AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER EDUCATION

by

Julie Hope Simon

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, READING AND CULTURE

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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An ethnographic study of sign language interpreter education

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GRADUATE COLLEGE

As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Julie Hope Simon entitled An Ethnographic Study of Sign Language Interpreter Education

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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	Date

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Teresa L. McCarty — Dissertation Director
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SIGNED: Julie H. Simon

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Morley and Arliss Simon. Their love, support, and encouragement have guided me throughout my life.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my grandparents - Al and Rose Kadner and Harry and Helen Simon - whose memories are with me always.

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ABSTRACT

The field of sign language interpreting and interpreter education is rapidly changing to meet the needs of deaf and hearing consumers. It is not sufficient to teach merely the techniques of interpreting and to produce large numbers of interpreters who work mechanically. Interpreters must understand issues of bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning because they work in cross-lingual, cross-cultural settings and are responsible for ensuring successful communication among all parties involved.

To accommodate these changes within the profession, it is important to understand how community members and prospective interpreters perceive the profession of interpreting. This ethnographic study focuses on students' and community members' attitudes, ideas, and beliefs about American Sign Language, American Deaf Culture, the deaf community, and the interpreting profession.

A case study approach utilizing several ethnographic data collection methods is presented to assist interpreter educators and other interested persons to understand how the profession is perceived. Several themes that emerged from the data pertaining to attitudes, language fluency, bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language acquisition are analyzed and discussed in terms of their implications

for interpreter preparation programs, policy, and future research.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Interpreting involves competence in at least two languages, an understanding of the dynamics of human interaction in two quite different modalities (for the signing interpreter), an appreciation of social and cultural differences, the ability to concentrate and maintain one's attention, a good deal of tact, judgement, stamina, and above all a sense of humor (Frishberg, 1986, p. 3).

Interpreters have been used for centuries to facilitate communication between peoples of different languages and cultures. In ancient times, the use of interpreters can be traced back to Joseph in Genesis 42:23 (Hertz, 1980; p.160), who spoke to his brothers through an interpreter to avoid being recognized by them. In the 14th century, Pierre Dubois, a French lawyer, wrote that interpreters were necessary for communication between Christians and Muslims (Stelling-Michaud, cited in Herbert, 1952).

Despite this long history, the profession of interpreting, whether for spoken languages or signed languages, is seen by many as a new and growing profession. Consecutive interpreting among spoken language interpreters is thought to have had its formal beginnings during the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War I (Frishberg, 1986; Herbert, 1952), while simultaneous interpreting was first used formally at the Nuremberg Trials following World

War II (Seleskovitch, 1978). The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) was established in 1953 as the first professional association for interpreters (Seleskovitch, 1978).

For sign language interpreters, formal recognition is considered to have come in 1964 at a conference held at Ball State College in Indiana and with the subsequent establishment of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (Fant, 1990; Smith, 1964). In 1979, the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) was founded to provide professional development opportunities for educators of sign language interpreters (Frishberg, 1986).

While there is now some recognition and understanding of the similarities between spoken and signed language interpreters, it is important to understand that the origins of the two groups are different. Frishberg (1986, p. 7) points out that spoken language interpreters "became a profession because of pressures among representatives of nations" who met in the period immediately following World War I. When these members of various nations met, they needed some way to communicate with one another. Civil servants, journalists, or diplomats who were fluent in several languages were utilized to facilitate these interactions.

Sign language interpreting, on the other hand, "is emerging as a profession primarily out of the needs of private individuals" (Frishberg, 1986, p. 7). Increased cultural and linguistic awareness, which occurred more on an individual level than a national level, has resulted in efforts to remove communication barriers for deaf persons. Despite differences in how the two groups began, their growth over the last 30 years has been steady.

The Interpreting Task

During the early stages of professional development, it was thought that an understanding of the message by the interpreter was unnecessary (Seleskovitch, 1978). Interpreting was seen as a mechanical operation for which a word-for-word translation from one language into another language was the only requirement. As knowledge about the task grew, it became apparent that interpreting was a much more complicated process than just matching lexical items in two languages; an understanding of the meaning of the message was vital (Herbert, 1952; Seleskovitch, 1978).

This understanding of the process contributed immensely to the development of the field. Discussion of the full process of professionalization is beyond the scope of this dissertation; however, a thorough account of the professionalization process from a historical perspective is

provided by Braden (1985; see also Rudser, 1986). It is sufficient here to recognize that this process "has required many decades of hard work and that interpretation today is founded on a solid heritage" (Atwood and Gray, 1986, p. 117).

Past research within the field has tended to focus on characteristics of interpreters, on product, rather than process, and on affective, rather than linguistic, factors. A study by Rudner, Getson, and Dirst (1981) focused on identifying manual communication skills that distinguish more-competent from less-competent interpreters, while a study by Murphy (1978) attempted to identify characteristics of a good interpreter. Cokely (1981) also conducted a demographic survey in order to understand the general characteristics of interpreters. His survey collected background information in the areas of family, interpreting, education, sign language, and spoken language. He also asked questions pertaining to reading and writing habits and to socio-economic status. Watson's (1987) survey also focused on characteristics influencing interpreters, but he was interested in characteristics that cause burn-out and lead to a high turn-over rate among interpreters.[1]

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[1]One member of the deaf community commented that the reason for high burn-out and turnover within the interpreting profession is that interpreters are not trained appropriately or adequately, and they do not have the skills or the understanding to do the job properly.

Several studies have focused on interpreters who work in educational settings. A discussion by Winston (1985) focuses on interpreters who work in mainstream environments. Austin's (1982) study was geared toward secondary educational interpreters, while Greenshaw (1985) focused on interpreters working in postsecondary settings.

One study on interpreter performance dealt specifically with the influence of lag time on an interpreted message (Cokely, 1986), whereas another study looked at the relationship between "proficiency in interpreting and the ability to make...predictions of the incoming message" (Wilcox and Wilcox, 1985, p. 87). The effect of language proficiency on the effectiveness of an interpreted task was a factor in a study by Hurwitz (1980), who focused on the ASL-to-English task. One study by Fleischer and Cottrell (1976) looked at interpreter effectiveness from the deaf students' perspective.

Although awareness of the history of the interpreting profession and of past research is useful, the recognition that current trends must continually be improved, especially with regard to education practices, is crucial. Some research on the demographic makeup of the deaf community (Schein & Delk, 1974) and on the attitudes of working interpreters (Watson, 1987) has contributed to the knowledge base of interpreter educators, yet there has been little

research on the motivations, interests, and attitudes of those preparing to become interpreters. Only recently have attempts been made to utilize literature from other relevant disciplines such as bilingualism and second language acquisition. For knowledge of the profession to grow and expand, these fields must be examined to complement the available research and to facilitate the preparation of interpreters.

Definitions of Interpreting

It is important to clarify several terms used in the field of interpreting. The definitions have been compiled from several sources (Frishberg, 1986; Herbert, 1952; Neumann Solow, 1981; Seleskovitch, 1978) and can apply to both spoken and signed language interpreters.[2]

Source Language - the language from which the message originates.

Target Language - the language into which the message is rendered.

Interpretation - the process of changing a message produced in one language into another language regardless of whether the two languages are spoken or signed (e.g., Spanish to English, French to French Sign Language, or American Sign Language to British Sign Language).

Translation - the process of changing a written text in one language to a written text in another

[2]The term interpreter is used generically throughout this paper since this is the most common referent for people working between two or more languages.

language (e.g., written Spanish to written French[3]).

Transliteration - the process of changing a message from one form of a language into another form of the same language (e.g., spoken English to signed English).

Consecutive Interpretation - designates that the interpreter provides the interpretation after the speaker has finished his/her speech. This may occur after a phrase, a thought, or an entire speech.

Simultaneous Interpretation - designates that the interpreter renders the message at almost the same time it is conveyed by the speaker. There is often a short delay, called décalage or lag time, since the interpreter needs time to hear and process the message.

Relay Interpretation - occurs when one interpreter must rely on another interpreter's output in order to render his/her own interpretation.[4]

The following definitions pertain specifically to sign language interpreters.

ASL-to-English Interpretation - interpreting task in which the source language is American Sign Language and the target language is spoken English.

English-to-ASL Interpretation - interpreting task in which the source language is spoken English and the target language is American Sign Language.

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[3] Sign language interpreters in the United States tend not to engage in the task of translating because American Sign Language is a visual/gestural language and has no standard written orthography. For more information on translation, see Bell (1991), Nida (1975), and Picken (1987), and others.

[4]Deaf persons work as relay, or intermediary, interpreters primarily in legal and international settings.

Statement of the Problem

The field of interpreting is changing. Deaf people are becoming more aware of their rights to equal communication. Greater access to educational, vocational, and employment opportunities for deaf people has led to an increase in communication between deaf and hearing individuals and an increase in requests for interpreting services. Interpreter preparation programs have been developed at colleges around the country in an effort to educate interpreters to meet these ever-increasing communication needs.

In addition to an increase in the quantity of services, there is also a demand for higher-quality service. Consumers, especially deaf consumers, are not willing to accept an interpreter whose skills are just "GOOD-ENOUGH."[5] They are demanding that interpreters be both linguistically and culturally fluent.

In the U.S., increased awareness has resulted, in part, from the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Employers and service providers, most of whom are hearing, will be hiring more interpreters to meet the increased needs of the deaf community. More interpreters will need to be educated in ways that meet the needs of both deaf and hearing consumers. Deaf people who

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[5] English words written in upper case letters are used to represent an American Sign Language (ASL) sign. GOOD-ENOUGH means 'adequate'.

can serve as relay or intermediary interpreters need to be included in this new generation of interpreters.

Educating and preparing interpreters who are mere "technicians," however, is not sufficient. Most sign language interpreters are hearing persons who learned ASL in adulthood as their second language. Therefore, to work in situations involving at least two languages and cultures, it is particularly important for them to have an understanding of issues surrounding bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning. Interpreter educators, too, must understand these issues and as well as understand the policy and programmatic implications of incorporating (or not incorporating) these topics into the curriculum.

Research Questions

To understand how research from related fields can help interpreters to improve the profession, it is important to understand what prospective interpreters believe about their own profession and its pertinent research. Four specific research questions were designed to explore these attitudes:

1. What attitudes about Deaf culture are held by students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class?
2. What attitudes about American Sign Language are held by students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class?
3. What attitudes about the profession of interpreting are held by students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class?

4. Why do students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class want to become interpreters?

This project also addresses two broader questions based in part on the findings of the aforementioned questions and guided by a theoretical framework within the fields of bilingualism and second language acquisition:

1. How can interpreter preparation programs incorporate the research on bilingualism and second language acquisition into their curriculum?

2. What are the policy implications of incorporating this literature into interpreter preparation programs?

Organization of the Study

To deal more fully with these research questions, this dissertation examines the theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the specifics of this case study, and discusses implications for educating future interpreters. Chapter 2 begins with an overview of the literature on American Sign Language (ASL) and American Deaf culture. This literature has become quite rich in the last decade and provides a foundation for better understanding the growth of the interpreting profession.

Chapter 3 includes a theoretical description of bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning, primarily of ASL. Attitudes toward language generally and toward ASL specifically are examined, as well as how these attitudes have been studied and evaluated.

Chapter 4 provides a review of relevant qualitative and ethnographic research methods, with special attention to case study methods. The present research utilizes a case study approach encompassing several data collection techniques (questionnaires, interviews, and participant observations). The case study focuses on students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class at a southwestern university in the U. S. In addition to the students, several members of the interpreting community, both deaf and hearing, were also interviewed.

An analysis of the data is included in Chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the participants in this study and profiles three students, each of whom has individually dealt with issues effecting ideas and beliefs about the field of interpreting. Chapter 6 examines the recurring themes that emerged from a qualitative analysis of the data.

Chapter 7 concludes with a discussion of the implications of the research findings and how these findings can be applied to current preparation programs and policies to strengthen the field of interpreting and interpreter education.

Significance of the Study

Educators can better prepare interpreters to meet the needs of deaf and hearing consumers by understanding the attitudes held by prospective interpreters. Attitudes toward the interpreting profession, toward the tools (ASL and English) of the profession, and toward the consumers (deaf and hearing) influence a person's ability and success in the field. Hence, it is important to study these attitudes as outlined in the four specific research questions. These findings will have an impact on the two larger questions as they relate to programmatic and policy issues for interpreter preparation programs. Consequently, consumers can be more confident that students who complete their preparation programs will be appropriately and adequately prepared to function in their role as interpreters.

In addition to understanding attitudes, this research provides a better understanding of the connection between sign language interpreter preparation and theories of bilingualism and second language learning. All too often, interpreter preparation programs produce interpreter technicians who may or may not have any theoretical understanding of their task. This case study examines one group of interpreting students to understand more fully their attitudes toward their chosen profession, toward one

group of consumers (deaf people), and toward the language (ASL) and culture of this group.

The results of this research will benefit interpreter educators who, by understanding their students, can adjust the curriculum to meet their needs, and the needs of deaf and hearing consumers. This research will also benefit interpreter educators by highlighting the connection between bilingualism and second language acquisition. Interpreter preparation programs must produce cross-cultural and cross-lingual mediators; educators must understand this connection.

More generally, this research will benefit the field of deaf education. Many interpreters work in K-12, mainstreamed settings where they may be the primary linguistic and cultural role model for the deaf student.[6] Interpreters who are neither linguistically nor culturally competent cannot provide adequate services to the deaf child or to his/her hearing classmates and teacher.

This research can be used to support the fields of interpreter preparation and deaf education by incorporating the rich body of literature that exists on bilingualism and second language learning. Providing interpreter educators

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[6] Ninety percent of deaf children have hearing parents who know little or no sign language. Therefore, the child receives little or no sign language input in the home and is often first exposed to sign language when he/she enters school (Johnson, Liddell and Erting, 1989).

with a stronger, broader theoretical foundation will allow them to strengthen their knowledge base, their programs, and the preparation they can provide to students.

Ultimately, the information garnered from this research can be used to strengthen existing programs and establish graduate-level interpreter preparation programs[7] where linguistic competence (in English and ASL) and cross-cultural understanding are prerequisites for admission.

[7]Gallaudet University, in Washington, DC, offers the only graduate-level signed language interpreter preparation program.

CHAPTER 2

INTERPRETING IN THE CONTEXT OF AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AND AMERICAN DEAF CULTURE[8]

American Sign Language

American Sign Language (ASL), a natural language with its own structure and grammar, is separate and distinct from English. Research has shown that ASL demonstrates all the properties of other languages. The main distinction is that language universals (Fromkin & Rodman, 1983; Hopper & Naremore, 1978; Klima & Bellugi, 1979) are represented in a visual/gestural modality as opposed to an aural/oral modality (Stokoe, 1960). As a natural language, ASL was developed over time within a community of users; it is acquired by children via natural exposure, and it is organized according to the principles found in other human languages (Stokoe, 1960).

Traditionally, however, ASL has not been used, or even recognized, in the education of deaf children. Manual codes were developed as a replacement for ASL in an effort to

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[8] The terms deaf and hard of hearing refer to audiological conditions associated with hearing loss. The term Deaf refers to a person who is a member of a cultural group of people who share a language (ASL) and a set of political and social beliefs and attitudes. The term deaf community represents a group of people who have a hearing loss regardless of their cultural identity. A member of the deaf community may or may not be a member of the Deaf culture.

teach English to deaf children and to make it easier for hearing parents with deaf children to learn a sign system to communicate with their children. Manually Coded English (MCE) utilizes several artificially created systems designed to represent the English language in a visual modality (Reagan, 1985). The codes invented new signs for those English words that do not have single sign translations (Padden & Humphries, 1988). Also, "old" signs were modified to match the syntax and grammar of English, especially in the areas of derivational and inflectional characteristics (Ramsey, 1989). These codes include Seeing Essential English (SEE1) (Anthony, 1971), Signing Exact English (SEE2) (Gustason, Pfetzing, & Zawalkow, 1972), Linguistics of Visual English (LOVE) (Wampler, 1972), Cued Speech (Cornett, 1966), and Fingerspelling (i.e., the Rochester Method).

These codes, though, do not meet the requirements of a natural language because they are developed by committees of people who were not part of the Deaf culture. They are taught formally rather than learned informally, and their grammar is derived from another language, namely English (Johnson, Liddell, & Erting, 1989). While it has been noted that MCE provides a manual and visual form of communication, it nonetheless represents English, which is based on sounds that deaf people cannot hear (Clements & Prickett, 1986).

Although ASL is recognized as the language of the Deaf community (Baker & Cokely, 1980; Padden, 1980; Walworth, 1989) and the linguistic community has accepted ASL as a naturally occurring language, professionals within the educational system for deaf children have not recognized it as a natural language of deaf children (Stevens, 1980a). Cokely (1980, p. 139) cites Stokoe's claim that "failure to recognize and use ASL in educational programs and the failure to give stronger voice to the Deaf community in educational programs amounts to cultural colonialism".

Not only has this failure to acceptance of ASL and Deaf culture had an impact on educational programs for deaf children, it has also had an impact on programs that educate people, e.g., counselors, to work with the deaf community. While ASL is given credence in most interpreter preparation programs, there is still little or no attention to issues of bilingualism (ASL/English) or second language learning (hearing adults learning ASL).

The acceptance of ASL can have a profound impact on the education of deaf children and on programs that prepare people to work with members of the deaf community. So, too, can the acceptance and transmission of the values and norms of Deaf culture. Moores (1987) states that educational systems are products of particular cultures and are used as vehicles of cultural infusion. This applies to K-12 and

postsecondary settings. This being the case, it is important to look at how both majority and minority cultural values are transmitted. While claims have been made that an institution like school cannot be neutral on issues of values and norms and, therefore, must choose one cultural set over another (Pearson, 1977), only by understanding one's own language and culture can a person truly understand his/her environment and be able to interact successfully with others (Freire & Macedo, 1987). For deaf people in the United States, this means American Sign Language and American Deaf Culture, both of which have been discouraged by past educational policy (Neisser, 1983).

American Deaf Culture

The concept of culture, as Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) point out, has been defined from various perspectives (descriptive, historical, psychological, structural, genetic) by researchers in a wide range of fields (anthropology, sociology, psychology, science). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) offer a series of definitions, some dating back to 1871, by social scientists such as Tylor, Boas, Malinowski, Sapir, and Mead, among others. The following are samples of these definitions.

> Tylor, 1871: Culture...is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and

> habits acquired by man as a member of society (p. 81).
>
> Boas, 1930: Culture embraces all the manifestations of social habits of a community, the reactions of the individual as affected by the habits of the group in which he lives, and the products of human activities as determined by these habits (p. 82).
>
> Sapir, 1921: Culture...[is] the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives (p. 89).
>
> Young, 1942: Culture consists of common and more or less standardized ideas, attitudes, and habits which have developed with respect to man's recurrent and continuous needs (p. 107).
>
> Gillin, 1948: Culture consists of patterned and functionally interrelated customs common to specifiable human beings composing specifiable social groups or categories (p. 119).

Geertz (1973, p. 11) quotes a passage by Goodenough as the *locus classicus* in defining culture: "A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members." Geertz goes on to say that

> from this view of what culture is follows a view, equally assured, of what describing it is--the writing out of systematic rules, an ethnographic algorithm, which, if followed, would make it possible so to operate, to pass (physical appearance aside) for a native (p. 11).

Stewart and Bennett (1991, p. 2) define two types of culture, subjective culture and objective culture. Subjective culture refers to "the psychological features of culture, including assumptions, values, and patterns of thinking." Objective culture refers to "the institutions

and artifacts of culture, such as its economic system, social customs, political structures and processes, arts, crafts, and literature."

Many of these definitions tend to be holistic in nature in that they embrace culture as a set of shared rules and understandings learned within a social context. Padden (1980), however, takes a more behavioral approach to culture, especially with regard to the deaf community.

Padden (1980) defines culture as a set of learned behaviors of a group of people who share a common language, set of values, rules for behaviors, and traditions. The Deaf community does indeed fit this cultural framework. Therefore, in addition to recognizing Deaf people as a linguistic minority, it is necessary to recognize them as a cultural community (Reagan, 1985). This cultural view is contrary to the traditional view of deafness as a pathological or medical condition (Baker & Cokely, 1980; Woodward, 1982).

Reagan (1985) lists four characteristics of culture that can easily be applied to Deaf culture. The first characteristic is language, which plays an important role in cultural and ethnic identity. This is especially true for the Deaf since membership in the Deaf community is often contingent upon communicative competence in ASL (Padden & Humphries, 1988; Rutherford, 1988; Woodward, 1982). The

second is group identification, where distinctions are often made based on social, linguistic, and cultural factors. The third is endogamy, where the maintenance of endogamous marriages is often seen as a key to the survival of an ethnic or cultural group. Deaf people tend to marry other Deaf people 85-90 percent of the time (Rutherford, 1988; Schein & Delk, 1974). The fourth characteristic is organizational network at all levels--local, state, national, and international--which maintains group cohesiveness and companionship (see Rutherford, 1988).

It is crucial to remember that the issues of language and culture cannot be separated (Duffy, 1987; Hamers & Blanc 1989; Lewis, 1980). It is not possible to learn a language well without an awareness of cultural values and norms, nor is it always possible to learn about a culture without knowing the language of that culture. Full understanding of a language will only take place by examining the culture that uses that language. Similarly, only by understanding a culture can one understand its language. Stevens (1980a) and others (e.g., Hamers & Blanc, 1989) assert that language is the major vehicle by which culture is transmitted by members of a society to other members and that language and culture must be learned simultaneously (Stevens, 1980b).

The Interpreting Task

Several writers have elaborated on the nature of the interpreting task. "Interpreting...is not merely transposing from one language to another. It is rather, throwing a semantic bridge between two different cultures, two different 'thought worlds'" (Namy, 1977, p. 25). Wilcox and Wilcox (1985, p. 89) have a similar perspective. "Interpreters are not merely conduits of messages, but are active construers of meaning." Roy (1993, p. 341) expands on this idea:

> The interpreter...is not a neutral conduit. ...Rather, the interpreter's role is active, governed by social and linguistic knowledge of the entire communicative situation, including not only competence in the languages, but also...in managing the intercultural event of interpreting.

Although Wilcox & Wilcox and Roy are referring specifically to sign language interpreters, these statements can equally be applied to spoken language interpreters.

Yet another perspective is that "interpreters attempt to equalize a communication-related situation so that the deaf and hearing participants involved have access to much the same input and output or can take advantage of the same resources" (Neumann Solow, 1981, p. 1). Herbert (1952, p. 3) elaborates further when he states that "the mission of the interpreter is to help individuals and communities to acquire a fuller knowledge and a deeper understanding of one another, and, what is still more important, a greater

respect for one another." Seleskovitch (1978, p. 112) concurs with this and emphasizes that whereas the interpreter's main goal is to ensure understanding between speakers, he/she must also "help participants to understand each others' cultural differences rather then pretend that they do not exist."

Understanding the Message

In order for the interpreter to convey the message of the speaker accurately to the audience, he/she must know what the speaker is talking about. As Seleskovitch (1978, p. 11) so succinctly states, "to interpret, one must first understand." One of the prerequisites for understanding a message is knowing how to listen to the message. An interpreter "must learn to listen for ideas and not words" (Isham, 1986, p. 154). Lambert (1978, p. 131) expounds on the idea of interpreters as listeners:

> Few people, I find, listen selflessly to others; rather we take what was said, interpret it, and prepare what we believe to be an appropriate reply. This is even so in situations where it is vital that we--as friends, loved-ones or counsellors--really listen. What could be special about interpreters is that they are expected to listen and dwell on what is being said and implied, to find meaning in talk and gestures, to search out root meanings, and to store this information so as to relay it with as much fidelity as possible through another language. The demands on the interpreter are enormous: we ...know from our own research that witnesses to the most simple situations are embarrassingly unreliable and personal in what they think they

> saw and heard. And yet we expect exactitude across languages from interpreters. My hunch is that certain interpreters do stand out as special because they become out-of-the-ordinary listeners and witnesses and thus out-of-the-ordinary people.

To be able to listen effectively, interpreters should have an "extremely wide general culture" (Herbert, 1952, p. 20) and a wide range of knowledge (Herbert, 1952; McIntire, 1980). This is because an interpreter is "exposed to whole worlds of information and thrust into situations demanding professional preparation and training" (Neumann Solow, 1981, p. xiv). Wilcox and Wilcox (1985, p. 90) explain further:

> The training of sign language interpreters requires much more than merely teaching a technical skill. Professional sign language interpreters must possess knowledge in a wide variety of areas. Only then can they accurately convey through languages the experiences of people who wish to communicate with each other.

Not only must interpreters have a broad knowledge base, they should also "have some knowledge of the subject matter under discussion" (Seleskovitch, 1978, p. 61).

> The intermediary (interpreter) must have <u>understood</u> what he heard (because if not, rendering of the message will be incoherent or incorrect.) This means that one must not only <u>know the language of the speakers</u> but also something about the <u>topic</u> being discussed (Seleskovitch, 1978, p. 6).

This does not mean that the interpreter must have a background identical to that of the speaker (Herbert, 1952), but he/she must have

> a comparable level of intellectual ability. He is faithful to the speaker chiefly through logical

> analysis and only secondarily through his knowledge of the subject. It is his power of reasoning, rather than his command of the facts, which must be on a par with that of the speaker (Seleskovitch, 1978, p. 63).

One important factor to remember is that "the interpreter is not a linguist who studies a specific aspect of language; rather he possesses a full and intuitive knowledge of the languages which he uses" (Seleskovitch, 1978, p. 9). Frishberg (1986, p. 59) cautions, too, that although the interpreter's role has been compared to a machine, a window, a bridge, and a telephone line, these metaphors "ignore that essential fact that the interpreter is a human being."

As can be inferred from this discussion, interpreting is often viewed as a product-oriented task in which there is a final output, namely, an accurate rendition of a message from one language into another language. Witter-Merithew (1982, p. 8) has a slightly different view.

> Practitioners of interpreting realize that technical skills comprise a vital part of what we do. However, there are additional competencies, knowledge and attitudes that aid the interpreter professional in determining which technical skills or integrating behaviors should apply in each situation. Therefore, interpreting becomes a **process** (bold in original).

Regardless of how one views the task of interpreting, an interpreter must be versatile (Witter-Merithew, 1980) and capable of meeting the needs of the persons being served.

Language Fluency

Within the field of interpreting, a person's language use is determined by his/her fluency with a language. Interpreters often refer to their "A," "B," or "C" languages, which are defined as follows:

> "A" Language - a person's mother tongue. Also known as a person's native or first language.
>
> "B" Language - a language in which the interpreter is fluent but which cannot be considered his/her first language.
>
> "C" Language - a language which the interpreter understands fluently but may not be able to produce. Also called a passive language (Frishberg, 1986; Seleskovitch, 1978).

As Frishberg (1986, p. 16) notes, "the usual and generally preferred practice among interpreters of spoken languages is to interpret into one's first ("A") language." This is just the opposite for sign language interpreters who tend to interpret into their second ("B") language (ASL).

With the exception of hearing children who grew up with deaf parents and have ASL as their native language, most hearing interpreters learned ASL as adults and, therefore, ASL, is at best, their "B" language. Most of the time, a sign language interpreter listens to a message in English and then renders it into sign language, hence working into his/her "B" language.

Herbert (1952, p. 61) discourages this practice. He believes that an interpreter

> should speak only in his mother tongue. If he uses a language which he has not fully mastered, he will make far more mistakes than he would in a different use of the same language, because all his attention is occupied elsewhere.

