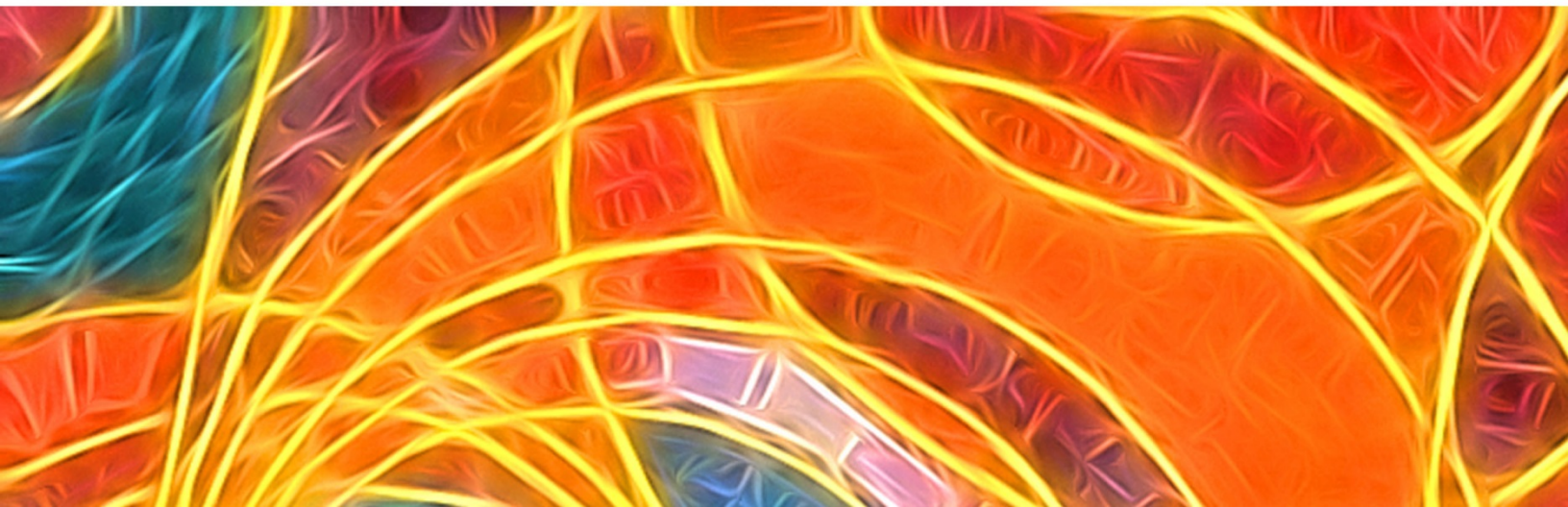# TOWARD EFFECTIVE PRACTICE: INTERPRETING IN SPANISH-INFLUENCED SETTINGS

Pauline G. Annarino,
Myrelis Aponte-Samalot, &
David Quinto-Pozos
Editors

NCIEC
National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers

About NCIEC

The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers aims to expand and enhance the effectiveness of the interpreting workforce through education and professional development services and resources offered regionally and nationally. Five Regional Interpreter Education Centers offer training and technical assistance to regional stakeholders including curricular resources for interpreting education programs, educational opportunities for interpreters at all levels of experience, consumer self-advocacy training, and new interpreter recruitment. The National Interpreter Education Center serves to coordinate cross-center collaborative activities, dissemination, communication, and knowledge transfer; evaluates the effectiveness of Centers' educational offerings; and provides educational opportunities, resources, and technical assistance to enhance teaching practices across the U.S.

NCIEC Mission

The mission of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers is to connect and collaborate with diverse stakeholders to create excellence in interpreting.

www.interpretereducation.org

List of Contributors

Editors/Authors:

Pauline G. Annarino, M.S., NAD V, CSC, Director of Western Region Interpreter Education Center (WREIC), and member of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC)

Myrelis Aponte-Samalot, Psy.D., M.A., NCC, RID-CI, former Director of the Interpreter Education Program, Universidad del Turabo*,* Puerto Rico

David Quinto-Pozos, Ph.D. Professor of Linguistics, University of Texas-Austin, President Mano a Mano

Authors and Other Contributors:

Erica Alley, M.A., NIC-Adv, Staff Interpreter/Video Interpreting Program Lead
Gallaudet University, Washington, DC 20002

J. Bichsel, M.S., Senior Research Specialist, University of Arizona National Center for Testing, Research and Policy

Kristie Casanova de Canales, M.A., CI/CT/NIC, Texas Trilingual Advanced, trilingual interpreter

Yolanda Chavira, Trilingual Master, BEI III, former staff interpreter for DARS-DHHS (Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services – Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services), and currently Board of Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Administrative Assistant

Robert R. Davila, President Emeritus, Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, and Vice President Emeritus, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY

R., Gatto, P., Phil., Senior Program Coordinator, University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy

Dueñas Gonzále, Ph.D., Professor of English at the University of Arizona, Director of the National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy

Beverly Hollrah, M.Ed, CSC, Director of the Gallaudet Regional Interpreter Education Center (GURIEC) and member of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC)

Mary Mooney, M.A., RID CI/CT, Professor and the Instructional Coordinator, Sign Language Interpreter Preparation Program at El Paso Community College, TX

Arlene Narváez, B.S., RID CI, CT, Trilingual Interpreter, Consultant, Interpreter Trainer

Angela Valcarcel-Roth, IC/TC/CSC/NIC, CEO/Owner of ASL Services Holdings LLC, HQ Kissimmee, FL

