Translation: Sandra Gish Presentation
translated by Kathryn Bennett, MA, CI

Clips 1-6

Clip 1. Philosophy of Teaching

Hi, I'm Sandra Gish. I live in Oregon and I'm the director of an Interpreter Preparation Program there. It's a four-year program with a BA/BS degree in ASL/English Interpreting. This is at Western Oregon University. I am thrilled to be involved in this project! I'm sure many of you within yourself feel like teachers, just as I do. And that's exactly what
mentoring is – teaching. It's analyzing what I know and what I have to bring to other people. And that's just so wonderful. I'm so excited today. Thank you for the honor of watching this part of the class.

Today, I'm going to present about my philosophy of mentoring. And that will just be a brief summary. Then, I want to talk about my approach and how to elicit from other interpreters and interpreting students what exactly it means to interpret. Many interpreters, whether they are young or old, new or experienced, just hear a word and then sign it, or see a sign and just speak the words. First, we really need to establish how we take in information, create an idea of what that means, and then produce that in a second language. The third portion I'd like to discuss relates to Vygotsky. This was a man from Russia who was an
educational philosopher. He studied extensively how people learn. He has been very influential to my teaching and mentoring.

I'd like to start off with a quote that was written by Elbert Hubbard. He was born in 1856 and died in 1913. I found this quote way back in the 1970's and all this time, to this day, I keep it in plain sight on my desk. It really has a strong influence on me. The quote is: "The object
of teaching a child is to enable him to get along without his teacher." I don't want people to become dependent on me. I don't want students and interpreters to always be checking what I think, or whether I think something is right or wrong, or good or bad. I want them to be independent as interpreters and to think on their own. I want them to believe that they can analyze themselves and create relationships with other interpreters. So, I always remember whatever I'm doing that the goal is to teach them to think for themselves, to reflect and to develop the confidence so that I can wish them well and send them on their way. That's success.

Alright, now…So our goal is to really be able to create independent interpreters. We can analyze our attitudes about ourselves and mentoring. I just happened to read the book, The Tao of Giving and Receiving Wisdom. All of the information, like title and authors, is in your handouts. That book really had an impact on me. As a mentor I can't be arrogant or have
an ego, thinking that I'm such an amazing mentor and the interpreting student will really admire me and look up to me. That is not what it means to be a mentor at all.

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The book talks about that if we as mentors show off or have that egotistical attitude, we will fail. We will fail. Instead, if we are open to also being learners and having the student teach us as well, then there is a mutual exchange which is really wonderful. The result is that we improve and become better as well. One caveat – if you have that egotistical attitude, there will come a time when you will once again be humbled. So, it's important to keep in mind that mentoring is really about the mentee, and not about anyone's ego. If it is about praise or ego that you need, find it some other way, such as a partner or family or friends, what have you. Become an actor and go into the movies and win an Academy Award, ok? In that book, there are two lists: Virtues of the Soul and Virtues of the Mind. Both of them are involved in mentoring. One virtue is especially cool. It's called Emptiness, meaning to be empty and open. Of course, you still have what you know, your experiences, and everything you've learned up to that point in your life still within you. But when you meet that colleague and are ready for the mentorship and to engage in dialogue about their work, that is when you become "empty." My agenda, what I think, what I need to do, etc… are all removed from my consciousness. And now I am open and ready for that individual. Right now, right here, I am present. You have those lists of the virtues also in your handouts.

One really neat thing was that a few years ago, I went to California and was involved in their mentorship program called VOMP. It lasted for three days or something like that. The group that I was there with all developed a wonderful definition for mentoring. I'll just take pieces of that here and make it more concise, but you have that in your paper as well. We generally think mentoring must involve success for the student. The student must have success. You all know well that if people don't feel good about something, they don't learn; without success, there is no motivation to keep going. Mentoring is really about the mentee's control, their analysis, their brainstorming about what to practice next and how to improve themselves and so forth. With mentoring, there must be a comfort zone. We want that person to become more independent and self-sufficient. This includes knowing their skills and their knowledge and becoming a life long learner. We want mentoring to be a development of a connection and the establishment of a process for analyzing and engaging in dialogue so that we can determine what has been successful and what can be modified. We want everyone involved to find enjoyment in the process. We want it to be truthful, effective, and to evolve. That means it is not static, but is constantly changing. We want other people to look upon our mentoring work and want to participate in it, too. That is all taken from the VOMP program which is credited at the bottom of the page.

You have one handout that I want you to understand where I'm coming from with that. It's about teaching and teaching interpreters. Understand that when I say "teaching," I'm referring to mentoring, too. The author's name is Steven Covey. He has a book, which I'm sure you know, called The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. It was written in 1989. I like one part in which he says, "Begin with the end

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in mind." So, I don't begin something and just proceed blindly. I think about my goal and vision for what I'd like to see for that person in terms of their skills, their knowledge, their ability to analyze and their independence. I have all those things in mind, then, and can set a goal that I can look toward. It's really easier to work backwards from the goal. In establishing the vision and goal, now I know what I want to do and can proceed accordingly. Your colleague, or
mentee, protégé, there are all kinds of different terms that can be used…Now you can have a vision of what it is you want for them.

