Linguistic**
    • Quick unrelated response
      – Use of fillers
    • Diverting/changing subject
    • Confused look
    • Eye gaze shift
    • Elongated processing
      – Sometimes accompanied by fidgeting

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• Debrief w/colleague
  – Feedback
    • Interaction w/client
    • Linguistic comprehension
    • Cues overlooked/missed
Concerns

• Access to portfolio
  – Valuable info
    • consumer history for language/cultural match
  – Confidentiality
  – Good judgment needed to avoid abuse
    • how to use
    • when to use
Collaborators

- Priscilla Moyers
- Patrick Boudreault