Winston, E.A.- Editor
Mapping Our Course:
A Collaborative Venture

CIT Convention 1994-Proceedings

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

In anticipation of the 1994 CIT convention in Charlotte, N.C., the Educational Standards Committee disseminated a set of issues papers and responses discussing several issues at the heart of our professional standards. These discussions were brought to the convention as forums in which members worked together toward a shared vision of standards for interpreter education. After three days of lively and impassioned discussion, the convention voted to endorse the standards proposed by the Educational Standards Committee. Two Months later, the CIT Board officially adopted the CIT National Interpreter Education Standards.' The Standards mark the culmination of fifteen years work by many, many

members of our organization. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to all of those who have brought us, through their energy, wisdom, and experience, to this point in our journey.

The 1994 CIT Conference Proceedings not only reflects our history; it equally directs our future. Part I contains opening remarks by Cathy Cogen, the keynote address given by Martha O'Connor, and the issues and the responses to the issues contributed by our membership for the conference pre-reading packet. It also contains two position papers adopted earlier by CIT, positions on class size in interpreter education and on communication and language use. Part II section contains the Free Papers presented at the convention. These papers represent the wide variety of research and experience that our membership brings to the shaping of our future.

The issues papers, response papers, and position papers reflect our history, the Standards are the present tangible result of our efforts, and the Free Papers reveal the great diversity, depth, and breadth of our membership. It is the membership that will carry us into the future, implementing the Standards, assuring their usefulness by keeping them current, and establishing a self-study process that will eventually lead to their use in program accreditation. We have come a long way on our collaborative journey, yet it is only the beginning. I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve both as the convention program chair and as the editor of the Proceedings for this landmark convention.

Elizabeth A. Winston, Editor
1994 CIT Proceedings: Mapping Our Course: A Collaborative Venture

~ The text of the National Standards has not been included in the Proceedings. It has been prepared as a separate document, although it will also be packaged with the Proceedings for those who want both.

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PART II

ISSUES PAPERS, RESPONSES, AND APPENDICES

(Formerly: Convention Pre-Reading Packet)

CASTLES IN THE AIR

CATHY COGEN, CO-CHAIR

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

This convention has been fifteen years in the making. Since the first attempt to create educational standards by RID in 1978, our organization has worked with RID and on its own to identify the benchmarks of excellence in interpreter education.

This has not been the work of the Educational Standards Committee alone. In 1983, our convention invited experts in foreign language interpretation and translation to find common ground and to broaden our view of our work. In 1984, CIT focused its convention on a task analysis of interpretation, in an effort to gain insight into the process and its implications for teaching. Subsequent conventions have focused on curriculum and instruction, evaluation and critique, educational standards, and student competencies. Every convention has challenged us to look forward, beyond what we were doing day-to-day in our classrooms and in our programs. Meanwhile, through many writings and rewritings of the standards, through a federally funded experiment with an endorsement process, with the

participation of many, many CIT members, and with the consultation of experts in standards development, the Educational Standards Committee has attempted to represent the wisdom of our organization and our evolving profession. This week, as we consider the proposed standards and some of the fundamental issues associated with them, we are challenged once again to stretch -- to look forward -- as we begin to map the course of our profession into the 21 st century.

I believe that we are on the brink of having a set of standards that programs can begin to use to engage in guided self-study and to gain support for substantive improvements they may need and want to make. These standards represent the knowledge, skills and perspectives our graduates need in order to enter the field of professional interpreting. These standards provide all of us a common set of 1

expectations about the basic knowledge and competencies our students should acquire, They give guidance in defining goals and policies regarding admissions, curriculum design, faculty selection, and student outcomes. And for the first time in their evolution, the standards go beyond the realm of interpreting skills, to address the importance of a broad-based, general education.

We are here in the spirit of shared goals and commitments. Although we bring a wide range of experiences, backgrounds, skills, beliefs, and credentials to the table, I believe we share a common vision for interpreter education:

*that interpreter education be meaningful, leading to job readiness;

*that students enter, ready to learn what we have to offer them;

-that we have adequate facilities and teaching resources;

•that interpreting faculty be knowledgeable, skilled, and nurturing, eliciting the best from ourselves, from each other, and from our students;

*that faculty get the support of their programs and institutions: from clerical support to professional development opportunities;

•that our programs reflect the value of diversity in all realms, from hiring and admissions to curriculum and instruction;

*that our graduates find appropriate work, that they experience job satisfaction,

that they provide excellent services to consumers and employers;

•and that we graduate sufficient numbers to meet the demand.

This Convention is our opportunity to give substance and reality to this shared vision. We

have the opportunity to say that YES, our faculty must have certain qualifications; YES, we must foster diversity in our programs; YES, our students must be proficient in their working languages before they begin to learn to interpret; and YES, our students should be job ready when they leave our programs. I believe the standards reflect this vision.

But, you say, we are limited -- by our own skills and credentials, and by too few opportunities to grow professionally; or by the structure or dictates of the programs or

institutions in which we work; or by the fact that our graduates are subject to a job market that places them where they are not ready to work and frustrates them until many leave the field.

Our challenge for the next few days is to look at these limitations not as obstacles, but as opportunities -- opportunities for our own growth and for the growth of our profession. We have a clear choice this week to set standards for our profession as it should be and could be, or to allow our current limitations and shortcomings to justify perpetuating the status quo.

Rather than say it is not realistic to require credentials of interpreting faculty because there are so few of us with advanced degrees, let's discuss ways to work together as an organization and within our institutions to assure that professional development opportunities are available. Rather than say, "My program has an open-door policy so that we can't screen for proficiency," perhaps we can share with each other how some programs have fought successfully to ensure some minimum level of language proficiency for entering students.

Our jobs for the next few days are first, to remember -- and to remind each other -- about out shared vision for the field,. and second, to build the momentum and energy we will need to realize this vision. Our job, in short, is to follow Henry David Thoreau's prescription from Walden:

> *"If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them."*

What will it take in the next few days to engineer these foundations?

We have all had the opportunity to read the issues papers and responses that mark

the beginnings of our fundamental issues dialogue. **The Educational Standards** Committee framed these particular issues because they are at the heart of what we do, and they are central to the direction our field will take in the coming years.

Hardly a week goes by without a request for guidance in setting up a new interpreter education program. In the best of all possible worlds, what advice would we give? What policies would we have them establish with regard to hiring faculty? Where will they find qualified faculty? What should they look for in prospective students? How should they prepare their students so that they will be ready to enter the field when they graduate? What does it mean to be ready? Does it mean they are ready for a particular job setting? Does it mean that they hold a particular degree? Does it mean that they can pass a local screening? Or a national exam? What ought to be considered professional entry level? Could we recommend a course of study when we have not yet agreed on the goal?

These are some of the questions we will be dealing with during this convention, Whether our programs are new, well-established, or in the planning stages, these questions are critical. Our answers will be the foundations of the standards, and the map for our future course.

I know I speak for all members of the Educational Standards Committee and the Convention Planning Committee when I say that I am thrilled to have the participation of so many colleagues in these fundamental issues dialogues. Thank you so much for being here.

SETTING STANDARDS

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION
CIT 1994

MARTHA O'CoNNOR, PH.D., OTR/L
AMERICAN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION

I feel lucky to talk about my favorite subject: standards. In education, standards are very important. I have a friend in Georgia who recently had a strange experience. His student came up to him, and she was excited because she had just seen West Side Story, the play, and said it was the most wonderful play she had ever seen. She then said, "Did you know William Shakespeare wrote Romeo and Juliet based on West Side Story?" This may have been a good indicator that some educational standards for English literature would be useful!

What are standards, and why might you consider adopting them? First of all, it is important to remember that there are many ways to comply with standards. Decisions you make now you will continue to evaluate, you will not be locking yourselves into something you will end up hating.

Standards are voluntary, non-governmental objectives that, if substantially accomplished, ensure the adequacy of education and preparation for professional practice. They are very useful in communicating because they give common language regarding goals and objectives. It is like the old saying about the glass that is either halfempty or half-full,

depending on our perspective. The beauty in standards is that there are two ways you can make the midline in the glass. You can begin with an empty glass and pour liquid into it up to the halfway mark, or you can begin with full glass and pour out half. Depending on your perspective, it is half-empty or half-full.

Your draft has been written to be broad enough to allow the institutions space in which to determine how best to meet the standards. There are a few givens which must be followed in any set of standards, however. For example, it would be difficult to have

an interpreting program taught by people who do not know how to interpret. Standards should include faculty qualifications. In many areas the program will have flexibility in determining how to comply with standards.

Often there is confusion about the terminology of certification and accreditation. Let me clarify: certification applies to the individual. Accreditation and educational standards apply to educational programs. If a program is in compliance with standards the professionals agree upon, hopefully our graduates would do well when it comes to certification. However, many other things can contribute to this outcome, not just the program quality.

There are many reasons to adopt standards. Standards provide assurance to the public. When you adopt standards, you are saying that an external and knowledgeable body has evaluated your program, and you conform to their standards. This is important to the public.

Also, you are saying that your program has voluntarily engaged in activities to assure compliance, not only to assure high quality, but also to help programs to continually seek to improve. Nothing is ever perfect. That is the point of having standards - you have a starting point for improvement.

Another reason to adopt standards is the improvement of services as programs modify themselves. Students benefit, as they have assurance their program conforms to the expectations their profession has set, and what they are enrolling in will provide the basic knowledge they will need to enter the field and practice.

Institutions of higher education benefit. The reason is that as more programs evaluate themselves and constantly seek to improve, and operate on their established standards, the reputation of the institution also improves. It is a cumulative effect. _

The profession itself benefits immensely. **The adoption of standards and** revisions provide means of participation for all practitioners to engage in setting those standards for entry to the profession. It contributes to the unity of the profession, brings together students

and teachers, directed toward improvement of professional preparation.

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Keynote: Setting Standards

I would like to discuss the overview of customary things that will happen if you adopt standards, the process of self study, and how standards improve your programs if complied with. Development and adoption is step one, followed by establishing a guide for the programs for the self-study process. The product is a report of self study, whether that be narrative, portfolios, videotape, or whatever you decide would demonstrate programmatic compliance with those standards. People are trained to review these reports. The only thing the program is evaluated on is compliance with the established and accepted standards. Generally, 2 or 3 people review the self-study report. One of the evaluators would write an executive summary of what they found, listing the strengths of the programs, areas for suggestion that might improve the program, and areas that merit concern (or deficiencies). When this report is written, it is shared with a larger body of trained people, who will then ask questions and look over the executive report, and may make changes. The larger body decides if that program becomes approved, meaning it is in substantial compliance with your standards. Programs can obtain approval and still have some deficiencies.

If a program has many areas that merit concern, or deficiencies, there may be things that would be easy to fix, and do not affect the education of the students. Many things are not difficult to repair. You would never withhold approval for minor things. Programs are given a period of time to become in compliance with the standard, usually two years. One person does not make the decision; it is decided by the larger review group.

Customarily, programs can strike names if they do not want a particular person participating in their evaluation. When the evaluators' summary report goes to the larger group, anyone with a conflict of interest, i.e. personally involved in the program being considered, is excluded. I have explained this process because I think it is difficult to decide if or not to go forward with standards until you get an idea of how the whole process works. The process is not punitive, it is based on a commitment to educational program improvement and enhancement.

Another issue is what constitutes good practice in establishing standards. Your draft standards are excellent because they are broad, and allow the programs to meet the standards in their own way. Generally, good standards allow institutional freedom of choice, the educational needs of professionals, and allow for education and innovation.

Standards require some specificity, such as adequate clerical support. A program cannot function without someone typing and providing support. Also, you must have interpreters teaching in the programs. You must decide what the bottom line is to close the gap between students completing the educational program and being prepared to get a job. These areas must be non-negotiable.

These are all ideas I am suggesting - I do not want to tell you what to do, I would like to generate some thoughts to stimulate your thinking. The key is for you to make those ideas work for you. That is consistent with the flexibility of complying with educational standards - if it works, do it.

If you adopt the draft standards, the next step is to implement them. You begin by allowing participation in the process of self-study. The report of self-study is the end product. A program that indicates interest in doing a self-study can at the same time be used to obtain feedback on the new standards process. This could help determine whether the standards are clear. One good method is to send out questionnaires to the people engaging in a self-study. Standards need to add information on how they are interpreted. I would give paper evaluation documents to those doing their self-study. As you are evaluating the standards, reward programs participating with a certificate that says `College ABC has engaged in the self study process'. Later you can determine when you will implement a process of approval, and at that time, programs that go through the process can receive a paper that says they are in substantial compliance with CIT standards, and the length of time that certification is valid.

If you give recognition to a program that has engaged in self-study, you may want to request that programs state what has changed since the self-study, how they handled problems, and let those programs enter in the approval process via an updated report of

self-study. Always look for the most cost-effective ways to do things. Formalized accreditation gets very expensive, due to the organizations you must join and to an increased amount of paper work. You may decide a paper review is adequate, and decide to not do

on-site evaluations, or do one on-site observation every so many years, and not every time a program is re-approved. You can decide that later.

What should you expect while you are looking at implementing standards? Expect enthusiasm from people invested in the process. You will experience resistance from some, and apathy from others. You should always expect the unexpected. The standard you think is easy to comply with will turn out to be the one people have the most trouble with. The one you think will cause shock waves will be fine. My crystal ball has gotten very fuzzy, so I do not predict anyone's reaction anymore.

