The difference between producing your own discourse and somebody else’s

- A speaker knows, or at least decides for himself/herself – if things will be compared, or not – and if so, which in best, which comes first, which is the biggest, etc. – and much, much more...

- An interpreter
  – does not know any of this for certain until the speaker says it
  – finds out the discourse content piece by piece, while already interpreting the previous piece of discourse
  – often needs to start signing something without knowing for certain how to finish it

Focus for this presentation;

- Three movement patterns used by L1-interpreters that embody the discourse content:
  1. left – right comparison
  2. forward – backward comparison / backwards movement
  3. sideways movement

The difference between producing your own discourse and somebody else’s

Initial research questions:

- Do sign language interpreters use signing space differently because of these different conditions for language production?
- A majority of the interpreters are L2-learners of SSL: is there any difference between the interpreted discourse produced by interpreters who are L1-users and L2-users of Swedish Sign Language?

Material & analysis

- Simultaneous interpretation of monologues; from spoken Swedish into Swedish Sign Language
- 12 “skilled, experienced interpreters”
  - 6 L1 users of SSL (9 – 31 years as full time interpreters)
  - 6 L2 users of SSL (15 – 31 years using SSL)
- Analyzed 2 x 30 seconds for each interpreter
  - Located and described movement of upper body
  - Additional material analyzed for L1-interpreters
- Source language and target language content compared for three distinct movement patterns

Summary L1-interpreters

- Smooth rhythmic movement, where “the body follows the signs”, especially noticeable for:
  – shoulders
  – torso
- Consistent use of the three large movement patterns described in this presentation
  - Each “content piece” combined with some type of body movement
  - Instead of pointing at tokens in token space (Liddell, 2003)
  - L1-interpreters move the whole upper body to distinct places in signing space

What about the L2-interpreters?

- Stand “too still” + hardly any use of “the body follows the signs”
- The hands/arms seem “detached” from the body
- Attempt to use fewer of the movement categories, e.g. do not use forward – backward comparison
- All attempts to use left – right comparison and sideways movement fail
- Do they know what the target movement looks like?
- Not “embodying the discourse content?”

Body movements; first impression

- Striking differences between L1- and L2-interpreters regarding:
  - amount of body movement
  - types of body movement
  - movement
  - movement patterns

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