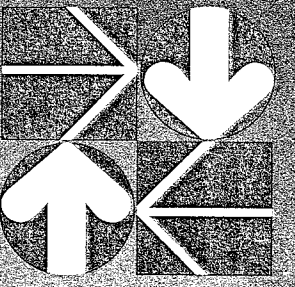
Proceedings of the 13th National Convention Conference of Interpreter Trainers

CIT AT 21:

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE, CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIP



OCTOBER 18-21, 2000 ■ PORTLAND, OREGON

Proceedings of the 13th National Convention

Conference of Interpreter Trainers

"CIT at 21: Celebrating Excellence, Celebrating Partnership"

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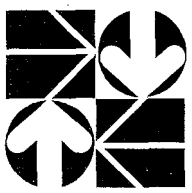

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Conference of Interpreter Trainers Mission Statement

Preamble

The CIT recognizes the minority status of D/deaf people and the long history of linguistic and cultural oppression that have endured. We therefore publicly proclaim our respect and support for D/deaf people's right to self-determination and true communication access.

The mission of the CIT is to promote quality education for interpreters working with American Sign Language and English (including English influenced forms of signing).

As a professional association of interpreter educators, the CIT

- provides opportunities for the professional development of interpreter educators;
- serves as a vehicle for sharing information among interpreter educators;
- promotes high standards in institutions, faculties, programs, and curricula for the education of interpreters;
- advocates for research relevant to the practice and instruction of interpretation; and
- encourages collegial relationships with professionals in other related disciplines and organizations.

The CIT welcomes participation by other educators of foreign signed languages and foreign spoken languages and other professionals who feel an affinity for our goals and an interest in our activities.

California, 1990

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Assessing Interpreting Skills: Practice, Procedures, Partnership

Eve Adelman West and Pamela Whitney

Abstract

Assessing interpreting skills of students is an issue that challenges, frustrates, and sometimes overwhelms interpreter educators. It is commonly recognized that assessment instruments vary widely among instructors and among programs. This,paper presents the results of a study focusing on the current state of assessment of student interpreting skills in Interpreter Preparation programs. The ultimate goal of this investigation is to bring the CIT membership together to comment on findings and invite professional dialogue regarding assessment. It has the potential to encourage standardization and to serve as an impetus for continued research and development of assessment practices.

Rationale

This study presents a survey of the current state of assessment instruments used to evaluate the skills of American Sign Language/English interpreting students by ASL/English interpreting teachers and trainers. Assessing interpreting skills of students has been an aspect of training that can frustrate and sometimes overwhelm instructors. Faculty teaching in interpreting programs grapple with the issue of evaluating students for several reasons. These reasons include 1) a lack of standardized assessment instruments in the field, 2) a paucity of research on the design and effectiveness of instruments currently in use, and **3)** a relatively isolated work environment within our college/university. **As** a result, assessment instruments are often designed without the opportunity for peer review, consultation, and collective wisdom. The lack of research-based data on this subject has contributed to a wide variety of "home-grown''assessment tools with uncertain objectivity and reliability. Moreover, there has been little communication about, and sharing of, such tools among teachers and trainers.

The purpose of this survey was to analyze assessment instruments currently in use in Interpreter Preparation Programs (IPPs) for commonalities and patterns in content, methodology, and grading criteria. The findings were gathered for presentation at the 2000 CIT convention in Portland, Oregon.

By bringing the CIT membership together for professional dialogue regarding evaluation practices, the potential to stimulate further research on evaluation practices and procedures was anticipated.

Related Literature

The research of literature related to assessing the interpreting skills of students revealed a very limited pool of information. The paucity of literature supports the need for continued development of research and materials on the issue.

With regard to evaluating competencies of students learning American Sign Language (ASL) as a second language, there is a significant body of work including research, materials, methodologies, and articles. While this research has led to enhancement and improvement of assessment of ASL skills, it does not inform us of how to assess student interpreting skills. In addition, concurrent with an advancement in evaluating ASL skills, there has been increased attention regarding the measurement of the skills of interpreters working in the field as paid professionals, often without formal training or supervision. This issue has been supported not only by articles and research on the topic, but also by a dramatic increase in states adopting legislation setting standards for working interpreters. Several states require certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), while others require interpreters to pass a state qualifying exam. The wealth of information available lies at either end of the spectrum — for students learning ASL or for working interpreters. While there is little data about the bridge between these two domains, within the literature that is available a common thread appears - *assessment is a difficult task because of the complex nature of interpreting.* And whereas several models of assessment present invaluable descriptions and approaches, there is little follow-up in the literature on the application and results of these approaches.

Sample Selection

Participants in the study were the members of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) for membership years 1999-2000 (current year) and 1998-1999 (previous year). Participants who were members of CIT for both membership years received only one survey. One hundred and eighty-five (185) surveys were mailed, with an email reminder sent one week prior to the requested response date via the CIT Listserv. Follow-up email, extending the deadline for anyone interested in participating, was sent via the Listserv as well. The survey was sent to the mailing addresses indicated in the CIT membership directory, with the current year's address used for people who were members for both years.

Survey Development

The cover letter and survey were developed collaboratively by Pamela Whitney and Eve Adelman West (see Appendix). Participants were asked to do the following:

1) Share two assessment instruments used in their Interpreting Program—one from the first class in which student interpreting skills are graded, and one from the class at the end of the Interpreter Preparation curriculum;
2) Fill out the Respondent Information Sheet;
3) Fill out an Assessment Instrument Information form for each assessment sent; and
4) Send a copy of their program's sequence of courses with names of courses, credit/lecture/lab designations, and brief description (if possible).

Surveys were returned to the attention of Eve Adelman West at Community College of Philadelphia. Those surveys mailed after July 10,2000, were returned to Pamela Whitney at her home address.

Responses to Survey

The overall response rate was 8.6%, including CIT members who said the survey does not apply to the type of teaching they do. The response rate for CIT members who mailed written responses and/or completed the survey as requested was 3.2%.

As of July 31, 2000, six surveys were received with the following written responses:

Respondent #1

A community college in the eastern U. S. that offersan **A.** A. degree program in Deaf Studies, from which many students go on to an Interpreter Training Program, responded to the survey. However, this program does not offer interpreting classes and, therefore, does no assessment of student interpreting skills.

Respondent #2

A mentor interpreter who is not affiliatedwith a formal program described the assessment process she uses as she mentors/tutors graduates of interpreter preparation programs and working interpreters. This assessment approach described a diagnostic evaluation using miscue analysis, based on Cokely's (1992) sociolinguistic model of interpreting.

Areas of initial evaluation include "articulation, enunciation, structure, non-verbal/non-manual behaviors." Topics of the second area of evaluation are "message reception, preliminary processing, short-term retention, intent realized, equivalence determined, message formation, and message production." Miscues are classified by type as "morphological omission, lexical omission, cohesive omission, non-manual addition, lexical addition, cohesive addition, expansive substitution, restrictive substitution, cohesive substitution, unrelated substitution, lexical intrusions, syntactic intrusions, target language anomalies, and interpretation anomalies. Obviously, there is some guesswork involved; however, the feedback from the interpreters after the assessment will usually reveal any wrong assumption on (her) part." The interpretation is evaluated for time delay between the source message and the interpreted message to use as a contrast between when the interpretation is successful and when miscues occur. The interpretation is analyzed for patterns in miscues. The overall number of miscues is divided by the total number of sentences, providing a percentage used for grading purposes. The final area of assessment looks at the effect the target message has on the audience and how much equivalence in meaning there is between the source and target messages. For example, the message may be misleading, confusing, or clear to the receiver. While the audience may be able to "fix" interpretations that are confusing or not clear, a misleading message may be quite clear, though incorrect, and therefore not "fixed" by the receiver.

Stimulus material varies based on the working environment of the interpreter and her/his individual limits. For example, an educational interpreter's assessment may use signed lectures, child signers, or elementary or middle school lectures in spoken English.

The respondent comments that this evaluation process is very time-consuming and could be modified by removing certain portions, such as the assessment of ASL competency. Finally, the respondent stated that she "like[s] using this method because it reveals a great deal of information."

Respondent #3

A community college program in the midwest that offers an **A.A.S.** degree in Interpreting provided information about two of their courses, Interpreting I and Interpreting Skills Lab. Interpreting I is the first class in which interpreting skills are assessed, with Interpreting Skills Lab as the last class that evaluates students before they begin their practicum. For Interpreting I the assessment process uses a source message that is expressed primarily in ASL structure in a formal register. For this class the instructor "discus[es] individually with the student their strengths and weaknesses. That way I can demonstrate what I feel they need to improve on" to determine grades. No additional information was provided regarding the criteria used in determining skills or what the student receives to indicate the grade given. The Interpreting Skills Lab is a new course that was not able to run during its first planned semester due to lack of enrollment. As a result, no information about assessment in this class was provided.

Respondent #4

A community college program in the western part of the country that awards an A.A. degree in Interpreting reported that it first evaluates students' skills in a class called Consecutive Interpreting. Students are assessed at the middle and end of this course using source texts of primarily ASL structure, one in a more formal register and another in a more casual register. In the final class in which students' interpreting skills are tested, Simultaneous Interpreting, the same process is used for evaluation with the difference "that the material which is interpreted progresses in difficulty, from consecutive to simultaneous [interpretation] and from informal to formal settings." The program uses "other more informal observational assessments, but this is the one that much of student progress is based on."

This program also follows an assessment process based on Dennis Cokely's sociolinguistic model of interpretation with the goal of providing "in-depth and useful feedback to the student" so that patterns can be identified and "students have specific skills to work on." The basic diagnostic evaluation process is described as follows:

1. The source text to be interpreted, usually a videotape, is transcribed and functions as our assessment "instrument" (this is done either professionally, or by the instructor, not by the student.)
2. The text is interpreted by the student.
3. The instructor then compares the interpreted work to the transcript and looks for equivalence in the message. Miscues are indicated on the transcript. Miscues usually include five different types: omissions, additions, substitutions, source language intrusions, and anomalies.
4. Patterns of miscues are identified by the instructor and indicated on the transcript as feedback.
5. Students are then required to write some type of response to their work and the feedback from the instructor and/or meet with the instructor to review their work.

Respondent #5

A southwestern community college with a two-year A.A.S. degree in Interpreter Preparation first evaluates student interpreting skills in a course called ASL: Intermediate II. The assessment occurs mid-semester using a text primarily in ASL structure and casual in register. Students are evaluated using a scale of five to one (5 = consistently, 4 = most of the time, 3 = occasionally, 2 = rarely, 1 = never) for the following thirteen items:

1. Accurate lexical choices
2. Loud enough/voice projection
3. Appropriate voice inflection, emotions conveyed, and accurate modulation
4. Appropriate register
5. Equivalent lexical choices (correct interpretation)
6. Recognizes and voices advanced ASL into English vocabulary
7. Recognizes and voices SWSM's accurately and appropriately [abbreviation unknown to researchers]
8. Adequate processing time
9. Adheres to COE (meaning: no adding, deleting, censoring, etc.) [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf's Code of Ethics]
10. Proper voicing of sign space, pronouns and directionality
11. Comprehends source message
12. Uses complete English sentences; grammatically correct
13. NMM's included in voiced text [Non-manual markers]
14. Comments

The final course in this program that evaluates students' interpreting skills is Specialized Interpreting/Transliterating. The assessment process utilizes source texts in spoken English, one in casual register and the other in formal or semi-formal register. Students are rated on 30 grammatical

items. A sampling of these 30 skills includes the following:

Topic-comment structure/ASL discourse style
Semantically equivalent
Conceptually accurate
Maintained character(s) and role shifting
Used outlining, paraphrasing or shadowing techniques
Appropriate use of classifiers
Use of sign space/placement and spatial agreement
Non-manual markers
Appropriate use of fingerspelling
Referential indexing
Culturally literate
Eye gaze
Consecutive or simultaneous interpreting
Ethical considerations

A sample evaluation sheet for a medical text to be interpreted was included with this response. It was reported that this particular set of criteria is not used with an interactive situation in which interpretation happens in both English to ASL and ASL to English.

The same rating scale used for the earlier assessment is also used for this test and in all evaluations throughout the program. Additionally, the "students are graded individually and receive many comments on [the] reverse of [the] form."

Respondent #6

This response was from a western U. S. university that offers a summer, non-degree, in-service program for rural and remote educational interpreters. A course called Introduction to the Process of Interpreting is the earliest in which interpreting skills are assessed. Interpreters enrolled in a three-week course conduct a self-analysis of a ten-minute segment taken from a 30-60 minute interpretation. A self-assessment form is provided in the text, MRID Self-Paced Modules, P-8 and P-9, and used by students as they evaluate their work. (This form was not included with the response.)

In addition to the self-assessment project, participants are evaluated using an ASL text of academic 6-12) material at the end of the three weeks. The interpreters complete a final project incorporating "many of the strategies [they] have learned, including mapping, information processing, and message analysis." Furthermore, participants do an evaluation of their interpretation into English and of their interpretation process. In this narrative the interpreters address topics such as the role of prediction, dropping form, first impression of their English rendition, accuracy, equivalence, pacing, completeness of sentences/thoughts, register, affect, and goal. "Grading criteria is subjective. Participants vary in skill level. The goal of this tool is to promote self-assessment for rural and remote educational interpreters, or interpreters who work in isolated settings."

Other Respondents

As of July 31, 2000, nine additional CIT members responded via email that the premise of the survey did not apply to the type of teaching or training they are doing. All of these respondents were not currently affiliated with an Interpreter Preparation Program. Six were providing training via workshops or tutoring, in which no formal evaluation is conducted, although diagnostic feedback is often provided during the course of the workshop/training. Two respondents were adjunct instructors and deferred to the director of the program. One respondent is no longer coordinator of an IPP.

Discussion

Although this survey was structured to require as little time as possible from respondents, the

resulting responses were few. Thus, this study may not accurately reflect or represent assessment practices of interpreting teachers/programs, weakening the overall data analysis. Additionally, the fact that few responses were fully complete makes speculative any definitive conclusions about assessment practices for interpreter education at-large. However, despite these factors, there are some fruits that emerge even from this small tree.

The entire pool of respondents is composed of teachers/trainers who are not affiliated with a formal program on the post-secondary level or who work in community college/non-degree programs. There were no responses from four-year bachelor's degree programs, an important presence in interpreter education, though far fewer in number than Associate degree programs.

Two of the six written responses utilize an evaluation approach based on Cokely's sociolinguistic model of interpretation. These respondents rely on miscue analysis as a way of providing targeted feedback to the student. All respondents reported using source texts in American Sign Language during the assessment process. Specifically, three respondents identified criteria they use to evaluate an ASL to spoken English interpretation. Ironically, the same program that had a list of thirteen separate items on which to asses a student's interpretation from ASL to spoken English, had a list of **30** items by which to judge a student's interpretation from English to ASL. The reasons for such a discrepancy are varied and could be the subject of further study, but regardless, it's a difference worth noting.

One respondent described evaluation procedures used in a summer program in which the "students" appear to consist of working interpreters. This was the only program to report self-analysis as a competency to be assessed. Additionally, this program included the only mention of evaluating competencies associated with "pre-interpreting" skills — mapping, prediction, analysis for goal of message, and visualization. Interestingly, this assessment process requires program participants to detail their process regarding these skills prior to beginning to interpret. This particular approach clearly emphasizes the advanced cognitive skills essential to successful interpretation and communicates this expectation to the "students."

In similar fashion, Respondent #6 requires students to prepare written responses and/or meet with the instructor to discuss the feedback received and reactions to their own work. This programs' approach toward assessment combines dialoguing, similar to the approach of Gish (1993), in student-teacher meetings, with the detailed patterns of miscue analysis based on Cokely's sociolinguistic model of interpreting. Although other informal types of assessment are used, for this program it is the miscue analysis upon which much of student progress [sic] is based. Respondent **#3,** when asked to describe the criteria used for grading, also reported utilization of discussion with students about strengths and weaknesses. However, no further information on criteria was provided, so it is unknown how this discussion factors into a teacher's assessment procedures in this program.

A question worth posing is, to what extent, if any, does the interpreting student's self-analysis and selfdiscovery about the interpreting process become integrated into the assessment of her/his skills? For example, can the student recognize errors? Can the student pose and apply self-generated solutions to successfully fix an error? Can the student identify the cause of an error? Can the student recommend ways to remediate a problem as it occurs throughout her/his work? Such higher levels of thinking demonstrate a set of competencies that are essential to an interpreter's growth and skill development beyond foundation skills. However, determining the weight and value of these analytic skills may be secondary to the challenge of deciding how to benchmark the inner workings of a student's brain and the leaps and bounds that can result from such an exercise.

In looking at what topics Interpreter Educators evaluate, some consistency across programs was revealed. For those teachers/programs that provided specific criteria of measurement, common topics included equivalency between source and target messages, sign production/clarity, and processing/message analysis. Other topics included in individual responses were ethics and cultural aspects and pre-interpreting skills.

Of the three respondents who provided detailed information about their grading/evaluation criteria, two rely heavily on miscue analysis, looking for error patterns in students' work. Based on the data provided, this prompts speculation that this methodology and, in fact, any method of assessment which focuses on one domain, whether miscues, production, or student reaction, may overlook other

critical skills. Are skill-building classes, such as the ones referenced in the respondents' programs, attending to skill development at the cost of providing students with a strong theoretical foundation regarding interpreting? Are these classes focusing on pieces rather than the whole? One answer may be that this information was not provided because the research question was too narrow, or was interpreted more narrowly by the respondents than the researchers intended or expected. Perhaps these other skills critical to interpreting, such as ethics, decision-making, process models, theory, role play and special considerations, are present in assessments, but respondents provided only interpreting skills-based assessments due to their understanding of the survey.

In examining how students are evaluated, the information provided by only one of the respondents describes a specific scale used in assessing students. Respondents using miscue analysis describe looking for patterns in students' work and, from the information provided, seem not to need anything more for testing students. One program stated they prepare a transcript of the source text and compare the students' interpretation with this transcript. However, there were no additional details about how that comparison is made apart from miscue analysis. The summer program noted that "grading criteria is highly subjective." Given that the participants and goals of the program differ from the other respondents, it may not be possible to generalize this subjectivity to other interpreter education programs.

Interpreter Preparation Programs use a variety of ways to establish how to measure students' work. **A** scale like the one used by Respondent #5 can be an efficient and considerate way to chart performance. In addition to the feedback provided, the circling of numbers provides an at-a-glance indication of a student's strengths (on one side of the chart) and weaknesses (on the opposite side of the chart). Given that many instructors work with classes larger than the CIT - recommended 12:1 ratio, teachers are constantly in search of ways that are efficient and effective, while at the same time providing the individualized attention that is part of interpreter preparation. An additional factor in trying to determine workable and successful ways to quantify a student's interpretation is that there is rarely only one correct interpretation for any given text. Unlike math class, where two plus two is always four, an accurate interpretation could be provided by each student in her/his own fashion. Unlike math, evaluation of students' interpretations cannot happen via multiple-choice Scantron tests. Assessment of student skills is variable, individualized, time-consuming and, in perhaps the ultimate irony, subject to interpretation about what "good," "correct," and "accurate" mean.

Students neither arrive nor leave an Interpreter Education Program with identical sets of skills, knowledge, and competencies. Yet, the nature of evaluation requires teachers to be "fair." Exactly how and with what yardstick this is done is a major challenge of assessment in our field. In adopting a more analytical approach, methodologies such as miscue analysis seek to qualify by quantifying, thus reducing the amount of subjectivity possible. Concurrently, teachers recognize that each student develops interpreting skills at a different rate and in different ways. Unfortunately, individual development does not always fit within an academic calendar. Direct, honest feedback—mindful of the wealth of skills needed, the communities we serve, and the needs of the individual student—from an experienced teacher/mentor can guide a student along her/his path of development. Merging all of these factors and considerations into a user-friendly assessment instrument is precisely what makes evaluating student interpreting skills an overwhelming task for many teachers.

Conclusions

In seeking answers to the dilemma of assessment faced by today's interpreter trainers, it seems that there are no answers, but rather more questions. Conjecture on reasons why this data is difficult to access, and therefore analyze, includes the following possibilities:

- Lack of practical assessment techniques in professional literature and materials.
- Information or articles may be too theoretical for practical use in most college settings due to class size, semester time limitations, and limited resources.
- Hesitancy on the part of teachers in sharing "home grown" tests.

- Lack of assessment models.
- Interpreter educators often have little training in diagnostics, and the training that is available for this skill is geared toward evaluating working interpreters rather than evaluating the emerging skills of students.
- The topic of assessment in interpreter education is complicated and time-consuming.
- The topic of assessment in interpreter education is relatively uncharted territory.

The low rate of response to this survey may be indicative of what people in the field of interpreter education already know, that assessing students is the Achilles' heel of our field. It is a critical aspect of preparing students to become professional interpreters, but exactly how to do it effectively remains nebulous and complex.

While many facets of this issue remain challenging, there is an enthusiasm, even hunger, on the part of teachers for more information and better methods. Support for this can be seen in the comments shared by respondents:

- "I suspect part of the reason you are not getting many responses is because a better assessment tool is very necessary."
- "I look forward to hearing about what you discover. Assessment is difficult and I would love to hear what other people are doing! It is a great way to improve what we do."
- "Congratulations on your pursuit for better assessment instruments. We will be most interested in what you discover."
- "We are really looking forward to your results. I know it will be very useful to us."

This showing of support demonstrates the need for continued inquiry into today's assessment practices for use in training tomorrow's interpreters. It is essential for ensuring that quality services are provided to the communities we serve. While tangible results from this project are elusive, a clear and legitimate conclusion can be drawn that further research and attention needs to be given to the topic of assessment instruments in ASL/English Interpreting programs.

Author's Note: The Review of Related Literature section has only been partially included with this paper due to length guidelines. Copies of the complete paper are available upon request from the authors.

About the Authors

Eve Adelman **West,** M.Ed., M.A., CSC, is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Interpreter Education Curriculum at Community College of Philadelphia. She is a founding member of CIT and served on the CIT Program Committee for the 1984, 1986, and 1998 conferences. Eve has also served as a member of the RID/CIT Ad Hoc Committee on Educational Standards. Her recent projects as coordinator of the IE Program include curricular revision and the establishment of a new language and interpreting laboratory.

Pamela **Whitney,** MS, M.A., CI and CT, is a full-time interpreter in private practice. She has a bachelors degree in Interpreting and in Secondary Education and a master's degree in Deaf Education. Recently, she completed a master's degree in Linguistics at the University of Delaware. Pam is an adjunct instructor in the Interpreter Education Program at Community College of Philadelphia. She devotes countless hours to promoting the growth of our field through mentoring novice interpreters.

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Appendix A

Community College of Philadelphia

May 30, 2000

Dear Interpreter Educator,

As a member of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) we seek your participation in an important survey of the current state of assessment instruments used in Interpreter Preparation programs. As interpreter educators ourselves, we know that assessing the interpreting skills of students is a challenge that can frustrate and sometimes overwhelm us. We know that faculty teaching in interpreting programs grapple with the issue of assessing students for several reasons, including 1) a lack of standardized assessment instruments in the field, 2) a paucity of research on the design and effectiveness of instruments currently in use, and **3)** a relatively isolated work environment within our college/university. As a result, assessment instruments are often designed without the opportunity for peer review, consultation, and collective wisdom. In addition, it is generally acknowledged that assessment instruments vary widely among instructors and programs.

The purpose of this survey is to analyze assessment instruments currently in use in Interpreter Preparation Programs for commonalities and patterns in content, methodology and grading criteria. At the upcoming October, 2000 CIT convention we are planning to share our findings with the membership, including assessment instrument examples. In bringing the membership together for professional dialogue regarding assessment practices we anticipate the potential to stimulate further research into the assessment of interpreting students, leading toward improvement and standardization of assessment practices.

For this investigation we are asking that you take a few moments of your time to do the following:

1) share two assessment instruments used in your Interpreting Program- one from the first class in which student interpreting skills are graded and one from the class at the end of the Interpreter Preparation curriculum.
2) fill out the Respondent Information Sheet.
3) fill out an Assessment Instrument Information form for each assessment sent.
4) Send a copy of your program's sequence of courses with names of courses, credit/lecture/lab designations, and brief description (if possible).

We hope you will take the time to participate in this survey and thank you, in advance, for your contribution not only to our research, but also to our field of Interpreter Preparation. Please send all requested information *by Thursday, June 22, 2000* to *Eve Adelman West, Interpreter Education, Community College of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA 19130.*

Sincerely,

Eve Adelman West Pamela Whitney

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Appendix B

West/Whitney Assessment Instrument Survey 2000

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT INFORMATION

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM FOR EACH ASSESSMENT INTRUMENT/TEST SENT AND ATTACH TO THE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT/TEST.

1. Name of the class in which this assessment instrumenthest is used: (Should match with one class from course sequence.)

_____

2. This assessment instrument/test is used:

   - ☐ In the first class in which interpreting skills are graded.
   - ☐ In the last class in which interpreting skills are graded.

3. This assessment instrument/test is used in the _____of the semester of this class:

   - ☐ Beginning
   - ☐ Middle
   - ☐ End

4. Video or live Signed source message information:

   - ☐ Is primarily expressed in ASL structure.
   - ☐ Is primarily expressed in (signed) English structure.
   - ☐ Other: Explain _____

5. Audio or video or live Spoken (English) source message information:

   - ☐ Is primarily casual in register.
   - ☐ Is primarily formal in register.
   - ☐ Other: Explain _____

6. Briefly describe assessment criteria for skills portion of assessment instrument and/or include assessment feedbacklgrade form (i.e. what the student receives to indicate the grade given).

   - ☐ Feedback/grade form attached.
   - ☐ Brief description of criteria for grading skills: _____

_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Name of program _____

Appendix C

West/Whitney Assessment Instrument Survey 2000

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Name of program _____

Name and position/title of person responding _____

Address of program _____

_____

_____

This Program is:

- ☐ Two-year Name of degree awarded _____
- ☐ Four-year Name of degree awarded _____
- ☐ Other Name of degree awarded _____

Enclosed is a copy of the sequence of courses including credit/lecture/lab designation:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No Reason_____

Permission is given to share sample selections of the instrument(s) from this program with the CIT membership.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, permission is given to identify the name of the program that uses the selected sample(s):

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Reading the Unwritten: Involving Beginning Students of American Sign Language in its Literature

Sharon Allen

Abstract

American Sign Language (ASL) students typically have little exposure to the language's oral literature until the second year of study. Current research suggests that literature can be made comprehensible with sufficient scaffolding of the material and opportunities for collaborative interaction. To help students gain an appreciation of ASL literature and a deeper understanding of Deaf culture, I developed activities which enable students to interact with the literature early in their coursework. This approach was implemented in nine college-level ASL classrooms over a 20-week period. Students completed tests and surveys before and after implementation, and interviews and classroom observations were conducted. Results were compared with those of students who had not participated in the activities. Evaluation of the data suggests that early exposure to literature in ASL greatly improves students' ability to recall various ASL genres, gain greater appreciation for the literature, and have a deeper understanding of Deaf culture.

Why Teach ASL Literature?

ASL is one of hundreds of languages of the world that does not have a commonly used written form, but has a rich oral tradition. History of the people and language, legends of folk heroes, lessons on how to live, and warnings about outsiders are all passed down to younger generations through stories recounted by members of the community. Padden (1990) points out that stories and rituals are often repeated also as an explicit attempt to preserve the language.

For students of an unwritten language, gaining access to this rich literature can be problematic. Whereas a learner of a written language has the opportunity to comb through the text, gleaning meaning and structure in increments, those studying an oral text must receive it at the rapid pace in which it is delivered. Often oral performances are captured on videotape or audiotape, and a written tran-

scription is used for purposes of analysis. However, when a performance of an oral text is frozen in such a way, performers view this as only one of many instances of the text, while for the literate world the transcription *becomes* the performance (Frishberg, 1988).

The recent documentation on videotape of performances of poetry, drama, narrative, and other ASL literary genres has opened new avenues for the ASL language learner. Availability of published materials is still slim, however, and most materials are composed with the fluent ASL-user in mind. This paper explores whether, with proper assistance, this growing body of recorded ASL literature allows the novice learner access to the language contained in literary texts and the opportunity to develop a deeper appreciation of the culture of the Deaf community.

Learning the unwritten language of ASL

Many colleges and universities are beginning to accept ASL coursework to satisfy foreign language requirements (Wilcox & Wilcox, 1997). A trend is also developing in which universities offer ASL course sequences under the umbrella of foreign language programs, two examples being the University of California in San Diego and the University of New Mexico. Language courses at the secondary and post-secondary levels typically emphasize the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Since ASL has no widely accepted written form, ASL language curricula have often emphasized only conversational skills. Various written systems have been proposed over the last few decades, but to date none has achieved widespread use among native speakers of ASL[1].

Secondary and post-secondary guidelines for foreign language instruction suggest the use of materials which "provoke the interest of students" and are "the best examples of the literature in the language" (Foreign Language Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee, 1989; see also *Guidelines for junior college foreign language instruction in California*, 1965). Use of similar materials in ASL classes would enable students to appreciate the literature of the language, as well as provide a window into the culture of language users.

Students' familiarity with ASL literature

Because of the emphasis in first-year ASL language programs on conversational fluency, students generally only read in English about the Deaf culture and its various expressions, rarely seeing examples of drama, poetry, and folklore in the original ASL. From my experience both as a learner and a teacher of ASL, I have found that even advanced students think of ASL as being a good language for "telling stories." When asked about the language's literature, many students cite poetry. Other genres (e.g. handshape stories and jokes) seem not to be categorized in students' minds as literature, and perhaps seem more like playing with language than bona fide literature. Legends and myths, rather than being seen as growing out of a long tradition in a community, often **look** to students like just another good story, either based on historical fact or created for fun.

I conducted a survey among ASL students at the University of California, San Diego, in the Fall quarter of 1997. When asked an open-ended question about what their ASL courses have taught them about ASL literature, over half of the first quarter students did not respond. These students had all read translations of ASL poetry, yet only about 10 percent were able to report having been exposed to poetry. Even third-quarter students, who after a year of studying the language had read about a variety of literary genres and seen examples of many, were by and large not able to list more than one or two genres. The results of this survey indicate that students do not have sufficient exposure to ASL literature, and what they are exposed to is not explicitly pointed out for them as literature.

Colleges and universities offer courses in second languages, among other reasons, in order to broaden students' perspectives on the world. As Vygotsky (1978) makes clear, culture is intimately tied with language. Literature is an expression of a people about themselves, providing a chance for outsiders to see the culture from the point of view of the insiders. In the process of decoding the literature, learners are also able to enrich their language learning. Students of ASL should therefore be afforded the opportunity to participate in enjoyment of the literature of the Deaf community, thereby learning more about the culture of Deaf Americans. At present, ASL students learn *about* some ASL literary forms but do not yet learn *from* these forms. The ability to learn from literature is key to understanding the culture of the Deaf people whose language students are studying.

Review of Research on Effective Language Learning

Deci (1995) states that if students are given the opportunity to use what they already know and build on that knowledge, with neither too much nor too little expected of them, they will be motivated to succeed. For this building of knowledge to occur, teachers must have a clear idea of what they want their students to learn and provide ample support to assist students in developing expertise. In second language instruction, Krashen and Terrell (1988) propose the "i + 1 hypothesis," which they define as the provision of comprehensible input at a level just beyond the student's level of competence. Guiding individuals from their current level of competence to their potential level involves what Vygotsky (1978) refers to as a zone of proximal development (ZPD). He describes the ZPD as the difference between a person's *independent* competence and his or her *potential* abilities in collaboration with others who are more skilled.

Cognitive characteristics of expert performance

In order to know when one has moved from novice to expert in a given skill, it is necessary to first determine the characteristics that make up expertise. For example, when confronted with an unfamiliar piece of ASL literature, adults who are fluent in the language are able to automatically recognize patterns which allow them to identify the genre and to anticipate possible content. If the genre is perceived to be poetry, then creative use of handshapes and space can be predicted, as well as potentially emotional content. If the piece of literature has the structure of a narrative, fluent signers are able to predict what might happen next in the plot, as well as to guess at the meaning of any novel vocabulary from context. If the art form is a joke, then close attention is paid to the build-up and eventual resolution in the punch line.

Bransford and Vye (1989) reviewed several studies on expert performance and argue that the main difference between experts and novices is that experts are able to recognize familiar patterns in novel situations. Individuals who are competent in a particular domain are able to process patterns automatically, which frees them up to deal with other more difficult aspects of the problem at hand. In contrast, novices become overwhelmed with the details of the problem, are unable to recognize patterns, and thus are at a loss as to how to go about solving the problem.

Similarly, once students of ASL are able to automatically identify patterns that define various ASL literary genres, they are able to pay greater attention to anticipating forms and meanings. In other words, they have more time to anticipate the finite set of possibilities defined by the genre presented to them rather than exerting mental energy attempting, for example, to find a punch line in a poem. Teachers must make these processes explicit for students, modeling strategies for creating meaning from text. But making the processes explicit is not enough. Students must also be encouraged to practice similar thinking processes themselves until they, too, experience the automaticity that is a feature of expert performance.

Scaffolded instruction

Leading students from their current state to their desired state involves what has been referred to as "scaffolding" (Bruner, 1978), a metaphor which refers to a building up of support around a particular skill which students are learning, allowing them to accomplish what they would not be able to do without this support. This idea resonates well with Krashen & Terrell's "i + 1 hypothesis" (1988), in which teachers use props, miming, pictures, and repetition to make complex language comprehensible to students. In thinking about instruction of ASL literature for beginning students of the language, the image of a scaffold conjures up not only ideas of immediate support but also of a larger structure or framework. Students need support in understanding the vocabulary and grammar contained in the piece of literature they are studying at the moment, but they also need a broader structure in which to make sense of the literature. Teachers need to provide a cultural framework, without which literature makes little sense.

It is possible to understand all of the sentences that are being said but miss the impact of a narrative if one does not possess the requisite cultural insight into why a particular rendering of a subject

strikes a chord with people intimately familiar with the culture. An example of this phenomenon comes from the narrative "Bird of a Different Feather" by Ben Bahan (1994) in which the principal of a school for birds, who is himself an eagle, holds a degree from the "A. G. Beak Association." The reference here is to the A. G. Bell Association which promotes oral education for Deaf children, emphasizing speech and lipreading in opposition to the use of any signed language. Without this cultural knowledge, the novice viewer is left with only the superficial humor of an organization named after the body part of a bird.

The aim of second language instruction is not only that students develop linguistic fluency and a corresponding broader perspective on the world, but also that they continue their learning beyond the classroom within the community of speakers of the language. Thus, students of ASL should not only develop communicative competence but also literary competence, or the ability to understand and appreciate ASL literature on their own *so* they can take part more fully in cultural aspects of the Deaf community.

Collaboration

An important aspect of the learning process is an initial partnership between the learner and others, since, as Vygotsky (1978) makes clear, learning occurs in a social environment rather than in isolation. This social environment for learning is often referred to as collaborative learning. Moll and Gonzalez (1994) summarize several studies of how members of various cultural groups in the United States use shared knowledge and dialogue in making sense of printed texts, particularly texts that are written in a language that is not the native language of the readers. The authors find that non-native speakers of English often tackle written English texts collaboratively, drawing on prior experience, contextual cues, and individuals' combined knowledge of English to make meaning of the texts, a process they refer to as sharing "funds of knowledge." In the classroom, students are more engaged in the learning process when they are provided with opportunities to talk about the literature they are studying and make explicit connections from it to their personal lives (Almasi, McKeown, & Beck, 1996). Thus, creating meaning from text becomes a fundamentally social activity, one in which participants jointly make sense of the text.