Rafael Oscar Treviño, M.A. NIC Advanced (ASL-English), BEI Trilingual Master (ASL-Spanish-English), Florida Certified Court Interpreter (Spanish-English), Freelance Interpreter, and Translator

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* Contributors to the History Chapter (chapter 2):

    Esteban Amaro ✦ Myrelis Aponte-Samalot ✦ José Bertrán ✦ Mathew Call ✦ Yolanda Chavira ✦ Edwin Díaz ✦ Melva Flores ✦ Carmen García ✦ Gilberto García ✦ María Laguna ✦ Caleb López ✦ Angélica Montero ✦ Mary Mooney ✦ David Myers ✦ Arlene Narváez ✦ Angela Roth ✦ Jorge Santiago ✦ Rafael Treviño ✦ Yolanda Zavala

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Author Bios

Ericka Alley

Erica Alley is pursuing a Ph.D. in the field of interpreting research and pedagogy from Gallaudet University. She has published and presented on her research in Video Relay Service interpreting, trilingual interpretation (ASL/Spanish/English), and video remote interpreting. Erica currently works as a staff interpreter for Gallaudet Interpreting Service.

Pauline Annarino

Pauline Annarino, M.S., NAD V, GPC, is Director of the Western Region Interpreter Education Center. Her career has spanned 40 years in the field of deafness, in both higher education and nonprofit community advocacy, including 13 years at the Greater Los Angeles Council on Deafness. For the past four years, she has served as co-team leader for the NCIEC Trilingual Interpreting initiative.

Myrelis Aponte-Samalot

Myrelis Aponte, Psy.D., M.A., NCC, RID-CI, has been providing services to the Deaf community since 1992. She created, developed, and directed the first and only ITP Program in Puerto Rico at the Universidad del Turabo, served as a CIT board member and Chair of the 2008 CIT conference, and as President of the PRRID Affiliate Chapter. She holds a doctoral degree from Ponce School of Medicine in Clinical Neuropsychology and a master's degree in Counseling from Gallaudet University.

John Bichsel

John Bichsel, M.S., is a Senior Research Specialist at the University of Arizona National Center for Testing, Research and Policy, where he has 20 years of experience in the fields of translation and interpretation curriculum development, interpreter training, and interpreter test development, administration, and validation. He trained teachers in language testing methodologies at the University of Veracruz and collaborated with the British Council to develop the accredited Exaver English language testing program.

Kristie Casanova de Canales

Kristie Casanova de Canales, CI/CT, NIC, is a trilingual (ASL/Spanish/English) interpreter. She is nationally certified as an ASL/English interpreter and as a sign language transliterator by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). In addition to working as a trilingual Video Relay Service interpreter, her experience includes interpreting at state and national conferences and presenting on the subject of trilingual interpreting.

Yolanda Chavira

Yolanda Chavira is a Trilingual Master, BEI Level III, and ITP graduate from El Paso Community College. Her professional career spans over 25 years with local, state, and federal agencies serving persons who are deaf and hard of hearing. She works for DARS-DHHS and was a key contributor in the development of the Trilingual Certification test. She is a advocator for trilingual certification and advancement of the field of trilingual interpreting.

Robert Davila

Robert R. Davila holds a Ph.D. from Syracuse University and four honorary degrees. His career includes teaching at the high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels before embarking on a long career in educational administration, including service as Vice President and President of Gallaudet University, Vice President of the Rochester Institute of Technology, Director of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and in the administration of President George H. W. Bush as Assistant Secretary of Education.

Paul Gatto

Paul Gatto, C.Phil., is the senior program coordinator at the University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy. During his tenure, he has been involved in various interpreter curriculum and certification projects, including materials and test development, administration, and validation. Paul is the co-principal investigator with Dr. Roseann Gonzalez for the Texas Trilingual Initiative, a project that has resulted in the development of trilingual ASL/Spanish/English certification exams.

Roseann Dueñas González

Roseann Dueñas González, Ph.D., professor of English at the University of Arizona, is the director of the National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy. The National Center is a major repository of the theoretical and practical aspects of specialized interpretation, including its cognitive underpinnings, ethical parameters, and the policy guiding its practice and assessment. Dr. González's research focuses on applied linguistics, bilingual education, and language policy.

Beverly Hollrah

Beverly Hollrah, M.Ed., CSC, is the director and principal investigator of the Gallaudet University Interpreter Education Center (GURIC), and a member of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC). Beverly is a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) and has worked as an interpreter and interpreter educator for over 30 years. She is the former director of the Educational Interpreter Training Program at William Woods University, and a former CIT Board member.

Mary Mooney

Mary L. Mooney, M.A., RID CI/CT, is currently a professor and the instructional coordinator in the Sign Language Interpreter Preparation Program at El Paso Community College in Texas. She has been an interpreter educator, curriculum specialist, and presenter for the past 30 years. She is the former project director of the federal grant for the National Multicultural Interpreter Project.

David Quinto-Pozos

David Quinto-Pozos, Ph.D., is a linguistics professor and researcher. Some of his research topics include developmental signed language disorders, trilingual interpreting, and contact between LSM & ASL. He teaches bilingual first-language acquisition and signed language linguistics at the University of Texas and is currently President of *Mano a Mano*, a national organization for trilingual (ASL/Spanish/English) interpreters.

Angela Valcarcel-Roth

Angela Valcarcel-Roth, in addition to working for domestic and international interpreting service companies, is the first nationally successful Latina woman owner of the FCC approved Video Relay Service provider, *Global VRS*. Ms. Roth is one of the founders of *Mano a Mano* and served as its first President, she has also served as RID Diversity Council, RID National Certification Chair, and as a national presenter and advisor.

