Sign Language Interpreter Education

Rico Peterson, Ph.D.
Northeastern University
April 25 - 27, 2007
Intro – Schedule for the Day

- **Northeastern University**
  - Bachelor of Science in ASL Interpreting
  - Masters Degree in Interpreting Pedagogy

- **Conference of Interpreter Trainers Standards**
Models of Sign Language Interpreting

- *Scientific or Metaphorical?*
- *Sociolinguistic*
- *Cognitive*
Helper Model – Social

– Family, teachers, clergy
– Obligation
– Dependent
Conduit Model – Systematic

– Empowering Deaf people
– Professional Service
Sociolinguistic Models

– Cokely
– Seleskovitch
– Colonomos
Bicultural-Bilingual

– *Language and Culture are inseparable*

– *Interpreting as Cultural and Linguistic Mediation*
Discourse Models

– Gish
  • Text Analysis

– Roy
  • Discourse Process
  • Nature of Communication
Summary of Models

• From helper to conduit to active participant
• Vocabulary-- encoding, unpacking, etc.
• Conduit model of interpreting wanes
• Conduit model of communication remains
  – What is meaning?
  – Where is it to be found?
Cognitive Models

- Reddy, Wilcox and Shaffer
- Cognitive Linguistics
- Inference over code
- What is the "message"?
  - A set of signals
  - The meaning assigned to those signals
- Interpreter as active participant
  - Actively constructing meaning
Gile's Effort Model

To Facilitate Interpreter’s Implementation of Tactics and Strategies

– Listening and Analysis
– Memory
– Production
– Coordination
Listening and Analysis

Effort

– Comprehension
  • How much do you need to know to be able to understand? To interpret?

– Linguistic and Non-Manual cues
Memory Effort

– Working Memory
– Processing and Storage
Production Effort

– Mental representation of message
– Planning and performance
Coordination Effort

– Managing distribution of energy between Listening/Analysis, Memory, and Production
Coping Strategies

- *Coping with the complexities of interpreting*
Coping Strategies

– Strategic Omission
  • name-sign

– Strategic Additions

– Strategic Substitutions
  • 1800s for 1827

– Paraphrasing/Circumlocution
Coping Strategies

– Lag Time
– Reconstruction
– Teaming
– Reordering
– Interrupting . . .
Models of Decision Making

– Classical
– Ethical
– Naturalistic
Classical Decision Making

– Value
  • The desirability of an outcome

– Probability
  • “Slippery” scales

– Pascal’s Wager
Pascal’s Wager

• You believe in God
  – If you’re right, your gain is infinite
  – If you’re wrong your loss is negligible

• You don’t believe in God
  – If you’re right your gain is negligible
  – If you’re wrong, your loss is infinite
Ethical Decision Making

*Based on three criteria*--

- **Obligations**
- **Moral Ideals**
- **Consequences**
Obligations as Behavior Restrictions

- Behavioral restrictions
  - Demands to do/ not do things
- Obligations of Friendship
- Obligations of Society
- Obligations of Employment
- Professional Obligations
Moral Ideals – Cardinal Virtues

– Prudence
– Compassion
– Loving Kindness
– Honesty
– Justice
Consequences

– Beneficial/Harmful Effects of Action
  • Physical/Emotional
  • Immediate/Eventual
Naturalistic Decision Making

– *Decision making in naturalistic settings*

– *Studies of firefighters, military planners, chess players, interpreters*

– *Decision making in circumstances characterized by:*
Naturalistic Decision Making

– *Ill-Structured Problems*
– *Uncertain Dynamic Environments*
– *Shifting, ill-defined, or competing goals*
– *Action/Feedback Loops*
Naturalistic Decision Making

- *Time Stress*
- *High Stakes*
- *Multiple Players*
- *Organizational Goals and Norms*
Recognition-Primed Decisions

– Our experience helps us identify situations as representative of/analogous to a particular class of problem

– This recognition leads us in adapting/applying previously successful choices to the current situation
Northeastern University
Bachelor of Science in ASL Interpreting

