



**A United Front: A Collaborative
Perspective on Educating Medical
Interpreters**

**National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers
Brenda Nicodemus, Robert G. Lee and Laurie Swabey**

Snapshot of the “real world” of interpreting

- *I had a female audiologist from India with a strong accent and parents who are Hmong and don't speak English and their deaf child, plus the Hmong interpreter and me (the ASL interpreter). Four different cultural backgrounds in one small room, plus gender and power issues. It gets complicated quickly.*

History of Signed Language Interpreting in the U.S.

- Becoming a profession
- The “discovery” of American Sign Language
- Legislative changes
- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)
- Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT)

-
- *Spoken language (community) interpreters are fighting the same fights we did 30 years go – getting competent people in there, competent interpreters from agencies, agencies that are competent, pay, dual role expectations, certification, everything.*

Spoken Language and Signed Language Interpreting

■ Similarities

- Work with people who have minority language status
- Power differential between participants
- Settings (courts, hospitals, schools, conference, etc.)

Spoken Language and Signed Language Interpreting

- Differences:
 - Bi-modal vs. uni-modal interpreting
 - Simultaneous vs. consecutive
 - How our consumers are viewed
 - Insider vs. outsider status



The National Consortium
of Interpreter Education Centers

Goal: To increase the number of qualified interpreters and advance the field of interpreting education.





The National Consortium
of Interpreter Education Centers

Mission:

- ...to build and promote effective practices in interpreting education.
- ...to draw on the wisdom and energy of experts, consumers, and other stakeholders to advance the field.
- ...to promote innovation, strong partnership networks and multiculturalism.
- ...committed to products, programs, resources that maximize resources, are replicable, measurable, sustainable and non-proprietary.

10 Major Initiatives

- National Needs Assessment
- Discover Interpreting
- AA/BA Transition
- Language Standards
- Mentoring
- Interpreting via Video
- Teacher Education
- Deaf Interpreter Education
- Consumer Self-Advocacy Training
- Healthcare Interpreting Education