You do not need to focus on the people who are enthusiastic, but on the ones who complain. Remind them that standards are issues to improve the educational process. Grandfathering occurs when you make changes, as there must be a period of time to implement standards for established programs. You may decide that the standards apply to all new programs, and programs in existence are given five or ten years to come in compliance with the standards. If the head of the program does not have the required credentials, you do not have the authority to fire them, but you can strongly encourage that when the next person is hired in that position, that their credentials are in compliance with the standards. You really need to make this a safe process for everyone. Standards are meant to improve the quality of the programs, but not with a 'slash and burn' policy. It means taking a period of time, and things will not move as fast as you would like them to. You need to make it easy and desirable for programs to be in compliance. People who are most worried will probably have good ideas about how to make it easy to be in compliance. Standards are like motherhood - no one is against them. By being careful and thoughtful, it is a good experience.

The key is keeping your eye on the ball: on where this profession is going; what you need to do to close the gap between the new graduates and job expectations; how you obtain pay commensurate with experience; and how you get employers to hire

people with expertise. What is good for the profession? Look at what faculty qualifications should be. How can you help people who do not have them to get them? There is time to do that. What skill areas must be taught? What academic qualifications should people have? You will be discussing this during your conference.

Faculty qualifications regarding deaf faculty are hard to write, because not every program can meet that standard. But it would be nice to have an issue paper indicating that the standard would be supported whenever possible. Diversity is another area you will be discussing, of both faculty and students. Again, it is hard to imagine that people would be

against this. A good question to ask is how will you incorporate it into a curriculum. It is apparent from the papers presented that there is always a way to make it work. It will not happen tomorrow, but you can decide how and when that will occur.

Are program exit proficiencies the same as entry level to the profession? How long is entry level to the profession? Some people I know call entry level the first day you are out there working. This is another topic that needs a lot of discussion. You need to know the difference between entry level and someone who is experienced. When you as a profession and a community agree, that is information you can give to employers, colleges, etc. Share information broadly. The difference between education levels and entry to the profession is a difficult discussion. Keep an eye on the big picture, develop a conceptual model, and the best way to meet the goals of the model. The papers in the packet will be helpful. You can base things over a period of time. The Australian model could be studied and modified. There are several options available. If you keep your eye on the future, you will help your profession. Remember you can dissent in a friendly way. Decide where to go from here, what this organization can do to help you with the growth and development of the profession.

POSITION PAPER: INSTRUCTIONAL CLASS SIZE

INTERPRETER/TRANSLITERATOR EDUCATION CLASSES

CONFERENCE OF INTERPRETER TRAINERS

As in the instruction of American Sign Language (ASL), effective teaching of interpretation and transliteration skills mandates very small class size. Ideally, students should have developed bilingual/bicultural skills prior to entering a course of study in interpretation or transliteration. However, this is rarely the case due to the time restrictions imposed by colleges and universities. It is therefore necessary for instructors to provide feedback on the general linguistic performance of students, specifically in the areas of semantic selection, grammatical correctness, complexity of sentence structure, and register of utterance. This applies to both English and ASL

In addition to enhancing general language capabilities, skills in interpretation and transliteration must be taught. Extensive individual instruction, critique and modeling are

required due to the extremely complex nature of the task. Drills must be conducted in the area of visual and auditory closure, prediction, perception, and discrimination; visual/auditory short and long term memory must be developed and refined; text analysis must be taught enabling the reproduction of the source language message into target language. In each of these steps, one-half of the process takes place in a visual rather than spoken language or code; classroom facilities must be large enough to allow students to sit in a semicircle in order to see one another and the instructor. Use of hands and upper torso should not be restricted by tables or other fixed objects in the room. Lighting in the classrooms must be maximal, eliminating facial shadows.

Class size must be small to allow an appropriate amount of individual instruction and skills development. As the medical student must have hands-on practice to perfect surgical procedures, the interpreting student must have maximal hands-on experience in developing interpreting and transliterating skills utilizing a variety of texts appropriate to a variety of clients. Videotaping must be used extensively, allowing students to analyze their own performance and to compare their performance to that of several models. This mandates the availability of cameras) and multiple playback capabilities which have freeze frame and slow motion capabilities.

It is for these reasons that the Conference of Interpreter Trainers recommends a class size of six (6) to ten (10) students for interpreting/transliterating classes.

POSITION PAPER:

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

CONFERENCE OF INTERPRETER TRAINERS

On November 4, 1985, the Board of Directors of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers adopted the following National Association of the Deaf statement as our *official position on communication and language:*

The National Association of the Deaf
Position on Communication and Language

The National Association of the Deaf respects the right of deaf individuals to clear and meaningful communication. Regardless of communication goals that others may set for deaf individuals, they have the right to express themselves and to receive communication without restrictions.

Deaf people of all ages have the right to use gestures, pantomime, signs, reading, writing, speech, speechreading, and residual hearing in order to express themselves or to understand what others are saying. They have the right to use these means alone or in various combinations. Whatever is needed to increase comprehension should be used whenever possible.

Inherent in our Communication Position is our recognition of American Sign Language (ASL) as a language in its own right, fully deserving of respect because of its importance to deaf people for its communication, educational, and cultural values. While the

National Association of the Deaf recognizes that English is the language of the United States, the NAD advocates a bilingual approach (utilizing both ASL and English) in schools to enable deaf students to reach full potential. As a viable vehicle to aid learning, American Sign Language requires a leading place in our educational systems. Communication methodologies in our educational systems should provide all deaf people with the maximum opportunity to acquire educational, social and emotional growth, and to attain competency both in the English language and American Sign Language. Moreover, American Sign Language, in addition to its communication and cultural values, is a useful means to help deaf children attain educational goals, including English language competency.

Finally, the NAD recognizes that two languages in the deaf community are ASL and English. We also believe that communication rights and privileges as stated in the Constitution of the United States belong to the individual. Therefore, the NAD recognizes the right of all deaf individuals to use ASL and/or English. That is, deaf individuals have the right to become fluent in both languages and the right to choose and utilize whichever language, communication approach, or combination of approaches best meets their personal needs in varying situations.

The issue of *levels* of *education spans all the issues discussed at the convention. It was part of the discussion in each forum session. The following paper addresses this comprehensive issue.*

COMPREHENSIVE ISSUE: LEVELS OF EDUCATION

Questions for thought:

What distinctions exist between different types of programs related to:
- faculty qualifications for each type of program
- diversity
- student proficiency at entry to a program
- qualifications of graduating students for entry into the profession

ISSUE PAPER: Differentiating training from **education, technical** from professional

Authors: Nancy Frishberg
Sherman Wilcox

There are now over 100 interpreter preparation programs sponsored by accredited post-secondary institutions in the United States.' The overwhelming majority of these are two year programs in community and technical colleges. Some programs are grouped in the division that includes police science or computer technician, that is, a grouping which reflects the institution's belief that technical skills can be taught in the two years, and graduates will learn the rest of what they need on the job. Other two year programs are put in a more academically oriented division with, say, allied health fields, such as nurse's aide or childcare worker, reflecting the expectation that program graduates may seek employment directly after graduation, but that the program of study does articulate to a four year institution's major in Arts & Science.

Only a few baccalaureate programs in interpretation exist, along with several more in deaf studies or some discipline slightly more broadly drawn. Master's degrees in interpreting are also still few.' To date, we know of no programs at the doctoral level which prepare

research interpreters or interpreter educators.

[1] We'll ignore the training programs based in social service agencies, those sponsored by community and private educational centers, courses offered by adult education.

'We are focusing on interpreting programs with a sign language focus. In the case of programs focusing on spoken language interpretation and translation, there is a struggle in the post World War II era between private training programs, staffed by professional

Professionalism and Engagement

Nearly ten years ago Harlan Lane gave us a series of suggestions for improving interpreting and interpreters which he grouped under two headings: professionalism and engagement (1986: 236). He urged us to "start now on laying the solid academic foundation" for growth of our discipline by embracing both cognitive and social science. Cognitive science can shed light on interpreters' bilingual competencies, memory, auditory and visual processing and on learning and teaching these skills. Social science offers us tools for identifying and understanding social dynamics and cultural differences, as well as techniques for assessing and evaluating our skills, our performance, our educational practices. "If interpreting is to continue to grow and improve, if it is to be truly a profession and not a trade, then interpreters must know their foundations... "(Lane, 237).

Lane was challenging us to engage in scientific research and to build strong academic foundations, so that our field will be acknowledged as a serious discipline both by us and our colleagues in related fields. We submit that an additional step he didn't mention explicitly is adopting educational standards, and eventually becoming part of the accreditation process.

Stratification of Programs and Standards

Let's ask ourselves the hard questions which will come if we are to take the discussion of revised standards seriously:

-Do we believe a single set of standards should serve for all programs at all sorts of institutions? Or, alternatively, are we ready to introduce stratification into the educational process and not expect graduates of two-year programs to be able to handle every sort of interpreting assignment immediately?

If this pair of alternatives is too charged to handle directly, perhaps breaking it into component parts, following the model of several accrediting bodies, will help to elucidate the potential places where we can honestly differentiate among programs that offer training from those that offer education, those that specialize in readying students for daily practice from those which engage in basic research on interpretation, prepare practitioners for specialized or supervisory roles as well.

For other fields, stratification in the educational process means two-year programs are more technically focused; baccalaureate programs more directed towards a

interpreters, and university-based programs with mixed staffing of academics and professional interpreters. The former accept students with or without university degrees for conference interpreting training; the latter prepare students at the baccalaureate, or more often master's, level, for a variety of professional specializations.

broad, liberal education; master's programs more devoted to preparing supervisory, management, or professional-level personnel; and doctoral programs specialize in preparing researchers, scholars, or university faculty who can teach in baccalaureate and higher programs. The implication, of course, is that stratification in the educational institutions reflects an emerging or existent stratification in the roles for interpreters in the world of work.

• Student Admission: How are students admitted to interpreting programs? What criteria do we ask for? e.g., do we expect in-coming students to demonstrate a minimum level of English and ASL competence before we begin to teach interpreting? What criteria do we not ask for? How should student admission criteria vary according to program type?

• Faculty: What background do we expect for our faculty? Do they all have to be certified interpreters? Does the program administrator have to be a certified interpreter? Does the institution support primarily adjunct or part-time faculty, or are most of the faculty regular fulltimers? What support or encouragement do faculty have for conducting and reporting research? for interacting with the local, national and international professional communities as part of professional associations, certifying bodies, influencing and advocating on behalf of the profession? Should minimal qualifications for faculty depend on the type of program in which they teach? Is there a need for faculty of differing backgrounds (language competencies, educational specialization, work experience)?

• Curriculum: How is the curriculum structured? Are students learning basic second language skills at the same time as interpreting skills? What proportion of the coursework is dictated by divisional or major requirements, compared with the portion from interpreting sequences (where the major is called something other than "interpreting,")? Is there a fieldwork or internship experience built in? If not, can the enterprising student fit it in? Is learning about research techniques or formal language assessment models part of the curriculum? Do students learn about administrative roles for interpreters (scheduling, coordinating, managing)? Do students learn to teach? to conduct diagnostic evaluations on interpreters?

• Student Evaluation: How do we let students know about their strengths and weaknesses in performance of job-related skills? Are course marks the only indicators of progress and accomplishment? Or, do we give any sort of comprehensive or integrative examination? Should student exit evaluations differ according to the type of program which administers them, and if so how?

• Student & Program Outcomes: What sorts of jobs do we expect our graduates to get immediately on graduation? Where are they two years later? Four years later? Ten years later? Do we track the length of time between graduation and achieving national certification? between graduation and changing, careers? If the goal of interpreter 17

preparation programs is to increase the number and quality of working interpreters, then knowing these program outcomes is essential feedback to our curricula, as well as to our personal and vocational counseling processes.

Interpreting Professions

When Dennis Cokely wrote of "sign language professions" (1980), he included sign language interpreters, sign language teachers, and teachers of the deaf. He acknowledged the particular roles of academic research and institutional policy on the emergence of these professions. We submit that interpreting is a collection of professional specialties. Some of these specialties are in demand frequently, others only occasionally at present. Nonetheless, we need to acknowledge that sign language interpreter and sign language translator are distinct roles, as are the roles of interpreter coordinator or manager, interpreter educator or trainer, coach and tutor, and interpreter evaluator. Like our colleagues in spoken language interpretation, we have community interpreters and conference interpreters, liaison interpreters and legal interpreters, to name a few foci. Soon, for example, we anticipate more demand for a separate specialty of sign language clinician, comparable to speech pathologist or therapist, where much of the training and employment background would overlap with that in interpreting at the graduate level. To date, no educational program specifically prepares practitioners for a clinical role. Such a person might evaluate signing skills in deaf children and adults (and define therapy programs where difficulties are detected), might prepare an educational program for an adult who grew up in isolation from other deaf people, and might act as an expert witness in court proceedings (cf. Frishberg, in press).

