Emerging Trends in Interpreting and Implications for Interpreter Education

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National Interpreter Education Center

RID Conference – August 8, 2015
Envisioning the Future
Envisioning the Future

- trends & challenges
- issues in interpreter education
- a call to action
Interviews

- Who will interpreters be working with over the next 10-15 years?
- How will interpreting services need to change?
- What changes are needed in interpreter education to prepare interpreters for tomorrow?
Focus Groups
Focus Groups

- Have you seen an increase in... within the population you serve, and if so, how has it affected service provision?

- What new skills and knowledge must interpreters have to effectively serve ......?

- What changes in interpreter education will be needed to prepare interpreter practitioners to work with this population in the future?
Survey
Survey Key Questions

In your provision of services during the last 5 years, do you observe the number of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind individuals from a racial or ethnic minority group:

- Substantially increased
- Increased
- Remained the same
- Decreased
- Substantially decreased
- Not sure/Don’t know
Survey Key Questions

How difficult is it to find interpreters whose capabilities match the communication needs of Deaf, Hard of Hearing or DeafBlind individuals who are from racial/ethnic minority groups?

- Very difficult
- Difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Somewhat easy
- Easy
- Very easy
- Not sure/Don’t know
Consensus Around These Issues

- demands from continuing demographics shifts
- needs of Deaf+ individuals
- impact of mainstreaming
- representation of Deaf professionals & leaders
- impact of CI industry
- impact of VRS/VRI
Community

• increasingly diverse & linguistically complex
• limited information & self-advocacy skills
Community:
- Increasingly diverse & linguistically complex
- Limited information & self-advocacy skills

Workforce:
- Needs greater diversity
- Needs more advanced language fluency
- Needs alternative communication strategies
Community
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Workforce
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Preparation
• diminished involvement with Deaf Community
• lack of agreed upon requirements
• need to identify effective practices
• inadequate recruitment & support
1 in 6 in general population is Hispanic/Latino (US Census 2010)
Asian immigration surpassed Hispanic (2012)
African-American population increase 12%
by 2020, whites under age 18 are the minority
by 2035, non-Hispanic whites outnumbered
Minorities, Immigrants, & Refugees

- limited ASL & English proficiency
- non-English spoken languages
- other signed languages
- diverse cultures, customs, & experiences
- lacking accessible information & resources
- potential to be at risk
87% of RID members are female
88% of RID members are white
general lack of shared background or language
Realities & Challenges

- shortage of interpreters who are *of* the community
- limited number of trilingual interpreters
- lack of scholarship/stipend funding
- inadequate recruitment efforts
Deaf +

- 50% of parents say deaf child has additional disability (SEELS, 2006)
- 69% of Trends Survey respondents report increase in Deaf+ individuals
- aging d/Deaf people at risk
Deaf +

- complex and unfamiliar communication needs
- dysfluent or idiosyncratic sign and gesture
- limited ASL and English proficiency
Realities & Challenges

- unique & specialized interpreting strategies
- 86% of Trends respondents report difficult to meet needs
- #2 training priority for interpreters who work with children
87% of deaf children mainstreamed (ED 2006)

- inadequate state & federal guidelines
- poor pay & low hiring requirements
- IEP grads: first interpreting job very often in K-12
Realities & Challenges

underqualified interpreters contribute to:

- limited language competence
- idiosyncratic signing
- poor academic and social outcomes
- specialized interpreting needs in the future
Deaf Professionals
Deaf Professionals

- d/Deaf people in advanced study & specialized professions
- specialized terms & discourse
- use of technology has increased complexity
- interpreters enhance or detract from others’ perception of d/Deaf person
Realities & Challenges

- Limited proficiency in English & ASL
- Limited number of interpreters with advanced degrees
- Limited experience in academic & professional milieus
Cochlear Implants

- Cochlear implant use increases annually.
- 77% of Trends Survey respondents reported observing an increase.
- Not well understood that CI technology does not produce normal hearing and success rates vary widely.
Cochlear Implants

1995
60% of families chose sign language

2000

2005
Cochlear Implants

1995
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2000
Congress passes EHDI Act & FDA approves CI @ 12 months old

2005
Cochlear Implants

1995
60% of families chose sign language

2000
Congress passes EHDI Act & FDA approves CI @ 12 months old

2005
15% of families chose sign language
Realities & Challenges

- at risk for language deprivation
- at risk for idiosyncratic sign language
- insufficient information for families
Summary of Community Trends

- CI: Increase
- Minority: Difficulty
- Immigrant: Difficulty
- Deaf +: Difficulty
- Deaf Prof/Tech: Difficulty

The graph illustrates the trends in various community groups, showing increases and difficulties.
Summary of Workforce Needs

NEW

COMPETENCE
Summary of Workforce Needs

- advanced ASL & English proficiency
- strategies for idiosyncratic/dysfluent language
- comfort & expertise with wide range of d/Deaf people of all ages and abilities
- increased ethnic & linguistic diversity; knowledge of other signed languages
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New road layout ahead
Interpreting Education

- revisit ASL instruction
- increase involvement with d/Deaf & Deaf-Blind communities
- create suitable opportunities for heritage signers
- recruit & support students
- study job types & associated risks
- provide structured pathways
Interpreting Education

- identify effective practices
- develop DI practitioners
- teach collaboration with DI’s & trilingual interpreters
- include DI’s as interpreting educators
- promote information, policies, & practices that advantage d/Deaf people
The Time is Now…
What can we do?

- individual, professional growth
- organizational, community actions
- policy, system-level change
What will you do?

What one action will you commit to and within what timeframe?
Connect with NCIEC on

www.interpretereducation.org

Join our mailing list
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