For most hearing sign language interpreters in the United States, speaking in one's mother tongue means producing the message in spoken English after receiving it in ASL. For a deaf person working as an intermediary interpreter, this means producing the message in ASL after receiving it in written or signed English.

An interpreter need not be a linguistic specialist; however, he/she must be fluent in the languages he/she knows (Herbert, 1952). The interpreter must have lexical, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic knowledge of the languages being used to "manipulate the languages with great precision" (Seleskovitch, 1978, p. 126). This is especially true in simultaneous interpreting because the interpreter does not have the luxury of time when rendering the message.

Fluency and knowledge of different languages does not make an interpreter (Herbert, 1952; McIntire, 1980) but they are pre-requisites to preparation (Herbert, 1952; Seleskovitch, 1978; Smith, Finch, Gorelick & Weiner, 1978). An interpreter must have fluency of his/her languages before learning the skills of interpreting because a person "cannot learn or improve his knowledge of a language while expressing the meaning of a message at 150 words a minute"

(Seleskovitch, 1978, p. 77). One caution specifically related to sign language interpreters is that "teaching use of the language of signs is not, per se, training of interpreters. The act of interpreting is complex, and mere ability to make signs is no assurance of ability to interpret" (Fant & Gough, 1964, p. 7). The ability to make signs and to understand those who use signs is, however, a necessary beginning.

McIntire (1980) and others (e.g., Scouten, 1964) stress the importance of language competence, specifically as it relates to sign language interpreting. "Anyone who wishes to interpret will first have communicative competence in ASL, will be able to understand deaf people in an ordinary conversation, and will be able to express their ideas and needs competently and appropriately in ASL" (McIntire, 1980, p. 190). McIntire also emphasizes that "we are on shaky ground when we proceed to train people who cannot even casually communicate with deaf citizens" (p. 194).

The issue of interpreters being able to understand deaf people fully was stressed by the members of the deaf community who participated in this study. One stated, "interpreters must understand how Deaf people think....They must know how to use the language [ASL] and know how Deaf people use the language." Another participant responded bluntly, "Interpreters don't understand Deaf people." The

key to educating new interpreters is to help them truly understand Deaf people and the language of the Deaf community, ASL.

We must not forget, however, that competence in one's native language is also a prerequisite to becoming an interpreter. For sign language interpreters in the United States, this means competency and fluency in English, as well as in ASL, because "native competence in English does not necessarily make us articulate or skilled in it" (McIntire, 1980, p. 190). Interpreters must be highly skilled in all of their working languages to be effective.

Frishberg (1986, p. 89), in comparing spoken language preparation programs and signed language preparation programs, addresses the issue of language competency.

> Consider the instructional programs for conference interpreters in spoken languages: for these there is no question that language skills must be firmly in place before interpreter instruction can proceed. These courses all assume that admitted students have complete undergraduate degrees and possess a breadth of general knowledge usually not expected in sign language interpreter courses.

As discussed, interpreters need not be linguists; they must, however, be competent users of their languages. Language fluency and broad general knowledge must be the goals of prospective interpreters (Davis, 1990).

Language Modality

One significant difference between spoken and signed language interpreters pertains to the modality of their working languages. Spoken language interpreters work between two languages that are aural/oral. Signed language interpreters work between one language that is aural/oral and another that is visual/gestural. Their deep structures differ, as do their surface structures (Klima & Bellugi, 1979). The structural differences between ASL and English have as much to do with modality as with syntax, semantics, or pragmatics. Thus, they are not only working with two structurally different languages, but with two different modalities as well.

There seems to be a misconception that ASL and English can be superimposed on one another simply by signing and talking at the same time, referred to as simultaneous communication, sim-com (SC), or sign supported speech (SSS) (Johnson, Liddell & Erting, 1989). Usually, however, neither the spoken utterance nor the signed utterance is grammatically, semantically, or syntactically complete (Bernstein, Maxwell & Matthews, 1985; Johnson & Erting, 1989; Lucas & Valli, 1989) although the spoken utterance tends to be more complete than the signed utterance. In their research on simultaneous communication, Bernstein, et al, (1985, p. 136) conclude that "the SC we observed...is a

bimodal coding of English....The sign channel alone does not resemble ASL. It seems derived from English....[Therefore], SC might best be viewed as a single, but bimodal, code."

Bi-modality has been discussed primarily in the areas of language acquisition for deaf children and for hearing children with deaf parents (Bernstein, et al, 1985; Daniels, 1993; Griffith, 1985) and educational practices for deaf children (Luetke-Stahlman, 1988; Swisher, 1989). There has been little research on the influence among interpreters who use bimodal communication. Davis (1989) extends Lucas and Valli's (1989) theory on language contact to the interpreting context. His research focuses on how "interlingual transference [is] manifest[ed] in the target language output of ASL interpreters," as demonstrated through code-switching, code-mixing, and lexical borrowing. Winston's (1989, p. 152) research focuses on the transliterating context and begins with the assumption that "transliterators produce signed target language messages that contain a mixture of English and ASL features." Both Davis' and Winston's studies demonstrate the necessity for sign language interpreters to be bilingual and bimodal in ASL and English. Further research is necessary to determine how interpreters who work within a bimodal context are influenced by this dual modality.

Sign Language Interpreter Preparation Programs

Regardless of the need to see interpreting as a process rather than merely as a product, and despite the increased acceptance of ASL and the proliferation of interpreter preparation programs (IPP),[9] Cokely (1992, p. 2) cautions that "very little is known about the process of interpreting.". Young (1985, p. 4) concurs when she writes that "the interpreting profession is probably the least understood of all professions", despite the fact that "the training of interpreters has progressed considerably from the groping-in-the-dark stage to a level of sophistication which gives us assurance that we are on the track" (Fant, 1990, p. 58).

Currently, few formal standards regarding what constitutes an adequate preparation program are universally accepted (Frishberg, 1986). Historically, preparation programs arose as a result of demands by deaf students pursuing opportunities in postsecondary education in the late 1960s, and was prompted by the passage of legislation regarding the rights of disabled persons (e.g. Section 504, PL 94-142). Educational institutions assumed the responsibility for educating interpreters to meet the needs of the deaf students enrolled in these programs (Witter-

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[9]IPPs were formerly called ITPs, Interpreter Training Programs. Much of the literature still refers to the "training" of interpreters.

Merithew, 1980). Due to the immediate need, many people were educated quickly and en masse. This mass production "provided an immediate quantity of service but frequently did not produce quality service" (Witter-Merithew, 1980, p. 83). Even today, interpreter preparation programs throughout the country are not equal in quality (Fant, 1990).

In sharp contrast to preparation programs for spoken language interpreters, which are at the graduate level (e.g., Monterey Institute for International Studies; Georgetown University), most preparation programs for sign language interpreters are housed at community colleges and are approximately two years in length. (A third year may be added if the student is learning his/her ASL language skills during the first year.) Cokely (1992, p. 3) offers the following breakdown of sign language interpreter preparation programs:

Two-year programs (A.A./A.S. degrees)	66%
Four-year programs (B.A./B.S. degrees)	7%
Short-term programs (Non-degree)	27%

One graduate level (M.A.) program specifically geared to sign language interpreting is offered at Gallaudet University.

The proliferation of two-year preparation programs may have occurred to combat the shortage of interpreters; however, "it is impossible to seriously train professional

level interpreters in such a short time, regardless of the quality of instruction" (McIntire, 1980, p. 193). All of the deaf and hearing people community members interviewed for this study agreed that a two-year program is insufficient for educating interpreters. One reason is that most students are learning their second language, ASL, simultaneously to learning the skill of interpreting. As IPPs are currently structured, the emphasis is on "language usage and/or acquisition" (Cavell & Wells, 1986, p. 131) rather than on interpreting and transliterating skills.

Young (1985, pp. 4-5) also points out that "there are no professions today that require only two years of study, unless that particular profession has a specific terminology limited to a specialized area (i.e., nursing). Even then, students must take additional courses."

The intention here is not to criticize or condemn two-year programs; rather, it is to rethink how they can be used more effectively in the process of educating interpreters. Several persons interviewed for this study suggested that a two-year program would be a good place for students to develop their language skills in both ASL and English. These students could then proceed into a four-year B.A. program to continue their education in Deaf Studies,[10] which

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[10]One Deaf interviewee suggested that it may not be necessary for these students to major in Deaf Studies. Rather they could minor in Deaf Studies and major in another

is another essential component for an interpreter (Davis, 1990; Frishberg, 1986). This four-year program could include knowledge of and skill development in interpreting, or it could lead to a graduate program in interpreting. This extended preparation would have long-term benefits because it is "no longer possible to simply train potential interpreters; they must also be educated" (Rust & Meldrum, 1978, p. 65).

This in-depth preparation would not only enhance the field of interpreting, it would also benefit those persons who use interpreting services. Young (1985, p. 5) states that we must

> consider the diversely educated individuals we serve. ...We cannot achieve [with] this kind of [short term] training...and to accept piecemeal offerings as a stop-gap solution to communication problems is to perform the greatest disservice to deaf people as well as to our own profession.

In addition to considering the needs of the consumer, these extended programs could address the needs of the students, the curriculum, and the instructors (Doerfert & Wilcox, 1986). Cross-cultural and cross-lingual skills could also be included but only after the student has a thorough understanding of both (all) languages, cultures, and peoples involved. Students would then be better able to "cope with the effect which differences between hearing and

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discipline that is relevant to their future work.

deaf cultures...have on them and their performance of the interpreter role" (Cavell & Wells, 1986, p. 131).

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of American Sign Language, American Deaf culture, and the field of interpreting. An important aspect of becoming an interpreter is having fluent language skills prior to learning the task of interpreting.[11] Understanding and accepting Deaf people as a linguistic and cultural minority will also greatly facilitate the preparation of sign language interpreters to meet the growing communication needs of deaf and hearing consumers.

This, however, is only one aspect of an interpreter's knowledge. He/she must also understand the influence that bilingualism and second language learning can have on his/her role as an interpreter. These issues are discussed in the following chapter.

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[11]There is a need to provide sign language interpreters with language-immersion experiences similar to those of spoken language interpreters, although there is, as yet, no means for achieving this.

CHAPTER 3

BILINGUALISM AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Bilingualism

As a result of the limited acceptance of ASL and Deaf culture, issues of bilingualism in the deaf community have not been widely discussed nor have issues of second language learning for hearing people learning ASL. At the most basic level, bilingualism deals with the knowledge and use of two languages by the same person (Appel & Muysken, 1987; Grosjean, 1982). Hakuta (1986, p. 3) states that "a bilingual person must have two parallel systems, one for each language, that must at the same time be interrelated." For Hakuta, this broad definition includes a "developmental perspective, bringing the entire process of second-language acquisition into the domain of bilingualism" (p. 4).

Appel and Muysken (1987) and others (e.g., Fishman, 1982) make a distinction between societal and individual bilingualism. The above definition falls into the category of individual bilingualism, whereas societal bilingualism occurs when "in a given society two or more languages are spoken" (p. 1). For the most part in the United States, bilingualism is seen as a transitional state into "fully assimilated English monolingualism" (Hakuta, 1986, p. 7).

Politzer and McGroarty (1983, 1985) and others (e.g., Davies, 1989; Spolsky, 1989; Widdowson, 1989) discuss aspects of communicative competence, defined as the ability to convey or receive information, and linguistic competence, defined as the mastery of the grammaticality of a language system (1983, p. 179). Their research has focused on assessing the communicative and linguistic competencies of students studying English as both a foreign language and a second language. In general, they found that

> communicative competence emerges as quite distinct from linguistic competence. The two kinds of competence are however related: communicative competence includes abilities which go beyond linguistic competence...[and] lower levels of linguistic competence impose limits on communicative competence. Any language-related level of communicative competence has a minimum level of linguistic competence as a prerequisite (p. 186).

There have been few studies which focus on the communicative and linguistic competencies of ASL as a second language although this would prove to be quite interesting.

Historically, as Hakuta (1986) points out, bilingualism has been associated with people who are seen as having low income and low status and who are identified as educationally "at risk". This is clear from examining the history of research concerning bilingualism. During the first half of the century, as Hakuta (1986, p. 15) states, research was "guided by the question of whether or not bilingualism has a negative effect on intelligence, while

more recent work has been concerned with whether or not there is a positive effect" on intelligence, usually the intelligence of minority populations without recognized political and/or economic status.

Romaine (1989) uses a slightly different approach when she discusses how various disciplines have viewed and conducted research on bilingualism.

> Psychologists have investigated the effects of bilingualism on mental processes, while sociologists have treated bilingualism as an element in culture conflict and have looked at some of the consequences of linguistic heterogeneity as a societal phenomenon. Educationists have been concerned with bilingualism in connection with public policy. ...Within the field of international studies, bilingualism is seen as an essential element in cross-cultural communication (pp. 7-8).

Hakuta (1986, p. 9), too, believes bilingualism is more than just the knowledge of two languages. He believes that it refers to "a constellation of tensions having to do with a multitude of psychological, societal, and political realities."

Some people view bi- or multiculturalism as being valuable to society (Fishman, 1978, 1982); however, according to Romaine (1989) many view it with negativity and suspicion. These contradictory views of cultures may occur because "different cultures may embody different notions of what it means to be a competent member of a particular language community" (Romaine, 1989, p. 15). Attitudes may

also depend on whether a language is viewed as an ethnic language used by a particular minority group or as a foreign language used by speakers from another country. As Ruiz (1987, p. 9) explains,

> There is a tradition of treating foreign languages and ethnic languages differently in this country....The study of foreign language is seen as academically respectable in large part because it is ethnically and politically neutral; the study of one's own ethnic language, so the argument goes, leads to ethnic separation and political conflict.

The simplicity of the definition of bilingualism as the knowledge of two languages seems to belie the complexity of how bilingualism and bilinguality are viewed by researchers and society. The next section discusses the achievement of bilinguality via second language learning.

Second Language Learning

Both Hakuta (1986) and Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) discuss factors that motivate individuals to learn a second language. At one extreme are people who are forced to learn a second language in order to survive. This is often the case among peoples who have been colonized. At this extreme, as well, are the colonizers who may learn a second language to get "'inside' of another cultural community in order to exploit, manipulate, or control, with personal ends only in mind" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 2). At the other extreme are people who want to learn a second language

because they are interested in better understanding that society or culture. Those in this category have no interest in changing the society. Some researchers (e.g., Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Torres, 1984) have referred to instrumental and integrative motivations for language learning. Instrumental motivation is described as a desire to use a language to obtain practical goals, whereas integrative motivation is described as a desire to integrate and identify with the target language group (Richard-Amato, 1988).

Although intelligence, language aptitudes, and motivation are all important factors in learning a second language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), a person's attitude toward a language and its users will also have a major influence on his/her acquisition of that language (Anisfeld & Lambert, 1972). Gardner and Lambert (1972, p. 14) discuss an "integrative motive" for learning a second language whereby the learner demonstrates "a willingness or a desire to be like representative members of the 'other' language community...and becomes associated with that other community. Gardner (1972, p. 215) stresses that "the psychological mechanism [for acquiring a second language]...would seem to be largely attitudinal."

Not only is attitude toward a language and its users a factor in successful second language learning but also the

attitude toward the learning task itself (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Lambert, Gardner, Barik, & Tunstall, 1972). The person who views the task of learning positively will be more successful than the person who views it negatively.

Language and Identity

Lambert and Taylor (1987, p. 80) found that "feelings of threat to one's ethnic identity function as a *negative* motivation in the second language learning process." This is not surprising; resistance to "outsiders" often stems from feelings of insecurity and/or threat to one's self. In a related study with Greek Canadians, Lambert, Mermigis and Taylor (1986, p. 49) discovered that those "who feel more economically and culturally secure and who are also more religious and ethnocentric...attribute favourable traits to a particular subset of ethnic groups in Canada."

Taylor and Dubé (1986) distinguish between *personal identity*, components unique to the individual, and *social identity*, aspects of the self that are shared with all who occupy the same category. Although the terms are defined separately, they are intertwined in that self identity is developed through interaction with others and from social categories (Taylor & Dubé, 1986) and is achieved through multiple group membership (Wong-Reiger & Taylor, 1981). Taylor and Dubé (1986, pp. 96-97) caution, however, that

> the social component of identity can be problematic. It may confront the individual with competing values that must be integrated with the self....Beliefs and ideologies formed on the basis of social identity are often at odds with more personal aspects of identity.

ASL as a Second Language

As previously mentioned, there has been little research on ASL/English bilingualism as it pertains to adults, although there has been sporadic interest in the topic over the years. Wilcox (1981), for example, used the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to examine the personalities of sign language students. His goal was "to understand what kinds of people are attracted to learning sign language and how different types performs" (p. 39). Wilcox suggests that this type of testing might be used in the field of interpreter education, because, as Doerfert and Wilcox (1986, p. 35) state, "in the field of sign language interpreter education...relatively little attention has been paid to personality or affective variables and learning style in activities typical of the sign language classroom."

Mills (1984) conducted research on how sign languages are learned as a second language by hearing adults. More specifically, the research was conducted "to determine what factors influence manual sign language learning by people with well-developed first language skills" (p. 261). This research focused on receptive, rather than expressive,

skills of learning. Mills found that "the translucency or transparency[12] of signs may be an important factor affecting learnability for hearing populations" (p. 264). This finding is interesting in view of the "reported unimportance of iconicity in processing and use of signs by deaf signers" (p. 264).

More recently, McKee and McKee (1992, p. 129) conducted a descriptive study "to identify what learners on one hand and teachers on the other perceive to be difficult about the learning of American Sign Language." They found that hearing learners must learn "to attend visually to linguistic information that is coded in a form for which they have no perceptual 'schema'" (p. 131). Erting (1988), too, determined in interviews with Deaf adults, that hearing people often have difficulty in shifting from an auditory to a visual orientation. Similarly, Mather (1989) found that a hearing teacher had more difficulty adapting to the visual needs of deaf students than did a Deaf teacher.

In addition to learning to perceive differently, hearing learners also need to become comfortable with using the body (i.e. face, arms, hands) as a means of expression (McKee & McKee, 1992).

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[12] Signs are called translucent when learners perceive a relationship between a sign and its referent and transparent when a sign's meaning can be understood from its form alone.

Just as Lambert et al. (1972) determined that attitude, motivation and aptitude are important factors in acquiring a second language, McKee and McKee (1992) also found these factors to be influential in the acquisition of ASL as a second language. The teachers in their study stressed that students' attitudes, in particular, are "significant in their success as learners of ASL" (p. 147).

One interesting aspect of the McKee and McKee (1992) study involved how the students perceived admittance into the Deaf community. They write:

> Students' experiences...show that interacting with the Deaf community is a valued but not always successful experience for ASL learners. Most students want to practice and improve their ASL skills by interacting with Deaf people, but feel overwhelmed and inhibited by their limited proficiency when they try, thus finding it difficult to establish and maintain social contacts in the Deaf community (p. 154).

This issue of entrance into and acceptance by the Deaf community was also a concern for the students who participated in this study.

Zimmer (1989) emphasizes that not only is it important to know the semantics and syntax of a language (ASL) fluently, but also to know the pragmatics of the language.

> In the area of second-language acquisition and the teaching of ASL, it is equally important to consider differences in register. In order to be truly fluent, a student must not only learn the correct forms and structures of the target language, but also must become knowledgeable about when and where particular forms are appropriately used (p. 271).

This, again, relates to the distinction between communicative competence and linguistic competence as previously discussed in this chapter. The issue of language fluency as it relates specifically to interpreters also was discussed previously (see Chapter 2).

Biculturalism

When learning a second language, it is also important to learn a second culture. Biculturalism is "the coexistence and/or combination of two distinct cultures" (Grosjean, 1982, p. 157). Despite the fact that language and culture cannot be separated, much of the literature on bilingualism and second language acquisition focuses on just that, language. Very little attention has been paid to issues of being or becoming bicultural.

It is especially important for interpreters to be bicultural as well as bilingual because "success in aiding the communication process is not necessarily directly related to how well the bilingual speaks both languages, but rather to how sensitive the individual is to the communication process" in its cultural context (Mellon, 1986, p. 103).

Interpreters need to be culturally aware and comfortable with the cultures of both the Deaf community and the Hearing community (Frishberg, 1986; Neumann Solow,

1981). By being bicultural, interpreters can better understand "meanings in their cultural contexts" (Wilcox & Wilcox, 1985, p. 90). This is particularly true because most interpreters are hearing, which makes them "automatically members of the powerful dominant group in the eyes of deaf people" (Baker-Shenk, 1986, p. 67).

Interpreters have been referred to as members of a "third culture" (Bienvenu, 1987; Sherwood, 1987) or as being "hearing bi-cultural"[13] (Miller and Matthews, 1986). Member status in a "third culture" is often given to people who "share extensive cross-cultural experiences" (Brislin, 1986, p. 17). For interpreters, this means acting "as representatives of an interpreter culture that mediates between the cultures of the Hearing and Deaf" (Atwood & Gray, 1986, p. 112). Despite this, according to Atwood and Gray (1986, p. 116),

> Interpreters sometimes fail to see themselves as a community with a culture. Interpreting is a culture in and of itself. Interpreters make up a community. Sign language interpretation has its own unique history.

Being bicultural oneself also means understanding the circumstances that led to the cultural texture of the groups being served. Deaf people, for example, are necessarily bicultural due to their minority status within a majority

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[13]Miller and Matthews (1986) also included professionals in deafness, hearing parents of deaf children, and hearing children of deaf parents in this group.

society. Hearing people (i.e., interpreters), on the other hand, are members of the majority (at least to the extent that they are hearing), who make a conscious effort to learn about and enter a minority culture. Interpreters need to understand the distinction of being bicultural by necessity and by choice.

Ultimately, however, interpreters must understand that in addition to mediating between two languages and cultures, they also mediate between two sources of power, which are often imbalanced. As Lane (1986a, p. 1) observes,

> language and power are so intimately related that an interpreter cannot translate a single word, cannot even appear on the scene, without communicating messages about group loyalty. Much of what the interpreter mediates between two cultures, explicitly and implicitly, is a struggle for power.

Overall, interpreters need to be aware of their roles as cultural mediators and how their presence in this role affects the very communication process they aim to facilitate. This includes understanding what being bicultural means, historically and politically from the deaf perspective and from the hearing perspective. Additional research from both the deaf and hearing perspectives is needed to fully understand the political/power issues associated with the interpreting process.

Language Attitudes

As previously discussed, an understanding of language attitudes is important, not only as they relate to second language acquisition but also because "attitudes represent an index of intergroup relations" (Romaine, 1989, p. 258). They can be thought of as "a crucial point of contact between many other communicative phenomena" (Giles & Coupland, 1991, p. 53). Antosch (1986, p. 230) states that "sociolinguistic theories show that language usage patterns are indications of the user's attitudes toward that language." Romaine (1989, p. 257) cautions, however, that perception about language users, "while ostensibly about language, is mediated through a stereotypical perception of a group which is believed to speak in a particular way." In addition, studies have shown that "there is a quite considerable social consensus among listener-judges about the *stereotypical* traits associated with voices" (Giles and Coupland, 1991, p. 33).

In their study of attitudes held by language minority and majority groups toward language and cultural diversity, Lambert and Taylor (1987, p. 59) found the following:

> - Newcomers seem less interested in becoming American or Canadian than they are in being <u>in</u> America or <u>in</u> Canada;
>
> - A very strong endorsement of a policy of ethnic heritage maintenance and a clear rejection of assimilation;

- That their children must become fluently bilingual and learn to handle English as well as the native speakers, with whom they will interact and compete for jobs; and

- That people feel more accepted and less like second-class citizens in America if they are bilingual rather than skilled only in English.

With regard to Spanish-speaking communities in the United States, Ornstein (1982) believes that attitudinal research on language varieties in different communities is insufficient. On the few occasions that this kind of research has been conducted, it is "performed within some sort of sociolinguistic framework, with psychologists prominently represented" (p. 242), and it tends to show strong evidence that "both Chicanos and Anglos reveal widespread confusion about [language] varieties in general" (p. 249). Ornstein found fault with the schools, which, he believes, fail "to include basic linguistic facts somewhere in the curriculum" (p. 249).

Another study on language attitudes of Spanish speakers was conducted by Solé (1982) in the Cuban-American community to determine what linguistic and demographic variables affect language attitudes. He found that, overall, most respondents had positive feelings about knowing more than one language, although "language choice seems to respond primarily to the linguistic competence of the speakers, which in turn is governed by generational differences, years

of residence in the United States, and age at the time of arrival" (p. 259).

Lambert et al. (1972) developed a method for assessing language attitudes. Their Matched-Guise Technique asked listeners to judge 10 speech samples produced in French and English. Four French-English bilinguals had each been tape-recorded reading the same passage--once in French and once in English. Two "fillers" were used to bring the total number of samples to 10.

The judges were told that they would hear 10 male voices; they did not know that they would be hearing the same speakers twice, once in each language. The reasoning was that if the judges did not know they were listening to the same person, any differences in their evaluations of the language would reflect their attitudes about the languages themselves, not about the language users. In a related study, Gardner and Lambert (1972, p. 98) indicate that

> The procedure [for matched-guise] stems from a very simple notion: hearing the flow of a foreign language evokes in the mind of the listener certain attitudinal reactions that have become associated with a particular foreign people who habitually use that language.

Giles and Coupland (1991, pp. 33-34) also stress that the matched-guise procedure is "built on the assumption that speech style triggers certain social categorizations which will lead to a set of group-related trait inferences."

Lambert et al. (1972) found that when the test was administered to both French speakers and English speakers, the tendency was to judge "members" or voices of their own language group more favorably, although overall, English speakers were rated more favorably than French speakers. This finding, Lambert (1972) suggests, may be "interpreted as evidence for a minority group reaction on the part of the French sample" (p. 94).

Giles and Coupland (1991, p. 43) concur with this conclusion:

> It seems reasonable to propose that when a non-standard speech style is, or becomes, a valued symbol of ingroup pride (be it working-class, ethnic, or occupational), individuals who are strongly committed to their social group display evaluative preferences for their own variety.

They also point out that the matched-guise technique is not flawless, but they feel that the value of the initial matched-guise study was at least five-fold:

> First, Lambert, et al. invented a rigorous and elegant method for eliciting apparently private attitudes, which at least arguably controlled for extraneous variables. Second, the findings underscored the important role of language (and code and dialect choice) in impression formation. Third, the study laid the foundation for an interface between sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic analyses of language and was an important factor in establishing the cross-disciplinary field of language attitudes. ...Fourth, the original study spawned an enormous number of studies world-wide....And fifth, the dependent variables used in the study gave rise to the now pervasively recognized (though relabelled) judgement clusters of *status* versus *solidarity* traits (Giles & Coupland, 1991, p. 35).

Although studies on language attitudes are important and informative, both Romaine (1989) and Giles and Coupland (1991) offer cautions to conducting this type of research. For Romaine, one of the difficulties is in interpreting any kind of self-reported data on language use. Cokely (1981, p. 274) confirms this when he writes, "self-rating generally tends to be positively skewed."

Along a slightly different line, Giles and Coupland (1991, pp. 48-49) caution that "the role of message content, and its underlying dimensions have been sadly neglected in the study of language attitudes. Researchers have preferred to gain experimental control by the use of supposedly 'neutral' topics."

In addition to the need for more research on message content, there is also a need for research on language use and what, if any, characteristics of language use in fact mark second language learners as such. The power/authority relationships between L1 and L2 language users also need to be more thoroughly and explicitly studied and understood.