The next section refers to the idea that everything you do, and every step you take is all connected to the end goal that you have in mind. They are all a chain that leads you to the end goal and thereby, success. This is a plan, as opposed to a state of needing to tell the person something so it is just thrown out there off the top of your head. I believe that we need to practice, analyze or work at something within an interpreting context. If there is some kind of skill and you put that into a hypothetical, unrelated situation, it's not as effective. I prefer to identify that piece to work on and then practicing it related to actually interpreting. I strongly believe, very strongly believe that people think differently than I do. Oh well! If that person thinks differently than me, there answers will be different from mine as a mentor or teacher. But I must support and reward that. We want to recognize that this is alright. People can't all think the same way. Even as someone who has been in the interpreting field for a very long time, it's not a matter of someone copying what I think and do. There is not only one right way and it's mine. We must complement a person for coming to their own decisions and thinking for themselves. We need to really support that independence. If the mentee's perspective is different than your own, honor that. Respect
that, especially when there are differences in gender, background or ethnicity. I may not be able to see things from their perspective because of those differences, that person's view is still something to be honored and respected.

We also need to understand the factors and reasons behind something. When there is something that really makes us stop and ask what the heck is going on and why, this is when we can recognize that this could be attributed to particular experiences growing up. We may not know or understand their experiences growing up, their background, home and family life, any experiences the day before, whether they are healthy or not, and so forth. I may not know any of those things and so I must remind myself that there may be a particular reason behind a way of thinking and that this is alright. I don't know what is involved there and to just leave it be.

Another factor depends on how strongly I trust that person. If they make a different decision, or I'm unsure of how they are making decisions, it's alright. What I really want is for that person to become more and more confident. I want them to believe that they can do it, and then off they go.

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We can ask ourselves what the point of teaching is. There are two schools of thought with teaching. The first is taking great pride in knowing that as a teacher I am right, what I teach and know and lecture on is of great importance. I'm not in that camp. The other school of thought is that I'm a teacher, but the focus is on the student, the colleague or the person that I am working with. It's about them.

The last part on your paper is that we must throw out ideas of right and wrong, an A or an F, who won or lost, and who's at the top. That's not the point. The goal is on-going learning.

Clip 2. Gish on Vygotsky

I hope that this information will come together and make sense to you. Some of you may already know it and I don't mean to go on and on about the Gish approach. But if an interpreter doesn't have purpose or control of their own interpreting, you can't analyze what's going on. That's the foundation for mentoring. You have handouts that provide more detailed explanations about the Gish approach. I am so grateful to Patty Gordon because she and I had many long phone conversations from which I would make revisions and think about things in different ways. She took the time and energy and everything to organize and type up all this onto paper. Many thanks to her. And actually, for many years, she has helped to think, re-think and re-think the model once again.

So, let's say someone is signing or speaking and everything is going well. I don't want to over generalize this to other aspects of instruction, such as how to teach fingerspelling, or how to improve language use, or how to interrupt a speaker to get missed information, and how to back up and correct an error in the interpretation. There's not enough time for all of that. Plus, many of you already know approaches for those kinds of issues. So, I guess we'll go ahead with Part 2, the Gish approach.

Suppose your colleague is interpreting comfortably and everything is going well. They are using grammar well, forming complete sentences, everything is flowing together and they are creating an equivalent interpretation. They will know if equivalency is not being achieved. For instance, they are aware when they miss a name, an age, or the name of a town, for example. Perhaps they missed a whole piece. Regardless, they will be aware when there is not equivalency between the messages. They will work more and more on strategy and increasing their wealth of strategies, hopefully in order to achieve the end goal. Once the interpreting job is finished, it's time to do some analysis of the work.

I've noticed something about what happens next. Too many times, when an interpreter wants my help I will be taking extensive notes while they are working. We sit down together afterwards and I will explain and go over all that I have written down in the notes to the colleague or mentee. They'll respond to it by

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nodding their head and making affirmations. OK, so they are listening. But are they really remembering that? Is it sticking in their mind? Not really. Research has shown this to be the case. Even though they are responding affirmatively and nodding their head, the problem has not been solved. I may explain it all and go over it, but later when they're interpreting somewhere else they will encounter the same problem.

The problem lies in not applying the previous information and therefore, the problem is not solved. The goal, though, is to actually solve the problem.. It's important for solutions to not just be about what has happened in a particular context. Rather, they need to internalize it to make it a part of their knowledge base so that they can apply it later.

Most of the time, however, it's in one ear and out the other. I know that for many years, we've experimented with different ways of giving the feedback. For instance, giving feedback alternately with one positive and one negative, or to sandwich positive and negative statements. Another way is to be honest but to use "I" statements. And those are good, but they still don't seem to get through so that the feedback makes its way into the person's brain.

So, I started to read and learn about Vygotsky. As you'll recall, he's the educational philosopher. I learned more and more about his views. It really hit me that Vygotsky's philosophy is that learning needs to be social. There needs to be an exchange and learning needs to be interactive. Secondly, roles need to be clearly identified where one person is there to guide another, but not "spoon-feeding" them. The latter is not successful. One has to ask what they bring when they enter into the interaction. I bring with me a wealth of things: how I was raised; my background, family, hobbies, educational experiences; my interpreting; my knowledge of and experiences with the Deaf community; my biases; what I believe, what I value, and what I think. I bring all of those things with me into this exchange.