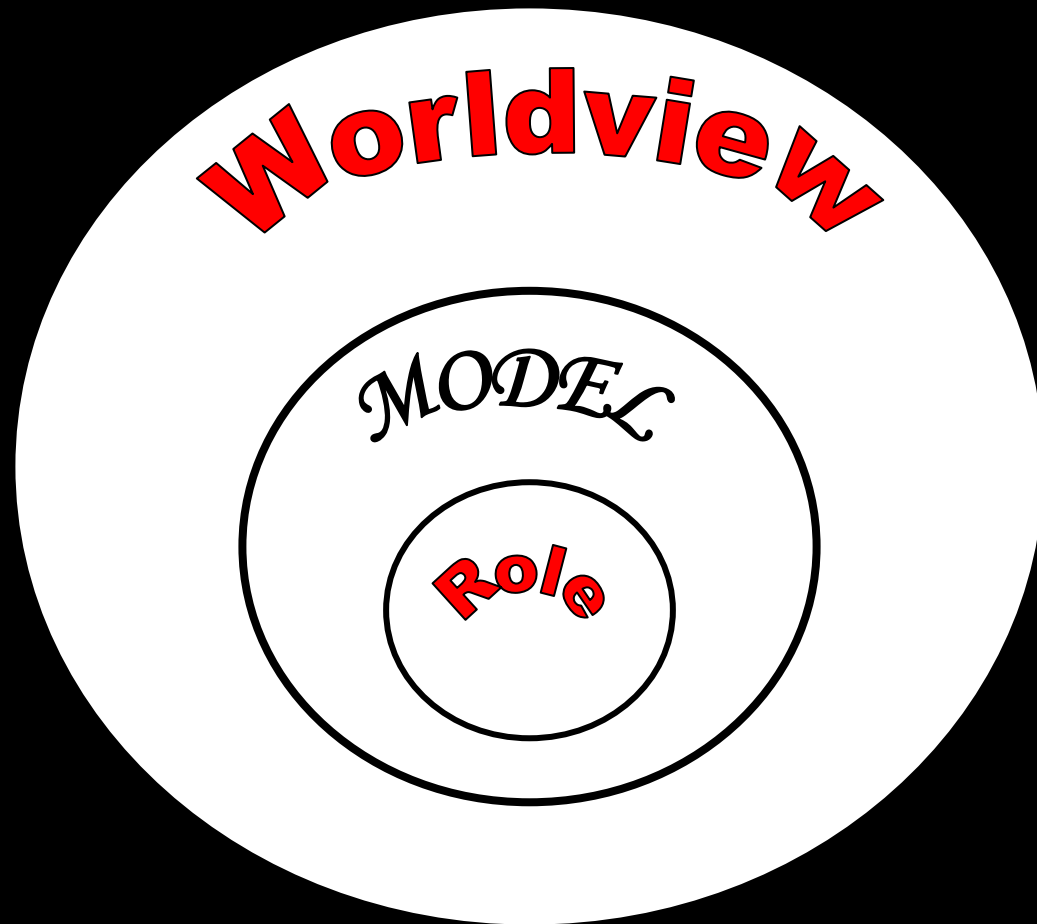


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- *Also that sixth sense of knowing when it's appropriate to offer a hand or a hug or some support. We kinda know – sometimes you do and sometimes you don't.*



We use language against a
background of belief.
- Wittgenstein

Roles, Models and Worldviews



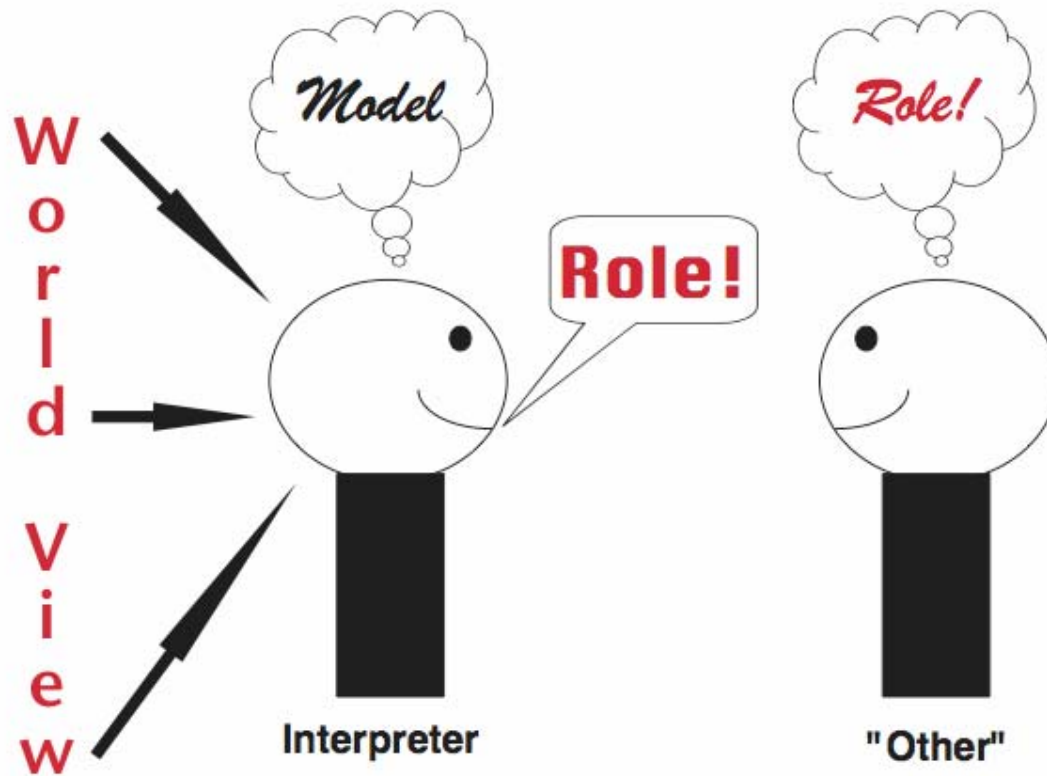
Roles, Models and Worldviews

- **Role** – explanation of purpose/function
(*external*)
- **Model** – Mental schema that influences role
(*internal*)
- **Worldview** (\approx *Weltanschauung*) – overarching set of beliefs that frame one's perceptions
(*ethereal*)