Attitudes Toward ASL

Historically, attitudes about ASL, the language of the Deaf community, have been those of condemnation and inferiority. This may be in part because sign language is used by people who are often viewed as being disabled and

who are a minority (Antosch, 1986). Not only have these views been held by hearing people, but they have, to some extent, "been internalized by deaf people and perpetuated against themselves" (Antosch, 1986, p. 222). A cycle of attitudes toward ASL is presented by Antosch (1986, p. 232):

> Negative attitudes toward sign language have changed, disappeared, and re-emerged throughout American history. English-speaking educators once perceived signs as a disability to be eradicated through oralism; they now perceive signs as a useful tool for teaching the English language. The deaf community has always perceived sign language as their eloquent birthright even while constantly being stigmatized by it. Now, both deaf and English-speaking Americans hold the seemingly new, but actually 150-year-old attitude that sign language is a minority language.

While Antosch (1986) provides a general view of societal attitudes about ASL, Kannapell (1989) conducted a study to understand better the language attitudes of students at Gallaudet University[14] toward ASL and English, and toward their participation in the Deaf culture. She conducted this study partly because of what she perceives as "a lack of research on language attitudes among deaf people" (p. 196). Kannapell found that Deaf peoples' attitudes about the language and cultures involved "depend largely on several sociolinguistic factors: the function of the languages, language choice, group reference, and cultural

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[14] Gallaudet University, located in Washington, DC, is a liberal arts college serving the Deaf community.

identity" (p. 195) and that these factors are influenced by educators' attitudes.

Of the nine key findings from this study (Kannapell, 1989), four are related to attitudes about language:

- Students have positive attitudes about ASL, but they also are ambivalent toward it and have misconceptions about it.

- The number of years spent at a Deaf School, the onset of hearing loss, and the age when sign language is learned are the most significant primary social variables contributing to the students' attitudes about sign language, English, and language users.

- Self-identification as deaf or hard-of-hearing and self-classification of linguistic skills are very significant secondary social variables contributing to students' attitudes about sign language, English, and language users.

- There is a strong relationship between the attitudes of students about ASL and those about deaf people, but there is no relationship between their attitudes about English and those about hearing people.

In another study, Trotter (1989) examines the language attitudes of prospective teachers of the deaf to determine the covert and overt language attitudes about ASL and English. She used a modified version of Lambert's (1972) matched-guise technique for her study. Trotter hypothesizes that "many prospective teachers of the deaf enter teacher-training programs with little or no knowledge of deaf culture, deaf people, or the nature of sign language" (p. 212). Based on her findings Trotter offers the following proposition:

> It seems that teacher training programs probably serve as a vehicle not only for informing prospective teachers about deafness, the Deaf, and deaf communities, but also for initially shaping prospective teacher's attitudes and stereotypes about the deaf experience (p. 227).

Attitudes about ASL within the general community and the field of education are often shaped by social, political, and historical factors. Interpreters need to understand these factors and how their own attitudes may be influence by them.

Summary

Often, for interpreters, their attitudes are evaluated by how they use language (especially ASL) and whether or not they demonstrate culturally appropriate behavior as recognized by members of the Deaf community. Because of this, interpreters need to be cognizant of their own attitudes and be aware of how they project these attitudes. In addition, interpreters need to understand issues of bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning because their jobs revolve around the appropriate use of two or more languages. Interpreters must demonstrate language skills and cultural behaviors that are acceptable to the users of those languages and the members of the accompanying cultures, and they must be aware of the power-alignment issues due to their presence in an interpreting situation.

Unfortunately, many of these issues are not discussed in sign language interpreter preparation programs, especially as they pertain to culture.[15] The result is a program that produces interpreter "technicians" for whom the language (ASL) and the culture are disassociated.

The following chapters provide an understanding of this current research in the context of findings that emerged from this study. Implications of these findings are discussed in the final chapter as are suggestions for further research.

[15] While many sign language students do take a course about Deaf culture, often called "Introduction to Deaf Culture," the course content is usually very general in nature. A thorough understanding of deaf people and of the intricate balance between culture and language (ASL) is not a requirement for admittance to many training programs.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

For this dissertation, I chose to study the attitudes held by students enrolled in an undergraduate "Introduction to Interpreting" class, to learn what prospective interpreters think about the interpreting profession. Being an interpreter myself, I have a vested interest in seeing the profession grow and succeed, and have strong feelings about the current state of the field and what I perceive to be inadequate and inappropriate services being provided to both deaf and hearing consumers. I am often frustrated as I observe interpreters who operate in a mechanical and rote fashion. While understanding and accepting that each person's signing style is different (just as each person's voice is different), it is difficult to accept the lack of mindfulness among many interpreters who produce interpretations that are conceptually and semantically inaccurate, and syntactically wrong.

The interpreters are not entirely to blame for this state of affairs. Some of the fault lies in the preparation that interpreters receive or fail to receive, as is sometimes the case. Interpreter preparation programs often graduate students who are not fluent in one or both of the necessary languages (ASL and English), who do not have a

thorough understanding of the cultural groups involved (Deaf and Hearing), and who do not seem to understand the role and task of being an interpreter or an understanding of the power that an interpreter has in a given situation.

The goal of this dissertation is not to scrutinize all IPPs, but rather to understand the ideas, attitudes, and motivations of students who are learning about and considering going into the field of interpreting. It is hoped that through such an examination, some specific recommendations for improving IPPs--and the interpreting profession itself--will become apparent.

Selecting a Data Source

With these goals in mind, I initially contemplated interviewing students in several IPPs around the country and comparing their responses to a series of questions. However, feasibility constraints and the advice of my dissertation committee led me to focus on one group of students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class at a southwestern university in the U.S. The students were just beginning to learn about the field of interpreting, and were in the early stages of considering joining that field. This sample, rather than one of students already immersed in a preparation program, I believed would provide a good representation of the attitudes held by the next generation

of interpreters. By understanding these attitudes, interpreter educators can tailor preparation programs to meet the needs of the students, and ultimately, the needs of deaf and hearing consumers.

Fortunately, an introductory course on interpreting was being offered in the near vicinity, and I secured permission from the instructor to work with her class for my study. This class was not part of a full interpreter preparation curriculum since the university offering the course does not have an IPP. Although it would seem that students who enroll in a formal IPP might have different attitudes than those who are taking an introductory course outside of an IPP, past experience indicates that many students enroll in an IPP prior to taking an introductory course and/or prior to fully understanding the interpreting profession. Their beliefs and attitudes are, possibly, just as "unformed" as those who only take an introductory course. Because the early experiences of the two groups are similar in this regard, the data collected from this class were still beneficial in helping me understand how students perceive the interpreting profession. Also, those students in the class who were interested in pursuing an interpreting career had the option of continuing their studies at a nearby preparation program.

The instructor for this course is hearing and the daughter of Deaf parents; her first language is ASL and her second language is English. She considers herself to be a native user of both languages. She is an RID-certified interpreter who has several years of interpreter education experience, as well as several years of ASL teaching experience.

The teaching assistant (T.A.) is hearing and was exposed to sign language at an early age by a baby sitter. She began to study ASL formally while in college. She has been interpreting professionally for approximately 9 years and has level 5 IQAS (state) certification.[16] This class was her first experience as an interpreter educator.

In addition, several members of both the deaf and hearing communities who have had experience in educating interpreters, agreed to be interviewed for my study. Finally, other members of the deaf community were invited to this class as guest speakers, and I was able to listen to their views and consider them in light of my research questions as well.

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[16]IQAS (Interpreter Quality Assurance Standards) is a 5-level, statewide system used to measure the ability and skills of interpreters. The goal of many interpreters who have IQAS certification is to obtain certification through the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Qualitative Research

As my study began to take shape, it became clear that a qualitative research methodology utilizing a case study approach was the most appropriate. Ethnography, one type of qualitative research, is a process of social science inquiry that draws upon a wide range of information sources (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) and is used to acquire knowledge previously unknown to the researcher (Agar, 1986)--in the attitudes and beliefs of a particular group of people. Spradley (1979, 1980) stresses that ethnography is a way of describing a culture so that the researcher can understand another way of life, i.e., "learning from people". Goetz and LeCompte (1981, p. 2) expand on this definition by describing ethnographies as analytic descriptions that "recreate for the reader the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge, and behaviors of some group of people." All of these understandings of ethnography and ethnographic approaches parallel my goals of better understanding the attitudes and beliefs of students preparing for the interpreting profession.

Marshall and Rossman (1989) assume that the "systematic inquiry" of qualitative research must occur in a natural setting. They believe that qualitative research entails

> immersion in the everyday life of a setting chosen for the study, that values participants' perspectives on their worlds and seeks to discover those perspectives, that views inquiry as an

> interactive process between the researcher and the participants, and that is primarily descriptive and relies on people's words as the primary data (p. 11).

For my study, the setting was the university classroom, the place where the students would learn about and discuss their views on the field of interpreting. Here, a better understanding from the students' perspective could be gained.

Focusing on understanding a situation from the perspective of those being studied "offers the greatest promise of making significant contributions to the knowledge base" (Merriam, 1988, p. 3), particularly in the field of education where qualitative research is concerned with process rather than product and is interested in meaning--how people make sense of their lives and their experiences. In this case, understanding how students make sense of newly acquired information about interpreting and the interpreting profession was the focus for investigation.

Case Study Research

The case study is a type of qualitative research that describes a specific organization or unit; it examines a bounded system such as a program, an institution, a population, a process, or a social unit (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989). In this study, the case involved a classroom. Case study research has several

purposes: to chronicle events; to explain, describe, or explore; to render, depict, or characterize; to instruct; to illuminate; to generalize; or to try out, prove, or test (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989). Case study research usually begins with a problem identified from practice (Merriam, 1988) and tends to be holistic in nature (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989).

According to Yin (1989, p. 23), a case study is an empirical inquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used." Further, the case study's strength comes from using multiple sources of data (e.g., interviews, observations) (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989).

Donmoyer (1990) discusses three advantages of using case studies. The first involves accessibility; case studies can "take us to places where most of us would not have an opportunity to go" (p. 193). The second advantage is that case studies "allow us to look at the world through the researcher's eyes and, in the process, to see things we otherwise might not have seen" (p. 194). The third advantage is that "the vicarious experience provided by the case studies might be preferable to direct experience" and might produce less resistance to learning (p. 196). Case

studies also allow the researcher to engage in "insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing" (Merriam, 1988, p. 10), especially when "relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated" (Yin, 1989, p. 19). In my case study, I had access not only to the expressed thoughts and ideas of the students, but also to face-to-face interactions, communication, and activities within the classroom.

Quantitative Analysis

Although most case studies are qualitative in nature, it is also possible to incorporate quantitative data and analysis into the research (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989), particularly when demographic variables are deemed important and such data are available. In this study, demographic information designed to assist in understanding the subjects' perspectives was collected via a questionnaire. The information was quantified and is presented in Chapter 5.

Case Study Research Within Education

Education is one field in which case study research can be especially helpful. As Merriam (1988, pp. 32-33) explains

> Case study is a particularly appealing design for applied fields of study such as education.

> Educational processes, problems, and programs can be examined to bring about understanding that in turn can affect and perhaps even improve practice. Case study has proved particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs, and for informing policy.

The current research utilized the case study approach based on some of Merriam's (1988) observations: the research grew out of a foreshadowed problem, it targeted one social unit (a group of students) for study, and it allowed for the utilization of several data collection methods to understand the situation from the participants' perspectives. Such a process of examination seems particularly well-suited for study within the field of interpreter education.

This case study, then, features students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" class at a southwestern university during a five-week summer session. The class met daily, Monday-Friday, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. There was one instructor and one teaching assistant.

On the first day of class, I was introduced to the students as a researcher who would be attending class on a daily basis. After explaining my project and how the students would be affected, I asked the students for their permission to involve them in the study. (My opening remarks are paraphrased in Appendix A.) I emphasized that the study would be confidential and that the students' identities would be protected. All 19 agreed to participate.

The students were asked to read and sign a consent form (see Appendix B) as required by the University's Office of Human Subjects. After signing the consent forms, each student completed the first of two questionnaires.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires are a frequently used method in qualitative and ethnographic research. While questionnaires can provide rich descriptive data, some information obtained via questionnaires can be quantified, thereby assisting the researcher to learn about "the distribution or set of characteristics" held by the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). McCracken (1988, pp. 24-25) discusses several important functions fulfilled by the questionnaire. Its first responsibility

> is to ensure that the investigator covers all the terrain in the same order for each respondent. ...The second function is the care and scheduling of the prompts necessary to manufacture distance. ...The third function of the questionnaire is that it establishes channels for the direction and scope of discourse....The fourth function of the questionnaire is that it allows the investigator to give all his or her attention to the informant's testimony....In sum, the questionnaire protects the larger structure and objectives of the interviews so that the interviewer can attend to immediate tasks at hand.

There may be some overlap of information collected when a questionnaire is used in conjunction with other methods of data collection such as interviews; however, the

questionnaire allows the subjects an opportunity to think about the topic prior to being interviewed. It also allows those participants who do not wish to be interviewed a chance to express their views. Two questionnaires were used in this study as one means of data collection.

The first questionnaire, distributed on the first day of class, was used to gather demographic and background information on each student (see Appendix C). Three students dropped the class after the first day's meeting; their questionnaires were removed from the sample. One student joined the class during the second week; she completed the questionnaire on her first day in the class and was added to the sample. In total, 17 students (all females) completed the class and participated in the study.

The second questionnaire (see Appendix D), distributed on the last day of class, included both short-answer and multiple choice items. The purpose of this questionnaire was to have the students assess their skills and attitudes at the end of the course.

On the first day of class, the instructor gave the students a written pre-test to check their general knowledge about the interpreting field and a performance pre-test to provide a starting point in their skills development. (Unfortunately, a performance post-test was not given due to insufficient time.) The pre-test was administered by the

teaching assistant (T.A.). A course syllabus (see Appendix E) also was distributed to the students.

All class activities were conducted in spoken English except when a deaf person was present; then, all activities were conducted in sign language without voice. A combination of teaching methods were used including teacher-led and student-led lectures, group discussions, and role play. During classroom activities, the students sat in chairs with individual desktops on three sides of the room facing each other and the teacher, who was positioned at the front of the class. This allowed the students to see and hear each other clearly. The exceptions to this seating arrangement were during small-group activities and during the mid-term and final examinations.

Participant Observations

The seating arrangement also allowed me to conduct participant observations of the students and their activities in the classroom. Participant observation is one fundamental technique used by qualitative researchers to gather information. Participant observation can be used to describe events, behaviors, and artifacts systematically (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). It entails "direct involvement in community life, observing and talking with people as you

learn from them their view of reality" (Agar, 1980, p. 114; Merriam, 1988).

According to McCracken (1988, p. 28), the advantage of participant observation is that "it can deliver data that are beyond the conscious understanding or implicit grasp of even the best intentioned respondent." This is because the observer can often attend to behaviors that might go unnoticed by those being observed. Also, these observations can be made in settings that range from casual to formal (Yin, 1989).

Yin (1989) stresses that, often, the participant-observer is not merely a passive player in a given situation but, rather, may take a variety of roles. Merriam (1988) relies on the work of Junker (1960) to describe four types of participant-observation:

1. Complete participant. The researcher is a member of the group being studied and conceals his/her observer role from the group.

2. Participant as observer. The researcher's observer activities, which are known to the group, are subordinate to the researchers role as a participant.

3. Observer as participant. The researcher's observer activities are known to the group ...and the researcher's participation is secondary to his/her role as information gatherer.

4. Complete observer. The researcher is either hidden from the group or in a completely public setting.

For this study, my role was as an "observer as participant". My primary function in the class was as a researcher. The students, the instructor, and the teaching assistant were well aware of this role. Yet, as an interpreter who is knowledgeable about the course content, I also participated in some class discussions, albeit in a very limited way. On rare occasions, the students asked questions which were directed to me.

Class observations were conducted daily with two exceptions: (1) during a field trip to observe interpreters working in a community setting and (2) on the day of the mid-term examination.

Field Notes

Field notes provide one method for recording observational data. These notes consist of "relatively concrete descriptions of social processes and their contexts" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 145). As part of the data collected for this study, field notes were taken daily during and after each day's class. The students were aware of the note-taking activities, but they appeared to take little interest in them.

Two types of field notes were used during the data collection process. In-class field notes consisted of direct observations, comments, and interactions of the

students, instructor, and T.A. Field notes written after class included clarification of in-class activities as well as reflective comments about in-class observations. Merriam (1988) uses the term "introspective record" when referring to reflective field notes. These serve as an account of the researcher's ideas, fears, mistakes, confusion, and reactions to his/her field work. These reflective comments are kept separate from observational field notes.

Writing reflective, or introspective, field notes about my reactions to the students and the class activities helped me deal with my biases. These field notes served as a vehicle for my concerns and frustrations. I could express myself without being concerned about how my reactions would affect the students or classroom activities.

Early in the process, I was unsure of the appropriate protocol for being a participant-observer. This anxiety comes out in my reflective field notes:

> I'm not sure of my role yet as a "participant observer." How much do I participate and how much do I observe....As [a colleague] said, "I'm there to record what goes on, not to change it." But thinking about ethnographies I've read (MacLeod's Ain't No Making It), how much do I get involved?

These feelings continued throughout the first week of participant observations but seemed to dissipate as the class progressed.

In-class Activities

Throughout the course, the students were observed while they engaged in information- and skills-building activities. The information-building activities included discussions and presentations led by the instructor, the teaching assistant, the students, and the guest speakers. Many of the student-led presentations and discussions were based on chapters in their text, Interpreting: An Introduction by Nancy Frishberg (1986). At the beginning of the course, the instructor paired the students and assigned the text by chapters. Because three students withdrew from class after the first day, two students gave individual presentations. All other were presented in pairs. Each chapter presentation lasted from 30-45 minutes. One chapter on the marketplace and working conditions was inadvertently unassigned; discussion of this chapter was led by the instructor.

In addition to the student presentations of content information, four deaf visitors addressed the students; all were women. Each visitor discussed her background, educational experience, and experience with interpreters. This provided the students with opportunities to hear about interpreting from the perspective of deaf consumers. It also allowed me to observe how the students interacted with members of the local deaf community.

Four hearing visitors also served as guest speakers. They discussed issues such as legal interpreting, working for an agency, certification, and techniques of feedback and self-critique. Students were able to learn more about the field from these working interpreters and service providers.

Another in-class discussion-based activity involved situational role play. The students, working in twos or threes, were given a situational dilemma by the instructor and asked to model appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. These role playing activities dealt with issues such as ethics, environmental considerations, and introductions. These hypothetical situations allowed the students to respond to issues that they may not have been aware of or had not considered in this context.

The skills-building activities allowed the students to practice their interpreting skills. (Although the course was mainly knowledge-based, the students were given some opportunity to develop their practical skills.)

One activity used regularly throughout the course for English-to-ASL practice involved students taking turns interpreting to the instructor or the T.A. while other students gave presentations or led discussions. On the first day of class, for example, the students interpreted each other's introductions. (This activity was interpreted only to the T.A., not to the instructor.) This proved to be

quite effective in providing the students with their first interpreting experience in a non-threatening way. It was the "ice breaker" that many of them needed.

Throughout the course, students received opportunities to practice their ASL-to-English skills in two ways. The first was to have paired students voice to each other during signed presentations given by the deaf guest speakers. The pairs worked simultaneously, whispering to their partner. This technique did not allow for individual feedback from the instructor, but it afforded the students more time to practice their ASL-to-English skills.

A second ASL-to-English activity involved watching a videotape of a deaf signer and having the students take turns voice interpreting brief passages to the class. Some students appeared timid about voicing in front of their peers, however, the students were able to learn from each other's successes and mistakes; this activity also allowed for individual feedback from the instructor.

Interviews

In addition to data collection through observation and questionnaires, each student was interviewed during the first two weeks of the class. Interviewing, which Yin (1989) views as one of the most important sources of information, involves asking questions of a subject in order

to uncover the participant's meaning perspective and to better understand the his/her beliefs through first-hand accounts (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). In this way, a special kind of information, which only the interviewee has, can be obtained (Merriam, 1988). McCracken (1988, p. 7) refers to the "long" interview, which he describes as "a sharply focused, rapid, highly intense interview process" which gives the investigator a more efficient and productive instrument of inquiry and allows the researcher to step into the mind of another person.

All of the interviews conducted with the students were recorded on an EIKI cassette tape player using TDK D90 cassette tapes (45 minutes per side) and ranged from 20 to 40 minutes. The interviews were conducted in a 10' x 12' university office with the interviewer and interviewee facing each other about 5 feet apart. The tape recorder was located on a desk tray between the two. (See Appendix F for a list of the interview questions.)

Follow-up interviews were conducted with three students. These students are profiled in Chapter 5.

All interviews were transcribed, verbatim, into written English, either by me or by a professional transcriber. All professionally transcribed interviews were verified by reviewing them while listening to the tapes.

Only after all 17 initial interviews were completed did I share my background and experience with the students. I chose not to share this information with the students prior to the interviews because I did not want my background to influence the students' responses during the interviews.

In addition to interviewing the students in the class, I interviewed the instructor, the teaching assistant, and four members of the community--two deaf and two hearing. Each of these six individuals, all of whom have been involved in interpreter education, signed a consent form (see Appendix G) and completed a questionnaire (see Appendices H and I) prior to their interview (see Appendices J and K for a list of the interview questions.) The interviews with the teacher, the teaching assistant, and the two hearing persons were recorded on an EIKI cassette tape player using TDK D90 cassette tapes. The interviews were transcribed into written English by a professional transcriber, and the transcribed text was checked against the taped text.

The interviews with the two deaf persons were videotaped on TDK E-HG (extra high grade) video tapes using a camera fixed to a tripod. The interviews were conducted in ASL and then voice-interpreted into a tape recorder to be transcribed by a professional transcriber. The written text was then checked for accuracy against the videotaped text.

The interviews with the non-students ranged from 45 to 90 minutes. Follow-up interviews were conducted as needed for clarification.

Other Sources of Student Data

I began the data collection with the intention of using three sources of data (questionnaires, observations, and interviews). Three other sources of data became available through the structure and content of the course. The first was a daily journal that the students kept of their thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the class and their participation in class. The second data source was a three-page reaction paper based on the students' observations of interpreters working in both community and educational settings. The third source was a self-critique assigned by the teacher after students watched a videotape of themselves interpreting part of a class lecture. At the end of the course, the students gave me permission to access each of these three additional data sources, after I assured them that the information would be confidential and would remain anonymous.

Merriam (1988) refers to the practice of combining several data collection practices as "triangulation." She feels this is especially helpful when doing case study research. In this case, triangulation included combining

interviews, questionnaires, and participant observations as primary data sources, and student journals, self-critiques, and reaction papers as secondary data sources.

Research Bias

In any type of research, the researcher must be aware that potential problems such as bias and preconceived assumptions may affect the results of the study. Agar (1980) cautions that ethnography, for example, coexists with some important contradictions--humanity and science, involvement and detachment, breadth and depth, subordination and dominance, friend and stranger--each of which must be recognized by the researcher, because the researcher is the "primary instrument of data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 1988, p. 18).

Case study research is an excellent method for conducting certain types of studies, but both Yin (1989) and Merriam (1988) caution that there is a strong potential for bias, especially on the part of the researcher. Yin (1989) emphasizes that this is especially true for participant observation. Bias, which is not necessarily negative, can occur because "how the investigator views the world affects the entire research process--from conceptualizing a problem, to collecting and analyzing data, to interpreting the findings (Merriam, 1988, p. 53).

All researchers begin a project with their own beliefs about what will occur; however, the researcher must take care not to let these beliefs unduly influence his/her behaviors and reactions. For example, my bias regarding lack of language fluency was supported by my reflective field notes: "Much of class time is spent reviewing lists of words and signs; the students are not fluent in ASL."

Being an "insider," a member of the group being researched, can also bias the researcher. In this study, examining students' attitudes about my professional field often led to frustration, as seen in my reflective field notes.

> It's very difficult for me to just sit [and not participant], especially when I disagree with what's being said.

And,

> It's frustrating to see the lack of language skill level that's needed to interpret. The students don't seem to understand what interpreting is all about. Some don't seem to take it seriously.

Bias may result, too, because in case study research, there are no set procedures or "recipe-like" instructions that can be followed. Guidelines exist and the experiences of others are helpful, but "one must be able to recognize that the 'correct' way to proceed will not always be obvious" (Merriam, 1988, p. 37). This can lead to anxiety for the researcher. My anxiety was apparent throughout the

first half of the course, as is reflected in several places in my reflective field notes.

> I can't tell whether or not I'm collecting the right kind of data--if the data that I am collecting will do what I hope it will do. I've enjoyed doing the interviews [so far] but am I doing them correctly? Am I asking the right questions?
>
> Just conducted the 6th interview....I'm still not sure if I'm doing it right or getting the right info.
>
> I feel like I'm on the wrong track, that I'm not doing the interviews correctly.

What I found, however, was that while qualitative research is not "haphazard" but is rather systematic and disciplined (see e.g. Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983), there is no "right way" of conducting interviews or participant observation. Despite the frustration of the process, the data are immensely rich and can be sorted out during the analysis.

Data Analysis

Once data had been collected through questionnaires, interviews, and participant observations, the task of analyzing them began. The analysis of data in a case study is, according to Yin (1989, p. 105), "one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies." Often researchers have little or no idea of how or where to begin this aspect of the research process.

Data analysis is the "process of making sense out of one's data" (Merriam, 1988, p. 127) and consists of "examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence, to address the initial propositions of the study" (Yin, 1989, p. 105). It is both time-consuming and tedious (Merriam, 1988).

Qualitative researchers (e.g., Merriam, 1988; Spradley, 1979, 1980; Yin, 1989) have proposed various methods for conducting data analysis. One method is based on a system developed by Spradley (1979, 1980) that can be used for interviews, participant observations recorded in field notes, and the short-answer sections of questionnaires. Spradley distinguishes between analysis of ethnographic interviews and participant observations, yet both methods utilize similar steps, which incorporate the following techniques:

making ethnographic records;
making descriptive observations or asking descriptive questions,
making a domain analysis,
making a taxonomic analysis,
making a componential analysis, and
discovering cultural themes.

All of these steps must occur prior to determining the results. Spradley's methods can be used to analyze the data systematically using color codes and index cards for quick referencing.

Yin (1989) proposes three dominant analytic techniques and three "lesser" modes of analysis. The three dominant analytic techniques are (1) pattern making, which compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one; (2) explanation building, where the goal is to analyze the case data by building an explanation about the case (here, the goal is not to conclude a study but to develop ideas for further study); and (3) time-series analysis, where a phenomenon is studied over a period of time in order to trace changes.

Yin (1989) also proposes what he considers to be "lesser" modes of analysis--lesser because, to him, they are incomplete ways of doing analysis, yet still have some merit. These modes are (1) analysis of embedded units of analysis, (2) repeated observations, and (3) the case survey approach. Although incomplete on their own, these modes have merit when used in conjunction with other forms of analysis.

Merriam (1988), relying heavily on the works of Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Goetz and LeCompte (1984), suggests that the researcher should begin the analysis by reading through the data several times from beginning to end, making continuous notes. This assists the researcher in identifying units of information that can then be categorized. "Analysis involves the development of

categories used to organize the case study data" (Merriam, 1988, p. 133). Merriam (1988, p. 133) stresses that although "devising categories is largely an intuitive process...it is also systematic and informed by the study's purpose [and] the investigator's orientation and knowledge." The number of categories, which should be kept manageable, depends on the specific data available and the focus of the research.