Rafael Oscar Treviño

Rafael Oscar Treviño, NIC Advanced (ASL/English), BEI Trilingual Master (ASL/Spanish/English), Florida Certified Court Interpreter (Spanish/English), faculty member at Miami Dade College, completed his M.A. in Spanish Translation and Interpreting at the University of Texas at Brownsville, where he offered a psycholinguistic model to explain the "deverbalization" process introduced by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer. He has been a co-investigator and presenter on trilingual-interpreting research, including the focus-group study for the NCIEC.

Foreword

Soon after becoming deaf at age 11 a friend of my mother, whose daughter had attended the California School for the Deaf (CSD), encouraged her to send me to the school. Enrolling at CSD contributed directly to our family's stability because my need for a permanent address (we were Mexican-American migrant farmworkers) required us to abandon moving around and we never again followed the harvests.

I was the only student at CSD who spoke fluent Spanish. I also recall one teacher who spoke some Spanish. As a consequence, my mother neither visited the school nor spoke to anyone who had any involvement with class work, social concerns or plans for after graduation. My mother's lack of communication with school personnel lasted her lifetime.

Toward Effective Practices: Interpreting in Spanish Influenced Settings is a work of love and long-time commitment by a number of dedicated individuals who believe that it's time for the interpreting profession to address the inability to create full access for a fast growing segment of the national deaf community that has a stake in three languages, American Sign Language, English and Spanish, necessitating professional interpreters. The monograph introduces the reader to principles, practices and procedures that define trilingual interpreting while directing reference to individuals and/or agencies where more in-depth knowledge and information is available.

As Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in the George H. W. Bush administration, I was especially interested in seeing deaf persons of ethnic and minority backgrounds form their own support groups. I arranged for the funding of national conferences for both Hispanic and African-American communities, in San Antonio and Atlanta, respectively. It was a significant honor that I was asked to be keynote speaker at both events. The Hispanic conference in San Antonio laid the groundwork for the establishment of the National Hispanic Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and I was privileged to work with such outstanding colleagues as John Lopez, Ramon Rodriguez, Gilbert Delgado, Angel Ramos, Cecilia Madan, Ivey Velez, Mark Apodaca and a number of other important contributors to get this important organization off the ground. Today, after recent organizational development, the NHCDHH continues to establish chapters throughout the country promoting social, political and

organizational empowerment. The NHCDHH stands solidly in support and expansion of trilingual interpreting.

Within the community of Deaf Hispanic persons, there are many whose families and friends speak Spanish as a first or acquired second language and the issue of not having trilingual support has been one of long standing. There are times when we all lament having been "born too soon," meaning that we were not able to benefit from developments that were not yet available. As an eleven-year old, I attended school 500 miles from home and came home only for the summer. My mother and I would exchange letters in Spanish, but absent the technology, did not have any opportunity to communicate with each other using the telephone. There were no Spanish-speaking interpreters to facilitate communication among school staff, my family and me. Today the field is emerging, but the dearth of professional interpreters with competencies in ASL, Spanish and English points out the dire need to increase the number of certified trilingual interpreters through robust recruitment and training programs.

I was born at the height of the Great American Depression in 1932 the fifth son in a Spanish-speaking family of nomadic farmworkers who trekked up and down California's San Joaquin Valley with regularity and great passion to harvest the vegetable fields and fruit orchards that provided the Nation's bounty. It was hard, but rewarding work, and most families worked as units. I remember life in the various "guest worker" camps, usually the cabins provided had no kitchens and were nothing more than four walls and a roof, although sometimes there were no roofs because harvest time was in July and August and it never rained in the Valley during those months. Life in those little camps nestled between fruit and crop farms were Spanish-speaking enclaves. This was the only life of my first ten years that I can recall with clarity. Since I did not know anyone who did any other kind of work for a living, I believed then that this would be the only life I would ever know.

In the 1950's and 60's when I was a teacher at the New York School for the Deaf (Fanwood), New York and other Eastern cities were experiencing a rapid influx of Puerto Rican immigrants, many who could speak only Spanish. As a consequence, Fanwood experienced an influx of students from Spanish-speaking families, but like most other schools for the deaf during that period, lacked professional interpreting support to bridge communication between the school and home. As the only faculty member who could speak Spanish, many of the Puerto Rican

students and their parents would stop to visit with me where we would communicate using ASL and spoken and written forms of Spanish.

Since my days at CSD considerable progress has been made, but we still have a long way to go. In 1972, as Gallaudet's only Hispanic deaf faculty member, I contacted students with Spanish surnames inviting them to a picnic. We sent out 100 or more invitations. I don't recall any of the fifty students who came stating they could speak, read or write in Spanish, but about half of them reported having parents who preferred to communicate in Spanish rather than English. I suspect a large percentage of the parents of these students experienced my mother's misfortune of not being able to communicate with their children's teachers and school officials. Worse yet is the burden of many non-Spanish speaking Hispanic deaf persons who cannot communicate effectively with their own parents and other family members because trilingual interpreters are still a limited, albeit greatly in demand, service.

Two years ago, I was invited to travel to Madrid and Barcelona to address groups of parents and deaf persons. The hosts did not have anyone with sufficient skills and experience to interpret bilingually and asked me to bring my own interpreter. I sent a request to an interpreter newsletter seeking to hire a bilingual interpreter and received over 20 responses with quite a few offering to go without compensation. This was the first time I have ever worked with a trilingual interpreter so I was a bit apprehensive. But, I needn't have worried. My interpreter and I made quite an impression when we appeared before the audiences. It was a classic example of trilingual support that allowed for smooth, flawless presentations. We were appreciative for the comments of praise and appreciation by many persons we encountered. This experience also convinced me that someday we will be able to provide this type and level of service to anyone who needs or requests it.