- Overview / Philosophy
- Course Mask
Year One

Fall Semester
• Deaf People in Society
• Elementary ASL 1
• College: An Intro
• ENG 111 College Writing

Spring Semester
• Elementary ASL 2
• Core Elective
• College Mathematics
• Elective
Year Two

Fall Semester
- Deaf Culture/History
- Intermediate ASL 1
- Introduction to Linguistics
- Core Elective

Spring Semester
- Intermediate ASL 2
- Linguistics of ASL
- Elective
- Elective
Year Three

Fall Semester
• Introduction to Interpreting
• Interpreting Inquiry Texts
• Middler Year Writing
• Advanced ASL 1
• Elective

Spring Semester
• Interpreting Narrative Texts
• Contrastive Analysis
• Advanced ASL 2
• Elective
• Elective
Year Three - Fall

Interpreting Inquiry Texts

- overview of linguistic and sociolinguistic factors, facets, and aspects of inquiry texts
- development of strategic decision-making skills
- cognitive processes and skills involved in translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation
- focus is the interpretation of inquiry texts (job interviews, case histories, and applications)
Year Three - Spring

Interpreting Narrative Texts

- overview of linguistic and sociolinguistic factors, facets, and aspects of inquiry texts
- development of strategic decision-making skills
- cognitive processes and skills involved in translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation
- focus is the interpretation of narrative texts (personal narratives, storytelling)
Year Four

Fall Semester
• Interpreting Expository Texts
• Ethical Decision-Making
• Ethical Fieldwork
• Research Capstone
• Elective

Spring Semester
• Interpreting Persuasive Texts
• Interpreting Practicum
• Elective
• Elective
Year Four - Fall

Interpreting Expository Texts

- overview of linguistic and sociolinguistic factors, facets, and aspects of inquiry texts
- development of strategic decision-making skills
- cognitive processes and skills involved in translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation
- focus is the interpretation of expository texts (lectures, procedural texts)
Year Four - Spring

Interpreting Persuasive Texts

- overview of linguistic and sociolinguistic factors, facets, and aspects of inquiry texts
- development of strategic decision-making skills
- cognitive processes and skills involved in translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation
- focus is the interpretation of persuasive texts (solicitation, hortatory, political texts)
Masters Degree in Interpreting Pedagogy (MIP)

• *Overview*
• *Admission Requirements*
• *Course Mask*
  – Academic Core
  – Skills Core
MIP Education Courses

- Adult Learning Theory
- Facilitation and Instruction
- Curriculum and Program Development
- Program Evaluation and Assessment
Adult Learning Theory

This course examines the social and psychological aspects of adult development and learning, including the various motivations of adult learners. Students learn various methods of training and development, as well as specific instructional practices.
Facilitation and Instruction

This course examines recent scholarship on teaching and instruction as it pertains to adult students. Students learn specific approaches and methods for classroom management and facilitation. Topics include establishing an outline, assessing student performance, instructional technology, and platform and presentation skills.
Curriculum and Program Development

This course focuses on the curriculum development process and takes a project management view of program development. Students will learn rubrics for curriculum design and their application to course and program development.
Program Evaluation and Assessment

In this course, students learn how to establish goals based on measurable outcomes and how to set benchmarks for performance measurement. Students learn how to demonstrate the impact of a program on an organization. Issues related to accreditation and other academic program reviews are examined.
MIP Skills Courses

• Language Foundations for Teaching Interpreting
• Foundations of Meaning Transfer
• Translation 1
• Translation 2
MIP Skills Courses

- Ethical and Professional Foundations
- Real-Time Meaning Transfer 1
- Teaching Practicum
- Real-Time Meaning Transfer 2
MIP Skills Courses

• Research Capstone Portfolio
CIT Standards

• Description of the Profession -
  Interpreting is the art and science of receiving a message from one language and rendering it into another.
CIT Standards - Objective

- A common set of expectations about basic knowledge and competencies
- Used for development, evaluation, and self-analysis of IEPs
CIT Standards - Sponsorship