Students learning to "read" videotaped ASL literature benefit not only from watching the teacher describe and model particular techniques, but also from working together to continue the efforts begun by the instructor, asking one another relevant questions regarding the text to bring about the creation of meaning and understanding of form. The implication for teaching ASL literature is that all instruction and discussion should be conducted in ASL, providing ample language input and practice.

summary

In order to model both comprehension strategies and appreciation of literary form for students, ASL instructors must make explicit the specific identifying features of each literary form, as well as comprehension and prediction strategies that they themselves use when viewing a particular genre. Students must then be given an opportunity to engage in meaning-making in a social environment, turning to each other for support in constructing meaning of an ASL text which they cannot understand fully by themselves. When students are able to make use of contextual and peer resources for understanding and appreciating ASL literature, they will be better prepared to encounter and wrestle with unfamiliar ASL literature once they are outside the supportive confines of the ASL classroom. In the end, students should feel a sense of accomplishment and be more prepared to be lifelong learners of the language and culture of the Deaf community.

Review of ASL Curricula and Materials

ASL instructional curricula

Most textbooks published in the last decade for teaching ASL are based on the Natural Approach to second language acquisition, developed by Steve Krashen and Tracy Terrell (1983), or a similar approach known as the "functional-notional" approach introduced by Finocchiaro in the same year

(Finocchiaro, 1983). The most current and widely used curricula are *Learning ASL* by Humphries & Padden (1992) and *Signing Naturally* by Lentz, Mikos, & Smith (Level 1, 1988; Level 2, 1992). The emphasis of these curricula is on conversational ASL, not on the introduction of any ASL literature. Only Level 2 of *Signing Naturally*, which is generally introduced toward the end of the first year of language learning, includes a section titled "Language in Performance'' in which prominent Deaf storytellers are featured portraying examples of various genres of ASL performance literature. Genres showcased are Handshape Stories, Cheers and Songs, Poetry, Storytelling, Legends, and Drama. No explicit analysis of form is presented; rather, the student workbook focuses on comprehension of content and enjoyment of the performance, with some explanation of the place of each genre in the context of the Deaf cultural experience. For example, the "Cheers and Songs" section mentions the traditional 1-2, 1-2-3 rhythm of ASL football cheers, but students are not asked to work with the rhythm to explore the constraints that the rhythmic pattern places on the sequence of signs contained in the cheer. Students learn *about* the literary forms but do not actually learn the forms themselves. The implication is that first- and second-year students are perhaps exposed to ASL literature but are not expected to understand its forms nor use its features in their own signing.

"American Sign Language Literature Series"

The existing materials in the *ASL Literature Series* (Supalla & Bahan, 1994) were designed as a supplement to the regular curriculum in the fourth semester/quarter of language instruction, with a stated guideline of one hour per week to be spent on literature-related activities. The series is based on a literary analysis of oral narrative, expressly arguing in its introductory pages that learning ASL as a foreign language should include a study of its rich oral literature and noting that appropriate instructional materials are to a large extent non-existent. Currently only the first videotext and workbook of the series is available, but plans for future materials include additional literary genres (e.g., poetry and drama) designed for various levels of language competence. The authors are renowned ASL storytellers and have done a thorough analysis of two original texts, "Bird of a Different Feather" and "For a Decent Living," both of which chronicle the experience of growing up Deaf in a predominantly hearing world. The analysis is from the standpoint of orality[2], and the work adds to the small yet growing body of work that is being done on ASL literature with the express purpose of increasing the validity of teaching ASL as a foreign language. The accompanying student workbook focuses primarily on comprehension, providing necessary scaffolded support by including language notes and cultural background to assist students in making sense of the text.

The authors provide no explicit description of the features, such as eye gaze and pause structure, which they used to determine chapter, topic unit, and strophe breaks. Inclusion of such a description might enlighten the study of other narratives and possibly even other genres. In any event, this set of materials goes a long way in filling the void in the instruction of ASL literature.

Other materials for teaching ASL literature

Other published video materials exist which portray ASL literature and even include interviews and discussions by the authors. Many of these videotapes are collections of poetry in which the authors describe features of their work and how they came to self-identify as ASL poets (e.g., Valli, 1990; Lentz, 1995; Graybill, 1990). Most of these materials come with English voice-over for the explanation of each performance but not for the performance itself, implying that these art forms should stand on their own and that translating the performances into English would somehow taint them, make them less authentic.

Two older sources of ASL literature are a collection of home movies by Charles Krauel beginning in the 1920s (excerpts were published by DawnSignPress; *Charles Krauel*, 1994), and the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) films from the early 1900s. Footage shot by Krauel includes some examples of ASL poetry and songs. A few of these performances appear on the published videotape, which also contains an interview with the already aged Krauel. The interview is voiced-over and open-captioned to provide access to the widest possible audience; many of the performances contained on the tape, however, are not translated for viewers.

The NAD films, which were created expressly as historic documents attempting to preserve ASL for posterity, were restored in **1934** and are now available on videotape *(The Preservation of the Sign Language,* 1997). Included on these films are jokes, legends, lectures, songs, dramatic performances, proclamations, and sermons. These films are, in the truest sense, historic documents rich in cultural meaning but difficult to access due to the distance from the era in which they were created and the evolution of the language. Two versions of the films are available from the publisher, one consisting of all 15 original films shown in their entirety, and the other containing extended excerpts from the originals interspersed with introductions in modern ASL. These introductions, in which the narrator compares archaic and modern forms of selected signs, are translated into spoken English voice-over.

The performances discussed above are not explicitly scaffolded for ASL language learners and were not intended as instructional materials. The literature contained in them is largely unintelligible in its present form to learners of ASL, particularly beginners.

Use of video

Teachers of ASL must take care not to assume that all videotaped signing represents a form of literature. Those materials which primarily present vocabulary and dialogue enrichment are most often tied closely with the rest of the classroom curriculum and should be seen as language practice. Literary materials will likely require additional innovative instruction and guidance because materials that teach literature are scarce, and literacy activities are lacking in most ASL curricula.

Reading the Unwritten: Overall Plan

To address the scarcity of instructional materials for teaching ASL literature, I developed Reading the Unwritten, a curriculum that provides the support needed to enable students to understand, enjoy, and learn from examples of authentic ASL literature. My primary research question was: If ASL students are provided with the strategies needed to access ASL literature, will they gain a deeper appreciation of the literature and culture of Deaf people, in addition to developing ASL language competencies?

The activities I designed make use of a variety of published materials, some designed for native speakers of ASL and others intended for the ASL classroom but which are not, in their existing state, sufficiently scaffolded to be comprehensible to beginning students. Reading the Unwritten makes use of strategies that guide students through an analysis of literary material, providing students with the support they need in order to understand and appreciate the texts. Activities foster collaborative learning, with students working together under the guidance of the instructor to make optimal use of shared knowledge. In Vygotskian fashion, students tackle texts together which would be much too difficult for them to undertake on their own.

The general purpose of Reading the Unwritten is that students become familiar with and comprehend various ASL literary genres. Additional intended outcomes are that students enjoy authentic ASL literature and increase their understanding of Deaf culture. Because I was interested in early exposure to the literature, I chose to introduce a few activities in the first quarter of a threequarter sequence of ASL courses, subsequently increasing the number of activities in the second and third quarters.

Activities and materials

Activities are designed to ensure that students' access to ASL literature is enhanced by discussing the aspects of various literary genres which fluent speakers of ASL appreciate, and guiding students to recognize these aspects in an environment of peer collaboration. In some cases, collaboration takes the form of whole class discussion. In other cases, students work in groups of two or three on activities designed to increase their understanding and appreciation of literary texts.

At the heart of each activity is an in-class viewing of a videotaped ASL literary text. Classes are conducted entirely in ASL. Although no English is spoken during the course of these activities, the students' first language is not entirely absent as a learning tool. O'Malley & Chamot (1990) offer translation as one of several strategies commonly used by second language learners to make sense of com-

plex literary texts in the language they are learning. For this reason, students have access to English translations of some of the videotaped materials, and read descriptions in English of other ASL texts without seeing direct translations. Activities related to other materials are conducted entirely in ASL with no reference *to* any written English.

In all cases, explicit instruction is provided on the features of the particular genre that make it recognizable and enjoyable to fluent signers of ASL. For example, students need to be instructed in the unique rhythm and rhyming properties of ASL poetry, which differ dramatically from properties of English poetry. An understanding of the features of each genre, as well as access to the content of the message, gives students a peek into the culture of Deaf people through the eyes of Deaf literary artists rather than through the filter of English translations and interpretations.

Figure 1 shows the Reading the Unwritten activities, which cover a threequarter language sequence:

Genre	Level A	Level B	Level C
Folklore & Legends	Preservation of the Sign Language (Veditz)[3]	Memories of Old Hartford (Hotchkiss)[4]	Civil War Spies (Bahan)[5]
Poetry	Seasons (Miles)[6]	Language for the Eye (Miles)[7]	Eye Music (Lentz)[8]; Windy Bright Morning (Valli)[9]
Handshape Stories		One-Handshape Story (Norman)[10]	ABC Story (Bahan)[11]

Figure 1: Reading the Unwritten Genres

Implementation of reading the unwritten

I implemented Reading the Unwritten in the Linguistics Language Program at the University of California in San Diego. I chose one firstquarter (Level A) and one secondquarter (Level B) class in which to begin the implementation in the Winter quarter of 1998. Subsequently, during Spring 1998, I expanded my implementation to include all classes in the ASL program, which consisted of three secondquarter (Level B) and four thirdquarter (Level C) classes. Each academic quarter lasted ten weeks.

Probably the most important lesson I learned in implementing the curriculum is that, as a fluent signer, I take much of my knowledge of ASL for granted. I had not realized how complex the cognitive tasks were that I was asking students to do until I saw them using props in their external environment to assist them in their struggle to remember meaning, vocabulary, and form, a process Hutchins (1995) refers to as "distributed cognition." If the environment does not naturally provide students with ways of distributing the tasks externally then, as a teacher, my activities need to have such opportunities built into them. Such scaffolding can be accomplished either by allowing multiple viewings of the videotapes or by signing the material repeatedly *so* students do not have to try to remember the individual signs. Students also made use of the additional support provided by collaboration with peers. The clearest example of this social learning was in the creation of handshape stories, where students were able to accomplish together what they had expressed skepticism about attempting on their own.

Evaluation of Reading the Unwritten

The four goals of Reading the Unwritten are 1) students will become familiar with various ASL lit-

erary genres, 2) students' enjoyment of ASL literature will increase, *3)* students will deepen their understanding of Deaf culture, **4)** and students will develop and use strategies for comprehension of authentic ASL literature. Figure 2 lists the strategies used to evaluate each goal:

	Familiarity with ASL literary genres	Awareness of comprehension strategies	Increased enjoyment of ASL literature	Deeper understanding of Deaf culture
Pre/post surveys	X	X		
Observation/ fieldnotes			X	X

Figure 2: Evaluation Strategies and Goals

Pre- and post-implementation surveys

I conducted a survey (shown below in Figure *3)* before and after each implementation cycle of Reading the Unwritten activities. The fifth question was added to the survey at the completion of the final implementation cycle, which was aimed at learning which strategies students found most help ful in their study of ASL literature.

1. What have your ASL courses taught you about ASL literature?
2. What types of ASL literary genres have you been exposed to?
3. Which did you like the most?
4. What would you like to see more of?
5. What helped you to understand the literature? What strategies did you or your teacher use?

Figure 3: Literature Recall Survey

Students responded to the survey at three points in the implementation process: before implementing any Reading the Unwritten activities; just after the first implementation in two classes; and upon completion of the final implementation in all classes. In all cases, students in both the implementing and non-implementing classes responded to the same set of questions. Prior to implementation, students who participated in the survey were in the Level A and Level C classes. Following the pilot implementation, results were gathered from Levels A and B, and the final survey was conducted with Level B and C students.

Observation/fieldnotes

In addition to the survey data, I kept fieldnotes on my observations of the classes in which I implemented the activities. I was personally involved with the first implementation of each activity for Levels A and B, and for the first implementation of the Level C folklore activity. I was therefore able to observe students' responses to the activities in one class for each activity except three of the Level C activities ("Creating ABC Stories" and two poetry activities: "Eye Music[12]" and "Windy Bright Morning[13]"). After conducting each activity in one class myself, other classroom teachers used the activities in their classes. I asked these teachers to report student participation and responsiveness

in the classrooms that I was not able to observe. Teacher feedback provides evidence and examples to make sense of the results from the survey.

Goal 1: Familiarity with ASL literary genres

I was curious just how powerful authentic literature is for students. In other words, if students are engaged in activities in which ASL literature is brought into the classroom, will this collaborative, scaffolded exposure make a deeper impression than merely viewing the literature on an individual basis outside of class? After doing only a few literature activities in class with the students (two in Level A, three in Level B, and four in Level C), I surveyed students to see what genres they remembered having studied.

Among other questions, I asked students to report which ASL literary genres they had been exposed to during their ASL coursework. I collected baseline survey data from all students enrolled in Level A classes during the quarter before implementation of any of the Reading the Unwritten activities. I administered the same survey immediately after the first implementation of Reading the Unwritten to all Level A and B students, whether or not their class had participated in the activities. The same survey was given once again after the second implementation to students in Level B, and was at the same time given to Level C students after their first exposure to Reading the Unwritten activities.

Level A students participated in one poetry and one folklore activity during implementation of Reading the Unwritten. The first implementation group was more successful than any other group in spontaneously recalling having seen examples of these two genres. Figure 4 illustrates the difference between the results of those Level A students who did not participate in the ASL literature activities and those who did. Only five out of 13 (38%) students in the non-implementing classes named poetry and three out of 13 (23%) named folklore or history. In addition, 23% combined several genres into one broad category, reporting having been exposed to "stories." One student left the answer blank. Thus these students generally did not recollect specific genres of ASL literature to which they had been exposed.

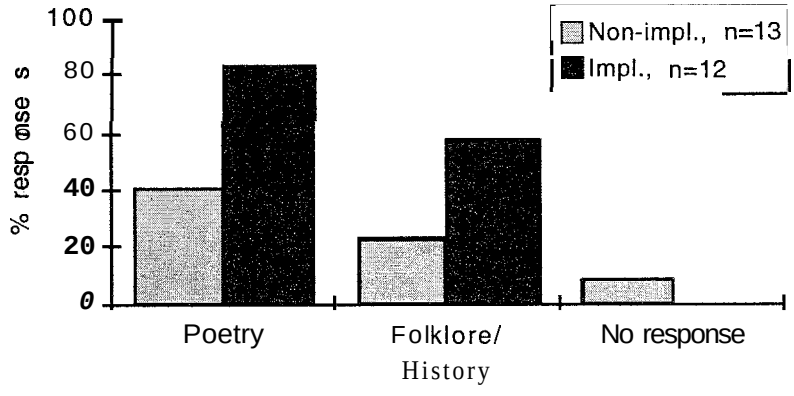

Figure 4: Level A Genre Recall

In contrast, of the 12 students in the implementing class, seven (58%) correctly recalled having been exposed to folklore or history, and 82% remembered having studied poetry. Rather than making a vague reference to having seen "stories," these students categorized the storytelling they had seen into folktales, myths, legends, and history, all of which fall under the larger category of folklore/history. All of these students named at least one genre, resulting in no student responses in the "no response" category.

Clearly students who participated in only two literature-related activities were better able to recall those genres than were students who had simply viewed or read about the literature on their own as homework. But what sort of a learning curve do we see if we look at the same students at two different points in time?

Did students' familiarity with genres increase over time?

I compared the responses of the students who were surveyed before implementation of any Reading the Unwritten activities with the responses of the same students after completion of the Level B course. Once at the B level, students randomly self-assigned to either the implementing or the non-implementing classes.

In this analysis, I was looking specifically for students' recollection of the three genres targeted in the Level B Reading the Unwritten activities: folklore, poetry, and handshape stories. **All** students in both the implementing and non-implementing classes had been exposed to these three genres in their homework assignments, Only the implementing class had also participated in classroom activities related to the genres.

It is clear from Figure 5 that those students who had engaged in the Reading the Unwritten activities showed greater improvement over time than did their non-implementing counterparts. In other words, although students who had studied the three genres in their homework assignments improved in their ability to recall these specific genres, the gain for students who had explored the genres in hands-on classroom activities was significantly ($p<.05$) greater. These findings indicate that having students actively participate in the literature helps them to remember it, even if they are only exposed in this way to very few genres.

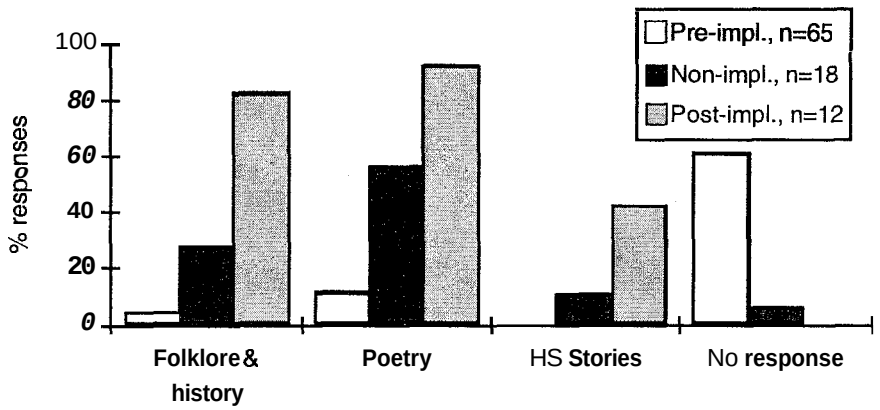

Figure 5: Change in Genre Recollection Over Time

Goal 2: Awareness of strategies to enhance comprehension and learning

I was also interested in learning what strategies students saw as optimally helpful for making sense of **ASL** literature. After the final implementation, I added one more question to the survey: "What helped you to understand the literature? What strategies did you or your teacher use?" In their responses to this question, students identified a set of useful learning strategies that matched the features of Reading the Unwritten: explicit instruction in expert performance, a scaffolded approach, and a collaborative learning environment.

Of the **23** Level B students, 11 mentioned explicit instruction such as teachers' explanations, questions, and personal examples; five commented on the collaborative nature of their learning, mentioning, for example, class discussion and practice time. Six reported learning best from the scaffolding provided in the activities, commenting on the usefulness of viewing the videotaped literature repeatedly in class and pausing periodically for discussion. Three students found the scaffolding provided by the English translations helpful.

Eighty-eight percent **(36)** of the **41** Level C students reported using in-class scaffolding, or the repetition and discussion of the videotapes, as their primary strategy for understanding the literature. Of these, one-third (9) commented on the benefit of pausing the tape periodically to discuss it or for the teacher to repeat what had just been said. Six of the 41 (15%) reported learning best from collaborative hands-on practice and creation of their own literature. Eight **(20%)** mentioned the scaffolding of the English translations as helpful, and **13 (32%)** commented on the teachers' explicit explanations.

Four (10%) reported finding the small-group discussions helpful for making sense of the literature.

To summarize, students found the following strategies helpful for their learning: group work, repeated viewing of the videotape, pausing to explain, group discussion, and creating their own lines of poetry and handshape stories. These strategies coincide with the features of Reading the Unwritten: explicit instruction, various types of scaffolding, and collaborative learning. Thus it is apparent that students, if given the proper learning supports, do recognize and develop the strategies necessary for comprehending ASL literature.

Goal 3: Increased enjoyment of ASL literature

Students' unsolicited comments indicated enjoyment

From my observations, students' expressions and level of participation indicated that they enjoyed the activities. For example, one Level A student, after participating in the "Preservation of the Sign Language" activity, asked if there were more such videos for him to watch on his own. This comment was particularly impressive because the activity involved watching a speech that took place almost a century ago, a task that is difficult even for fluent signers of ASL. Another student stopped me in the hail after the Level C activity on the legend of the Deaf Civil War spies and asked if there was another class where she could learn more ASL literature.

Throughout the implementations of Reading the Unwritten, I had conversations with the instructors in the classrooms who were implementing the activities. These teachers reported that students were engaged in and enthusiastic about the literature activities. Teachers reported that students especially enjoyed creating their own pieces of literature, particularly handshape stories (which include one-handshape stories and ABC stories) and short lines of ASL poetry in which signs flowed into one another. These genres are quite different from any genre in English literature, so the fact that students enjoyed them indicates that it is specifically ASL literature, not literature in general, which the students find appealing.

Did appreciation of ASL literature increase over time?

To see how widespread student interest was in ASL literature, I turned once again to the survey data. Students were surveyed at the end of the quarter three times during the academic year. The survey included two questions regarding enjoyment of ASL literature: "Which [type of ASL literary genre] did you like the most?" and "What would you like to see more of?" A higher percentage of students participating in activities related to the literature reported enjoyment of at least one literary genre than students who had only viewed literature in their assignments, many of whom simply left the answer blank or responded with a non-genre, erroneously including such topics as paintings, books, and cultural events (see Table 3).

Level	Implementing	Non-implementing
A	65	10
B	91	56
C	93	78

Table 3: Percent of Students Reporting Enjoyment of at Least One ASL Genre

Goal 4: Increased understanding of Deaf culture

Instructors' reports of student responses, as well as my own observations, indicate that students'

understanding of the culture of Deaf Americans increased as a result of their exposure to ASL literature. For example, the Level A instructor who implemented Reading the Unwritten in her classroom observed a "glow of familiarity" on students' faces as they made connections between two assignments. They had previously analyzed George Veditz's speech "Preservation of the Sign Language" (from *The preservation of American Sign Language,* 1997) and were now seeing a documentary on Deaf heritage. The narrator of the documentary mentioned Veditz's speech, which had been filmed in 1913, and showed a brief excerpt from the speech. Although the excerpt was from a part of the speech with which the students had not previously worked, they recognized Veditz and, according to this instructor, were better able to understand the historic and cultural significance of the original Veditz speech.

Another teacher reported that her Level B students who participated in the "Language for the Eye" poetry activity understood the unique rhyming qualities of ASL poetry better than did students in her other Level B classes who simply watched the poem on their own as a homework assignment. She noted having spent between 20 and 25 minutes explaining the same concept to students in her non-implementing classes, and still felt that they did not understand it as well as students who had participated in the poetry activity.

Teachers' feedback on students' depth of understanding of Deaf culture was substantiated by my own observations. In three different Level B classes, I observed students spontaneously incorporating Deaf cultural themes when they participated in the "Creating a One-handshape Story" activity. Several of the students' creations involved issues in the lives of Deaf people. For example, one group's story was about what the Deaf community condescendingly refers to as a "peddler," a person who gives out trinkets and small cards imprinted with the manual alphabet in exchange for donations. Another story dealt with the difficulty a hard of hearing college student had reading lips in the classroom.

Students showed an understanding of the culture of Deaf Americans in all three genres. This understanding was particularly evident when students were asked to create a literary work themselves. The recurrence of Deaf cultural themes in students' one-handshape stories indicates their understanding of how cultural knowledge is transmitted through literature.

summary

Of the four goals of Reading the Unwritten, the one most readily achieved was increasing students' familiarity with ASL literary genres. Participation in only a handful of classroom group activities helped students to recall the genres which they had studied. Achievement of the second goal, the development and use of learning strategies, was also fairly easily attained. Students listed the strategies that had been used in class, which coincide with the features of Reading the Unwritten. Increased enjoyment of literature and deepened understanding of Deaf culture are goals which, under the constraints of this project, were difficult to evaluate quantitatively. Anecdotal evidence points toward the achievement of these goals, and in particular to the development of "favorite" genres of ASL literature.

Conclusion

My research has shown me once again how expectations about what students can and cannot do are borne out not only in classroom practice but in the development of teaching materials and curricula. Based upon the assumption that students are not able to understand and discuss ASL literature until they have a strong command of the language, students have been deprived of the rich linguistic and cultural content of authentic ASL literature. Reading the Unwritten has shown me clearly that if we maintain high yet reasonable expectations for our students and provide the support they need to reach these expectations, they will succeed. Beginning learners of ASL are indeed able to grapple with and understand difficult literary texts, given proper scaffolding.

Through this project I have become reacquainted with the need for classroom-based research. It is teachers who have direct contact with the students, who experience students' successes and failures right alongside the students themselves. We often know instinctively what will and will not work for our particular constellation of students, but without research backing up our beliefs, these beliefs

remain unarticulated and unique to our situation alone. For these reasons it is important that teachers become involved not only in learning about research that has been done before, but also in conducting research on our own, in our own classrooms. Doing so will not only improve the credibility of our own classroom practices, but will also be a basis from which to share with others in the field what we have learned from our students.

Footnotes

[1]Three such examples are Stokoe's (1965) notation system, SignFont (Newkirk, 1987), and SignWriting (Sutton, 1981).
[2]For a detailed description of orality and literacy, see Tannen (1982).
[3]In *The preservation of American Sign Language,* (1997).
[4]In *The preservation of American Sign Language,* (1997).
[5]In Lentz, Mikos, & Smith (1992).
[6]In Padden & Bendixen (1980).
[7]In Padden & Bendixen (1980).
[8]Lentz (1995).
[9]Valli (1990).
[10]In Lentz, Mikos, & Smith (1992).
[11]In Lentz, Mikos, & Smith (1992).
[12]Lentz (1995).
[13]Valli (1990).

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Idealizations and Realities in Interpreting: When the speaker is vague

Nancy Frishberg

Abstract

Idealizations about interpreting often suggest the interpreter is most like the speaker, with the speaker's knowledge of the text to be spoken and the circumstances behind the text. Realities show us that the interpreter is more often like any other listener, with limited prior knowledge. Given the challenge of a spontaneous spoken text, a live audience, and the task of simultaneous interpretation, an expert interpreter shows us how to handle this lack of knowledge. By delaying commitment to a specific representation of the physical space described in the narrative for nearly a full minute while continuing to interpret, the interpreter allowed himself to hear and understand more of the speaker's message. We examine a 3-minute excerpt of that production to understand how a vague message was resolved successfully.

Idealizations and Realities in Interpreting

Ignore foreign accents, technical terminology, and references to classical literature, current events, or popular culture. Leave out all the complications relating to emotionally charged topics or psychologically fraught interactions. Forget that the speaker's gestures may not be visible to the interpreter, and that those add meaning. Disregard the fact that the interpreter and the speaker may differ in age, sex, ethnicity, and a host of other personal attributes that will affect both how each of them experiences the world, and how the audience experiences a message coming from one or the other of them. The fiction we teach our students and tell ourselves is that the well-trained, competent "ideal" interpreter is a substitute for the presenter, merely taking the words and rendering them in another language and mode.

"You speak and I'll be your hands." Unpacking this idealization shows us at least three fictions within:

- The interpreter can do as good a job on the message as the speaker. In this idealization the

interpreter knows what the speaker knows, can portray the message with the speaker's attitudes, and is challenged to find an efficient and accurate way of translating.

- The interpreter makes the signing choices that the speaker would have made if the speaker were fluent. The accomplished interpreter ideally represents this speaker through appropriate signs, non-manual expressions, order and spatial arrangement of signs, and pausing structures.
- The interpreter can choose how to lay out the space described by the speaker.

The reality is that the interpreter is not the speaker. Cynthia Roy (1992, 1999) among others has reminded us often that the interpreter constitutes a genuine party to the communication. The interpreter controls neither the content of the source message nor its expression. As for content, an interpreter rarely works with a text fully known to him or her in advance. The speaker offers the message, which the interpreter is learning for the first time. The simple depiction of real-world space presents a challenge when that space is being described in spoken language gradually over the course of several minutes. Therefore the interpreter is often in the same position as the listening audience, not privileged at all. The interpreter, like any other listener, must wait for the speaker to reveal sufficient information over the course of several utterances, or several minutes. When a speaker is ambiguous or vague, audience members can anticipate any of several meanings, and wait for the resolution until the speaker is ready. Simultaneous interpreting does not allow the interpreter the luxury of waiting. Or does it?

Many years ago as part of a laboratory examination of interpreting, one of our esteemed colleagues agreed to be a guinea pig in a series of explorations. I agreed to speak; others (hearing and deaf) were in the audience to make it a genuine translation task. I told stories that were new to at least some of the audience, and to the interpreter. An excerpt from one of those experiments in voice-to-sign interpreting from the early 1970s yields some enduring reminders and novel findings about the particular situation and narrative, as well as about the idealizations we carry around and tell ourselves, our students, and our clients about interpreting and the interpreting process.

In this 3-minute excerpt, the speaker describes kids playing in an outdoor neighborhood space—on the sidewalk, in the driveway, near one house. As events unfold the listener/interpreter understands that the pivotal action requires portrayal of the layout of the space. Through a series of approximations, the interpreter eventually settles on a satisfying depiction of the stationary objects, the people, and objects in motion. The approximations are as interesting as the final depiction: they show us in some detail how to be vague, not intentionally misleading, but vague in the sense of "not fully specific." The speaker knew what the space looked like, but had not given enough information for the listener to have a good idea. The final depiction is important as well, since it differs from the real-world space in one important dimension, and yet is functionally equivalent to the real-world space it portrays for the purposes of the interpreting task.

Since I have described this interpreting episode and its context in some detail in another publication (Frishberg, 2000), I will here only briefly review the spoken source and the interpreted result, and instead attempt to draw the lessons for interpreter educators more completely. In the 3-minute excerpt from a narrative, the speaker describes various children riding a sled (with wheels) down a U-shaped driveway and coasting back up. The space includes the two ends of the driveway and the house at the low point in the curve. While the speaker (the present author) was convinced at the time that her words were conveying the whole layout of the scene, examining the text in retrospect we realize that quite a bit of the detail remains unspoken or implied.

What the speaker says

The speaker first described the participants and the outdoor area: a playmate "lived on a big hill." What she knew but did not say is that the houses on one side of the street are at a higher elevation, while those across the street are lower, and the street itself has an incline.

Next she told of the driveway, "It went down on one part and got to the house at the bottom and went up at the other part, sort of like a U-shape. It went down and back up." What she knew but did not say is that the house in question is on the lower elevation, with the house at a level lower than the road.

In the next few utterances the speaker's voice changes—it speeds up and slightly raises in pitch, indicating arousal and excitement. The playmate doesn't merely ride on the sled but lies on the sled and goes "swinging down the hill and turned the handle at the bottom and swinging back up," reaching the top of the other end of the driveway. What she knew and did not say was that the sled used its momentum from the downward path to propel it on the upward portion of the driveway. The playmate's second ride repeats the sequence of riding down, turning the handle, and coasting up to the other end of the driveway.

Twice she describes her own rehearsal of turning the sled's handle, first as an internal monologue (foreshadowing the climax, "I knew I didn't have the strength ...") and second as she was coached by the other kids.

And, finally she describes how she failed to turn the handle, instead ramming into a planter at the bottom of the driveway, near the front door of the house.

What the interpreter does

The interpreter chooses initially to show the hill, with houses on it. "A big hill with houses on it" becomes an upward grade with houses in sequence up and to the right from the signer's perspective. The plan to borrow the sled and slide down the hill is shown slightly forward and again to the right.

At the first description of the driveway, the interpreter gives the driveway a more or less straight path with a dip in it, showing a change of elevation without a change in direction in the horizontal plane. The interpreter takes his time in describing the driveway, without mentioning the turn, but instead focuses on the extent of the path from one end to the other. In fact he allows his interpretation to extend in time by four or more seconds, *so* that when it ends the speaker is already well into the faster-paced description of the playmate's first ride.

The first ride is given in the interpreted version with a right turn by the manual portion, but without coordinated eye gaze to confirm the turn. Instead of portraying the turn as crucial to the ride, the interpreter makes the excitement and turbulence the focus by using side-to-side rocking motion of the body. This is the first instance of vagueness.

During the description of the second ride down the hill, the interpreter makes an attempt to integrate the shape of the driveway with the shape of the sled's path. The rider takes off from the space by the interpreter's upper left shoulder, and moves downward, and outward toward the audience as the interpreter depicts the turn. Eyes and hands both indicate a change of direction, but the eye gaze is not completely contained within the space. The interpreter is still working out the spatial relations; he's still not committed.

The interpreter commits to the righthand turn fully as the speaker hypothesizes about whether she'll be able *to* turn the handle.

When the speaker starts her run down the hill, the interpreter anticipates the final crash: he uses a sequence of signs for this journey. RUN (dominant hand higher and nondominant lower) repeated for the speed; SLIDE (with H-hands as a classifier) for the sled's manner of movement; APPROACH (without actually completing the sign ARRIVE as a fully realized CRASH). All of these combined with the eye gaze and lean of the torso indicate the continuous downward path. The shouts of the playmates to "Turn it! Turn it!" show the full commitment to a righthand turn at the lowest point in the driveway.

What educators can learn

Interpreter educators can draw a number of lessons from this instructive example.

Recognizing the double bind of idealizations and realities

Shall we encourage our students and colleagues to explain to their clients the ways that the idealization and the reality are a mismatch? Not at all. The speaker can feel reassured that the idealization is the goal for each new interpretation task. Interpreters, on the other hand, can assess themselves on how far off from the idealization they found their production. In this case the interpreter's solutions, whether conscious or not, rely on what he's certain of. He doesn't guess ahead about the driveway or turn.

A translation need not be equivalent to what transpired in the real world to be an adequate interpretation

In the example described here, the interpreter managed to create a meaningful narrative that resolved all the facts in the story as spoken. The speaker is the only one who knows that the path of the children down the driveway proceeded from the righthand arm with a leftward turn up the driveway. The fact that the interpreted world came out as mirror-image of the real world speaks to the arbitrariness of language, both sign and speech. It is also a testament to the skill of this interpreter that he managed to resolve the U-shaped driveway and the hill satisfactorily and managed it within the time available.

Karen Emmorey and her colleagues (1995, 1998) have studied several ways that locational, geometric, and linguistic information are encoded using spatial mechanisms available in ASL. In this case, the interpreter uses the Handle morpheme (holding onto the steering mechanism of the sled) to signal movement, and not to show a precise manner of holding. The interpreter's behavior accords with Emmorey's predictions based on work with signers. Other interpreting events deserve examination *to* find out when the interpreter's behavior fits the patterns predicted for accommodating a speaker and when it accommodates a viewer.

Ella Lentz (1980) has differentiated the metaphoric functions of signer's space: the nondominant side is good for introducing new characters, who move toward the dominant side for presentation or resolution. The prominent or positive characters are positioned on the dominant side relative to the weaker or negative characters.

My own analysis of dominance reversals and discourse structures has shown how the non-dominant hand may be used for backgrounding, mention of minor characters, as well as several other functions.

I would also argue that the interpreter in this example turns the sled in a righthand curve as a culturally or linguistically unmarked gesture. Young and Clanton (1993), in their tutorial for human-computer interaction (HCI) designers, draw attention to the ways that feature films manage the viewer's expectation in the two dimensional frame of film. Their point for HCI audiences is equally appropriate here: characters come on from the left side of the frame and depart at the right; the path is often from the upper left toward the lower right. They make no claim about whether our custom of reading text left-to-right predisposes us to "read" film in this way. They urge HCI designers to create successful applications by understanding and using the prior habits and knowledge of the user. I urge interpreters to be aware of viewers' habits and knowledge in creating successful multi-language experiences.

We can argue here that faithfulness to the real world layout will be important when there are consequences to the interaction that depend on the original space. A legal proceeding is one situation where there is little room for deviation from the real world ("...and where was your car relative to the intersection when you first saw the defendant's vehicle..."). Instruction in the use of specific equipment might be another ("...to adjust the contrast, use the second knob in the top row..."). For other interactions, the interpreter has more leeway to create an arrangement that fits the facts, and fits the default language behavior, but where it may differ from the world. In this case the interaction was more or less social, and the space being described may not exist anymore; the speaker's verbal description is the one that counts, not the facts in the world.