The rate of growth of the Hispanic population in our country has created a sense of urgency regarding the ability of our education programs and services to accommodate their needs. This monograph is an important step in addressing this need. Its authors should be complimented and congratulated.

Robert R. Davila
Vice President Emeritus, Rochester Institute of Technology
President Emeritus, Gallaudet University

Preface

According to the 2010 Census, 308.7 million people reside in the United States. Of this number, 50.5 million (or 16 percent) are of Hispanic/Latino origin and 2.1 million are also deaf.[1] It is estimated that by 2050 this number will grow to 102.5 million and include 4.2 million deaf individuals. In other words, in 2010 one in every eight Americans was of Hispanic/Latino origin, and in 2040 this number will increase to more than one in every four Americans (RID Standard Practice Paper, 2013). It is certain that during their lifetime, a number of these individuals will be exposed to a "trilingual experience;"[2] some will experience effective interpretation, others perhaps not.

Over a two-day period in 2010, fourteen experienced trilingual interpreters convened in Los Angeles to take a critical look at the specialization, referred to as *Trilingual Interpreting – American Sign Language, Spanish and English*. They chronicled real world experiences and reviewed best practices in order to understand the depth and breadth of the work. They shared the importance of community mobilization and strategies for empowering trilingual leadership, and developed a related action plan. This meeting planted the first seeds for the establishment of NCIEC Trilingual Task Force and the development of *Toward Effective Practice: Interpreting in Spanish-Influenced Settings.*

The NCIEC Trilingual Task Force was created in 2011. Its first "assignment" was to identify and vet a slate of standardized domains and competencies required by trilingual interpreters to ensure effective communication. To this end, they undertook the arduous task of identifying current, best, and effective practices around this focus. They conducted numerous surveys, focus groups, interviews, and a literature review. While on this path of discovery, it became evident that trilingual interpreting is a complex process that requires a high degree of linguistic, cognitive, and technical skills that go far beyond bilingual interpreting, *and* that there exists very little anecdotal or research-driven data.

This publication adds to the current body of research, literature, and resources by highlighting the myriad elements that comprise the trilingual "big picture." Through its

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[1] For purposes of this publication, unless otherwise described, the term "deaf" refers to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind.

[2] For purposes of this publication, unless otherwise described, the term "trilingual" refers to the languages and cultures that support American Sign Language, Spanish and English.

evidence-based content, the publication offers quantitative data to support long-time anecdotal beliefs. It provides future researchers, fund seekers, and educators with new data and reference materials to use as they move forward with their work. It offers practitioners a greater understanding of what they do and promotes strategies for mobilization. Finally, it educates stakeholders and the public, including employers, as to the nature and uniqueness of this specialization.

As you peruse this publication, you will garner knowledge as described through formal research findings, informal case studies, individual perspectives, and suggested blueprints for shaping the future. You will enjoy a comprehensive history of this specialization, one believed to be a first of its kind. As you study the Literature Review (chapter 3), you may note that a two-year literature review chronicled only thirty references, and that academic and practitioner-provided data comes in "waves" every eight to ten years. While it is certain that not every publication has been captured in the literature review, and that this review is specific to trilingual interpreting in Spanish-influenced settings, the dearth of research signals the need for greater study and exploration.

In each chapter you will be struck by and appreciate the complexity of the task that goes far beyond the act of bilingual interpreting, particularly when one factors in, among others, twenty-three Spanish-speaking countries. [3] As such, you may wonder why trilingual interpreters are not better compensated for their additional skills. Despite the need for advanced skills, there continues to be a lack of formal education specific to trilingual interpreting, in particular education designed and taught by trilingual academics and practitioners. This challenge may now be somewhat mitigated by the introduction of a vetted set of domains and competencies in which to base curriculum design and teaching strategies. Outlined in chapter 6, these domains and competencies were identified and crafted using clearly defined effective practice protocols. Trilingual interpreting educators are encouraged to bookmark this chapter for their ongoing use. In the meantime, trilingual interpreters continue to learn from each other, and specific to this publication, through rich case studies (chapter 7) of real life situations reflected in the practitioners' own words.

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[3] This publication recognizes that a full spectrum of spoken Spanish variations exist depending upon a region or country, as does a spectrum of signed languages such as Mexican Sign Language (*Lengua de Señas Mexicana,* or LSM).

The authors of this publication recognize that there is need for additional documentation that addresses the unique interpreting needs of individuals who communicate in languages other than English or Spanish. A review of the trilingual domains and competencies reveals that many of the competencies pertain to all trilingual settings. However, it also revealed that there exist skills that are unique to a particular language and culture. The editors invite trilingual professionals who are working in non Spanish-influenced settings to borrow from this publication as they advocate for their particular trilingual focus. With so many commonalities, broad-based collaboration among all trilingual interpreters has merit and would be welcome.

We hope that the reader, irrespective of background, will use this resource for learning, teaching and advancing the field. We hope that its content will spur dialogue that leads to the expression of philosophical ideas and new and bold approaches to trilingual interpreting. Narváez issued a call to action when she stated in "What is Trilingual Interpreting" (CHIA Insider, 2009).