Summary

Our current perspective is that we must expect differences among our educational programs, acknowledge that graduates of community and technical colleges are wellprepared for some interpreting tasks, and not for others, recognize that graduates of university pro-rams with bachelors' and more especially masters' degrees are prepared for most interpreting tasks as well as many administrative, instructional and supervisory roles, anticipate that new roles and new educational foci will emerge. Our hope is that this paper will provoke all of us to tune the definitions of what the strata should be. Elsewhere in these position papers, the terms "Technician" and "Professional" are suggested. Are those the right names for the graduates of each type of program? Will two categories be sufficient for the next five years? If most two year schools are preparing "Technicians" and most Master's programs, "Professionals", what about bachelor's programs? If we agree that there should be stratification, what are the consequences for educating the consumer public (both hearing and deaf)? Are there consequences for certification?

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ISSUE I: FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Questions for thought:
- What skills should faculty have?
- What education should faculty have?
- Should all faculty have both or should the pool of faculty have all?
- Should fulltime and parttime requirements be the same?

ISSUE PAPER: What constitutes a quality faculty in interpreter education?

Author: Elizabeth A. Winston

Academic credentials, cohesiveness, and institutional support are critical benchmarks of a credible interpreter education faculty. There are two categories of qualifications for a credible, qualified interpreting faculty-the category of qualifications that each faculty member

needs to exhibit, and the category of qualifications that may be shared by members of a faculty. Additionally, in defining a quality faculty it is essential to define the needs that must be met by a program or institution in order to support and encourage credible qualifications in the faculty.

Qualifications for all faculty All full time faculty need to be experienced, skilled interpreters. This is important regardless of the specific courses each faculty member tee ,hes. Clearly, faculty who teach interpreting must understand interpreting. However, faculty who focus on sign language development must know how to deal with the sign language needs of interpreters, needs that are much different and more complex than those of communicators. It is not enough to be a consumer of interpreting services; faculty need to understand the interpreter's perspective.

Faculty also need academic qualifications. While such credentials may or may not have a bearing on interpreting, they are crucial to the credibility of interpreting programs housed in academic institutions. Most institutions have such requirements, but teachers in fields such as ours, that have no obvious "terminal degree," often try to waive these restrictions or indefinitely extend the time they take to get this education. The more degrees faculty have, the more credible the program is to the academic community around it. Obtaining these degrees is not a waste of time. Although there is little opportunity to get degrees in interpreting education, there are many fields of study that can be easily applied to interpreting. These include linguistics, second language teaching, communications, education, and any field that employs interpreting graduatesfor example, an interpreting teacher with a background or degree in counseling is a definite asset to a course that focuses on counseling settings. Thus, an academic credential is necessary both as a basic requirement of academia and because it is valuable to the teaching of interpreting.

Faculty need to demonstrate a continued interest in improving their teaching and learning about the field. This can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. Attending conferences, taking classes, teaching workshops, conducting research, and publishing articles all demonstrate such interest. It is, of course, important to distinguish between quality and quantity. A faculty member needs to attend local, state, and national conferences. Likewise, a faculty member needs to demonstrate both a breadth and an depth of skills and knowledge about interpreting, being able to teach a variety of skills and topics.

Skills to be shared by faculty: While faculty in interpreting programs need to be skilled in a variety of areas, each faculty member does not need, and should not be expected to be, an expert in all areas of interpreting. Different members of a faculty will have different interests and strengths. Needs of a program should be considered and evenly shared by the faculty. One member needs to have native fluency in ASL; one needs to have native fluency in English. It is helpful if the interests and strengths are diversified. If one teacher is interested and experienced in education and interpreting, another should be strong in community interpreting; another in deaf/blind interpreting. Someone needs to be interested in mentoring processes; someone needs to be interested in language development. Specific faculty bring a variety of strengths to a program; these should be encouraged and taken into account when searching for faculty. Thus, interpreting programs need to evaluate not only overall skills and experience, but the fit of those skills and experience into the overall needs within the program.

Commitments needed from the institution: It is an unfortunate situations that many programs

are forced to teach most of the courses through the exclusive use of adjunct faculty. This situation, while, monetarily advantageous for the institution, is disastrous for a program. It is essential for a program to be successful that the courses be coordinated and sequenced and that all the faculty understand the sequencing and progress expected from course to course. Adjunct faculty are valuable members of a program, adding a breadth and depth that could not otherwise be achieved by only one or two full-time faculty. However, use of adjuncts as the primary faculty often leads to courses that do not sequence properly. Adjunct faculty, in my experience, are usually not required (or invited) to attend program faculty meetings, to have input into the coordination of courses, or to participate fully in the advising and evaluation of students. There is little cohesion among faculty and courses when institutions rely on adjunct rather than full-time positions for the primary faculty positions.

Institutions need to require professional development from interpreting faculty. This means providing support and encouragement for faculty to obtain further education. In my experience, the faculty are eager to take advantage of such opportunities. While it would be wonderful if institutions provided for travel, tuition, and expenses to all meetings (a few actually do this!), it would be a start if faculty were provided with release time to attend without losing pay. I have heard of programs that will support only one faculty member's attendance at any given meeting. Some faculty have the

opportunity to attend national conferences only once every several years. Such attitudes by institutions need to be changed from discouraging to encouraging faculty growth and development. I realize that this problem is not unique to our field-it is a widespread problem in academia. We need to actively demonstrate encouragement and support of interpreting faculty in our own field in order to begin convincing institutions of the importance of faculty development.

Conclusion: Most of us involved in the education of interpreters at this point in time have gotten into the field as the result of our experience as interpreters; few have an education that is directly related to interpreting. There is very little opportunity for interpreter educators to learn about interpreter education. 7ur field is in the position of having growing opportunities to teach interpreters and few options for preparing (and eventually certifying) teachers. Faculty of interpreting programs are acutely aware of this problem. It is very difficult to find qualified teachers to fill positions in interpreting programs; in most parts of the country it is difficult to end and retain adjunct faculty.

The positive side of this situation is that those who are active in interpreter education are those who are dedicated and motivated to continually improve their programs and extend their own understanding of interpreting and interpreter education. A striking example of this was an interpreting educator's seminar last May that was sponsored by spoken language interpreters but opened to sign language interpreters. Half of the participants were from sign language programs!. The need for more training for us is clear; the willingness to take advantage of the training is evident.

As interpreter educators, we need to demand high qualifications from our faculty and high levels of support from the institutions that we work in. Such qualifications can be demonstrated in many ways, as discussed above, and such support does not need to be limited to monetary support. We need to continually encourage faculty to be skilled interpreters and teachers, to be continually learning and contributing to the field, and to be active in educating institutions about our needs for professional development.

RESPONSE TO ISSUE PAPER: WHAT CONSTITUES A QUALITY FACULTY?

Title: Role of Deaf Faculty in an Interpreting Training Program

Author: Val Dively

Before the role of a deaf interpreter educator in an interpreting training program (IPP) is examined and described, deaf interpreter educators are to be foremost viewed as educators and colleagues, not as 'back-up' or "second class" or even 'extra' interpreter educators in relationship to their hearing colleagues in the field. This also applies to the decision-making process and settings related to an IPP's curriculum, the assessment of student interpreters' progress in an IPP and any other related areas in the program.

Perhaps one of deaf interpreter educators' major contributions to the interpreting field is their presence as deaf consumers and native ASL signers. They provide an IPP an environment where student interpreters are given constant exposure to ASL and deaf culture. Deaf interpreter educators' interactions with student interpreters also give them important opportunities to develop proper professional relationships as well as rapport with deaf consumers. Most spoken language interpreters are fluent in two cultures and their languages. They also tend to interpret into their primary languages, not their secondary languages. However, this is not true of most sign language interpreters in the U.S. as they tend to have been raised in hearing or American English speaking environments with a severe limit or no contact with Deaf (culturally deaf) people and their language. This latter group of interpreters finds themselves interpreting into their secondary language, ASL, much more frequently than they interpret into their primary language, American English. Not only that, these interpreters' limited contact with deaf consumers, especially culturally deaf people, often affect their ability to comprehend deaf persons' messages in ASL. This limited contact often brings poor ASL-to-English interpreting performances. The 1990's find more and more deaf people assertive in expressing their communication needs and other needs with hearing people. This change in asserting and expressing specific needs will certainly continue into the future. Thus these deaf people will participate more fully in an interpreted setting; they will speak more, rather than just sit and listen to hearing people talking. Sign language interpreters thus need to be fluent in the two languages: American English and ASL. They also need to be fluent in interpreting into both primary and secondary languages. Hence, deaf interpreter educators often feel more responsibility to ensure that graduating student interpreters'

bilingual and interpreting skills are acceptable in deaf communities.

Thus teaching responsibilities in an ideal IPP would include hiring deaf ASL instructors to teach advanced ASL classes to enhance student interpreters' second language (ASL) skills so as to develop a high performance level of interpreting. Other

interpreting courses where the target language is ASL also can be taught by the deaf interpreter educators. For instance, a deaf interpreter educator can teach English-to-ASL translating and English-to-ASL interpreting. In my IPP, two translation courses for the first year student interpreters are taught by a co-team consisting of one deaf interpreter educator and one hearing interpreter educator in teaching ASL and English as target languages. Like the translation courses, two interpreting courses for the ,ond year students also are taught by a deaf/hearing coteam of interpreter educators.

Additionally deaf interpreter educators can serve as student interpreters' mentors during their practicum and/or internship. They also can coordinate practicum and/or intern interpreting programs as well as direct or coordinate an IPP. A look at an IPP's curriculum is needed before deaf and hearing interpreter educators can discuss which interpreting courses they should teach as well as recommend possible changes in the curriculum in order to make the IPP a better program. Deaf people interested in teaching in an IPP are to be fluent in ASL and also need to be able to comprehend various levels of written English. It should not be mandatory for deaf interpreter educators to be fluent in writing in English as English and other spoken languages are not accessible for deaf people in natural settings.

Interested deaf people also should be familiar with aspects of an interpreted event such as an interpreter's role and function, communicative nature of an interpreted event, the interpreting process and so forth. It should be recognized that deaf people have limited opportunities to develop interpreting skills in comparison to hearing people, as the current interpreting job market for deaf interpreters is severely limited. Deaf interpreters often are asked to work as team court interpreters and deaf-blind interpreters. Only very few deaf interpreters are working as full time interpreters on a regular basis.

One exciting change facing today's IPPs is enrollment of deaf student interpreters. Three deaf student interpreters have enrolled in my IPP during the last four years; two graduated and one currently is enrolled in the IPP. The three deaf student interpreters each have a different career goal; the first one as a deaf-blind interpreter; the second as a translator, interpreter of ASL and another sign language and deaf-blind interpreter; and the third as an interpreter of ASL and another sign language and a deafblind interpreter. Deaf interpreter educators here have a vivid role in providing input in the IPP's curriculum for deaf student interpreters as well as for hearing student interpreters.

Lastly, the presence of deaf interpreter educators in IPP's across the country not only plays a vivid role in educating student interpreters but also enhances an ever increasing awareness in deaf peoples' comprehension of how a successful interpreted event can occur. More and more deaf consumers are learning how to be an effective team player with an interpreters) as how to provide the interpreter opportunities to perform well in an interpreted event. It is in both parties' best interests to have 'topnotch' interpreted performances.

_Questions for thought:
• Should interpreter education programs support and promote diversity? •
What is the definition of diversity?
• How does your program actively recruit a diverse student and faculty population? •
How does your curriculum incorporate acceptance of and respect for diversity in the curriculum?

ISSUE PAPER: Diversity in Interpreter Education

Author: Pat Stawasz

The mission statement of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT, 1992) proclaims "respect and support for D/deaf peoples right to self determination and true communication access", and the promotion of "quality education for interpreters working with American Sign Language and English (including English influenced forms of signing)." These statements, while supportive and open, describe in very general terms the population of the organization and its constituents. Recent legislation, political action, and civil rights demands from traditionally underrepresented groups have led to increased awareness of the linguistic and cultural diversity of our population. The diverse needs of all these groups will greatly expand the meaning of "true communication access" and lead to changes in the way CIT carries out its mission in the areas of management, policy, the establishment of standards, and the recruitment and education of interpreters.

The concept of diversity is complex and multifaceted, encompassing such aspects as ethnicity, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, economic background, age, and religious belief. Promotion of diversity in organizations encourages the establishment of an atmosphere of inclusion, recruitment, and participation by and for the individuals and groups from various backgrounds. In policy making or revision diversity should be linked directly to the organization's mission, goals, and pedagogy. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges in their policy statement on diversity offers a threefold definition: 1) representation from a variety of groups; 2) the creation of a climate of respect and cooperation among all members of and within an organization and its various activities; and 3) recognition and appreciation of the differences of various group and their needs for in-group affiliation. Diversity goes beyond the mandated, quantitative and retrospective requirements of Affirmative Action to a place of prospective, qualitative production of an egalitarian, supportive environment. (WASC, 1993) Such action, however, is more easily written into policy than put into practice.

Many people from underrepresented groups who have been involved in various organizations and programs have often felt as though they were unwelcome or the targets 27

of subtle discrimination. Those with majority status have been and still are unaware of bias or discrimination and unwittingly continue to engage in behaviors that reinforce the alienation of others. Herein lies the challenge of diversity. While rules and policies can protect and promote the inclusion of underrepresented individuals and groups, the knowledge of the issues of diversity and the creation of a truly open, inviting environment is the responsibility of each person involved.