Now, that person who is the mentee does not come into this as a blank slate. They bring with them that wealth of knowledge and experience, too. The two of us are not the same at all, though. Well, maybe a little bit. But, we don't think or believe the same things or know the same things. And that is extremely powerful. You have one of Vygotsky's articles, thanks to Patty Gordon and other authors you will see in the bibliography. My world view and my colleague's world view are different. All the things I say as I am talking, lecturing, preaching to them may not be in line with their world view. It may be so out of their realm that it will not sink in. What do we do about that? As a mentor, I must take a lot of time to first figure out who that person is. This comes down to what the mentee is bringing to the interaction and what their world view is. With this I will know how to analyze their interpreting. I need to ask the mentee to explain to me their opinion and what they think. I can then find a good fit based on who they are.

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You know, you talk to lots of different people. Let's say you meet someone who has just come to this country. You change how you interact and talk with them to fit what they say. Dennis Cokely's research has proven that deaf and hearing people do the same thing. Another example is if there are two boys ages three and twelve. How you talk and interact will differ with each of them. Also, you will make changes in your communication
depending on if you are talking to your best friend or a superior, such as an administrator or "higher-up," like your boss. How you communicate and your language will be different depending on who you are speaking with, because you'll make changes and adaptations
in order to be in line with what that person expects and how well they are able to understand you. That's the same feeling.

The mentee and I both bring our world views when we engage in an exchange. It's my responsibility to find the right fit based on where they are coming from. It's interesting that during that exchange and during the mentorship, the result will be a new world view that
the two of us create together where we come together. And that is really a very old concept. What does it really mean to teach and how would teaching be defined? A long time ago, teaching meant "x + 1." In other words, it's what that person already knows and drawing on that, adding one more thing. It means we really have to discover what they know. The "x" is what they already know and have, which we try to elicit and determine. It's interesting that we have a lot of educational theories, philosophies and research. But, who ignores it and never applies that educational theory? Teachers. The American way is to set up rows of chairs with the teacher in front controlling everything. The tests are centered on what the teacher wants the students to know at that moment. It's so interesting that we don't put the theory that we know into practice. We don't use that concept of drawing out what they already know, or their "x", and then adding to that. My apologies; I've gotten off the point here a little bit. So, our job is to follow Vygotsky's theory.

Now, what's the goal. You've seen another videotape about object, other, and self. The object may be what controls me, or a particular paper I have to follow, or what that person told me. There's a connection to something tangible, such as that paper, article or book with all the information that I have to read and follow. If I break away from the object, I may meet someone, like the author who wrote it. I can ask them what they meant or something I'd forgotten. It may not be the author, but instead is a friend or student or other interpreter. I can ask them what they thought and their take on the information. I can ask for clarification
or to have them explain a portion that I didn't understand. Those are examples of relying on another source. Later, I can think it over myself regarding what that person meant, what
they said and my own opinion about it. That's the "self"- the third component. This means not relying on an outside source or the actual object, but rather breaking

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away from them thinking it through on my own. As mentors, that's our goal – self regulated student.

We want the mentee to think for themselves. You all know well that most interpreters work alone. For instance, educational interpreters or those that free-lance in the community are very often working solo. Sometimes there is an instance of team interpreting and then there is a strong desire to engage in dialogue and discussions about the work. Generally,
though, one works alone.

An interpreter needs to be an independent thinker because of this. Some people have misunderstandings about Vygotsky's theory. They think it involves letting go of the object and others, so that the self carries on from then on out. But that's not true. It's actually an interplay between all three and the status is constantly changing. When you encounter something new, maybe you'll return to the object or relying on others for assistance. If my hot water heater breaks down, for instance, I'm not going to be able to think about that one on my own and fix it. That's an instance where I go to the phone book and find someone I'm dependent on to help me. That's what is really behind a mentorship. It's guiding that person to a point where they are on their own, but can identify when they need to come back to the mentor for more assistance or practice. Then they once again go off on their own. It involves knowing when to come back and when to be on their own. Sometimes when a mentorship is finished, the mentee will stay in touch. I still call my mentors, often when I'm feeling like the worst interpreter in the world. That person helps me to get back to the third step of being on my own again.

Another one of Vygotsky's concepts is scaffolding. Let's say you want to build something. Often you'll build from the ground up, and as you get to higher levels you need some kind of foundation or structure to continue to build. Perhaps it is wooden columns or a metal structure. Something is needed to stand on in order to continue to build and get higher and higher. When that is accomplished, you take that structure down. The same concept applies in mentoring. There is a person that needs "help." I analyze, study and determine what it is they already know and what some of the problems are. I design the scaffold that
will fit all of those factors. I can then pull them along and help them improve. When that has happened, I, as the scaffold, am "taken down," and the person doesn't need me anymore. How do I know what scaffold to build in order to match up with what they need to pull them along? It's through what Vygotsky calls ZPD, the Zone of Proximal Development. This is where the person is feeling stuck, or where they feel their skills are not up to par.