***How** to be vague—put off committing to a particular depiction—or at least **how** this one interpreter did it on one occasion*

The speaker described riding a sled on a U-shaped driveway. As she told more about the events, the interpreter showed more understanding of the shape of the driveway in three dimensions. The episode — from the speaker's first mention of the need to turn the handle until her questioning her own ability to steer — took nearly a full minute. Only after that minute did he make a firm commitment to a righthand turn. On the way, however, he continued to interpret, engaging the audience by portraying the speaker's excitement, and letting the drama unfold as the path of the sled became more clear: not only down the hill and up, but down the hill with a sharp turn and back up the other leg of the driveway.

How long one can delay the commitment?

In this case, the interpreter was sensitive to making the climax of the interpretation occur as close as possible to the climax of the speaker's narrative. From the speaker's intonation as well as words, it was clear there would be a crash. In another situation, where there was no timing constraint, the interpreter might have delayed even longer. A full minute feels like a long time when the idealizations we've been living with for the past 25 or **30** years suggest that appropriate time lag (voice-hand span) can be measured in seconds for simultaneous interpretation.

*How to **work** with video materials*

Letting students loose with actual examples of master and novice interpreters preserved on videotape or other media formats can be wonderfully enlightening. There are many ways of interrogating the data directly, and each student or team becomes an expert on a particular aspect of the translation, interaction, and overall performance. We are well accustomed to giving holistic and immediate responses to an interpreting performance. Performing microanalysis on a particular experience offers students a new set of tools for discussing their own and others' experiences.

Among the questions that this 3-minute excerpt provokes are those of timing, meaning, and expression, as well as metaquestions about the field of interpreting and sign language studies:

- What is the voice-hand span (time lag) at different points in the text?
- Assuming it is not uniform throughout the performance, what factors account for differences in the voice-hand span?
- How does the interpreter display the speaker's layers of meaning? When are words translated as signs, and when as some non-manual aspect? When are non-word aspects of the vocal source rendered as sign and when as non-manuals?
- Does the speaker use full sentences? Does the interpreter use full sentences? Are these the same units?
- Is the pacing and pausing in the original (vocal) text reflected in the interpreted version? To what extent or when?
- What general principles can be drawn from this example, and what aspects are idiosyncratic to the text or the speaker or the interpreter?
- Can this example be classified as ASL or some other variety of signing?
- What aspects of this interpretation are artifacts of the times it was produced? Can we find evidence for a particular model of interpreting in this example?

Careful examination of these or other questions will force us to confront our idealizations of the interpreting process and 'the interpreting product. We will better understand the realities of this demanding, real-time cognitive and linguistic behavior.

About the Author

Nancy Frishberg, Ph.D., is the author of *Interpreting: An Introduction,* published by RID, and has served on the Educational Standards Committee of CIT since 1991. In her capacity as Executive Director of New Media Centers, a non-profit consortium of higher education institutions and innovative technol*ogy* companies, she has been honored to participate in a National Research Council study reviewing the information technology strategy of the Library of Congress. Her research interests span a range of topics in sign language linguistics, interpreting theory and practice, and digital technology.

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Remediating High-Risk Interpreting Ergonomics

By Diane **M. Gross**

Abstract.

Healthy interpreting ergonomics contribute significantly to reducing the risk of Cumulative Trauma Disorder (CTD), commonly known as Repetitive Motion Injury, in sign language interpreters. Interpreter educators can play an important role in educating interpreters about safe interpreting ergonomics. This is vital when one considers the impact CTD can have on an interpreter's chance for a long, healthy, and productive career in the field of sign language interpreting. There are a number of factors that can influence one's risk of getting CTD, such as insufficient warming-up and cooling down before and after the interpreting task, inadequate physical muscle strength and flexibility necessary for the specific demands of the interpreting task, various physical and psychological predispositions to injury, poorly managed stress, and more. This paper, however, will focus exclusively on the impact of high-risk interpreting ergonomics, as well as define the various elements comprising high-risk ergonomics and discuss some general strategies aimed at remediation. It is imperative that curricula regarding healthy ergonomics be included as part of the comprehensive approach to interpreter education and professional development. During ergonomic interpreting workshops and seminars I conduct in various sites across the United States, interpreters fresh out of basic interpreter programs inform me that they are already experiencing CTD symptoms. Often they report the initiation of symptoms even before graduation.

The information presented here is based on research conducted by the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) and the Center for Occupational Rehabilitation (COR), University of Rochester Medical Center. The collaborative effort was the result of a high incidence of CTD among sign language interpreters on staff at NTID. At one time during the 1989-90 academic year there were *73%* of the 65 interpreters on some kind of work accommodation due to reported CTD symptoms (National Technical Institute for the Deaf and the U.S. Department of Education, 1996; *Cumulative Trauma Disorder - CTD*, p.6, section 1). As part of a multidimensional approach to addressing this challenge, NTID worked closely with COR to identify and develop a plan for remediation of precipitating factors

that were potentially leading to CTD symptoms. A study was conducted in which the interpreters were divided into two groups: one group working with pain, and the other working with little or no pain. Each group interpreted a prepared text while being videotaped. Various physiological responses were also conducted, monitored, and logged. A comparative study was then conducted of the videotaped work of the interpreters to determine if there were any significant differences between the two groups. Significant differences between the two groups were noted (Feuerstein, Journal of Occupational Medicine, Volume **34,** Number **3,** March 1992).

As a result of the information gleaned from the research and subsequent strategic and systemic programming, scheduling, and educational changes and implementations, the need for work accommodation was reduced to less than 6% in a two-year interval ***(Cumulative Trauma Disorder*** - *CTD*, p.7, section 1). This writer had the pleasure of working with COR and NTID to develop and refine an educational program and materials for staff interpreters on the prevention and management of CTD. The ergonomic component is essential. As Dr. Feuerstein states, "reductions in biomechanical risks should reduce the likelihood of symptoms" (Feuerstein & Fitzgerald, 1992).

There are five basic ergonomic factors affecting sign language interpreters. These are sometimes called "workstyles" or "biomechanics of interpreting" (Feuerstein, 1992). They are:

- Ballistic or forceful signing. Quick, abrupt beginnings and endings typically earmark this type of signing. The entire body or upper extremity may move slightly in response to the force of the movement.
- Number and length of rest breaks. A rest break is different from recovery time. A rest break refers to resting your hand(s) in your lap if sitting, or at your side if standing when it is appropriate. Many interpreters, for example, leave their hands hanging midair when the speaker pauses, waiting for the next sentence or thought. This may be a missed opportunity for rest.
- Size and location of work (signing) space. Signing too far away from the body creates tremendous physical stress. The farther from the body you sign, the more work the muscles must do. Signing too close into the body also creates tension and leads to excessive hand/wrist deviations. Posture is an important part of maintaining an optimal workspace. It is essential to maintain a healthy posture while interpreting. An unhealthy posture can inhibit circulation of blood in the upper extremity and may put stress on the muscles and tendons of the neck, shoulders, back, and arms.
- Deviation of the hand/wrist from neutral position. Hand/wrist deviations occur when you bend the wrist in any direction. Some signs must be made with a hand/wrist deviation; however, often interpreters produce signs while bending the wrist unnecessarily.
- Physical muscle tension. Physical tension decreases needed blood flow to the extremities while working. It also decreases muscle flexibility, increasing the risk of injury.

The implication for sign language interpreters as well as interpreter educators is significant. It is vital that we address the issue of educating interpreters in safer ways to perform their work. Ergonomically appropriate signing needs to be a foundational and integral part of interpreter education, not a one-day seminar that is provided after high-risk habits are already developed.

Some suggestions for interpreter educators and trainers for incorporating ergonomics into current programs include:

- Develop a knowledge base of factors contributing to CTD, including, but not exclusively ergonomics.
- Become familiar with and learn to recognize high-risk interpreting ergonomics.
- Include the ergonomic element when teaching sign language to interpreters so they learn healthy habits from the beginning.
- Discuss ergonomics during classes on linguistics. For example, often interpreters overuse the tool of "forceful" signing. Forceful or ballistic signing certainly has its place in ASL and interpreting; however, it can be valuable for interpreters to practice other non-manual markers that can be

equally, if not more, effective in rendering a message faithfully.
- Include an ergonomic diagnostic element in your assessments and feedback to interpreters.
- Become familiar with appropriate remediation strategies for already developed high-risk interpreting ergonomics.
- Expose interpreters to interpreters who model healthy ergonomics.

CTD is not something that a sign language interpreter must fear, however, it should be taken seriously. It is, in my opinion, one of the most important challenges facing our field today. As interpreter educators we can and should approach the education of ASL and interpretation in the safestway possible. Inclusion of ergonomic issues in our instruction may allow more interpreters the benefit of remaining in the field of sign language interpreting. It must be clear, however, that the ergonomic element is but one aspect impacting one's risk of CTD. It would, therefore, be important to have minimally a basic knowledge of other general CTD precipitating factors.

Knowledge regarding healthy ergonomics can be enormously empowering. As interpreters we often seem to feel vulnerable, at risk, and without power. We can feel more in control when we know and utilize the principles governing low-risk interpreting ergonomics because we see that we can positively impact our own health and the longevity of our careers.

About the Author

Diane Gross, CI and CT, is Vice President of Interpretek, a sign language interpreting referral agency based out of Rochester, NY, and Vice President of Ergotek, a company specializing in providing instruction and diagnostics for interpreters seeking to reduce or manage their risk of Cumulative Trauma Disorder (CTD), commonly known as Repetitive Motion Injury. Diane served as Project Coordinator/Senior Writer in the development of training materials on the prevention and management of CTD at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf for an interpreting staff of over 100 individuals. Diane was specifically trained by individuals in the field of Occupational Medicine to provide ergonomic training and diagnostics to sign language interpreters, and she currently conducts workshops around the country.

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A Novel and Interactive Approach to Teaching Classifiers Using a Digital Video Disk

Patricia Lessard

Abstract

Teachers of signed language interpretation and advanced ASL courses need a systematic approach to teaching classifiers. In this session the presenters will describe a multimedia-based course that was offered to advanced signers and working interpreters. It was co-taught by a native Deaf sign language teacher and a hearing interpreter trainer at an interpreter preparation program. Lesson plans will be shared as well as data on the students' level of improvement. All participants rated the course highly. This novel teaching approach offers flexibility: it works for large programs as well as remote populations with limited access and resources. The curriculum also meets the needs of those working interpreters who never went through an IPP or for recent graduates training for certification. This presentation will be conducted by the hearing instructor of the course along with a video producer, who will present a digital video disk (DVD) incorporating the lessons and video clips used in the course.

The examples offered in this paper are the property of the author. They are offered here as ideas for you to use in creating examples of your own. You may make use of the examples directly from the text by permission of the author or by citing the source.

Introduction

The genesis of this material was a course I offered at Ohlone College, in Fremont, California, as a *bridge course,* a term we use there to describe a course designed for those who have completed all the required ASL courses and related courses in a Sign Language Program, but are still not quite ready to enter into an Interpreter Training/Preparation Program, or for those who have acquired ASL by means other than formal classroom instruction. It was a revised version of a continuing education course I had taught and was given the title of "Traffic Reports," hereafter abbreviated as "TR." That course (TR) was designed primarily for working interpreters. It was an attempt to get them to incorporate classifiers more in their work and to develop better skills in creating the spatial "scene." I

found that many of them lacked the basic skills for classifier production and struggled when I required them to use several perspectives to convey information. For the first few weeks I could not actually get into the course I had prepared, but instead had to review classifier types and the non-manual behaviors that needed to co-occur with them.

As the semester progressed, I wrote down my own comments on how the class was going and where I felt I needed to make changes. I also elicited feedback from the students. Many of them reported that they felt they needed to go back to the basics. It had been too long since many of them had taken an ASL class that included instruction on classifiers. That is when I decided that I would start working on a curriculum that was systematic and sequence-based, beginning with an introduction to classifiers with some very simple exercises and progressing to more complex texts and longer activities.

I was determined to collect enough commercially made ASL video footage to cover a semester course. It was not an easy task, and I could not find exactly what I wanted. Instead, I turned to making my own lessons and developing the video footage to accompany them. I was fortunate to know a very talented deaf man, Ben Jarashow, who lived in the area and agreed to act as the signing talent for the material I wanted to produce. I had found in the previous version of this class (TR) that while teaching the concept or skill for a particular lesson, I often had to act as the sign model and could not discuss the decisions that needed to be made regarding which classifier should be used and why, nor the meta-linguistic and processing issues that were relevant to that lesson. I was determined that if there was going to be a second offering of this course, it had to include a deaf team teacher. When there came the opportunity to teach this type of course again, Ben agreed to become the team teacher. I think it adds to the credibility of a course when you can have a native speaker present, one who is familiar with the material and good at explaining concepts to the students. We worked together in developing many of the lessons. His opinions and expertise were invaluable to the course. And without the masterful work of our video producer, Dan Veltri, these wonderful ideas would be just that, ideas. I am grateful to have someone who could take over the technical part of this production *so* completely and competently. I just told him what I wanted, and he figured out a way to make it happen.

I will now take you through a sampling of the course material. There will be demonstrations of a few of the lessons that were taught and a summary of the students' evaluation of the class. I will outline possible settings where this type of course can be taught, who would benefit from a course of this type, and why this approach to teaching classifiers is ideal for many programs and non-program classes.

Overview of the Course

One of the drawbacks to a "bridge" course is that, unlike our Interpreter Preparation Program (IPP), there is no screening of students prior to their registering for the class. As a result, the skill level of the students is often quite disparate. The second time the class was taught, in addition to the students who needed a class to help them transition into an IPP, the class included some graduates of IPPs, candidates for certification, a certified working interpreter, and a CODA who had neither attended an IPP nor had formal training. This range in skills could have posed a problem for us as the instructors. Designing a class that would meet the needs of all the students would have been quite a challenge. For this reason, we decided to implement a new format for the class that consisted of a lecture portion taught to the class as a whole, and lab sessions where the students were divided into two smaller groups. Ideally, the lab would consist of students of like abilities. The labs could be used either for reinforcement and remedial work for those students who needed more time with any particular concept or for "enrichment" sessions, extensions of the lessons taught in class for those students who wished to go beyond the level of material covered in the lecture.

Much akin to the "early bird, late bird" reading groups in public instruction years ago, the students were divided into two groups. One group came half an hour before the designated lecture time and left after the lecture session, the second showed up at the lecture session and stayed half an hour afterwards. The first few weeks, however, were taught to the group as a whole to get a sense of their

skills and to determine who would be in which lab. The group this time, even though the members were very different in the number of years of exposure to ASL and the nature of their training, was similar in its ability to use classifiers. The lab sessions were therefore arranged according to the time preference of the members. Some students would attend both sessions to get the added benefit of more time on the material.

At first it was a bit awkward for all involved. The classroom itself was the cause of much of the confusion. The room was occupied at different times during the day by students taking classes in ASL, those in the Deaf Studies program, or the Interpreter Preparation Program at the college. Ben and I never knew what it would look like when we arrived. The entire department had been moved from a different building to this one over the winter break, so equipment and supplies were not always readily accessible. One thing that is definitely required to make a course like this successful is access to equipment. The good thing about this material is that there are options for the user in terms of what equipment can be used if another type is not available. If I did not have access to the computer for the DVD, for example, I could use the TV and VCR instead.

I had found in the previous class (TR) that the students were able to sit and watch a video and imitate to greater or lesser degrees the performance of the person on the screen. However, when asked to create a text of their own or retell the videotext, they were not able to accurately produce the classifiers that were needed. Often they did not use them if they thought they could get by without using them. When asked why they chose to describe an event with words instead of gestures or classifiers, they said that they felt if they had to stop and visualize the event and think of which classifier to use, then they would not be able to keep up. They complained that in addition to not being able to spontaneously produce the correct classifier, the sign stimulus was often too fast for them. They could not watch the signing that was going on and keep notice of the behavior of the signer's face simultaneously. For these reasons, the new video material that I created presents most of the video texts four times: the first time is at normal speed; the second consists of a close-up of Ben's face with a picture-in-a-picture of the normal shot reduced and placed in the lower right corner of the screen (like the interpreter "bubble"); the third is the normal shot in slow motion, and the last is the same as the first, at regular speed. This way the student can isolate the particular skill they want to watch and view it magnified or at a reduced speed so they can identify and practice what they need to learn.

Because all the lessons are available to the students on either a video or CD, they could view the teacher-prepared version and compare it with their own recorded version numerous times and be ready to discuss with us what they saw as their mistakes. When I asked them what they liked about that approach, they said that they preferred to find their mistakes before I did. They also appreciated having the same tape hold all of their recorded performances so that they could see how they had improved during the semester. Having a sample of the text performed by the teacher ready and available was not just for the benefit of the students. It also made it easier for us to give feedback to the students on their videotapes because Ben and I had identified ahead of time the places in the written texts where we expected the students to incorporate classifiers in their rendition of the text. Those places were "highlighted" so we did not have to scrutinize the entire text, only the parts where we expected a classifier to be used. The focus of the class was not ASL grammar, and we informed the students that they would not be graded on that aspect of their work.

There were tests given periodically throughout the semester. All of the tests were done using the video material. One test required the students to answer multiple-choice questions; another required them to trace the direction Ben traveled onto a map; still another had them locate persons in a room during a story where there are multiple perspectives presented.

At the end of every lesson there was a form that I asked the students to fill out which I called the *Learned Outcome Report*. On it I asked them to identify which lab group they were in and to write a brief paragraph about what they had learned from that particular activity. Those were helpful to me in giving me feedback for the lesson, and helpful to the students because it enabled them to synthesize all they had done that day into a concise statement. Their reaction to this part of the lesson at first was not favorable. I believe it was because this process was new to them and required them to think on another level. Eventually they were less reluctant to fill them out. They each had a file fold-

er where they kept the notes they had taken during the class, a copy of their Learned Outcome Report, the feedback sheets for their recorded projects and the results of their tests.

Scope and Sequence

A weakness of many interpreters or advanced signers is the inability to switch to a more classifier-like way of signing intermittently in the course of a text. It seems difficult for them to stop processing on the word/sentence level and go to the image level. During their training in an IPP, there is an emphasis on discovering and conveying the meaning. I think this predisposes the students to produce a "word/sign-bound" version of the English. The goal of this course was to help the students arrive at a comfort level with classifiers that would allow them to create them dynamically throughout a text and still "keep up."

To help get the students comfortable in leaving the word-based description behind and replacing it with more gesture-like signing or classifiers, we began with a game. The students were presented with a short list of words from English. Some of them were verbs and some of them were nouns. The idea was that the student had to convey the meaning of the word without using any conventionalized sign for it. The lesson was done during the lecture session and repeated in each of the lab sessions with some of the same words to reinforce the idea. In addition, we introduced new words to extend the lesson.

In the course material, there is the complete list of words in text form as well as the video lesson where Ben models what to do. There are suggestions for remedial and extension lessons as well as resources for creating additional lessons.

It became apparent to us at the time of this exercise that many of the students did not have a good sense or grounding in adjectival classifiers, or SASSes, as many of us call them. Ben and I had to go back and create a lesson for them where we introduced the handshapes used for descriptive classifiers and a lab activity to accompany it. It required more than one class period to teach. We wanted to be sure they really understood the concept before we moved on to the more complex concepts and activities we had planned. Thanks to the technology we could rearrange things as we went along. In the course material this lesson will now occur *prior* to the gesture noun/verb lesson, should future students also need assistance with this.

After the students had become somewhat comfortable with descriptive classifiers, the next goal was to have them interact with the handshapes, making a cline: for a given object, start with it as small as possible and in at least three steps, increase the size to make it as large as possible. The intent here was to expose them to different handshapes that could be used to describe the same object, with the level of detail dictating which handshape they would employ.

To advance their skills further, we created a fun activity for the students to practice their interaction with an object of different sizes where they had to integrate the concept of descriptive classifiers with handling classifiers.

It seemed only right to move on to a more complex level of classifier use, so we introduced the idea of classifiers as verbs (classifier predicates). The objects that they had described and handled now had to move. In the lecture portion of this lesson, we went over the handshapes for when the classifier would act as a verb. During the lab activity they had to make their object grow and shrink using descriptive classifiers; manipulate the object using handling classifiers; and then make the object travel. Some were able to perform the planned activity for the lab plus try a few of the extended exercises. Others had a more difficult time and needed to stay with the original activity and repeat it until they were comfortable.

After successfully completing the above activities, Ben and I felt the students were now ready to be introduced to yet another level of complexity: the concept of changing perspectives and points of view. Many of them were unfamiliar with this technique. It was also a difficult skill for the students to master. Many of them were aware of the concept of *role shift* or *character shift*, but they seemed to limit their use of that technique only to a dialogue. We wanted them to understand that changing the perspective and/or point of view, or camera angle as I called it, was part and parcel to the transmission of information in ASL. We also wanted to expose the students to the concept of using more and dif-

ferent space when performing a text. At the Deaf Studies VI Conference (1999), held in Oakland, California, one session that was particularly interesting was Bauman's "Line/Shot/Montage: Cinematic Techniques in American Sign Language Poetry." In his lecture, he compared ASL with film. In the conference proceedings he quoted William Stokoe as saying:

> "In a signed language ... narrative is no longer linear and prosaic. Instead, the essence of sign language is to cut from a normal view to a close-up to a distant shot to a close-up, again, and so on, even including flashback and flash-forward scenes, exactly as a movie editor works. Not only is signing itself arranged more like edited film than like written narration, but also each signer is placed very much as a camera: the field of vision and angle of views are directed but variable."

Using the analogy of a television program where the director determines which camera to call into play at any given moment was successful in helping my students understand this new and challenging concept.

To demonstrate this technique during the lecture, I asked Ben to place himself in a hotel near a beach, San Diego, for example. I then asked him to look out the window of his hotel room on the 5th floor and see a log of driftwood sitting on the beach across the street. He modeled this for the students. Then I asked him to do the same thing, but this time from the 25th floor of the hotel. In addition, I asked him to go down to the lobby and view the same log. After walking out of the hotel, he was to go up to the log, look at it, show where it was and then sit on it. He demonstrated this sequence for the students several times. Then they had to try it. It was interesting to see their reactions. Their comments at the end of that lesson on their Learned Outcome Reports generally said that it was quite a stretch for them to have to manipulate an object that many times.

To further demonstrate this technique, we took a successful activity from the "Traffic Reports" class and asked the students to drive on the freeway and:

> Be the driver of car A and hit the car in the lane to the left of them (car B)
> Be the driver of car A and hit the car in the lane to the right of them (car B)
> Be in a helicopter and watch the accident happen
> Stand on the side of the road and watch it happen
> Be the person in the car behind the accident and watch it happen
> Look in the rear view mirror and see it happen
> Be the driver of car B and react

The purpose of this exercise was to familiarize them with the camera angle technique mentioned above. They had to use different classifiers for the car depending on the perspective and whose point of view they were trying to covey. We introduced them to the *flat hand vehicle* classifier and the *entity* classifier. This was difficult for many of them. They were used to using the *3-hand vehicle* classifier for all of their references to a car. On occasions such as this, where the reason for choosing one handshape over the other seems so elusive, it was wonderful to have someone with native intuitions there to advise the students.

This activity allowed me to segue into a topic I had always wanted to cover, but never had the proper venue for it. It may seem like a digression, but let me give you the background for this drive of mine.

I often take students of the IPP or interpreters seeking mentoring situations with me when I do volunteer or "low risk" assignments. On one occasion I went to interpret at a local state park. A recent graduate of an IPP was volunteering there as a docent for the tours about the Elephant Seal migration to the island and park. I had been doing sign language interpretation for those tours in previous years and she and I discussed the possibility of my mentoring her for one particular tour where she would not be the docent, but rather the ASL interpreter.

In subsequent weeks I brought other "mentees" with me to that same site. What I saw happen was consistent in all of their work in this setting. During the lecture given by the docent, there is a part

where the docent goes into a description of the alpha bull and his harem of female seals, competing bulls for the same harem, and fights that ensue on the beach. All of them did a good job of setting up the signing space; their verbs that needed to show direction did convey clearly who was the subject and who was the object, but something was missing. Later that day when I asked the deaf people present what they thought of the "mentee" interpreted segment, most of them said that it seemed "flat," though they could not exactly tell me why.

One reason I did not assign a label to the phenomenon I had witnessed at the beginning of this discussion is that I was not sure what to call it. It seems the "mentees" not only lacked the ability to visualize the scene, they were uncomfortable in producing a mimetic rendition of the activity on the beach. I felt I would be remiss in my duties as a teacher if I had not included some sort of lesson on the development of this skill in the new course. I am not sure whether a good label for this technique is *personification,* but that is the term I used when describing this concept to my class. I have since learned that *reported action* is another term used for describing this technique.

I had to stress again the need for the students to be like a camera, or a series of cameras, to allow for different perspectives of the scene. When talking about the seals in general, the index finger could be used by the narrator to set the scene. Not much detail was required for that shot. When moving the camera in to the action on the beach, still keeping the narrator's perspective, a different set of handshapes would need to be employed, including the use of the arm. When it came time to describe the fight, the camera would need to really come in close and capture a lot of detail, *so* actually becoming the seal, taking on the *persona* of the seal, would work best for that shot. At that moment, the perspective would need to shift from that of the narrator to the seal's. I had Ben model the information provided in the written text using different camera angles *so* that the students could see what their work could look like. I acted like a TV producer, having Ben alternate between a shot that was in close and tight, which I referred to as a *zoom in* shot, to one taken from a distance, which I labeled as *pan out,* to a mid-way shot, back to zoom, and so forth.

These same steps were rehearsed several times by the class until they understood that the level of detail they needed to convey was what determined the handshape they had to use. This lesson was one of the four that could be recorded by the students and presented to us for feedback. After watching the video of Ben telling the story of the elephant seals as many times as they felt they needed, the students then went to the camera stations and recorded their own version of the text. As with other texts, there were places that had been highlighted ahead of time by Ben and me where we felt there had to be a classifier used. This time we were also looking for a variety of "camera shots" to be incorporated into the student's work to prove to us they understood the lesson.

Although Bauman spoke of ASL poetry in his presentation, I believe what he said could also apply directly to text that is not poetry:

> "The signer's body and its immediate environment create the frame of the text. ASL poets fill this space in a similar manner to how cinematographers fill cinematic space: through a series of close-up, medium, and long shots. Because ASL's grammar consists of the body's movements through three-dimensional space, it has a variety of shots. Non-manual markers such as facial expressions often convey a close-up shot of a character. In addition, ASL makes extensive use of a classifier system, consisting of classes of handshapes and their movements that are able to describe the physical properties of objects–their location, size, shape, dimensions, scale, and number–and also their movements: speed, direction, and attitude. Classifiers easily create distant shots, but can also be used to describe the shape and dimensions of an object, say a single cell, from an extreme close-up shot." (Proceedings, page **141)**

Once the students had internalized the concept of changing the camera angle, or perspective, Ben and I decided to add another layer of complexity: the ability to rotate an image and convey the same or similar information from a different person's point of view. The students were given an English text and watched the video where Ben performed it first from the point of view of one character in the story, a second time from a different character's point of view, and lastly, a version of the story in

which he combined both points of view.

I showed them a picture of the scene "layout" for the first two stories and told them of the need to rotate the image when setting it up from a different point of view. Before they had to perform the text, I went through several simple exercises where I had them actually manipulate a sheet of paper with images drawn on it, rotating the paper a quarter turn to the left, a quarter turn to the right, and 180 degrees. This helped them see how the alignment of the images would change with the rotation. During the lab that accompanied this lesson, there were more exercises with increasing degrees of difficulty that they needed to do before they could move on to recording themselves doing the longer text. Needless to say, this lesson required more than one class session. Some of the students still had not fully developed the ability to change points of view even with repeated exercises. Many of them had a difficult time being consistent in where things were located in the scene when they had to rotate the image for a different point of view.

After they had recorded themselves telling the stories, I asked them to watch their videos and draw a picture of the scene as they described it. I then asked them to compare it to the picture provided with the English text. Some of them made only minor mistakes and recognized them immediately. Others had to rely on my drawing the picture they described in order to see where they had gone wrong. During private conversations with the students, several of them said that they did not realize they could rotate an image. They thought once the scene was set, they had to keep to that perspective. They also did not remember practicing different points of view in their earlier courses. Despite their pained expressions when seeing themselves on tape and discovering their mistakes, they felt that this lesson was really beneficial to them. As with other texts, certain passages had been identified as needing to have a classifier and had been highlighted *so* that we could look specifically at those places on the students' videos.

Some of the students have given me a call or sent me an email after the class was over and told me how they had actually used this technique on an interpreting assignment, as well as the others they had learned about in the course. They felt good about consciously choosing to use it. They and others have said that now that they know these techniques are used, they are able to recognize them when they happen, which they hadn't really been able to do before.

Student Evaluations

The students reported that they had noticed their performance improving throughout the semester. One student felt her work had actually looked worse. She felt that she used to be able to deliver information smoothly and now she appeared stilted and unsure. I sat and spoke with her about that. We came to the agreement that she was fluent in what she had been doing but had learned *so* many new techniques this semester that it would take time and numerous practice sessions before these new skills would become as automatic as her other abilities.

Several of them wished that the course could have been offered more that once a week *so* they could have more time with the material and more opportunities to meet with the instructors. They all felt that the skills they learned could be applied directly to their work. They enjoyed the variety of lessons and activities. Even though they complained about having to do the Learned Outcome Report at the end of every lesson, they appreciated the fact that they were encouraged to think. They felt one of the strong points of the course was the demand put on them to constantly analyze their work. Their opinions of a weak point of the class varied from the time of day they wished it had been offered, the number of times per week they wished it had been offered, to the chaos of the classroom setup. At the last class session, they wanted to know if the material presented in class was ready to be marketed, as they were eager to have a copy of their own.

Summary

Settings where this type of course could be taught:

- ASL programs in various institutions

- Weekend workshops for teachers (itinerant, full-time staff or adjunct faculty), "Train the Trainers"
- Offered in the community by itinerant teachers as in-service workshops
- Deaf Education Programs for future teachers of the Deaf who need more practice
- Interpreter Preparation Programs
- Language Labs in an institution where a student can go in and work on a self-paced study program or complete certain lessons assigned in class
- At home for those who wish to perform these techniques independently

Who can benefit:

- Teachers who do not have the time or resources to create a curriculum of their own, be they full-time staff, adjunct faculty, or itinerant teachers
- Students in ASL programs who want more work with classifiers
- Graduates of ASL programs that want to go into interpreting programs
- Students needing more work on particular aspects of classifier production
- Those who are weak in changing perspective or point of view when giving information
- Graduates of an IPP striving for certification
- Candidates for certification
- Certified interpreters
- Programs that have a "packed curriculum" and cannot teach it as a course but could have it on reserve in the library for student use

Why it is an ideal approach:

- Table of contents for easy reference
- Links embedded in the computer program for students and/or teachers to obtain more information about a particular segment, such as reference citations
- Progressive level of lessons — students are able to build upon the skills learned in the previous lessons
- Lecture material and lab activities for reinforcement or as a means to supplement the lecture are provided
- There is enough material that it could easily be presented as a one-semester course with resources for remediation and extension, or a two-semester course with plenty of lessons to last a full year
- Is also designed to work as a series of intensive workshops
- Can be done at home for distance learners. The program could be delivered over the internet.
- Can be offered for CEU's for certified interpreters and other professionals
- Flexibility of starting point depending on class skill
- Has a complete series of video texts so the students can:
  - practice imitating the stimulus material
  - record (videotape) their own production of that text
  - compare their work to the stimulus provided
  - see the signed stimulus in different speeds and a close up of the NMMs
- The written English texts have segments highlighted where the use of a classifier is anticipated for ease of correction of student work
- Texts can be rehearsed or done cold-can be spoken onto an audio tape either in "chunks" for consecutive practice, or done slowly or at regular speed for simultaneous work
- Texts can be printed out and done in stages with teacher input
- Material presented for tests can be viewed in video format for those who would be afraid to use the computer — to eliminate the confound of signer computer literacy — it could be difficult to tell if they were struggling with the material presented in the test or if their comfort with a computer was the problem

- Videotext could also be used for sign-to-voice practice
- Tests available with answers on the computer screen, or the teacher can print out the tests and correct the students' hard copies

Note: The material that was presented to the students is now being refined for future courses that I will teach. Hopefully, with your feedback, it can be further improved and be made available to others. I look forward to receiving comments from you. You can contact me by phone (510) 792-4562 v/tty, by e-mail at plessard@57@earthlink.netor plessard57&wyndtell.com. You can also visit Dan Veltri's web-site at **http://www.treehousevideo.com** to get news about the program, make your comments known, or express interest in purchasing this package once it is available.

About the Author

Patricia Lessard has been a certified interpreter since 1979 and has been employed at Ohlone College as an adjunct faculty member since 1991. She was also trained as a teacher of the deaf. She continues to take classes and workshops to further her own knowledge of ASL and second language acquisition, striving to incorporate what she has learned into her own work as an interpreter and in the classroom.

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ben Jarahow and Dan Veltri for their assistance in making one of my dreams become a reality.

Ben will be furthering his own education, attending Gallaudet University this Fall. He has been affectionately called the "One Take Wonder" by Dan and myself. He is simply amazing. His own interests lie in theatre and in the field of Deaf Studies. He was an invaluable asset to the course and the product that was created as a result.

I am not sure how to begin to acknowledge the work that Dan has done. He has been hired by numerous people to create or edit videos. These videos have included topics relevant to ASL, the Deaf Community, and Interpreters. He has also been responsible for the production of material not related to the aforementioned groups. Without his technical assistance, the course would not have been as successful and there would not be a final product worth talking about today.

Your **Polite Is Different Than** My **Polite:** How **a Deaf/Hearing Partnership Illuminates Culturally Appropriate Behavior**

Anna Mindess

Abstraet

This is a presentation in which two presenters, one Deaf and one hearing, take on the roles of Miss Deaf Manners and Miss Hearing Manners, experts on appropriate behavior in their respective cultures. In an informal and entertaining format, the two "cultural experts" answer queries regarding the appropriateness of certain behaviors that vary across their two cultures. Topics covered include: "straight talk," keeping the other informed, and sharing personal information. This technique uses humor to illuminate sensitive issues and creates a safe environment where participants may bring up embarrassing moments without being judged. By focusing on the cultural relativity of politeness norms, participants are shown that cultural difference is not a matter of "right" or "wrong." By splitting forces equally between the features of American Deaf culture and mainstream American culture, all participants recognize that elements of their own culture may seem odd when viewed by a member of another cultural group.

How can we communicate to students and interpreters the importance of attending to cultural differences, not as a mere intellectual exercise but in a way that allows them to examine their own cultural assumptions? It was this question that I set out to answer in 1998 for the Northern California RID chapter conference. With the assistance of Priscilla Poynor Moyers, I came up with an approach that has proven successful with a variety of audiences. Priscilla and I have since visited several states and led many workshops based on this approach, and occasionally Daniel Langholtz has stepped in to take over from Priscilla. I wish to thank them both for their time, commitment, energy and willingness to honestly share their feelings and experiences. The only way for this "mutual cultural exploration" to succeed is if the presenters are insightful enough to be aware of their own cultural biases and articulate enough to express them in a way that audience members can either immediately identify with or which enables them to see the world through the presenters' eyes. Both Priscilla and Daniel are personally insightful, and their articulate explanations of Deaf culture delight both Deaf and hearing

audience members. I feel fortunate to share this work with them.