CIT accepts the challenge to engage in critical self-reflection in the elimination of any evidence of bias, stereotyping or exclusion in our policies and practices. The organization will

seek out input from members of underrepresented groups and promote dialogue that will lead to the creation of an open, supportive working environment among all members. In addition , programs have a twofold responsibility: 1) to assure that diverse student and faculty populations are actively recruited and supported, and 2) to assure that the curriculum fosters the attitude of acceptance and respect of the diversity in the population. The very nature of the task of interpreting situates interpreters and the organization within the diverse populations of this country. The 1992 CIT Handbook of Collective Wisdom states in the introduction that the handbook "is meant to be a living document which is by definition, in constant need of nurturing, learning, and love, as are all living things." It is with the same spirit of nurturing all living things that the topic of diversity is addressed by CIT.

RESPONSE -- DIVERSITY

Response Parser: Diversity in the Curriculum

Author: Anna Witter-Merithew

Embracing the goal of affirming and valuing diversity within our educational programs and curriculum requires us to recognize that such an effort entails a commitment to understanding multiculturalism in its personal, social, historical, and political context. Accordingly, we must view our classrooms as a microcosm of the broader society and engage students in the active exploration of the societal power structure that has historically subordinated certain groups and learn how to make our classrooms the breeding ground for social justice and equity. As a result, we and students can become better prepared to function fairly and equitably in a democratic society. An important piece in this process is a critical analysis of how we design and structure our curriculum.

Curriculum can be defined as the framework which brings organization and structure to the learning environment. As such, it is rarely neutral, but represents what is determined to be important and necessary knowledge for students to learn by those who hold decision making power and authority, Consequently, it can become a form of social control and an instrument of oppression. This happens when our curriculum perpetuates the views and beliefs of the majority culture, without meaningful representation and discussion of diverse views and beliefs. This potential is reduced when all persons directly effected by the curriculum have an active role in the ongoing development and revision of the curriculum. This means an on-going inclusion of students and consumers in the curriculum development and implementation process.

We must expand our ability to create conditions that motivate students to learn and become critical thinkers, by drawing on the issues and factors which influence their individual decision-making and make learning applicable to their day-to-day life experience. This can be done when there is frequent and open dialogue between students **and faculty and when student** input is viewed not only as valuable, but necessary and essential. Likewise, there must be a strong involvement of the broader community in the development and implementation process through advisory councils, guest lecturers, panels, practicum placement and other related strategies. We need to foster a sense of student-community pride and ownership in our programs and learning processes.

Diversity requires us to strive for excellence and equity and to hold ourselves and students to high standards, Considering that most interpreter education programs are housed in community colleges with "open door" policies, the potential for teachers to have lower standards of expectations, for both themselves and students is great. In the

textbook, Affirming Diversity, Sonia Nieto states that, " no educational philosophy or program is worthwhile unless it focuses on two primary concerns:

• Raising the achievement of all students and thus providing them with an equal and equitable education

• Giving students the opportunity to become critical and productive members of a democratic society." (Nieto, 1992)

Concentrating on these two concerns encourages us to view students as vital, critical thinkers, capable of, and responsible for, creating change through action both in their own lives and in the broader society. Their interactions in the classroom should provide real opportunities to analyze and apply knowledge as they collaborate across cultural and linguistic boundaries, in the pursuit of understanding and social justice. Teachers must create opportunities for students to become a central part of the curriculum via their real life experiences and examination of their social heritage, which can become the basis for case studies to be examined, discussed and synthesized. In such an environment, the teacher becomes a mediator, modeling respect for their own culture and identify and for the identities of others, expecting nothing less from students.

In order to successfully achieve diversity within our programs and curriculum, we must be willing to openly face and discuss racism and discrimination based on race and other differences. We must acknowledge our own lack of knowledge about the diversity of our students and how this diversity may affect learning and the class process. We must allow our

students, and the broader community, to influence our own thinking and assist us in molding a curriculum which is both relevant and representative. Our ability to understand and value differences and use diversity in positive ways will make us and our students better people, more equipped to function within a global society. No better resource exists to help us in this journey than the experiences our students and the community at large bring to the classroom and our ability to integrate these experiences into the fiber of the curriculum.

ISSUE -- PROFICIENCY

Questions for thought:

Should programs require proficiency in English and ASL for entry into the program?
What is proficiency in ASL? in English?
How do you assess proficiency in ASL? in English? Can this proficiency be achieved in 2 years? 4 years? What academic settings) provide the best opportunities for second language acquisition -- high school? A.A. program? B.A.program? M.A. program?

ISSUE PAPER: Required backgrounds, proficiencies, and aptitudes for students entering an interpreter education program

Author: Christine Monikowski

The problems of selecting and training interpreters have been the focus of debate by members of our profession. There has been some research on the psychological makeup and personality of ASL/English interpreters (Quigley et al. 1973 and Schein 1974), just as there has been research on spoken language interpreters (Bank, 1973; Chernov, 1979). To date, there has not been any systematic research on student selection and training in our field. However, it seems that most members of our profession would agree that proficiency in languages (both L1 and L2) is separate from interpreting skill. Successful interpretations can be achieved only when the interpreter sees the process as a complex cognitive task that goes beyond the foundation of bilingual and bicultural competence.

There is some agreement among professional interpreters and interpreter educators, suggesting the following "as being essential for [student] success"' (Gerver et al, 1984, p. 19):

1.Profound knowledge of...[target and source] languages and cultures.
2.Ability to grasp rapidly and to convey the essential meaning of what is being said.

3.Ability to project information with confidence, coupled with good voice. 4.Wide general knowledge and interests, and a willingness to acquire new information. S.Ability to work as a member of a team.

It may be surprising to some that these qualities were suggested by interpreters and interpreter educators who work with spoken languages. Yet it seems clear that the basics of the interpreting process transcend the languages and we can, indeed, benefit from this information.

Students entering an interpreter education program should demonstrate a high level of proficiency in their L 1 and L2. This view has been expressed by spoken and signed language interpreting experts alike. Nida assumed spoken language interpreters were proficient: "in addition to competence and skill , proficiency is required" (1964, P. 58). Seleskovitch supported proficiency,..

> "...We contend that, in order to learn how to interpret, the would-be interpreter must already have acquired a command of his language which we would describe as perfect" (1978, p. 77).

Frishberg clearly called for proficiency: "...skills in both languages [English and ASL] must be exemplary" (1990, P. 25),

In addition, it is important to note that the level of proficiency in an interpreter's L1 plays a definite role in the potential for level of development in his/her L2. If LI proficiency is relatively poorly developed we cannot expect proficiency in L2 to be more advanced. By the same token, if the level of L 1 proficiency is quite high, there is a greater potential for a high level of proficiency in L2.

Current research in second language acquisition supports this position. Most notably, Olshtain et al, (1990) studied the relationship between L 1 proficiency and success in [English as a foreign language for students whose native language was Hebrew] (P. 27). They observed:

> "academic proficiency in one's mother tongue seems to play a very important role in predicting students' success in [foreign language learning) within a school situation" (p. 38).

One possible implication to be drawn from their findings was "that we may need to strengthen the learners' academic proficiency in L1 to facilitate the learning of a foreign language in the school system" (p. 39).

While discussing the use of native speakers as judges for the ACTFL-ETS Oral Proficiency Interview, Barnwell flatly said: "Some native speakers do not exhibit the [required] linguistic and cognitive patterns... it is by no means inevitable that all [native speakers] will rate as Superior" (1989. p. 45). And Carroll (1993,p. 146), made a clear distinction between native speakers:

> "In concrete terms, individuals tend to differ--certainly over different ages, and also

within groups of the same age--in general level of language development. But there is also some specialization of abilities: some individuals are specialized in speaking skills, others are specialized in reading and writing skills, and so
[51]
on..

These views support a holistic definition of proficiency which explains an integrated system of systems--cohesive, connected, and pragmatically viable skills. This implies a language. comprehension beyond the surface level, a dimension "which is strongly related to overall cognitive and academic skills" (Cummins 1979, P. 198).

As we learn more about the complexities of interpreting, we appreciate the limited successes we have achieved. Cokely's model of the interpreting process (1992, p. 125) provided a glimpse into the complexity of the process. He outlined a seven-stage process: "message reception, preliminary processing, short term message retention, semantic intent realization,; semantic equivalence determination. syntactic message formulation, and message production". Between message reception and message production, interpreters must identify the concept and determine the underlying meaning. They must analyze the symbol to find the underlying fact. Comprehension *in both languages* is necessary. Message reception must be thorough or the underlying meaning cannot be accessed. Message production must be relatively complete or the produced symbols will not be comparable to those which are received. This model offered a theoretical foundation for possible curricula in our interpreter education programs which focus on specific tasks. And it seems quite clear that language proficiency must be present before students can successfully learn these tasks.

The process of interpreting is a complicated and demanding one. And we realize that currently, there are not enough professional interpreters to meet the needs of the Deaf community in most areas of our country. When we increase the number of students in our programs, we believe we are moving the profession forward. However, knowingly accepting students into programs without requiring exemplary skills in both ASL and English fosters a linguistic facade' which mars our professional standards and offends the intelligence of the Deaf community.

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RESPONSE -- PROFICIENCY

Author: Nancy Schweda Nicholson

The author of the Proficiency Issue Paper makes many excellent points on the

subject of proficiency, such as the distinction between language ability and interpreting skills. Moreover, she quite rightly draws attention to the fact that "native speaker" does not necessarily equal "Proficient speaker", especially in a wide variety of settings which require specialized knowledge of concepts and relevant terminology.

It is my understanding that, unlike the majority of spoken language interpreter training programs, those which offer signed language interpreter training are often composed of students who are at the same time learning to sign. This approach is less than satisfactory for several reasons:

(1)Requiring that students perform the complex process of interpretation when they do not have the necessary linguistic tools available to them is a frustrating experience for both trainees and instructor alike. For example, students who have potential regarding mastery of interpreting skills may well be prevented from demonstrating their capabilities because they lack the requisite knowledge of the language, which is the basis for the interpretation task. To illustrate, one may know how to install a deadbolt lock but, without the correct tools, it is impossible to accomplish the job. In like fashion, student interpreters may be internalizing interpretation techniques but are prevented from putting their abilities into practice because the proper linguistic tools are not readily accessible.

(2) The methodology described in Point # 1 puts an additional processing and learning burden on the trainees. They may perform poorly as interpreters because they lack relevant linguistic knowledge. Concurrent training in language and interpretation skills significantly increases the cognitive load on students, which will probably prove counterproductive in the long run. [NOTE: With respect to "concurrent training in language", I wish to clearly distinguish between (a) initial acquisition of an L2 (its phonology, syntax, grammar and semantics) and (b) information and terminology building in specialized domains by those who already have a good working knowledge of the language. The latter, of course, is an integral part of any interpreter training program.]

Returning to the example above, requiring the trainees to install the deadbolt lock with only one or two of several essential tools is self-defeating. It is a no-win situation.

(3) Cultural knowledge may also be lacking in the L2 (which I will assume is ASL in this context). It goes without saying that language and culture are inextricably tied. As a result, fledgling linguistic skills may also be accompanied by an insufficient

understanding of the target culture which can, in turn, adversely affect the quality of the interpretation.

I wish to raise another point with respect to proficiency. Perhaps it is useful to suggest that specific levels of proficiency be defined in relation to the knowledge required for the task. For example, it is the practice in spoken language simultaneous conference interpretation for interpreters to work primarily into their "AI" or dominant language. This procedure necessitates excellent passive knowledge of the nondominant source language, whereas active knowledge is not required. Many United Nations interpreters do not hesitate to volunteer that they consider themselves to have an excellent "receptive competence" m their passive languages, but do not in any way deem their "productive competence" in those languages to match their "active" abilities in their dominant tongue(s).

Given these differences, perhaps proficiency should be viewed as a relative term and,

as such, more clearly defined in terms of (1) the type of interpreting which will be done (simultaneous, short or long consecutive) and (2) whether or not interpreters will be required to work from and into both passive and active languages. If, in fact, they are expected to interpret in both directions (such as in consecutive court or community interpretation), then it is essential for interpreters to be highly proficient in both codes, inasmuch as active, productive competence is involved bidirectional ly.

In this connection, not wishing to lose sight of the importance of cultural understanding, if it is deemed that students are to be trained to work only into a dominant language, it does not in any way minimize or obviate the need for an excellent comprehension of the non-dominant culture which, as stated earlier, is a primary component of the knowledge base required for both passive and active use of the languages involved.

To conclude, linguistic tools, cultural awareness, and interpretation techniques are essential for the student interpreter; however, depending upon the type and the direction of the interpretation involved, it is useful to make a distinction between active and passive knowledge as well as between receptive and productive competence. In this connection, it is suggested that identifying relevant, task-dependent proficiency levels be viewed as an alternative to the blanket idea of "superior" passive and active mastery of all working languages.