I can slowly pull them along, that is within the zone, or I could try to yank them from one point to another. This would not be operating in their ZPD, though. I must find the right fit to help them along from where they are at that time and what they know

now. I'll find out exactly how much to challenge them and how to bring them along. That's important. I must figure out the Zone of Proximal Development for that particular goal for that colleague, or protégé, in order to find the right scaffolding fit. There are a lot of teachers who have never thought of that. Sometimes you may be sitting in a class with a teacher who is giving a presentation that is going right over your head. That teacher doesn't understand where I
am and what I already know. So, here I am with my needs, wishing and hoping for the tools or scaffold to get me where I want to go. The teacher's structure, though, is off somewhere else. I'm just stuck in one place, then. The experience certainly makes me feel ignorant
and gets me down. In that kind of situation, I feel like the teacher's scaffold was built in entirely the wrong place. It's as if where I stand in the building and where the scaffold is are in two completely different places. In studying the mentee, I know where they are and what they need, and can therefore build the scaffold to get them to the next level. That's a summary of the concepts and theories of Vygotsky.

Clip 3. Bienvenu on Vygotsky
Bienvenu: I'm MJ Bienvenu. I grew up in the South, but got kicked out because I'm way too rebellious. I went to find my place back East. (portion not viewable due to camera movement) I work at Gallaudet University as the coordinator of the ASL program. My responsibilities lie with juniors and seniors who are working towards becoming ASL teachers. In addition, I also teach a Level 6 ASL course. I absolutely love teaching ASL. I also occasionally interpret, which I very much enjoy. If you're curious to know more, feel free to ask me later. But, I think that's enough for now. (fields a comment from the audience) Oh yes, I have a BA and a Master's, but have not yet gotten a doctorate. That is on the way. It's just too expensive to do so, especially for me with tolls at $1 a piece now.

Alright, I'd like to talk about Vygotsky. I'm not going to use the shaken "V" handshape as the names sign. I feel that doesn't work. I'll be fingerspelling Vygotsky – "Vy" – "got" – "sky." Breaking it down into individual components has been the way it's always worked for me ever since growing up in residential school. So, like (points off camera) said, Vygotsky was about extensively analyzing the entire person. People tend to think that a child is done learning when they grow up and reach a certain age. However, as we go through life everyday, there are constantly new things around us that we are learning. There may be a new challenge or problem that we encounter and we learn something about that. We constantly experience new things.
Vygotsky has something we call world view. Some of you may have already had experience with this or learned it previously, and this will be a good review for you. He talks about the steps we take in the learning process.

The first is "object." You might be wondering what exactly is meant by "object." This

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could be what you all just talked about, a computer, a bicycle, a cooking utensil, or anything at all. An "object" in Vygotsky's theory is something tangible that you can work with. But, you don't know what to do with it. It's something completely foreign and new to you. What is learned from it, though, is what can be seen. But suppose you've never seen it before and therefore have no concept of it. In terms of a personal experience, I've had a lot of experience with computers. I'm still not 100% literate, though. When I first saw and used a computer, I had no idea what to do. It was one of the old style, box-like Macintosh computers. It was before Mac Plus. (Referring to someone in the audience) – No, you're a young woman. This was before Mac Plus. (Addressing the audience again) It only had 64K. That's all! When that memory ran out, you had to replace documents each time. The idea, though, is that I had to learn what to do with this apparatus. Then I had a Mac Plus. There was still learning to be done, even though I knew Macs from the first computer. Then it evolved into the PC, and it was the same situation of having to learn all over again. Having had a Mac, all over again, I faced not knowing what to do with this new thing. So, in order to proceed, I needed an "other." I needed another person who knew a lot about it. A long time ago, Dennis Cokely had a lot of expertise in that area. He's not necessarily the best "other," though. I mean, he'd come in and fiddle with it, do a little of this and that, giving an explanation here and there. He'd do his thing and fix it all up and that was it. He was done and even though I was thankful, I was in the same boat because I still had no idea what to do.

Gish enters: You need to tell him that goes against Vygotsky's theory!

Bienvenu: In that exchange with Dennis, I caught maybe three words. I was able to keep on learning more from starting with those words. Or, I could have looked at a book. Although, looking at a book was still confounding sometimes. It would tell you to do this or that and then wouldn't work, for example. So, I had to go to additional resources and get other people to help me in my learning. Then, when I felt more confident I could do the work myself. I would know what to do with the computer. I developed my confidence and expertise with that Macintosh, and then came the Mac Plus, and the Mac SE, and so on. With each new system and advancement, came more learning. Then there was a whole other job having to learn the PC, which is obviously entirely different. Thank goodness for Windows, though. My solution was to call a man whose children I babysat. He works at Gallaudet and is extremely knowledgeable about computers. For two hours, we sat down went through everything.

Gish: That's finding an "other."

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Bienvenu: So for two hours, he took me through everything step by step. After that, I could do it on my own. With each advancement and change, from Mac to PC to a laptop and on, I was able to come to a point where I could do it myself. And even if there was something else that was brand new, such as a particular program like PowerPoint, I would be able to go to a class or find some "other" resource where I could learn those specifics. But, I have enough of a foundation and knowledge base in computers in general to be able to then
add these pieces to my knowledge. I'm independent and don't need to rely on someone who knows about computers. It's exactly the same with interpreting. At first there is just this complex language to learn and get a handle on. The language itself is the "object." There are classes to take and experiencing the new language, trying to figure it out and gain an understanding. So, the language is learned. Then there is interpreting, which is a whole new ball game.