In our presentations, titled "Your Polite Is Different Than My Polite," the audience is immediately introduced to two speakers (who are dressed rather formally with gloves, hat, and pearls), Miss Hearing Manners (portrayed by myself) and Miss Deaf Manners (Priscilla or Daniel). We explain that we are both advice columnists who work for the local newspaper writing our respective columns. Recently, however, there has been a slight problem in the mail room and we happen to have a stack of letters from our readers, but we have no idea to whom they were addressed. So we will both answer each letter and hope that satisfies the readers' concerns. Not surprisingly, as each letter is read in turn, it becomes clear that Miss Hearing Manners and Miss Deaf Manners have exactly opposite ideas of what constitutes polite behavior in certain situations. For example, when the writer inquires whether it would be appropriate when one is dining in a restaurant with a group of friends or associates to announce that one is leaving the table to go to the bathroom, Miss Hearing Manners responds with a vehement "No!" and Miss Deaf Manners responds with an equally firm "Yes!" Then each one explains her culture's rule and the reason behind each viewpoint. Other letters focus on issues such as direct comments about a change in a friend's appearance, a discussion of the best way to give criticism, how to handle arriving late at a class or meeting, and the appropriateness of asking someone how much they paid for a new car.

In our responses each Miss Manners expresses dismay at how the other Miss Manners could possibly hold such a clearly erroneous belief. At the end of our prepared set of letters we open the floor to questions from the audience. After a typically timid start, we are usually met with a barrage of questions as participants realize that this is their chance to finally find out what the other culture's reasons are for certain "puzzling" behaviors. Or they can ask for polite ways to handle certain dilemmas they routinely face. Often, those who interact with members of another culture would like to act in a culturally polite manner but lack the relevant information at the right moment. *Also,* having two Miss Manners allows for an interplay and for seeing both sides of many situations.

After the audience questions are answered, we drop our Miss Manners personas and continue the rest of the workshop as Anna and Priscilla/or Dan. Now that we have established that Deaf culture and mainstream American culture often have different views on what is considered polite behavior, we can move on to the question of adjusting to such cultural differences. Whose rules should be followed and who should do the adjusting? We are all familiar with the "When in Rome..." dictum, but how does this apply to a culture such as American Deaf culture, which cannot claim a physical territory to mark its boundaries? We discuss places where it is assumed that Deaf culture's rules would be respected (residential school events, Deaf club, mostly Deaf party, etc.).

We next turn to the topic of one-to-one encounters between Deaf and hearing friends outside of these Deaf events. How can intercultural pairs work out whose rules to follow in a given situation? We advocate honest discussion and negotiation between the partners. Then we give examples of what this might look like. Priscilla and I share several instances in our friendship where we have had to negotiate with each other. One thing that comes up, for example, is when we have to drive to a job together (Priscilla works as a relay interpreter). I have warned Priscilla that even though I know she expects me to chat with her during our long drive on the freeway, I happen to be very **poor** at driving and signing simultaneously. So either she can drive and we can converse, or if she is sick of driving I will drive, but she might want to bring a book to read because in order for us to arrive safely at our destination I know I had better concentrate on driving and not try to sign at the same time. The previous example models the following important ingredients for resolving intercultural encounters: an awareness of the expected behavior in the other culture, a sensitivity to wanting to work things out in a mutually acceptable manner, a personal acknowledgment of one's own limitations, and coming up with options which might satisfy both partners.

Priscilla and I have come up with an exercise we call "What's my limit?" that lets participants in our workshops begin to examine some of their own cultural behaviors. It focuses on information sharing. Participants are given a grid-like sheet on which they are to plot which subjects they would feel comfortable discussing with different people. The items range from telling someone they have spinach in their teeth or that their fly is down to asking someone how much they paid for their house or why

they don't have children. The exercise is done in small groups and then feedback is shared with the entire group. This exercise has led to some great discussions as Deaf and hearing participants realize how different are their initial reactions to these questions. An interesting point comes out: sometimes the two cultures' opposite behaviors share a common underlying value - saving face. For example, the question of whether to inform someone that there is spinach in their teeth or their blouse is unbuttoned seems to clearly divide along Deaf vs. hearing lines. Most hearing people explain that they usually do not inform people of these embarrassing facts in order to make them feel better later. The thinking goes "If Mary's blouse is open and I don't mention it now, she may discover it herself later but think that no one really noticed it and feel relieved. And of course, I save myself the embarrassment of bringing it up." On the other hand, many Deaf participants would definitely let the person know if there was something that needed fixing. Their thinking is "It's *so* much better to tell Mary and let her fix the situation now than to continue to let her go around like that. And if she got home and saw her open blouse and realized I hadn't told her, she would be mad at me!" This type of exercise not only lets participants compare their cultural first reactions but also introduces the question, "How much are you willing to change in order to accommodate what is expected in another culture?"

At this point in the workshop we are ready to tackle interpreting issues. First, we go back to some of the situations mentioned in our initial letters. Priscilla or Dan act out certain behaviors (such as giving great detail about their recent trip to the bathroom to the dining companions or asking point blank how much someone paid for their new car) and then we have audience members brainstorm and call out their ideas of options available to the interpreter. The point seems to be readily accepted by the group. If this behavior is not rude in Deaf culture, but would appear rude in hearing culture because of its different cultural norms, then an interpreter who is truly a bi-cultural mediator needs to preserve the *intent* while perhaps modifying the surface form. Some options that are usually generated are summarizing the bathroom details or leaving them out, adding a warning phrase to the money question ("I am just dying to know..." or "Do you mind if I ask you...") or making the money question more general ("How much does a car like that go for?").

Often our Miss Manners presentation is part of a longer all-day workshop that focuses on many parts of my book *Reading Between the Signs: Intercultural Communication for Sign Language Interpreters,* which goes into greater depth regarding cultural issues. The book also discusses several techniques interpreters can use if they decide a cultural adjustment would be warranted in a certain situation. In our all-day workshops, participants use the perspective gained from the Miss Manners presentation to assist them in practicing the interpreting techniques in several scenarios. In these exercises, participants are first asked to identify the presuppositions and cultural expectations of both the Deaf and hearing consumers and then decide which technique(s) would be most appropriate to use.

We have found the Miss Manners presentation to be an effective and enjoyable way to sensitize students about cultural differences between Deaf and hearing cultures. In post-workshop evaluations, participants have almost unanimously expressed their appreciation of our humorous approach. Humor not only relaxes and entertains the participants but can lighten potentially tense situations and discussions of sensitive issues. Another comment we received was that we create a safe environment where participants feel they can admit uncertainties or confess embarrassing moments without fear of being judged. In fact, by showing that politeness norms are culturally relative we avoid any discussion of "right" and "wrong" behavior. Probably the most important element of our success, however, is having two presenters, one hearing and one Deaf. By equally dividing the focus on the quirks of mainstream American and American Deaf culture we further emphasize the point that *any* culture can be viewed as odd or strange by members of another culture. It is by this kind of mutual cultural exploration that we hope to enlighten our students and inspire them to do more self examination of their own cultural biases as well as sharing with each other their various viewpoints. This will not only lead to more effective interpretations, but to increased understanding and respect between the two cultures as well.

The **Way** We Do the Things We Do

Jean **Plant Moeller** and **Bruce** D. Finkbone

Abstract

While commercially produced instructional materials are increasing in number, the Interpreter Trainer is often faced with the task of creating in-class activities and homework assignments that will enhance the skills of his/her students. This presentation will provide participants with some activities and assignments that have proven successful. We will share specific activities and assignments that have been used in the Georgia Perimeter College Interpreter Training Program (ITP) as well as inform those in attendance how they might implement "student developed course materials." Finally it is our hope that participants will feel free to share their ideas for materials and skills and knowledge enhancement activities through a "share shop" at the conclusion of the presentation.

As the field of Sign Language interpreting continues to grow during its fourth officially recognized decade, the "art and science" of teaching Sign Language and training interpreters remains in its infancy. While new and exciting theories of interpreting emerge and more resources and materials become available, it is still necessary to rely, to some extent, on one's own creativity and the exchange of ideas with other interpreter trainers.

This presentation will focus primarily on ways in which the interpreter trainer's creativity can be utilized in the following manners: 1) outside-of-class assignments, 2) independent study, and **3)** student-made source materials.

Due to the lack of commercially produced materials available for teaching American Sign Language and training future Sign Language interpreters, it quite often falls to the instructor to develop materials for use in the classroom. The materials that we will present address both skills and knowledge components of an ITP student's education. We will discuss and demonstrate several ideas that we have utilized and found to be successful. Additionally, mention will be made of ideas that fell short of their intended goals.

"Register stories" have proven to be very successful in assisting interpreter training students in "breaking out" of their shells and feeling more at ease with the facial expression and body language that are such necessary components of American Sign Language. The object of this exercise is for

each student to verbally tell a Mother Goose story or other easily recognizable children's story as it might be told by any of a number of "characters" — decided upon by the class and assigned by the instructor. Initially the class members, with the assistance of the instructor, list as many Mother Goose-type stories as they can on the board or overhead. Next a list of "characters," real or fictional, generic or specific, is made. Stories are matched with a particular character and are then assigned to each student. For example, a student might be assigned to tell the story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" as told by W. C. Fields, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" as a used car salesman might tell it. Students are encouraged to be creative and to incorporate props and costumes. In addition to the primary goal of acquiring and developing the ability to assume the physical mannerisms and personality traits of another, students also enjoy the opportunity to "break out of their shells," break from the normal classroom routine, and they find the exercise to be energizing/refreshing/entertaining. Each student, in turn, tells his/her assigned story in class while being videotaped. The student renditions should be between four and six minutes in length. The videotaped stories also make excellent source material for voice-to-sign interpreting/transliterating practice.

Another out-of-class assignment focuses not on skills but knowledge and awareness of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf professional Code of Ethics. During the students' first year in the Interpreter Training Program, they take "Introduction to Interpreting." A requirement of that course which the students perform independently, is to research a particular tenet of the Code of Ethics. Students are provided with specific guidelines for completing this research project but, at the same time, may approach the assignment in their own style. The class then compiles a notebook, complete with title page and separate sections for each student's work. A sample of this project will be provided for your edification.

Our program recently implemented a new course called "Independent Study." This course is a one-hour credit course. Each student is required to take this course once during his/her studies in the Georgia Perimeter College ITP and may elect to take Independent Study as many as three times for a total of three credits. Students must initially meet with a program advisor (a full-time instructor in the ITP) and negotiate an acceptable course of study for the Independent Study. The student may choose any particular area of interest as long as it is, in some way, related to Sign Language interpreting, Sign Language, and/or Deaf Culture. Once the student has decided upon an appropriate course of study, s/he must fill out an "Independent Study Plan" (Appendix A) in duplicate. The advisor checks to make sure all components of the Independent Study plan are acceptable and then signs both copies. One copy is returned to the student; the instructor keeps the second copy on file.

Areas of study or research for the Independent Study may range from self-improvement with signing and/or interpreting skills, to in-depth research into an area of personal interest, or, as one student chose, to make her workplace accessible to deaf and hard of hearing consumers. A current second-year ITP student recently chose to focus on the area of Deaf-Blind interpreting and services provided by SSP's (Support Service Providers). The student attended the recent conference of AADB (The American Association of Deaf/Blind) in Columbus, Ohio. His Independent Study included the following aspects: self-produced videotape demonstrating guiding and interpreting techniques when working with a deaf/blind individual. This video was accompanied by a guidebook with guiding techniques outlined. The student also provided footage of the 2000 AADB conference, including interviews with several SSP's who shared their experiences. An edited version of this student's videotape will be shown during the presentation.

Our first-year students take a course titled "Consecutive English to ASL." One aspect of this course is similar to the Independent Study mentioned above, but it is on a much smaller scale. Each student is required to perform research about a particular area of American Sign Language that is either of interest or has been challenging during his/her studies. Some research projects have focused on the use of classifiers to describe 1) different sized birds in flight, 2) various objects such as cylindrical objects, **3)** physical activities such as skiing or dancing.

Another example of a research project for this course that has been of special interest to many students through the years is that of "semantic clusters." A specific concept such as "anger" is chosen, and the student then interviews various individuals — Deaf consumers, nationally certified interpreters, CODA's, etc. to determine the various signs utilized to convey the concept presented. (See

Appendix B for a detailed description of project requirements.) The presenters will provide selected samples from various students' INTP "Consecutive English to ASL" research projects.

A relatively new course in our program, "Specialized Settings in Interpreting," focuses on areas of specialization within the profession of sign language interpreting. This course meets during the summer mini-mester for three weeks, followed up by one all-day Saturday class session. The students are assigned a "Code of Ethics Project" (Appendix C) to complete during the summer and return by the end of the semester. Students are provided with a list of five ethical dilemmas. The student is to choose one of the dilemmas presented and hypothesize as to how various individuals would respond to the given situation. The student is to then interview a minimum of two people who belong to the following categories: nationally certified interpreters, state screened (QA) interpreters, non-credentialed interpreters, and Deaf consumers. (The Deaf consumer should respond as s/he hopes the interpreter will behave.) The respondents' answers are recorded along with accompanying demographic information. (Names of respondents are omitted.) The student must then contrast/compare the responses given with his/her own hypothesis as well as compare the replies from within each group and between the groups. A five- to ten-page report is then submitted to the instructor.

One final research project to be discussed during the presentation is a requirement of the second-year class "English to ASL Interpreting." This project (Appendix D) takes into account that our profession, like most others, has its own vernacular. To address this issue and determine intelligibility of certain words within our profession, students must interview a minimum of ten individuals—some of whom are family members and friends who are aware of the student's course of study in Sign Language and Interpreting. The others are to be individuals who are not aware of the student's area of study. They are asked to define a list of words that we, as professionals, might assume are easily understood by someone outside the profession. The list includes words such as: "deaf," "Deaf," "name sign," and "Deaf School." The student submits a written paper with the results.

In addition to these projects and activities, we also engage the student in developing source materials. There are two specific types we will share here. The first assignment is for students to produce an audiotape with two "stories," each 9 to 11 minutes in length. The first story can relate anything of the student's choosing; the second must be a "current event" that is occurring in the news. The requirement for the second story increases the possibility that more technical/factual information may be included than is present in the first story. The stories must not be read, but after recording on audiotape, each story is then scripted. The student must make two copies of the script and the tape. The instructor receives one copy of each (which may be utilized in other courses), and the student shares the other set with the class on a weekly basis. This provides source material for practice outside of class. This can be utilized in a variety of ways: shadowing activities, "listen and recall," prediction skills development, up to and including simultaneous interpreting.

The second example of studentdeveloped source materials is called the "talking head" video. Students produce a videotape (for Voice-to-Sign usage) on a topic of his/her choosing. The video must be between 13 and 15 minutes long and will be submitted to the instructor with an accompanying transcript. Some examples of topics are: 1) demonstration videos ("How to Bake Chocolate Chip Cookies," "How to Clean a Gun," "Self Defense"), 2) informational videos ("Employee Benefits," "Orientation for New Employees," "The Benefits of a Healthy Diet"), or 3) personal anecdotes. The student is encouraged to recruit another individual to be the "talking head," but may be the presenter him/herself. The best of these videos are archived in the library and are available for students to check out and use for individual or small-group practice. The benefit of the script is two-fold: first, and most obvious, is preparation for the material contained within the video. Secondly, the student may wish to use this source material with a Deaf tutor or mentor. This allows the mentor to become familiar with the source message prior to work with the student.

The focus of this presentation has been on discussing materials and activities we have found to be successful in assisting ITP students to enhance their skills and knowledge. We hope to end our presentation with a "share shop"—an open discussion of participants' ideas, materials, and activities. By an open exchange of this nature, we will all be better equipped to provide a wider variety of assignments and activities that can enhance the academic and professional lives of our students.

Appendix A

INTP 2903 - Independent Study Plan

To be completed by participant in consultation with faculty advisor

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Participant's Phone: _____ Social Security # _____

FAX: _____ Email: _____

1. What do I want to do? *Briefly describe the activity you will complete. (Ex. I would like to learn more about the process of translation from a linguistic point **of** view. Several books on translation have been recommended. I would like to read one and apply it to my work.)*

2. Why do I want to do it? *Personal needs, professional growth, skill enhancement in a specific area, increased general knowledge, remaining current in the field, etc. **(Ex.** I tend to retain too much **of** the source language when I try to interpret. I cannot "getaway from the words." **By** learning more about translation I will be able to improve this area.)*

3. What are my specific goals? *(Something measurable, observable, tangible. Ex. I will compare the problems and techniques of spoken language interpreters to those I have experienced.)*

4. How will I accomplish my goals? *(Action plan. Ex. I will read 'x.' I will discuss it with other students via the computer. I will look for ways to apply these texts to my own work.)*

5. How will I show my advisor what I learned? *(Evaluation. **Ex. I** will write a 1 - **2-page** report **comparing spoken** and signed translation **work.)***

6. What is my time line? When will I start? When will I finish? How often will I communicate with my advisor?

7. I anticipate the following special needs or accommodations.

Comments:

I agree to implement the Independent Study Activity as outlined in this plan and to submit all the necessary documentation of successful completion to my advisor within the time specified. I understand that it is my responsibility to check in with my advisor and notify her/him of any problems or questions I have concerning my project. I will submit the completed project by the date specified. I will conduct all work with professionalism and with a respect to the Code of Ethics.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

I will insure that this Independent Study Activity will be overseen and evaluated by individual(s) with the relevant expertise. I, or my designee, have discussed the Independent Study Activity outlined in this plan with the participant and agree that it represents a valid and verifiable Interpreting Training Program activity that will satisfy INTP 2903. Further, my designee, or I agree to assess the documentation submitted to me by the participant upon completion of the Independent Study Activity and award the appropriate credits if completion is satisfactory.

_____ _____

Signature of Advisor Date

Appendix B

English To Asl - Consecutive Interpreting (INTP 1931)

Research Project

One of the ways that interpreters achieve national certification level competency is by increasing their skills through linguistic research. Although few interpreters would say that they actually conduct formal research, most have some method of incorporating new signs, correcting errors or expanding their knowledge outside of classes, workshops or videotapes. Research, even informal research, is a method of applying what you learn in class to gain a deeper understanding of the language and interpreting.

This research project is your chance to learn how to take an in-depth look at one small piece of American Sign Language in order to answer some very important questions about the language. This is not nearly as difficult as you might think. It is an opportunity to go on an exciting linguistic adventure.

Choosing Your Project

All projects must be approved by the instructor. Projects must be selected by (date) .

The following are examples of possible projects:

1. Select a sign and do an investigation into all of its properties, uses, meanings, inflections, and derivatives.

2. Select,a small closely related set of signs and discover the subtle differences in meaning, use, and properties.

3. Select a concept and make a comprehensive list of signs that relate to that concept.

4. Select a difficult passage in written English and do a comparative study of how that passage might be interpreted.

We will discuss in detail the methods you will use to do this research.

Presenting Your Research

On the date set aside for the research project, you will turn in a videotape of your project - topic, methods used, results, etc. A one-page synopsis of your findings should be handed out to each class member.

A research log, which includes bios of participants, your materials, the techniques used, your conclusions and the rationale for those conclusions are to be handed in at the time your project is due. This can be in diary or journal form.

Due Date: The topic of your research project is due on (date', . On that date, please submit an explanation of the nature of your research.

Due Date: The research project is due on (date) . On that date you will turn in the following:

1. a videotaped spoken English presentation which includes a description of the project, clear examples or samples of your research, conclusions, outcomes, and your insights into your process

2. a one-page typewritten summary of your project - goals and outcomes

3. a journal (can be handwritten but must be on standard sized paper). This journal is a record of your research. You should include basic information about how you conducted your research and, most importantly, a record of your informants - those people who participated in your research. Do not use their names - assign them initials. Here are some examples of the information you need to collect.

   M. I. - male, 32, deaf since birth, attended residential school

   C. B. - female, 21, deaf since 3 years of age, mainstream program, graduated Gallaudet

   T. R. - male, 45, interpreter, QA Transliterating, QA-Advanced Interpreting

   B. Q. - female, 67, CODA

Research Project FAQ's Frequently Asked Questions)

1. How many people should I ask?

   You should get enough information from no less than FIVE individuals. You may need to ask more if you do not get adequate information from any particular individual or if your survey was inconclusive.

2. Who should I ask?

   That depends somewhat on your project. If you are looking for differences between the meaning of a set of signs, you primarily should look for native ASL users (this may include both Deaf individuals and CODAs). If you are focusing on an interpreting perspective, you may ask interpreters and Deaf consumers.

3. Can I ask any interpreter?

   You can only use information from credentialed interpreters (GRID, NAD, RID)

4. Does age matter:

   Age matters in the sense that Deaf education has changed significantly over the last forty years. It may be interesting to see the responses from a wide range and that may be part of your project. For other purposes, it is best to select either adults or children, but not both.

Appendix C

Specialized Settings In Interpreting
(INTP 2901)

Code **of** Ethics Project

Review the five (5) ethical dilemmas provided by your instructor. Choose one (1) and get input/feedback from the following groups of individuals.

At least two (2) from each of the following groups:

Nationally Certified interpreters
State Screened **(QA)** interpreters
Non-credentialed interpreters
Deaf consumers

Identify the participants by initials or by fictitious names. For the interpreters, include background data such as credentials (what kind and what date first received), educational experience, source of their ASL knowledge, number of years interpreting, and in what setting(s). For the deaf consumers, include date such as educational background and experience with interpreters (how long, in what kinds of settings).

Make an educated guess (hypothesis) as to how you thin the interpreters should react: in the situation that you choose. Record your hypothesis.

Present the ethical situation to these individuals and record their responses. (The Deaf consumers should respond as they would hope their interpreters would.)

Record the vakious responses and contrast/compare the responses with each other as well as with your hypothesis.

Projects should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, standard one-inch (1") margins. Student's name should appear on each page of the project. Projects must be turned in inside a folder. Project should be between 5 - 10 pages in length.

Grade will be based on content, organization ahd ckitical thinking. Paints will be deducted for punctuation, grammatical and spelling errors.

Due Date: _____

No late papers will be accepted. Papers may be turned in early to the office during the week of _____

Appendix D

English to ASL Interpreting (INTP 2911)

Research Project

Students are to interview at least ten (10) people over the next week. Students will compile their results and present them in a paper on (date) . The persons interviewed should be a mixture of family members and close friends who know they are taking sign language and other individuals who do not know. They are to ask the interviewees to define the following:

Hearing Impaired
Deaf
Deaf
Hearing
Close Captioning
Open Captioning
TTY
TDD
Oral
Culturally Deaf
Tactile interpreting
Relay Service
Name Sign
Deaf School
Residential School
Transliterator
Interpreter
CuedSpeech
Aural
ASL
Pidgin Signed English
Signed English

If individuals are unfamiliar with terminology, they should be encouraged to take a *guess.*

About the Authors

Jean Moeller, IC/TC, CI and CT, OTC, is a nationally certified interpreter and has been working in this field for over 15 years. Currently she is a full time faculty member of Georgia Perimeter College (formerly DeKalb College) Interpreter Training Program. She continues to work as a freelance interpreter as much as time will allow her. Jean has presented workshops in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, she would love to present in all fifty states before she retires! Jean remains a very active member of the Deaf and Interpreter communities. She serves on numerous committees and attends on average twenty workshops a year. Jean is a firm believer in continuing education — even before we had the CMP!

Bruce Finkbone, CSC, began his involvement with the Deaf community and American Sign Language in 1978 as the Audiological Technician for the Kentucky School for the Deaf. He received his Comprehensive Skills Certificate (CSC) from RID in 1981. He became an adjunct faculty member of the DeKalb College (now Georgia Perimeter College) Interpreter Training Program in 1984, one year after accepting a position as Educational Interpreter in a public school mainstream program. He has 15 years experience as an educational interpreter and begins his third year as a full-time faculty member in the ITP. Bruce is involved at various levels in several professional organizations.

Acknowledgements

The presenters would like to acknowledge the assistance and support of Christine A. Smith and Faith G. Powell.

Multicultural and Multilingual Team Interpreting National Multicultural Interpreting Curriculum: Demonstration of Module—Multicultural Interpreting — "Decision-Making Activities and Discussion of the Case Studies"

National Multicultural Interpreter Project
El Paso Community College
NMIP Team Leader Consultants—Anthony Aramburo, Dr. Jeff Davis, Tupper Dunbar, Angela Roth, Jan Nishimura, and Mary Mooney, Project Director

Abstract

This presentation allows instructors the opportunity to explore the concepts of multilingual and multicultural interpreting and the decision-making factors behind the acceptance of assignments in multicultural and multilingual situations. It discusses and defines a multicultural and/or multilingual situation, interpreter, and team. The curriculum materials that NMIP developed will provide the tools and strategies for identifying the guiding principles, sociolinguistic variables, other complicating cultural factors, and the questions required to select and match interpreters and/or interpreter teams to various consumers, situations, and topics within culturally and linguistically diverse settings. It assists educators in guiding students into a self-recognition of the cultural implications of their own specific cultural norms, behaviors and values, and their impact on an interpreting assignment and on fellow team members. The materials developed for this module consist of a new series of culturally embedded "case studies," and "case assignments," with accompanying videotapes. These materials are demonstrated and discussed *so* that educators may have new tools for exposing students to ethical decision-making in the context of multilingual and multicultural interpreting teams and situations. The overall goal of the module is to recognize the value and promote the appreciation of culturally and linguistically diverse interpreters and teams within the interpreting profession and among consumers of these interpreting services.

Brief Overview of the National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP) and the DACUM Process

In January of 1996, El Paso Community College received a five-year grant to implement an education and training project uniquely designed to meet the national interpreter trainer and interpreting needs of multicultural individuals who are D/deaf and individuals who are deaf-blind by: 1) implementing a National Multicultural Interpreter Consortium; 2) publishing the results of surveying, identifying, and quantifying the multicultural issues involved with the recruitment, training, and retention of interpreters from culturally diverse backgrounds; 3) providing technical assistance to the RSA Regional Interpreter Training Projects; 4) developing and disseminating four comprehensive interpreter curriculum packages; 5) producing and disseminating training videotapes; and 6) providing training and workshops that will positively impact interpreters, interpreting students, interpreter educators, and consumers at national conferences and regional, state, and local field-based sites.

Description of the NMIP "DACUM" Curriculum Development Process

During 1996 and 1997, the NMIP project utilized a process known at El Paso Community College as the DACUM process, "Developing A CurriculUM" (DACUM). DACUM is a participatory approach to curriculum development. It is also used as a means of a evaluating a program's overall curriculum. This process is traditionally used in vocational programs to develop curricula geared to meet local and community needs, These NMIP meetings involved representation from the identified culturally and linguistically diverse groups. These meetings were specifically designed to generate the training competencies that consumers and interpreters had identified as necessary to successfully interpret within the Hispanic, African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American/Alaskan communities.

This process was chosen, not because of its application in vocational and technical education, but rather for its emphasis on a group process approach to involve community "experts" brought together under the leadership of trained facilitators to generate, from personal and professional life experiences, the relevant competencies to be included in the NMIP curriculum development.

Who has participated in the NMIP curriculum development?

The NMIP Multicultural Team Leaders are:

Anthony Aramburo, African American-Black Team Leader
Dr. Jeffrey Davis, Euro-American Team Leader
Jonathan Hopkins and Tupper Dunbar, Co Team Leaders
Native American/Alaskan Team
Jan Nishimura, Asian American/Pacific Islander Team Leader
Angela Roth, Hispanic/Latino Team Leader

Curriculum consultant representation included members from each identified group with a balance of consumers, interpreters, student representatives, and outside cultural consultants. These consultants provided the community-based and professional input needed to identify and produce the multicultural competencies, and they are conducting peer review of all curricula and materials produced. Individual consultants may rotate participation at different advisory board meetings and projects to allow for increased membership and involvement. Dr. Glenn Anderson, Dr. Steve Chough, Dr. Howard Busby, Dr. Angel Ramos, and Dr. Jeff Davis are serving as senior editors. Dr. Glenn Anderson and Dr. Doug Watson are serving as national grant consultants for the entire process.

How did the NMIP DACUM work?

A group of resource persons from the identified communities worked together to define the competencies and skills that are essential to the interpreting profession. The NMIP utilized a flexible adaptation of this process to identify the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that an interpreter would require to effectively interpret for consumers from culturally diverse communities, specifically African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Native American/Alaskan backgrounds.

What happened during the **NMIP DACUM** process?

NMIP consultant members were guided by the project director, as facilitator, through several steps to reach the end product of NMIP DACUM Competency Statements. The result of the input was organized into a competency profile sheet. The profile sheet was then utilized to build the curriculum and to evaluate a current curriculum design. These steps included:

1. Discussion of the characteristics of a multicultural interpreter and situations;
2. Identification of the major areas of multicultural competence;
3. Identification of the specific multicultural interpreter skills within each area of competence; and
4. Organization of the values, attitudes, and behaviors in a realistic and logical sequence.

The results of the NMIP DACUM competency profile and the resulting curriculum packages will be available to interpreter educators and programs to infuse, enhance, or supplement any existing sign language interpreter curricula or post-service training.

The NMIP curriculum development process focused on those areas of competence that were not currently being taught in many traditional interpreter preparation programs and workshops. Participants were asked to specifically address the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that would be required when training the interpreter to function in a variety of multilingual and/or multicultural situations or settings.

From these identified competencies, a comprehensive general overview multicultural curriculum with four culturally specific curriculum packages with training materials will be disseminated. Curricula will be geared to the interpreter educators to support developing multicultural awareness and communication competencies, curricula will be organized into eleven modules. The competencies have now been consolidated into modules that are divided into three broad areas:

Cultural Knowledge and Sensitivity - five individual modules
Interpreting Skills - five individual modules
Decision-Making Skills - one combined cross-cultural module

Each module consists of a:

Module Description
Participant Prerequisites
Instructor Qualifications
Learning Objectives
Topic Outline
Supplemental Lecture Notes
Suggested Resources and Instructional Materials
Suggested Learning Activities

The NMIP DACUM Competency Statements form the basis for both the learning objectives and the participant evaluations. The modules can be used as stand-alone seminars, or workshops, or combined in courses. The competencies will hopefully be infused throughout an interpreter educational program, from the American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture courses, to the interpreter preparation courseware and internship programs.

The NMIP DACUM consultants and team leaders identified a need to differentiate between an interpreting situation that is by its nature or context multicultural and/or multilingual, and situations in which the interpreter(s) or other participants in an interpreted event themselves may not be multilingual and/or multicultural. Examples of multicultural situations might be a Jewish Bar Mitzvah ceremony, a National Asian Deaf Congress convention, or an immigration hearing for a Mexican Deaf national who uses Mexican Sign Language. An example of a multicultural/multilingual interpreter might be a White Deaf interpreter who lived and was educated in Japan with professional fluencies in Japanese Sign Language, a Hearing Hispanic/Latino interpreter who is trilingual in Spanish/English/ASL, or a Black Hearing interpreter who has extensive experience working with elderly Black Deaf. This differentiation is needed when discussing the necessary cultural and linguistic

skills required for a specific interpreting assignment and the interpersonal and intercultural dynamics of the interpreter team. The following NMIP working definitions are provided as a starting point:

Multicultural/Multilingual Interpreting Situation

A multicultural/multilingual interpreting situation is one in which one or more of the consumers, including the hearing and/or deaf participants, require additional cultural and linguistic competencies: sensitivity, knowledge, background, interpreting skills, and language(s), beyond the assumed ASL/English, United States majority culture/American Deaf Culture sign language interpreting paradigm. These competencies will be necessary to provide equal communication and cultural access, both in content and affect, receptively and expressively, for a given consumer(s) and situation.

Multilingual/Multicultural Interpreter

A multicultural and/or multilingual sign language interpreter is an interpreter, either Hearing or Deaf, that possesses the required cultural and linguistic competencies: sensitivity, knowledge, background, interpreting skills, and language(s) necessary to provide equal communication and cultural access, both in content and affect, receptively and expressively, for a given consumer(s) and situation.

Multilingual/Multicultural Interpreter Team

A multicultural and/or multilingual team is two or more persons, Hearing and/or Deaf, that collectively possess the language(s) and cultural competencies necessary to provide equal communication access, both in content and affect, receptively and expressively, for given individual(s) or situation.

NMIP Module - "Decision-Making in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities as Applied to Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts"

This presentation introduces the interpreter educators to a curriculum component of the "National Multicultural Interpreter Project's Curriculum to Address the Needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities," specifically the module titled "Decision-Making in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities as Applied to Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts." This module assumes that these decision-making and negotiation strategies may be applicable in a wide array of multicultural situations as well as situations where a different cultural or linguistic background is not a factor, such as in many ASL and English language situations, or with Deaf and Hearing consumers from United States mainstream culture backgrounds. This module implies that the situation involves the multilingual or multicultural perspective, with at least one Deaf or Hearing consumer, including family and community, or a member of an interpreting team is from a cultural and/or linguistically diverse background.

This module recognizes that each consumer, interpreter, and audience to any interpreted setting or event brings her/his own unique perspective and personal experience of values, culture, and language. There is no intention during any module to represent any group as a monolithic or homogeneous group but rather to highlight those areas of interpreting practice that have been problematic based on the lives and professional experiences of the DACUM consultants and interpreters of color.

The curriculum assumes that the module will assist the participants in developing guiding principles and behavioral strategies regarding ethical and interpersonal professional situations. Information or case studies are presented and intended for general discussion, and may or may not be applicable in any given situation. Thus, the interpreter caveat "it depends," does indeed presume a full analysis of a situation and the determination of a multiplicity of possible situational outcomes.

Module Description

This module introduces the participants to an exploration of decision-making in multicultural and/or multilingual interpreting contexts. Participants will examine the principles, variables, and strategies for effective interpreting, interpreter decision-making, and negotiating skills as relevant to multilingual and multicultural situations and teams. This module presents a more holistic view of interpreting.

Participant Prerequisites

Participants should have completed NMIP Modules on Multicultural Knowledge and Sensitivity or have an equivalent background. Participants should be familiar with general interpreting settings and situations, and have a knowledge of the ethical principles and practices of sign language interpreters.

Instructor Qualifications

Instructors should possess the following qualifications:

- An extensive professional background working in multilingual and multicultural settings and situations both as an individual interpreter and as a member of various interpreter teams.
- Familiar with a number of multicultural decision-making models and strategies.
- A high level of comfort addressing racial, ethnic, cultural, and other issues of diversity.
- The ability to guide participants through the process of analyzing the salient cultural implications of a variety of interpreted situations and events.
- A strong background in working with interpersonal relationships and cross-cultural interpreter teams.
- An ability to recruit and develop a diverse pool of community resources, instructional materials, and panel members to represent the issues of working in multilingual and multicultural interpreter teams with Deaf and Hearing members.

Assumptions

Instructors assume that the participants have an experiential or working knowledge of the general cultural information relating to the multilingual and multicultural communities, and general interpreting and cultural competencies in this area, or will be teaming in this situation.

NMIP Decision-Making Module Competencies

Included in the "Decision-Making Module" from the direct input from a wide constituency of organizations and consultants, the following **DACUM** competencies for participants are listed below.