APPENDIX I -- PROFICIENCY

APPENDIX I: STUDENT COMPETENCIES IN
INTERPRETING:
DEFINING, TEACHING AND EVALUATING

Author: Roda P. Roberts'

INTRODUCTION

Translational competency has been defined by Wolfram Wilss (1976) as "the ability to reproduce technical, common language and literary texts adequately in the target language." This definition of written translation competency, vague as it may be, can be used as a starting point for determination of interpretation competency. Interpretation competency can thus be said to be the ability to orally reproduce technical, common language and literary discourse adequately in the target language. This overall interpretation competency, which consists therefore of all the skills and knowledge that an interpreter needs to adequately reproduce a message orally in the target language, will serve as the basis for identifying the competencies that interpreter trainees need to acquire and for proposing methods of teaching and evaluating these competencies.

1. SPECIFICATION OF INTERPRETATION COMPETENCY

Overall interpretation competency as defined above can be broken down roughly into the following categories on the basis of an analysis of the interpretation process: (1) language competency; (2) transfer competency; (3) methodological competency; (4) subject matter competency; (5) bi-cultural competency; and (6) sense of professionalism. Each of these individual competencies will be briefly examined below, before the competencies that interpreter trainees should have are discussed.

1. 1 Language competency

Language competency, which covers the ability to manipulate with ease and accuracy the two languages involved in the interpreting process, is a prerequisite for successful interpreting of a message, for the message is mediated through language. It can be further divided into two main subcategories:

(a) ability to understand the source language in all its nuances;
(b) ability to express oneself correctly, fluently, clearly and with poise in the target language.

While voice interpreters have the luxury in some situations - for instance, while doing simultaneous in the booth - of using one language constantly as the source language and the other as the target language, sign language interpreters are generally called upon to work in both directions (Sign Language to Spoken Language and Spoken

'This article was originally published in Student Competencies Defining Teaching and Evaluating, the Proceedings of the Ninth National Convention of Interpreter Trainers, Denver, CO: October 21-24, 1992.

Language to Sign Language). They therefore need an excellent passive and active knowledge of both their working languages.

1.2 Transfer competency

Transfer competency, while implying language competency, is nevertheless distinct from it. This is clearly revealed by the fact that not everyone who knows two languages well is capable of interpreting professionally. Transfer competency involves much more than merely understanding the gist of the message and conveying it as best one can into another language. It includes the following capacities:

(a) ability to understand the articulation of meaning in the source language discourse;
(b) ability to render the meaning of the source language discourse in the target language accurately (i.e. without distortions, additions or omissions);.
(c) ability to transfer a message from a source language into a target language without undue influence of the source language;
(d) ability to transfer a message from a source language into a target language appropriately from the point of view of style.

1.3 Methodological competencx

Methodological competency in interpretation covers two different aspects, one involving the modes of interpretation, the other, terminology.

(a) ability to be able to use different modes of interpreting (simultaneous, consecutive);
(b) ability to choose the appropriate mode in a given setting;
(c) ability to do relay interpreting, when necessary;
(d) ability to find pertinent lexical and terminological data, to evaluate it and to use it judiciously;
(e) ability to record pertinent lexical and terminological data correctly for future use.

1.4 Subject matter competency

Subject matter competency covers the knowledge required to understand the content of a message being interpreted, since one cannot interpret what one does not comprehend. It involves

(a) wide general knowledge to be able to interpret general discourse covering several fields;
(b) sufficient specialized knowledge of one or two disciplines to be able to interpret more specialized discourse in these disciplines.

1.5 Bi-cultural competency

Bi-cultural competency, which consists of a deep knowledge and appreciation of the cultures underlying the working languages, is based on the concept that language is a reflection of culture and that true understanding of a message involves not only a mastery of the language in which it is expressed but of the culture the language represents. Bicultural competency has the following components:

(a) knowledge of the basic beliefs, values, experiences and behaviours characteristic of source language speakers and target language speakers;
(b) appreciation of the differences between the source language culture and the target language culture.

1.6 Technical competency

Finally, the interpreter must acquire the technical competency required to perform adequately. Technical competency covers

(a) ability to position oneself appropriately for interpretation;
(b) ability to use a microphone appropriately;
(c) ability to work with ear phones (in relay) when necessary.

The components identified above for each of these competencies can be further subdivided. Thus the ability to understand the articulation of meaning in the source language discourse, which is an element of language competency, involves (a) the ability to understand all the ideas contained in discourse, (b) the ability to distinguish principal ideas and secondary ideas, and (c) the ability to determine the links between principal ideas and between principal ideas and their related secondary ideas.

It thus becomes clear that the rather nebulous concept of interpreting competency which was the starting point of this paper can, in fact, be fleshed out and made very detailed if one analyzes in depth the various skills and knowledge required during the interpretation process. Interpretation competency can be further specified by identifying for each of the abilities isolated above the minimum level of ability required. This is a far more difficult task, for qualifications such as "perfectly", "well", "excellent", and "good" are too subject to differing interpretations to be truly useful. Identification of the level of abilities can be based, at least partially, on the analysis of successful performances in professional accreditation examinations. For example, by analyzing the maximum number of language errors, transfer errors, etc., found in "passing" exams, it would be possible to indicate that language competency (or a component thereof) would be deemed "satisfactory" if there were no more than X number of Y type of errors in the interpretation of a general (or specialized) text of Z length. However, this type of work still remains to be done and therefore the evaluation of

abilities, even of professionals, remains subjective to a large extent. This renders the definition of student competencies more ambiguous.

2. DEFINING STUDENT COMPETENCIES

Interpretation competency in the context of interpreter training can be considered from two different perspectives: the end-of-programme perspective and the inprogramme perspective. Each of these perspectives gives rise to two questions: (a) what competencies should the interpreter trainee have acquired at the stage of training under consideration (end of the programme or major turning point in the programme)? and (b) what level of ability should he have acquired for each category of competency at the stage of training under consideration (end of the programme or major turning point in the

programme)? Both perspectives and both questions need to be considered if student competencies are to be clearly delimited.

2.1 End-of-programme competencies

The end-of-programme competencies must be determined by what the profession expects of beginning interpreters. By profession I mean not only the professional associations) but also the marketplace, for there may well be a contradiction between the expectations of the two: for instance, the professional association may prefer beginning interpreters to have sound language, transfer, methodological and bi-cultural competencies, even if this is at the expense of subject matter and technical competencies, whereas the work market may require beginning interpreters to have acquired all competencies, even if the level of attainment is not that high.

First, using as a starting point a listing of competencies required of professional interpreters (cf. Section 1 above), a parallel list of competencies expected of beginning interpreters must be drawn up on the basis of discussions with the professional association and major employers. This list may vary from one region to another, depending on several factors: the possibility of further training and continuing education; the organization of the profession in the area; the quality of interpreting services already provided in the area, etc. Next, an attempt should be made to determine the minimum level of ability required for each competency. This is a difficult task, since, given the general lack of precision concerning the level of abilities required of professional interpreters, programme administrators cannot proceed simply by a lowering of the level. In other words, they cannot use the following logic: certified interpreters are allowed a maximum of 2 errors of style in the target language for the interpretation of a general discourse of 500 words; it takes on average two years of practice as an interpreter to pass the certification exam - two years during which their level of ability will improve; therefore, we will expect graduating students to make a maximum of 6 errors of style in the interpretation of a general discourse of 500 words. Such determination of the level of competency will have to wait until the level of competency required for professional certification is more clearly defined. Meanwhile, there are other ad hoc methods of level determination which can be tried. One such method presumes the existence of taped endof-programme exams, which are evaluated by professionals: a thorough examination of the taped exams and comparison of the pass/fail results could yield some interesting (although not necessarily statistical) results. Another method would be observation of beginning interpreters at work and a necessarily subjective evaluation of their level of competencies. The problem with this method, however, is not only its subjectivity, but also its presumption that all beginning interpreters meet certain basic criteria: we have all heard

horror stories about a neighbour or court clerk with some knowledge of ASL being asked to interpret because no one else was available! The third and final step in defining end-of-programme competencies is to consider the results of the first two steps (identification of all the competencies expected of beginning interpreters and identification of the level of each competency) in terms of the length of the interpreter training programme, the prerequisites required for entering

the programme, and the academic level at which the programme is offered. It is obvious that all competencies cannot be taught in a 2-year programme, especially if such a programme does not require as a prerequisite a high enough level of the two working languages to eliminate the need for much training for acquisition of language competency. On the other hand, if the interpreter training programme is a 2-year graduate level programme with strict language prerequisites, a higher level of transfer, methodological, bi-cultural and technical competencies can be attained, for the language competency and some degree of subject matter competency can be taken as given.

From the above discussion, it should be clear that end-of-programme competencies will vary from one programme to another. The only way to establish the same end-of-programme competencies from one school to another would be (a) to draw up a common list of competencies expected of beginning interpreters on the basis of discussions with major professional associations (but not with major employers); (b) to establish, somewhat arbitrarily, the level of ability to be attained for each competency; and (c) to set up programmes of the same length, at the same level, with the same prerequisites, which can adopt the common end-of-programme competencies determined by steps (a) and (b).

Such harmonization of end-of-programme competencies is not only unrealistic, but also unnecessary. For not all interpreting situations require exactly the same blend of competencies at the same level. For instance, educational interpreting for a hearingdisabled student at the college or university level requires excellent English comprehension skills and ASL expressive skills, but can be adequately performed with a lower level of English expressive skills since the lecture format often employed at this level does not call for much "public" communication between the hearing-impaired student and the teacher. However, educational interpreting at the school level, where classroom work involves active participation on the part of all students, would call for excellent comprehension and expressive skills in both English and ASL on the part of the interpreter.

The problem with differing end-of-programme competencies is ensuring that these differences are understood by employers and that graduates are given interpreting assignments that are in keeping with their end-of-programme competencies. This problem could be resolved by adopting a national system such as the one in operation in Australia, where the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) has established five levels of interpreting and translating, set up uniform tests for these levels and approved training programmes for different levels (Gentile 1985). Each of the levels of interpreting identified is defined in terms of the kind of interpreting or translating (and therefore, indirectly, the competencies) that can be expected from those accredited at that level; thus, Level I interpreters are language aides, who use their linguistic skills as an adjunct to their principal duties: their competence is therefore defined in terms of handling simple conversation and some questions and answers. Such a system clearly identifies the level of competency for which each educational programme is preparing students; end-of-programme competencies are thus, to a large extent, out of the hands of the training programmes. It also ensures, by its uniform levels, that employers are fully informed of what

can be expected from graduating students.

2.2 In-programme competencies

Whether end-of-programme competencies are determined by some outside body such as NAATI or by the programme administrators, the task of establishing competencies to be attained at each stage of the programme (which, for lack of a better term, I have labeled "in-programme competencies") falls upon programme administrators and educators.

First, the stages of the interpreter education process must be identified in terms of both the end-of-programme competencies and the programme prerequisites. Thus, for instance, language competency, which will be an element of all programmes, will require special attention prior to work on other competencies if there are no or very minimal language prerequisites; in such a case, the interpreting programme will consist of two main stages: the language acquisition stage and the stage where interpretation competencies proper (other than basic language acquisition) are acquired. When basic language competency is a prerequisite or once basic language competency has been acquired, stages can be identified in terms of the type and level of ability to be acquired for each competency during a given period (semester or academic year). Thus, for instance, one could decide to work on partial acquisition of all the abilities outlined in Section 1 in Year 1 of a two-year programme (with language prerequisites); or one could decide to work on full acquisition of certain abilities (such as knowledge of the basic beliefs, values, experiences and behaviours characteristic of source language speakers and target language speakers), leave the acquisition of a few abilities entirely for the second year (e.g. the abilities relating to technical competency), and aim at partial acquisition of the remaining abilities.

The terms "full acquisition" and "partial acquisition", ambiguous as they may seem, can be made very precise if the end-of-programme competencies have been properly defined from the point of view of level. Thus, for example, if the ability to understand the nuances of the source language (language competency) must, by the end of the programme, have reached the point where a maximum of two linguistic meaning errors are committed per 100 words (or 2 minutes of signed discourse), then full acquisition means that the majority of students in the class should commit no more than that number of that type of error. Partial acquisition of an ability would be determined by the number of educational stages fixed: in a 2-year programme where two main stages of a year each have been identified, partial acquisition of the same ability just discussed would involve committing no more than 4-6 errors of linguistic meaning per 100 words (or 2 minutes of signed discourse). Thus, acquisition of abilities at different stages can be made more specific by quantification.

The abilities to be acquired at any given stage should be the basis for setting up specific courses to be offered during that period. In establishing courses in terms of abilities to be acquired, the following points should be borne in mind: (a) the same ability can be worked on from different points of view in different courses; (b) it is not necessary to have distinct courses to cover each ability or even competency; and (c) many, if not most, courses will work on several abilities at the same time. What is

important is the clear identification of in-programme competencies and the appropriate division of the teaching of these abilities between the various courses.

3. TEACHING INTERPRETING COMPETENCIES

Since interpreting involves a variety of abilities rather than a specific content, courses in the interpreting programme are better described by the abilities taught than by attempting to specify content topics.

3.1 Teaching by ability-related objectives

Teaching interpreting competencies through a specific course involves transforming the abilities to be taught into specific course objectives. In other words, the course objectives are based, on the one hand, on the end-of-programme competencies and, on the other, on the in-programme competencies listed for that particular stage of the programme. Since the objectives of every course are established in the same manner, those of a specific course also have a direct link with courses that precede, that run simultaneously and that follow.