That's an entirely new learning process and again one feels unsure of how to do things. It involves watching others model the process, asking questions and developing a body of knowledge. During this time, I'm relying on another person. There comes a point where one has to learn how to do it themselves. We can't always be looking to another person.
The same thing goes with mentoring. If I, as the mentor, am continuously the provider of the information, then that mentee is stuck in the "other" phase. They will always be hitting a
wall and there is no movement to the "self" stage. One excellent connection between Vygotsky and mentoring is how to get to the "self' and the independence of breaking away from relying on a teacher.

Gish: It's very unfortunate that interpreter training programs have historically created a dependency on another person. All along, a teacher has observed and studied a student and when the interpreting is over, then the teacher is the provider of all the information about it. And that's all that they'll know about that piece of work. I could be right or wrong in that feedback. It leads to a dependency in which it's always another person's perspective on one's work. It creates a state of mind that I need others to give me the information about whether or not my work is alright. What we want instead is to develop the situation where that person can think about those things on their own. In other words, I teach you how to analyze yourself and then you don't need me anymore. Unfortunately, up to this point, that hasn't been the case. We really want interpreters to become more independent now. Many interpreters work alone. So, the model of always using others as resources is not effective. There may not be any "others."

Clip 4. Gish on Feedback
Alright, so, that's the philosophy and everything, but now we need to be able to apply it back to the Gish approach. The first half of the Gish approach is analysis, setting goals and objectives, and so forth. When I've watched someone interpret

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and we sit down for feedback, I don't rattle off all the things I've written down. I do it another way and let me explain that now. I call it "guided self analysis." This means the students analyze themselves. If this is a little difficult or awkward, I will guide them along and draw things out of them. That's my job as a mentor. You have handouts that give general questions, but I'd like to give more detailed explanations of those questions. Again, I did type all that out, but later guess who expanded upon the work and made it more extensive? It was Patty
Gordon. So, that's a much more expanded version of that information. And that's an honor, too. Someone started with my work, then the two of us worked together, and then goes out on their own and expands upon it, creating other ideas. That is what you have as your handout.

The basic idea is that I don't tell or rattle off comments, "spoonfeeding" the mentee. I ask them to take the responsibility upon themselves for their own analysis of their interpreting. Once they are out working as an interpreter, they will need to be analyzing their own work, so they need to learn that now. So, let's say they are interpreting and I've watched it, or seen a videotape they've sent me, and the work is done. We then sit down to have a feedback session and as a mentor, I ask them. And that's it. I ask about what they think happened while they were interpreting. And it's hard. The American way is to tell someone what you already know. "I've been working for a a very long time and I've gained an immense amount of knowledge, so now I will impart that and teach that to the other
person." But, it doesn't work. That's not effective. Nothing will stick with them. I have to learn to hold off and not say anything. Instead, I ask them what they thought of their interpreting and then wait. Perhaps their answer is that it was okay. Well, as a mentor, what do you do next? I then would ask what they meant by okay, or what part exactly was okay, asking for examples. They might respond that they understood the speaker. Great! So, that's comprehension.

This is a situation where we can find a place to "meet," where we match up. They've explained that they understood and I've provided the term comprehension. Next I can encourage them by delving deeper into comprehension. They could bring up reasons to account for the comprehension, such as that they already knew the topic, or the speaker is someone they know on an everyday basis, or they read a book by that speaker previously. Then those comments can be validated and explored. For instance, "So, when we know the speaker, it's easy to interpret. Or, rather it is easier." Now, I'm finding myself on common ground with the mentee and discovering how we can find a good fit. I'm still teaching, but I'm creating the world view and building the scaffold from what they've said. So, now, we're coming together.

Next, questions can be directed to additional areas other than comprehension. They might say they hated a particular part. I ask them to tell me more specifics about it, such as where in the interpretation they got thrown off. This leads to more

details about what happens and I can model how to describe that. Modeling, for instance, by saying. "At that spot, you lost the speaker's goal and the point of what he was trying to say. And that meant you got behind. Finally he said his point, but you were so far behind you were not able to catch up. And, wow, doesn't that make sign production really break down?" In this way, I can model ways to talk about it and elicit more from them. Further questions can be asked about what the mentee might do if the same things were to happen again in the future, and what would help.

The mentee can then brainstorm different ideas and solutions to use later. That might also bring to mind another problem they want to address, like struggling with timing and trying to manage lag time. We know now that the term "lag time" is not one everyone likes. Lag implies laziness or slowness, or the like. Many people are now replacing that term with "processing time," because what is actually going on is cognitive processing. I can ask more questions to get to the heart of what they are struggling with in relation to lag time. "Does it happen all the time? What is really happening?" The mentee may respond that
they don't know how long to wait. While they thought it should be 2 or 3 seconds, they found that wasn't really working. This information brings for you a realization that maybe they don't understand the concept of lag time. You can draw out this information with these questions. Then you can inquire about what ideas they have for a problem and how to practice on it. "Can you think of any activities?" Perhaps at first, they will only be able to come up with a few. And, that's fine. I'll meet them where they are, so to speak. And maybe I can give them an idea. I actually know a good one for this example. You watch TV and view a segment or portion. Click mute or turn the TV off after watching the chunk. Then,draw a picture or write a sentence. That's actually two different activities which we'll talk more about later. But, the task is to document that segment into a concise summary. How much of a chunk or segment do you take in all at once? That's just one way to practice. The point is that you can give examples of ideas. You are able to narrow in on the actual problem, which in this case is process time.