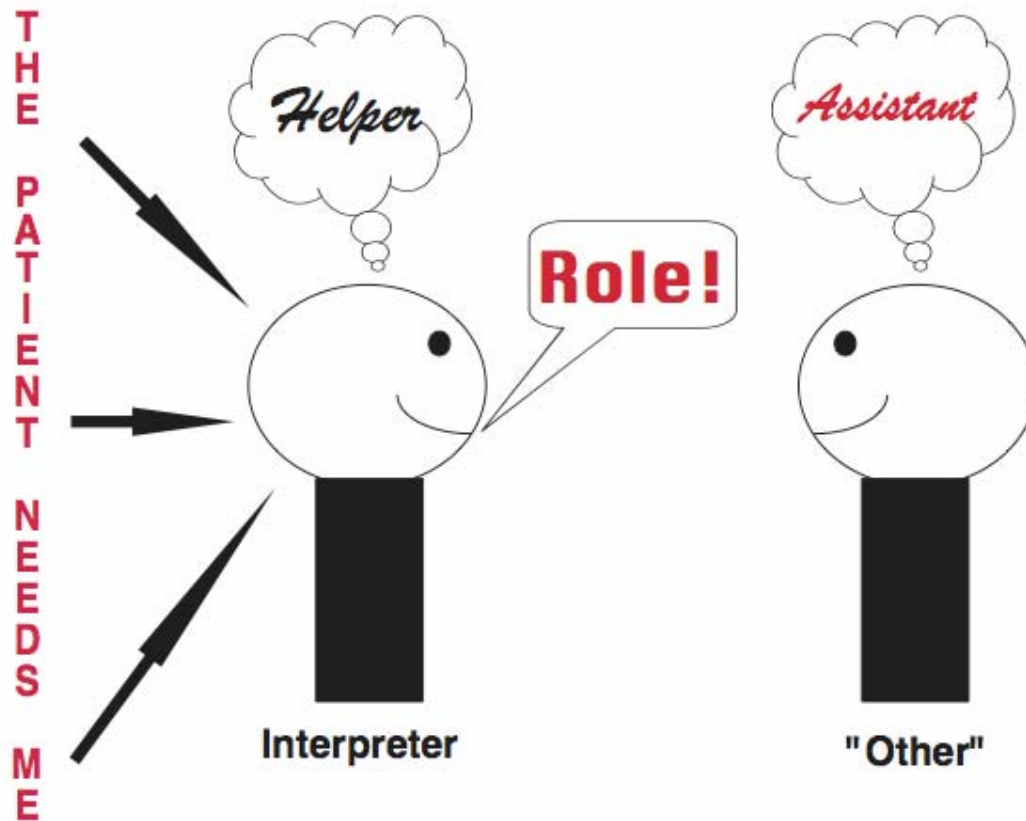
Roles - Evolution

- **Helper**
- **Machine**
- **Facilitator**
- **Bilingual-Bicultural Mediator**

The Interaction of Interpreter