The participant will:

1. Analyze the values of the United States mainstream culture reflected in codes of ethical conduct for interpreters compared with the values of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
2. Examine and compare the interpreter's role and function as a linguistic and cultural mediator contrasted to that of an advocate between disparate cultural paradigms and the deaf and hearing consumers' perceptions, assumptions, and expectations.
3. Identify the guiding principles, sociolinguistic variables, and other complicating cultural factors involved in selecting and matching interpreters and/or interpreter teams to various consumers, settings, and topics within culturally and linguistically diverse interpreting situations and settings.
4. Recognize the cultural implications of one's own specific cultural norms, behaviors, and values and their impact on an interpreting assignment.
5. Obtain cultural information as it occurs during an interpreted event and share this information within the team interpreting framework.
6. Develop strategies for appropriately and effectively involving the consumers, both Deaf and Hearing, in the negotiating and decision-making processes to minimize and resolve cross-cultural conflict.
7. Negotiate between one's own cultural norms, as a culturally and linguistically diverse interpreter,

and the dominant United States cultural norms for professional self-advocacy and empowerment.
8. Practice working in multicultural and multilingual interpreting teams that include certified and/or qualified deaf interpreter(s), cultural liaisons, and hearing team members.
9. Develop dominant culture and minority culture partnerships to create a new synergy and provide two-way mentoring opportunities.
10. Promote the appreciation and value of interpreters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds within the interpreting profession, and by consumers of interpreting services.

These competencies should be infused throughout the program's ethical and professional explorations within the entire in-service interpreter education program, mentoring plans, and intern and post-service training experiences.

Multicultural Decision-Making Module—Instructional Products and Materials

The following products and materials were developed to support this module:

Videotapes

National Multicultural Interpreter Project (1999). *Multicultural Interpreter Issues: From the Deaf Multicultural Perspective.* El Paso: El Paso Community College.
This videotape features, Dr. Angel Ramos, Martin Hiraga, and Dr. Howard Busby exploring the multicultural Deaf consumers perspective on the appropriate interpreter skills required for multicultural situations. The presentation is in ASL with English voiceover.

National Multicultural Interpreter Project (2000). *Multicultural Interpreter Assignments Instructor Curriculum Resources.* El Paso: El Paso Community College.
This videotape features short 3-minute segments of various hypothetical interpreting situations featuring a variety of hearing and deaf consumers and styles of communication.

National Multicultural Interpreter Project (2000). *Multicultural Interpreting Issues: The Multicultural Interpreter Perspective.* El Paso: El Paso Community College.
This videotape is a panel discussion by eight interpreters: Anthony Aramburo, Jackie Bruce, Dr. Jeffrey Davis, Tupper Dunbar, Jonathan Hopkins, Jan Nishimura, Angela Roth, and Yolanda Zavala. These interpreters provide a personal professional history and their views of multicultural interpreting and its relevance to today's profession.

Development of the Multicultural Interpreter Assignments and Imagination Directory Training Activity

When providing workshops and training, participants need an opportunity to encounter "real world" situations. This activity is meant as a simulation of the decision-making process that occurs when a coordinator discusses an assignment with a potential interpreter or interpreter team. The Multicultural Assignments and Videotape is a sampling of several assignments that resemble those typical of many communities and situations. These assignments can be used to simulate the first meeting with an unknown client, or an "arrival on the scene experience." This training has been provided and field tested with a variety of audiences including the RID convention in Boston, 1999, and the RID Region II and III conferences in 2000.

Development of Multicultural Case Studies

The NMIP Team Leaders for the past five years have had ample opportunity to interview and collect a number of anecdotal incidents during deaf consumer input meetings, in public forums, and in private conversations as mentors. These incidents were either directly experienced, witnessed, or shared. For interpreter education training, these were condensed into key cultural "themes." Several incidents contained the same "core" attitude, value, or interpreting behaviors, even though the setting and participants may have changed. When the themes of the incidents began to repeat them-

selves, the case studies were formulated to allow for professional discussion. There are unique cultural and cross-cultural conflicts that occur for each group, and also many common experiences. The exact situations, participants, and locations have been changed to keep the "core" discussion points without losing the cultural authenticity of the incident. Incidents were selected to attempt to address many ethical, cultural, and linguistic issues. Each section has approximately 10 to 15 case studies.

Here are two samples:

1) Asian American/Pacific Islander Case Studies

> A group of Asian employees are meeting to plan a program recognizing Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month at work. There are eight hearing participants, all of whom seem foreign-born. There is one Deaf participant who is American-born. All are professionals. One interpreter is an American-born Asian woman; the other team interpreter is a non-Asian male of large stature. The participants speak softly and in measured tones. The male interpreter, when he can't hear, looks at the speakers and directs communication in a loud voice: "Speak up! You're not talking loud enough!" His command is always met with silence. When discussion resumes, the participants speak even more hesitantly, more quietly, and with less interaction. The Asian interpreter tries to replace the non-Asian interpreter, but he will not relinquish the position. At one point, the non-Asian interpreter stands up and mutters, "I give up!" The Asian interpreter then takes over. She quickly explains to the Deaf employee that people were speaking very softly and it was hard to hear. At an appropriate moment, she turns to the Asian group leader and says in a very calm and respectful tone, "Excuse me, Dr. Lee, I am having trouble hearing. Could you please repeat your information?" Dr. Lee responds, and the group begins to interact more.

What are the issues? What are the strategies that could have maximized the interpreter team's performance and relationship?

2) African American/Black Case Studies

> At a regional conference the interpreting team is meeting to go over their work assignments for the day. The plenary speaker that morning is an African American/Black Deaf man who will speak on the topic "AfricanAmerican/Black Deaf Leaders: Past, Present, and Future." The interpreter coordinator has selected an African American/Black state certified interpreter and a White RID certified interpreter as the voicing team. The coordinator designated the White interpreter as the lead "voicer," with the African American/Black interpreter as the backup team member. The English interpretation was accurate in terms of overall content. However, it lacked the emotional affect and cultural nuance of the source message. It presented the speaker in standard White discourse, with much of the Black vernacular code switching features getting lost in the translation. The African American/Black interpreter felt that due to his/her familiarity with the speaker, the content, and culture, and he/she could have provided a more culturally and linguistically accurate interpretation. In debriefing the morning assignments, this was discussed among the interpreters and the coordinator.

What are the issues? What are the strategies that could have maximized this interpreter team's performance?

Conclusion

As Anna Witter-Merithew wrote in her response paper to the Conference of Interpreter Trainer's issue papers "Diversity in the Curriculum" (1994):

> "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 affected by the curriculum have an active role in the on-going development and revision of the curriculum. This means an on-going inclusion of students and consumers in the curriculum development process (p.27)."

Too often this philosophy can stay as "rhetoric," frequently referred to as "lip service," while the challenging task of bringing the individuals and their diversity of ideas to the individual program and instructional level is given a lower priority. The National Multicultural Interpreter Project not only concurred with the above statement, but actively embraced and implemented it in the development of all phases of product development. These materials represent an authentic effort to present a more holistic and collaborative approach to our professional development as sign language interpreters and educators. As Angela Roth, host, summarized on the videotape, "I believe that multicultural interpreting is reality, is the reality of the world that we live in today. It's the reality of who we are, and who we can be. It's the reality of who we work with; it's the reality of the people we serve in our profession. It is the reality of how we are growing as professionals, and the only way that we can grow as professionals, is by facing the reality that we have to grow as people. Thank you!"

References

Witter-Merithew, **A. (1994,** October 26-29). Response Paper: Diversity in the Curriculum. In the Winston, E. **A.** (Ed.) Mapping our Course: **A** Collaborative Venture. Proceedings of the Tenth National Convention Conference of Interpreter Trainers. Charlotte, North Carolina.

National Multicultural Interpreter Project (Producer). (1999). Multicultural Interpreter Issues: for the Multicultural Interpreter's Perspective. [Videotape].

About the Author

Mary L. Mooney M.A., IC/TC, CI - Director of the National Multicultural Interpreter Project, is a native of New Mexico. She is a second generation American of Italian-American heritage. She has been a professional interpreter educator at El Paso Community College (EPCC) since 1982, a Deaf educator, language, and curriculum specialists for 20 years, and a professional interpreter since 1980. She was the convention planning chair for the 25the Silver RID Anniversary Convention held in El Paso and has been active on national, state and local levels. She was a consultant to develop a multilingual literacy project for Hispanic deaf adults at El Paso Community college and the Trilingual Interpreting Program at Santa Fe Community College. She currently serves as a consultant for the Texas Commission=s Deaf and Hard of Hearing Trilingual Interpreter Task Force. Presently, she is focusing all professional efforts on directing the National Multicultural Interpreter Project at EPCC.

Special Acknowledgments to NMIP Team Leaders

Anthony J. Aramburo, M.A. - African American Team Leader has been involved in the profession of deafness for over twenty years. He currently works as a private practice interpreter and instructor of American Sign Language at Xavier University of Louisiana. His **M.A.** degree is in Linguistics of American Sign Language from Gallaudet University. He is enrolled full time in the doctoral program at the University of New Orleans where he is pursuing a Ph.D. in Deaf Studies. An active member in several organizations, Mr. Aramburo serves as President of the National Alliance of Black Interpreters (NAOBI), active in the New Orleans Chapter of NAOBI, served on the Convention Committee (Credentials Coordinator) for the National Registry of Interpreters for Deaf (RID) Convention, an active member of the Louisiana Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (LRID), and coordinator of interpreting services for the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA) annual conferences. Mr Aramburo is nationally certified by RID and NAD. He is actively involved in presenting workshops on interpreting topics along with infusing multi-cultural practices in our profession. His interest also lies in the area of sign language research where he is active in collecting data focusing on sociolinguistic aspects in the African-American Deaf Community.

Jeffrey E. Davis, Ph.D., CSC, CI and CT, SC:L - NMIP Euro-American Team Leader, was raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. He has worked as an interpreter, teacher, counselor, and researcher in the field of Sign Language/Deaf Studies for the past 25 years. He has a Bachelors degree in Exceptional Student Education, graduate degrees in Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second language, and a Ph.D. in Educational Linguistics. He has been a nationally certified interpreter since 1979. Dr. Davis served on the faculty of Callaudet University in the Masters Degree Program in interpreting in the Department of Linguistic and Interpreting from 1986 to 1990 and in the Sign Language/Deaf studies Program at the College of Education at the University of Arizona from 1990 to 1994 where he researched language issues relating the Deaf members of the Navajo Nation. Currently, Dr. Davis is a professor in the Interpreting Training Program at Miami-Dade Community College, one of the largest culturally diverse student bodies in the nation.

Tupper Dunbar, CSC - has been in the profession for over twenty years. He is a native ASL user and also knows American Indian Sign Language. He has been involved with the Intertribal Deaf Council since its inception, and works with the National Multicultural Interpreter Project as both as a Consortium member as well as being a part of the American Indian/Alaskan Native DACUM Committee. Tupper has also been instrumental in working with a Human Resources sub-committee of the National Congress of American Indians in drafting and lobbying of successful resolutions that have direct bearing on interpreting services with American Indian/Alaskan Native Deaf. He is a member of the Bird Clan of the Oklahoma AniKituhwagi (Cherokee) Nation, as well as a ceremoniously adopted member of the Whistling Water Clan of the Absaroke (Crow) Nation. Tupper is also of Scottish descent.

Jan Nishimura, CSC, OIC: V/S and OIC: S/V, CI and CT, SC:L - Asian/Pacific Islander Team Leader - is a Sansei, third generation Japanese- American, from Chicago, Illinois. She is the co-founder and Vice President of Sign Language Associates (SLA). In the past 25 years, she has served as interpreter, interpreter educator, evaluator, evaluator trainer, diagnostician, consultant, advisor, and mentor. In addition to her work at the local level, Jan has also been a member of RID=s Certification Council and the Board of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers. §he has had many proud moments, not only with the establishment of the SLA Professional Development/Mentorship Program, but also seeing the accomplishments of those she has mentored. She is equally proud of and humbled by the Distinguished Service Award, which RID honored her with in 1995. Jan is currently working with the National Multicultural Interpreting Project as a consultant and team leader for the Asian/Pacific Island group.

Angela Roth, CSC - Hispanic Team Leader, founder and owner of the largest for profit interpreting agency based in Kissimmee, Florida; American Sign Language Services, Inc. She has been a keynote speaker, presenter, panelist and moderator for many national and state workshops. She currently serves the National Multicultural Interpreter Project as Consultant Presenter and as the National Hispanic/Latino Team Leader. She was the originator and co-chair for the 1999 AMano a Mano@ National One Day Assembly, the first one of its kind for interpreters in Spanish speaking communities across the US. She has served RID as a 2 term Chairperson for the National Certification Board and is one of ten members on the NAD /RID National Task Force. She is published in the text, AProfiles in Communication@HBJ Corporation Publishers. She is co-chair for the Conference Planning Committee as well as co-chair for the RID 2001 National Convention to be held in Orlando, Florida.

For More Information and NMIP Products

The NMIP Project hopes that this presentation, curricula materials and videotapes will be applicable to interpreter training programs across the United States. The NMIP project anticipates the final editing and production of curriculum materials to be completed by December 30,2000, and then will be available for final distribution. The NMIP project office is located at El Paso Community College, El Paso, Texas. For more information: call, fax, email, or write:

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Anxiety in the American Sign Language Student

Nancy Pfanner

Abstract

Learning a second language can be an anxious experience for many students. Research has indicated that students experience this anxiety for a variety of reasons and may be negatively impacted as a result. This study focuses on the student of American Sign Language (ASL) and the impact anxiety may have on student success. Comparisons are made to students taking spoken language classes, with the results indicating that ASL students are less anxious than their counterparts in other language classes. Also, the hearing status of the instructors (Deaf vs. hearing) does not seem to be a factor in anxiety for most students.

In response to recent state legislative actions supporting American Sign Language (ASL) classes in public education, as well as a changing social climate that is beginning to value Deaf people and their language, there has been a proliferation of ASL classes for non-Deaf students in high schools and colleges across the country. Until recently, the majority of sign language acquisition research focused on Deaf children. Now, the overwhelming popularity of sign language classes among hearing people has forced educators to evaluate sign language acquisition in a new light. One such paradigm shift in research concerns the role of anxiety in the older ASL learner. Unlike a young Deaf child who may be learning the language in a natural setting, these older hearing students find themselves in a formal, and sometimes anxiety-producing, environment. The purpose of this study is to investigate anxiety in students learning ASL and to compare their experiences with students learning a spoken language.

There is a general consensus among spoken language educators that anxiety is a prevalent problem in second language acquisition (Cardner, 1991; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1991). Teachers of American Sign Language have also described this same problem (Poor & Wilkins, 1986; Wilcox & Davis, 1986). Krashen's Affective Filter hypothesis (1982) claims that the presence of anxiety in a language learner will impede their ability to achieve fluency in a language. To maximize learning, the student must be relaxed and free from the negative affects of anxiety.

Anxiety impacts the language learner in several ways. The anxious learner experiences a reduction in the amount of information that can be processed (MacLeod, 1996; Tobias, 1986). As Eysenck (1992)

proposes, anxiety may act as cognitive interference that places increased demands on the working memory capacity. Valuable cognitive processing capacity may thus be involved in task-irrelevant activity in the form of anxious thoughts. As Krashen (1982) describes, effective language instruction is one that provides input "a bit beyond our current level of competence." At each stage of instruction, the student is presented with information that requires a cognitive "stretch" on his part in order to successfully understand the message. This complex task places great demands on the cognitive processing capacity of the student. Anxious thoughts use up much of this capacity, and thus reduce the amount of incoming information that can be processed. This may account for Price's (1991) findings that indicate that anxious students spent an inordinate amount of time studying for their language classes as compared to other subjects, yet received lower grades. It is possible that increased anxiety decreases the efficiency of cognitive processing capabilities and, as a result, more study time is needed to learn the material (Tobias, 1986; Sarason, Pierce & Sarason, 1996; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994).

Just as anxiety impedes the input process, it also impedes the retrieval process. Although the causes of poor performance are many, anxiety is undoubtedly a contributing factor. In describing how cognitive interference reduces performance, Tobias (1986) states:

> The interference model implies that high and low anxiety students may have mastered the content on which they are to be examined to a comparable degree, but that retrieval of this previously acquired information by high anxiety students is debilitated by the cognitive interference experienced as a result of the evaluative threat posed by examinations.

Although specifically referring to test-anxiety, Tobias' description could also apply to the language learning environment in which a student's performance is evaluated. The correlation between language anxiety and test scores has not been clearly established; however, Horwitz (1997) feels that anxiety may be an underlying cause of the discrepancy between true ability and performance in the foreign language classroom. Studies have indicated that foreign language anxiety was indeed a significant factor in the performance of language students (Price, 1991; Aida, 1994; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986).

A far more sobering and far-reaching consequence of anxiety in the language classroom may be its lasting effect on the ASL student as a result of the brain's encoding of affective states. Baron (1987) writes, "when a particular event is associated with a strong affect, the recurrence of that event automatically elicits the affect." For the highly anxious language student, this could have long-term consequences. Students who experience negative anxiety during the learning process may encode this anxiety in the same memory locations used to store the language. When the student later recalls the language for use, the anxiety is recalled also and, in effect, re-experienced. As stated earlier, anxiety takes up valuable cognitive processes that would otherwise be used for task-related purposes and interferes with the processing of complex information.

This phenomenon could have a very negative effect on professionals who use sign language in the course of their work. Is it possible that anxiety experienced while learning ASL may be reexperienced each time a teacher of the Deaf or sign language interpreter uses the language to communicate? For the interpreter, Patrie (1998) believes the added mental stress of the recalled affective state of anxiety combined with the complexity of interpreting may severely hinder an interpreter's performance. Other professionals who use ASL in their work may also experience decreased performance due to the encoding of anxiety during their language learning process. The question we must ask ourselves is, Are we making an already difficult job more difficult by adding anxiety to the load? If this indeed turns out to be the case, it is just one more reason we should seek to decrease anxiety in the language classroom.

Unfortunately, very little data exist regarding the role of anxiety in the ASL classroom. Because ASL instruction is relatively new, research has been limited. The purpose of this study is to apply Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's model of foreign language anxiety to ASL. This model was developed to better quantify the effects of anxiety on the spoken language learner (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). In an

attempt to further define language anxiety and assess its impact on the language learner, Horwitz developed the 33-item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS, Horwitz et al. 1986). Since its development, the FLCAS has been applied to several different languages, all of which are spoken. For this study, the FLCAS was adapted to include grammatical aspects of ASL that are unique to a visual language, such as facial expression, body movement and position, and use of space, in an attempt to discern whether or not they increase anxiety in hearing students who may be acculturated to the idea of using mitigated non-verbal behavior. Horwitz' original FLCAS contains 33 items based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Each response is assigned a number from one to five indicating the degree of anxiety. The sum of their responses becomes the anxiety score for that individual. Horwitz' original scale has a possible range of 33 (little to no anxiety) to 165 (maximum anxiety). The adapted scale used here has a range of 35 to 175

This study seeks to explain the phenomenon of anxiety as it is experienced in a unique learning environment, the ASL classroom. The assumption is that many aspects of spoken language anxiety also apply to a visual language. However, the differences between a spoken and visual language cannot be overlooked when investigating the impact certain activities have on the student. It is expected that there will be differences in the way students experience the language learning environment due to the visual nature of ASL. By investigating the causes of anxiety in the ASL classroom, educators can create a better environment for the growing population of ASL learners.

Although many questions warrant exploration, only four are discussed here. There has been a great deal of debate in recent years about Deaf vs hearing ASL instructors. While much of this debate focuses on the cultural aspects of teaching ASL, there has also been a question about the comfort level of students who cannot communicate with the instructor in their spoken native language and whether or not this influences student success. This study seeks to better understand this issue as it relates to anxiety. Another topic of discussion among ASL educators has been the difficulty in teaching non-manuals to hearing students. These non-manuals, which are important grammatical markers in ASL, are vital to the fluent use of the language. Some have suggested that requiring students to use facial expressions and body movements that are unconventional in the hearing community may cause embarrassment for some students (Knapp, 1998, Locker-McKee & McKee, 1992, Wilcox & Davis, 1986). Understanding how students feel about these facial expressions and body movements is critical if we are to maximize the learning environment to achieve acquisition.

As stated earlier, it is expected that many aspects of language anxiety will be the same regardless of the mode of communication, visual or spoken. However, some aspects will vary because of these differences. The third question of this study is designed to compare the results from spoken Spanish and Japanese classes to the results from ASL classes. In what ways do the experiences of ASL students differ?

The final question deals with the impact anxiety has on outcome. Unfortunately, proficiency in a language is a difficult thing to measure, and as a result, final grades will be used as a measure of performance. This in no way implies that final grades are always an adequate measure of proficiency, but lacking other types of measures, final grades were chosen as a starting place. Obviously, more comprehensive and realistic evaluations are needed to accurately determine a student's true abilities. And ultimately, it is not the student's final grade that matters, but more importantly, does he or she successfully communicate with native signers in real-world interactions? That is our goal as educators and researchers in second language acquisition.

Although there are many types of anxiety, two specific categories are germane to this discussion, trait anxiety and state anxiety. State anxiety refers to transitory emotions that vary in intensity depending on the situation (Speilberger, 1972). Circumstances that are perceived to be threatening to the individual will elicit high levels of state anxiety. Situations that are perceived as non-threatening will have correspondingly low levels of this affective state. This type of anxiety fluctuates in intensity and duration depending on the individual's perception of the environmental factors and is not necessarily related to an actual threat to his well-being. Speilberger defines trait anxiety as a relatively stable individual variable characterized by anxiety proneness. This individual tends to "perceive a larger number of situations as dangerous or threatening" than persons who are low in trait anxiety and

responds to perceived threatening situations with increased state anxiety. In other words, an experience may not trigger high anxiety in some people but may cause a great deal of anxiety in those who have a predisposition to this type of reaction to arousal. It can be stated that persons with trait anxiety are more prone to state anxiety. The etiology of trait anxiety could possibly be the repeated occurrence of state anxiety. Eysenck (1992) argues that environmental influences and learning play a role in the development of trait anxiety. Anxiety-related information added to long-term memory will, over time, increase the amount of trait anxiety in an individual. A negative or stressful experience will influence the way information is stored and will increase the propensity for elevated state anxiety in similar situations. Since trait anxiety is dynamic, it can also be mitigated over time by learning that occurs in low anxiety environments. This information storage process echoes Baron's (1987) theory that negative affective states are encoded in the brain along with what is being learned and are later recalled when the information is retrieved for usage. For the language student, this means that previous negative experiences in the classroom will create a general framework within the individual that predisposes him to heightened anxiety in future language learning environments or in other situations where the language must be utilized. It is easily seen that anxiety is a complex phenomenon and cannot be readily dissected into neat categories.

It would seem that the language learning environment creates a unique type of anxiety in some students. Guiora (1972) identifies a personality variable he calls "language ego" to describe the way self-identity is tied to one's language. When a person is required to present him or herself using another language, this self-identity is threatened. Unlike other academic areas, authentic presentation of self is difficult in a second language where fluency has not been attained (Horwitz, 1991). This inability to express one's thoughts in a coherent and articulate manner is a source of discomfort for many. For some students with good self-esteem, making mistakes and possibly looking foolish in front of others may be acceptable, but for others, it is not. Language classes pose serious risks to these students.

Language classes also typically require much more interaction with both class members. and instructors compared to other types of classes, causing additional concern in some students. They are by nature interactive and require class participation. Reticent students often receive lower grades because of poor participation. In describing the behavior of reticent people, Phillips (1998) states that they refrain from participating by sitting in the back of the room and avoiding oral presentations when possible, two behaviors not conducive to success in the language classroom.

McCoy (1979) reports a study involving first-year Spanish students and elementary school teachers in which subjects reported these eleven sources of foreign language anxiety:

- Inability to learn another language
- Inability to pronounce strange sounds and words
- Not knowing the meaning of words and sentences
- Inability to understand and answer questions in the new language
- The reputation of language classes for failure and poor grades
- Peer derision and criticism
- Not knowing or understanding the goals and requirements of the course
- The teacher in general-native-speaker teachers especially
- Testing, especially the oral part
- Previous unsuccessful language learning attempts
- Encountering different cultural values and customs

Another cause of anxiety in the language classroom comes from the way the target language is presented. As Krashen and Terrell (1983) state, effective acquisition can only take place in an environment where certain affective prerequisites such as a low anxiety situation and a certain amount of acquirer self-confidence have been established. In classes where students are forced into speaking before they are ready, errors are over-corrected, and topics are not relevant to the student's needs, anxiety increases. Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach seeks to eliminate these negative factors

by providing a long silent period before students are required to use the target language in complex discourse. Errors that do not hinder the communication process are not corrected, and activities are used that engage the student in non-threatening, relevant communication. Signing Naturally is one such approach to teaching ASL and uses many of Krashen and Terrell's theories in presenting the language. Whether or not this type of curriculum actually decreases anxiety is open to debate. In a study by Koch and Terrell (1991), it was found that activities such as giving oral presentations and role-playing actually increased anxiety when compared to more traditional approaches. For some students, the lack of explicit rules and error correction may cause more concern and uncertainty.

Specific to the ASL environment, Wilcox and Davis (1986) explain that anxiety may be caused by negative affective filters created when students are first exposed to certain aspects of ASL and the Deaf culture, which may be uncomfortable to hearing students (Battison & Cogen, 1978). These include physical contact such as touching a person in order to gain their attention, sustained eye contact necessary for receiving the language, and body movements that require moving the arms and shoulders in sometimes dramatic ways. McKee and McKee (1992) further describe aspects of learning ASL that may cause concern. The visual-gestural nature of ASL challenges the learner's ability to represent himself through communication. They may feel awkward with certain body movements and facial expressions. Students in McKee and McKee's study reported difficulties in using non-manual signals in ASL. One student described embarrassment when making facial expressions and body movements that are considered rude outside of the ASL environment. Teachers also were aware of this difficulty and reported that some ethnic groups, who are acculturated to show mitigated facial expressions and body movements, are uncomfortable with non-manuals. Other anxiety-producing aspects of learning ASL reported by the students were interacting with Deaf people outside of class, the demand for more intense eye contact while signing, and the performance aspect of signing, which draws the attention of other people. The researchers refer to Guiora's (1972) concept of language ego and self-representation and suggest that students need to "shed deeply ingrained physical and cultural inhibitions about using the body for communication."

For this study, eight sections of second semester ASL I classes at two universities participated. Two Deaf instructors teach at one university (School 1) and had a total of 62 students in their four sections. The two hearing instructors teach at another university (School 2) participating in this study and had 94 students in their classes. All four instructors have native or near-native ASL fluency, and the two hearing instructors are also certified interpreters. All instructors at the first university are Deaf and all instructors of day classes at the second are hearing, giving students no choice in the hearing status of their teachers. This factor controls for the possibility that some students may avoid taking classes from a Deaf instructor if they are anxious about not being able to use spoken English to communicate. Although the instructors at School 2 are both hearing, it is important to note that a Deaf teaching assistant had daily contact with all four sections of ASL during the entire semester. He was involved in both the teaching activities and the evaluation process for School 2, a factor that would obviously affect a student's perception of ASL class. Both programs use Signing Naturally as the core curriculum with the accompanying videos. The students at School 1 are also required to view videotapes in the lab and must attend four social events in the Deaf community during the semester. Proximity to a very large, active Deaf community makes this requirement feasible. School 2 does not have these two requirements, but interaction with Deaf people outside of class is strongly encouraged.

McCoy (1979) has suggested that having a native speaker as the language instructor increases the anxiety in some students. The first question of this study was designed to investigate this aspect of taking ASL classes. The results of this study showed no significant difference in the anxiety levels between the two groups when individual instructor variations were not considered. The mean anxiety score for students with a Deaf instructor (School 1) was 87.11 and the mean for those with a hearing instructor (School 2) was 90.68 (Table 1). Students with Deaf instructors did not have significantly different levels of anxiety than those with hearing instructors. There were, however, differences in the mean scores between the four teachers. The teacher with the highest mean score was hearing ($\bar{X}$ = 92.40). Two instructors, one Deaf and one hearing, had almost identical scores for their students ($\bar{X}$ = 88.96 and $\bar{X}$ = 88.94). A Deaf instructor had the lowest average for her students ($\bar{X}$=85.17). Although

not generalizable to other populations, the assumption based on these results is that possibly other factors such as the personality or teaching style of the instructor had a greater impact on how students responded in ASL class and not the hearing status of the instructor.

More variation emerges when individual items on the FCLAS are compared. Although the overall anxiety levels are similar regardless of the hearing status of the teacher, certain aspects of anxiety appear to correspond to having a Deaf or hearing teacher. In a statement that reflects speech anxiety, "In ASL class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know," the Deaf instructors had the largest percentage of students indicating high anxiety (56.7% and 59.4%). One student who had a Deaf instructor wrote this comment:

> *I am most nervous when I need to tell her (the teacher) something. I have to go over how to sign it in my head a few times, or I can't sign anything.*

Other students wrote that forgetting what they knew was a problem when interacting with Deaf people outside of class but not while in ASL class. The hearing instructors had a lower number of their students responding with high anxiety to this item relating to forgetfulness (46.8% and 38.3%). It would seem that this problem is prevalent in both situations but may be higher with a Deaf instructor due to the fact that all communication takes place in ASL. With a hearing instructor, a student can discuss issues or questions after class using spoken English. Some students may need these explanations in their native language to fully grasp what is going on in class. The instructors at School 2 reserve the last five minutes of class each day to discuss questions and clarify misunderstandings using spoken English. For students accustomed to more traditional methods of language instruction, this opportunity may give them a sense of security they would otherwise not have. Beginning ASL students especially may be reticent in asking for clarification using ASL if they do not have a good working command of the language. This lack of clarification may lead to further confusion and cause increased anxiety in some students. This problem could be averted if a fluent hearing signer was available in the lab or for tutoring for those students who felt they were not fluent enough to accurately express their questions in ASL. As their skills improved, they would then be encouraged to discuss questions with the Deaf instructor directly.

Although having a Deaf instructor may cause anxiety in some students, the results from this study seem to indicate that students with Deaf teachers have a more positive response to ASL classes than their counterparts who have a Hearing teacher. For the item, "It wouldn't bother me at all to take more ASL classes," which Aida (1994) says indicates negative attitudes toward language class, 93% of those students with Deaf teachers responded positively, as compared to 74.4% of the students with hearing instructors. Variations between the two Deaf instructors and between the two hearing instructors were less than 4% for this item. Another item indicating a negative response to ASL class, "I often feel like not going to my ASL class," also had a significant difference, with 21% of the students with a hearing instructor endorsing this statement and only 9.6% of the students with Deaf teachers doing *so*. Further breakdown of the percentages show that individual instructor variations did appear. Deaf instructors had 12.5% and 6.7% of their students endorsing this item, while the hearing instructors had 23.6% and 19.2% of their students doing *so*. It would appear that students with a Deaf instructor might be more motivated to attend class.

Another statement reflecting a student's perception of ASL class, "I feel more tense and nervous in my ASL class than in my other classes," yielded a greater percentage of students with a Deaf instructor feeling less tense and nervous in their ASL class. Unfortunately, the results from this study do not indicate the reason for this phenomenon, but several explanations are plausible. It is possible that curriculum implementation, class requirement differences, or teaching styles may be factors in this situation. As was the case before, individual instructor variations occurred. (Deaf instructors = 25% and 16.9%; Hearing instructors = 29.8% and 34 %).

The last item to be discussed in this paper regarding the differences between students with Hearing instructors and those with Deaf instructors is the responses to "I am afraid that my ASL teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make." Some students have expressed the concern that a Deaf person would be more critical of signing mistakes since ASL is "their language" and would be less toler-

ant of students "butchering" it. The responses to this item (# 19), seem to indicate that most students do not experience this fear but that the tendency was actually slightly higher for those with a hearing instructor. Both hearing instructors had 14.9% of their students endorsing this item, while the Deaf instructors had 6.3% and 10% of their students responding with similarly high anxiety. The actual mean score for this item was 2.03 for School 1 and 2.02 for School 2, indicating almost no difference between the two. Because of the small subject population, any differences may not be significant, but they do seem to indicate that hearing status is not an issue.

The two questions regarding the use of non-manuals yielded interesting results. Although most students are comfortable with non-manual markers, a significant percentage of students selected a response with a value of four or five for these two questions, indicating high anxiety. Students' written comments further clarified this issue. One student wrote that some, but not all, facial expressions caused her embarrassment. Since the subjects in this study were finishing their second semester **of** ASL, it is possible that they had become accustomed to seeing and using non-manuals over a two-semester period. One student wrote that the facial markers were her favorite part of ASL, and another said these expressions had "filtered into (her) spoken English as well." It is plausible that students who experience a great deal of discomfort with these non-manual markers may not continue taking ASL after the first semester and that those students who continue are generally comfortable with them. These results also show that high anxiety with non-manuals does not strongly correlate with either the total anxiety score on the **FCLAS** (r = .3712, p =.000, n =156) or a student's final grade(r = .0373, p = .754, n = 71).

The results obtained from this study were then compared to the results from Horwitz' (1986) study of Spanish language students and Aida's (1994) study of students taking Japanese. The following table summarizes the results of this comparison.

Comparisons of Anxiety Scores for ASL, French, Spanish, and Japanese

	Mean	SD	N
ASL	89.26	19.38	156
French	104.8	17.6	106
Spanish	94.5	21.4	75
Japanese	96.7	22.1	96

Even allowing for the maximum possible difference due to the substitution of an articulation item, the mean for this ASL study is still lower than for any of the three other languages. There are several plausible explanations for this lower anxiety level in ASL students. One possible reason may be that because ASL is a non-traditional language, the negative feelings associated with learning a spoken foreign language may not transfer to a visual language. McKee and McKee (1992) reported that, compared to spoken language students, a greater percentage of their students perceived ASL as easier than other languages. Peterson (1999), in an extensive survey of ASL students, found that most students believe anyone can learn ASL. Could it be that students' preconceived notions of ASL regarding its relative difficulty might establish a basis for diminished anxiety and, as a result, improved acquisition? Another possible reason for the lower anxiety levels in ASL students may also stem from the non-traditional nature of ASL. It seems possible that students who tend to be risk-takers gravitate to a non-traditional language when fulfilling their foreign language requirements and are, by nature, less anxious. Because of the highly visual, performance-type aspects of ASL, students who tend to have high trait anxiety may avoid ASL and stay with traditional spoken language classes.

These results suggest that ASL students may experience less anxiety in their language classes than spoken language students. The question remains if this is due to the nature of ASL class itself and students' beliefs about ASL, or do students with low trait anxiety tend to gravitate to visual languages? If the former is true, then students who have experienced anxiety in previous foreign language classes may benefit from taking ASL to fulfill their university's foreign language requirement. They may find the ASL environment more relaxed and, thus, have a more positive experience.

In the final analysis, the main question is how anxiety affects performance. Anxiety can be facilitative or it can be debilitating. It appears that some degree of anxiety enhances learning, but too much interferes with the cognitive process involved and inhibits retention. Performance, as defined by this study, was measured by the final grade for the course. This, of course, is not always the best measure for performance, but the lack of other available measures made final grade the best choice for determining success. The correlation between the anxiety score and the final grade were calculated separately in order to control for teacher variations in testing methods and grading criteria. The instructors with the highest and lowest correlations were both Deaf, supporting the theory that hearing status is only one of many complex variables that affect student performance. A Pearson Correlation for all subjects regardless of instructor yielded a coefficient of $r = -.3617$, $p = .000$, n = 152, indicating that higher scores on the FCLAS were associated with lower final grades for the course.

Causes of Anxiety in the ASL Student

Of the 35 items on the adapted FCLAS used in this study, 21 elicited high anxiety in at least 25% of the subjects.