The data analysis for this study draws from each of the methods discussed above. However, Merriam's (1988) system was the most helpful and manageable. I read through the field notes, observational notes, interviews, and other data sources several times and made notes in the margins. Several themes seemed to emerge and they were color-coded using highlight markers in six different colors. After all data had been color-coded, selected portions were transferred onto 5" by 8" index cards and sorted according to color. This theme analysis was intended to provide a better understanding of the attitudes and beliefs held by sign language interpreting students. Data analysis is discussed in depth in Chapters 5 and 6.

Upon completion of the thematic analysis, the findings were analyzed in the context of the research on bilingualism and second language learning, particularly with regard to the two broad research questions as outlined in Chapter 1.

Discussion in Chapter 7 includes implications for policy and program planning and possible steps to incorporate the research findings into current and future preparation program curricula.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of various qualitative research methods and how they pertain to this research. Special emphasis was placed on case study methodology because this is the primary method utilized in this study. The following chapters provide an analysis of the data using techniques outlined above.

CHAPTER 5

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW AND STUDENT PROFILES

Demographic Overview

As discussed in Chapter 4, students enrolled in an "Introduction to Interpreting" course served as the primary source for my data collection. This sample population allowed me to learn how students view the field of interpreting before, and if, they actually become interpreters. In addition, I was able to examine how deaf and hearing people who have had experience with or as interpreters view the issues that were raised by the students.

Background and demographic information collected from the students using two questionnaires (Appendices B and C) reveal several interesting patterns. In some ways, the students are a very homogenous group in that they are all Caucasian females with hearing parents.[17] All 17 students, ranging in age from 20 to 36 years old, had graduated from high school and had some experience with postsecondary

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[17]Although it was not possible to obtain national demographic information about interpreters despite several calls to the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, past experience indicates that most interpreters are, in fact, Caucasian females. As indicated in the previous chapter, I believe this to be a representative sample, at least of practicing interpreters.

education (see Table 1). Each student reported English as her first language. Although all had experience with learning a second spoken language, usually Spanish or French, only two of the students considered themselves to be literate in that second language. Interestingly, only six students reported knowing ASL as a second language even though all had studied it formally for a minimum of 2-3 years, and all were enrolled in a course requiring skills in that language.

In other ways, the students were somewhat heterogeneous, particularly in terms of their language learning and use of ASL. The students' reported having studied ASL from 2 to 10 years (see Table 2), and although most had had some type of formal classroom learning, only a few reported any type of learning experience outside of the classroom (see Table 3). They also differed in extra-curricular learning activities and use of ASL; some students reported rarely using sign language outside of the classroom, especially with deaf people, while others said they used their sign language skills on a daily basis, mostly in social settings.

Table 1. Students' Educational Background

Degree	Completed	In Progress
A.A./A.S	2	0
B.A./B.S.	5	10
M.A./M.S.	2	4

Table 2. Length of signing experience

No. of years	No. of students
2-3 years	9
4-5 years	4
6+ years	4

Table 3. Source of sign language knowledge

Location/ source	No. of students
School	17
Friends	5
Co-workers	2
Self-taught	4

Students' Linguistic and Cultural Backgrounds

Only two of the students reported on the follow-up questionnaire that their frequency of interaction with deaf people had increased as a result of taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" course; the others saw no change in the frequency of their interactions (see Table 4). Those students who did use their sign language skills outside of the classroom did so at a variety of events (see Table 5). Additionally, only about two-thirds of the students reported having attended an event where the majority of people were deaf.

Table 4. Students' frequency of interaction with deaf community

Frequency	No. of students
Always	2
Often	7
Sometimes	4
Seldom	4

Table 5. Students' type of interaction with deaf community

Type of interaction	No. of students
Deaf club	5
Picnics	5
Sporting events	6
Meetings	6
Other (parties, residential school, school, plays, church)	7

One interesting finding involved the differences in how the students rated their own sign language skills on the first day of class and on the last day of class. On the first day of class, over half of the students rated their expressive (signing) and receptive (comprehension) skills as good (see Table 6). On the last day of class, all students felt their expressive skills had improved as a result of taking the class, yet only 12 thought that their receptive skills had improved. Most of the students continued to rate their skills as good; a few, however, down-graded their skills to fair or good/fair (see Table 7).

In addition to asking students to rate their ASL skills, the follow-up questionnaire asked them to rate their interpreting skills and their transliterating skills, for

Table 6. Students' self-rated skills on first day of class

Skill level	Expressive	Receptive
Fluent	2	3
Good	13	10
Fair	2	4

Table 7. Students' self-rated skills on last day of class

Skill level	Expressive	Receptive
Fluent	3	1
Good	10	7
Good/Fair	2	1
Fair	2	8

ASL-to-English and English-to-ASL tasks. Most felt that their transliterating skills had improved more than their interpreting skills. This is not surprising for two reasons: 1) the students had fewer opportunities to practice their interpreting skills and 2) most were not fluent in ASL, which restricted their ability to interpret. Another indication that the students were more comfortable with transliterating than with interpreting was that they rated their transliterating skills higher than their interpreting skills (see Tables 8 and 9).

On the follow-up questionnaire, the students were asked whether they had considered interpreting as a career prior to or after completing the "Introduction to Interpreting" course (see Table 10). Seven of the nine students who expressed an interest in becoming interpreters before taking the class were still interested in possibly pursuing an interpreting career. The remaining two students were unsure as expressed in their comments:

> I didn't think it would be this complicated of a system to get involved in.
>
> I want to explore other options with working in the deaf community, not only interpreting.

Table 8. Students' Self-rated Transliterating Skills

Skill level	ASL-to-English	English-to-ASL
Fluent	0	2
Good	9	7
Good/Fair	1	1
Fair	6	7

Table 9. Students' Self-rated Interpreting Skills

Skill level	ASL-to English	English-to-ASL
Fluent	0	0
Good	6	4
Good/Fair	1	1
Fair	10	11
Poor	0	1

Table 10. Students' expressed interest in becoming an interpreter

	Prior to course	After course
Yes	9	7
No	2	2
Not Sure	6	8

Several other students expressed reservations about a career as an interpreter, both before and after taking the class:

> I'm not quite sure I can hack it.
>
> I would like to try [but] I'm more concerned about finding a secure full time career.

A few students changed their minds after taking the class and decided they did want to pursue an interpreting career, even if only on a part-time basis:

> Once I started taking the class, I learn [sic] about the manys [sic] settings where an interpreter would work. So now I want to work part time as a medical interpreter.
>
> I enjoy the process of transliterating and interpreting very much. I did not know I would when class started.
>
> I like interpreting but I find it stressful and prefer to not do it full time.

None of the students rejected the possibility of becoming an interpreter after taking the class.

Observing the Students

In addition to learning about the students via the questionnaires, I also observed them throughout the course on a daily basis. Most of the students knew each other before taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" course; many were in the same program and had taken other classes together. Also, most were simultaneously enrolled in an

"Advanced ASL" class, which met in the same classroom immediately preceding the interpreting class. The students often had a lot of energy to release during the break between classes as a result of sitting in the ASL class for four hours. Frequently, the students spent their short, 15-minute break between classes eating a snack and joking with each other or discussing class activities and assignments.

Students who were new to the group generally seemed to be accepted quickly. Many of the students socialized with at least one or two other students in the class, and there was generally a feeling of camaraderie within the group. This may have been because all the students were experiencing the same challenges and frustrations of learning the task of interpreting.

There was an atmosphere of comfort and ease during much of the class despite the stress that some of the students seemed to be feeling. The students asked tough, thought-provoking questions that led to lively class discussions. The students grappled with ethical questions and issues, many of which they had not previously realized or considered, such as confidentiality, appropriate behavior, and minority oppression and empowerment. For example, students asked questions such as:

> How can people interpret without being qualified or certified?

Why are there so few male interpreters?

How can a deaf person train to become an interpreter?

What do you do if you meet a deaf person in the community after having interpreted for him/her?

These questions prompted class discussions which were facilitated by the instructor or the teaching assistant.

Many of the students had taken a sign language class from the instructor and were familiar with her which also may have contributed to the classroom atmosphere. The only difference was that the interpreting class was conducted, for the most part, in spoken English while the sign language classes had been conducted in ASL.

While there was generally a positive feeling throughout the course, there were two students who, at times, seemed to annoy the others. One of these students had previously taken a similar course and many of her comments took on a boastful tone; she seemed to enjoy "showing off" her knowledge even if it meant contradicting the instructor or the guest speakers. The other student appeared to others to have a "know-it-all" attitude about deaf people and Deaf culture. She tended to make broad, over-generalized statements such as "All deaf people..." or "Deaf people don't know how to do..." While both of these students spoke up on a regular basis, there were only a few times that any

of the others students verbally challenged what they said; usually, the other students just let the remarks pass.

Surprisingly, none of the students asked about my background on the first day of class. They were agreeable to participating in my research yet did not seem overly curious about it. Some of them had seen me interpreting but several students did not know who I was or that I was an interpreter. Although a few of the students asked about my background during the interviews, I did not reveal much information about myself until after all of the interviews had been completed. There were times in class that students asked a question of me directly, but, in general, they seemed content to let me go about my business as a participant-observer.

The students did seem to appreciate having three practicing interpreters--the instructor, the teacher's assistant, and myself--in the classroom. We each have a wealth of practical experience in various interpreting settings and our knowledge and backgrounds seemed to complement each other. The students were able to see that each interpreter handles situations differently and that there isn't a single uniform way to proceed with a given situation. By sharing how each of us handled or would have handled a particular situation, the students were able to learn that variation and flexibility are acceptable traits

among interpreters. Overall, I believe the students learned a great deal of valuable information during the course and now have a better appreciation of interpreters and the interpreting profession.

This overview is helpful in understanding the students who participated in my study. At the same time, it is also helpful to take an in-depth look at individual student attitudes and beliefs. While it is not feasible to provide an in-depth look at each of the 17 students, the following section will profile three students, each of whom dealt, in her own way, with the issues raised during the course.

Student Profiles

This section profiles three students from the "Introduction to Interpreting" class. They were selected because they expressed the most interest in becoming interpreters and in the interpreting process. Many of the other students, while interested in learning about interpreting, clearly had other career goals in mind (e.g., counseling or teaching). The three students profiled here were selected because they varied in age, marital status and educational background. In addition, they had all dealt, to varying degrees, with the issue of being a hearing person in the deaf community. Prior to their follow-up interviews,

they were asked to reflect upon and discuss issues of bilingualism, biculturalism, language fluency, and identity.

Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identities of the three students. Questions asked during the interview appear in brackets ({}).

Alice

Alice, a 21-year old college senior from Phoenix, Arizona is outgoing, friendly, energetic, and quick to laugh. She is the oldest of 3 children; her father is an aeronautics engineer and her mother, a court transcriber. She attended a public elementary school and a private Christian middle/high school. Alice was the only student on the first day of class who stated "I want to be an interpreter." She knows what she wants and has plans, both educational and personal, for achieving this goal. During the initial interview, Alice commented that she had been watching an interpreter in a class when she realized that this is what she wanted to do. As she explained, "it would be a job that I would enjoy. I think that's important because a lot of people don't get jobs that they like and then they hate them for the rest of their lives."

When asked on the follow-up questionnaire if she still wanted to be an interpreter after completing the class,

Alice wrote, "I know that I want to be an interpreter and I just took this class to get the ball rolling."

Alice's first exposure to sign language and deafness came at an early age via a friend who had a deaf sister. Alice said she wanted to be able to communicate directly with her friend's sister and persuaded her mother to locate a class for her. Alice also taught herself signs from a book and practiced every summer until she went to college.

Although Alice was exposed to sign language at an early age, she claims to have known sign language for only two-three years, a time frame corresponding to her college studies. During the initial interview, Alice reflected on her feelings about using sign language.

> My second semester teacher [was deaf]. That was interesting because it...[almost] forced you to sign. You should want to sign, but you really had to, unless you wanted to write every question down. You had to feel competent in signing. It was a humbling experience, although I wasn't over confident in the first place....I was a little intimidated by him [at first], but by the end of the semester, it wasn't a problem at all.

When deciding which college to attend, Alice chose one that offered sign language classes. Although it took until her sophomore year to get into a sign language class, Alice persevered. She discussed career opportunities with her instructor and decided upon interpreting after ruling out teaching and counseling. She said her goal is to interpret and do research. (Ironically, Alice decided to transfer

colleges after her first one dropped its sign language classes.)

When asked during the initial interview if she considered herself to be bilingual, Alice responded, "a medium bilingual....I can understand and I can communicate with deaf people. Not as far as I want to be, but I do". She also stated that her receptive skills are better than her expressive skills. During the interview, Alice identified herself as a medium bilingual, yet she marked on both questionnaires that she considers her receptive and expressive signing skills to be fluent. During the follow-up interview, Alice was asked to discuss why she feels this way.

> Maybe I'm a little insecure in my signing. Not that it's bad, but I spent more time trying to be able to take it in so I can understand the teachers....If I have to sign something for class, I sign it and I practice it until I have it memorized....I want to come across [as] literate.
>
> I feel more comfortable with people I don't know, like people at work,...than I do [with] people I know. I'm insecure in myself on how I sign. Maybe I'm just afraid that they're judging me.... It's just something within myself I need to work on.

This self-assessment of having stronger receptive skills than expressive skills comes after only two or three years of knowing sign language.

This three-year period is analogous to the amount of time Alice studied Spanish in high school. Alice reports

that her receptive skills for Spanish were better than her expressive skills, yet she never considered herself to be fluent in Spanish or bilingual in Spanish and English. Overall, learning Spanish was not a positive experience.

In the following excerpt from the initial interview, Alice describes her background in language acquisition and bilingualism.

> {Have you ever taken a class that looked at issues dealing with second language acquisition and bilingualism?}
>
> I took a linguistics class....It was like a regular linguistics class. I don't remember what it was called but it dealt with languages of the world....They had a big thing about second language and bilingualism. And I also took a... child language acquisition class, so I knew. And we did deal with bilingualism -- Spanish/English.
>
> {Do you find that that background and knowledge has helped you in learning ASL [and] understanding the process that you're going through?}
>
> I don't know. I don't really think of myself that way. Probably because I failed so bad in Spanish. ASL just totally came naturally for me. Which is good, 'cause that's how a second language should be. It shouldn't be a struggle....That's how I was in Spanish. I guess I never really thought about it before....It's easy to think of Spanish/English, bilingualism. And I could never do that. But this [ASL] seemed easy and it doesn't seem like I'm working real hard to learn another language, which it seems that way for Spanish.
>
> {It seems more fun and it's easier. It's not considered like learning a second language?}
>
> Not at all. To me, because of the previous experiences, second language [learning] is yucky! This [ASL] isn't that way.

Regarding her knowledge and understanding of Deaf culture, Alice stated during the initial interview that she gained most of her cultural knowledge from books and from her ASL classes. She has never taken a class specifically on American Deaf culture.

> [I learned about Deaf culture] through all my sign classes. We had to read or research or something like that. The two classes I did the most on that were my first semester class. We had to write and do a project....She [the teacher] picked out the topics that were Deaf culture topics....And then [in another] class, we had books and so we had a lot of questions and things that were answered in the book. And we had to write papers and stuff on it.
>
> {Do you consider yourself to be bicultural?}
>
> No. Well, I'm interested, and I want to learn as much as I can, but from my knowledge, no. Because I don't think I know enough....I have an outlying understanding, but I don't have a deep understanding.

Overall, Alice projects an image of self-confidence and comfort with her chosen profession. She was one of the students in class who seemed to understand her place in the deaf community and her interactions with deaf people.

> {You mentioned that you had a somewhat unpleasant experience with a hearing teacher [at a day school for deaf children]. Have you ever had unpleasant experiences with deaf people because you are a hearing person in the field?}
>
> No. Everything has been so positive. Most of the people that I meet, I meet at work. I'll see them signing, and [I'll say] "Hi!". And I start signing away, and they're just shocked....I get a whole bunch of people and I find that they tend to come to me. They don't come directly to me just

> because I'm the only one that can communicate. 'Cause they lived their whole lives without me there.
>
> I think that right now if I got a negative [reaction], I'd be upset. If I had got a real bad negative [reaction], when I first started, from a deaf person, I would probably [have said], "Okay, I'm switching majors."
>
> And I've had so much support, that one negative [reaction] would upset me a lot, but it wouldn't make me want to stop.

During our follow-up interview, Alice was asked to comment further on how she views herself as a hearing person getting involved in the deaf community, and whether or not she would talk to a person who was new to the field about this issue.

> I would make them aware of it. A lot of people are really obsessed with it, and I've never had any problems. Maybe I will in the future, and that's fine....I would let them know because it's good that I know. I don't go out there and all of a sudden someone may have a bad feeling toward me because I'm a hearing person who's trying to get into the deaf community....I'm not looking for it, but if it happens, I'm not going to be shocked.... I hope I'm not going to come across a lot of people who are going to be angry toward me because I'm doing it, because I'm not doing it [to "help poor deaf people"]. [I would tell people though because] I know, and it helps me....[But it seems that] everyone is so obsessed about it. We always have at least one lecture about it.

As reflected in the latter part of this statement, Alice doesn't always seem to realize that other students are dealing with the issue of their own identities in the deaf community. This may be because Alice appears relatively

comfortable with herself as a hearing person in the deaf community.

Understanding her role in the deaf community also requires Alice to understand the process of becoming a qualified interpreter. Based on her journal entry after the first day of class, it seems clear that she knows what she must do and is ready to face the challenge.

> We had to get up and interpret for the first time. ...I knew that it would be hard. It didn't discourage me, it just showed me that I really need to work on my weak areas....There is LOTS of work ahead, but I'm looking forward to it.

Even with such a positive, realistic attitude, other entries in the journal reflect Alice's frustration with achieving her goal.

> 6/9: I was videotaped today. It will be used to show how much we improve during the class....I watched the tape and I feel very stupid. I know that I can't expect to do it right the first time, but I wish I didn't look so frustrated on the tape.
>
> 6/14: It [voice interpreting] wasn't easy but I felt pretty good about it. Sometimes it was hard because of [the signer's] speed. I did feel that I did a little better than with the videotape.
>
> 6/16: I interpreted for part of a lecture today. ...I know I have a very long way to go but today made me feel like I made a little baby step toward improvement.
>
> 6/17: I was semi-nervous to interpret today [for a deaf guest speaker], but I volunteered anyway to try and conquer that nervousness. I wasn't nervous to communicate with her as a deaf person. I was just afraid that I wouldn't be able to

> communicate things correctly to her. I feel I did okay. She seemed to understand me.

Despite her frustrations, Alice said she plans to continue with her education and to make her goal a reality. As she stated in the final paragraph of her self-critique at the end of the course, "Overall, I did see an improvement between both videotaped assignments which was a tremendous relief to me! Seeing this slight improvement really encourages me to keep practicing so someday I can be at the level I'm aiming for."

She also offered the following thoughts on her progress and on her continuing education during the follow-up interview.

> I still want to be an interpreter. I saw a little bit of improvement; I wasn't expecting anything major....I was happy I improved a little bit on my skills. The part I liked most [was learning] the ethics and etiquette....It was fun. I liked it.

In addition to seeing her own growth during the course, Alice was able to observe professional interpreters in three different settings, educational, religious, and community (platform). Based on the comments to these experiences in her reaction paper, Alice seems to be an enthusiastic and eager student who is willing to learn as much as possible about her chosen profession. Alice wrote the following comments in her reaction paper. "It was very educational for me to observe these three distinctly different

situations. I really enjoyed [it] because it allowed me to get a taste of and learn from something that I wasn't really familiar with."

Alice said she plans to pursue a graduate degree in interpreting after she completes her Bachelor's degree.

> I hope I'm going to go to Gallaudet...because no other school has a Master's in interpreting. But I really don't know what I'm going to do....My highest expectation is Gallaudet. I'm going to work my darnedest toward that!

When asked for some general thoughts on learning ASL and becoming involved in the field of deafness, Alice responded:

> I sign all the time. I sign when I'm at home. I sign to the radio. I sign to the T.V. It's just something that I'm interested in....It's just all I ever think about. And...everyday I wish I was finished in school 'cause I want to be in this. I can't wait until...I'm done and I'm doing it....I love it. That's all. I love everything I'm doing.

Joy

Joy, a 40-year old mother of four children, ages 8-17, decided to return to school part-time. She grew up in the Southwest and earned a Bachelor's degree in elementary education. Her husband of 18 years is an accountant. She is enthusiastic about her studies and open to learning as much as she can about her chosen field of study. She has been learning sign language on a part time basis for about

10 years but has begun to concentrate on her studies within the last year.

Joy seemed to have difficulty with the concepts of bilingualism and biculturalism. She seemed unsure about how to define these terms and how they applied to her.

{Do you consider yourself to be bilingual?}

No. (laughter) I don't know. Can you be bilingual when you start this late as an adult?

{I want you to use your own definition of bilingual.}

Bilingual? I would think a person would be able to communicate really well in two languages if they say bilingual and can communicate really well and comfortably so that native users of that language would understand them easily.

{Okay. So using that definition, would you consider yourself to be bilingual?}

No. (laughs) I'd like to be someday, though. No, definitely not. The other part, too, is that you need to understand them readily, and that I definitely don't.

Later in the interview, when asked about her background in learning Spanish, Joy responded that she had never considered herself to be bilingual in Spanish and English even after studying Spanish for five years (four years in high school and one year in college). Again, she seems to have difficulty applying this term to herself.

{Did you ever consider yourself to be bilingual in Spanish and English?}

No. (laughs)

{Never?}

No.

{Even after 5 years?}

> No. I was in a class with a lot of the students [who] had been missionaries for a church, and they lived in different Spanish speaking countries for two years. And I never lived any place where they spoke Spanish, so that's a key thing I think that needs to be done. But they were just way above me. So, to really be bilingual, I feel like you need to live in that culture. And in a country where they use it. No, I wasn't even close.

When asked further about the necessity for living in a country that uses a particular language and about the fact that there is no "deaf country", Joy responded:

> It's interesting you should ask me that because I've been asking myself that for the last year or so. How do I do that? And I don't know. The closest thing I've come up with, for me, is...to volunteer at [the local residential school].... Some kind of immersion experiences I think are really critical. If you want to be bilingual, I think that's what you'd have to do.

During the follow-up interview, Joy was questioned again about the definition of bilingualism and whether or not she considered herself to be bilingual. She replied, "I still don't know. I still don't really know. [I] don't really have a definition myself for what bilingual means. ...I just really feel like I don't know much about that whole topic."

Joy said she did not consider herself bicultural, but again, she had difficulty defining this concept. Most of

her cultural knowledge has come from books or from her sign language classes. She has had very little contact with the deaf community, and, prior to our first interview, she had had only one Deaf instructor.

During the follow-up interview, Joy was asked whether learning from books was sufficient for becoming bicultural.

> {Can someone thoroughly understand a culture just by reading about it as opposed to experiencing it?}
>
> No, not completely. I think you get a feel for it....You can learn and then you can learn some of the characteristics of it....I think you can understand that there is a culture and understand some of the facets of it. Some of the important parts....And a little bit maybe about some attitudes that we may run into. But then you need to be with that culture to really understand.

Joy seemed to be the student who was the most concerned about and affected by the issue of being a hearing person entering the deaf community. She said she entered the class with an interest in interpreting, yet she was unsure about how she would fit into the deaf community in this role.

> Probably my biggest continuing question is, where do I fit in? (Pause) Where would I be acceptable to deaf people as a hearing person?...I've only met a few deaf people and most of them just superficially. The only person I've really discussed it with is [my Deaf instructor], I think. And he has always been real encouraging. I think it was in the first semester I had him, and I was reading Arden Neisser [<u>The Other Side of Silence</u>, (1983)], and some of her stuff is pretty discouraging. And I really started to noticed that. [I asked my instructor], "is there a place for me as a hearing person?" He said, "yes, as

> long as you look at it from a cultural perspective and not a pathological perspective."

Joy was so concerned about this issue that she requested a meeting with me to discuss it. Following are some of her thoughts on being a hearing person in the field of deafness.

> We were learning about Deaf culture, and we're... getting hit in the face with stuff a lot. [The part about hearing people is] kind of strongly worded. I guess all fields have people criticizing different things....This is something I'm going to have to figure out. Am I a hearing person who fits in here or not? And when I keep hearing this [negative information] from time to time, is that going to keep throwing me off or not. [One instructor] said you have to have a soft heart and a tough skin....I might as well go through it and figure it out now because I'm going to have to carry that with me. Figure it out for myself and then tell people [why I'm in this field]. And they either accept it or they don't. But I have to decide it for myself....[But] will the reason that I stay in or that I am in be good enough for the deaf person who asked me the question.

Joy also wrote about "fitting in" in her journal.

> June 17: Here is a key need that I am struggling with -- How do I associate frequently, regularly, with Deaf people? How can I experience, with Deaf people, the equivalent of living in the country where a language other than English is spoken, the "immersion experience?"
>
> What I hope to gain from an immersion experience is fluency and a better understanding of Deaf people. How do I make association with Deaf people a part of my life? This is one disadvantage of coming into the field of interpreting without experience of knowing Deaf people already.

> June 28: I was disturbed by a chapter in the book we are reading, For Hearing People Only. It discussed how Deaf people feel about hearing people who learn sign language. It was a really negative response to interpreters. That surprised me and caught me off guard....This was one of the times that I had to sit back and question if I'm sure I want to work as a hearing person in the deaf community.

This issue of identity is one that Joy is very cognizant of and concerned about, not only in her decision about her involvement in the deaf community but also with how she is viewed by members of the deaf community. She is very aware of her attitudes and is concerned about she expresses herself. Joy also discussed this issue of attitudes and identity during the follow-up interview after the completion of the course.

> I think I feel a little better. I discussed it with you and then in class a little bit but I wanted to ask a deaf person...I asked [my deaf instructor] about it in class and he said "you're ...different than hearing people in general. You know a little more. You're interested. You're learning the language."...So I'm feeling a little more comfortable [about being involved]...but I want to be careful about saying it myself....[I'm trying to understand] the attitude of working with, rather than helping people. It's hard because helping was a good thing in my vocabulary before. Now it's kind of hard to try to figure what is wrong with that attitude.
>
> Believing that ASL is a language equal to English is an attitude that deaf people appreciate and that's the attitude I have because that's what I've been taught....It's going to be a long-term process, understanding what the acceptable attitude is....Deaf people know the right attitude when they see it. To put it into words, though, takes some thought....As far as if I'm sure I fit

> in, I guess I'll have to wait and see about that too. I think [my instructor] thinks I'm okay, so that's one person.

Although Joy's general concerns are about her role as a hearing person in the deaf community, she also raised two concerns that deal specifically with becoming an interpreter. One concern involves how she perceives the role of an interpreter, and the second focuses on her perception of what is required to become an interpreter.

Regarding the role of the interpreter, Joy stated during the first interview:

> It seems a little bit like a passive role. At least from what I understand of it. You're not teaching, or making changes, or working for something or toward something. You're more a, I don't know [if] tool is a good word, but you're not supposed to be helping that person or teaching that person. So, I don't think I'd be satisfied with that forever.

Joy was asked to elaborate further on this issue during the follow up interview after completion of the class.