Let us take as an example the second of a series of four interpreting courses, run on a semestrial basis over two years. The end of the second course would thus mark the half-way point in the programme. In other words, by the end of this course, the students should be at least 50% of the way towards full acquisition of all interpretation competencies. Let us also presume that this course has been preceded not only by an introductory interpreting course, but also by advanced courses on ASL and English and by a deaf culture course.

Since the abilities to be inculcated during this course, as in most interpreting courses, include all but those related to technical competency, specialized subject matter competency, and some specific methodological abilities, the list of objectives will necessarily be long. But since many of the same abilities have been worked on not only through the first interpreting course but also through other more narrowly focused courses, the objectives will not be as formidable as they may appear to be at first sight. They may be stated as follows:

(a) To be able to understand a five-minute discourse in ASL and in English on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, without any misunderstanding of the main ideals) and no more than S errors in the interpretation of secondary ideas.

(b) To be able to express oneself for five minutes in ASL and English on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, in neutral register, making no more than 5 structural errors and S vocabulary errors.

(c) To be able to reproduce in schematic form all the main ideas and the secondary ideas, along with their links, of a five-minute discourse in ASL and in English on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events.

(d) To be able to interpret from ASL into English and from English into ASL the meaning of a two-minute discourse on general topics such as the family, school

life, personal problems, and current events, making no more than 4 errors of distortion, addition or omission of meaning.

(e) To be able to interpret from ASL into English and from English into ASL the meaning of a two-minute discourse on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, making no more than three interference errors.

(f) To be able to interpret from ASL into English and from English into ASL the meaning of a two-minute discourse, in neutral or informal register, on general topics

such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, maintaining overall the register of the original discourse.

(g) To be able to interpret in the consecutive mode from ASL into English and from English into ASL taking no more than twice as long as the original speaker. (h) To research English and ASL vocabulary on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, to evaluate it and choose the best terms and equivalents.

(i) To record for future use the English and ASL vocabulary researched on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. (j) To read and watch video tapes and T.V. programmes on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, to widen general knowledge in these areas.

To identify some of the basic beliefs, values, experiences and behaviours characteristic of ASL and English speakers in areas such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events.

(1) To able to take into consideration during interpretation any differences between the basic beliefs, values, experiences and behaviours characteristic of ASL and English speakers in areas such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events.

What would distinguish the objectives of this course from those of the previous and subsequent interpreting courses would primarily be the topics of interpretation and the margin of error allowed.

3.2 Teaching activities

While the general goal of such a course is to have students develop and improve their overall interpretation competency, it is clear that all these objectives cannot be attained only by having students interpret discourse after discourse. That is because straight interpretation requires the more or less simultaneous use of all the abilities underlying the objectives presented above, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to improve them all at the same time or to focus more on one than another. Hence, in addition to straight interpretation exercises, other activities must be developed to work on specific objectives.

Let us take as an example one specific objective and consider a certain number of activities that could be used to achieve that objective. The objective that will serve as an illustration here is Objective a: To be able to understand a five-minute discourse in ASL

and in English on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, without any misunderstanding of the main ideals) and no more than S errors in the interpretation of secondary ideas.

This objective can be worked on through the following activities (among many others):

(a) Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then have them do a written comprehension exercise (multiple choice or questions and short answers) on the main ideas and secondary ideas.

(b) Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then have them summarize the main ideas in one or two sentences (orally or in writing) in the same language.

(c) Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then have them jot down the main ideas and secondary ideas in point form, clearly distinguishing between the two types of ideas.

(d) Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then have them paraphrase the ideas (all if possible) in the same language.

(e) Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then have them summarize the main ideas in one or two sentences in the other language.

(fJ Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then ask them questions in the other language and have them answer the questions in that language.

(g) Have students listen to a short tape in English or watch a short video in ASL or English on a general topic such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events. Then have them present the main ideas in the other language.

Note that the activities become progressively more complex, with abilities other than straight comprehension of the source discourse coming into play: for example, activities d, e, f, and g involve greater ability to express oneself in a language; and activities e, f, and g involve limited transfer abilities. But the focus remains throughout on the comprehension of the source language discourse, and the inclusion of other abilities is very gradual. Nevertheless, the final activity is already a good preparation for straight interpretation. Even during straight interpretation activities, attention should initially be placed on one or two specific abilities over others. In fact, the same text or very similar texts may be used in sequence with the students concentrating each time on improving one 45

ability and then working on another while retaining the improvement acquired for abilities previously worked on.

Unfortunately, there is not as yet, to the best of my knowledge, a published teaching manual covering various activities for the development of interpretation competency -although detailed syllabi including a description of proposed activities have been prepared for certain specific courses at certain institutions. Thus, it is generally up to the instructor to use his imagination to create suitable activities, as well as the materials required for these activities.

3.3 Integrating the different interpretation courses into a whole

It has already been pointed out that all courses should be linked via the inprogramme and end-of-programme competencies. However, it takes more than objectives to link a series of courses into a whole. And yet the integration of different courses in an interpretation programme is a must, if interpretation competency, which is a composite and multidimensional capacity is to be adequately developed.

Various ways may be conceived to achieve synchronization of interpreting courses per se on the one hand and of the latter and other interpretation-related courses (e.g. courses on deaf culture, on ASL) on the other. Some of them are discussed below.

(a) Using the same or similar materials either in complementary courses at the same level or in similar courses at different levels - e.g. using discourse on a deaf person's relations

with his hearing parents both in a course on deaf culture and in an interpreting course. This policy, which also reduces each individual instructor's materials preparation time, has the advantage of having the students use familiar materials for new activities for the attainment of different or enhanced objectives.

(b) Using the same or similar activities in interpreting courses at different levels. The repetition of activities is the only way to reinforce and improve certain abilities. Hence there is much to be said for repeating certain activities done in Interpreting I in subsequent interpreting courses. However, in such cases, new materials should be used and the objectives should be enhanced.

(c) Making direct links between what has been taught in concurrent courses in the previous week - e.g. follow up a discussion, in the deaf culture course, of a deaf person's relations with his hearing parent with a straight interpretation exercise on that topic.

Links made in these and other ways between the various components of an interpretation programme will ensure **that students see the interrelationship of the** various skills and knowledge and the different levels of skills and knowledge which comprise interpretation competency and which are taught through many distinct courses.

4. EVALUATING INTERPRETATION COMPETENCY

Evaluation in interpreting courses (other interpretation-related courses are not considered here) should focus on both the acquisition of individual competencies and the

ability to combine individual competencies in interpretation performance. In addition, it should be both diagnostic and summative.

4.1 Evaluating individual competencies

Individual competencies need constant evaluation. This can range from teacher feedback on specific ability-related activities to student self-evaluation to peer evaluation to formal evaluation through a test.

Teacher feedback on specific ability-related activities is diagnostic in nature: it is intended to point out to the student the particular problems he has relating to a given ability and to suggest to him ways in which he can work on these problems. Such feedback can be given directly in the classroom, immediately following a class activity, or can be based on practice exercises submitted on tape by the student once a week. Two points to bear in mind during such feedback are (a) to avoid critiquing a variety of competencies at once; and (b) to provide not only a critique but also suggestions for improvement.

Student self-evaluation of individual competencies, also a diagnostic form of evaluation, is an excellent way of gradually developing the student's judgment. Some exercises (such as a, b, c, and f in Section 3.2 above) lend themselves more easily to self evaluation on the basis of proposed responses and a correction code supplied by the instructor. Others (such as d in Section 3.2 above) will require careful and objective analysis by the student of his work. The latter type of self-evaluation would need a follow up either through teacher feedback on the student evaluation or by peer evaluation.

Peer evaluation, i.e. evaluation of one student's work by another, encourages student cooperation and sharing of knowledge if it is undertaken in the right spirit. Activities that lend themselves to several possible responses (such as d in Section 3.2 above) are the kind that would benefit from peer evaluation, for students can share their responses and jointly come up with better ones.

The instructor should provide additional exercises and materials that students can

use as required for self-evaluation and peer evaluation. Moreover, he should gradually increase both the level of difficulty of the exercises and the criteria for evaluation from one exercise to another. These steps should allow the student to be adequately prepared for the summative evaluation of individual competencies.

Summative evaluation of individual competencies can be done through short but formal tests administered during the semester. Each of these formal tests may focus on more than one course objective (i.e. more than one specific ability) if they are very closely related (e.g. objectives a and c in Section 3.1). This will avoid the proliferation of such tests that take away valuable class time. Another way of handling summative tests of individual competencies and, at the same time, saving precious class time is to organize individualized testing, with each student expected to do a certain number of summative tests relating to individual competencies before the end of the term. Such an arrangement, while often complicated to organize, would allow students to improve individual competencies at their own rate. The criteria for the summative evaluation of individual competencies should, in principle, be included in the presentation of the course objectives (e.g. the objective " To be able to express oneself for five minutes in

ASL and English on general topics such as the family, school life, personal problems, and current events, in neutral register, making no more than 5 structural errors and 5 vocabulary errors" contains within it the exact criteria used for evaluation). So, if the course objectives are well-prepared, the students should know precisely how they are going to be judged.

4.2 Evaluating the ability to combine individual competencies

However, interpretation involves a combination of abilities. Hence, evaluation of the student's capacity to effect such a combination has to be evaluated through interpretation performance.

The methods of teacher feedback, self-evaluation and peer evaluation discussed above can be used again for diagnostic interpretation evaluation. However, the instructor will have to ensure that self-evaluation and peer evaluation take into consideration all the abilities covered in the course objectives. Students should be encouraged to note the number of different types of errors they have made during the interpretation and to work towards reducing the number. But since it is difficult to provide one "correct" version for interpretation exercises, more teacher feedback will be required in this case to supplement self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

At least three summative evaluations of interpretation performance should take place during the semester. Obviously, the level of difficulty of the source discourse will be lower in the first two tests than in the third, and the criteria specified for individual competencies which make up overall interpretation competency will be applied more leniently at the start. However, by the third test, the precise criteria for individual competencies indicated in the course objectives should be applied in the evaluation of interpretation performance.

4.3 The role of subjectivity in the evaluation of interpretation performance Throughout this paper I have insisted on the necessity of having precise and even quantifiable objectives to provide precise and quantifiable criteria for evaluating interpretation competency. However, we have all heard overall very good interpretations which contain a large number of small errors and we have also been given the impression of a very poor interpretation by one major error. So it is evident that interpretation performance cannot be judged only on a quantitative basis.

Subjectivity in the form of overall impression must therefore be given a place in summative evaluation. But to avoid the oft-repeated pitfalls of such subjectivity, it should be limited. I suggest that no more than 20% of the grade for summative evaluation be based on

impression; thus, 80% at least of the final grade will be clearly transparent to the student. Such transparence is essential if he is to improve and develop and not waste his energy trying to second guess what will please one instructor as opposed to another.

CONCLUSION

Interpretation, like translation, involves a multidimensional competency that is hard to define and to teach, and even harder to evaluate. It is no doubt because of the

difficulty of the enterprise that there are no teacher's manuals for the training and evaluation of interpreters. However, the reality is that we are training interpreters and our graduates are proof that this can be done. So it is time for us instructors to reflect on our teaching, to see what we have done, what has worked well and why. We should then share the fruits of our experiences and reflections with others in the form of detailed syllabi to begin with, and exercise books and training manuals at a later stage. This paper, based on my personal reflections on my teaching experience, is intended to provide a start in that direction.

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ISSUE --ENTRY LEVEL TO THE PROFESSION

Questions for thought:

- What are minimal competencies for entry level into the profession? • Should Certificate/AA/BA/NIA program exit level skills equal profession entry level skills?
- What jobs are considered entry level?
- What levels of skill should be defined beyond entry level?
- What continued education is required to progress beyond entry level skills -- Certificate? AA? BA? MA?

ISSUE PAPER: We have no issue paper-many people responded ABOUT the issue, but nothing directly addressed the issue. Our goal at the convention is to discover our position. PLEASE briny thoughts, ideas, contributions, and, if you've written something that takes a position--share it with us!

WHERE DO YOU STAND ON THIS ISSUE???

RESPONSE -- ENTRY LEVEL TO THE PROFESSION

Response Paper #l: *The* ***"Readiness-to-Work Gap"1***

Author: Carol J. Patrie

This paper is one in a series designed to open a dialogue in the field of interpreter education and begin building a community of scholars whose shared vision is a revision and eventual adoption of standards for programs.

There currently exists a discrepancy between the preparedness of interpreting program graduates and the demands of the interpreting profession. Program graduates are typically not ready for employment as independent, fully-functioning practitioners. Many of these program graduates are weak in specific language competencies and interpreting processes. The more committed program graduates are painfully aware of their shortcomings and seek in-service training and Mentorships to bridge the "readinessto-work gap" and the

"school-to-certification gap." Often these types of opportunities typically cannot bridge the gap. There are many other program graduates who are floundering in frustration over their lack of preparedness, and who may soon leave the field. Although the number of interpreter preparation programs continues to increase, the overall shortage of qualified interpreters is not being reduced. This paper proposes that -the "readiness-to-work gap" is real, and is a function of discrepancies in program exit criteria and entry into the job market criteria. The situation does not appear to have improved since it was first documented by Anderson and Stauffer (1990). A farreaching solution is proposed that links program goals to job requirements and responsibilities.