Roles, *Models* and **WorldViews**



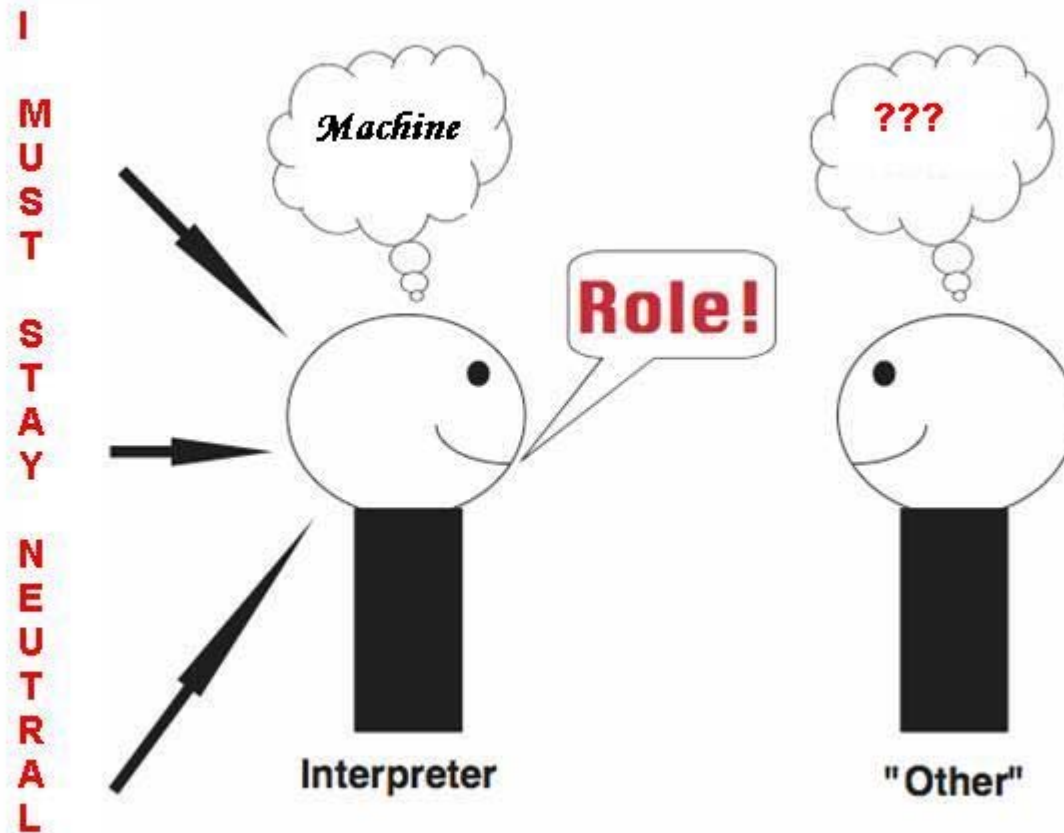
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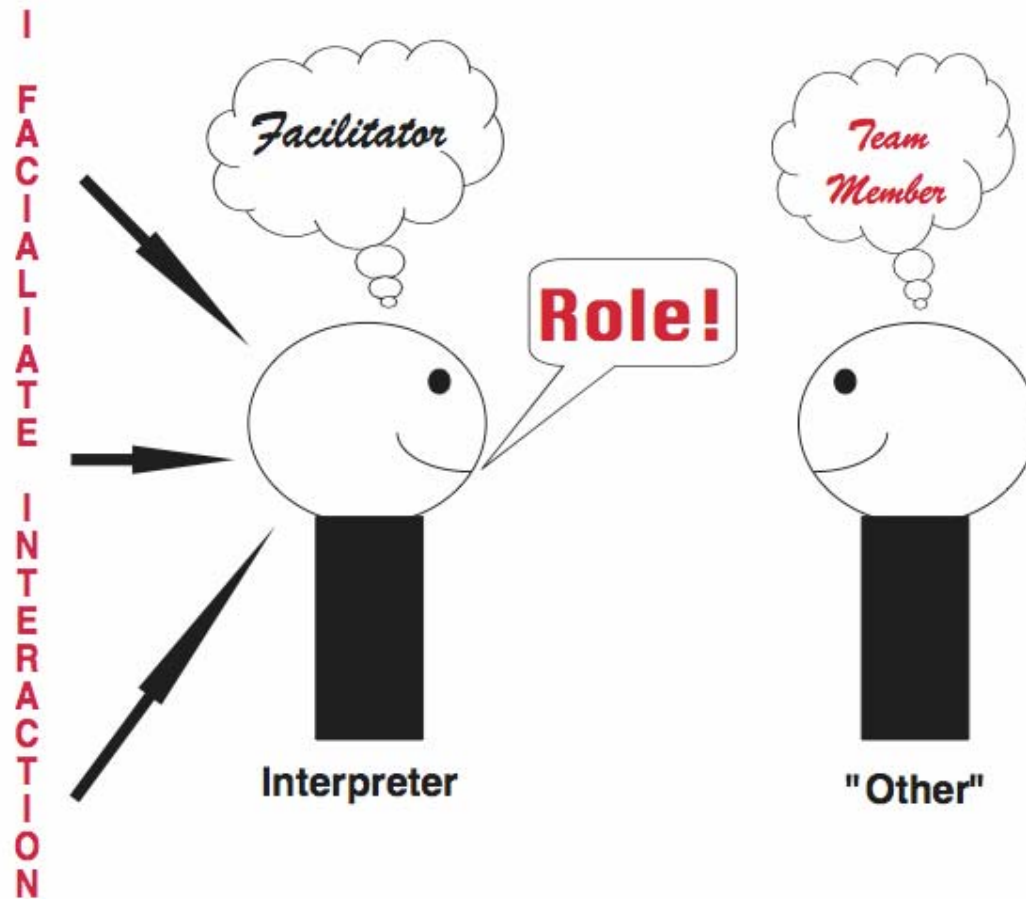
Perception of Role