> "… It is time to reconsider the standard, research the work that we have been doing, identify the differences and the nuances of the work, and move forward as informed educators, interpreters and consumers about the amazingly complicated work that we do."
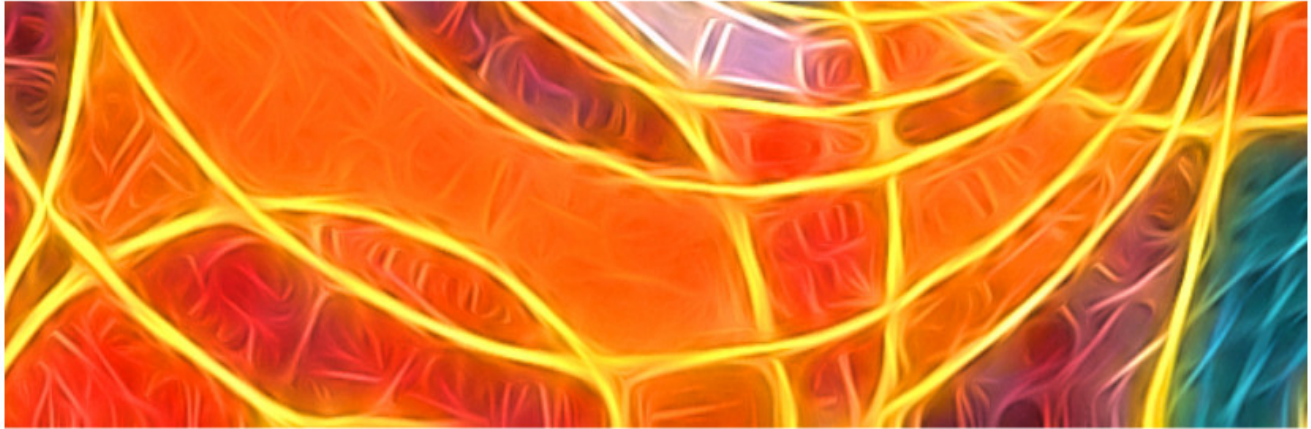
We hope that the publication leaves the reader with a desire to become engaged and eager to shape the future and growth of the profession.

The Editorial Team
Pauline Annarino
Myrelis Aponte-Samalot
David Quinto-Pozos

Part I
Historical Perspectives

Defining Trilingual Interpreting and Its Practitioners

Pauline Annarino
Kristie Casanova de Canales
Rafael Treviño
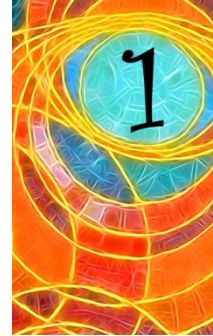
"As an [ASL-English] interpreter, you almost have to try not to be influenced by so many resources. As a trilingual interpreter, you have to go out of your way to find support."
— Trilingual Practitioner

Defining Trilingual Interpreting

It is said that trilingual video interpreters travel the world in a day, interpreting telephone calls that connect consumers around the globe. Using video technology, they interpret phone conversations between deaf and hearing consumers, switching from a spoken English call to a spoken Spanish call in a matter of seconds. They are exposed to dialectical differences, a multitude of accents, and varying speeds of conversation. They work in all of the same settings as bilingual interpreters, plus a myriad of Spanish-influenced settings including Immigration and Naturalization, Latino cultural events, conference presentations being interpreted *from* one language into two different languages or from two different languages *into* one language, companion interpreting, and foreign language classes. They remain neutral while managing the stress in front of them; making the task seem seamless and easy (Narváez, 2009).

With 23 countries speaking numerous dialects of Spanish, and with a high probability that individuals speaking one or more of these dialects reside in the United States, defining what is meant by "*Trilingual Interpreting: American Sign Language/Spanish/English*" is complicated. It does not refer to any one particular kind of translational act, nor does "trilingual interpreter" currently refer to one particular kind of practitioner. Just as the word "deaf" is often used in a broad sense and refers to people who may be deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind[4], "trilingual" alludes to more than its surface definition of English, Spanish, and ASL.

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[4] The unhyphenated word is being used, following the definition that "deafblindness is a condition presenting other difficulties than those caused by deafness and blindness" (Lagati, 1993, p. 429).

Theoretically, a trilingual interpreter is one who is fluent in English, Spanish, and ASL, and by extension, one who is able to interpret between and among the three languages. The definition also implies an interpreter who is able to read and write in both English and Spanish, and who is proficient in the various registers ranging from informal to the frozen in all three languages.

In 2000, the National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP) defined "multicultural/multilingual interpreting" as:

> "one in which one or more of the consumers including the hearing and/or deaf participants, require additional cultural and linguistic competencies: the sensitivity, knowledge, background, interpreting skills and languages(s), beyond the assumed ASL/English, U.S. majority culture/American Deaf Culture sign language interpreting paradigm, necessary to provide equal communication and cultural access, both in content and affect, receptively and expressively, for the given consumer(s) and situation (p. 31)."

It further defined a "multicultural/multilingual interpreter" as:

> "an interpreter, either Hearing and/or Deaf, that possesses the required cultural and linguistic competencies: the sensitivity, knowledge, background, interpreting skills and/or language(s) necessary to provide equal communication and cultural access, both in content and affect, receptively and expressively, for given a consumer(s) and situations (p. 31)."