> {One of the things you had mentioned in our previous interview was that you saw interpreting as a passive role and that it's not something you would want to do forever because you wanted to take a more active role in the field in whatever you were doing. Do you still see interpreting as a passive role?}
>
> Not as much. In interpreting class they talked a little bit about how sometimes, as an interpreter, you can teach what that role is. Explain it to people. So there's a little room for that. But still, in general, the role seems kind of like a passive role. But sometimes when the debate gets kind of heated in areas related to deafness, I think that would be nice [to remain passive].

> I'll just pass on the information back and forth and you guys work it out.
>
> {So you can step out of the discussion and know you're not involved.}
>
> Sometimes that might be nice....I don't know if passive is exactly the right word.

Joy describes the interpreter as having a somewhat "passive" role in terms of personal involvement in the communication interaction, yet she is very aware of the active nature of the interpreting process and of the need for the interpreter to remain alert and attentive at all times. Joy wrote the following comments in her reaction paper after having observed an interpreter in an education setting.

> I found the subject matter interesting and my attention was drawn away from interpreting. That taught me that an interpreter has to be careful to concentrate on the interpreting process and not get distracted by the message.

Not only did Joy realize the importance of concentration during an English-to-ASL situation but in an ASL-to-English situation as well, as illustrated in her journal entry.

> 6/14: [A deaf woman] came in as a guest speaker. She told about her experiences growing up....[Her] stories were interesting and fun. The problem was I was supposed to be voice interpreting [but] I would become interested in her speech and forget to interpret.

Joy also related two experiences she had in the role of interpreter. The second experience in particular reinforced

her understanding of why interpreters need to be skilled and qualified.

> A year ago there was a deaf boy at church...and the person who usually interprets for him was sick for about a month so I went and tried to help him. ...I felt like I could get the main ideas to him. It was a children's meeting, children's level, children's vocabulary.
>
> About a year later, some deaf adults came to church and I tried to interpret for them and I could not. I was stunned at the difference, really. It was an adult meeting, adult vocabulary....I was untrained. That was an eye opener.

As the course progressed, Joy seemed to be able to look at both the pros and cons of interpreting. She made the following entry in her journal.

> June 25: One thing I like about the field of interpreting is that there will always be room for growth, for skill improvement, and something new to learn.
>
> One thing I don't like about interpreting is the imprecision of the process. Partly because interpreting occurs simultaneously, partly because changing from one language to another is difficult, it seems something always gets lost or missed. For now, that bothers me a little, it kind of irritates my sense of what a client "SHOULD" receive. I wonder if Deaf people are aware that interpretation is an imprecise process and that even the best interpreters may miss something or interpret something slightly differently than the speaker, deaf and hearing, may have said it themselves.

We discussed the imprecise nature of the interpreting process again during the follow-up interview.

> It [the interpreting process] always just looks like it's incomplete or imprecise, like there's

> always something that gets lost in the translation. For now, that bothers me. Maybe it's good if it always bothers you a little bit because it would make you work hard to do the best you can. But it would be hard to always be left feeling like something was missing. I'd either have to accept that or understand it better or something.

Joy did add that this imprecision was not enough of a deterrence to keep her from pursuing an interpreting career.

The second issue pertained to Joy's perception of what it takes to be a good interpreter.

> To be a really <u>good</u> interpreter, if you don't have deaf parents or haven't grown up knowing sign language, requires more work, more time, than you would be paid for. So you have to want to do it. If you're pretty skilled, I guess, you can be paid decently, or pretty well. But it's not like if you're a doctor and you work long and hard you're going to earn a lot of money. But to be good, it's going to take time and a lot of practice and a lot of experience. More than economically we'll ever make and that's discouraging....The time required will be more than the monetary benefits.

Joy was asked in the follow-up interview if, after completing the class, she still felt that the time and effort required to become an interpreter outweighed the monetary benefits.

> Yeah. To really do a good job...involves learning the language well, which takes a lot of time. Time that you can never really be paid for it. At least not what I've seen interpreters earn around here. Or in general. I think the preparation time to really be good is real demanding...and extensive.

One problem Joy perceived in herself was an inadequate sign vocabulary. Her journal entry of 6/15 reads:

> My biggest problem is with vocabulary. There are so many words that I still don't know how to sign. [Also] extracting meaning from spoken information and being able to express that meaning into ASL that makes sense is a slow process still. So ASL fluency is a goal to work toward.

When asked to talk about her frustrations, she stated

> I just don't know enough words. When we were doing the skit for the final presentation, we were going to do a little story, a children's story. But there were a lot of words I didn't know in one book. So we changed books and it was simpler. But I still have a hard time learning how to make it ASL.
>
> {Do you have a hard time making it ASL because of your limited vocabulary or because of the structure of the language?}
>
> I think both. And I just don't have enough experience seeing people use the language to understand it....So it's partly work and it's partly experience. Seeing the language used and using it. Having that cultural immersion experience. But I still feel really limited in the words that I know. Even though I know a lot of words.

Later in the same interview, Joy discussed her concerns again.

> The thing that still frustrates me is [not having the] language base. It's still frustrating. I don't know why this is bothering me.
>
> {Not having the language base or the fact that it's ASL?}
>
> Not having it, being able to get it. Where, how can I personally get that so I really feel comfortable, and fluent I guess is the word. Fluent in ASL so that I can feel like I can express myself in most situations. So I guess it's fluency that's elusive. I don't want to do a crummy job. If I'm an interpreter, I want to be a good one. And so I guess I personally feel like I

> need to be pretty fluent in ASL to be a good interpreter. And that's frustrating.

This frustration may have to do with Joy's difficulty with the concept of bilingualism. Joy, herself, is frustrated with her language skills; she has not yet internalized the language and, hence, cannot quite fully understand what it means for her to be bilingual.

Kristina

Kristina, who grew up in the Northwest, is a 33-year old Special Education/Deaf Education teacher interested in interpreting part time. She has two Master's degrees, one in Elementary Education and the other in Deaf Education. She is married and has no children. She is aware of her abilities with sign language and interpreting although she tends to be very critical of herself; this is reflected in her journal entries.

> 6/15: I judge myself harder than others would. My standards are sometimes too high to be realistic.

> 7/1: I usually am too hard on myself. For other people, I try to give good feedback and a lot of support and reassurance. Sometimes I wish I could accept that from myself more often.

Kristina takes her studies very seriously and stated that she appreciated learning about the interpreting profession in the "Introduction to Interpreting" class.

Kristina said she feels that her sign language skills are adequate for working with children but not for working with adults, especially if she becomes an interpreter. She expressed comfort in conversing with deaf people in most situations but hesitated in calling herself bilingual. She stated that applying the term bilingual to herself seemed "cocky" and that she does not want to exaggerate her skills. When questioned about whether she would have felt cocky using the term bilingual when she was studying two spoken languages, French and English, Kristina replied,

> It still would have been hesitant for me to use it. It's just a feeling that,...I'm not sure exactly what bilingual means. I think it's used kind of across the board, for some people [it means] that they just can speak both languages, or read both languages, or [for other] people that they can integrate and communicate and socialize in the community. So to me, that's more of the second.

During the follow-up interview, Kristina stated that she feels she is able to communicate effectively in most situations.

Kristina indicated that most of her cultural knowledge came from classes and from interacting with deaf people, mostly through working in educational programs for deaf children; she has never taken a formal class in Deaf Culture. With regard to the idea of biculturalism, Kristina had the following response:

{Do you consider yourself to be bicultural?}

> I wouldn't know what that meant....I've never really thought of it. I feel that I've worked really hard, especially when I was in school, to learn a lot about the deaf community. What was acceptable, what was unacceptable. How my attitude really could play a part. And I've had the experience of working in the classroom with another person who was deaf, another teacher who was deaf. And I feel I passed his kind of evaluation of whether I'm culturally sensitive, attitudinally sensitive. And so I guess I would say, kind of. In that sense but I'm not sure exactly what you mean.

During the follow-up interview, Kristina was asked again about the definition of biculturalism.

> Bicultural I feel has to do with being able to speak both languages and be privy or understanding, sympathetic, I'm not quite sure of the word, of how both cultures work and how you would have to work within both cultures.
>
> {Do you see yourself as being bicultural?}
>
> Kind of....But I don't feel I've had enough opportunities to really test that out. I mean I think I've got a book knowledge of it and an understanding, in general. Because I haven't been out in the other community, more often. So I feel hesitant to say yes.

Kristina said she appreciated having members of the deaf community come to class as guest speakers because it gave her a chance to hear different perspectives on interpreters and on issues of language learning and language use.

The issue of identity, of being a hearing person in the deaf community, is one that Kristina has thought about and seems to understand in terms of her own involvement in the deaf community.

{Have you ever gotten feedback, deaf or hearing, about you being a hearing person going into this field?}

Yes. And I don't know exactly where it came from. I don't know whether it was a topic brought up in class, like in school here, or something that somebody was discussing outside in the community. It really made you think about a lot of different things. She [the speaker] was speaking about... wanting to feel part of the community. Whatever community it is. I have felt part of the community at [the local residential school]. So I know I can feel that way. But she was talking about feeling part, and accepted by the deaf community. And that really pushed some buttons for me, because basically she said, you know, you never do get accepted by the deaf community to an extent that you would like.

{Never?}

She said, realistically, I mean, there are people that socialize and are part of the community, but they're still outside that inner circle that they talk about. And, it was like, "wait a minute. Here I am. What am I working for? It is to become part of it." I don't want to change anything, but I just want to be a part of it. And, to have somebody tell me, "No you won't become a part of it" was a little [frustrating]....But now that I look at it I understand a little more clearly. And to me, being accepted by the community is, "do they accept the work I'm doing? And do they accept the attitude that I present? And, am I able to feel comfortable socializing at a limited degree at this point?" I think I have come to that. So I guess I've changed my thoughts about it by having to look at it from a different perspective

During the follow-up interview, Kristina talked again about wanting and needing to feel part of the community.

[At my current school], I'm just a visitor in the community, and it bothers me....That's why I like the deaf school so much because I feel, especially when I was teaching there, a part of the

> community. I have a real strong need to feel a belonging to a group.

With regard to her own signing skills, Kristina said she feels that her expressive signing skills are stronger than her receptive signing skills.

> [I'm more comfortable with] my expressive skills. I tried to talk to different people about it and I found that everybody's individual. I recognize that fact, but I would have thought that there would have been a majority of people that would have found it easier to just express. I think it's true that expressing something is easier because you have control over the whole situation.

Feeling more in control of her expressive skills may relate to Kristina's lack of fluency and command of ASL. As she stated, she can control her own signs when expressing herself; she can use the signs she knows and is comfortable using. When reading signs, she has no control over which signs the other person will use; hence, her anxiety level may be higher because she may encounter an unfamiliar sign. One of the statements in Kristina's journal relates to this issue of fluency and comfort level with ASL, "I wonder how difficult it will be to become more proficient in ASL interpreting"?

One issue that Kristina expressed very strong feelings about has to do with the kind of training she received to become a teacher of deaf children. More specifically, she expressed concerned that she did not receive training on how to use an interpreter in her classroom.

> When we went through our program, Deaf Ed., there was no interpreter training. No introduction to interpreting. No introduction on how to use interpreters....And the three of us that graduated last year all have interpreter horror stories to talk about, just different situations that we ended up in, and how do we use it? And when we spoke on a panel,...that was something that I pushed. I said that it was real important for programs, educational programs to have. And I understand we're real limited in what we can do. But even just having somebody come to discuss it. To find out resources of where you would go to find out guidelines, Code of Ethics, not really the Code of Ethics but guidelines, on how interpreters should be doing their roles. How we would work with an interpreter. Those kinds of things would be really important. And I think that, in addition to interpreter training programs, should seep down to Deaf Ed. programs.

This interest in knowing more about the interpreting process and the role of interpreters is part of what prompted Kristina to take the "Introduction to Interpreting" class. She said she also felt that she "was interested in becoming an interpreter but...never felt boastful enough to say 'yeah, sure, I can be an interpreter'." In the second of our follow-up interviews, Kristina again expressed her feelings on the topic of becoming an interpreter. "I kind of wanted to be an interpreter but didn't really feel like I had the skills. This class allowed me to at least know what was needed to attain those skills".

When asked more about the issue of teacher training programs in the follow-up interview, Kristina discussed her

current situation and her lack of knowledge regarding the use of interpreters.

> {Did the training program assume that you as a teacher would be going into a classroom with all deaf children so you wouldn't need an interpreter? Or did they talk about mainstream settings?}
>
> Well actually they tried to make it so that you had experience in a mainstream setting and [in] the deaf residential school. They required me to work out in the public school system to get a better balance. Which is important. By them requiring me to do that I would suspect that they should have thought and they knew. They tell us, just so you know the deaf school isn't the only place you're going to work. There's all this other stuff....I've talked to them about it, and I think they will address that issue some. I hope they do, just for the teacher's sake.

In addition to providing information on the use of interpreters to prospective teachers, Kristina also said she feels that there should be a safe way for interpreters to learn about their own roles. "I wish that there was a mentor to come down and say [to the interpreter], 'that was good but this is what I would have done differently.' That would help improve [the process]."

Kristina's concern is important because it emphasizes an area that needs improvement in terms of training teachers to work with deaf children. Both special education teachers and regular education teachers can benefit from this knowledge, especially since a large number of deaf children are mainstreamed into regular education classrooms.

This relates to the idea of offering a non-skills based class on the field of interpreting. A class based on theory, as opposed to practice, would benefit people both in and out of the field of deafness: teachers, administrators, parents, counselors, and community members. Both deaf and hearing people could learn the appropriate way to request and use and interpreter for a variety of situations.

Summary

This chapter has provided both a general overview and in-depth profiles of the participants in this study. Their linguistic and cultural backgrounds as well as their interactions and relationships with one another and with the community were examined. The profiles of three students who expressed great interest in interpreting as a career, illustrate several key themes which emerged from the larger data. The following chapter provides further analysis of those themes.

Chapter 6

THEME ANALYSIS

Chapter 5 presented a descriptive overview of the students in the "Introduction to Interpreting" class, as well as a profile of three students in the class. In this chapter, several themes that emerged from the data within the contexts of interviews, classroom observations, and other student-generated texts such as journals, are discussed. Information provided by the students on the follow-up questionnaire supplements this discussion. Comments from the instructor, the teaching assistant, and four members of the interpreting community, two deaf and two hearing, also are included.

Seven recurring themes are presented here. These include: (1) identity and acceptance as a hearing person; (2) attitudes toward ASL, Deaf culture, and the deaf community; (3) language fluency; (4) second language learning; (5) bilingualism; (6) biculturalism; and (7) attitudes toward the interpreting profession.

Identity and Acceptance as a Hearing Person

The issue of how a hearing person can fit into the deaf community was discussed by students in their journals, during some of the interviews and in class on several

occasions. Reflections centering on this theme also were included in my field notes, e.g.:

> 7/6: Several students expressed frustration at being told that they, as hearing people, would never be accepted into the deaf community. The students are wondering if all deaf people really do hate all hearing people. This is how the students perceive this issue of hearing people being involved in the deaf community. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in ASL classes, IPPs, teacher training programs, RCD programs--any place where hearing people are preparing to work in the deaf community. Each person has to understand the issue as it pertains to him/herself.

Part of students' concern resulted from what they had read in books and heard in other classes. Several students mentioned during interviews that they had been told by an instructor in a previous class that as a hearing person, they would never be accepted by the deaf community. The instructor who had made this statement is a hearing person. One student was particularly concerned about this issue and expressed this both during class and during her interview:

> In the beginning, we learned a lot about culture, how they were suppressed [sic] and everything. And then, through the semesters, it was almost aggravating [to hear the negative comments] because...I'm trying to learn this language...so that I can mediate between these two cultures and it's like, 'you're a hearing person. You're bad, bad, bad'....They were suppressed [sic], I understand that...but it's just so hard to be told that you're a bad person when you're learning.

Another student shared similar concerns. "It's hard for me to accept the fact that, no matter how hard I want to

be in the community, they [deaf people] will never accept me."

What is interesting about these statements is that no matter how frustrated the students said they were about the perception of not being accepted, they still expressed a desire to pursue their studies of ASL and Deaf culture. This may be because none of the students had heard a statement about not being accepted from deaf people. The deaf people with whom they interacted had been very encouraging of their learning sign language and of their becoming active in the deaf community.

During class discussions, both the instructor and the teaching assistant stressed the need for the students to understand deaf-hearing relations from a historical perspective. Traditionally, members of the deaf community have been oppressed by members of the hearing community and, therefore, are somewhat hesitant to automatically accept hearing people into the community. This is not to say that all hearing people have treated deaf people poorly--only that deaf people may rightfully be cautious. The instructor and the teaching assistant emphasized that the students would probably have to prove themselves as friends and allies of the deaf community but that they would not be excluded solely because they were hearing. One deaf community member explained that acceptance of hearing people

depends on the attitudes and goals of the local community and is based on that community's past experiences. "It depends on the people in the community [and] on their experience with hearing people."

Two other deaf people, one guest speaker in the class and one community member, discussed the notion of respect as one aspect of acceptance. One stated, "Interpreters must have good attitudes and understand deaf people, not look down on them. I want an interpreter with respect for deaf people....Deaf and hearing people must work together." The other person said, "if they [hearing people] respect the culture, then deaf people are going to respect them."

This speculation about whether they would be accepted into the deaf community may also be a result of having read a book entitled For Hearing People Only (Moore & Levitan, 1992). This book was required reading for students enrolled in the "Intensive ASL" class during the same summer session in which they took "Introduction to Interpreting." The book was written for hearing people with little or no knowledge about ASL, the deaf community, or Deaf culture, and the students perceived it as having an anti-hearing focus causing them to question their participation in the field.[18]

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[18]In the forward of the book For Hearing People Only (Moore & Levitan, 1992), Harlan Lane specifically points out that the book does not present hearing people in the most flattering light. "I have told how hearing people commonly describe Deaf people in unflattering terms--well, the

In addition to discussing the issues of identity, the students also wondered how they could enter and be accepted by the deaf community, so that they might learn more about deaf people and the Deaf culture. Some students shared their difficulties in attending deaf community events.

> I've done some reading and I do attend deaf community events....But I don't have any deaf friends and I find it very difficult to approach people....I feel isolated generally when I'm there.

This same student offered the following suggestion as a way to help students who are learning about the deaf community.

> I would like to see more concentration, explanation, focus, whatever in sign language classes on how to ease your way into Deaf culture. How to be accepted. It's a very difficult and unique thing for a hearing person, especially one who is just learning [ASL] as a new language.

Another student expressed similar concerns although she later seemed to have overcome her initial fears.

> When I first started, I felt kind of intimidated, like they [deaf people] didn't want me to be there trying to use their language....Now I just enjoy it more because I get to communicate with so many different people.

One student expressed an interest in immersing herself in the deaf community.

> I know I want to go to Gallaudet...because I'm ready to just know ASL. You can really only learn so much in a class, and I feel that even going out into the community, it's going to help but it's not enough....I'd just like to have first-hand

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compliment is returned! We are seen as woefully ignorant" (p. 12).

> experience with what's going on instead of just hearing about it.

This idea of more complete immersion was also expressed by a hearing community member.

> There was a point in my life when I realized that I cannot be an interpreter the way I wanted to be, be involved in the deaf community as much as I wanted to be, and still try to carry on a life in the hearing world, as much as was expected of me. ...I still have hearing friends, and I enjoy my hearing friends. But I had to make a decision that this is what my life is. It was a conscious effort decision on my part that, this is the way I want to live my life. I want to be with deaf people. I want to be with interpreters who understand my work. But I have to be real careful with not losing the fact that I am hearing,...to try to figure out my role as an ally....I have to be careful not to lose my identity as a hearing person.

The course instructor offered this explanation regarding student involvement in the deaf community.

> I don't think student interpreters can really be members of the deaf community. But I think it's important that they get involved in events in the deaf community for a number of reasons. To improve their language skills. To work on their attitudes. To have deaf people in the community know them....I think that's important.

A decision regarding how and how much a person will be involved in the deaf community does not happen suddenly. It must be considered carefully by each person based on his/her own needs.

Attitudes

The above discussion about identity and acceptance is not intended to show that there is no place for hearing people within the deaf community. Hearing people who support the goals of the deaf community and show support for the community by learning ASL and learning about Deaf culture are often welcomed as allies and as friends. A person's attitude is often the deciding factor. One deaf community member provided the following insight:

> I can't ignore attitude....I look at how they [interpreters] communicate with deaf people. If they view us as equals. If they respect the language and if they demonstrate that respect [through their language use]....If they know how deaf people interact. Often, interpreters know nothing about Deaf culture. They don't know what's happening. They don't associate with deaf people. A lot [about attitude] has to do with awareness level and behavior.

The four deaf people who visited the class as guest speakers as well as the two deaf community members who were interviewed were asked the following question.

> If you had a choice between two interpreters--one who had a good attitude and mediocre interpreting skills and one who had a bad attitude and excellent interpreting skills--which one would you prefer to use?

The preference for an interpreter with a good attitude and mediocre skills was unanimous because it was important for the interpreter to respect Deaf culture and values and to demonstrate this respect in his/her attitude. One interviewee also expressed the importance of building a good

rapport with the interpreter. He preferred an interpreter who respected his language and his culture.

> I want to establish a good rapport with that person....If a person's got really good skills and a lousy attitude,...we may have negative interaction and [it may be] hesitant and awkward.

The students were curious about how a deaf person can recognize who has a good attitude. The guest speakers all responded that they could tell by listening to what the interpreter said and how he/she said it. One guest speaker said it is a "gut feeling" she gets after talking to an interpreter. The students seemed amazed that a deaf person could tell what kind of attitude they had after just a brief conversation, although I suspect that they also make decisions about a person's attitude after an initial meeting, perhaps without even realizing it.

Attitudes Toward ASL

On the follow-up questionnaire, the students were asked whether their attitudes, after taking the course, had changed or remained the same about ASL, Deaf culture, and the deaf community. As for their attitudes about ASL, most of the students responded that their attitudes had not changed because they had positive attitudes prior to taking the course. "I understand how important it is to view ASL as a separate language," one student stated. Another said, "I've always had a positive attitude toward ASL." Those

students who responded that the class had changed their attitudes felt that the change had been for the better. One student responded that although her attitude is still positive, "it [ASL] seems harder and more frustrating to learn than I had originally thought."

Attitudes Toward Deaf Culture

The students' attitudes about Deaf culture were affected more than their attitudes about ASL; again, these changes were positive. One student stated, "It hasn't really changed, just strengthened. I really appreciate the cultural differences more." Another student noted that, "Our speakers helped me better see the deaf perspective. ...I'll keep much of it in mind." One student's comments seem to reflect her increased awareness of cultural issues: "I'm finding it harder to socialize with deaf people. It's difficult to know how to approach people without being offensive or having things misconstrued."

Attitudes Toward the Deaf Community

Interestingly, attitudes about the deaf community seemed to be more troubling and/or disconcerting for the students than were their attitudes about ASL or Deaf culture. The following comments reflect these concerns.

> I can't say if I have an attitude, it's more like a conception. I need to become more involved before any feelings of mine can be changed.
>
> I am still unsure of the deaf community and 'its' attitude. It [the community] is constantly changing and so is the attitude.
>
> I understand now that it is important not to want to "help" deaf people but to "work" with deaf people. I also learned how they view their deafness--as a cultural attribute, not a handicap.
>
> I am a little more weary about acceptance of hearing people and I think I understand what it takes to be accepted.

The students seemed to be more aware of their own attitudes after taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" course. I suspect that some of their attitudes may change as they continue to learn about the deaf community.

Language Fluency

A third theme that became evident as I read through the data focused on the students' language fluency, or lack thereof, particularly in ASL. As discussed in Chapter 2, an interpreter must have a thorough knowledge of and native-like fluency in the languages used in an interpreting situation. Without having control over the languages, the interpreter will not be as effective or as accurate in his/her interpretation.

Throughout the course, several guest speakers, both deaf and hearing, spoke to the students about the interpreting profession. They all emphasized the need for

interpreters to be fluent in both languages, ASL and English, and in both cultures, Deaf and Hearing. Students may have been unwilling to acknowledge or accept this point since many who were preparing to enter the field as professionals were not yet fluent.

Most interpreter preparation programs do not require fluency, especially in ASL, prior to entrance into their program. A sampling of IPPs throughout the United States, primarily in the West, revealed that, at best, these programs required one or two semesters of ASL language learning prior to entry into the interpreting related courses, which are often set up as a two-year program. Occasionally, the language learning and the interpreting skills learning occur within the same two-year period. As one hearing guest speaker told the students, "You can't learn the language and [learn] interpreting skills in two years." Another hearing guest speaker was emphatic when stating, "You have to be fluent to enter an ITP. The current standards are too low."

A hearing community member who was interviewed explained the importance of being fluent in both languages when interpreting.

> I think that it is really important to be bilingual before you even start because...you get frustrated and then that can effect your ability, too, because you're trying to interpret something and you don't have the skills to do it.

This woman understands these frustrations first-hand because she went through an IPP without being fluent in ASL. Because of the difficulties this created, she did not pursue work as a sign language interpreter after she completed her education. At the time of this study, she worked as a Spanish/English spoken language interpreter and intends to improve her sign language skills.

The students' lack of fluency in ASL was evident throughout the duration of the course and is reflected in both my observational and reflective field notes.

> 6/9: During group work, several students asked the instructor for signs (i.e., How do you sign X?)....There is a need for language skills enhancement in addition to interpreting skills development.
>
> 6/15: There's a lot of vocabulary building taking place in class. Students are often stuck on a word because they don't have the sign vocabulary.
>
> 6/23: The students' language skills are in much need of improvement.

Often, throughout the class, the instructor or teaching assistant reviewed lists of vocabulary items in English and demonstrated the appropriate signs in ASL. Idioms, slang, and regional variations in both languages were also reviewed as necessitated by the students' questions or by their inability to interpret during practice sessions. Examples of these vocabulary items are found in Appendix L.

When practicing their interpreting in class, the students often seemed to place too much emphasis on specific

words rather than thinking in terms of the concepts being discussed. Because the students were so intent on finding the right sign vocabulary equivalent, which they did not always know, they often ignored the conceptual meaning of the message to be interpreted. This phenomenon occurred during ASL-to-English interpreting and English-to-ASL interpreting. The English-to-ASL practice revealed deficiencies in the students' ASL fluency, while the ASL-to-English practice revealed problems with their English fluency. These deficiencies were exposed when the students asked questions such as "What's the sign or word for...?" or "How do you handle it when a person uses one sign and I use another sign?" One student was more straightforward about her feelings: "I feel so stupid with idioms. I can't even tell you in English [what they mean]. It's good to know them." The following comments from my field notes reflect this issue:

> 6/9: I wonder how strong the students' English vocabulary is, especially with words representing nuances of similar ideas (insist, require, demand). If they see a sign, can they adjust their English vocabulary choice to correspond to the situation. Likewise, if they hear a concept (in English), can they modulate their signs to fit the concept (change, alter, adjust, modify).
>
> 6/15: The problem I see...is that students enter IPP's who are not fluent language users and can't interpret between two languages fluently....Their English skills are not good. Their articulation and/or oral abilities are not strong. They do not always have a strong extended English vocabulary on which to draw.

This comment in my field notes came about as a result of interviewing the students. Several were not able to express their views clearly as demonstrated in the following excerpts:

> It's kind of a weird story because back in elementary school, I don't know, I always had like a fascination.

> And she's like "they take sign language as a requirement."...And she was like "why don't you take it?"...And I'm like that would be awesome...

Some of the students' written comments on the follow-up questionnaire also revealed difficulties with using written language.