- IHE must be accredited
- IHE must demonstrate commitment to fostering positive attitudes
- IHE assumes primary responsibility for all aspects of the program
CIT Standards - Resources

• Personnel
• Financial
• Physical
Personnel

- Program Director
- Faculty
- Clerical and Support Staff
CIT Standards - Resources

Program Director

• Responsible for management and administration of program (planning, evaluation, budgeting, hiring)

• Qualifications:
  – interpreting, teaching, administrative experience
  – Masters Degree
CIT Standards - Resources

Faculty

• Responsibilities consistent with mission of the institution
• Experience in interpreting and teaching
• Academic qualifications
CIT Standards - Resources

Professional Development

• Program has written plan for continued professional growth
• Faculty submit annual written plans for continuing professional growth
CIT Standards - Resources

Financial

• A budget allocated to the program
  – To develop and maintain objectives
  – To fulfill obligations to students
CIT Standards - Resources

Physical Resources

- Facilities
- Equipment and Supplies
- Learning Materials
CIT Standards - Students

• Admission Policies and Procedures
• Evaluation
• Guidance
CIT Standards - Students

Admission Policies and Procedures

• Admission in accordance with established practice
• Policies readily accessible to students and the public
CIT Standards - Students

Evaluation

• Criteria for successful completion of each segment of the program given in advance

• Evaluation consistent with objectives and competencies
  – Employed frequently enough to provide timely indications of progress
CIT Standards - Students

Guidance

- Faculty advising
- Practicum (collaborative) advising
CIT Standards - Program Evaluation

• Outcomes

• Results of Ongoing Evaluation
  – Internal and external curriculum validation
  – Follow-up of students’ employment
  – Review of admissions policies and procedures
  – Examination of curriculum design
    • Internal and external
CIT Standards - Curriculum

- Description of Program
- Curriculum Design
CIT Standards - Curriculum

Description of the Program

• Mission
  – Consistent with institution

• Philosophy
  – Sociolinguistic view of Deaf people
  – Focused on knowledge and competencies
CIT Standards - Curriculum

Curriculum Design

• Supports mission of IEP
• Identifies goals consistent with mission and philosophy statements
• Describes organizing principles for content, scope, and sequence
• Includes/involves Deaf Community
CIT Standards - Curriculum

Prerequisites

• ASL
  – Proficiency enable culturally appropriate participation

• English
  – Proficiency enables culturally appropriate participation
CIT Standards

Content Requirements

• Liberal Arts
• Social and Behavioral Science
• Knowledge and Competencies
Liberal Arts

- Oral and Written Communication
- Critical Thinking
  - Contextual Decision-Making
- Multicultural knowledge
- Practical knowledge of diversity and its influence on the profession
Social and Behavioral Science

• Sociocultural Systems
• Minority Group Dynamics
• Language and Society
Knowledge Areas

- Theories of Interpretation/Translation
- Historical Foundations
- Interpreter Role and Responsibilities
- Professional Ethics
- Human Relations
- Dynamics of Cross-Cultural Interaction
Knowledge Areas

- Human Services/Community Resources
- Certification and Licensure
- Business Practices
- State and Federal Legislation
- Professional Development
- Stress Management/Personal Health
Competencies - Language

• Ability to understand nuanced source language
• Ability to express oneself correctly, fluently, clearly in the target language
Competencies - Message Transfer

• Ability to apprehend meaning in source language discourse
• Ability to render equivalent meaning in target language discourse
• Ability to render appropriate style without undue influence from source language
Competencies - Methodology

• Ability to use different modes of interpretation (simultaneous, consecutive) when appropriate
• Ability to use different target language forms, ability to employ forms appropriate to audience preference
Competencies - Subject Matter

• Breadth of knowledge allowing interpretation of general discourse within several fields
• Sufficient specialized knowledge of one or two disciplines
Competencies - Techniques and Logistics

- Management of physical setting
- Ability to select and use appropriate equipment