Causes of Anxiety in ASL Students
N=156

Category	Item	% students
Expressive Skills	1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am signing in my ASL class.	50
	3. I start to panic when I have to sign without preparation in ASL class.	31
	18. I (don't) feel confident when I sign in ASL class.	**31**
	20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in class.	29
	23. I always feel that the other students sign better than I do.	40
	24. I feel very self-conscious about signing in front of other students.	**34**
	35. I get nervous when the ASL teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	**36**
Making nistakes	2. I worry about making mistakes in ASL class.	**31**
Receptive skills	**4.** It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in ASL class.	**30**
	15. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my ASL class.	29
	31. I get nervous when I don't understand every word my ASL teacher signs.	**30**
nteractions with leaf people	**14.** I would be nervous using ASL with Deaf people.	**70**
	34. I would probably not feel comfortable around Deaf people.	**30**
Jse of facial grammar	25. I feel embarrassed when using facial expressions while signing.	28
rests, fear of failure	3. I am usually (not) at ease during tests in ASL class.	**34**
	10. I worry about the consequences of failing my ASL class.	26
	22. I feel pressure to prepare very well for ASL class.	**49**
	27. I feel more tense and nervous in my ASL class than in my other classes.	25
Other	7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am	**41**
	12. In ASL class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know..	49
	16. Even if I am well prepared for ASL class, I feel anxious about it.	28

Items 14 and 34 are designed to investigate a student's comfort level when interacting with Deaf people. Number 14 deals specifically with language usage, and number 34 targets general social interactions. As expected, students responded with much higher anxiety to item 14 because it involves linguistic competencies. Of all the items on the FCLAS, item 14 elicited the highest level of anxiety. It would seem that students still feel anxious about using ASL with Deaf people despite having daily interactions with Deaf instructors or teaching assistants. Having a variety of Deaf visitors of all ages come to class or sponsoring events where interaction could take place in a non-threatening environment might help students to feel more comfortable interacting with Deaf speakers. For programs requiring outside interactions with the Deaf community, the instructor may want to consider suggesting situations that are less linguistically complex in which topics will be limited to previously announced issues, such as workshops and special meetings. As students progress in their ASL skills, more complex and varied language environments can be added to their experiences.

The majority of anxiety-producing activities dealt with expressive skills. The problem and the solution can be summed up in one student's written comments:

> *Getting used to constantly going up in front of a classroom and signing my first semester was kind of difficult for me at first, but as time went on, I became much more comfortable signing in front of others. I came to realize that everyone makes mistakes, and that no one, including the teacher, expects anyone to sign perfectly.*

Another student wrote that after the teacher gave them "permission" to make mistakes, her comfort level dramatically increased. This statement was echoed in many of the written responses.

Coming as no surprise to ASL educators, several students wrote that fingerspelling, both expressive and receptive, was a major anxiety producer, One student wrote that although she is normally relaxed in ASL class, reading fingerspelling makes her nervous. Another student said that she was "just about to give up" on fingerspelling and expected a lower grade because of her inability to grasp it. For many students, learning to read fingerspelling is the most daunting task undertaken when learning ASL. For this reason, innovative and non-threatening instructional techniques should be employed when introducing, practicing, and evaluating fingerspelling.

Conclusion

The results from this study support findings from previous spoken language research that indicate language anxiety is a complex issue not easily defined. It seems that many factors contribute to a student's sense of anxiety in ASL class. The results for the first question, dealing with Deaf and hearing instructors, seem to show that although hearing status of the instructor is a factor, many other variables may in fact be more significant causes of classroom anxiety.

Not surprisingly, the non-manual grammatical markers used in ASL did cause discomfort in a large percentage of students. Many indicated feeling embarrassed by this feature. The ASL instructor may want to consider involving students in activities to reduce this discomfort, such as mime, gesture, and other non-verbal communication exercises that employ facial expressions. In the case of students who may be pursuing careers as teachers of the Deaf or sign language interpreters, courses in non-verbal communication as well as acting classes may be beneficial.

Although the results from this study indicated a lower anxiety level for students taking ASL as compared to students taking a spoken language, the conclusion cannot be made that ASL itself is less anxiety-producing than other languages. As mentioned before, the nature of ASL could act to select out students who are more willing to take risks and are, therefore, less prone to state anxiety. Another plausible explanation for the lower FCLAS scores for ASL students may be students' beliefs about the language. The negative stereotypes associated with learning a spoken second language may not transfer to ASL and, as a result, students come into the course with less anxiety. This initial lower anxiety attitude may act as a self-fulfilling prophecy of sorts to create a relaxed atmosphere.

For many ASL students, the most important question is the one pertaining to his or her final grade.

Consistent with other studies, a negative correlation was found between anxiety scores and final grade. The question still remains as to which came first: Did high anxiety lead to poor performance or did poor performance create an atmosphere of increased anxiety? It may be that there is a cause and effectrelationship between the two, or quite possibly, poor performance and anxiety exist as characteristics of a much broader phenomenon taking place within the language learning environment.

Only by recognizing these aspects of anxiety can we as educators begin to design learner-friendly classroom environments that optimize the language learning experience. Research in spoken language anxiety as it relates to the spoken language learner is still an emerging field, and research in second language acquisition for signed languages lags far behind research in spoken languages. There are many questions still unanswered at this time, but fortunately, researchers are beginning to explore this exciting new field of ASL instruction.

About the author

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Enhancing Self-Regulation in ASL/English Interpreting: Promoting Excellence in Interpreter Education

Melissa B. Smith

Abstract

ASL/English interpreting students often struggle to produce interpretations that make sense. Research suggests that self-regulation, developed through scaffolded instruction and peer collaboration, facilitates learning in a wide array of content areas. In 1998, I implemented activities in three community college classes to scaffold metacognitive and cognitive strategies, content knowledge, and specialized ASL vocabulary to maximize student learning and improve interpreting performance.

Students' metacognitive skills were evaluated through pre- and post-performance test data, field notes, written self-assessments, and journals. Analyses of the data suggest that students effectively learn to use metacognition to enhance ASL to English interpretations but have difficulty applying these techniques in English to ASL interpretatibn. While fluency in English allows students to benefit from the use of metacognitive strategies, more scaffolding of ASL grammatical features is needed to help students gain fluency in ASL and allow them to self-regulate English to ASL interpretations more effectively.

The Challenge Faced by Current ASL/English Interpreter Education Programs

The formal training of American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters poses a variety of unique challenges. Many students who enter interpreting programs have not yet achieved the ASL fluency necessary to meet the challenge of working between these two languages simultaneously, let alone for handling specialized content.

I began teaching interpreting in the community college system with the belief that students should already have competency in both ASL and English before taking interpreting classes, and I did not think language instruction should play a major role in the context of interpreter education. More accu-

rately perhaps, I did not feel equipped to teach language and interpreting at the same time. Yet with each incoming group of aspiring ASL/English interpreters, I recognized a vast range of competency in both languages. I also realized that very few of my students seemed to have achieved ASL fluency adequate to discuss and comprehend presentations of substantive cognitive academic content. The problem is not new (Baker-Shenk, 1983; Wilcox, 1986). I felt there must be a way to effectively teach interpretation while providing multiple opportunities for students to continue developing their ASL skills. In order to improve my teaching methods, I decided to embark on a journey to discover the best practices in the field of interpreter education and the most effective approaches to enhancing learning. I hoped that by integrating research and current best practices, I could help to improve the efficacy of ASL/English interpreter education. My first step was to find out what constitutes "fluency" in the acquisition of a language and how long it typically takes to achieve that level of competency in a second language.

Second language acquisition

Cummins (1981; 1984) defines two levels, or categories, of language proficiency. Conversational aspects of a second language, called basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), can usually be acquired in two to three years (Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle, 1978). More complex interactions such as those generally encountered by interpreters including debate, analysis, discussion of abstract ideas, and other more demanding types of language contexts require the use of what Cummins (1981) refers to as cognitive-academic language proficiency (CALP). Studies of immigrant students demonstrate that a period of five to seven years seems necessary for second language learners to acquire CALP (Collier, 1987, 1989; Cummins, 1981; Klesmer, 1994; Hoefnagel-Hohle, 1978).

Language instruction in ASL/English interpreting programs

Although research indicates that CALP takes five to seven years to acquire, the number of semester-long ASL courses required for entry in most ASL/English interpreter education programs (IEPs) is between two and six. Although instruction at the graduate level might be the ideal venue for preparing competent interpreters, at the present time, two-year programs are the norm. The dilemma may not be resolved by the establishment of baccalaureate programs. Hoza (1998) points out that on average, only **4.2** semesters of ASL instruction are required for current bachelor degree programs.

Many interpreter educators and researchers adamantly claim that language instruction cannot take place within the context of interpreter training programs. I have also heard interpreter educators comment that "it is not our problem" if students do not have enough fluency in ASL, and that it is the students' responsibility to go improve their own language competency. If the ASL classes we offer to prepare students for interpreting programs do not facilitate adequate fluency in ASL, whose problem is it?

summary

Current demand for ASL/English interpreters has resulted in a fast-track approach to teaching ASL/English interpreting in two-year community college systems, which impose a time constraint for students to learn both ASL and the interpreting process. It may be true that graduating students manage to gain employment because of the high demand for interpreting services, but there is a consensus that we are not graduating students with adequate skills. If ASL programs have not sufficiently prepared students for the complex task of interpreting, we cannot expect them to take responsibility for their own language learning. I set out to find techniques other fields used to improve student learning.

Benefits of Cognitive Science to Teaching Performance-Based Tasks

Cognitive research made its first contributions to the field of education by comparing the mental processes involved in expert vs. novice performance. Bransford and Vye (1989) contend that "by specifically studying the processes involved in [cognitive tasks], it should be possible to make signif-

icant improvements in instruction." In addition to cognitive strategies, successful interpreters use metacognitive strategies, which refers to the mental processes experts use to monitor an approach to a complex task. Effective ASL/English interpreters employ both cognitive and metacognitive skills.

Metacognition and self-regulation

Metacognitive strategies are used to determine if comprehension of the source language (SL) is taking place and facilitate identification of an equivalent target language (TL) message. Metacognition, also called "self-regulation," also helps interpreters to assess whether or not their production of the TL is effective. Bruer (1993) defines metacognition as "the ability to think about thinking, to be consciously aware of oneself as a problem solver, and to monitor and control one's mental processing." Schoenfeld (1989) describes how metacognitive strategies work "While engaged in a task of some intellectual complexity, you have evaluated the current state of affairs. Are things going well as you perform a complex task? If yes, then leave well enough alone. If not, then there might be things you can do."

Metacognition, or self-regulation, is a technique used by good readers, good writers, and good problem solvers, in short, by experts across domains. In second language learning circles, it is called monitoring. This process involves being cognizant of progress while speaking, listening, or writing in one's second language. It is the self-talk that goes on in one's own head to process comprehension and to ensure that what is understood makes sense in light of the source and one's own view of reality (Bruer, 1993).

Scaffolding

The guidance or support that enables a student to accomplish a task is referred to as "scaffolding." Bayer (1990) redefines Bruner's (1978) term as "guided participation in joint activities that help students assimilate new ideas." Hull (1989) notes, "Each time we ask a novice to attempt an authentic writing task, we are asking him to do something he is not ready for and cannot do on his own except in a flawed, incomplete fashion." She further elaborates, "We must make it possible for students to stretch beyond their current competence." Through proper scaffolded instruction, students of many disciplines can achieve higher levels of understanding and enhanced performance.

The zone of proximal development and collaborative learning

Since ASL/English interpreting students enter programs with such a wide array of ASL competency, it is important for teachers to allow students to learn at their own optimal levels. Researchers and educators have given much attention to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development because of its implications for understanding student learning. He defines this zone as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." In other words, the zone of proximal development represents the distance between the knowledge and skills a student can demonstrate independently and the knowledge and skills the same student can demonstrate when assisted by a more capable other. This theory places a spotlight on what students have the potential to do instead of placing emphasis on what they have done *so* far.

Research suggests that peer collaboration enhances student learning. Since ASL/English interpreting students have such diverse experiences, prior knowledge, and language competencies, collaborative learning can help to level the playing field. Resnick and Klopfer (1989) suggest that collaborative work on complex tasks can enhance student development of knowledge and skills. They state, "By working cooperatively, students can arrive at solutions that one student could not manage alone." They should also feel more successful, in turn increasing their motivation to strive for excellence.

Motivation, competency, challenge, and authentic contexts

White (1959, cited in Deci, 1995) claims, "People yearn *so* strongly to feel competent or effective in dealing with their environment that competence could be thought of as a fundamental human need." Although accomplishing a challenging task increases motivation, too much challenge is often coun-

terproductive. If students feel that a task is beyond their capabilities, their motivation to try decreases greatly. Deci explains, "If the challenge is not realistically within the [student's]grasp, it will not be motivating."

Adult second language learners frequently experience greater anxiety and lack of self-confidence than children who are acquiring a second language. This anxiety raises what Krashen and Terrell (1983) call the affective filter, a type of mental screen which often makes it difficult for adults to take in new information presented in a second language. Since most students are working on ASL skills upon entry to interpreting programs, it is important to recognize that fear of making mistakes may discourage risk-taking.

According to Krashen (1982), the key to increasing student ASL comprehension skills is making sure the input is accessible. He frequently refers to an example from a study by Adams (1982) to illustrate the power of context, prior knowledge, and comprehensible input in gaining access to a new language (Figure 1).

Read the following set of sentences and, without looking ahead, try to figure out what the word *rouche* means:

1. Favorable conditions are necessary in order to do this activity. That is, you have to have enough *rouche*.
2. If there is too much *rouche*, the object might break.
3. But if conditions are too calm, you will have problems because the *rouche* makes the object go up.
4. If there are obstacles, a serious problem can result because you cannot control the *rouche*.
5. Usually the *rouche* is most favorable during the spring.

Figure 1
Example of the Power of Context and
Comprehensible Input in Language Learning

Even though there is only one new vocabulary item presented in the previous five statements and several contextual clues provided, without understanding that the passage relates to kite-flying, many readers may not easily figure out that *rouche* refers to wind. Additional factors that cause student anxiety make it easy to imagine how difficult it may be for students to access information even when they are unfamiliar with a single sign. For this reason, it is essential that students learning a second language have multiple methods for gaining access to the content knowledge needed to perform a specified task.

Authentic contexts provide an actual need for the development of bodies of knowledge and skills. Studies have been done that show students are more interested in a task if it is authentic, that is, if the skills are not developed in isolation and appear relevant to their own lives. As a result, vocabulary is now most often taught within the context of reading, grammar is taught within the context of writing essays and stories, second language instruction is taught based on communication needs, and *so* on. The Natural Approach (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) has changed the emphasis of second language instruction from drill and grammar exercises to a communicative focus. Second language learners are engaged in conversation in the target language in their classes *so* they will be able to communicate with native speakers of the language. Motivation for learners increases when a task is challenging, yet possible, and when the task is authentic. If these two conditions are met, research suggests that learning will be enhanced.

summary

As I researched effective teaching and learning strategies, I wanted to know what would happen if my approach to teaching included scaffolding techniques, direct instruction in metacognitive strategies, collaborative learning opportunities, and authentic interpreting practice. I wondered how to ensure the advancement of language acquisition while students learned to interpret. I decided to investigate current practices in IEPs to see what types of curricula and materials were most commonly used and how well they met the challenge of addressing students' varying degrees of ASL competency.

Existing ASL/English Interpreter Education Curricula and Materials

Videotapes, CD ROM's, and other practice materials

There are many practice materials that can be extremely beneficial to interpreter educators, working interpreters, and interpreting students; however, most of them do not contain explicit curricular guidelines and suggested activities.

Models of the interpreting process

Although no ASL/English interpreter training curriculum currently exists, the interpreting process models devised by Seleskovitch (1979), Ingram (1974), Colonomos (1982; 1992), and Cokely (1985; 1992) can be invaluable resources for interpreter educators.

Among the interpreter educators whom I spoke with about curricula, most informed me that they relied heavily on the Gish (1987; 1996) Approach to Information Processing or the "Goal-to-Detail" approach to teaching interpreting. This model scaffolds student learning by allowing them to choose the level of analysis at which they will interpret, so all students work within their own zones of proximal development. The Gish Approach to Information Processing also increases motivation, as students remain in control of how much of the message they will interpret. This approach is excellent for teaching students how to analyze a message while fostering feelings of confidence and competence.

Although the Gish model is based on strategies that research has shown to be effective in enhancing student learning, it does not seem to capitalize on the social nature of learning. I felt that providing structured opportunities for collaborative learning should result in an enhanced approach for teaching ASL/English interpreting. I devised a method that synthesizes the Gish Approach to Information Processing, videotaped practice materials, and features that research has shown to enhance student learning in order to create a more effective method for teaching ASL/English interpreting.

Enhancing Self-Regulation in ASL/English Interpreting

I developed a number of scaffolded activities in a metacognitive approach to interpreter education called "Enhancing Self-Regulation,''to determine if a metacognitive approach within a safe, authentic, and collaborative context would enhance student interpreting performance. In an effort to develop student competency to assess their own work accurately and to modify their own interpretations, metacognitive questioning strategies for self-regulation are explicitly taught to students throughout the program. Students work collaboratively on potential interpretations. Source text content of diverse content, language style, rates of delivery, register and specialized ASL vocabulary are scaffolded to keep the interpreting task challenging yet manageable. Students have multiple opportunities for researching, reviewing, discussing, and/or rehearsing materials to be interpreted. Students observe expert interpreters on a regular basis to become familiar with the performance outcomes toward which to strive. The teacher and other classmates provide frequent feedback and assessment to each student, and students frequently view and assess their own interpreting performance on videotape.

Goals

There are two primary goals of Enhancing Self-Regulation. The first is to improve overall student interpreting performance. This goal will be achieved as evidenced by student ability to produce grammatically correct and complete target sentences as well as more equivalent target messages (based on meaning). Secondly, students will approach novel interpreting situations more efficiently by increasing their use of metacognitive strategies when approaching the interpreting task and assessing interpreting performance. They will learn to recognize more easily when to apply what they have learned, and they will learn how to monitor their own work more accurately.

Features

Scaffolding

In order to expose students to specialized vocabulary in their second language, an essential feature of Enhancing Self-Regulation is conducting class discussions in **ASL** on a broad array of content domains. Scaffolding is a process by which students take control of their own learning. Bruer (1993) states that "instruction creates a scaffold to support learning, and then the scaffold is gradually dismantled." When students conduct research on cognitive academic content and specialized vocabulary, they are engaged in a type of self-scaffolding. Classroom discussions in **ASL** provide peer scaffolding of **ASL** structure, specialized vocabulary, and content knowledge.

Lectures and student presentations containing cognitive academic language should be commonplace in interpreting classrooms, yet the teacher must remember to take measures that ensure that material presented in ASL is accessible to all class members. For example, if students will be interpreting a video on a specified topic, they should conduct research in advance, *so* that all students have access to the same knowledge base and are not unduly challenged. This process allows students who may have less familiarity of certain content areas than their classmates to compensate for lack of exposure to a topic and teaches students the value of advance preparation for an interpreting task.

Peer collaboration

A second essential feature of Enhancing Self-Regulation is providing opportunities for students to work collaboratively with their classmates. Activities and projects are structured to allow students to collaborate on a single interpretation. Students view or listen to a segment of source language text in ASL or English and discuss potential interpretations. These discussion groups are likely to occur in both ASL and English, as students are working between the two languages. In this fashion, each student can work with others who may have more or less content knowledge, or language proficiency in ASL and/or English. By negotiating meaning and potential interpretations, the process of collaboration should promote maximum student learning. Working in small groups provides students with the scaffolding needed before they are expected to perform independently, which should reduce anxiety and encourage them to take risks leading to more effective interpreting performance.

Feedback and assessment

Collaborative learning groups also increase the likelihood that students will receive immediate feedback on any errors or misunderstandings that occur. In Enhancing Self-Regulation activities, students engage in frequent and immediate self-assessment and peer assessment while working in small groups. Full class collaboration in the form of discussions and the sharing of group interpretations follows all group activities in order for peers to scaffold more effective interpretations, and *so* the teacher can identify and make suggestions to clarify any remaining misconceptions. Following this format allows students to receive immediate feedback from their own group members, their classmates, and their teacher. This feedback should give students a chance to revise any inadequate interpretations and facilitate student conceptions of clear performance outcomes.

Direct instruction in metacognitive questioning strategies

Enhancing Self-Regulation provides direct instruction in metacognitive questioning strategies that should facilitate students' assessment and revision skills. Students are reminded to ask themselves specific questions to monitor interpretations. Metacognitive strategies are often used when reading.

Does the Interpretation Make Sense?

1. Is the interpretation consistent with the target language? (In other words, does the interpretation consist of grammatically correct ASL or English sentences? Does it look, sound, and/or feel right?)

   Is the interpretation consistent with the signer or speaker's previous comments?

2. Is the interpretation consistent with your own prior knowledge?

Figure 2
Guiding Metacognitive Questions for Monitoring Interpretations

Have you ever thought you read a certain thing, but as you continued to read, you realized that something didn't make sense? You go back and read it again, only to find that you did not read it correctly the first time. Self-regulation strategies should enhance students' interpreting performance by increasing their ability to monitor and revise interpreting tasks while in progress. Enhancing Self-Regulation periodically reminds students of three metacognitive questions (Figure 2), which derive from the overall question: Does the interpretation make sense?

Answers to any of these questions may provide clues that an interpretation is off track and needs modification. Enhancing Self-Regulation activities are designed to give interpreting students the support they need to produce more effective interpretations while continuing to develop second language skills and content knowledge. The next section provides an overview of the activities contained in this approach.

Activities

All instruction in Enhancing Self-Regulation follows a basic four-activity cycle. Metacognitive strategies compose the hub of the wheel and remain at the center of all four activities (Figure 3). Students should be consistently reminded of metacognitive questions to help them monitor their interpretations (Figure 2). During the first activity of the cycle, content knowledge is scaffolded for all students by assigning a topic to be researched in advance, by providing informational handouts or reading materials, or by asking students to engage in a predictive discussion about a specified topic. This

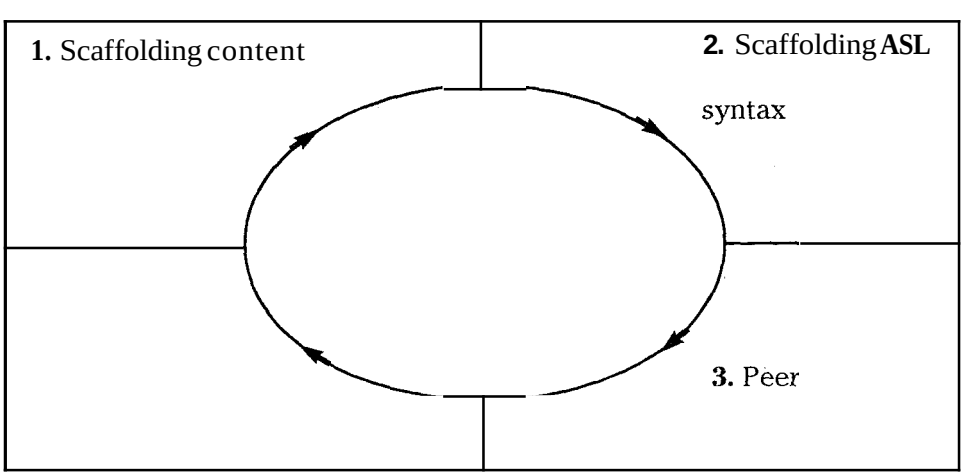

Figure 3
Cycle of Enhancing Self-Regulation Activities

advance preparation provides scaffolding for students to develop specialized vocabulary in English and general subject matter knowledge.

The second activity involves scaffolding specialized ASL vocabulary that is likely to be included in the target message. It is essential to conduct a discussion in American Sign Language on each topic to be interpreted so students have an opportunity to gain exposure to new ASL vocabulary from their classmates and the teacher. If the source text contains common-knowledge subject matter, students will most likely possess the ability to discuss the topic competently using spoken English. They will probably not demonstrate an equal level of competency for a discussion on the same topic using ASL. During this discussion, students should suggest terminology and issues that they predict would appear in a source text on the specified topic. This process helps students get used to using cognitive skills such as prediction and prior knowledge in preparation for interpreting familiar content based on common life experiences. Practice and use of higher order thinking skills should also facilitate further cognitive development.

In the third activity of the Enhancing Self-Regulation cycle, students participate in collaborative working groups. Students work collaboratively on manageable sections of a source message. After student groups have created a collaborative interpretation for a section, each group shares their interpretation with the class as a whole.

The fourth and final activity in this cycle provides multiple opportunities for immediate feedback, in groups and with the class as a whole, *so* students can modify ineffective interpretations and make revisions that enhance their preliminary interpretations. During this process, students will begin to develop, test, and revise hypotheses to use as a framework when approaching novel interpreting situations.

Summary

Enhancing Self-Regulation in ASL/English Interpreting through Scaffolded Instruction and Peer Collaboration incorporates features that research suggests are effective in promoting student learning of both content knowledge and performance skills. It seemed reasonable to anticipate that explicit instruction of metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, and collaborative learning would improve student interpreting performance. In order to determine if my hypothesis was correct, I implemented Enhancing Self-Regulation in my own interpreting classes.

Preparation courses

American Sign Language I
American Sign Language II
American Sign Language III
American Sign Language IV
Dactylology (Fingerspelling)

Required courses for interpreter training program

Awareness of Deaf Culture
Perspectives on Deafness
English Composition
**Interpreting II*
Sign-to-Voice II
Interpreting as a Profession
Areas and Functions of Interpreting
Interpreting I (Prerequisite: ASL IV)
Sign-to-Voice I (Prerequisite: ASL IV)
Interpreting Practicum (to be taken after completion of all other interpreting classes)

* italics denote implementation classes

Figure 4
ASL/English Interpreter Training Program Courses

Implementation of Enhancing Self-Regulation

Description of settings

I teach in an ASL/English interpreter education program at a large suburban community college in Southern California (Figure 4). Students can complete the four skill-based courses in one year before they participate in a year-long practicum experience, so the program takes at least two years to complete. I implemented Enhancing Self-Regulation activities in my Interpreting II and Sign-to-Voice II classes in the spring of 1998 and two activities in a colleague's Sign-to-Voice I class at a nearby community college. Through implementation, I hoped to determine if a scaffolded, metacognitively explicit, and collaborative learning approach to teaching interpreting enhanced student performance.

summary

Students in both of my classes and my colleague's class seemed to benefit from Enhancing Self-Regulation activities. To determine if the activities significantly affected interpreting performance and facilitated development of metacognitive strategies, I systematically analyzed the data that I collected before, during, and after implementation.

Determining the Effectiveness of Enhancing Self-Regulation

Data collection strategies

The success of this approach was evaluated through an analysis of a variety of data. Types of data included numerically rated interpreting performance tests, field notes from class discussions and student/teacher meetings; and student comments from journal writings, self-assessments, and class reflections.

Goal one: Improved overall interpreting performance

***Findings** from English to ASL data analysis*

The performance test data (Figure 5) reveal that students improved, but did not perform significantly better when interpreting from English to ASL on sign production, flow, vocabulary choice, or message equivalence. Although the data suggest that students did not significantly improve according to the Wilcoxon signed rank test, as you can see in Figure 5, student English to ASL performance did, in fact, improve.

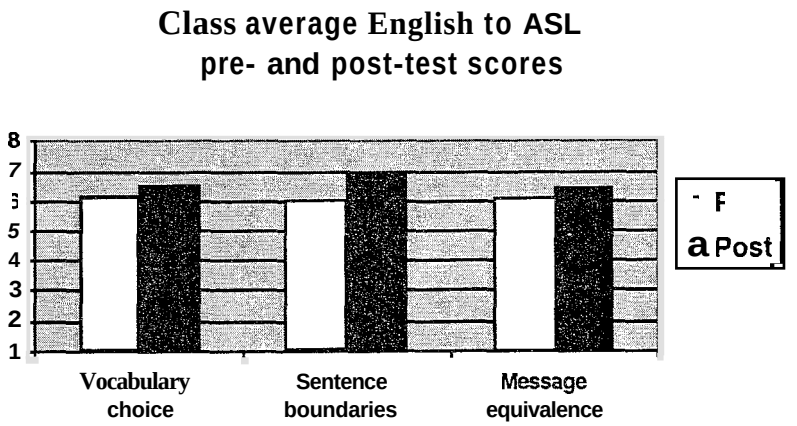

Figure 5
Class Average English to ASL Pre- and Post-Test Scores

Findings from ASL to English data analysis

In contrast to the English to ASL segments of the performance exams, the data reflect that student performance improved significantly in every component of ASL to English interpretation (Figure 6). Why are these results *so* different?

Goal two: Facilitate student development of metacognitive strategies

Findings

I believe that the differential use of metacognitive skills accounts for the discrepancy between performance on the English to ASL and the ASL to English portions of the interpreting tests. Since students were still learning ASL, they were not as certain about ASL syntax and semantics. Since students were more competent users of English, they were able to use metacognitive strategies to determine whether or not their ASL to English interpretations were on track, and if not, could make appropriate adjustments. The analysis of data suggest that students must be more competent ASL users to monitor English to ASL interpretations, but they approached the ASL to English interpreting task much more effectively after gaining metacognitive skills.

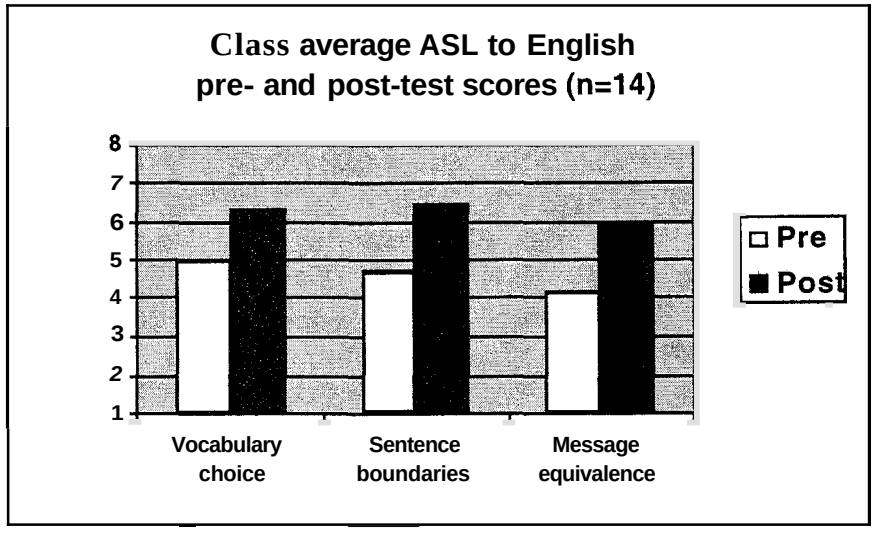

Figure 6
Class Average ASL to English Pre- and Post-Test Scores

Student reflections on Enhancing Self-Regulation

On the last day of class, I asked students to write down in what ways, if any, metacognitive questions had helped them to monitor their own work. From their responses, it is evident that metacognitive strategies helped many students primarily when working from ASL to English. A student replied, "I can hear if the voiced message sounds smooth, clear, and if it makes sense." Another wrote, "If I get lost or don't understand the ASL, thinking about what I just heard helps me put the pieces together." Another student commented, "It works—giving almost instant knowledge of [whether or not] what was spoken fit what was signed."

Students also seemed to benefit from the process of scaffolding content and cognitive skills to aid them in preparing for an interpreting task. One student noted, "Before this class in particular I would resist using my own knowledge for help in interpreting a particular topic." Another student stated, "It was a good lesson to do the research on a topic. It really prepares a person for vocabulary." One more student wrote, "Another thing that helped to prove a point is when you told us to research the coffee thing, and then you showed us how much better we interpreted when we knew about the subject."

Students also felt that peer collaboration improved their learning of ASL vocabulary and understanding of the interpreting process. One student observed, "I enjoyed working on a piece as a class—it really helps to see the different choices." Another wrote, "Being able to [work] as a whole class

helped us get different ways of interpreting the information (because you know there is not just one way of interpreting things)." Another remarked, "...and to be honest, I think it was really good that we were not allowed to speak in class, because I learned a lot of new signs from the other students."

Discussion and summary

The comparison of student pre- and post-test performances indicates that a combination of scaffolding, authenticity, peer collaboration, immediate feedback, and explicit instruction of metacognitive strategies does seem to improve overall student interpreting performance, most significantly from ASL to English. These findings demonstrate that the field of interpreter education has much to gain from research on learning. The activities in Enhancing Self-Regulation successfully integrate some of the best features from research on learning with some of the best practices in the field of interpreter education to improve student performance in ASL/English interpreting programs. This example of the effectiveness of the connection between teaching and research will hopefully inspire us as interpreter educators to continue the search for more effective methods for enhancing student success in ASL/English interpreting programs.

Conclusion

I have always believed that the journey is more important than the destination. The process that I have described in this paper strengthens my conviction. I began this project because of my realization that there was room for improvement in IEPs. When I looked at existing research on learning, I found many features that seemed to enhance student learning and performance in a variety of subject areas. I realized that many of these features could easily be applied to ASL/English interpreter education.

Perhaps one of the most important benefits to come out of this project is that I have become a better teacher because I have begun to systematically pay attention to what is occurring in my classes. I strongly encourage all ASL/English interpreter educators to try out different activities in the classroom based on current educational research, revise those activities, and analyze and publish the results. We need to combine all of our best efforts in order to improve the quality of ASL/English interpreter education programs by conducting action research, examining and reexamining our own instructional practices, and disseminating information *so* that it will reach the largest possible number of ASL/English interpreter educators.

About *the* Author

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Melissa completed her undergraduate work at San Diego State University, graduating Cum Laude with distinction in her major. She completed her graduate studies at the University of California, San Diego, earning a Master's degree in Teaching and Learning with an emphasis in curriculum design. Her focus of study was teaching ASL/English interpreting.

She has presented for RID's Region V Conference, the Southern California chapter of RID (SCRID), the San Diego Community College District, and the CIT 2000 Convention.

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It Just Doesn't Look Like ASL! Defining, Recognizing, and Teaching Prosody in ASL

Betsy Winston

Abstract

Prosody is the combination of features in any language that produces the rhythm, accent, and "feel" of the language. In ASL, prosody is a visual spatial image, created by several features. These features include head and body movements, eyebrow movement, mouth movement, speed of signing, sign formation, pacing, and pausing. These features are often very difficult for students to acquire. As teachers, we can expose students to these features in class through selective watching and shadowing techniques. Once students have overtly learned about prosodic features in ASL, they are more able to recognize and use them when they do go out and mingle with the Deaf community, and when they eventually become interpreters. In this paper, I describe several prosodic features and patterns that appear in ASL discourse.

Defining Prosody

Prosody is the combination of features that produces the visual, spatial rhythm, accent, and feel of **ASL,** and that allows signers to reflect their internal focus for any given text (and segment thereof). It also allows watchers to break the message into processable chunks that help them interpret the signer's intended meaning. The challenge of defining and analyzing prosody in any language is that it is produced by *so* many different features in combination over a variety of utterances, and is highly influenced by the speaker's or signer's mental focus at the moment. In spite of the challenge of defining prosody, native users of any language are adept at identifying the visual, spatial nuances of prosody, changes in prosodic stress and emphasis, and, in the case of second language users, the inappropriate use of or entire lack of prosodic features in discourse.

As a second language learner of ASL, as an interpreter, and as a teacher of interpreters, prosody has long been my nemesis. I am told that my signing just "doesn't look right!" As interpreters we often learn that our interpreting is "boring, not life-like, not real ASL." And when I work with interpreters, I find that one of the aspects of interpreting that is *so* often missing is the elusive "prosody." Beginning

signers and interpreters often lack effective prosody—their communications appear to be monotone, lacking interest, and difficult to comprehend. To compare it to spoken language, it often looks like someone reading words from a book without pausing, pacing, emphasis, or variation of pitch. An interpretation that is accepted is one that has appropriate prosodic features, in appropriate combinations over appropriate chunks.