> I'm more concerned about find [sic] a secure full-time job.

> The fact the [sic] interpreting and transliterating is [sic] a big difference.

My field notes from later in the course again touched on the issue of language fluency but more in terms of language features than vocabulary:

> 6/28: The students tried voicing stories today. They still need to work on their language skills. I'm not sure how strong their receptive skills are. Some sound smoother than others although they still voice in glosses. They may get the words but may not get the meaning. Or they see signs but not the non-verbal cues like facial expressions, body expression, modulation.

This relates to one student's comments during class about getting confused over the placement of characters in a story that was told by one of the deaf guest speakers.

As the course progressed, the instructor became more aware of the limited language fluency of the students. She commented to me about half-way through the course that she was not accomplishing what she had planned and had to restructure the course in order to meet the needs and skill abilities of the students. This issue also was discussed during a more formal interview with the instructor after the course had concluded.

> JS: I want to talk a little bit about the class that you just finished teaching, "Introduction to Interpreting." You had made a comment to me one day that you had to completely revamp everything because of the time restraints and a few other things. Could you talk about that a little bit? Why you set up the syllabus the way you did before the class started? And what changes you had to make and why?
>
> Instructor: I set up the syllabus the way I did before the class started because I had a lot of information that I wanted them to get, about a number of different things. I wanted to focus on specific areas of interpreting a little bit, like educational, legal, medical. I wanted to practice both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. I wanted to practice both transliterating and interpreting. And I just had all these ideas that would, like if you were going to have a two year program you could have fit all this stuff in. And I wanted to do it in five weeks. So then of course reality struck. And also the level of the students was not, even though I knew most of them, it wasn't, I don't know I just wasn't thinking I guess. So I got in there and I realized they just needed so much basic stuff that I really had to just change everything that I had planned. And really just do a little basic stuff every day. I mean we never really even did interactive interpreting. So, I really had to change everything from what I had planned.

> JS: When you said they weren't at the right level, what specifically was not at the right level?
>
> Instructor: Their proficiency in ASL was not at the right level....And, I think probably for most of them, their English skills were not up to par either.

One class discussion involved the ability to interpret versus transliterate and whether someone could truly "interpret" between two languages without being linguistically and culturally fluent. The students were not completely convinced that fluency was required to "interpret." However, based on the works of Frishberg (1986, 1987), Seleskovitch (1978) and others discussed in Chapter 2, fluency in both [all] languages is required for accurate interpretation. Perhaps the students would have been more aware of this if they had been more comfortable with their own skills and abilities.[19]

Second Language Learning

Most of the students did not consider themselves fluent in ASL; however, they found that learning ASL as a second language to be much more enjoyable and easier than learning another spoken language. All but one student had studied

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[19]Many interpreters are more comfortable and confident with English-to-ASL interpreting than ASL-to-English interpreting, possibly because they perceive having more control over their (often) non-dominant language when using it expressively rather than receptively.

either Spanish or French while growing up, mostly during high school and college, although a few had some exposure to learning a second language in elementary and middle school.

These second language learning experiences lasted from two to six years. Ironically, none of these students ever considered themselves to be fluent in this second spoken language, even after five or six years of study. For most, these second language learning experiences were negative and tedious. Following are students' comments about their experiences with learning a second [spoken] language, some of which led to their study of ASL.

> I took about 5 years [of Spanish] and I speak practically nothing. I did what I had to do to get the grades....At the time, I though I needed to know Spanish because I lived in [the southwest] ...but I never was taught it well. I never retained it well. It just wasn't a language I could pick up really well....I found learning sign language was very easy for me, which Spanish wasn't. Spanish was very, very hard for me....ASL showed me that I'm a more visual learner.
>
> I hated it [learning Spanish]. It was hard....I really don't know what makes [ASL] easier for me. ...More interest? It was kind of like I <u>had</u> to take Spanish in high school. It was kind of forced on me rather than a desire. I'd rather take sign language. I want to.
>
> It [3 years of high school Spanish] was really hard for me. I seemed to get the hang of it but when I progressed on to another year, it would just be over my head again....I think it influenced me choosing ASL for a foreign language when I entered college.
>
> I was getting fed up with Spanish so I decided to try [sign language].

> ASL to me was a lot easier to learn [than Spanish].
>
> [I was] not really bilingual [in French and English]. I was starting to learn and in class I could speak well. But then when my grandmother came, she's from Canada, I didn't understand a word she said to me. I dropped French.

One student summed up her feelings for learning ASL this way: "I really like it. I've had so much fun".

Many of the students felt that they gained a better understanding of what it means to be a second language learner, as indicated by responses on the follow-up questionnaire.

> I'm realizing more and more how one word means many, many things.
>
> It has explained more in depth all the aspects involved in learning a second language, culturally and linguistically.
>
> It's harder then [sic] heck to learn another language and involves so much more than words.
>
> Just becoming more fluent in a second language allows me to understand what it means to learn a second language.

Although an introductory course on interpreting may not necessarily focus on the issues of second language learning, interpreting students need to fully understood these issues and how they pertain to their chosen field.

Bilingualism

The concept of bilingualism emerged as a theme because the students seemed to have so much difficulty understanding

and defining it. Bilingualism is tied closely with the concept of biculturalism which is discussed later in this chapter. The obstacles encountered in defining and discussing these terms is evident in the students' answers on the follow-up questionnaire and during their interviews.

To define the term bilingual, the students often used a broad definition they had heard used in class--to know or be fluent in two languages. Although they used this definition during class discussions, the students did not necessarily understand the implications of being bilingual. Sample definitions on the follow-up questionnaires reflect this broad, somewhat general, usage: "to be fluent in two languages;" "the ability to communicate in two different languages;" and "the ability to use two languages."

Only two students extended their definitions to incorporate the ability to interpret between two languages. One gave this definition: "The ability to quickly and accurately comprehend, express, or interpret from one language to another." Another said, "Being fluent in two languages and being able to interpret meanings and concepts from one to the other."

Two other students specified that being bilingual meant knowing two languages, not just knowing two modalities. As one student wrote on the follow-up questionnaire, bilingualism is "having an understanding and fluency in two

separate languages (i.e. ASL and English), not two modalities (i.e. SEE and English)." Another student wrote, "It is the knowledging [sic] of two completely different languages, i.e. English and ASL. English and SEE would not be bilingualism. They are different modalities."

One student gave a more thorough definition of bilingualism:

> Bilingualism is being able to communicate fluently and appropriately in two languages. Appropriately includes correct use of grammar, structure, correct terminology, appropriate concepts, and what is acceptable to discuss or how to discuss something in a culture.

In fairness to the students, it should be noted that this class was not designed to discuss the issue of bilingualism specifically, nor did most of the students claim to be bilingual in ASL and English. Most students answered "no" to the interview questions, "do you consider yourself to be bilingual?" The following explanations were offered:

> Not really. I mean I'm getting better at ASL. I can carry on a conversation pretty well but I still get nervous and my hands get all tied up.
>
> I can communicate but I wouldn't consider myself bilingual.
>
> I don't think so. I've only studied four years. I don't think that's very long. But I don't know. ...I would still consider myself a student.

A few students who answered "yes" to the question about being bilingual qualified their answers: "I can get by,"

"Yes, receptively; no, expressively," "Yes with hearing people, no with deaf people," and "medium bilingual." Two other students responded as follows:

> I think I can communicate adequately in sign language, however I would never go as far as saying I was fluent. I mean, I can communicate. I can understand. I can hold a conversation. I can be educated in sign language but I don't think I'm ready to say I'm bilingual, yet.

> Maybe not fluently bilingual. I could get by with sign language definitely, but...I'm no native signer or anything like that.

Three students answered the question about being bilingual with a strong "yes," one of whom provided the following answer:

> Yes, I do [consider myself bilingual]. I wouldn't say I was a skilled fluent native signer by any stretch of the imagination. But I would say I was bilingual. I can definitely communicate with deaf people. I hang out with deaf people. I can get my point across. I can understand what they're saying to me and very effectively communicate. So I would say bilingual.

What is interesting about a number of these answers is that although several of the students talked about being able to communicate in sign language, they did not all agree about whether or not this meant they were bilingual. This seems to relate to the distinction between communicative competence and linguistic competence as discussed in Chapter 3. The students allude to their ability to convey and receive information (communicative competence), yet none of

them mention having mastery over ASL grammar (linguistic competence.)

One student who did not think she was bilingual until she clarified her answer seemed to have a different definition for being bilingual in two spoken languages as opposed to one spoken and one signed language. This student's interview responses also touches on the ability to communicate as part of the definition of bilingualism.

> No, I don't. Well, I don't know....I can sign.... It's kind of hard. Bilingual for sign language, I think, is a different meaning, really, than [for] a vocal language....If I had to talk to a deaf person, I don't think I'd have any real communication problems, so, I guess I'd consider that bilingual.

The above comments were all made during student interviews conducted within the first two weeks of the course. At the end of the course, the students were asked again to define the term <u>bilingualism</u> to determine whether the class discussions had helped them to clarify this concept. Although many of the students responded that they now had a better understanding of bilingualism, several still seemed to be grappling with the concept and had a difficult time expressing it, as indicated in their responses on the follow-up questionnaire. One student wrote, "The concept of bilingualism is unclear to me." "[We] discussed differences between bilingualism and different modalities," said another student.

A few students seemed to be able to understand the concept of bilingualism but only in the context of interpreting. "The fact that interpreting and transliterating is [sic] a big difference," wrote one student, while another responded, "I never really understood the difference between transliterating and interpreting. By understanding that, I know what it means to be bilingual."

Bilingualism and Second Language Learning

The themes of second language acquisition and bilingualism, although discussed separately, are closely related. The relationship between the two is important, especially for interpreters, who deal with two or more languages in their work. It is also significant that many interpreters learned their second language as adults. Many of the students did not clearly understand how these issues affect interpreters, which is not entirely surprising since all but three of the students had never taken a class on the structure of ASL, and only half had taken a course on the structure of English.

Traditionally, issues of bilingualism and second language acquisition are not dealt with during interpreter preparation programs. According to the information received from several IPPs, only one program includes a course

specifically dealing with these issues, at least as identified through the course titles.

When asked about the need for interpreters to be knowledgeable about theories of bilingualism and second language acquisition, two of the community members interviewed, one hearing and one deaf, concurred in their beliefs:

> JS: Do you think issues of second language acquisition and bilingualism should be addressed in training programs?
>
> Hearing community member: Yes, I do. It gives you a better understanding of the task you have in front of you....I think the more information you can have about language and language learning, [the more you] realize [that] this is our second language and not set yourself up because you are not fluent like a deaf person.
>
> ---
>
> JS: Do interpreters need to know about the principles and theories of second language acquisition and bilingualism?
>
> Deaf community member: For interpreters, I think it helps....They need to understand the thought process...and how to translate between two languages. The more awareness they have about language and meta-language, the better interpreters they're going to be....[Regarding bilingualism], because there are two languages involved, two communities involved, they have to understand what the conflicts are between those two languages.

Another deaf community member who was interviewed discussed the historical nature of interpreter preparation programs and how issues of bilingualism and second language acquisition were handled, or not, as was often the case:

> At that time, maybe 10 years ago,...that issue [of bilingualism] never came up. We didn't think about the bilingual/bicultural approach. We didn't know what that was. It was either ASL or English....[In addition], the people who used ASL were [considered] low functioning and the deaf people who used Signed English were the intelligent ones. ASL meant that you were a low functioning person.

Part of the reason for the lack of linguistic emphasis on ASL may have been that ASL was, until recently, viewed as being inferior to English, and its users, deaf people, were seen as having low status.

Biculturalism

The issue of being bicultural is as important as that of being bilingual. Yet when asked about this issue during the interviews, most of the students seemed puzzled as to how it pertained to them or even what it meant. One student's response to being asked whether she felt she was bicultural was, "I don't know. I never thought about it." The students who provided a definition on the follow-up questionnaire spoke in general terms as well, e.g., "the knowledge of two cultures" and "to understand and be sensitive to two separate and distinct cultures."

Several students mentioned that a sense of belonging and acceptance are part of being bicultural.

> Having knowledge of, sensitivity to, and socialize in two distinct cultural groups and to be accepted by both.

> Being involved in two cultures and being accepted by both and accepting both.
>
> This is when someone is accepted into another culture because of the activities, etc. they do with that community. As well as accepted into their own culture. They belong and are accepted into two cultures and are active in both.

Along with feelings of acceptance are feelings of inclusion in a culture. One student's response seemed to touch briefly on this theme when she wrote that biculturalism is "being part of two cultures. [The teacher] is bicultural because of her parents. I'm not and never will be cuz [sic] I may understand deaf culture but it doesn't mean I'm a part of the culture."

The above definitions were provided by the students on the follow-up questionnaire. During their interviews, however, each student was asked whether she considered herself to be bilingual. Only two students responded affirmatively to this question. One stated,

> Oh, definitely. It's like a whole different world. I mean I live with my boyfriend, now, who's deaf. I have the closed captioning. I have a TTY. We have the vibrator alarm clock....Yeah, I really live within the deaf culture now. I have very few hearing friends at all.

It seems from this student's statement that she equates having the artifacts of a culture (TTY, closed captioning) with being bicultural. She also seems to feel the need to exclude members of one culture (hearing) as a way of proving her standing in the other culture (Deaf).

Most of the students did not feel that they were bicultural, although one student felt she was "becoming" bicultural, and two others thought they were "kind of" bicultural. One student responded as follows:

> Kind of, I guess. I respect their culture and I have a pretty clear understanding of it. I guess in a way I'm bicultural in their culture, because, I'm not deaf, obviously. Kind of bicultural. I've never thought about it.

One student who responded with a negative answer to this question provided clarification: "No. I'm educated in the Deaf culture. I respect it, but [I'm not bicultural]."

This confusion about biculturalism is not surprising since 14 of the 17 students had never taken a class specifically dealing with Deaf culture, and one student was unsure if she had taken a class on this topic. This means that only two students had taken a formal class on Deaf culture during their academic endeavors. Aside from course work, most students indicated they had little or no experience as actual participants in deaf community events or cultural interactions.

When questioned further about how and where they had gained cultural information about deaf people, the students responded that they had acquired this information from books, from their sign language classes, and occasionally from friends. Rarely was the knowledge gained directly from deaf people. As one student explained, "I don't really know

any deaf people." My field notes of 6/15 and 6/23 reflect this:

> 6/15: The students seem to have learned about Deaf culture from books, not from deaf people. These books that are mentioned repeatedly are Padden and Humphries (1989), Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture and Jacobs (1980), A Deaf Adult Speaks Out; both are good, informative books however there seems to be little or no interaction with deaf people. (One student said that she didn't meet or talk to a deaf person until she was in ASL 4).
>
> 6/23: One of the startling bits of info that I heard in the interviews has to do with how few of the students actually associate with deaf people. A few have never been to an event where the majority of people have been deaf.

One student was open about her limited interactions with deaf people. During her interview she stated, "I don't have any deaf friends and I find it difficult to approach people." For a few of the students, their only contact with deaf people comes from their interactions with deaf classmates.

One student who had been to an event where there were many deaf people but who does not attend these events often, said, "I feel isolated generally when I'm there." Another student who discussed her experience at an event in the deaf community remarked that she "mostly just sat there and watched". The issue of frequency of interaction with deaf people was discussed in Chapter 5.

Attitudes Toward the Interpreting Profession

The course seemed to have the greatest impact on the students' attitudes toward the interpreting profession. This is not surprising given the topic of the course. Fourteen students responded that their attitudes had changed by the end of the course, yet it seems that all students gained a new appreciation of the task of interpreting, as reflected in their comments:

> It's a whole lot harder than I ever imagined it could be.
>
> I have developed a lot more respect for interpreters. Considering all the time and effort it takes to become skilled, they are underpaid!
>
> I never knew there were so many rules for interpreters. I had no idea about the confidentially rule. I assumed once you were fluent in ASL one [sic] could become an interpreter.
>
> I now have a better understanding and more professional view of the interpreting field.
>
> I feel this class defined the profession for me more clearly.
>
> More respect. It's a hard field.
>
> It's a lot harder and frustrating than I though. I knew it was hard but not this hard.
>
> My attitude has not changed, but I have enhanced my knowledge about the profession.

Many of the students expressed an interest in interpreting as a part-time vocation, primarily to supplement their income. Several viewed interpreting as a good way to support themselves while working to accomplish

another career goal (teacher, counselor). Only one student saw interpreting as a full-time career. Most of the students appeared to view interpreting as a means to an end, not as an end unto itself. For many, interpreting is not seen as a viable career choice.

> I'm not really interested in being an interpreter. First, I want to improve my sign language skills. [That's] really what I want to do. Maybe some freelance interpreting occasionally, for extra money.

Some students expressed the idea that if they can interpret, it proves to others that they are good signers. They seem to equate being able to sign with being able to interpret. The following sentiments were expressed by more than one student, especially those planning careers in counseling.

> Student: I want to become certified [as an interpreter] because then, in the Rehabilitation and Counseling program, I think they respect you more as a counselor if they know you're certified. Like, it almost gives you a license that "okay, you know my language."
>
> JS: If you're certified you get more respect as a counselor?
>
> Student: That's kind of what I heard. I mean not straight out, but I think it removes the language barrier that's automatically there....Sometimes if [the deaf person] knows you're an interpreter already...they can feel a little more comfortable and focus more on the counseling aspect than the language aspect which becomes a big barrier.

> My main focus is eventually to look forward to being fluent in sign language to the point where I

> can counsel deaf people. I'm probably going to go for [interpreter] certification so I can show people that I can sign at a certain level.

> If you become very skilled at interpreting then most likely you're...obviously skilled in the language...and you're going to be able to communicate with most of the deaf people you meet and that's what I want. I want to be able to communicate with all the deaf people that I meet and if I didn't take interpreting maybe my skills wouldn't be as good.

Several students said they were taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" class because they wanted to improve their signing skills and, again, mentioned interpreting as a side-line venture.

> I want to improve my [sign language] skills...and it just seems like it would be fun and something that I would want to do on the side.

> I took up this class because I was like, "let's give it a try." And that way I'll be able to keep up my signing, because that's my main thing. I want to keep up my signing. And I'd like to, maybe in the future, interpret on a part-time basis. Just for a little extra money. And not for the money, but mostly to maintain my signing, 'cause I don't want to lose it.

It appeared that students did not view learning to sign for its own sake as a credible option. They talked about taking the class to improve their signing skills but did not seem to give credence to those skills if they could not prove them except by being able to interpret.

Many of the students did not take the "Introduction to Interpreting" class with the intention of becoming an

interpreter, but they seemed to leave the class with a better understanding of the interpreting task and of the interpreting profession. As written in my reflective field notes,

> 6/25: Students are amazed at the role and responsibilities of being an interpreter. I think some of them don't fully understand the implications of being an interpreter.

One student's statement during class seemed to support this: "I didn't think there were so many ethical problems with interpreting."

These concerns were revealed in the questions that were asked by the students during class, e.g.,

> How do you know when to accept assignments?
>
> What do you do if someone asks your opinion during a job?
>
> When is it appropriate to step out of the interpreter role?
>
> What do you do when you have several deaf clients who all have different language needs?

A different student expressed her feelings about this issue during her interview.

> I had this impression that it would be like a miracle class, like I would take this class and I would know how to interpret. And I'm realizing that this is just an introduction....I guess I took it because I was thinking, maybe, I can interpret on the side.

My field notes toward the end of the course also touched on how the students perceived interpreting.

> 7/2: I think the students have a much greater understanding of interpreting than when they started a month ago but they still have a long way to go....It's not until a person is in the situation and has to start making decisions that he/she will truly understand what it means to do it. The more experience one gets, the better he or she will become at judging situations and knowing how to act appropriately.

An example of this is seen in the comments that the students made after practicing their ASL-to-English skills in class. One student said, "Sometimes I really get into it (the signed story) and forget to voice." Another student concurred and said that she never realized just how much processing goes on in the interpreter's mind during ASL-to-English interpreting. She had not realized that the interpreter must be aware enough of what is going on in the story in ASL to be able to transmit it into English but not so engrossed that it interferes with the transmittal.

Another entry in my reflective field notes addresses this same topic:

> 7/7: I think the students are beginning to understand what interpreting is all about. I think several of them had the idea that they would be able to interpret after this one course. I also think that those who took the class to improve their ASL skills learned a lot of information that they weren't expecting about the interpreting process and profession.

For example, by the end of the class, the students were able to answer some of their own questions about appropriate behavior for an interpreter. They were also able to debate

ethical issues and to support their views using references from their readings.

One student expressed her concern and indirectly her respect for interpreters when she stated, "I think that it [interpreting] is not taken seriously enough by society and about people who are doing it for a profession."

A hearing community member also discussed her feelings about how people view the interpreting profession.

> I would think there is an attitude that anybody can become an interpreter....Many people become interpreters for the deaf because they can hear and that's their only qualification. And then they know the sign language. Where the spoken language interpreters, they have the language first and then they become interpreters. And I think we just have this attitude and it reflects on the kind of attitudes that we have about deaf people that they're not worth high quality interpretation. And so I think, we have to break that image of interpreters.

Although a change in attitude does not happen overnight, change can occur through education and increased awareness of the interpreting profession and professionals.

Summary

Several themes that emerged from qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data have been discussed in this chapter in an attempt to better understand issues affecting the field of interpreting. The themes of identity toward ASL, attitudes, language fluency, second language learning, bilingualism, biculturalism, and attitudes toward

the interpreting profession were presented from the perspectives of students and community members who participated in this study. The next chapter looks at the implications of these findings for preparing future interpreters and for possible future research.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The previous two chapters focused on findings that emerged from the data. A general overview of the students was presented as were profiles of three students. Recurring themes emerging from a combination of data sources also were discussed. This chapter examines the advantages and drawbacks of this case study, as well as the findings in terms of the specific research questions about students' attitudes toward ASL, Deaf culture, and the interpreting profession, and in light of the broader implications for interpreter education presented in Chapter 1. Suggestions for further research are offered, as well.

Research Advantages and Drawbacks

This study found that students' attitudes toward ASL, Deaf culture, the deaf community, and the interpreting profession were very positive. Interpreter educators need to understand how these attitudes affect prospective interpreters. Additionally, issues emerged from the data that appear to have significant implications for sign language interpreter preparation practices. One such implication is that an understanding of issues of language fluency in ASL and English, bilingualism, biculturalism, and

second language learning would benefit interpreter educators, and that curricular materials should be developed to help prospective interpreters address these issues.

Policy implications from this research can be quite broad. Currently there are no widely accepted guidelines for preparing sign language interpreters. The data from this case study, though limited in scope, nonetheless demonstrate the need for programmatic and policy changes in interpreter education, especially as such changes pertain to the issues outlined above.

It must be acknowledged that this case study, as others, is not generalizable in its totality. First, the educational institution where the "Introduction to Interpreting" course was offered does not have an interpreter preparation program as part of its curriculum. The university offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in Deaf Studies and Sign Language Studies, but does not offer a formal interpreter preparation program. This may explain why most of the students in this study had no intentions of becoming interpreters; this program of study was not an option to them. The only local interpreter preparation option for the students was at a community college. Because most of the students were either nearing completion or had completed a bachelor's degree, they did not necessarily see the community college program as a viable option. A similar

study focusing on students enrolled in a formal IPP may yield different findings, although the findings here may be used to guide further research.

The "Introduction to Interpreting" course was simply an introduction and overview of the field. Because it was not part of a formal preparation program, it was not feasible to require bilingual fluency in ASL and English. Even though the latter requirement seems most warranted by the data as well as by the larger research literature, bilingual fluency was not an option for this particular class.

In addition, while it would have been valuable to interview students enrolled in a formal interpreter preparation program, this was not financially or logistically possible. Instead, a case study approach was used. This allowed me to focus on one particular social unit, a university classroom, and to learn as much as possible in that environment. To do so I utilized various methods of data collection including interviews, participant observations, and sample's of student work. In retrospect, the case study approached proved to be a manageable and highly informative framework within which to better understand the attitudes and aspirations of individuals who may one day become members of the interpreting profession. While results of one case study of interpreting students cannot be generalized to all interpreting students, or the

profession, such a study can serve as an in-depth point of reference for future research.

Time constrained what was possible within this research framework. The "Introduction to Interpreting" course was offered during a five-week summer school session. Thus, I had access to the class as a whole for a limited period of time. After the course ended, many students left for summer vacation. Also, once the fall semester began, students enrolled in different courses and some did not enrolled at all. I was therefore unable to conduct further follow-up with them. These constraints also limited the number of interviews; except for the three students profiled in Chapter 5, I interviewed each student only once. The scheduling of interviews was sometimes difficult, too, because of conflicting class and work schedules.

Follow-up interviews conducted with the three profiled students did allow me to probe more deeply into their beliefs and attitudes. These three students were willing to take the time to do this because they were the most serious about their studies in ASL and interpreting. The other students may not have been so giving of their time. Although all agreed to participate in my study, they had goals for the course that did not necessarily include interpreting as a long-term career aspiration.

Occasionally during the interviews, I found that some students were not very talkative; their answers often were short--one or two sentences at most. Open-ended questions allowed me to elicit more extensive responses, but some students did not elaborate on their answers even when asked.

Being an interpreter was immensely helpful for me as the researcher; a thorough knowledge of issues within the field assisted in framing questions for the students. Although some biases were inevitable, care was taken to set aside my own attitudes and beliefs and listen to the students' comments with an open mind. I reserved my personal reactions to observations and other qualitative data for the reflective portion of my field notes. On the other hand, after the initial interviews were conducted, I did discuss my views with the students when they asked me directly.

Within any research situation, there is always room for improvement and change, especially as new information develops. This study cannot be considered definitive, but it does provide new insights into the field of interpreting and interpreter preparation--particularly from the students' perspectives--and this in turn, can inform both policy and practice. Specifically, the students' difficulties in defining and understanding the concepts of bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning suggest

implications for interpreter preparation precisely because the students had so much trouble with these concepts. New policies for interpreter education should thus incorporate these topics into the curriculum. This is discussed more fully in the sections that follow.

Discussion of Findings on Student Attitudes

Three of the four specific research questions in this case study deal with attitudes about ASL, Deaf culture, and the deaf community. It is important to understand how students feel about the language and people they are studying, especially if they are planning to pursue a career in the field of deafness.

Overall, students in this study expressed positive attitudes and were quite respectful of the language and culture of Deaf people. Admittedly, the students are still learning, but overall they expressed positive views. For example, all of the students said that they believe ASL should be used as the language of instruction for deaf children in K-12 educational settings. Although this research does not explicitly address educational practices for deaf children, acceptance of ASL for children is viewed by members of the Deaf community as a positive indicator of a person's attitude. The only concern expressed by students

relates to finding a sufficient number of qualified teachers who are fluent users of ASL.

The students also stated that ASL should be accepted by colleges and universities as meeting "foreign" or second language requirements for graduation. Although the students may appear to be biased on this point (since many of them used ASL to meet their language requirement), they were able to offer valid reasons for accepting ASL. As one student said, "I think it's good because it is a language and it should be given the same amount of respect and validity as the other languages get." Several students also mentioned that ASL is the third or fourth most used language in the United States and that members of the cultural group who use it could be shown some respect by having ASL accepted in postsecondary settings.

Several students expressed concern that ASL has not been recognized by many people as being a "real" language, and that Deaf culture is not publicly accepted either. As one student stated during her interview,

> Overall in our country, I believe ASL is more important than other languages just because there's a deaf person in almost every single community in the country. And you have more chances of using that language than any other, even if you don't decide to get into the field. ...I can't understand why [people] would put down ASL when it's obviously a language that a community, a culture, uses.