- *I've been beaten over that head that we (interpreters) don't get to say anything but that boundary is like a cement wall and nothing happens...I didn't say anything because it was at that time when it was like you don't say anything, you don't do anything and I left and I was like I can't do this job. I still don't know what happened to the woman but it probably wasn't good.*

The Interaction of Interpreter Roles, *Models* and **WorldViews**



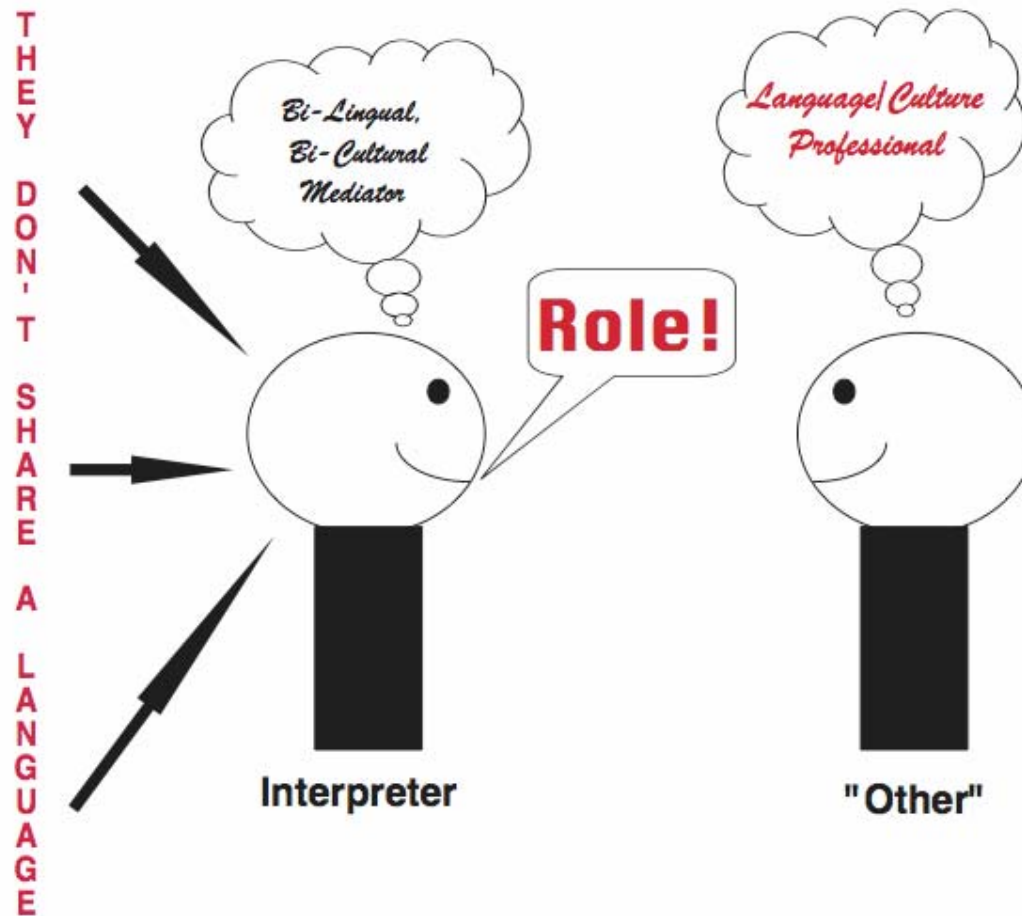
The Interaction of Interpreter Roles, *Models* and **WorldViews**