But what is appropriate prosody in ASL? It is an elusive combination of features that have not yet been extensively defined, studied, or taught to learners. This paper is an exploration of the overall prosody that causes watchers to think, "That looks like ASL," or "That does not look like ASL." It is the difference between monotone, unsegmented signing (like someone reading from a book without pausing, stress, intonation, or interest) and a signed message that looks right, that seems natural, and that is watched for meaning instead of for mistakes and bad accents.

Prosodic Features

Researchers in spoken languages have long made the easy distinction between sounds made by the vocal tract and other non-sound features that accompany sound production (Cruttendon, 1986; Gumperz, 1982; Schiffrin, 1994; Tannen, 1989). Sound production is divided into 1) linguistically relevant sounds (words, utterances, etc.) and features that co-occur with the linguistic features, such as intonation, accent, rhythm, tempo, speed; 2) paralinguistic features (meaningful sounds like sighs or whistles), that add meaning but are not linguistic; **3)** other features (anything non-vocal) that are labeled extralinguistic and are not studied as part of linguistics (generally facial expression and body movement, as well as hand gestures, have been excluded from spoken language linguistic study).

In ASL we cannot make such distinctions. It is essential to consider any visual feature as a possible component of prosody. After extensive and detailed analysis it may become clear that certain features are linguistic rather than prosodic, but for now it is too early to exclude any visual feature from analysis and consideration.

Approaches to Prosody

There have been two opposite approaches to the study of prosody. We can focus on the physical production of prosody, measuring the pitch, the vowel length, the length of pauses, the exact tones of intonation, etc. While very exact descriptions of the sounds of speech are achieved, these descriptions rarely correlate with perceptions of prosodic prominence by native users. In other words, there is no direct correlation between the absolute length of a pause between phrases and the prosodic prominence that pause produces. Likewise, there is no direct correlation between the absolute frequency or volume of a sound and the perceived importance or prominence of that sound in the overall discourse (Cruttendon, 1986; Tannen, 1989).

We can also approach the study of prosody from the perceptual direction—given that native users identify a specific feature or sound as prominent, what does that prominence achieve? And now, many (Chafe, 1980; Gumperz, 1982; Tannen, 1989) are combining the best of both approaches. Using utterances that have been identified as perceptually marked by language users, they try to identify those physical features that produce the given perception. This approach seems the most likely to be effective for ASL as well. It is certainly possible to measure the length of a movement, the exact physical location of a sign, the difference in height between a raised and non-raised eyebrow, and it will be interesting to see what correlations may result. But these measurements will probably not lead to a definition of prosody in ASL; it will be the watchers' perceptions of prominence that help us identify the features that combine in any given utterance to direct our attention to its meaning. For example, the length of a final hold in a sign only focuses attention on that sign in relation to the length of final holds on every other sign in the utterance. If they are all the same, the length of the final hold is unremarkable; if the final hold of the last sign is 1 second, and all the other final holds are 2 seconds, the final sign becomes unstressed; if the final sign is held 1 sec, and every other sign has no hold or a minimal hold in the transition from one sign to the next, then the final sign becomes the focus of the utterance. *So,* in studying prosody, it is not the actual physical production, but the relative production within a given series of physical productions that creates the perception of stress, prominence, and focus

Functions of Prosody

When prosodic features co-occur over longer sequences of discourse, they tend to focus the audience on the relative prominence of topics, sub-topics, and asides within the overall discourse structure. For example, the prosodic pattern for listing in English has an upward intonation at the end of each utterance except for the last one, which falls. "I bought bread, eggs, cheese, and milk"—where the intonation on "bread, eggs, and cheese" rises, while the intonation on "milk" falls. This prosodic pattern in English helps the listener predict when and where the list will come to an end. Knowing that the list has ended, the listener will assume that the next utterance moves on to another topic (or sequential topic), such as, "then I went home and ate." If the speaker dropped the intonation on "milk," then continued the list, the listener might predict that something out of the ordinary was happening next. Likewise, if the speaker did not drop the intonation on "milk," the listener would think that the list was unfinished and might ask the speaker what else they bought. Such is the power and function of prosody, to help us chunk discourse, and interpret the prominence and structure intended by the speaker.

Likewise in ASL, prosody provides the watcher with a means of chunking and interpreting the discourse over larger chunks. ASL is comparable to English in its use of prosody for defining listing—each utterance that lists an item tends to end with an upward movement and slightly longer hold on the last sign of the utterance, until the last item in the list, which tends to have a downward movement on the last sign (or signs) of the final utterance.

Another example of ASL prosodic features that mark larger segments of discourse can be seen when signers shift from the naming of an idea to an expansion or explanation of that idea. For example, a signer discussing which breed of dog she bought might sign the first few utterances ("I just bought a dog as a pet, it is a Husky") in fairly central space with relatively little movement, facial expression, head movement, or use of space. But, if the next few utterances explain to the watcher what a Husky is, the signer's prosody will change to a rhythmic, larger space, often moving from side to side or front to back while signing ("Those dogs with the big ruff, they are used to pulls sleds, and often have one blue eye"). Another choice, if the signer wants to make an aside comment rather than a straightforward expansion, would be to move slightly back and to the nondominant side for the several utterances needed for the aside, moving back to the center space when the aside is over.

Features of Prosody in ASL

As you read through this article, I recommend that you choose a 5-10 minute ASL text and use Selective Watching and Selective Shadowing (Nida, 1953; Winston, 1990) to become more aware of each of the prosodic features described here. Once you have watched for a feature, shadow your text for that feature, trying to identify patterns of prosodic use of each feature.

I qualify this discussion of prosodic features by saying that some of these features may have multiple functions, and some may be more effectively analyzed as lexical, syntactic, phonological, or morphological units. However, since current analyses of these features have limited their scope to the smaller units, I believe it is essential to consider them at the discourse level as well to determine their actual functions.

Mead movement

Head movement (and the lack of it) creates both a visual pattern and a rhythm to signed text. The movements include nodding, shaking, and tilting the head. These movements can be single or multiple, fluid or staccato. Many head nods have been analyzed at the syntactic level (Baker and Cokely, 1980; Liddell, 1980). However, because they produce both rhythm and prominence within discourse, I include head movement as a prosodic feature as well.

Watching the signed text you have chosen, look for differenttypes of head movement—multiple and single nods, shakes, lifts, and twists. Where do YOU see the different types of head movements occurring? Do you see any patterns? Are there differencesin the categories of narrative, descriptive, and explanatory? What about in conversation?

Eye brows—raise/lower

As discussed above for head movement, much current research in ASL categorizes eye brow movement as syntactic, marking types of sentences such as Wh-qs. or Yes/No qs. While these markers often co-occur with these types of sentences when produced in isolation, the consistent co-occurence of these features has not been investigated in on-going natural discourse. It will be interesting to see if and which of these grammatical markers always occurs, sometimes occur, and where within a discourse structure they are more prominent (openings, closings, conversations, lectures?). As syntactic markers, these indicate types of utterances. As prosodic features, they function to mark beginnings and ends of utterances.

In your chosen text, what type of movement do you see and what does it seem to mark? As you did with head movement, watch then shadow eyebrow movement in this text. Then do the same with other texts. Any patterns?

Eye gaze

Eye gaze, as a prosodic feature, often marks utterance boundaries. Eye gaze is used to mark prominence in ASL discourse as well (Mather, 1989; Mather and Winston, 1995). Signers look at their hands to direct the watcher to the signing. They look at the audience to indicate that what they just signed was important; the shift from looking at hands to audience marks the boundary between one utterance and the next. Bahan and Supalla describe three types of eye gaze in their article about narrative structure, gaze to audience, character's gaze, gaze at hands (Bahan and Supalla, 1995). As you watch your chosen text, can you identify these eye gazes? Do they describe all the types of eye gazes that you see? What about in other types of texts? Again, watch then shadow the story, then try it on other texts.

Eye blink/eye open

In addition to eye gaze, eyelid movement cues the watcher to utterance boundaries. Eye blink often occurs at the ends of utterances. The blink is sometimes preceded by a slight widening of the eyelids. This sequence of normal width, brief opening, then blink is a salient prosodic feature in ASL. Wilbur (1994) also discusses various eye blink features that mark utterances in ASL. What patterns do you see in your chosen text and other texts?

Mouth

The mouth can also be considered as a possible prosodic feature in ASL. Of course, signals occur with specific signs, or as meaningful additions to a variety of signs (MMM, TH) (Baker and Cokely, 1980; Bridges and Metzger, 1996). They also mark utterance boundaries by their disappearance. For example, the occurrence of TH with DRIVE happens at the end of a clause; when the TH disappears, the watcher knows that a new utterance is beginning. In addition, mouth configurations that are not signals also may change at utterance boundaries. Do you notice different types of mouth movements occurring with different categories of signs—fingerspelling, nouns, verbs? Are there patterns of mouth movement that tend to mark ends of utterances? Ends of topics?

Shoulders-up/down

Another feature of ASL that creates patterns in the signer's space is the movement of the shoulders. While signing, the shoulders move in a variety of ways and directions: up and down, forward and back, together and independently. These variations often occur at utterance boundaries and can also signal prominence within utterances and larger chunks of discourse.

Shoulder movement, as with other prosodic features, can be part of an overall style of signing. Each signer will use a variety and combination of features, some more than others. Shoulder movement seems to be one of those features that is very marked in some signers and not in others. What do you see in the text you have chosen to watch? Now that you have looked at several different prosodic features, have you noticed that one person uses particular features more than others? This is common. We each use a particular combination more often, and more often in specific types of texts. This is

what people recognize as their "style" of signing. Have you ever noticed that some students sign like their ASL teachers? Many of the similarities may be prosodic in nature.

Torso (body): side-to-side, forward/back

Likewise, the movement of the torso in space creates spatial patterns. The torso can move from side to side, forward and back, and it can twist and bend. One interesting observation is that signers tend to lean forward toward their dominant side, and back toward their non-dominant side. A shift in this pattern can mark an utterance as prominent. Also, utterances can be marked for beginning and end by the shifting movement from forward to back, then back to forward in a rhythmic pattern. As you watch your chosen text, do you see any patterns in this shifting? Does the signer shift to the dominant or non-dominant side at the beginnings of utterances? At the ends?

Sign articulation

In addition to the features discussed above, there are several features of sign articulation that create prosody: sign-internal movements, size of articulation, repetition, length of movements and holds both within and between signs, and height of the signs can all combine to help create the prosody of a text.

Sign internal movements create prosodic patterns. Individual signs, and sequences of signs, can be articulated with more or less tension (and the opposite — more or less fluidity). The relative tension and fluidity of signs can mark utterance boundaries. As you watch your text, focus on a couple of signs that are repeated throughout (perhaps a noun or classifier that is part of the main topic) and look for differences in the ways each sign is signed at different times in the text. Look for each of the features below. The differences will not be large or long — they will be very subtle.

Size of articulation also creates prosody. A sign can be made at the expected size, or it can be made either smaller or larger, creating visual prosodic patterns. Likewise, the speed of the articulation — slow, fast, ordinary — adds to the prosodic visual patterns created in signing space.

The number of times a sign is repeated creates visual, spatial patterns. Certainly, some movements have morphological functions, but single and multiple movements can also indicate relative prominence of a sign within a sequence. Likewise, the difference in number of movements can mark the end of a topic rather than the middle or beginning.

The lengths of movements and holds within and between signs, as well as the relative tension used to move through the signs also create prosody in signing. A series of signs with relatively fluid transitions followed by a tense, staccato stop on the last sign clearly marks the utterance.

The relative height of signs in discourse also can be prosodic. Signs at the end of utterances may be dropped slightly in comparison to signs at the beginning; signs at the beginning may be raised. Thus, a combination of a raised sign, several middle signs, and a dropped sign can cue the watcher that the series is a single utterance, At the discourse level, lists are an example of this. Each element of the list is signed up or level, with the exception of the last. This is often dropped slightly in comparison to the other elements.

Number of hands

While some signs require the use of both hands in ASL, many do not. The use of both hands to create a sign when both hands are not expected creates emphasis; likewise, using one hand to create a sign when two are expected can focus the audience on the signing. In the example below, the sign FINE is signed in a natural text at one point with a single hand **(A)** and at another point with both hands for added emphasis at the end of a topic.

Beyond the domain of a single sign, signers often use two hands to create more complex messages. A signer can use one hand to point, either emphatically or not, to the signing hand, as seen below. Although it appears that the non-dominant hand in just hanging, it is actually pointing. This point continues over specific spans, then disappears, then reappears repeatedly.

In an even more complex construction, a signer can end one clause, hold one hand of the last sign, and sign about that last sign with the other hand. Below, the sign FIND is articulated with the domi-

nant hand, held in place at the end, and the sign RELIEVED is articulated by the nondominant hand, producing the meaning "I was relieved to find it."

Holding the dominant hand creates a link between the two sentences, while the shift to a new utterance marks an utterance boundary. The signer can thus use prosodic features to create cohesive links (discussed later in the section on cohesion), helping the audience both chunk utterances and link them simultaneously. There are also examples of this in the River story, while Sarah is describing the tree swing incident.

ONE AND TWO HANDED FORMS (FINE)

A:FINE

B:FINE

LIBRARY #OF CONGRESS

Dom:INDEX(Library)

N-D: INDEX----------

LIBRARY

Shifting hands

Signers also shift hands to create emphasis or focus prosodically. In setting up a spatial comparison, a signer can point a sign toward each side of the map, articulating the sign normally. However, as can be seen in the two pictures below, the signer can also change the articulating hand in order to point to the spatial map. This prosodic shift creates focus because the unexpectedness of the articulation marks the importance of the topic. Below, in **A,** the signer articulates the sign SOUND with his dominant hand on his dominant side. Then he switches to his nondominant, signing SOUND with his left hand on his left side. In this example he is discussing two perspectives of sound—one perspective has been mapped on the right, the other on the left. By switching dominance he switches his pointing from one location to the other.

Do you find examples of this in the text you have chosen? Watch the text, and if you find this type of shifting, practice shadowing it.

Non-Prosodic Features

There is also a category of "features" that do not create prosody in the signed message. These include what might be labeled "extralinguistic" features, features that appear due to particular situations (nervousness, restricted signing space due to video limitations). These "patterns" may overlay

and confound the prosodic features that co-occur to mark prominence and utterance boundaries. For example, in addition to torso movement that marks utterance boundaries, a nervous signer may sway back and forth from side to side throughout a lecture. These movements need to be teased apart from the prosodic ones. Likewise, the restrictions of signing on video mean signers may use less spatial patterning and more rhythmic distinctions (more and longer pauses, more defined and prolonged head nods) rather than shifting from side to side in the signing space.

Simultaneous Signs (FIND/RELIEVED)

FIND-------
RELIEVED!

Hand Shifting (SOUND)

A SOUND B: SOUND

Pausing

When discussing prosody, it is also essential to consider the contribution of the halting or removal of all these features: the pause (Bahan and Supalla, 1995). For spoken languages, the pause may simply be the cessation of sound. But for ASL the pause can be more complex. While it is similar to spoken languages in that there is a cessation (of movement rather than sound), it is different in that the signer can continue to hold the signs in space, keeping the watcher's attention on the sign rather than on the absence of it. I have tentatively identified three types of pauses in ASL discourse: the filled pause (where a sign is held while everything else stops); the prosodic pause, which marks boundaries between phrases and utterances; and the extralinguistic pause (used for re-grouping, checking notes, thinking, hesitations for repair/re-thinking). These are only preliminary descriptions.

The prosodic pause seems to be the least marked, occurring between and within utterances to chunk idea units. The filled pause seems to be the more marked pause, often occurring at the end of an utterance that ends a topic or point. It focuses attention on the idea just ended, giving the watchers a cue to its prominence in the overall text.

The extralinguistic pause may seem irrelevant to this discussion of prosody. For some signers it can be a brief, practical pause that signals nothing more than a forgetting of the next point, a checking of

notes, a repair, or a gathering of thoughts. However, even when a signer pauses for these reasons, the pauses often signal an utterance boundary, and often a topic or subtopic boundary. The signer checking notes signals a new topic. Such a pause may also signal a closing of a topic, as when a signer checks to see if they have included all the points before closing the topic.

However, some signers use this pause to mark more than simple structural cues. One signer I have studied used the extralinguistic pause to involve the audience, building suspense. At periodic breaks in his lecture, he stopped signing, looked at his notes, and rubbed his hands together, adding a facial expression of glee. This gesture within the pause implied a sense of anticipation, a sense of "Great, now for the next piece of the puzzle!" And it signaled, each time it appeared, a new revelation in the research the signer was describing.

Prosodic Domains

The features described above also co-occur over various lengths or domains. Some tend to occur more often with single signs, often at the end of utterances. Others seem to co-occur more frequently over utterances, while still others are more noticeable over longer discourse chunks.

Single signs

The features that seem to co-occur with single signs are mouth movements, eye open (while a sign is being held), and sign internal movements and holds.

Utterance boundaries

Features that seem to occur most often at the end of an utterance or chunk include pause, eyeblink, long holds, multiple movements of signs, and dropped hands.

Longer spans

Prosodic features that often co-occur over longer spans include eye gaze, shoulders up (dropped at end), rhythm/stillness, high signing/low signing, eye brows, holds (one hand held, other hand signs), staccato/rhythm, and use of space.

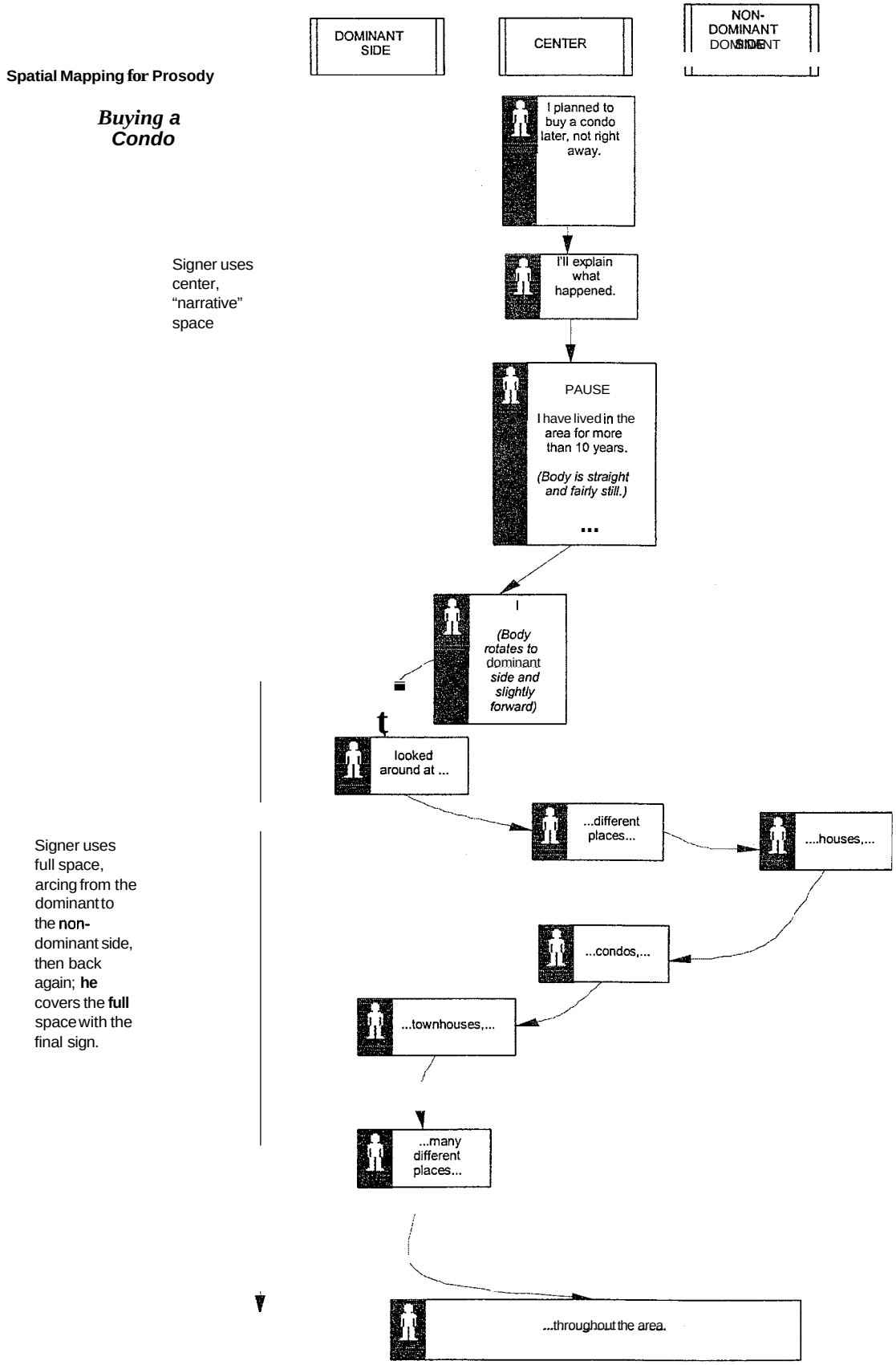
Signer Styles

These features seem to bound both short and long sequences — single signs, phrases, and utterances, as well as longer chunks such as topics and sub-topics. Signers appear to have different personal styles, and also variations of those styles in different settings. For example, in a single setting (formal lectures given at a conference at Gallaudet University) signers incorporate a variety of features to chunk their discourse. One signer used primarily clear pauses between each utterance, with little head movement but large body movement (stepping from one space to another) and fairly tense, precise sign formation with distinctive holds between signs within utterances. Another signer had relatively few clear pauses, frequent head and torso movement, and frequent stepping from space to space, with more relaxed sign production and transitions. A third signer had frequent and large head and torso movement, very tense sign production within signs but transitions between signs were relatively smooth, and stayed in one place for most of the lecture. Thus, each signer incorporates a combination of features for chunking their messages in any particular setting (and the setting certainly impacts these choices.)

Likewise, a study of a single signer across settings reveals that signers incorporate different combinations in different settings. This should not be surprising — levels of formality, distance between signer and audience, familiarity with the audience, number in the audience, as well as such simple features as sitting instead of standing, all influence the features signers choose to produce prosody. The first signer mentioned above, who in the lecture setting used relatively few features other than pausing and stepping from space to space, uses facial expression, head movement, placement of signs in space, and torso and shoulder movement in a commercial tape of story-telling. The large stepping into

Spatial Mapping for Prosody

Buying a Condo



space is not evident—constrained by the simple factor of videotaping the event. In an interview following the story, yet another combination of prosodic features are seen in the same signer—few pauses and holds between signs, smooth transitions, frequent head movement and facial expression, subtle eye gaze, and relatively more rhythmic tempo in the signing. These differences are not surprising; they are expected. However, these examples should demonstrate the difficulty of pinning down rules of prosody that always occur for chunking specific segments of discourse. Rather than rules, we look for patterns that tend to occur, and combinations of patterns that seem to occur with specific signers in specific settings.

Prosodic Patterns

It is fascinating to me to study the prosodic patterns that occur within utterances. As a second language learner of ASL, I have had a difficult time learning to appropriately incorporate these patterns. Yet these are the patterns that make signing look natural, and again, help the watcher understand the relative importance of each succeeding chunk. These patterns cue the watcher to the focus of the signer. These patterns signal us to the introduction of new topics, the expansion of given topics, listing, and the shifting from fact to feeling.

Introduction of new topic

Some of the examples in this section come from the video, Buying a Condo (Valli, 1993). I recommend that you watch it before you read, and again as you read each example. The signer is introducing his story about buying a condo. (I have chosen this text to demonstrate the example; my observations come from natural data collected from various signers, usually presenting more formal lectures.) At the beginning of the narrative, he is introducing a new topic, why he bought a condo. If you refer to the map of the visual patterns in space (below) and then watch the clip, you can see that he introduces this topic by signing primarily in central space, giving us facts, and using very little complex ASL grammar (no classifiers or role shifting, for example.) His sentences are fairly short and primarily lexical. There is little repetition of signs, except those that require it in articulation. The signing is closer to citation form—more slow and staccato, more clearly distinguished, and the internal boundaries, both between signs and utterances, are fairly clearly defined. In this introductory section, he signs that he had always planned to buy a place to live, but had intended to buy it later, rather than now.

Expansion of topic

As the signer enters into his explanation, expanding his topic, he signs that he had been looking at various places to live, including houses, condos, and townhouses—several places throughout the area.

As he expands this topic, his prosody shifts. The sign space is widened, deepened, and takes on an "S" pattern. There is more repetition of movement in comparison to the previous section, the signing is more fluid and relaxed, and the internal boundaries are less distinct.

This prosodic shifting is very subtle, yet is a recurrent pattern throughout not only his signing, but throughout a variety of other signers I have analyzed. To date, most of my research has looked at more formal lecture settings. The use of space for prosody in this example, which results in the "S" pattern, is an expansion of the sign space. As the signer begins the pattern, he signs that he looked around at different places, moving from one side to the other, ending with the sign HOUSE on his nondominant side. There is not a clear utterance boundary but he swings back toward his dominant side, signing CONDO as he reaches the middle, and TOWNHOUSE as he arrives at the dominant side of the "S" pattern. He then continues with the same rhythm, reiterating that it was many different places, ending with a classifier indicating the entire area.

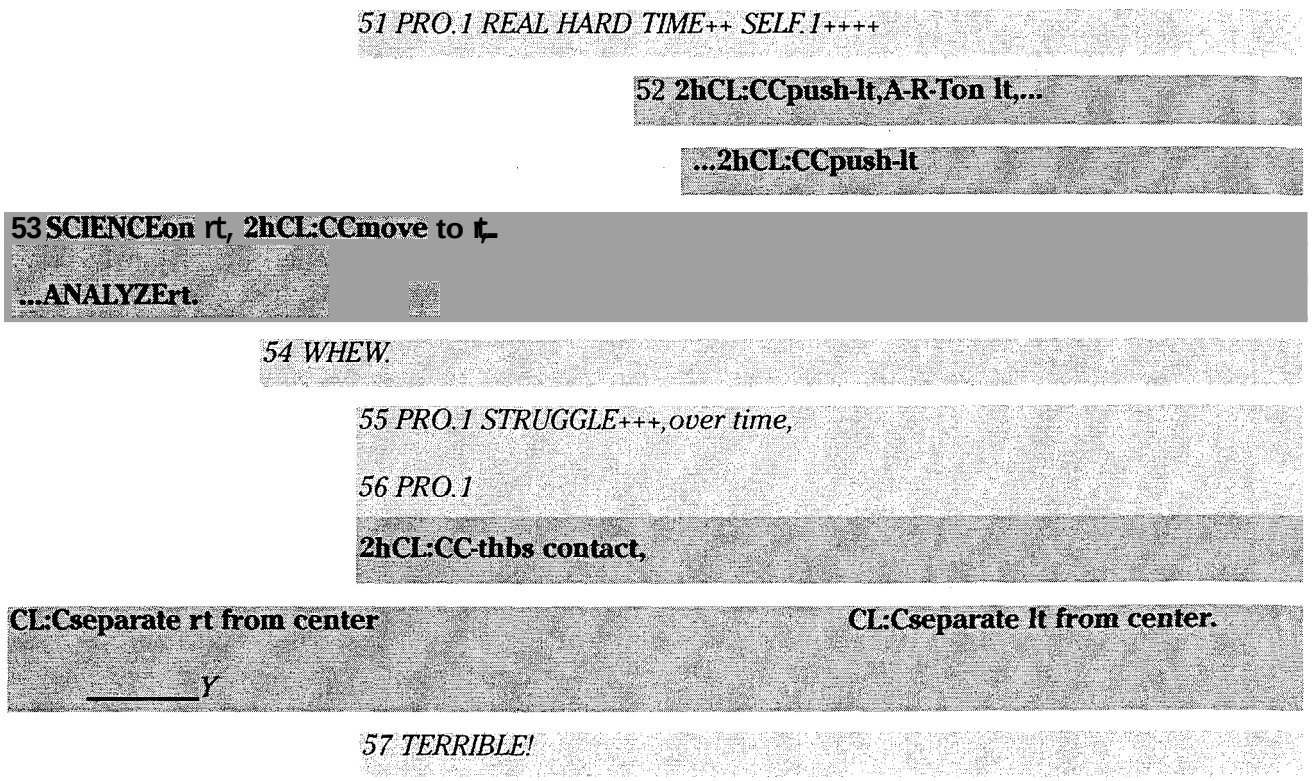
It is interesting to compare the final sign (CL:5around there) with the same sign when it occurs earlier, while he is still in the central space introducing his topic. In the first occurrence, the sign is centralized; in the last occurrence, it covers the wider space covered by the "S" pattern, adding to the visual pattern in the expansion.

These patterns are very subtle! These are not huge shifts in signing size, space, or movement. But they are visually striking and, as I have been seeing, occur in regular patterns.

This shift between central, clearly articulated signing and broader, more rhythmic signing is a recurrent pattern for signers who are introducing, then expanding on topics. One reason that this is so interesting to me (the second language learner) is that, when I saw a shift to a use of space, I assumed it was a new topic, not realizing it was an expansion. As I learn more about prosody, I see these shifts with new insight.

Fact to Feeling

The shifting from central to side also shows up in another function. When signing comparisons, signers appear to use the central space for another purpose. Looking at an example of comparing the art and science of ASL poetry, the signer defines art on one side of the spatial map (ln. 52), and science on the other (ln. 53). The placement of the two entities is referential, not prosodic shifting. However, he returns to the center to express his feelings about the struggle he faced in relation to the topics (lns. 54-56). He then uses the two sides of the map to show the separation (ln. 56), returning to the center again to express his feelings about the struggle (ln. 57). This appears to be prosodic. Central space does not MEAN feelings, but the shift back to it in this instance marks a difference between the two chunks.



Again, this type of shifting appears to be fairly regular throughout signers. As you look at your text, and as you watch other signers, see if you can spot these or other prosodic patterns.

Additional patterns

A few other patterns that I have begun to identify, but have not yet categorized, clearly occur between unmarked and marked utterances. I don't have much to say about these, but thought I would include them here so you can look for them in your own observations.

In ordinary, **unmarked discourse,** signers tend to:	In contrast, when a signer wants to **mark** something in discourse, for emphasis, focus, or involvement, signers tend to:
Move forward toward the dominant side	Move forward to the non-dominant side
Move backward toward the non-dominant side	Backward movement may indicate the end of a chunk
Use the dominant hand	Use the non-dominant hand or both hands
Have more unfilled pauses (no signs are held and the hands are dropped or held in a neutral position.)	Use filled pauses (holding the final hand of a sign, then signing about it with the other)
Continue prosodic features over longer stretches without a great deal of change	Change many or all of the prosodic features between chunks

The research into discourse-level prosody has barely started. The visual patterns we see in space are created through the co-occurrence of the various features we have discussed in this section. They create what we perceive as the rhythm, pacing, and focus that guides us in chunking and understanding the discourse of others. Signing that includes the appropriate combinations of prosodic features looks natural; signing that does not include these features appropriately looks awkward and non-native. Teaching students how to recognize these features and how to incorporate them into their signing is a challenge for ASL and interpreting teachers (Hatch, 1992; Nida, 1953). I have found that a combination of selective watching (Winston, 1990) and selective shadowing enhances students' use of prosody in their signing. Once students are able to recognize and use prosodic features, their signing and interpreting become more intelligible and more acceptable to watchers.

About the Author

Betsy Winston, Ph.D., is the director of the Teaching Interpreting for Educators and Mentors program (Project TIEM.online), a national project to provide online courses for interpreting educators and mentors at the University of Colorado-Boulder. She is also the research director of the Educational Linguistic Research Center and an educator and consultant in educational linguistics, discourse analysis, and teaching interpreting. She holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Georgetown University and an M.A. in Linguistics with a focus in ASL from Gallaudet University. Dr. Winston teaches courses and workshops in linguistics, interpretation, interpreter education, and educational interpreting nationally.

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Effectively Using Web Resources: Reaching Interpreter Educators

Betsy Winston and Brenda Schick
Project TIEM.Online
University of Colorado-Boulder
WWW.Colorado.edu/slhs/TIEM.online

Presentation Description

There is a great need for education and training for interpreting educators and mentors in the US. Project TIEM.online (Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors) is a national project designed to provide a curriculum for interpreting educators that offers a sequenced set of courses via the World Wide **Web.** In this presentation, we discuss the advantages of this distance education approach and describe the overall goals of the project. We welcome input from anyone interested in this project at TIEM@Colorado.edu.

Presentation Outline

I. The Distance Education Approach
   A. Features
   B. Tools
II. Project TIEM.Online (Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors)
   A. Curriculum Development and Implementation
      1. Professional Development Certificates for Interpreting Educators
      2. Master Mentorship Certificate
   B. Web Center for Interpreting Resources and Technology

Project TIEM.Online
University of Colorado-Boulder

Project TIEM.Online

University of Colorado-Boulder
Betsy Winston, Project Director
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Project TIEM.Online (Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors) is a national grant project awarded by the Department of Education (H160C000003) to the University of Colorado-Boulder. The purpose of the grant is to develop and provide training for current and future interpreting educators and has been awarded for a period of 5 years.

This project will develop and implement curricula for interpreting educators and mentors. The courses will be offered via distance delivery on the WWW. The curricula will be designed and evaluated by experts to be pedagogically sound and to meet the knowledge and skills requirements for teaching interpreting and mentoring. Using the web to deliver curricula offers the most accessible, flexible, high quality, and cost-effective means of reaching the intended audience.

The goals of the project are:

1. Develop and implement (via the World Wide Web) a pedagogically sound, thorough and in-depth curriculum designed to provide appropriate training for current and future interpreter educators;
2. Develop and implements a pedagogically sound, well-designed interpreter mentoring curriculum;
3. Provide technical assistance to institutions, agencies, and individuals for training and implementing mentoring programs.

Project TIEM.Online
University of Colorado-Boulder
Department of Education (H160C000003)

Master Mentoring Certificate

Project TIEM.Online

Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors Online

The Master Mentor program will train interpreters and interpreter educators to serve as mentors within their communities. The courses in this curriculum will focus on the knowledge and skills necessary for effective mentoring. The Master Mentor program will identify and train interpreters and interpreter educators to serve as mentors for interpreters at all skill levels. In the proposed curriculum, there is a series of four courses that focus on developing both knowledge and skills essential to effective mentoring.

Proposed Course Sequence	Information	Description
1) Approaches to Mentoring	Date: Fall (yr.1) Place: WWW	Theories and approaches to mentoring
2) Feedback and Assessment Credit: 3 credits	Date: Spring (yr.1) Place: WWW	Theories and approaches to providing assessment and feed-
3) Practicum: Mentoring Credit: 3 credits	Date: Summer yr.1): Place: OPTIONAL- University of Colorado for 2 weeks OR	Intensive application of mentoring approaches with hands-on practice of interpreting assessment and feedback
4) Fieldwork Cooperative Credit: 3 credits	Date: Fall (yr.2) Place: WWW and home region	Application of mentoring practices; to be planned in conjunction with the agencies or regional programs of

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Master Mentoring Certificate
Project TIEM.Online
University of Colorado-Boulder

pplication Information

luring 2001-2002, 1 representative from each RSA region will be recruited for the pilot cohort. In the ubsequent 3 years, two representatives from each RSA region and 5 additional participants will be ac-epted yearly. Applicants need to submit the following for consideration.