A snapshot of a *real world* trilingual interpreter, though, often illustrates a different view. Treviño and Casanova de Canales in their extensive focus group study (chapter 5) found that in reality not all trilingual interpreters are equally proficient in all three languages. With regard to ASL, most trilingual interpreters are on par with their bilingual peers and face the same challenges mastering the language. In respect to English, most trilingual interpreters who were raised and educated in the English-speaking United States are also on par with their bilingual peers. It is the Spanish language that presents the most challenges to trilingual interpreters, with the exception of Puerto Rico, where interpreters tend to be more proficient in Spanish than in English. Because of the island's affiliation with the U.S., whether interpreters there identify as bilingual (Spanish/ASL) or trilingual, there is a notable influence of English in both signed and spoken forms that interpreters must address.

In their focus group study, they further learned that the vast majority of trilingual interpreters in the United States are heritage speakers[5] of Spanish, whereby most, if not all, can understand spoken Spanish but some will struggle with speaking it. Some will not be able to read it, and many will not be able to write it. Like CODAs[6], who have been using ASL since childhood, heritage speakers of Spanish have an ease of use in their two languages, but their Spanish competency must be further developed for the purposes of professional interpreting. One effective solution to this challenge is for heritage speakers to enroll in formal Spanish classes at a local university or college.

The focus group study also revealed that interpreters who are native speakers of Spanish, including those in Puerto Rico, also face challenges when working in the United States, particularly in videoconference settings. The varieties of Spanish spoken in the U.S. are rich. Sometimes, these varieties can be anticipated geographically, such as Mexican Spanish in California, Salvadoran Spanish in Washington, D.C., and Cuban Spanish in Miami, Florida. In addition, there will always be smaller communities within these larger regional communities that speak the other varieties of Spanish. As such, regardless of origin and native fluency, trilingual interpreters must learn about the varieties of Spanish outside of their own.

In tandem, trilingual interpreters who are non-native or non-heritage speakers of Spanish face the greatest challenges. They must acquire not only a new language, but often a new cultural paradigm. They must expand their repertoire of varieties of Spanish in the same manner as heritage and native speakers. A significant challenge to the non-native speakers of Spanish is the lack of fluency in the intimate and informal registers of Spanish, which heritage speakers usually hold intact. Since moving to a Spanish-speaking country is impractical for most interpreters, non-native speakers must take alternative steps to develop these registers, such as consulting with peers, socializing with Spanish-speaking communities in the U.S., and apprising themselves of educational materials.

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[5] The term "heritage speaker" is used to refer to an individual who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or merely understands the heritage language, and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language (Valdés, 2000, p. 1).

[6] CODA is an acronym derived from 'child(ren) of (a) deaf adult(s)' and refers to those people who grew up in an environment influenced by sign language and deaf culture (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_of_deaf_adult).

The Act of Trilingual Interpreting

Bilingual interpreting has often been described as a complex process requiring a high degree of linguistic, cognitive and technical skills in both English and ASL. Trilingual interpreting extends the complexity with the addition of the third language, whether spoken or signed. ASL/English interpreters are trained to take into consideration various factors about their deaf consumers in order to match their linguistic needs. They consider whether the deaf consumer was mainstreamed or attended a residential school, raised in a hearing or a deaf family, is young or old, has a profound or a mild hearing loss, etc. These same factors are considered by trilingual interpreters, albeit multiplied by the number of Spanish-speaking countries and their respective cultures (Treviño and Casanova de Canales, 2012).

As noted in the NCIEC Literature Review (2012) and the focus group work of Treviño and Casanova de Canales (2012) regardless of linguistic ability in English, Spanish or ASL, trilingual interpreters face other unique challenges that go beyond the more traditional bilingual experience: they tend to work with a greater proportion of deaf consumers who are not fluent in ASL. Trilingual interpreters are often hired for situations in which the deaf consumer is of Hispanic/Latino origin and for whom ASL is a second or foreign language. As such, trilingual interpreters have noted that they feel most ill-prepared in situations where the deaf consumer comes from a Spanish-speaking country. A great many factors can affect the consumer's linguistic interaction with the interpreter, with one example being the deaf consumer who is fluent in ASL but preferring mouthing or fingerspelling in Spanish. Others, such as recent immigrants, may be fluent in their native sign language but not yet fluent in ASL. Therefore, the trilingual interpreter may, or should, work in tandem with a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) to mitigate this challenge.

Compounding the complexity of the trilingual task is the cultural, societal and linguistic differences inherent in each language. Navárez (2009) notes that little is known about the strategies that trilingual interpreters use to navigate ambiguities within the source language caused by differences between Spanish, English and ASL. It is known that the culturally competent trilingual interpreter understands and incorporates these cultural and linguistic factors into each interpretation. They ensure inclusion of each consumer in the communication interaction, making decisions regarding the order and modes to use among the three cultures, such as which party will be greeted or addressed first. They are cognizant of which variant of

formal and informal verbs to use, depending on the status of the individual being addressed and the speaker's relationship to that person. They determine whether to interpret simultaneously or consecutively using ASL or one spoken language. They make decisions regarding voicing of fingerspelled names, inflecting for English or Spanish pronunciation (e.g., Carmen or David), knowing that the interpreter's pronunciation may have an effect on whether a person is perceived to identify with the Latino community or not.

Expanding on the more stereotypical and linear understanding of trilingual work, Treviño and Cancel described the complexities of trilingual interpreting at the Conference of Interpreter Training (CIT) Conference in 2012. In table 1.1, the presenters capture the depth and breadth of the understanding and decision making that accompanies this specialized work. As illustrated, while an individual may see the task of trilingual interpreting as "decision making around three languages," Treviño and Cancel postulated that the task actually involves "decision making around seven discreet language factors and multiple registers."