Several students expressed similar sentiments during interviews.

Students also had positive attitudes about the interpreting profession. The data show that students' ideas about the interpreting profession changed significantly during the course which is not surprising for most, since the course was their first formal introduction to the field. The students seemed to gain a new appreciation for interpreters after observing working interpreters and after trying the task themselves.

While these findings do suggest some attitude changes on the part of the students by the end of the class, it is unreasonable to expect that coursework alone will change people's attitudes. Erickson (1993) discusses the societal nature of attitudes and the resistance, whether consciously or unconsciously, to changing hegemonic practices.[20] Changes in attitudes that are grounded in societal and historical contexts profoundly affect programs, policies, and practices as well as the people involved in them.

The students' positive attitudes about interpreting were not surprising; in fact, I had hoped to find the kind

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[20]Hegemonic practices are routine actions and unexamined beliefs that are consonant with the cultural system of meaning and ontology within which it makes sense to take certain actions, entirely without malevolent intent, that nonetheless systematically limit the life changes of members of stigmatized groups (Erickson, 1993, p. 45).

of positive attitudes that the students expressed. What did surprise me, however, was how few of the students enrolled in the "Introduction to Interpreting" class actually wanted to become interpreters. On the first day of class, as the students introduced themselves, only one student, Alice, who was profiled in Chapter 5, stated "I want to be an interpreter." The other students had different goals in mind such as wanting to become a counselor or teacher; they were taking the class only to improve their sign language skills. This was somewhat disconcerting since one purpose of this study was to learn why students wanted to become interpreters. What I found instead were reasons why students did not wish to become interpreters, and more significantly, just how much misinformation exists about the interpreting profession. The students seemed to know very little about the role and function of an interpreter and even less about the task of interpreting. It is important to note that these students had been studying ASL and Deaf culture, and had seen interpreters work. If these students had misconceptions about the field and misgivings about becoming interpreters (e.g., financial limitations, restrictive employment options), the misconceptions among the general public can be assumed to be even more prevalent.

One of the reasons given by the students for not pursuing a career in interpreting was that it is not seen as

being a stable, full-time career option. As mentioned in Chapter 6, several students viewed interpreting as a part-time option to supplement their income. When asked about this issue, Joy, who was profiled in Chapter 5, said, "Interpreting was presented to me as not being a good full-time job because of physical limitations and because of the limited amount of available work." The need to limit one's hours due to physical demands is indeed a reality, although other aspects of the job such as scheduling, billing, and transportation very easily bring an interpreter's hours to full-time status. Unfortunately, time spent on billing, scheduling, and transportation is usually not reimbursed. A more pressing part of the problem is that there are few full-time positions that provide benefits. Therefore, most interpreters work on a freelance basis and earn an hourly wage. This, coupled with the unpredictability of available work hours, seems to validate the students' concerns about entering the field.

The second part of Joy's comment about the limited availability of work is not such a pressing concern to well-qualified interpreters. Referral agencies, educational institutions, and other consumers often are in need of qualified interpreters, especially since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The issue here

involves preparing interpreters who are well qualified and capable of performing the interpreting task.

In sum, the students' attitudes about ASL, Deaf culture, the deaf community, and the interpreting profession were generally quite positive. All students expressed interest in continuing their studies. The ideas expressed by the students for not wanting to become interpreters were revelatory in that they illustrated the need for awareness about the profession as a career, as well as the economic realities that may constrain individuals' choices in pursuing interpreting as a career.

Implications for Interpreter Preparation

The importance of proper and appropriate preparation for interpreters cannot be over emphasized, nor can the need for a thorough understanding of the interpreting task, especially by students and educators. As Roy (1992, pp. 24-25) states,

> The study of interpreting is about the nature of interpreting as a communicative event. It is founded, first, on the notion that live, simultaneous interpreting is a negotiation of two different communication systems and second, on the observation that the task of managing those systems is largely the work of the interpreter.

This seems to support the need for interpreters to have extensive general background knowledge as well as high level bilingual and bicultural skills (Roy, 1993).

Roy (1992) compares the historical view of an interpreter as a passive participant with the present view of an interpreter as an active participant in a communicative context. She views an interpreter not only as needing to be knowledgeable of two languages, but also as needing to be knowledgeable of "the social situation, the 'ways of speaking' of both languages, and strategies for the management of the communication event (p. 58). Edmondson (1986, p. 138) also provides a perspective on an interpreters place in a communication event. He writes that "a breakdown of the roles of 'speaker' and 'hearer' suggest that the interpreter is in a critical sense neither. The interpreter is not involved in interaction. However, the interpreting task involves cognitive activity not normally involved in interactional talk."

These perspectives on the role of the interpreter can apply to both spoken and signed language interpreters; both have as their goal the task of facilitating communication between two persons or groups who do not share the same language and culture. There are some major differences, however, in the preparation and perceptions about interpreters. Strong and Rudser (1985, p. 345) point out that one difference between signed and spoken language interpreters is that signed language interpreters must make

a decision that "concerns the point on the continuum between ASL and manual English at which to function."

Both spoken and signed language interpreters deal with two languages that can and do overlap, albeit in different ways. Spoken language interpreters deal with languages of the same modality (aural/oral); thus, the overlap manifests itself via code switching and lexical borrowing (Davis, 1990). Words in the different languages cannot be spoken simultaneously but can be intermingled within an utterance.[21]

Signed language interpreters, in contrast, deal with languages of two different modalities (aural/oral and visual/gestural), which can, in theory, be used simultaneously. In reality, though, the grammatical differences between the two languages make it impossible to accurately produce them at the same time. Also, as discussed in Chapter 2, when the two languages do overlap, one language (usually the sign language) tends to be compromised, and the signed portion is reduced from ASL to a manual code of English.

Although some people, including several of the community members who participated in this study, would

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[21]In addition to linguistic factors, spoken language interpreters also deal with socio-cultural factors such as country of origin and political status (e.g. refugee, political asylum, immigrant, migrant, etc.) of the consumer (Davis, 1994, personal communication).

prefer to see the two languages remain completely separate, the reality is that many deaf people prefer using a form of manual English over ASL. As a result, the language needs of members of the deaf community are greatly varied. For example, at one end of the continuum are deaf people who have or had deaf parents, who attended a residential school, and who have ASL as their first language. At the other end of the continuum are deaf people who grew up in an oral environment or who may have become deaf later in life, who grew up with English as their first language, and who may or may not know sign language. In the middle of the continuum are deaf people who have varying degrees of knowledge of ASL, of manually coded English, or of spoken and written English. An interpreter must have fluent abilities in ASL and in various forms of manually coded English to be prepared to meet the needs of the deaf consumer, regardless of the consumer's language preference. Likewise, the interpreter must have fluent skills in English in order to meet the needs of the hearing consumers, including the ability to modify language register to suit the situation. Working in a bimodal setting is of concern to signed language interpreters but not necessarily to spoken language interpreters.[22]

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[22]For signed language interpreters, transliteration--rendering a message from one form of a language into another form of the same language--usually involves working between

For these reasons, it is crucial for an interpreter to be bilingual and bicultural prior to learning the task of interpreting. Unfortunately, this is often not the case; students enrolled in interpreter preparation programs often do not have either communicative competence or linguistic competence in ASL, do not have strong competencies in English, and do not have cultural fluency in Deaf and Hearing cultures. Many sign language interpreters seem to be more comfortable transliterating precisely because they are not fluent or comfortable in ASL. The myth seems to be that an interpreter does not need to know ASL in order to transliterate. The students in the "Introduction to Interpreting" class expressed these same sentiments.

Although the field has made tremendous progress from the time when "flexible personality, availability for employment, and appropriate social service drive" were seen as being more important in interpreter preparation and experience than "previous knowledge of deafness and previous knowledge of fingerspelling and/or ASL" (Carter & Lauritsen, 1974, p. 54), most preparation programs for sign language interpreters still do not have stringent prerequisites, especially regarding ASL fluency, for students interested in

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signed English and spoken English, although fluency in ASL is still required. For spoken language interpreters, transliteration usually involves working between a written text and a spoken text.

becoming interpreters. This is another difference in preparation between signed language and spoken language interpreters. Spoken language interpreters, as Rudser and Strong (1986, p. 316) point out, "undergo much longer training and are required to have high levels of fluency in their relevant languages before beginning their training programs." Nowell and Stuckless (1974, p. 70) also state firmly that "a prospective interpreter trainee should be able to sign before entering an interpreter training program." These sentiments serve to reinforce the need for language fluency as previously discussed in Chapter 2.

Both deaf and hearing consumers "have a right to the best services that diligently trained professionals can provide" (Rudser, 1988, p. 111); however, this is usually not the case because sign language "interpreter training programs seem to lack the essential requirements that will insure competent and qualified interpreters upon completion" (Simon, 1984, p. 7). Rudser (1988, p. 109) states that this is because "interpreter education still focuses mainly on language instruction rather than on actually teaching the highly complex art of interpreting." Additionally, instruction focuses on communicative competencies more than on linguistic competencies. Theoretical principles of bilingualism and adult second language learning are not addressed despite the fact that most interpreters are

learning ASL as adults, and their goal as interpreters should be fluency in both ASL and English.

This was the case in the course examined for this research. The instructor had planned to include many interpreter skills development activities, yet she was unable to do so because the students lacked the language skills necessary to learn and perform those tasks. As mentioned in Chapter 6, the students often asked about signed vocabulary that they did not know (see Appendix L). Not only did the students lack strong ASL vocabularies, many of them also lacked sufficient ASL grammatical and syntactic knowledge. (The English skills of some students were demonstrably weak, as well.)

For the most part, the students were aware of their language difficulties and took the interpreting class specifically to improve their language skills. Many viewed interpreting as a means to an end, not as an end in itself, as indicated by their statements that they took the interpreting class to improve their signing skills (see Chapter 6). No student seemed to realize that the language skills should precede the interpreting skills. Although these findings cannot be generalized to all interpreting students, my past experience with IPPs leads me to believe this may be common among many students enrolled in such programs. Sometimes the only course option open to students

who want to continue to learn ASL after completing four semesters of ASL language classes[23] is an interpreting class. Also, there is sometimes an underlying presumption that a hearing person who learns sign language will automatically become an interpreter.

This is not to suggest that students who take interpreting classes to improve their signing skills view sign language and the interpreting profession negatively. On the contrary, all of the students involved in this study expressed very positive ideas and attitudes about ASL, the deaf community, Deaf culture, and interpreting.

Interpreter Preparation Program Requirements

One way to ensure that students who enter an interpreter preparation program are linguistically and culturally ready and that those who complete an IPP are adequately prepared would be to develop entrance and exit criteria along the lines of spoken language interpreter preparation programs. Some of the inconsistencies between preparation programs for signed and spoken language interpreters are in the areas of linguistic and cultural fluency upon entry, duration of preparation programs, and

[23]Most colleges and universities that offer ASL follow a four-semester sequence--ASL I, II, III, IV. Some programs offer two additional semesters, ASL V and VI, that are considered to be advanced language classes.

evaluation of skills upon completion. Although further research is needed to identify what the specific differences and criteria should be (Frishberg, 1986), Rudser (1988, p. 109) clearly delineates the differences between spoken and signed language IPPs.

> Most of the differences in training reflect the implications of entrance requirements. At the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS), in California, requirements for admission are quite rigorous. The student must have native fluency in two languages, one of which must be English. The student must have lived for at least six months in a country where the non-English language is spoken, or must have received part of his or her education in that language....The student must have a bachelor's degree. Thus, MIIS admits students who are bilingual, bicultural, and highly educated.
>
> In stark contrast to this is the situation in sign language interpreting programs. Many of these programs are housed in community colleges that have a so-called open-door policy....The basic idea is that students should be able to enter the program directly, the only prerequisite being a high school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED). Most of these schools also require that individual programs be no longer than two years, which means that the average training program has only a minimal amount of time, both to teach sign language, and to develop interpreting skills....At the present time interpreter education focuses mainly on *language instruction*, rather than on actually teaching the highly complex art of interpreting (italics added).

As Rudser (1988) points out in the above passage, many, if not most, IPPs are located at two-year community colleges whereas IPPs for spoken language interpreters are usually at the graduate-level. The belief that sign language IPPs should also be located at the graduate level was expressed

by the community members interviewed. Two of these community members discussed the image and status of the interpreting profession within this context. One stated, "A B.A. is good but I really think we need higher professional standards and status." Another community member elaborated on this point:

> Interpreting is a profession....It's just a complicated process and it takes so many years of experience and training....It doesn't seem appropriate [that] it should only be two years in the first place....I just think it [an A.A.] lowers the image of what an interpreter does.

Interpreters are called upon to work in a variety of situations and with a variety of people; therefore, they need to have extensive general backgrounds and life experiences in a multitude of areas, some of which can be gained and/or enhanced by matriculating through a bachelor's level program (Kanda, 1987). During the four or five year bachelor's program, not only could the student be exposed to a wide range of topics, he/she could also develop communicative and linguistic competencies in ASL, improve competencies in English, and develop cultural awareness in American Deaf culture and mainstream (Hearing) culture.[24]

Upon completion of a Bachelor's degree and demonstration of appropriate language skills and background

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[24]Many students do not seem to realize that there is such a thing as a Hearing culture or that they themselves have a culture.

knowledge in areas such as bilingualism, biculturalism, second language acquisition and cross-cultural mediation, the student could enroll in a two-year, graduate-level program, the goal of which would be to focus on the skill of interpreting, just as is done for spoken language interpreters. Included in the graduate-level program, as well, could be further course work focusing on cross-lingual, cross-cultural interactions and on their ramifications for interpreters. In this way, students could build upon the knowledge base developed in their undergraduate studies.

Unfortunately, there has been, and continues to be, strong resistance by some interpreter educators to the idea of developing graduate-level programs.[25] Reluctance to changing preparation requirements stems from several factors. The first has to do with economic concerns--the current job market and salaries do not necessarily warrant obtaining a master's degree. The second factor concerns political factors--given the history of oppressive educational practices and policies, and the failure to publicly acknowledge ASL as a "legitimate" and natural language, deaf people tend not to have much status in the

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[25]Currently, there is only one master's-level interpreting program (at Gallaudet University) and only a handful of bachelor's-level interpreting programs (e.g., University of New Mexico, Maryville College, Western Oregon State College).

political arena, and this in turn influences the status accorded to interpreter preparation. Additionally, deaf people are still viewed by many as a handicapped minority, rather than a cultural minority. The third factor involves self-preservation--many current interpreter educators would not be eligible to teach in a graduate-level program because they do not have graduate degrees thus making them ineligible to teach at the graduate level.[26]

Whatever the reasons, the notion that interpreters can be adequately prepared in a two-year setting seems to be perpetuated by their very existence. Rudser (1988, p. 110) explains this cycle:

> The present educational situation is unsatisfactory from the point of view of students, teachers, and consumers. It is patently unfair to admit students to programs that are of too short a duration to teach the skills and knowledge they purport to impart. Interpreting is a rigorous and demanding profession, and two years, when that time must also include teaching one of the two languages, is not enough time. Yet, the fact that the vast majority of interpreting programs exist within community colleges suggests that those in the field believe it is possible to prepare interpreters in two years.

In his closing remarks at the 1985 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) convention, Lane (1986b)

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[26]According to Baker-Shenk (1990, p. iii), "most of the nation's 3,500 sign language and interpreting teachers who instruct at the college level have not received any academic training directly relevant to their work as teachers, resulting in a great variety in their performances and the subsequent learning of their students".

made the following suggestion for remedying this situation, including consideration for finding appropriate instructors.

> [The RID] could prepare proposals under the Rehabilitation Services Administration personnel training programs to create master's and doctoral programs in interpretation at one or two key schools. Departments of interpreting or interpreting programs within the university will develop only in the measure as there are doctorate-holding interpreter trainers who are eligible for appointments and tenure.

The purpose here is not to belittle two-year programs or discount their usefulness. Such programs need to be viewed as places for introductory language and culture learning. Because most interpreters learn ASL as their second language in adulthood, a two-year associate's degree is a good place to develop language skills and to begin learning about bilingualism from the perspective of an adult second language learner. Prospective interpreters, however, could then use this as a basis to pursue his/her education, including continued language and culture skills development in a four-year bachelor's program, and ultimately enroll in a graduate-level program specifically designed to teach the skills of interpreting.

The debate over which program--two-year, four-year, or six-year--is the most appropriate will only be decided "if research is undertaken comparing graduates of each type of program to see, for example, how long it takes to become certified as interpreters" (Frishberg, 1986, p. 89). Strong

and Rudser (1985) advocate additional research on interpreting. They recognize the value of the extensive research that has been done in the areas of bilingualism and second language learning but express disappointment that, "few scientists have apparently been curious or bold enough to devote energy exploring the process of language interpretation" (p. 343).

The Scope of Preparation

With regard to the scope of interpreter preparation, Nowell and Stuckless (1974, p. 71) contend that

> No one course can hope to teach the entire variety of skills needed by interpreters who will face all kinds of interpreting situations....The primary objective of any such training program should be to help the trainees progress in ability to interpret increasingly difficult material pertaining especially to the situations in which they will function after completing the program.

It is true that no program can teach an interpreter everything he/she needs to know and that actual experience is needed; however, there are some areas of knowledge that must be included in interpreter preparation programs. Gustason (1985) suggests, for example, that interpreters who plan to work in elementary or secondary education settings get special training in child development or in working as an aide in the classroom.

Kanda (1987) believes that a model interpreter preparation program should include courses related to the

following topics: comparative English and ASL linguistic analysis, comparative cultural analysis, text analysis in various settings, skills development in interpretation (consecutive and simultaneous), an overview of the profession, and a practicum.[27] Included, too, should be courses in the theories of bilingualism and second language acquisition especially for adults. All too often, however, these topics are not addressed in preparation programs, partly because the focus is on learning language skills, rather than learning interpreting skills, as mentioned previously by Rudser (1988). Courses focusing on text analysis and comparative cultural analysis are almost non-existent, and courses on Deaf culture, while offered, are "viewed as core curriculum...regardless of the scope of the program. The concepts of cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural mediation are rarely addressed as communication processes" (Sherwood, 1987, p. 17). Some programs offer courses on audiology, psychosocial aspects of deafness, education of the hearing-impaired, and implications of deafness, yet there are no standard requirements among programs. Information received from several IPPs indicated that only one program offered a

[27]Although curriculum issues are beyond the scope of this dissertation, examples of such courses can be found in Baker-Shenk (1990).

course entitled "First and Second Language Acquisition in Bilingual/ESL Programs".[28]

One suggestion by several researchers (Bonni, 1986; Lane, 1986b; Neumann Solow, 1981), by a few students in this study, including Joy, who was profiled in Chapter 5, and by several community members who were interviewed for this study, is to include more members of the deaf community in preparation programs, both as educators and as students.[29] The hearing community is already well represented in IPPs because most interpreter educators are hearing. The deaf community and Deaf people are not represented in this same way even though they are seen as the primary consumers in most situations.[30] The inclusion of more deaf people in all aspects of interpreter preparation would accomplish several goals. It would provide hearing students with opportunities for increased contact with members of the deaf community. (As discussed in Chapter 6, many students do not interact with deaf people on a regular basis.) This would allow the

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[28]A description of this course was not included in the materials received, so the actual course content, and whether the focus is on children or adults, are unknown.

[29]There is currently a shortage of qualified deaf people to serve as intermediary interpreters.

[30]Many students in the "Introduction to Interpreting" class often referred to the deaf consumer but rarely to the hearing consumer. They were cautioned to remember that the hearing person in the situation is just as much a consumer as the deaf person.

students to "upgrade [their] signing skills and cultural knowledge" (Neumann Solow, 1981, p. 37), and to better understand how deaf people think and view the world, especially in terms of political power issues.[31] These interactions can facilitate better cross-cultural relations.[32]

Another goal would be to educate more deaf people about the role and task of interpreters. By involving deaf people in interpreter education they, too, would have the opportunity to learn about issues of bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language acquisition. This would allow them to better understand the role and task of an interpreter and how interactions and communications between two linguistic and cultural groups can be affected by the presence of a third party.

Incorporating research theories of bilingualism and second language acquisition into the curriculum and requiring linguistic and communicative competencies in both ASL and English would better prepare students who complete interpreter preparation programs to meet the needs of both

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[31]For one Deaf person's perspective on relations between deaf consumers and interpreters, see Forestal (1994).

[32]This also involves understanding deaf people's attitudes toward hearing interpreters and understanding boundary-markers (Davis, 1994, personal communication) in the sense that hearing interpreters are thrust into the communication situation without the explicit invitation of the parties involved.

deaf and hearing consumers. Upgrading preparation programs can only have a positive effect on the profession. In addition, interpreters who have had more comprehensive preparation will more fully understand the task that awaits them.

In sum, the policy and programmatic implications of this research suggest a model for interpreter preparation that would include graduate-level education[33] and both deaf and hearing students and faculty. Acceptance into the program would require demonstrated communicative and linguistic fluency in ASL and English, demonstrated cultural fluency in Deaf and Hearing cultures, and undergraduate course work in bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning. Matriculation in the program would include courses covering consecutive and simultaneous interpreting and transliterating, ASL-to-English and English-to-ASL skills development, cross-cultural/cross-lingual mediation, professionalism and ethics, principles of second language acquisition, adult and child bilingualism and biculturalism, advanced structure of ASL and English, public speaking, theory and practice of interpreting, interpreting in various settings, understanding the dynamics of language use within the deaf community including the use

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[33]This research can be used to inform all types of IPPs, not only those at the graduate-level as proposed in this model.

of various sign systems, and, an internship. Upon completion of the program, students' interpreting and transliterating skills would be evaluated via an in-house examination.

Developing such an extensive interpreter preparation program would require policy and programmatic changes. First, however, there must be changes in the attitudes of people both within and outside of the field about the task and profession of interpreting. As long as preparation programs remain at the A.A. level, and as long as ASL and Deaf culture are viewed as inferior, unworthy, or worse, as non-existent, there will be little or no significant change within the field of interpreting and interpreter preparation. Interpreter preparation programs will continue to graduate students who are ill-prepared for the task of interpreting.

Related and Further Research

In conjunction with the wider research literature cited in Chapters 2 and 3, the findings from this case study suggest a need for further research. While there have been numerous studies conducted within the field of interpreting (see, e.g. Chapter 1), much of this work is now several years old. This section highlights some important recent

recommendations for further research, as well as those arising specifically from this case study.

First, the need for research on the disproportionate number of minority interpreters in the field is clear (cf. Mathers and White, 1986). One suggestion has been that an interpreter research center be established for the purpose of conducting such studies (Fant, 1990). My own case study supports this; to achieve the goals of producing interpreters who are bilingual and bicultural, the perspectives and participation of members of the deaf community, as well as other minority communities, is very much needed.

Second, there is a need for research that would "improve [the] ability to evaluate the technical skills of sign language interpreters" (Strong and Rudser, 1985, p. 344). Four groups of people would benefit from this research according to Strong and Rudser (1985): consumers and employers of interpreters, interpreter trainers, researchers, and interpreters themselves. As Strong and Rudser (1985, p. 344) caution, "it is likely that each of these groups will focus on somewhat different aspects of the interpreters' qualities, according to their perceptions of the constituents of good interpreting." One community member interviewed for this study offered the following comment related to how different groups view interpreters:

"I think we need more research...in terms of discourse, and in how deaf and hearing people think....Many interpreters don't understand how deaf people think."

Third, research is needed on how language fluency, or lack thereof, influences an individual's ability to perform the interpreting task. Although one must be fluent in his/her languages to interpret effectively, being a fluent signer does not necessarily guarantee that an individual will make a good interpreter. Research is needed to determine what characteristics, in addition to fluent signing skills, an individual must possess to be most effective as an interpreter.

Fourth, further research on interpreter education is needed. Presently, many interpreter educators are interpreters themselves, but they may lack a background on how to educate others. One community member in this study remarked, "We need more research on how to teach interpreting. Most of the time, people use their own experience. I think we need more research on how to teach." Another said,

> I think we need to just look at the whole process of how we teach interpreting. We're relatively new at this. Not just us, I think, [but] all language interpreters. We need to look at actually how we go about the process....I think we need to take a hard look at what we do, look at other models of interpreting training. See how other people do it.

The third person interviewed was more succinct: "I don't think anybody really knows how training should be done."[34]

Fifth, research on how to include deaf people in interpreting, both as students and as educators, needs to be undertaken. All community members interviewed for this study stated strong beliefs about this issue. One said, "Not very many deaf people are actually in the interpreter training programs....I think we need to change that." Another commented,

> I think we need more deaf people involved in interpreter training....We need to educate deaf people about the role of interpreters and of deaf peoples' rights. How they can demand better services and design programs to meet their needs. Often deaf people just accept whatever they're given.

One person qualified his answer, "There is a place in IPPs for both deaf and hearing people as long as they understand the issues and the processes."

Understanding these issues and processes requires looking beyond the field of interpreting. Such an understanding also involves looking at other relevant research such as that encompassing bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning. As discussed in Chapter 6, these areas often are not thoroughly understood by students in the field. Yet these issues are

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[34]There is only one program, at Western Maryland College, designed to teach interpreter educators how to teach interpreting, and its status is currently in jeopardy.

crucial because interpreters work in cross-lingual, cross-cultural settings; interpreters are responsible for ensuring effective communication among all people involved in these settings. By including components on bilingualism, biculturalism, second language acquisition, and cross-cultural mediation in IPPs, the profession has an opportunity to grow and improve. Current preparation practices must be strengthened to meet the changing demands and needs of both deaf and hearing consumers.

Finally, further research is needed on exactly how the literature on bilingualism, biculturalism, and second language learning can be incorporated into interpreter preparation curricula. Interpreter educators must become familiar with and understand the literature themselves before they can begin to teach these principles. Some work has been undertaken on curriculum development (Baker-Shenk, 1990) but much remains to be done.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the advantages and drawbacks of this particular case study, on the implications for interpreter preparation programs, and on future research. This case study provides an in-depth look at how prospective interpreters view ASL, Deaf culture, the deaf community, and the interpreting profession. Recurring

themes from the data suggest the need for improved preparation practices for sign language interpreter education. Entrance requirements need to be more stringent, especially with regard to linguistic and communicative competencies of both ASL and English, and new curricular practices must be advanced, particularly with regard to course work in the areas of bilingualism and second language acquisition.

Interpreters are cross-lingual, cross-cultural mediators. They must fully understand their role as an interpreter, the task of interpreting, and issues such as bilingualism and second language acquisition that affect their work. Likewise, interpreter educators need to understand these issues. Interpreter educators also need to understand how students view the profession of interpreting. Only then can they adapt education practices to meet the needs of their students and, ultimately, the needs of hearing and deaf consumers.

APPENDIX A

Paraphrase of Opening Remarks

The following is a paraphrase of my open remarks on the first day of class.

> I'm a doctoral candidate doing my dissertation on interpreter education. I've spoken with your instructor and with my committee members regarding having you as participants in my study.
>
> Your participation would involve filling out 2 questionnaires-one today and one on the last day of class-and being interviewed by me. The initial interviews would take place within the next two weeks. Possible follow-up interviews will be done later in the summer or in the fall.
>
> All participation is voluntary. No one will be forced to participate. Also, if you agree to participate now but change your mind later, just let me know. All information will be kept confidential. No one other than my primary advisor will see the raw data. Your instructor will not see your responses and your grade will not be effected by your participation.
>
> Please read and sign the consent form that is required by the Human Subjects Committee. Then, I will distribute the questionnaires.
>
> There are no wrong answers, so please answer honestly on both the questionnaire and during the interview.
>
> Please do not discuss the interview questions with colleagues. I do not want your answers to be influenced by what someone else has said. It may adversely effect the data.