1. Letter of interest, outlining experiences expertise, and objectives that demonstrate active interest in mentoring, teaching, and inter reter education; applicant should also demonstrate the intention of completing all 4 courses in the Raster Mentor Certificate in the 4 semester timeframe.
2. Resume/Vita
3. One-page proposal describing how you will apply mentoring skills in your home community during the fieldwork experience. This proposal is tentative, but should demonstrate cooperative support from a recognized group or organization during the participant's fieldwork course. This might be a school district, an interpreter training program, an NAD, ASLTA, or RID chapter; etc.
4. Three letters of recommendation that demonstrate strong support from one or more of the following:
   a. individuals and organizations that have developed, or are currently developing, the RSA funded curricula on multicultural, deaf/blind, educational, and rehabilitation interpreting;
   b. experts in the various specialized interpreting settings including legal, medical, and mental health;
   c. interpreters and interpreter educators, especially those serving rural and remote areas;
   d. members of the deaf community, in order to recruit deaf and hard of hearing students.

hese letters must demonstrate the applicant's active participation in the home community, as well as skill n the specific languages and/or systems used in the applicant's interpreting. This may include Cued peech, oral interpreting, tactile and close-vision interpreting, languages other than English and ASL, and poken-language based signing systems such as Signing Exact English (SEE). Student mentors who do not ave the necessary prerequisite of ASL for participating in some of the courses will be directed to alterna-ve materials and information.

pplication Deadline

pplication review will begin May 1 of each year. Applications received after that date will be reviewed on a pace available basis. Any spaces not filled by August 1 will be made available to general registration. hese students will not need to meet the application criteria outlined above, and will NOT be eligible for ny financial support (tuition reduction, course materials, travel and expenses onsite).

OSTS (Anticipated)

articipants costs:

- Tuition - Yr. 1 (Pilot): - $103/course (X 4 courses) for qualified participants.
- Yrs. 2-4: $100/credit ($300/3 credit course X 4 courses) for qualified participants. In addition, students may apply for additional need-based tuition assistance each semester. We also suggest that participants look for tuition support from local or regional sponsors when possible.
- Computer and internet access throughout the 4-course sequence.

rovided by program:

- All course books and materials;
- Travel to the optional onsite course (2 weeks at University of Colorado-Boulder);
- Housing and meals during onsite course.

articipant commitment

articipants in the Master Mentor Certificate Program need to commit their attendance and full participa-on in the entire 4 course sequence. Online coursework requires the same time and effort as any course. articipants should expect to spend an average of 10-15 hours per week taking the course. This includes nline time, reading, and preparation of assignments.

Effectively Using Web Resources: Reaching Interpreter Educators

Betsy Winston and Brenda Schick

Abstract

There is a great need for education and training for interpreting educators and mentors in the U.S. Project TIEM.online (Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors) is a national project designed to provide a curriculum for interpreting educators that offers a sequenced set of courses via the World Wide Web. In this paper, we discuss the advantages of this distance education approach and describe the overall goals of the project. We welcome input from anyone interested in this project at TIEM@Colorado.edu.

Introduction: Educating Interpreting Educators and Mentors

Since the National Task Force report (1989), interpreter education has received increased attention and support. Programs for training interpreters, both in general studies and a variety of specialized settings, have been established across the US. However, while the number of programs has increased and the need for qualified interpreters has increased, there is a shortage of qualified, well-trained interpreter educators. Furthermore, most programs have been established by practitioners who are highly skilled interpreters respected in their communities for their interpreting abilities. Many of the founding teachers of interpreter education programs became interpreters before the proliferation of such programs. Given this, they often do not have any formal training as interpreters or as interpreter educators. At the same time, the field of interpreting has evolved in what is considered to be an appropriate level of training. Currently most programs are set in academic settings, the majority in community colleges.

Despite the shortage of qualified interpreters and the need for additional training, many programs report great difficulty in finding qualified instructors. Being situated in academic institutions, most have to satisfy institutional hiring requirements. For community colleges, the minimum is usually a master's degree; in four-year institutions, it is a Ph.D. While it is possible to argue that skilled practi-

tioners of interpreting and skilled signers have the potential to become effective teachers, their interpreting and signing skills do not, in and of themselves, qualify them as teachers. Most faculty in interpreter education programs have few educational qualifications for working in their fields. While they may be skilled practitioners, they often have no background in teaching methodology, adult education, interpreter training, or language teaching.

Qualified mentoring is also essential for improving interpreting services. Even if an interpreter graduates from an interpreter training program, he or she needs to continue to develop skills. For example, one research study that investigated skill levels of educational interpreters found that the majority did not meet minimum standards (Schick, Williams, & Bolster, 1999). These data show that many interpreters continue to need mentoring. However, most interpreters are not trained to mentor each other, even though they are highly competent interpreters.

In a sense, the field of interpreting needs to further develop its infrastructure by providing training to people to become interpreter educators and to provide working interpreters with trained mentors who can help them improve their skills.

In order to determine the extent to which interpreter educators are disadvantaged by the lack of training, we conducted a survey. There were 140 responses, which included **63** individuals who reported that they taught interpreting. **Of** these, only **38%** had an M.A. degree. Many cited the lack of a degree as a barrier (25%) and 57% reported that they would like an M.A. program in the area of interpreter education. The vast majority (92%) reported that they would like coursework in pedagogy. In contrast, **78%** reported that there were fewer than three training opportunities in their geographical area each year.

The field of interpreter education is also facing another dilemma in that the field is graying. The few full-time positions available are, and have been, held by the original founders and a few "new-comers." But there are few new interpreter educators entering the field. Adjunct faculty come from the same sources as previous interpreter educators; that is, they are skilled practitioners with no background in education or teaching. And for those who are currently teaching and experienced, there are few formal, systematic opportunities to pass on their own knowledge and experience in teaching interpreting.

An additional problem faces those interpreters who wish to continue their training. Often these individuals are unable to leave their positions to attend a resident teaching program. Like many people in the United States, the cost of relocating a family and losing an income for several years is prohibitive. Furthermore, in rural areas, there are already individuals committed to that particular geographical area. An education that forces them to leave in order to obtain training increases the risk that the person will not return. This means that the region loses some of its best interpreters and faces difficult recruitment. The distance model of training encourages the best individuals to stay in their geographical area.

An additional need in the field of interpreting education is to include the many cultural, ethnic, and other underrepresented groups in the materials and training approaches currently used. It is essential to include training for specialized settings such as education, rehabilitation, mental health, legal, cued speech, deaf-blind, and relay interpreting. There exist **RSA** funded curricula focused on some of these areas, but they have not been widely disseminated or used. The two currently funded projects, the National Multicultural Project and the Deaf-Blind project, face similar fates unless interpreter educators become aware of the curricula and are trained to use them effectively.

For these reasons, there is a clear need for graduate level training for educators who are currently *or* potentially teaching in interpreting programs. The shortage of well-trained, qualified interpreter educators has a major impact on the ability of interpreting programs to train highly skilled interpreters to serve the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind communities.

Benefits of a Distance Education Approach

One effective approach to reaching interpreter educators around the country is to make effective use of the World Wide Web (WWW). This approach offers the most wide-spread impact in the most cost-effective way while meeting the learning and practical needs of many interpreter educators.

Traditional approaches requiring face-to-face meetings (workshops, courses at a particular site in a specific time period) often exclude a great number of people because of the expense of travel, living expenses, prior commitments of time, family responsibilities, and work commitments. Distance delivery approaches remove many of these barriers and provide convenient, flexible access to educational opportunities. The benefits of distance courses on the web include the following:

- *Distance education provides a unique solution to training low-incidence populations.* The group of current interpreter educators is a low-incidence group, spread across the U.S. Except in high-population areas, there are not enough potential participants in any one area to support a program that requires face-to-face meetings regularly. Distance classes can be offered regularly because the student population is drawn from across the nation; thus they are not dependent on the time and interest of a few interpreter educators in any given region.

- *Distance education provides courses that are highly comparable to traditional courses.* The technical possibilities of teaching via the World Wide Web are much greater than they were in the past. Simply speaking, all aspects of traditional courses can be provided in a web-based class except for the face-to-face interaction. These courses use a special form of software, often termed courseware, that provides an entire course environment. The table below shows how aspects of a traditional course are provided in a course offered over the web.

	Traditional Course	**Online Course**
Lectures	Oral/signed presentation, overhead slides, handouts	Text notes, slide show, digital video clip examples, handouts
In Class Discussion	Instructor and student interaction; student and student interaction	Threaded discussion groups, chatroom, email
Assessment	Homework, quizzes, exams, projects, participation	Online homework and quizzes, exams, projects, participation in threaded discussion
Group Work	Team communication via in class discussion, email, phone, fax	Team communication via email, threaded discussion groups, chatroom, document sharing

Research has shown that distance delivery approaches are extremely successful for student learning. Comparisons of student grades between students taking a course face-to-face in a classroom with a teacher and students taking the same course with the same teacher online via WWW demonstrate that the online students in WWW courses perform on average 15-20% higher on final exams (Navarro, 1999; Schutte, 1999). Specifically in interpreter education, the Educational Interpreter Certificate Project has been effective in significantly raising interpreting students' skill levels in a program that was primarily a distance program. Using an assessment tool with a 5-point scale (based on the EIPA), students' skill scores improved from pre-program averages of 2.0-2.8 to post-program averages of 3.4-3.7. A score of 3.5 was the goal for success in this training program. (Johnson, 1999).

- *Time flexibility.* Courses delivered via the web are usually term-based and asynchronous. Term-based courses provide students with a schedule and a sequenced syllabus with fixed beginning and end dates, as well as a basic structure for effectively completing each course. Asynchronous presentation of the course content allows students to log on, participate, read, and prepare assignments without the limitations of a class meeting on a specific day and time every week. Interpreter

educators are able to work around teaching schedules, family commitments, and professional responsibilities while still participating fully in web-based courses. This is in contrast to 1) face-to-face courses that they might want to take but cannot fit into tight schedules, 2) workshops that are offered sporadically, again at times that may conflict with other commitments, and **3)** summer courses that take the place of vacations. Schedule conflicts with a date or time often make attendance impossible; with web-based courses, this is not an issue.

Another issue regarding time flexibility is the fact that web-based courses are not attempting to cover an entire semester's material in one or two weekends. Students have the time to read material, reflect, and interact meaningfully while incorporating the new concepts presented. This is very different from a workshop where you learn everything in a short period of time, often with very limited course readings and little time for reflection and synthesis of the materials.

- *Location flexibility.* A benefit of web-based course delivery is that students do not need to travel long distances in order to take advantage of learning opportunities. Students can access the course through the internet from any available site. They do not need to commute hours to take a course.

- *Access to online courses.* Access to online classes is as close as the nearest computer. Although it is more convenient to have a home computer for access, many students are able to access course work through their employment, or through local libraries, YMCAs, and other public organizations offering these connections. The biggest barrier to access at this time is a student's own fear of and discomfort with using these technologies. Our experience has been that students have been willing to overcome these barriers when the opportunity for valued and essential education is available and there is technical support freely available.

- *Enhanced interaction.* Another benefit of web-based courses is the very nature of the interaction. Online courses have a bulletin board where students post questions and comments about the course material, using threaded discussion groups. Students can post at any time; there are no special times that everyone must meet. (An example of a bulletin board discussion can be seen in Appendix A.) Due to the asynchronous interaction, there is often more interaction from all students than occurs in face-to-face courses and workshops. In addition, the nature of the interactions is more prepared and well-thought-out, due to the time students have to prepare before interacting. Additional benefits are reported by distance students in web-based courses. Students from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds report that the interactions feel more balanced and fair because immediate judgments based on appearance are eliminated. This is also reported by students whose first language is not English. Although many web courses are conducted in English, students often report that the time for writing, revising, and proofreading their input makes them more comfortable participating in these kinds of classes. Students with various disabilities notice the lack of judgmental attitudes from classmates and teachers. And, current technology has made computer and internet access much easier for people with disabilities.

- *Visual materials.* Web-based courses allow teachers to use a great deal of signed examples throughout the courses, delivered via digital movies on CD ROMs. Within the course content, students can click on hyperlinks to view ASL examples. These examples are **30** frames per second, which is real-time motion, and the resolution **is** sufficient for fine-grained analysis and for demonstrating topics and specific examples.

- *Professional networking.* Another benefit of distance delivery for this group of students is the opportunity to network with colleagues from around the country. This provides a variety of input and interaction that would not be available in most face-to-face courses and workshops. With this, students develop a network of colleagues from across the U.S.; this provides them with information and contacts that benefit them in future teaching.

Project TIEM.Online

Project TIEM.Online (Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors) is designed to meet the needs of interpreting teachers and future teachers by providing a nationally designed curriculum that is available to them where they are. The project has five major goals related to interpreter educators and mentors. These goals are described below.

1. Develop a curriculum for interpreter educators;
2. Implement the developed curriculum for interpreter educators;
3. Develop a curriculum for interpreter mentors;
4. Implement the curriculum for interpreter mentors; and
5. Provide technical assistance and resources for mentoring and interpreter education on a national scale.

Goal 1: Develop and Update Curriculum for Interpreter Educators

Most interpreter educators have entered the field as highly skilled practitioners of interpreting. They usually have little or no background in teaching, course design, assessment, program management, or adult education. We have designed a preliminary curriculum of 12-15 three-credit courses for interpreter educators (see Table 1 below). This curriculum has been designed based on a review of existing curricula, and consultation with interpreter educators, including both informal discussion and the results of a recent Professional Development survey of interpreter educators conducted during September/October 1999. This preliminary curriculum will be reviewed by an advisory committee consisting of experts in the areas of interpreter education, curriculum development, and distance education. (See Appendix B for a list of our advisory committee members and our consultants), The final curriculum design will be established from this review. Once the initial curriculum design is complete, the individual courses will be developed under the direction of the project director, Dr. Winston, in collaboration with content area experts on the advisory committee and the content area consultants representing consumer groups, multicultural interpreting needs, and specialized settings.

Incorporating Existing *Curricula*

A variety of interpreter education courses and curricula have been or are being developed. These include curricula for educational, rehabilitation, deaf-blind, and multicultural interpreting. The existing curricula, while available to interpreter educators, have remained largely unused, due in part to the lack of skilled interpreter educators who know about the materials and who know how to adapt them to their own teaching needs.

Using these curricula within and in conjunction with our own curriculum, and working in collaboration with the various agencies, individuals, and organizations involved in their development, we will develop curricula to prepare interpreter educators to teach these courses. The membership of our advisory committee and the consultants working with us represent many of these specialized areas and needs. We will continue to recruit consultants with expertise in additional areas. Incorporation of these curricula is included in Specialization Area 6 (Table 1).

Goal 2: Implement Curriculum for Interpreter Educators

Once the overall curriculum structure and the content for each course have been developed, reviewed, and approved by the advisory committee, each course will be developed for actual delivery to interpreter educators. The project director, in collaboration with the codirector, the advisory committee, and consultants will identify potential faculty for each course. These faculty will be recruited and trained to participate in the development and teaching of the courses. We anticipate that most faculty we identify and recruit will be skilled interpreter educators, but they may not have expertise in the areas of distance delivery and course design. They will be mentored during the development and teaching of the distance courses to be offered. Every newly recruited faculty member will be required to observe and participate in an online course as part of this training.

1. Teaching Interpreting: Level **1** • ASL Linguistics • Discourse Analysis • First & Second Language Assessment *These courses are already being offered. For descriptions, please visit the website at www.Colorado.edu/slhs/ASLcert	**2.** Certificate of Master Mentor • Principles of Mentoring • Skills Assessment and Feedback • Mentoring Practicum (on-site) • Fieldwork in Mentoring
3. Teaching Interpreting: Level **2** • Teaching Interpreting I: Theory, Approaches, & Methodology • Teaching Interpreting II: Theory & Practice • Assessing Interpreting Skills	**4.** Program Design • Curriculum Design and Development • Adult Education • Teaching at a Distance
5. Teaching Interpreting: Level **3** Teaching Interpreter Education courses (in collaboration with the national project funded to develop a distance curriculum for interpreter training, we intend teach educators how to implement the content and materials in each course developed by the other project) Students focusing in this area will need to take **4** courses, one related to teaching content knowledge sets, and 3 related to teaching specific interpreting skills.	**6.** Teaching Interpreting: Special Needs & Settings (1 credit modules-partial list) • African American • Hispanic • Native American • Asian • Legal • Mental health • Medical • Deaf/Blind • Education • Rehabilitation • Oral • CuedSpeech

Table **1. (Proposed)** Curriculum for Interpreter Educators

Courses will be offered regularly following initial development. These courses will be self-sustaining after this development, and will be part of the on-going curriculum for the interpreter educator program. The University of Colorado-Boulder is committed to offering this curriculum once initial development is finished, with revenue for support being generated by tuition from the courses.

These courses will be offered to any applicants who meet the minimum prerequisites — knowledge of ASL and of written English, frequent and regular access to the internet, and any prerequisites listed for courses offered sequentially. The course, ASL Linguistics, is a prerequisite of Discourse Analysis, for example. The cost of each 3-credit course, offered for either graduate or undergraduate credit, is the same for both in-state and out-of-state students. For the students in the mentoring program (Goal **3,** described below), the University of Colorado has agreed to offer the courses for a reduced tuition. In addition, 25% of the students will pay only 20% of the tuition, which covers administrative costs only. Students will be required to submit information to Continuing Education in order to receive this tuition reduction.

Goal 3: Develop and Update Curriculum to Prepare Mentors

There is a great need for mentors to serve both new and practicing interpreters. These mentors serve a valuable role in the on-going professional development of interpreters. Newly graduated interpreters need on-going supervision as they transition from the training program environment into the community of practicing interpreters. Practicing interpreters need input and feedback about their skills, as they often work in isolated positions. Interpreters who are working in multiple cultures, in

specialized settings, and in rural and remote areas have a great need for mentoring support in their work. And, finally, interpreters need the input of qualified deaf and hard of hearing mentors as well. We are designing a Master Mentor program that is intended to train interpreters and interpreter educators to serve as mentors within their communities. This, combined with existing curricula and courses, will be reviewed by the advisory committee and consultants. Following the review, the Master Mentor curriculum will be finalized and developed. The courses in this curriculum will focus on the knowledge and skills necessary for effective mentoring. This includes an understanding of the languages used by interpreters in various communities throughout the U.S., a knowledge of discourse, the ability to assess both language and interpreting skills, the ability to provide diagnostic feedback based on reliable skills' assessments, and the knowledge of guiding skills development based on a diagnostic assessment.

Goal 4: Implement Master Mentor Curriculum

The Master Mentor program will identify and train interpreters and interpreter educators to serve as mentors for interpreters at all skill levels. In the proposed curriculum, there is a series of four courses that focus on developing both knowledge and skills essential to effective mentoring. Although the specific courses will be finalized after review by the advisory committee and consultants, the sequence will most likely include: 1) Approaches to Mentoring, 2) Feedback and Assessment, and **3)** an intensive on-site mentoring Practicum at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Following this onsite Practicum, students will return to their home regions to finish the final course, **4)** a fieldwork cooperative to be planned in conjunction with the agencies or regional programs of that area. On successful completion of these requirements, students will be awarded the Certificate of Master Mentor.

Over the course of the grant funding, we will recruit and train three cohorts of students. Each Cohort will have a maximum of 25 students. The project will pay for their travel to the campus for the single on-site summer course, their course materials for all courses, and living expenses for the on-site summer course. Students will need to pay the tuition and supply their own computers and internet connections for the on-line courses. The university will provide the courses at reduced tuition. In order to insure a wide representation of mentoring students, we will reserve spaces for two student mentors from each regional RSA area, and five additional spaces, for a total of 25 students in each cohort. Over the course of the five years of the project, we will be able to teach three full cohorts. Students for this program will be identified and recruited through:

1. Consultation with the individuals and organizations that have developed, or are currently developing, the RSA funded curricula on multicultural, deaf/blind, educational, and rehabilitation interpreting;
2. Consultation with experts in the various specialized interpreting settings including legal, medical, and mental health;
3. Consultation with interpreters and interpreter educators in rural and remote areas; and
4. Consultation with members of the deaf community, in order to recruit deaf and hard of hearing students.

Once identified, prospective mentor students will submit a letter of interest, and three letters of recommendation from members of their communities. These letters must demonstrate the applicant's active participation in the home community, as well as skill in the specific languages and/or systems used in the applicant's interpreting. This may include Cued Speech, oral interpreting, tactile and close-vision interpreting, languages other than English and ASL, and spoken-language based signing systems such as Signing Exact English (SEE). Student mentors who do not have the necessary prerequisite of ASL for participating in some of the courses will be directed to alternative materials and information. In addition to offering these mentoring courses to the students recruited for the Master Mentor program, they will be offered as part of the regular interpreter educator curriculum. Once the funding cycle is ended, the mentoring courses will continue to be offered as part of the regular interpreter educator curriculum and will become self-sustaining.

Goal 5: Provide Technical Assistance for Organizations for Mentoring and Interpreter Education

Our project will provide technical assistance in several ways:

1. Develop and maintain a clearinghouse of resources and information about mentoring.
2. Disseminate the mentorship training curriculum developed by the program.
3. Maintain and disseminate a list of assessment and diagnostic tools available for mentors to use.
4. Maintain and disseminate a list of skill enhancement activities for use by mentors.
5. Establish and disseminate a list of mentors who are available in various areas, specialized settings, communities, and needs.
6. Provide assistance to those serving as mentors who want to improve their mentoring skills by providing consultation, courses, and workshops at conferences.
7. Collaborate with local areas and communities by assisting with the fieldwork course that is completed in the students' home regions.
8. Maintain and disseminate a list of mentoring opportunities available across the U.S.A.
9. Offer the Master Mentor courses to any interested mentor students in addition to the Cohorts recruited specifically for the Certificate Program.
10. Collaborate with local organizations by recruiting mentor students from their areas in order to develop their pool of qualified mentors.

This information will be available via printed materials that can be mailed to individuals upon request. More importantly, it will be available through the development of a web site that will be accessible nationally. All information will be available in PDF format, a cross-platform format that is easily downloadable and printable. This will make information immediately accessible and available to mentors and interpreter educators from all parts of the country and at all times of the day.

Conclusion: Effectively Reaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors

Project TIEM.Online is an effective means for reaching many current and potential interpreter educators and mentors. It provides highquality educational experiences in a clearly developed sequence of courses. These provide the necessary knowledge and skills required of qualified interpreter educators and mentors. The courses and modules proposed in this project will have a lasting impact on the field by increasing the number of well-trained and qualified interpreter educators and mentors. Increasing the number of qualified professionals will then influence the quality and training available for interpreters and in interpreter education programs across the nation. The final impact will be an increased number of qualified, well-trained interpreters serving the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind populations across the variety of cultural, ethnic, racial, regional, and social groups served by interpreters. For more information, please contact us via email at TIEM@Colorado.edu.

About the Authors

Betsy Winston, Ph.D., is the director of the Teaching Interpreting for Educators and Mentors program (Project TIEM.online), a national project to provide online courses for interpreting educators and mentors at the University of Colorado-Boulder. She is also the research director of the Educational Linguistic Research Center and an educator and consultant in educational linguistics, discourse analysis, and teaching interpreting. She holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Georgetown University and an M.A. in Linguistics with a focus in ASL from Gallaudet University. Dr. Winston teaches courses and workshops in linguistics, interpretation, interpreter education, and educational interpreting nationally.

Brenda Schick, Ph.D., is an associate professor at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Her primary interest is how children learn language, particularly ASL. Her current research, with Drs. De Villiers and Dr. Hoffmeister, is an investigation of the relationship between cognitive skills, or Theory of Mind, and language skills in deaf children, both who have deaf parents and hearing parents. She is the co-author, with Kevin Williams, of the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment, a tool designed to evaluate classroom interpreting skills. She is the Co-Director, with Dr. Winston, of a national program to train interpreter educators and mentors, which will result in a complete program delivered via the world wide web. Dr. Schick is also the co-author, with Mary Pat Moeller, of a curriculum designed to teach ASL to hearing parents who have a deaf child as well as a series of classic English stories translated into ASL on videotape

Appendix A

Examples from an Online Class

EXAMPLE: Threaded Small Group Discussion: Index

This represents the threads of a small group discussion. Students post comments on topics from the readings (usually the first numbered line in each section of the index), then other students post responses and replies. (I have changed the names to protect the confidentiality of the students in the class.)

Following this Index, I have provided examples of the actual discussion, from postings number 449, and the immediate reply, #474. (shaded postings in the index)

INDEX	Description
Wk 3/4 (or is it 5/6?) Data Collection Discussion	
416. Alice A. (Tue, Sep. 21, 1999, 20:28)	New Topic
454. Chris C. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 13:24)	Student discussion
463. Ann M. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 16:09)	
464. Ann M (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 16:11)	
475. Alice A. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 21:25)	
499. Ann M. (Thu, Sep. 23, 1999, 15:07)	
500. Chris C. (Thu, Sep. 23, 1999, 16:20)	
510. Alice **A.** (Thu, Sep. 23, 1999, 20:36)	
Wk 3/4 ... Chapter Style Discussion	New Topic
417. Alice A. (Tue, Sep. 21, 1999, 20:33)	Student discussion
Chris' Transcription	
430. Chris C. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 00:25)	New Topic
444. Ann M. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 10:55)	Student discussion
Transcription Assgnt #1	
443. Barb B. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 10:54)	New Topic
612. Chris C. (Mon, Oct. 4, 1999, 05:26)	Student Discussion
wks *3-4* discussion posting	
447. Ann M. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 11:32)	New Topic
458. Chris C. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 13:59)	Student Discussion
465. Ann M. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 16:14)	
wk *3-4* discussion posting	
449. Ann M. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 12:06)	New Topic
474. Alice A. (Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 20:58)	Student Discussion
498. Ann M. (Thu, Sep. 23, 1999, 14:55)	
558. Alice A (Sun, Sep. 26, 1999, 20:30)	

Appendix A

Examples from an Online Class (continued)

EXAMPLE Student Discussion

Article No. 449 posted by Ann M. on Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 12:06
Subject: wk 3-4 discussion posting : use of prosody

Hi!
I wanted to make some comments on my data collection on our recent transcription assignment. In some ways it was harder than I expected, but in some ways easier than I expected. Something that I struggled with was eye gaze—either I cant see many changes she makes, or there were just fewer variations than I expected. To me, the signer kept a pretty steady gaze at the audience (or camera!) I haven't studied the transcriptions from the rest of you, but I am interested to see what you saw in that area!

Also, head movement was tough for me, because body shifts of the signer was a factor that confounded my data collection—I finally decided to make body shifts one of the features to collect, so I could separate out body shifts from head movements. I wasn't really consistent with the collection of data on that feature, but only when it was interfering with my analysis of head movement. Was this difficult for anyone else?

Another part of head movement I struggled with was something that was brought up in Betsy's comments in Section 3.1—is a head tilt the same thing as a chin raise or not? I started out recording the head movement as chin raises/lowerings, but abandoned it and went to discussing the movement as head tilts.

I was able to identify what I called a neutral handshape and position for the signer's non-dominant hand. It was interesting how consistent this neutral handshape and position was when the hand wasn't being used for signing!

And finally, one interesting thing was a sign I saw in the video clip that was not listed in our transcription. It is in line 7: SMALL CITY G-O-O-D-I-N-G. Did anyone else see
another sign (I don't even know how to gloss it) after the sign for CITY that emphasized the smallness of the town (another sign for SMALL)?

OK—hope you all weren't too bored by the above recounting of my transcription, but those are the things I found interesting! I would love to hear your experiences!

Ann

****

Article No. 474: [Branch from no. 449] posted by Alice A. on Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 20:58
Subject: re: wk 3-4 discussion posting

In article 449 on Wed, Sep. 22, 1999, 12:06, Ann M.
writes:
>Hi!
>To me, the signer kept a pretty steady gaze at the audience (or camera!)

I agree!

>Also, head movement was tough for me, because body shifts of the signer was a factor >that confounded my data collection

Appendix A

Examples from an Online Class (continue4

Ditto!

> Was this difficult for anyone else?

Yes. Something that bothers me is that we didn't really have any way to indicate whether these shifts & head movements preceded, were concurrent with, or occurred after the "word".

>Section 3.1—is a head tilt the same thing as a chin raise or not?

1 don't think so ... but even if they aren't, how do we distinguish between tilt-dominant, tilt-nondominant, tilt-back, tilt-forward?

For me a tilt involves a larger area. Chin raises & lowerings have a narrower focus. .. but it's one of those "I can explain it when 1 see it, but how do 1 put it on paper?" things :(

>I was able to identify what 1 ealled a neutral handshape and position for the signer's >non-dominant hand.

I loved the way you did that!

>It was interesting how consistent this neutral handshape and position was when the hand >wasn'tbeing used ***for*** signing!

Yeah! 1 saw that too. 1 think there was only one place
... with the "what"/rhetorical where she changed it's shape
... and even then it was one of the BASCO15 shapes. 1 wonder if all non-dominant neutrals fall into the **1 / 5** categories ... or if ANY BASCO15 would work?

>And finally, one interesting thing was a sign 1 saw in the video clip that was not listed in >our transcription. It is in line 7: SMALL CITY G-O-O-D-I-N-G. Did anyone else see
>another sign (I don't even know how to gloss it) after the sign for CITY that emphasized >the smallness of the town(another sign for SMALL)?

YEAH! There were two things happening there for me. One was a NMS 1 thought I caught — a POW ... or PO ...I'm not sure which. I associated it with small and it made me think that she doesn't live in a city, she lives somewhere smaller.

Right after the CITY/TOWN 1 caught something 1 glossed as "ABOUT IX-point(to wrist)" (I think ... gotta check :)

>OK—hope you all weren't too bored by the above recounting of my transcription,

Not a bit. I think this is what we're supposed to do anyway ... compare what we thought we saw :)

I have a question for you ... I saw something in my "read" that I glossed as a kind of rhetorical question ... it was around about the age section. Did anyone else catch that ... or did 1 dream it up? :)

Alice

Appendix B

Advisory Committee and Consultants

Dennis Cokely, Ph.D. Dr. Cokely is a nationally renowned expert in the areas of curriculum development and assessment of interpreting skills, as well as education of interpreters and interpreter educators. He was instrumental in the development of a model curriculum for interpreter and ASL educators (Model Curriculum for Teachers of ASL and Teachers of Interpreting, C. Baker-Shenk, Ed., 1990.) His research of interpreting assessment has resulted in a book widely used in interpreter training programs *(Interpretation: A Sociolinguistic Model,* 1992).

Thomas Holcomb, Ph.D. Dr. Holcomb is a culturally deaf adult who has published and presented widely on creating healthy environments for students who are deaf. He is the Director of Deaf Studies at Ohlone College and teaches a wide range of ASL and Deaf Studies courses. He speaks from experience, having received his doctorate from the University of Rochester, where as a deaf person, he was a minority. He also speaks from training, with his educational background in psychology, human resource development, and education. Additionally, he is recognized for promoting collaborative relationships between individuals who are hearing and those who are deaf.

E. Lynn Jacobowitz, M.Ed., A.B.D. Ms. Jacobowitz is an experienced teacher of ASL and has expertise in curriculum development. She is currently on the faculty of the Department of ASL, Linguistics, and Interpreting at Gallaudet University. She is also an experienced consumer who uses interpreting services regularly. She has experience in mentoring and distance education.

Mary Mooney, M.A. Ms. Mooney is the director of the National Multicultural Interpreter Project, an RSA funded project to address the needs of culturally diverse communities. Her expertise in this area, along with her experience as an interpreter educator and curriculum designer, will be invaluable as we design the project curricula to meet the needs of culturally diverse communities. In addition to her own expertise, she will help us identify consultants and faculty to ensure the inclusion of multicultural issues and needs into our national curriculum.

Cynthia Roy, Ph.D. Dr. Roy is an experienced interpreter educator and a teacher of interpreter educators. She is the director of the B.A. interpreter preparation program at Indiana University. She was the primary designer of the curriculum now used in the Gallaudet interpreter education program, the only graduate level Master's degree program in interpreting in the US. Her research in interpreting is recognized nationally, and she has recently edited a text for interpreter educators, one of the few available in our field (*Innovative Practices in Teaching Interpreting,* C. Roy, Ed., 1999).

Gary Sanderson, M.A. Mr. Sanderson is a nationally recognized authority in mentoring for interpreters. He is the Outreach Coordinator for the Western Region Outreach Center & Consortia (WROCC), an organization providing mentorship experiences in the western United States. He is also an expert in educational interpreting. His expertise in both areas will benefit the design and evaluation of the project curricula.

Consultants

In addition to the consulting expertise of the Advisory Committee, we have identified some consultants for specific areas. We are looking for additional consultants through input from the advisory committee, consultants, and institutions and agencies involved in specialized settings. If you are interested or know someone who is, please contact us via email at TIEM@Colorado.edu.

Appendix B

Advisory Committee and Consultants (continued)

Anthony Aramburo, M.A. Mr. Aramburo is the lead consultant/trainer for the National Multicultural Interpreter Project. He is involved in the National Alliance of Black Interpreters, and the RID Special Interest Group, Interpreters/Transliterators of Color. He is a national leader in minority and cultural issues in many organizations, including the Conference of Interpreter Trainers.

Earl Fleetwood, M.A. Mr. Fleetwood teaches courses in the Gallaudet University Master's interpreter education program. In addition to his expertise in curriculum design and interpreter education, he presents workshops nationally for interpreter educators. He is the president of Language Matters, Inc., an organization that provides training, courses, and national resources related to cued speech transliteration.

Judy Kegl, Ph.D. Dr. Kegl is the director of the interpreter training program at the University of Southern Maine. She is currently offering interpreter education courses at a distance and is an expert in interpreting, curriculum, and ASL Linguistics.

Christine Monikowski, Ph.D. Dr. Monikowski is currently on the faculty at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, where she teaches interpreting, ASL, and designs curriculum for the interpreter preparation program. She is an experienced distance educator, having developed courses for a variety of distance delivery approaches, and has taught using these approaches. She has taught distance interpreting courses for the Educational Interpreting Certificate Project and for NTID. She is also a trainer of interpreter educators, having provided workshops and co-authored an article on teaching interpreting in the volume, *Innovative Practices in Teaching Interpreting* (1999, C. Roy, Ed.)

Jan Nishimura, CI, CT, SLL, OIC:S/V, V/S Ms. Nishimura is an experienced interpreter educator and is a co-founder of Sign Language Associates, an interpreter referral service in the Washington, DC area. She has been involved for many years with multicultural issues in interpreting, and has expertise in mentoring in multicultural and diverse settings.

Karen Petronio, Ph.D. Dr. Petronio is an expert in the area of deaf-blind interpreting, as well as being an experienced interpreter educator. Her research in aspects of deaf-blind interpreting has led to a broader national understanding of the issues involved in this important area of interpreter education.

Kevin Williams, M.S. Mr. Williams is an expert in educational interpreter assessment and has been working with the Educational Interpreting Performance Assessment (EIPA) in collaboration with Dr. Schick. He is responsible for training evaluators, for educating school systems about the needs of interpreter assessment, and is very involved with the development of multimedia materials used in the assessment process.

Mary Wright, M.A. Ms. Wright is an experienced interpreter educator and has broad expertise in offering interpreter education at a distance. As the former director of the interpreter preparation program for RSA Region V, she has provided a variety of distance learning workshops.

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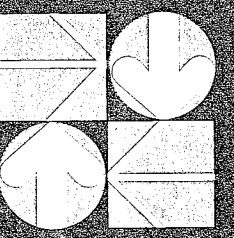

Conference of Interpreter Trainers

Internet: www.cit-asl.org