A Nationwide Survey

In a recent survey, designed to elicit information about this issue, the directors of twelve Federally Funded Interpreter Training Grant Projects were asked about their perceptions of the gap. As managers of regional projects, the directors bring a national perspective to the question. Moreover, they tend to function in multiple roles as teachers in local degree programs, interviewers for interpreter referral services, employers of interpreters and members of advisory boards.

In response to the survey, the project directors stated unequivocally that this gap exists. They report that as educators, they observe that at the end of interpreter education programs, few graduates are employment-ready. As employers of interpreters, they report that recent interpreter education program graduates often do not have the necessary skills to successful enter the job market. This is evident in the number of

'The author is grateful to mebers of the Educational Standards Committee for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper, especially Cathy Cogen.

requests for in-service training, in efforts in some areas to establish mentorship programs to bring program graduates up to speed, and in reports of Deaf consumers about the inadequacy of graduates' performance, especially where American Sign Language is concerned. Further evidence was provided by one respondent who researched this question in relation to educational interpreters in K-12 settings. Ninety-five percent of these interpreters reported that they needed additional training in order to function well in their positions. (Jones, 1993) One of the most telling responses indicated that this discrepancy is noted and felt by Deaf consumers of interpreting services, most notably in the area of ASL to English skills.

Solutions: Definitions on Both Sides

There is clearly not a good match between the skills of newly graduated interpreting students and the requirements of available jobs. Perhaps the problem lies in a general assumption that the graduates of any program, regardless of admissions criteria, curricular breadth and depth and graduation requirements, should be capable of functioning in any assignment or position. We all know that there are some jobs that a novice could handle alone or with support and other jobs which should only be assigned to experienced professionals. It may not be practical to expect that all programs are alike in terms of student outcomes. Rather, it is likely that graduates of Associate of Arts degree programs who entered the program with little or no signing skills, may be employment-ready only under supervision of more advanced professionals. Associates programs which require language fluency at entry will have a different set of descriptors for their graduates skills. This graduate may be ready for some specific types of responsibilities and situations while the graduate from a Bachelor's

program may be ready to accept additional responsibilities. The graduate of a Master's degree program will, as experience has shown, find themselves in decision-making positions and in teaching and supervisory roles. It is these various exit-from-program points that have not been delineated by educators and employers of interpreters.

Clarification of exit-from-program requirements is related to the notion that interpreter education programs should have stricter entrance requirements, specifically fluency in both American Sign Language and English. Respondents to this survey spoke in unison on this point. Several also pointed out that language skills should be assessed throughout the interpreter education program. They also encouraged the field to move away from programs which attempt to teach ASL~ and interpretation skills simultaneously.

The confusion and dissatisfaction surrounding this gap is both pervasive and profound, but not hopeless. It can be addressed if the profession can agree to a differentiation between the levels of education and training currently available for prospective interpreters. This distinction could address how these levels, specifically: AA, BA, MA or Certificate relate to professional entry. Currently in interpreter education programs, an individual may enter the field with any of these credentials. One model which could be used to differentiate these entry points is to use 4 or more years of

education for entry to "Professional" level work, while two or less years of education may be sufficient for entry into the field at a "'Technical" level. Certificates may be offered at either level and is customarily another route for entry into a profession for those who already possess a baccalaureate degree at the professional level. " (Marty O'Connor, director accreditation American Occupational Therapy Association, personal communication).

. One approach may be to determine which programs provide interpreter training and which provide interpreter education. It may be that one provides access to the technical entry level while the other provides access ma a professional level. To date we have used the words "training" and "education" interchangeably, depending on which is in vogue, rather than acknowledging that training and education are really two very different experiences.

Other skill-and-education based professions have multiple entry points into their professions. For example, The American Occupational Therapy Association has one set of guidelines for accredited educational programs for Occupational Therapy and a separate set of guidelines for programs for Occupational Therapy Assistants. Graduates of these programs enter their profession at distinct levels which are defined by their education. The educational programs, in turn, are defined by clearly different parameters. Each has a specific set of accreditation requirements to meet. Differences can be found in virtually every area of program description including Program Director, Faculty, and most importantly, Student Outcomes. The more rigorous program, Occupational Therapy, requires all that is required for the Occupational Therapy Assistant and more. The Occupational Therapist's content requirements indicate a deeper and broader base of knowledge, analysis and application. Students enrolled in each of these types of programs know from the outset of their education, the types of work for which their education will prepare them. As a result of this tiered system of entry into the field, the needs of the consumers can be more reliably met than in a system where all assignments are open to all takers. The notion of a tiered system of entry into the field would require the rewiring of the fabric of interpreter education so that specific

kinds of programs prepare students for specific kinds of work. Naturally, as new interpreters build an experiential base, they evolve into more effective practitioners over time.

Summary

The results of this survey indicate several clear findings. There does appear to be a real readiness to work gap. That is, interpreting program graduates are often not ready to enter the work force in a meaningful and satisfying way. This fact may contribute to the high attrition rate among new interpreters. If they are not skilled enough to enjoy job satisfaction, then they are likely to leave the field altogether. As a result, many training hours on the part of the student and their teachers have not resulted in an increase in the number of working interpreters.

Directions for the Future

The readiness-to-work gap does not need to continue to have its current and disastrous effects on the field. It is conceivable that interpreting programs could determine, based on their own resources and goals, if they are training programs or education programs. Once the basic parameters are established, then entry and exit requirements can be determined. Interpreting assignments can be categorized in terms of appropriateness for recent program graduates. Mentorships can be established to ease the transition from school to work. All of these ideas have precedents established in other fields. The demands on the interpreting profession and on the interpreter preparation profession are steadily increasing. These demands call for a reasoned response, the crux of which may rest in developing parameters for interpreter preparation programs that are in line with well-developed and articulated standards for entry and exit criteria which interface appropriately with job requirements.

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RESPONSE -- ENTRY LEVEL TO THE PROFESSION

Response Parser #2: A Response toThe "Readiness-to-Work Gap"

Author: Linda Stauffer

Professional involvement m interpreter education over the last seven years at the local, regional, and national level makes it easy to concur with the findings in the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper regarding the existence of the 'readiness-to-work gap" between interpreter preparation program graduates and the demands of the interpreting profession. Studies, by Anderson and Stauffer (1990) indicate that most students typically graduate from two-year interpreter preparation programs with entry level credentials into the field. While this may be also true of other professions, interpreters with entry level credentials face the double dilemma of being locked out of most available interpreting assignments due to lack of credentials, and having few avenues available to upgrade their skills and credentials. In other words, graduates receive their degrees and immediately enter a professional parallax where the standards set by the profession, i.e., RID certification, and demanded by consumers are well above the standards set for graduation. It is no wonder that graduates flounder in frustration and may opt to leave the field as stated in the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper.

Interpreter educators collectively recognize that many A.A. degree graduates face this dilemma. These students graduate with the minimal requirements necessary to enter the professional field of interpreting, The faculty m my interpreter education program (ITP) are aware that their students', too, face this problem. Support for this includes: a) students' expressed apprehension during their last semester of coursework that they are not yet ready to begin interpreting professionally. b) consistent scoring by last semester students on the Mid-America Quality Assurance Screening Test (QAST) of Level I or Level II on a I (lowest) to V (highest) level test. c) interpreting assignment limitations imposed by referral services which are based on the knowledge of the kinds of situations that interpreters with QAST Level I or Level II can and cannot successfully handle. d) the ongoing commitment of ITP graduates who enroll in additional pre-service coursework and in-service training workshops

to increase their skills and knowledge, and e) the faculty's knowledge of the demands of the field of interpreting in juxtaposition with their knowledge of graduates skills and knowledge base.

Discussions with other interpreter educators during annual national and regional meetings indicate that these observations and concerns are mirrored by many of the interpreter preparation programs across the country.

Educational settings in mainstream public schools have been the traditional avenue for non-certified or minimally credentialed interpreters for entry Into the field of interpreting. Stuckless, Avery, and Hurwitz (1989) indicated that, nationally, over 50 percent of ITP graduates find employment in elementary and post/secondary educational settings. Interestingly, recently proposed standards for educational interpreters in my state establish a QAST Level III as the minimum .credential for interpreters in public schools, This means that students will not be immediately qualified for these educational interpreting positions upon graduation, another indication of the existence of the 'readiness-to-work' gap.

The "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper proposes several solutions to this pervasive problem. One solution advocated is stricter entrance requirements and clarification of exit-from-program requirements. This would, assuredly, improve the quality of entering students, and provide greater assurance to graduates that they are, indeed, ready to enter the profession upon graduation.

One problem faced by many programs in two-year or four-year institutions is the "open door" policy for admission to the institution. Most colleges/universities review high school credentials, standardized testing scores and an application process for admission requirements. Few programs impose more strenuous requirements (and may be prevented from doing so) for admission into specific programs within these institutions. Additionally, most programs require only a passing grade for completion of coursework within a prescribed degree plan for graduation. Some interpreting programs have addressed these concerns by a) requiring that students satisfy specified coursework or demonstrate specific competencies prior to acceptance m the program, b) complete coursework in major courses at a minimal standard and/or c) demonstrate specific language and interpreting skill competencies, even if not required for graduation. For example, our A.A. degree program requires that students obtain a "C" or better in major coursework rather than our minimum requirement of a "D," Additionally, each major is required to take (but not necessarily pass) the Mid-America QAST Test as part of their coursework just prior to graduation. Our proposed B.A. degree in Interpretation will require students to successfully complete two semesters of ASL as a pre-requisite for admission into the program. While these steps and others like them aim toward better and stricter entrance and exit standards, it is clear from the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" study that even stronger measures are necessary.

Another solution the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper proposes is to delineate tiered outcomes for tiered educational levels, specifically, A.A., B.A. , M.A. or certificate programs. This solution innovatively addresses a distinction In terminology that has been problematic **in the field in recent years, i.e., the difference between 'Interpreter** training' and "interpreter education." Under this model, technical positions require technical skills training, whereas professional positions require professional degrees.

Clearly, the field of interpretation has recognized that highly skilled interpreters must

may need to reconsider the wisdom of graduating A.A. degree students who do not meet the professional requirements demanded by the field. These institutions have the academic structure to offer interpreter education at the B.A. And/or M.A. level, and can better address the issue of 'educating' interpreters who can then enter the field at a "professional level of work."

However, there is a continuing need for two-year and/or certificate programs as suggested by the "multiple entry point to the profession" model. For example, there may be individuals who never aspire to a four-year or higher degree, but who will complete an A.A. degree with the goal of interpreting only in specific settings. Additionally, those A.A. degree programs that do not simultaneously teach language skills (ASL, English) and interpretation, but rather, concentrate only on the interpreting process, have a valuable place in the field because they can graduate skilled Interpreters in lees than a four-year or six-year period. Another model for an A.A. degree program is the "2 plus 2" approach. In this model students complete an A.A. degree that is housed in a two-year Institution which addresses language proficiency, and then transfer to a four-year institution for two additional years of interpretation.

Interpreter education programs must begin to define, or redefine, their respective goals. objectives, and strategies, As painful as it may be, some programs may need to consider radical-changes In their programming or consider closing down all together. As long as the field of interpreter education is locked into the status quo, programs will continue to overwhelmingly graduate students who are ill-prepared to meet the demands of the field and thus perpetuate the "readiness-to-work" gap, Hopefully, with the implementation of innovative strategies such as the ones proposed by the author of the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper and by others, the future, while not yet clear, appears extremely positive.

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RESPONSE -- ENTRY LEVEL TO THE PROFESSION

Response Paper #3: Start With the End in Mind'
A Response to The "Readiness-to-Work Gap" Paper'

Author: Rebecca Robinson

I am honored for the opportunity to respond to issues raised by my respected colleague. This paper is offered as a continuation of the dialog that is necessary to raise the standards in interpreter education.

I believe interpreter education is approaching a crisis point. Every year new programs come into being without the guidance of educational standards by which to inform the curriculum and instruction. The "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper is very timely because she asks educators to squarely face the existence of the "readiness to work" gap and makes suggestions for change to alter our present course. The author of that paper notes that interpreter educators in her survey report their acknowledgment of the existence of a gap between graduation and readiness to work. These programs also note dissatisfied graduates, Deaf consumers, and employers. She reports programs' various prescriptions, for solutions to the gap problem: tiered entrance and exit standards based on academic level of study, stricter entrance requirements regarding American Sign Language and English competence, separation of technical training and professional education, stricter exit standards.

PRESCRIPTIONS VS. DESCRIPTIONS

Some of these prescriptions are not new. We have been exposed to entrance testing and exit testing since the 1983 Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) convention and to task analysis since the 1984 CIT convention. In reading the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper, I wondered how many of those programs responding to the survey have implemented some of the suggestions they make, and if they have done so, what results they are finding. Our field has a long history of prescribing solutions to problems, but we have very little systematic study and documentation of the results of various purported solutions.

' The title of this paper is credited to Stephen Covey, author of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.

' The author wishes to gratefully acknowledge the contributions that Sandra Gish has made to the formulation of this paper.

Altering one's course is a process which starts with one's own altered awareness and ends with altering one's own behaviors. As an educator I would be very interested to hear the results of programs which have implemented solutions and tracked progress toward the desired results. Have programs been able to reduce or close the readinesstowork gap? There is a need in our field to share what has worked and what has not. We need to know which educational strategies lead us toward work-readiness.