APPENDIX B

Student Consent Form

Subject's Consent Form

I AM BEING ASKED TO READ THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL TO ENSURE THAT I AM INFORMED OF THE NATURE OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY AND OF HOW I WILL PARTICIPATE IN IT, IF I CONSENT TO DO SO. SIGNING THIS FORM WILL INDICATE THAT I HAVE BEEN SO INFORMED AND THAT I GIVE MY CONSENT. FEDERAL REGULATIONS REQUIRE WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY SO THAT I CAN KNOW THE NATURE AND THE RISKS OF MY PARTICIPATION AND CAN DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE OR NOT PARTICIPATE IN A FREE AND INFORMED MANNER.

PURPOSE

I am being invited to voluntarily participate in the above-titled research project. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of the attitudes held by students entering interpreter preparation programs, specifically attitudes toward American Sign Language, Deaf Culture, and the interpreting profession.

PROCEDURE

If I agree to participate, I will be asked to agree to the following:

to complete a questionnaire consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions.

I will also be asked to participate in follow-up interviews. Any participation in the interviews is strictly voluntary; completing a questionnaire does not obligate me to be interviewed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All answers on both the questionnaire and during the interviews will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.

I have read and understood the above information. My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this research.

_____ _____

Name (please print) Date

_____

Signature

APPENDIX C

Students' First Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Please answer all questions as thoroughly as possible. All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Reporting of any and all results will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of the respondent.

Auditory status:
Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing _____

Age:
Under 18 _____ 18-25 _____ 26-35 _____
36-45 _____ 45+ _____

Ethnic background: (check all that apply)
Caucasian _____ African American _____ Hispanic ____
Oriental _____ Native American _____ Other _____
(Please specify)

Highest degree completed:
HS diploma GED equivalency _____ AA/AS _____ BA/BS ____
MA/MS _____ Ph.D. _____
Did not graduate HS/do not have GED equivalency _____

How long have you known sign language prior to taking this "Introduction to Interpreting" course?
0-1 year _____ 2-3 years _____
4-5 years _____ 6+ years _____

Where did you learn to sign?
Family _____
Friends _____
Classes _____
Self taught (books, video tapes) _____

How many sign language classes have you taken?
0 _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5+ _____

Were these classes offered through
_____ School
_____ Community organization
_____ Religious organization
_____ Have not taken any classes

What was the official title of your class(es)?
_____ American Sign Language
_____ Sign Language
_____ SEE II (Signing Exact English)
_____ Manual Communication
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

What was the length of the class(es)
_____ < 6 weeks
_____ 7-12 weeks
_____ 12+ weeks

How would you rate your <u>expressive</u> sign language skills?
_____ fluent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor
_____ don't sign

How would you rate your <u>receptive</u> sign language skills?
_____ fluent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor
_____ don't sign

Are you comfortable signing in (Check all that apply):
_____ ASL
_____ Signed English
_____ SEE I (Seeing Essential English)
_____ See II (Signing Exact English)
_____ LOVE
_____ Fingerspelling/Rochester Method

Have you ever taken a language proficiency exam for your signing skills ?
_____ Yes _____ No
If yes, how did you do? _____

How many times have you met a deaf person?
_____ Never
_____ Once
_____ A few times
_____ Several Times
_____ Often (Have deaf relative and/or friends)

Do you ever attend events where the majority of people are deaf?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, what kind of events? (Check all that apply)

_____ Deaf clubs
_____ Picnics
_____ Sports events
_____ Other (Please specify)

Are you familiar with American deaf culture?

_____ Yes _____ No

My Interpreter Preparation Program leads to:

_____ A certificate of completion
_____ An AA/AS degree
_____ A BA/BS degree
_____ Other (Please specify)

Have you ever been asked to interpreter before.

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, did you do it?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, how did you do?

_____ Poor
_____ Fair
_____ Good
_____ Excellent

Have you ever taken a class on the structure of ASL?

_____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever taken a class on the structure of English?

_____ Yes _____ No

APPENDIX D

Students' Follow-up Questionnaire

Follow-up Questionnaire

Please answer all questions as thoroughly as possible. All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Reporting of any and all results will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of the respondent.

1. Do you think that your expressive sign language skills have improved because of this class?
   _____ Yes _____ No

2. Since taking "Introduction to Interpreting", how would you rate your expressive sign language skills?
   _____ fluent
   _____ good
   _____ fair
   _____ poor

3. Do you think that your receptive sign language skills have improved because of this class?
   _____ Yes _____ No

4. Since taking "Introduction to Interpreting", how would you rate your receptive sign language skills?
   _____ fluent
   _____ good
   _____ fair
   _____ poor

5. Because of taking "Introduction to Interpreting", has the frequency of your interactions with deaf people
   _____ Increased
   _____ Remained the same
   _____ Decreased

6. Because of taking "Introduction to Interpreting", has your knowledge of American deaf culture
   _____ Increased
   _____ Remained the same
   _____ Decreased

7. Because of taking "Introduction to Interpreting", have your Sign-to-Voice transliterating skills
   _____ Improved
   _____ Remained the same
   _____ Declined

8. How would you rate your Sign-to-Voice transliterating skills?
   _____ Excellent
   _____ Good
   _____ Fair
   _____ Poor

9. Because of taking "Introduction to Interpreting", have your Voice-to-Sign transliterating skills
   _____ Improved
   _____ Remained the same
   _____ Declined

10. How would you rate your Voice-to-Sign transliterating skills?
   _____ Excellent
   _____ Good
   _____ Fair
   _____ Poor

11. Because of taking "Introduction to Interpreting", have your Sign-to-Voice interpreting skills
   _____ Improved
   _____ Remained the same
   _____ Declined

12. How would you rate your Sign-to-Voice interpreting skills?
   _____ Excellent
   _____ Good
   _____ Fair
   _____ Poor

13. Because of taking "Introduction to Interpreting", have your Voice-to-Sign interpreting skills
   _____ Improved
   _____ Remained the same
   _____ Declined

14. How would you rate your Voice-to-Sign interpreting skills?
   _____ Excellent
   _____ Good
   _____ Fair
   _____ Poor

15. Do you plan to take the Arizona IQAS evaluation within the next 6 months?
   _____ Yes _____ No

16. If yes on #15, which IQAS level do you plan to take?
_____ Level 1
_____ Level 2
_____ Level 3
_____ Level 4
_____ Level 5

17. Do you plan to take the National RID written evaluation within the next 6 months?
_____ Yes _____ No

18. Do you plan to take the National RID performance evaluation within the next 6 months?
_____ Yes _____ No

19. If yes on #18, which evaluation?
_____ CI (Certificate of Interpretation)
_____ CT (Certificate of Transliteration)
_____ Both CI and CT

20. Before taking "Introduction to Interpreting",
_____ I was interested in becoming an interpreter
_____ I was not sure if I wanted to become an interpreter
_____ I did not want to become an interpreter

21. After taking "Introduction to Interpreting",
_____ I am (still) interested in becoming an interpreter
_____ I am (still) not interested in becoming an interpreter
_____ I (still) don't know if I want to become an interpreter

21a. Please explain your answer in #21.

22. Has the "Introduction to Interpreting" class contributed to your understanding of what bilingualism is and what it means to be bilingual?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

23. Has the "Introduction to Interpreting" class contributed to your understanding of what it means to learn a second language?
____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

24. Has the "Introduction to Interpreting" class contributed to your understanding of what biculturalism is and what it means to be bicultural?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

25. Because of taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" class, have your attitudes about American Sign Language changed?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

26. Because of taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" class, have your attitudes about American Deaf culture changed?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

27. Because of taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" class, have your attitudes about the deaf community changed?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

28. Because of taking the "Introduction to Interpreting" class, have your attitudes about the interpreting profession changed?
_____Yes _____ No _____ Not sure
Please explain.

29. Please define bilingualism.

30. Please define biculturalism.

APPENDIX E

Course Syllabus

INTRODUCTION TO INTERPRETING
SUMMER SESSION 1
1993

Course Description

The course is designed to provide students with a working knowledge of the profession of interpreting. Course work will focus on roles and responsibilities of interpreters, RID Code of Ethics, state and national certification criteria/evaluation, and various methods/modes of interpreting. Information will be provided on legal issues/ implications of interpreting and recent interpreter laws. The variety of interpreter settings will be discussed and special considerations within each setting. The course will also focus on models of interpretation and transliteration, intralingual shadowing, feedback, cross-cultural awareness, ASL-to-English and English-to-ASL interpretation, and consecutive and simultaneous interpretation. The course will also enhance skill areas in décalage, listening, closure, fluency/speed, sign utilization, non-manual grammatical markers and message conveyed for content and affect.

Course Objectives

1. A basic understanding of the field of interpretation from an historical perspective.

2. An understanding of the interpreter as a cross-cultural mediator.

3. An understanding of the responsibilities, skills, and aptitudes for working as an interpreter.

4. English-to-ASL and ASL-to English skills in interpreting and transliterating.

5. An understanding of current issues in the field of interpretation.

6. An understanding of the process of interpretation.

7. Skills in interpreting with conceptual accuracy.

8. Skills for effectively transmitting style, mood, register, and intent of the speaker as well as content and context.

9. An understanding of team interpreting, providing and receiving feedback and awareness of similarities and differences between American Deaf culture and general American culture.

Required Texts

Frishberg, N. (1990) Interpreting: An Introduction

You will also be required to purchase a packet of readings . . . at least one blank videotape.

Grading and Evaluation

The final grade for the course will be based on the following percentages:

Class and lab work - 35%
Journal - 5%
Midterm - 25%
Final - 25%
Chapter Presentation - 10%

A = 90 - 100%
B = 80 - 89 %
C = 70 - 79 %
D = 60 - 69%
E = 59% or below

Course Assignments

1) Students will be required to keep a daily journal which will be turned in each Friday by the instructor.
2) Students will be required to observe 2 interpreting situations and write a three-page, double spaced, typed, reaction paper based on the observations.
3) A final group presentation regarding how to use an interpreter in certain setting geared to a particular audience (i.e. deaf consumers, teachers, administrators).
4) Other homework as assigned in class.

Tentative Course Outline
Week 1

Monday, June 7 - Introductions, pre-test (written)

Tuesday, June 8 - pre-performance test, Models of Interpretation and Transliteration

Wednesday, June 9 - Overview of Code of Ethics and Terminology; Responsibilities, Skills and Aptitudes of Interpreters; Evaluation and Assessment Systems

Thursday, June 10 - Frishberg: Chapter 1, Intralingual Shadowing (English-English/ASL-ASL)

Friday, June 11 - Frishberg: Chapter 2, Consecutive Interpretation

Week 2

Monday, June 14 - Compare and contrast linguistic features of ASL and English, Consecutive Interpretation

Tuesday, June 15 - Frishberg: Chapter 3, Models of ASL to English Interpretation

Wednesday, June 16 - Frishberg: Chapter 4, ASL to English Interpreting, Development of Short Term Memory, Concentration, Visualization, Décalage and Closure Skills

Thursday, June 17 - Frishberg: Chapter 5, Simultaneous ASL to English Interpretation

Friday, June 18 - Guest speaker: Agency Interpreter Referral Specialist

Week 3

Monday, June 21 - Models of English to ASL Interpretation, Consecutive practice

Tuesday, June 22 - MIDTERM, Frishberg: Chapter 6, Simultaneous English to ASL Interpretation

Wednesday, June 23 - Frishberg: Chapter 7, Conceptual and Semantic Accuracy

Thursday, June 24 - Frishberg: Chapter 8, Idiomatic Expressions

Friday, June 25 - Guest speaker on Legal Interpreting and Interpreter Laws

Week 4

Monday, June 28 - Guest speaker: University Interpreter Coordinator

Tuesday, June 29 - Frishberg: Chapter 9, Skill Development

Wednesday, June 30 - Skill development

Thursday, July 1 - Frishberg: Chapter 10, Skill development

Friday, July 2 - Skill development

Week 5

Monday, July 5 - Holiday: No Class

Tuesday, July 6 - Frishberg: Chapter 11, Post test

Wednesday, July 7 - Final presentations

Thursday, July 8 - Final exam and wrap up

APPENDIX F

Student Interview Questions

Student Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research. I want to assure you that our discussion will be confidential. Our discussion will be taped but any reporting of the data will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of all participants.

1. Please tell me about your sign language background. What sign language(s) or system(s) do you use? How long have you signed?

2. How did you become interested in becoming an interpreter?

3. Please tell me about your experiences with bilingualism and with second language acquisition.

4. Please tell me about your experience with American Sign Language with American Deaf culture, and with the deaf community.

5. Do you consider yourself to be bilingual?

6. Do you consider yourself to be bicultural?

7. Please tell me about your professional goals including your plans at the completion of your interpreter preparation.

8. There is some controversy right now about ASL being accepted as meeting the language requirement in post-secondary settings, what are your thoughts on this topic?

9. Do you feel that ASL should be used in the classroom with deaf children? Please explain.

10. Some school districts around the country are trying to implement multi-cultural curricula. Do you feel the Deaf culture should be included? Please explain.

APPENDIX G

Community Member Consent Form

An Ethnographic Study of Sign Language Interpreter Education

Subject's Consent Form

I AM BEING ASKED TO READ THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL TO ENSURE THAT I AM INFORMED OF THE NATURE OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY AND OF HOW I WILL PARTICIPATE IN IT, IF I CONSENT TO DO SO. SIGNING THIS FORM WILL INDICATE THAT I HAVE BEEN SO INFORMED AND THAT I GIVE MY CONSENT. FEDERAL REGULATIONS REQUIRE WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY SO THAT I CAN KNOW THE NATURE AND THE RISKS OF MY PARTICIPATION AND CAN DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE OR NOT PARTICIPATE IN A FREE AND INFORMED MANNER.

PURPOSE

I am being invited to voluntarily participate in the above-titled research project. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of the attitudes held by students entering interpreter preparation programs, specifically attitudes toward American Sign Language, Deaf Culture, and the interpreting profession. The relationship between literature on bilingualism and second language learning and interpreter education will also be examined.

PROCEDURE

If I agree to participate, I will be asked to agree to the following:

complete a questionnaire consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions; and
participate in taped (audio or video) interviews (an initial interview and possible follow-up interviews).

Any participation in the interview is strictly voluntary; completing a questionnaire does not obligate me to be interviewed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All answers on both the questionnaire and during the interviews will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.

I have read and understood the above information. My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this research.

_____ _____

Name (please print) Date

_____

Signature

APPENDIX H

Hearing Community Member Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Please answer all questions as thoroughly as possible. All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Reporting of any and all results will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of the respondent.

1. Auditory status:
_____ Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing

2. Age:
_____ Under 18 _____ 18-25 _____ 26-35
_____ 36-45 _____ 45+

3. _____ Female _____ Male

4. Ethnic background: (check all that apply)
_____ Caucasian _____ African American
_____ Oriental _____ American Indian/Alaska Native
_____ Hispanic _____ Other _____
(Please specify)

5. Parents auditory status:
Mother: _____ Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing
Father: _____ Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing

6. Highest degree completed:
_____ HS diploma GED equivalency _____ AA/AS _____ BA/BS
_____ MA/MS _____ Ph.D.
_____ Did not graduate HS/do not have GED equivalency

7. Are you currently in a degree program?
_____ Yes _____ No

8. If yes on #7, what type of program?
_____ HS diploma GED equivalency _____ AA/AS ____ BA/BS
_____ MA/MS _____ Ph.D.

9. How long have you known sign language?
_____ 0-4 year _____ 5-8 years
_____ 9-12 years _____ 12+ years
_____ I am a native signer

10. Where did you learn to sign?
_____ Family
_____ Friends
_____ Classes
_____ Co-workers
_____ Self taught (books, video tapes)
_____ Don't sign

11. How many formal sign language classes have you taken?
_____ 0 _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5+

12. Were these classes offered through
_____ Grade School
_____ College/University
_____ Community organization
_____ Religious organization
_____ Have not taken any classes

13. What was the official title of your class(es)?
_____ American Sign Language
_____ Sign Language
_____ SEE II (Signing Exact English)
_____ Manual Communication
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

14. What was the length of the class(es)
_____ < 6 weeks
_____ 7-12 weeks
_____ 12+ weeks

15. How would you rate your <u>expressive</u> sign language skills?
_____ fluent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor
_____ don't sign

16. How would you rate your <u>receptive</u> sign language skills?
_____ fluent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor
_____ don't sign

17. Are you comfortable signing in (Check all that apply)
_____ ASL
_____ Signed English
_____ SEE I (Seeing Essential English)
_____ SEE II (Signing Exact English)
_____ LOVE
_____ Fingerspelling/Rochester Method

18. Have you ever taken a language proficiency exam for your signing skills ?
_____ Yes _____ No

19. If yes on #18, how did you do?
_____

20. How would you describe the frequency of your interaction with deaf people?
_____ Always
_____ Often
_____ Sometimes
_____ Seldom
_____ Never

21. Do you ever attend events where the majority of people are deaf?
_____ Yes _____ No

22. If yes on #21, what kind of events? (Check all that apply)
_____ Deaf clubs
_____ Picnics
_____ Sports events
_____ Meetings
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

23. How familiar are you with American deaf culture?
_____ Very
_____ Somewhat
_____ Not at all

24. Are you a sign language interpreter?
_____ Yes _____ No (If no, go to #35)

25. If yes on #24, did you complete an interpreter preparation program?
_____ Yes _____ No

26. If yes on #25, where?
_____

27. My Interpreter Preparation Program led to:
_____ A certificate of completion
_____ An AA/AS degree
_____ A BA/BS degree
_____ Not applicable
_____ Other (Please specify)

28. How long have you been working as an interpreter?
_____ 0-3 years _____ 4-7 years
_____ 8-11 years _____ 12+ years

29. In which settings have you worked as an interpreter?
_____ Education
_____ Medical
_____ Legal
_____ Religious
_____ Community
_____ Conference
_____ Other (Please specify)_____

30. How would you rate your Voice-to-Sign skills?
_____ excellent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor

31. How would you rate your Sign-to-Voice skills?
_____ excellent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor

32. Have you ever been involved with interpreter education?
_____ Yes _____ No

33. If yes on #32, for how long?
_____ 0-3 years _____ 4-7 years _____ 8+ years

34. If yes on #32, in what capacity?
_____ Teacher
_____ Assistant (T.A.)
_____ Tutor
_____ Mentor
_____ Lab Technician
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

35. If no on #24, do you plan to become a sign language interpreter?

_____ Yes _____ No

36. Have you ever taken a class on the structure of ASL?
_____ Yes _____ No

37. Have you ever taken a class on the structure of English?
_____ Yes _____ No

38. Have you ever taken a course on bilingualism and second language acquisition?
_____ Yes _____ No

39. What languages do you know?
Speak _____
Read _____
Write _____
Sign _____

40. What do you consider to be your first language?
_____ English
_____ ASL
_____ Spanish
_____ American Indian/Alaska Native
(Please specify) _____
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

41. What is the first language of your parents or primary care givers when you were growing up?
Mother _____
Father _____
Other _____

42. Do you consider yourself to be bilingual/trilingual?
_____ Yes _____ No

43. If yes on #42, in what languages?
_____

APPENDIX I

Deaf Community Member Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Please answer all questions as thoroughly as possible. All responses will be kept strictly confidential. Reporting of any and all results will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of the respondent.

1. Auditory status:
_____ Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing

2. Age:
_____ Under 18 _____ 18-25 _____ 26-35
_____ 36-45 _____ 45+

3. _____ Female _____ Male

4. Ethnic background: (check all that apply)
_____ Caucasian _____ African American
_____ Oriental _____ American Indian/Alaska Native
_____ Hispanic _____ Other _____
(Please specify)

5. Parents auditory status:
Mother: _____ Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing
Father: _____ Hearing _____ Deaf _____ Hard of Hearing

6. Highest degree completed:
_____ HS diploma GED equivalency _____ AA/AS ____ BA/BS
_____ MA/MS _____ Ph.D.
_____ Did not graduate HS/do not have GED equivalency

7. Are you currently in a degree program?
_____ Yes _____ No

8. If yes on #7, what type of program?
_____ HS diploma GED equivalency _____ AA/AS ____ BA/BS
_____ MA/MS _____ Ph.D.

9. How long have you known sign language?
_____ 0-4 year _____ 5-8 years
_____ 9-12 years _____ 12+ years
_____ I am a native signer

10. Where did you learn to sign?
_____ Family
_____ Friends
_____ Classes
_____ Co-workers
_____ Self taught (books, video tapes)
_____ Don't sign

11. How many formal sign language classes have you taken?
_____ 0 _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5+

12. Were these classes offered through
_____ Grade School
_____ College/University
_____ Community organization
_____ Religious organization
_____ Have not taken any classes

13. What was the official title of your class(es)?
_____ American Sign Language
_____ Sign Language
_____ SEE II (Signing Exact English)
_____ Manual Communication
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

14. What was the length of the class(es)
_____ < 6 weeks
_____ 7-12 weeks
_____ 12+ weeks

15. How would you rate your <u>expressive</u> sign language skills?
_____ fluent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor
_____ don't sign

16. How would you rate your <u>receptive</u> sign language skills?
_____ fluent
_____ good
_____ fair
_____ poor
_____ don't sign

17. Are you comfortable signing in (Check all that apply):
_____ ASL
_____ Signed English
_____ SEE I (Seeing Essential English)
_____ SEE II (Signing Exact English)
_____ LOVE
_____ Fingerspelling/Rochester Method

18. Have you ever taken a language proficiency exam for your signing skills ?
_____ Yes _____ No

19. If yes on #18, how did you do?
_____

20. How familiar are you with American deaf culture?
_____ Very
_____ Somewhat
_____ Not at all

21. Have you ever worked as a relay interpreter?
_____ Yes _____ No (If no, go to #30)

22. If yes on #21, did you complete an interpreter preparation program?
_____ Yes _____ No

23. If yes on #22, where?
_____

24. My Interpreter Preparation Program led to:
_____ A certificate of completion
_____ An AA/AS degree
_____ A BA/BS degree
_____ Not applicable
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

25. How long have you been working as an interpreter?
_____ 0-3 years _____ 4-7 years
_____ 8-11 years _____ 12+ years

26. In which settings have you worked as an interpreter?
_____ Educational
_____ Medical
_____ Legal
_____ Religious
_____ Community
_____ Conference
_____ Other (Please specify)_____

27. Have you ever been involved with interpreter education?
_____ Yes _____ No

28. If yes on #27, for how long?
_____ 0-3 years _____ 4-7 years _____ 8+ years

29. If yes on #27, in what capacity?
_____ Teacher
_____ Assistant (T.A.)
_____ Tutor
_____ Mentor
_____ Lab Technician
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

30. If no on #24, do you plan to become a relay interpreter?
_____ Yes _____ No

31. Have you ever taken a class on the structure of ASL?
_____ Yes _____ No

32. Have you ever taken a class on the structure of English?
_____ Yes _____ No

33. Have you ever taken a course on bilingualism and second language acquisition?
_____ Yes _____ No

34. What languages do you know?
Speak _____
Read _____
Write _____
Sign _____

35. What do you consider to be your first language?
_____ English
_____ ASL
_____ Spanish
_____ American Indian/Alaska Native
(Please specify) _____
_____ Other (Please specify) _____

36. What is the first language of your parents or primary care givers when you were growing up?
Mother _____
Father _____
Other _____

37. Do you consider yourself to be bilingual/trilingual?
_____ Yes _____ No

38. If yes on #37, in what languages?
_____

APPENDIX J

Interview Questions
Hearing Community Members

Interview Questions
Hearing Community Members

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research. I want to assure you that our discussion will be confidential. Our discussion will be taped but any reporting of the data will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of all participants.

1. Please tell me about your sign language background. What sign language(s) or system(s) do you use? How long have you signed?

2. How did you become interested in becoming an interpreter?

3. Are you involved in interpreter education? Please tell me about your experiences.

4. What do you think are important components of an interpreter preparation program?

5. Should there be any requirements for entrance into or exit out of an IPP? If so, what should they be?

6. Please tell me about your experiences with bilingualism and with second language acquisition.

7. Please tell me about your experience with American Sign Language with American Deaf culture, and with the deaf community.

8. There is some controversy right now about ASL being accepted as meeting the language requirement in post-secondary settings, what are your thoughts on this topic?

9. Do you feel that ASL should be used in the classroom with deaf children? Please explain.

10. Some school districts around the country are trying to implement multi-cultural curricula. Do you feel the Deaf culture should be included? Please explain.

APPENDIX K

Interview Questions
Deaf Community Members

Interview Questions
Deaf Community Members

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research. I want to assure you that our discussion will be confidential. Our discussion will be taped but any reporting of the data will be done in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of all participants.

1. Please tell me about your sign language background. What sign language(s) or system(s) do you use? How long have you signed?

2. Please tell me about your experiences with using sign language interpreters.

3. Are you involved in interpreter education? Please tell me about your experience with interpreter education.

4. Please tell me about your experiences with bilingualism and with second language acquisition.

5. What do you think should be some requirements for entry into and exit out of an interpreter preparation program?

6. What elements do you think should be included in an interpreter preparation program?

6. There is some controversy right now about ASL being accepted as meeting the language requirement in post-secondary settings, what are your thoughts on this topic?

7. Do you feel that ASL should be used in the classroom with deaf children? Please explain.

8. Some school districts around the country are trying to implement multi-cultural curricula. Do you feel the Deaf culture should be included? Please explain.

APPENDIX L

Vocabulary Items

research
guess, assume
enough vs. full
before (tense vs. previous)
spoken lang
donations
"wearing a different hat"
negotiate
"don't want to be sucked in"
workshop
human services
competent, aptitudes, capability
psychology vs. bother
open-minded, close-minded
traits, characteristics, tendency
performing my job
until
willing to do something
general vs. specific, vs. area
area (geographic vs. topic)
invent, creative
validity
how many, how much, many
how often
voc. rehab. (DVR vs. VR)
community
focus
practicum
majority
major vs. minor
direct communication
conference, meeting
analysis
set up guidelines
spit it out
overlap
criteria
minimum
base of ASL
curriculum
working in the field
guarantee, promise
average
organization
client
comprehensive
reverse
transliterate
translate

set up guidelines
"to go in cold"
vulnerable
cause
members
position, place
sermon
placement
official, formal
rehab
consideration
react
structure
physical
author
team interpret
consumer vs. client
honest
evaluate
emotion
criteria
reliability
interactive
occasionally
in terms of
relatives
observe, watch
advanced
witness
system
subscribe
mainstream
entrance vs. exit
pain in the butt
regional
role play
appeal
protect
accreditation
mandate
publish
peers
literacy
competence
community
career
seminar
1975-1978
system

throughout the U.S.
paraphrase
secondary (HS)
post secondary (after HS)
to meet the needs
privacy rights
legal constraints
medical exam (SEARCH)
mental health
to feel threatened
evaluation
psychiatrist
to graduate vs. graduate school

treatment} different in medical and
diagnosis} educational settings

ability
versus
tutor
appropriate
LRE
role conflicts
profession
mandated by law
client, consumer
emotions
experiment
psychologist
therapy

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