‘Bi-lingual, Bi-cultural Mediator’

- *I had a female audiologist from India with a strong accent and parents who are Hmong and don't speak English and their deaf child, plus the Hmong interpreter and me (the ASL interpreter). Four different cultural backgrounds in one small room, plus gender and power issues. It gets complicated quickly.*

The Interaction of Interpreter Roles, *Models* and **WorldViews**



‘Stepping out of Role’

- *I have acted as an advocate but I thought that I had to because I'm like this is dangerous stuff you know, they're not getting it; I would do it again. It was like boy, I really stepped out of my role. I could have been called big time for stepping out of the role but I felt like I had to do it just to be able to sleep at night.*

‘Stepping out of Role’

Doctor

Patient

Interpreter

‘Stepping out of Role’

Interpreter

Patient



‘Stepping out of Role’

Doctor

Interpreter



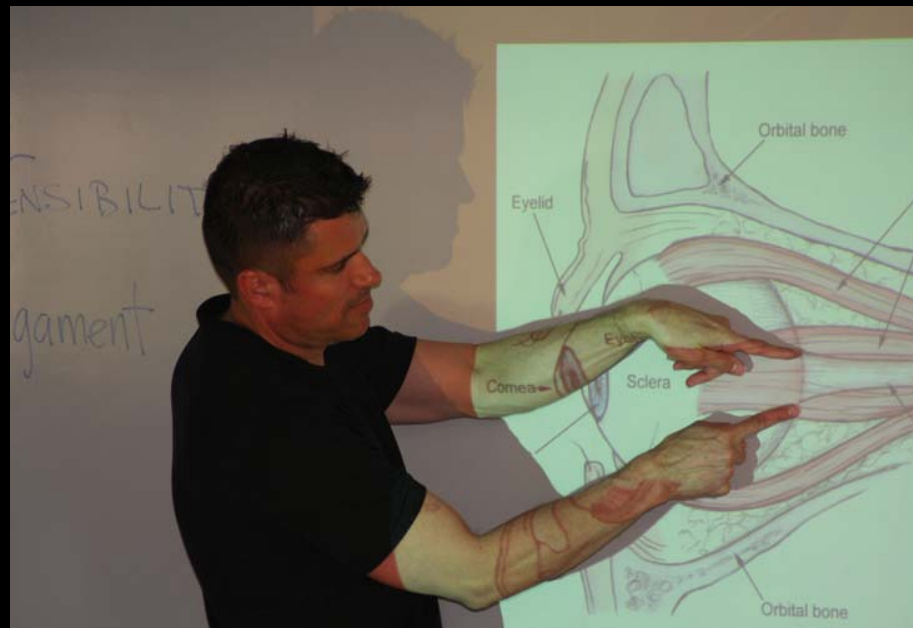
‘Stepping out of Role’

Doctor

Patient

Interpreter

How can we prepare interpreters to work effectively in medical settings?