Table 1.1: Complexities of Trilingual Interpreting

NOT THIS…

Trilingual Interpreting

| English | ASL | Spanish |

…BUT RATHER THIS

Trilingual Interpreting

- English-speaking hearing consumer (ESHC)
  - Variety of English
- Deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind consumer (DHHC)
  - American
    - Variety of ASL
  - Hispanic/Latino
    - Variety of ASL
- Spanish-speaking hearing consumer (SSHC)
  - Variety of Spanish
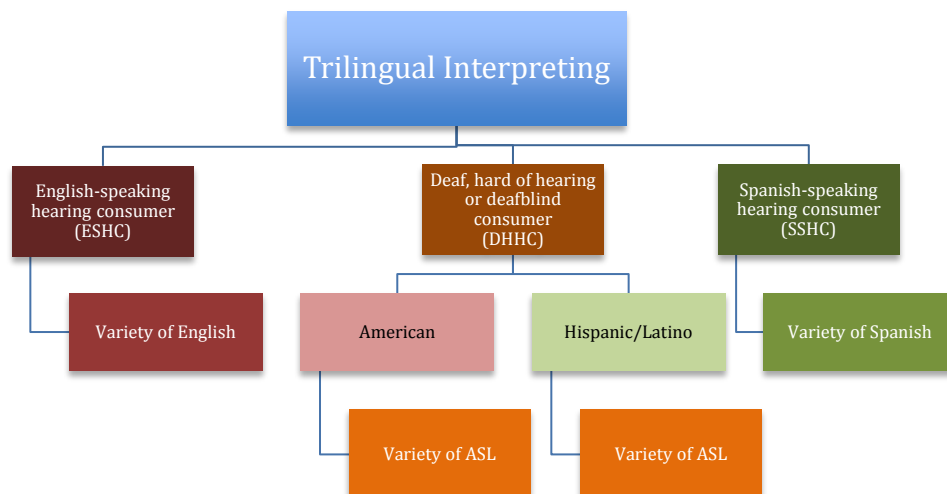
NOT THIS…
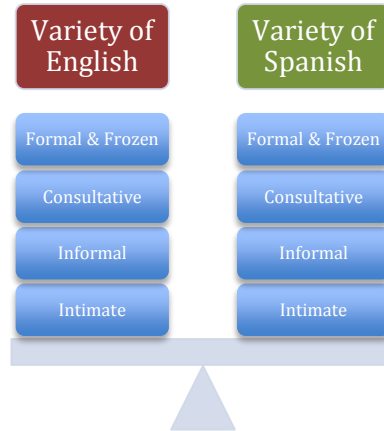
…BUT RATHER THIS
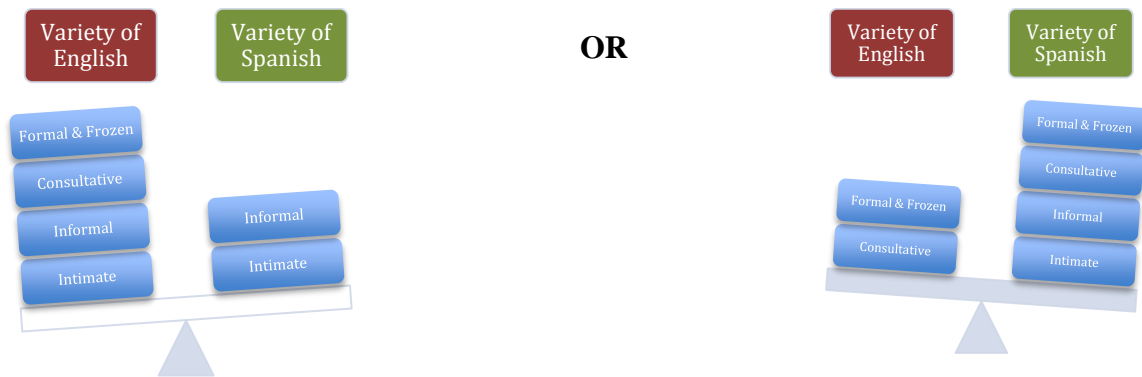
The Unique Demands Placed on Trilingual Interpreters

During the two-day Roundtable meeting in Los Angeles in 2010 (as noted in the Preface), the fourteen participants took time to engage in an in-depth look at the demands placed on these specialized interpreters. Using the Demand Control Schema (Pollard & Dean, 2013) as a framework in which to study the interpreting work, the participants looked at the requirements and challenges they often face in the trilingual setting. After a day of discussion and reflection, they identified a number of trilingual-specific demands they routinely manage. For example, in terms of *environmental* demands, they identified the challenge of "medical appointment by committee," whereby entire families attend in small spaces, and control may not be held by the patient, as well as the lack of direct translation of medical terms from English to ASL and Spanish.

The group looked at *interpersonal* demands and identified trilingual-specific challenges such as the increased frustration sometimes felt by all parties in a three-language and three-culture environment, where roles may be confused by the parties and the communication time may be extended. They noted such cultural issues around the concept of increased and varying privilege, power and authority, cultural sensitivity or insensitivity on the part of one or many participants, and cultural nuances such as "spank" versus "hit."

Of specific highlight was the great number of *paralinguistic* demands placed on them. Among others, they identified navigating settings represented by individuals from 23 different Spanish speaking countries who are using a variety of formal or informal Spanish, along with differing accents, dialects and linguistic nuances. Additionally, they spoke of the skill of hearing English, signing ASL and mouthing Spanish simultaneously, code switching and the reconciliation of three registers as unique and significant demands.

They further shared the *intrapersonal* demand created when an interpreter has greater strength (real or perceived) in only two of the three languages, and the lack of confidence that is generated as a result. Moving beyond language, they spoke of feelings of oppression by the dominant culture, and how the cultural nuance of Latino "machismo" and "flirtation" must be managed while doing the work.

