



## Demand Control Schema Glossary

**Demand Control Theory** is an occupational health theory devised by Robert Karasek (1979) whose cardiovascular research showed that occupational health is best understood not through a focus on job titles or occupational categories but through an analysis of the dynamic relationship between job demands and the controls available to a worker to respond to those demands. See chapter 5 of *The Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession*.

**Demand Control Schema** is an application of Karasek's demand control theory to the profession of *community interpreting*, developed by Robyn Dean and Robert Pollard (2001) which uses the demand-control concept as a way of discussing stress and wellness, work effectiveness, and ethics in interpreting. The basic theoretical construct of the demand control schema (DC-S), in combination with Dean and Pollard's teleology-based, *practice profession* approach to ethical and effective decision-making, provides a series of organizing principles (i.e., schemas) for community interpreting.

**Demands** are defined by Karasek as any *requirement of the job*. Demands may include physical, intellectual, experiential, material or other factors or resources needed for an effective work outcome. For interpreters, a demand is *any* factor in the interpreting assignment that rises to a level of significance that impacts, or factors into, effective interpreting work. It is important to note that demands are not necessarily "demanding." Demands are about the job alone, unrelated to the interpreter who is in that job. The demand control schema identifies four categories of interpreting demands: environmental, interpersonal, paralinguistic, and intrapersonal. These four types of demands comprise the *context* of an interpreting assignment and are often referred to collectively as "EIPI."

**Environmental Demands** are specific to the setting (e.g., the goal of the setting, personnel or clientele present, the unique terminology of that setting, and the physical surroundings);

**Interpersonal Demands** are specific to the interactions that occur between the service users, and the interpreter as well (e.g., cultural factors, communication goals of the encounter, moods/emotional tone);

**Paralinguistic Demands** are specific to the quality of the expressive skills of the deaf and hearing service users (e.g., pace, volume, accents, visual or auditory impediments to perception);

**Intrapersonal Demands** are specific to the internal experiences of the interpreter (e.g., thoughts, feelings, physical states).

For more, see chapters 1 & 4 of *Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession*.



Controls are defined by Karasek as the worker's *decision latitude* or what they *can bring to bear in response to job demands*. Note that the definition is a noun, as in "a response potential," not a verb (as in "to control"). Dean and Pollard prefer the term "control options." For interpreters, controls are quite varied and encompass such things as one's personal characteristics, professional credentials and skills, ability to acknowledge and identify demands, behavioral interventions, translation decisions, and follow-up actions with consumers, colleagues, and employers. Whereas demands are about the job, controls are about the interpreter. Dean and Pollard have identified three types and opportunities for controls: pre-assignment, assignment, and post-assignment.

Liberal-to-Conservative Spectrum is a concept and graphic image used in DC-S to convey three points. First, that there rarely is a single best or correct control decision in light of a constellation of demands. Rather, there are many potentially effective and ethically appropriate control decisions one might employ. Second, this variety of ethical and effective control decisions can be characterized as ranging from those that are more conservative in nature to those that are more liberal in nature. Liberal control decisions tend to involve more overt or observable action on the part of the interpreter. Conservative control decisions tend toward much less overt observable action, including the potential decision to "do nothing" in response to a job demand. Third, the spectrum's graphic image emphasizes that there are extremes on both sides of the liberal-to-conservative spectrum where control decisions can be grossly ineffective and/or unethical. Interpreting pedagogy tends to emphasize the ethical dangers of control decisions that are excessively liberal. While true, DC-S emphasizes that there are control decisions that are so excessively conservative that they are grossly ineffective and/or unethical as well.

See chapter 5 of *The Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession*.

Main Demands signal a *decision juncture*, a demand which requires some type of response from the interpreter, even if that response is to do nothing. Main demands usually stem from the interpersonal and paralinguistic demand categories and could be broadly defined as *what happened* and *what was said*. Within the first minutes of an interpreted interaction, there will be numerous main demands. Main demands and concurrent demands (defined below) together comprise the *constellation of demands*. The constellation of demands identifies all the necessary demand components that pertain to the evaluation of ethical and effective control decisions.

Concurrent Demands are demands that describe relevant factors that are tangentially related to the main demand. In addition to what happened and what was said, what else was happening or true in those moments which *matter* in the job? Identifying concurrent demands helps flesh out the full picture of the work situation and narrows down which control options are likely to be the most effective. Identifying both main and the concurrent demands is the starting point for context-based decision-making.

See chapters 7 & 8 of *Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession*.