Challenges

- Not enough available, qualified interpreters for regular and emergency work.
- No specific standards for ASL-English medical interpreters

Approach

- Literature review (including medical interpreting standards of practice and medical interpreting education – signed and spoken languages)
- Survey of interpreter education programs
- Interviews – issues and experts
- Expert group – effective practices draft
- Review
- Focus group design and data collection
- Website development
- Next steps: revise effective practices document, review; lit review on adult learning/practice professions; begin curriculum design

ASL – English Medical Interpreter Education

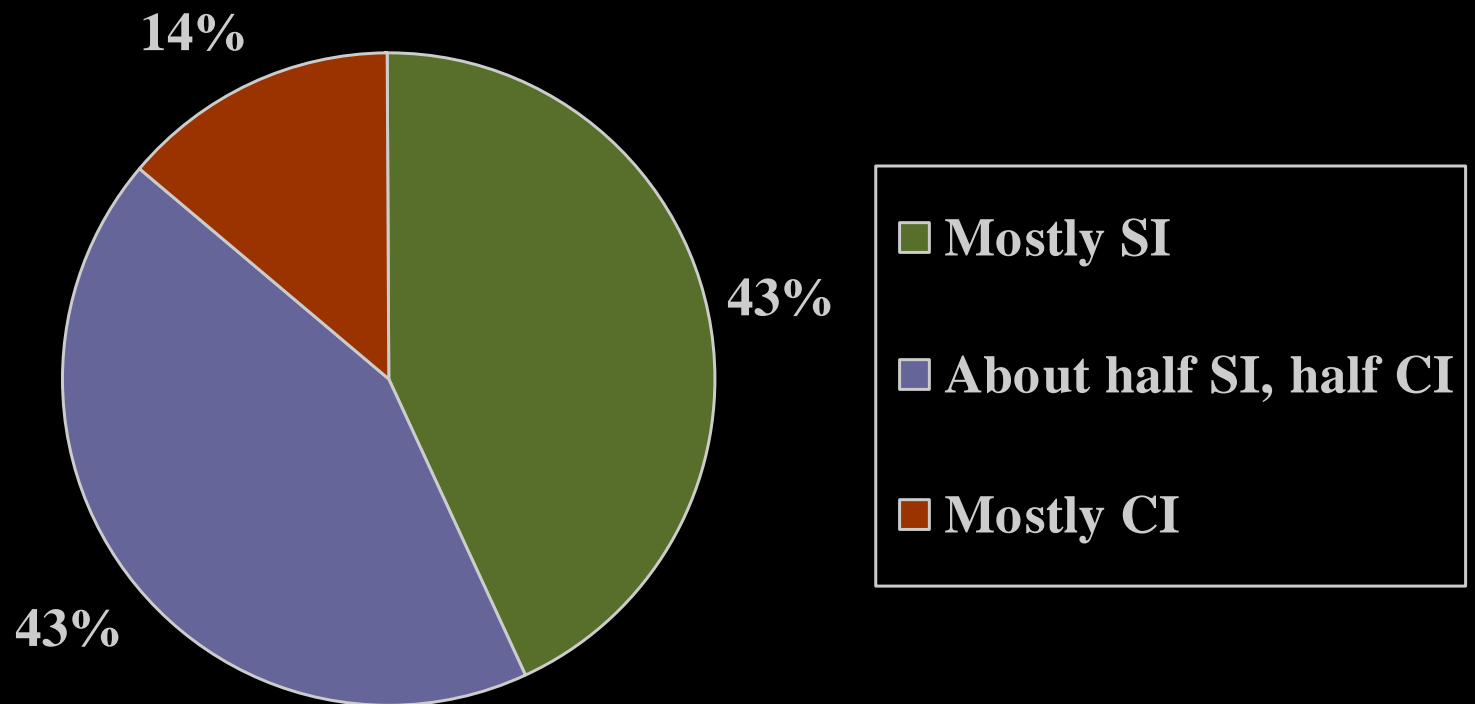
(34 BA programs – 7 mention medical)