Why do we ask all those questions and elicit all those answers from the mentee? This is because you may have three different colleagues/protégés who all have the same problem, but each one has different reasons behind that issue. Suppose the problem is fingerspelling and in asking question and getting information from the first colleague, you identify that the problem is struggling with receptively understanding fingerspelling. Therefore, it may be a language or integration issue. The second protégé's problem lies with the processing time. They are not managing the processing time so they get behind quite a bit and are thrown off when something is fingerspelled because they are trying to
balance so many things. As a result, they are not able to catch the fingerspelling, add it into the process and then insert it into the translation. The third person has a problem with their wrist and some kind of pain associated with it. They may all experience problems with fingerspelling, but in very different ways. The challenge

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is in helping each one. Often, it's said that the fingerspelling is sloppy and needs to be cleaned up. But that is rather unclear. The mentee goes home and endlessly practices their articulation and production of letters and fingerspelling. But it may not be about that for that person. Instead, it's a processing issue and is about what's happening in their head. That's the purpose of all the work of asking questions and digging for answers. It gets to the point of what is actually going on.

For many years, we've been observing interpreters signing and we'll look only at the hands. We tell them how to change what is happening on the hands, like how to sign something a different way or to add specific non-manual markers and facial expression. But in doing so, I have not really found that "fit" where the mentee and I come together on common ground so we can determine a problem. We use hands to talk about hands and the voice to make changes in the voice. That's silly. I'm just going to make a number, but let's say it is 95% of interpreting that happens in the brain. That's something we need to learn by asking those questions and listening to their answers. We develop realizations about what is happening with that person. Then, we can focus and change what is happening in the brain. The end result is that it changes what is produced on the hands or in the voice for the interpretation. There are some problems, though, that are actually just about the hands or voice in a physical sense. And that's just fine to focus in on them. But, that's just one of the many skills and tasks involved in interpreting. Analyzing requires looking very carefully and picking out all of those things.

I know we've been going on for quite awhile, but I must take some time to tell my favorite story about why an interpretation can get thrown off. One time I was working with a very dear friend. The two of us were interpreting, which was wonderful because I love working with her. We interpreted together quite often. She was "on" and I was feeding her a word here or there. Her interpretation happened to get totally out of whack. I had never seen that before. I was asking myself, "Who is that person?!" I just did not understand what was
going on. Her expression...I mean, you just know that look when it's just not working. So, I stood up and took over. Later I saw her come around out of the corner of my eye and we switched. At break time I asked her what in the heck had happened. Her interpreting was fine, beautiful, great and then all of a sudden it was just a mess. Well, her bra had come unclasped. She said all she was able to think about, her brain's entire focus was on her bra. She was worrying about if anyone could see, were her breasts moving around, could she cover it up with her arms and still sign… In that instance, she just needed to fix her bra, not change her interpreting.

Again, you have the papers and handouts developed by Patty Gordon and myself. There are a number of sample questions about different questions to ask mentees in order to elicit information from them. For instance: What happened? Where did the problem occur? Why? One part was really successful – What do you think was happening there? If you were doing the same interpretation again right now, what

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would you do differently? If you were doing a different interpretation and the same thing happened, what would you do differently? Those are all in the handouts that you have.

We've discussed asking questions and drawing out information from the mentee. Next to discuss is how to find that "fit" and the meeting ground that will help bring the mentee
along. One of your papers is from CIT Proceedings, which has a summary of different tasks involved in interpreting. You can take a look at those and apply them to feedback with the mentee. You can use the list for making suggestions and pointing out those very specific items on the list for what they are currently working on. Another handout is from my former students in 1996. It was a homework assignment where they had to identify different things they wanted to work on or things they felt had been very effective. I collected them all and then categorized the responses. You'll see some relate to analysis issues, some are about equivalency of information, [comprehension ??] and so on. Those comments are in the student's words. Perhaps that will help you in working with a mentee who feels they are not sure what to call something. If they say something, I can give them good, professional [advice ??].

Clip 5. Feedback Part II

We are getting closer and closer to finishing up. I want to let you know more about Vygotsky first. Specifically, how his concepts apply to the process and analysis of interpreting. I was looking at an article one time and really like what that person was saying. I took that and molded it to fit interpreting. You'll find the name of the author in the
papers you have. First Vygotsky said that people don't learn by sequential steps. Imagine if you were teaching a baby to sign or talk, you don't force the baby to learn A first and then
B, and then C, and so forth. You don't keep them from learning or using a sign until they've learned the alphabet first. That's silly! Of course we don't learn that way. If that was the case, we'd get so frustrated we'd give up! A baby learns "milk" or to sign "Da-da" etc. As they are exposed to language, they pick up and learn what they want to know. That's how the brain works; we learn what we want.