Dialogic Work Analysis is a means of evaluating the effectiveness and ethics of a demand-control interaction. It is a detailed, teleological process that starts with the necessary elements of the context (the main and concurrent demands) and ends in an identification of the consequences (defined below) of a given control decision and possibly resulting demands (also defined below) that arise from that interaction. The term “dialogic” is used to convey the *back-and-forth interaction* between interpreters and the contexts in which they work. That is, interpreters working in a teleological manner will remain responsive to *and responsible for* the results or outcomes of their actions or their inactions. The dialogic work analysis also is expressed via the acronym *D-C-C-RD: demand-control-consequence-resulting demand*.

Consequences result when a particular interpreter’s controls interact with the demand constellation of an interpreting assignment. Consequences can be positive or negative. Identifying positive consequences is a way of highlighting which professional value has been prioritized in a given situation; it is that prioritized value which likely compelled the interpreter’s control choice. Negative consequences are natural *artifacts* of given control options. Identifying negative consequences is simply a way of highlighting “incommensurate” values that necessarily had to be forfeited in exchange for the prioritizing of another relevant value.

Resulting Demands sometimes arise subsequent to the application of a particular control decision. Often, they are mislabeled as negative consequences. Resulting demands are not necessarily undesirable or always avoidable but they do call for a new control response. Considering the potential resulting demands that might arise from a given control decision is important in any teleological decision-making process. Ideally, before a control option is chosen, the potential resulting demands are considered. If the potential resulting demands are undesirable, they might be avoided or ameliorated by modifying the original control to a more or less liberal/conservative decision.

New Controls are those implemented in response to resulting demands. Consistent with the definition of controls, choosing to not take action in response to a resulting demand may be ethical and effective. However, failing to *identify* a resulting demand and therefore, taking no action in light of a resulting demand may be ineffective and or unethical.

See chapters 8 & 9 of *Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession*.

External Demands are factors that are external to the actual interpreting assignment (and therefore not considered EIPI demands) but which still influence the EIPI of the situation. For example, interpreters all work within larger systems that may well impact the EIPI demands of the job. Or a more specific example might be that two interpreters coworking in a teamed assignment might have a strained relationship due to a disagreement in an earlier work situation.

Situational Analyses are exercises designed to simulate an interpreting assignment for the purpose of critically analyzing the demands and potential controls of an assignment. Situational analysis exercises (such as picture analyses) emphasize the importance of discussing interpreting work in a contextual manner but also provide the instructor or supervisor latitude to shift from the specific context being discussed to meta-commentaries about interpreting work on a broader



scale. In addition to picture analyses, situational analyses could also be conducted using written scenarios. These exercises are best for *predicting* likely demands. Other situational analyses such as video clips or in-vivo observations can be accompanied by a DC-S observation form and these are best designed for *identifying* demands. Situational analyses can be used to teach or evaluate knowledge and accurate application of the DC-S theoretical construct. They can also foster an introduction to the dialogic work analysis (defined below).

Theoretical Construct is the intellectual foundation or core of the demand control schema. It is the foundation upon which other elements of the schema, such as ethical reasoning, teaching methods, and evaluation methods are based. The theoretical construct is the union of Karasek's concepts of demands and controls with Dean and Pollard's conceptualization of the phenomenology of community interpreting. In brief, the theoretical construct describes how interpreting work (like any job) can be viewed in terms of demands and controls – what the job requires of the worker and how the worker is able to respond. Interpreting demands are divided into four categories: environmental, interpersonal, paralinguistic, and intrapersonal (EIPI). Interpreting controls are divided into three temporal opportunity categories: pre-assignment, assignment, and post-assignment. These are the basic ideas – the theoretical construct – that yield the framework for the three remaining aspects of demand-control schema: *dialogic work analysis, learning methodologies, and evaluation approaches*.

Grading Rubric for the Theoretical Construct defines the expectations for a quality demand control schema (DC-S) situational analysis. The rubric has eleven scales, each conveying a different area of DC-S mastery. The eleven scales are: accuracy of demands, distinctness of demands, number of demands, breadth of demands, categorization of demands, goal of the environment, sophistication of interpersonal and paralinguistic demand categories, intrapersonal demands, specificity of control options, variety in control option opportunities, and breadth of control options (from liberal to conservative).

DC-S Learning Methodologies are educational approaches that are often employed in demand control schema pedagogy or reflective practice, including *situational analyses, supervision, and observation-supervision*. These learning methodologies build on the DC-S theoretical construct and dialogic work analysis and entail distilling interpreting context through an EIPI structure.

DC-S Evaluation Methodologies include a number of evaluation approaches that examine interpreters' mastery of various aspects of the demand control schema (DC-S). For the theoretical construct, evaluation methodologies are based on the 11 scales of the DC-S *grading rubric*. Evaluation methodologies can also be applied to the *dialogic work analysis* (or D-C-C-RD) which examines critical thinking skills and the effective application of professional values.

**For more information on the application of DC-S to community interpreting, visit our online course offerings at [courses.demandcontrolschema.com](https://courses.demandcontrolschema.com).**