Postulating theoretical solutions is one basis for altering our course. Case study, where we examine programs undergoing planned change, is another. The two together can bring individual programs to a considered approach in planning for their own program changes which can provide the least amount of risk and the highest probability for success. The future of interpreter education will depend on the choices individual programs make at

this critical juncture. We need to get on with making those choices that will result in graduating work-ready interpreters. _ EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

We are living in a social climate of assessment and accountability. We can see the American public asking for accountability in public education and in government. It is not surprising to find accountability systems affecting the field of interpretation.

Across the United States assessing interpretation performance quality is becoming more prevalent. Many states are legislating licensure through performance testing. These measures will ultimately evaluate interpreter education programs; programs will become known for the levels their graduating students attain at exit. Exit standards are being defined despite our profession's response.

CIT and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) have been working for over a decade on developing standards and accountability systems for interpreter education programs. The original RID draft of standards published in 1978 was followed by a CIT draft in 1982. CIT and RID joined efforts in 1986, and the FIPSE supported pilot of the CIT/RID accreditation process was published in 1990. This history of professional accountability has not been embraced by interpreter educators at large. However, reticence toward accountability for the quality of interpreter education is no longer acceptable. If educators do not choose to progress towards self accountability, others will do this for us through regulation.

INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY:
Graduating Students Through Exit Standards

Here is one choice we could make: individual interpretation programs could choose only to graduate people who possess the skills, knowledge and attitude which

qualify them as "ready to work". This is a proactive choice of program accountability and requires a change in the paradigm by which we operate interpreter education programs. In 1983 the faculty of the interpreter education program at my institution decided to implement this commitment, the impetus for which came from the fourth national Conference of Interpreter Trainers convention at the Asilomar Conference Center in Monterey, California. The convention theme was "New Dialogues in Interpreter Education" which widened our view to include perspectives from spoken language interpretation education. At the convention, CIT members were exposed to a very sophisticated system of gate keeping for the entrance and exit of students. This conference was, for me, revolutionary in changing my thinking in years to come regarding the very nature of the task of interpreting and the resultant design of interpretation education curriculum.

Adopting Exit Standards:

I will admit that it was difficult at first to embrace the idea of exit testing. In 1983 in my area, there was no accountability system in place. In initiating exit standards we had to accept the fact that some students who would have otherwise graduated because of passing grades would not be able to do so given an exit exam. We teachers had to accept the fact that there would be angry students who would look for someone or something to blame. As

teachers we also had to accept the fact that the results of exit testing would clearly indicate program and instructional weaknesses. As a program we had to accept the fact that exit standards would put us on a path of change. All of these possibilities have come to pass, and they all have created growth in exit competence, curriculum, instructional methods, and evaluation techniques. In the long run, the changes have been positive.

The alternative was far less appealing--graduating people who we knew were not ready to work. We knew that under qualified graduates would be able get work. Even though in their heart of hearts they too most likely "knew" that they were not yet ready, they were not professionally mature enough to make another choice. After the CIT convention, maintaining the status quo was no longer an option for me. In 1983 we implemented a "qualifying exam" (QE) as prerequisite to entrance into the final stage of their education: a mentored internship.

Adopting Entrance Standards:

With the implementation of a qualifying exam also came a two-year attempt to implement entrance standards and testing. In 1984 it was difficult to convince an

This term is used as defined by Stephen R. Covey: "While the word proactivity is now fairly common in management literature, it is a word you won't find in most dictionaries. It means more than merely taking initiative. It means that as human beings, we are responsible for our own lives. Our behavior is a function of our decision, not our conditions. We can subordinate feelings to values. We have the initiative and the responsibility to make things happen." (70-71).

uninitiated public about the rigors of ASL acquisition and ASL-English interpretation. Having tried and failed, we realized that we needed a transition period of two or more years to advertise our intention to change prerequisites. Having accomplished that, we found the need to substitute entrance testing with ASL course completion in order to attract enough viable entrants. This was a compromise strategy implemented for the short term knowing that it would eventually return us to the competency based entrance standard necessary for graduating work-ready interpreters. In the interim we experienced a large attrition rate. A decade of patience and advocacy for new standards was necessary to build the base of tolerance for entrance competence.

We found that ASL course completion did not guarantee ASL entrance competence, just as we had found that interpretation course completion did not guarantee interpretation competence. Readiness to enter and exit interpreter education must be validated by personal performance. In 1994 we will return to ASL and spoken English proficiency assessment for entrance into our program.

RELEVANCY OF STANDARDS

The author of the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper suggested differentiating between Associate, Bachelor, and Master degree program exit criteria. This is a notion I wholeheartedly support. The notion of differentiation could well be applied to all aspects of programming.

Within each academic setting there are differing tolerances for variation. I believe it is important for us to understand the limits of tolerance and to make adjustments within the zone of tolerance while we work towards expanding the tolerance for deviation.

Standards for Program Entrance

Depending on the academic level of study, applicants have varying levels of tolerance for meeting prerequisite requirements . When requirements surpass tolerance levels, the diminished pool of applicants reduces our ability to select high caliber students while maintaining adequate enrollment numbers to satisfy college policy for student-faculty ratios. I tried to implement program prerequisite skills before there was a tolerance established for them. Prerequisites won't work if applicants won't accept them, no matter how important those requirements might be.

Actual program histories can provide examples of varying tolerances for our consideration. Here in the Pacific Northwest, we have a program which has maintained administrative support while requiring one year of ASL courses prior to entrance. On the other hand, another AA program in a less populated state no longer exists after it implemented a new entrance requirement: completion of a 2-year Deaf Studies degree. As a result, the program had a small pool of qualified applicants and, in a time of limited resources, lost support from the administration. Our region recently gained a BS program which has a six-term ASL entrance standard which is validated through language competence assessment. In this part of the United States, the tolerance level is quite clear for the various levels of academic study.

Standards for Program Effectiveness

There is a fine balance to be maintained among the tensions placed on interpreter education from the various constituencies which have vested interest in the outcomes of such programs: the Deaf community, the employment community, the interpreting community, the student community, the college community, the higher education system, state policy and law, etc. Opening dialogues with these constituencies is vital for the effectiveness of interpreter education programs. The outcome of these ongoing dialogues is the fluid and dynamic standard of the collective community.

It is important that we are aware of the various measurements used by each group to determine interpreter education effectiveness. The field of organizational development offers the following view. Consumers are interested in outcomes assessment: a measure of the end product which includes measuring the adequacy of the standard upon which the outcome is based. Instructors are interested in process assessment: a measure of the quantity or quality of work activities. Process assessment, one step removed from outcomes assessment, measures effort rather than achievement. Accreditation reviews and college program reviews are most interested in structural assessment: the measure of the capacity and resources of an organization for effective performance. This assessment is the farthest removed from outcomes assessment.

It would be important for interpreter educators to examine how we assess our students, instructors, and programs in light of these models. Does the student come to the program with the capacity and resources for effective performance? Do the courses, instruction, and learning activities conform to a standard? Is there agreement among individual instructors within programs as to the standards students must meet at various points throughout the program of study? Do instructors provide students with adequate information about their progress towards the exit competence? Upon which standard of assessment do course grades get based? Do instructor tolerances for student performance levels match consumers' tolerance for minimum service? Does the course of study result in the student's ability to

demonstrate the standard at the end of the course of study? Do the program standards reflect the outcome standards expected by consumers and employers?

Standards for Internship

The author of the "Readiness-to-Work Gap" paper suggests that "graduates of Associate of Arts degreed programs who entered the program with little or no signing skills, may be employment-ready only under supervision of more advanced professionals." I agree that advanced professionals are the most appropriate mentors, but I also believe that every internship should be mentored. By mentored internship I mean a partnership between the intern and the professional interpreter already assigned to the setting to provide interpretation services. Using the Americans with Disabilities Act as the standard for accountability, I believe that we cannot afford to place any students in internships which are intended to service consumers without a mentor as such practices could be legally actionable.

Further, I also believe that mentors should be able to work with mentees who have job entry level skills. Internship should act as the transition point from program to work in which students are guided by seasoned professionals to apply knowledge and skill in a work setting. Despite the transition nature of internship, these interpreting interns will provide actual service to people who are counting on them for communication accessibility. Individuals who we admit are under qualified to work should remain in an educational environment until such time as they can demonstrate readiness to work. How can we expect mentors to bring these students to work readiness in the short term of internship when we have been unable to do so in the long term of two or more years of education? With this in mind, it is not in any one's best interest to believe that all students who enter programs with little or no sign language can produce desired results. It is our challenge as educators to control entrance, exit, and instruction in order; to increase the numbers of individuals who are ready to graduate and work as professional interpreters.

Standards for Program Exit

Traditions in the Deaf community have provided safeguards to Deaf people regarding the competence of various interpreters working in any community. Deaf people have always shared their Views with each other about the specific interpreters who are available to work with them.

The Americans with Disabilities Act heralds a new era and liberty for Deaf people to respond to inadequate interpretation services. Standards exist with respect to geography, time frame and groups of consumers and employers. Levels will differ from community to community and will change over time within each community. Job readiness levels and program exit levels can be articulated through dialog between those affected: Deaf people, interpreters, educators, and interpreter employers. The dialog must be ongoing to allow programs to continue to be responsive to the changing demands for work readiness.

Interpreter educators, therefore, must design programs and curriculum starting with the end in mind. Interpreter education curriculum must be developed backwards: from the end (work-readiness/exit standard) to the beginning (entrance standard). Once exit competencies are defined, the beginning will define itself, because there is only so much that can be included in a predetermined block of time mandated by the institutions in which programs exist.

Student Mastery

Applicants and students need to know what exit competence looks like. Educators can **provide students with continuous models of exit competence so that they** know what they are moving toward. If students know what the end looks like, they can continue to assess their current skills within the framework of the skills needed to exit. They will be able to tailor their efforts in the appropriate direction. "Effectiveness-often

even survival-does not depend solely on how much effort we expend, but on whether or not the effort we expend is in the right jungle." (Covey, 101)

Exit testing has brought many changes to my interpreter education program. Students who are not ready to exit at the end of two years of course work have continued their education in several ways. Some second year student return to previous curriculum through which they can enrich their interpretation competencies. Others conduct self-directed or mentored study and practice. The Qualifying Exam remains available to them as long as they can document active pursuit of advancing competence. These people have come to call themselves "third year students", thus legitimizing their pursuit of mastery. We are beginning to find that some first year students are choosing to repeat first year curriculum before entering into second year curriculum. This provides these students an additional year to focus on second language mastery, translation competence, and interpreting process management. These students' proactive decisions set precedence for students who follow. Students who might otherwise have discontinued their studies prematurely see more potential in themselves through these alternative avenues toward exit competence.

Students here are also fortunate to have a BS degree program in interpretation to which they can transfer for continued development toward mastery. The BS program currently has a variety of prior students from our program, those who did not graduate, those who recently graduated, and those who graduated and have been working in the field for several years. The faculty of both programs are looking forward to tracking the results of these continuing students as a way of defining the articulation between our two curricula.

Program Mastery

Entrance and exit testing also has down sides. They add administrative work to already overloaded faculty with inadequate resources, and they sometimes provide false results. Sometimes under qualified students are admitted into the program, sometimes under qualified individuals are placed into internships, and sometimes qualified individuals are not placed.

These false results can be rectified. Under qualified students can return through courses they fail; under qualified interns can fail to complete internship; and qualified students will eventually demonstrate a qualifying interpretation performance. However, once we graduate under qualified interpreters, we cannot rectify the problem.

These false Qualifying Exam results have provided an actual benefit to us: the opportunity to reexamine the testing standard and practices for reliability and validity. These reexaminations are critical to the viability of such measures to effectively retain their gate keeping functions.

After a decade of managing our own exit testing, we are currently investigating the use of external testing measures as a way of qualifying our student for internship. This would release administrative and faculty time commitments which would otherwise

be spent more productively on assisting student skill mastery. In our case, we are looking at state quality assurance testing in a neighboring state which is very convenient to us (until such time as our own state develops similar testing legislated as licensure in Oregon).

Although we would have to rely on the external test's validity and reliability, we would determine which QA level matches our program exit standard. This would result in students being required to take the state QA and gain a specified level of competence as prerequisite to enrolling in internship.

State quality assurance testing offers a viable option to programdeveloped testing. If external testing could be incorporated into a program course, the associated workload could be assigned to an instructor, program QA testing could be scheduled at curricularly appropriate times, and lab fees could be charged to offset the cost of QA testing. The cost of these lab fees could be born by the student's regular financial aid. If all of this is possible, student interns could be presented to mentors and consumers as having a specific community-accepted credential which would recommend students to particular internship settings.

SUMMARY

Altering one's course is a process which starts with one's own altered awareness and ends with altering one's own behaviors. We have to take the first step: to accept the need for exit standards. The second step is to change our behaviors: test for exit competence. The third step is to use the results of exit testing to evaluate program strengths and areas that need improvement. It is only through establishing standards that we will be able to collect the kind of data which informs the revision of instruction.

If we are doing what we say we are doing, educating interpreters, we should be willing to put our process and product to the test. If we begin with the end in mind, we as interpreter educators must accept the challenge of graduating work-ready students. Once we meet that challenge, we are prepared to examine and share the teaching-learning strategies that work.

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