Some people feel as if a person learned something because they taught it to them. It doesn't matter. Perhaps you did teach them that, but it doesn't mean they learned it. We have to leave that alone. It may be a matter of teaching a little bit now and a little bit sometime later. We go through different stages where we learn one part of a larger whole. There may be times when we only want to take one portion and analyze that, learn from that, and then put all that back into the larger scheme of things. And that gets followed by selecting another piece to focus on. It's a dynamic process and that's important to apply to one's questioning. As we are asking the questions and eliciting information, we may sometimes feel as if the mentee is not

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saying what we want. We have in mind a list of things we want for the answer. That's the old way and my brain still works the old way. In my mind, I have "weak language skills," or "poor use of classifiers," whatever. I have a list of things that are in my mind already. But, the mentee is not saying those things. They are fixated on vocabulary and that's all they are talking about. You may feel exasperated and want to roll your eyes. But, don't do that.

Those things that you have in mind – just throw them away. There's an axiom: you have totrust that person, trust the process of learning, and trust time. That person is going on and on and worrying about not knowing specific signs or words. They are feeling as if their vocabulary is very poor. You need to come to where they are and be patient with that. Engage in interactions on how to work on that and what to do. You have to trust that the list of other things that you had in mind will come up later. Maybe they'll come up in your relationship, or with another person, or in class, or with another mentor. They will come up again, so don't worry over that. But, don't try to take the things you have in mind and force them on the other person. For instance, it should not be an instance of brushing aside what the protégé is saying with "enough about that" and moving on to one of your items, like grammar. The mentee may say they feel quite comfortable with their use of grammar. Then to insist that they need to improve on their grammar anyway creates a situation that is worse than saying nothing at all. That's really a set-up. It's been established that you'll listen to the mentee and what they have to say, but really you're only listening to yourself. The message is that we will analyze the work to find what's important to you and then work on those, but it's not true. What would actually be happening is already having your mind made up about what you will talk about. And that makes the mentee feel as if they've been suckered. At that point, the trust is gone; it's over. The moral of the story is don't ask a question with an answer already in mind.

Often, we'll ask a question to the mentee and their answer is not my answer. In that case, I shouldn't twist and manipulate their answer to try to fit mine. Leave it as is instead. That's their answer and we go where they want to, rather than expecting them to come to where I am. Plus, the reason they are in the mentorship is not for them to be like you. So, the point is to start with the student. Recently, something funny happened at a workshop I was attending. I noticed a woman who was struggling with an English to ASL interpretation and the placement or order of signs. Then there was an interaction between the mentor and the woman. The mentor was asking the woman questions and found out that the mentee believed that in ASL the rules dictated time and adjective come first, and the noun second. She was strictly adhering to this rule. And we know that, yes, languages have rules. But,
we are just scratching the surface with ASL. We don't know all of them yet. Also, languages are flexible and dynamic, changing all the time. So, five minutes later people were asked to switch around. And again, there was the same story in English. I knew that story, and when I heard it I knew it was a situation where we had to switch the order of the word/sign structure. In that situation, the woman

actually did make the switch in the order.

Now, it's funny for two reasons. Later, I met up with that person and I commented on what I noticed about their use of the rule. It was so surprising that their improvement would be so rapid. I mean, they had just found out that rule and 15 minutes later they were using it. And she was so excited. It's wonderful that an interpreter was so thrilled about improving, as opposed to feeling discouraged because they feel there is so much to learn and they'll never be able to do it all. The second reason it is funny is that later I met up with the mentor. The mentor felt that she had not helped the mentee in her group. She expressed
that while she had patiently asked questions and discovered the problem, she still believed that she had not helped the woman. I told her to hold on. My perspective was that she had analyzed and ask questions to get to an understanding of what that woman meant and
knew about the order of signs. She had gotten to the heart of the problem. And I told her in actuality she had helped the woman because we saw the change and improvement occur. That process was started by the questioning. If that had not happened, the end result of the change in how it was used would never have happened.

Trust yourself, trust the process, and don't have the answers in mind already. Throw out those preconceptions. Some people wonder if they can tell the mentee something they've noticed that can be easily fixed. Of course you can. It might be just stating that you've noticed they've signed something in an incorrect location, like signing FARM with the thumb under the nose. And you can easily correct that with showing them it is done down on the chin. Or it could be feedback about posture. You can tell them these kind of simple, small things like worrying about the pain they'll experience from poor posture. Another instance might be noticing they are having trouble with exchanging and ordering things in grammatical structures. Of course, you can tell them these things, but…you can't force it. For instance, in the example of the farm sign, if they insist that their sign is right because their ASL teacher signed it that way or it is a regional variation where they are from, then leave it. Accept that it is how that person sees it. In the example of the posture, you can ask them "Do you want to work on that? Would you like the two of us to work on posture together? It's up to you." And they may not have known of that issue and will heartily agree to wanting to focus on that, especially given that they'll be working for increasingly longer periods of time and the pain will only become worse. They may, on the other hand, want to take care of the problem another way, like going to the doctor on their own. And that's fine, too.

