

Self-reflection in educational interpreting: Clarifying the role and improving ethical decision-making skills of the educational interpreter

Susanna van Zyl-Bekker

Stellenbosch University

Dean and Pollard's (2011) Demand Control Schema (DC-S) advocates post-assignment control, with discussion after the interpreting assignment considered essential, and critical thoughts allowing room for the development of self-reflection, ethical decision-making and autonomy, which in turn will increase the self-confidence of interpreters.

Ethical decision making during the process of educational interpreting aims to facilitate communication to establish teaching and learning in the classroom. If an interpreter cannot hear the lecturer or a student, or does not understand the relevant terminology, she must act decisively in order to establish communication.

This contribution was informed by a master's study investigating the demand control-schema (DC-S) and the application of the theoretical construct thereof on educational interpreting at Stellenbosch University (SU) poses two questions:

- Which factors do educational interpreters at SU experience as job demands within the context of the interpreting programme?
- To what extent do educational interpreters at SU utilise the necessary outcomes-based ethical decision-making skills needed for facilitating effective communication and overcome job demands?

To answer the questions in the study overview, data was collected by means of questionnaires and focus-group discussions. At the time this study was conducted, 26 educational interpreters and two sign language interpreters formed part of the interpreting team at SU. Twenty five interpreters completed the questionnaire and 17 interpreters participated in the focus group discussions. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the questionnaires.

This study has found interpreters' ethical decision-making being impeded by role conflict.