College of St. Catherine	Healthcare interpreting; Internship in Healthcare	Supporting coursework	BA
Gallaudet University	Interpreting interaction: Medical; Interp. Interaction: Mental Health; Field Observation: Medical and Mental Health	Supporting coursework;	BA
Temple University	Technical Signs		BA
Goshen College	Specialized Vocabulary		BA
Quincy Univ.	Topics in Interpreting (multiple)		BA
UNC Greensboro	Interpreting in Specialized Settings (multiple)		BA
Univ of S. Maine	Advanced Interpreting: Source Lang ASL; Special Topics in ASL/English Interpreting (single topic)		BA

Readiness to work in medical settings

- 61% did not feel adequately prepared when they started working in the medical setting;
- most didn't have education in medical interpreting in their IEP
- 24% did feel adequately prepared

How would you describe the amount of simultaneous or consecutive interpreting you use in medical settings?



Most important knowledge areas for medical interpreters

- ASL and English needed for interpreting in medical settings – 58%
- Role and boundaries – 53%
- Ethics and professional decision-making 53%
- Knowledge of health care systems – 30%
- Culture and Diversity – 30%
- Interpreting skills – 21%

Do you see a need for post BA education in medical interpreting?

■ Post-baccalaureate certificate:

Yes = 60%

No = 21%

MA degree

Yes = 26%

No = 35%

Comments about post-baccalaureate education

- More important for full-time medical staff interpreter than generalist
- YES – stakes are high
- This specialized field requires specialized knowledge and skills
- Concerns: pay may not justify an MA; lack of experiential learning; should be part of a BA
- Need experience; hands-on learning – not MA

The interpreter's role - document review and focus groups

- Invisibility and neutrality, stressed in document review, not in focus groups
- Discussion is important for educating interpreters
- Supports observation, mentoring, practica, internships
- Need standards of practice that accurately reflect the scope of our work

Across all groups

- Roles and boundaries are different in medical settings than in general interpreting settings.
- Inconsistency in the understanding of roles, boundaries, support and advocacy.

Other factors

- Health literacy
- Socioeconomic status
- Education level
- Knowledge of the system
- Support network
- Severity of illness
- Cultural differences
- Age
- Spoken language interpreters
- Experience working with interpreters
- Use of charts and models (perceived as “advocacy” by some)
- Medical to legal

Differences in education/training

- Exit and entrance requirements
- Depth of coursework
- Observation; practicum or internship
- Simultaneous interpreting
- Translation
- Training vs. education
- Decision making
- Discourse analysis
- Ongoing professional development
- Role

Partnerships and Possibilities

- How can we work together?

Download this presentation and contact us:

- www.asl.neu.edu/nciec
- bnicodemus@projects.sdsu.edu
- robert.lee@childrens.harvard.edu
- laswabey@stkate.edu



Website and Resources

www.medicalinterpreting.org



DRAFT

ASL & ENGLISH RESOURCES FOR INTERPRETING IN MEDICAL SETTINGS

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The
CATIE Center
at the
**College of
St. Catherine**



The CATIE Center at the College of St. Catherine is pleased to present this website that is designed to provide a comprehensive guide to resources for ASL-English interpreters working in medical settings. Please help us by suggesting resources and links to be included and join in the discussion about what makes for effective interpreting in medical settings.

What's New!



Blog: All of the commentary developed from Deaf consumers and interpreters is being compiled

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