In the case of the ordering and grammar, you could ask if that is something they want to work on and they may reply that they absolutely do not. They are already feeling overwhelmed and can't add that into the mix. Maybe later. You know that their interpreting will suffer without working on that, but you need to hold off. They are obviously not ready. Remember, you are trying to meet them where they are. It

can't be forced. Because even if you tried, they don't have to learn it. And the result is that you've broken a trust. They will learn that the whole thing is sneaky, or how to satisfy you be saying what it is they think you want to hear. If they don't want to, just leave it be. Develop the trust and it will happen later.

Clip 6. Feedback Part III

One more thing to add…You may have two or three colleagues/protégés. They will all learn at different paces, in different ways, and with differing styles. Some may be very enthusiastic, and some not. Some will be like the woman in the story; something is analyzed once, broken down, and understood right away. Some you may have to help analyze the same problem every single time. That woman was experiencing a problem with rules and following them too strictly. You can ask them how they think they want to improve on that. They might respond that they need to wait a little bit longer and truly consider something before actually putting it out in sign. I give lots of praise for that because I just love to see an interpreter think. It's one of my biggest thrills. But, like I said, sometimes there is rapid integration where a skill is put to use right after talking about it. Sometimes it doesn't always happen that way. At times, you'll see the same things happening over and over and over again. And you can ask them the same questions
again, or in a different way. But, just be patient with it, leave it be and hope that they'll learn it as they go along. I'm not talking about if things are not working out between you two. That's something else. But, you know what I mean and what I'm talking about. Different time, different site. One last quote which is also on your paper….But before we do that, I want to insert one piece here that I've really been preoccupied with and it is a point that is very important for myself and for many people. It's about different people of differing ages, religions, backgrounds, childhoods, skin colors, cultures, values, and so forth. Take me for example. Obviously I'm white. I'm a white woman. Will this approach work for myself and a black person? I don't know. Does the Gish approach work for black people at all? I don't know. Will it work for Deaf interpreters? Native American interpreters? Asian interpreters? I don't know. Will Deaf people really be into analyzing themselves in depth? I don't know. It may be different for a Native American in that they analyze themselves in a different way.

We don't know yet. I'm white. I wrote this from my very white perspective. We still need more research about that. Suppose my colleague is a black man and the two of us sit down to work. Will that work? I, as a white woman, am asking him all these in-depth, probing questions and asking him to open up and trust me. Now let's say the colleague is a black woman. Will there be trust that develops there? With a Native American man? As I understand it, in the Native American culture there are many very strong traditions and value systems related to gender. I don't know a whole lot about that. There are so many different cultures. I know a little bit and I'm always trying to learn more and improve that part of myself. But, those are not things that I know a lot about. So, is the Gish approach going to work in those instances? How do we find out? The research to discover that will be done by each

and every one of them. That is, Deaf people, black people, Native American people, Asian, Hispanic, Latino and so on. All of those people in those cultures will be discovering the answers.

And what about me? Am I to take over and do the research and investigating for those groups and cultures? Absolutely not. But what I can do is to "open the door," provide support, and ask them if they want my support and involvement. My role is to inquire how I can be of help. Perhaps I could write a grant. Sure, I can do that. I can type up an English translation, or such. You know what I mean? I can network with other people. That I can do. What's important is that I ask and then they can tell me what I can do to help. I'll take my white, middle-class, female power and go home. You know there's an axiom: "Get out of
the way, please, white person." You know, move out of the way so that the culture is empowered and taking charge of the action themselves. I can volunteer to help and support, but that's it in terms of my role.

To add to that, we can't apply the same things to all people. We need to be very careful, and honor and respect each and every one of the traditions, values, and cultures. Our profession and organizations for interpreting have always been established with our rules, our protocol, and our standards. We are long overdue to make changes to those rules, protocols and standards, so that they are broadened and become more inclusive of all of their world views.

One last paper that I want to call attention to is entitled "Punishment by Rewards." It comes from a book that is called "The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, Bribes, A's and Praise." That author has done some extraordinary work. The research involved children all the way through to adults, and various different groups. They divided people into two groups: one group who would get rewards and another group who did not. They just did
the job. Repeatedly, the people who did the best work were those that did not receive rewards. They thought for themselves, did the job and determined if the work was successful all on their own. The other group was being forced to wait for some external person to determine whether or not the work was satisfactory. With that kind of situation, all motivation is lost. Many people feel as if they are left waiting for someone to either praise or criticize them in order to give them an idea of how well they are doing something. And emotions become topsy-turvy depending on which it is. We feel good when there is praise and then feel terrible when there is criticism, all depending on what someone else is
saying.

American society does not support thinking on one's own. Instead we prefer to lump people into groups. The quote is: "We see strong improvement by telling less and asking more." If you ask a student what they do and why, that opens up a conversation. Now, the student can really start to reflect about their work. And they'll

also feel that the mentor is supporting them. The author said if they had to summarize their book in one sentence, it would be "We never reach our goal if we do things to students or on students; we have to work with them." We want them to become caring, responsible people; to become creative people; and we want them to become excited about life-long learning.

You know, with this videotape project, my mind is already buzzing with all the things I've learned. I can't see you, but you can see me. Thanks so much for another opportunity to learn more myself. I look forward and am eager to work with you. Again, thank you for the honor of watching this program and good luck. Good-bye.