The demands identified by this group in 2010 were consistently validated in all of the effective practices research conducted by the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force. They are noted throughout this publication. Among others, they will be identified in chapters 4 and 5, which discuss the beliefs of more than 100 trilingual interpreters and stakeholders, as captured in focus groups and surveys, and again in chapter 6, which discusses the domains and competencies required to render an effective trilingual interpretation.

Understanding the demands of trilingual interpreting is an important tool for achieving a more solid interpretation. However, successful trilingual interpreting also rests firmly on the strength of an interpreter's interpersonal multicultural competence, which is at the apex of effective communication. The National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP, 2000) describes interpersonal multiculturalism as an ability:

> "…that requires a paradigm shift of perception from ethnocentrism to perceptual and empathetic orientation to see and treat others as "central." It is not an infinite or finite set of academically acquired culturally specific skills. It is the development of respect and

appreciation for differences. It requires a strong sense of personal awareness, sense of self, and understanding to move along the continuum of cultural awareness from sensitivity to having competency interacting with others who are different...(p. 1)"

The NMIP published "A Curriculum for Enhancing Interpreter Competencies for Working within Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities" in 2000. We suggest that it be required reading for all interpreter educators, regardless of ethnic or racial origin, and that its curriculum be "…included, infused and transformed into each interpreter education program. For, with transformation comes a 'core value paradigm shift and, ultimately, social change" (p. 4).

The work of the trilingual interpreter is complicated, specialized and necessary. The nation cannot deny nor ignore its current resident demographics and trends over the next forty years as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. With so many variables and with so many "high stakes" interactions (e.g., medical, legal, immigration, etc.), the importance of adequate training and adequate pay cannot be over emphasized (Narváez, 2009). It is imperative that the field of interpreting acknowledge the depth and breadth of skill needed to provide effective communication in Spanish-influenced settings and respond by creating culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate educational opportunities, while promoting greater bilingual pay.

A Historical Review of Trilingual Interpreting

Primary Contributors:
David Quinto-Pozos, Angela Roth, Mary Mooney,
Yolanda Chavira, & Myrelis Aponte-Samalot

Note: This chapter also benefited greatly from information provided by the following persons: *Esteban Amaro, José Bertrán, Mathew Call, Edwin Díaz, Melva Flores Rodriguez, Carmen García, Gilberto García, María Laguna, Caleb López, Angélica Montero, David Myers, Arlene Narváez, Jorge Santiago, Rafael Treviño, Yolanda Zavala*

Introduction

The closing decades of the 20th century were a pivotal time in the history of trilingual interpreting. Activities and opportunities were materializing in various areas of the United States and Puerto Rico—activities that reflected the surfacing of currents that had existed for years. Within those activities emerged a number of common themes, and among them were the following:

1. In communities where Spanish was prevalent, signed language interpreters fluent in Spanish found themselves using a combination of ASL, Spanish and, in some cases, English. In some circles, this became known as trilingual (ASL/Spanish/English) interpreting. In tandem with this realization was the recognition that there existed specific linguistic challenges across the various Spanish-speaking communities that were being addressed by the trilingual interpreters.

2. Deaf community service providers saw an increase in the need for trilingual interpreting. Among those service providers were Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, Video Relay Service (VRS), and educational institutions.

3. The need for training, professional development, and service delivery protocols specific to trilingual interpreting became evident, and multiple leaders at both the regional and national levels came forth to address the need. Training included linguistic and cultural topics, with a recognition that trilingual interpreters needed to gain competency and hone their knowledge of three languages and several cultures.

4. Regional and national unions of trilingual interpreters were created to satisfy a common desire to be recognized and respected by the larger ASL/English interpreting profession. The creation of these affiliations resulted in the establishment of national and state organizations of trilingual interpreters.

5. The need for a method to validate skills became evident, and discussions of trilingual certification were commonplace during this time.

6. Discussions of compensation for value added skills of interpreters were also commonplace.

7. The need for a directory or list of qualified trilingual interpreters became evident.

In addition to the themes that have united trilingual interpreters throughout the country, there were also unique aspects of trilingual interpreting attributed to specific geographic regions and their distinct Spanish-speaking communities. Among these regional and cultural differences were the following:

1. There exist different degrees to which varieties of Spanish and linguistic features of Spanish are represented in ASL (e.g., Spanish mouthing or fingerspelling). For instance, there is more spoken English used in the continental U.S. than in Puerto Rico; this impacts the degree to which local interpreters manage English or Spanish in their daily work. Anecdotal reports of language use in different regions include: rapid fingerspelling of English in the ASL used on the mainland; an influence from Spanish on the ASL used in Puerto Rico; and generally less frequent and slower fingerspelling by deaf people from Latino backgrounds. Although these claims need to be investigated empirically to be upheld, we report them here as anecdotes that continue to be shared by the various language users involved with these language communities.

2. There are likely differences in proficiency due to the language in which one was educated, both for the interpreters and the deaf and hearing communities they serve. The language in which one was educated has been found to have a notable influence on one's language use, and in turn one's interpretation skills.

3. There may be differences across the country correlating to the amount of access a trilingual interpreter has to professional development materials, including their access to training programs.

4. There may be differences in the types of certification required for interpreters throughout the country; although there may be federally funded programs that have distinct standards for minimal professional competency and appropriate credentials for interpreters.

As a result, trilingual interpreting in the U.S. is not monolithic; there are various differences that are influenced by the local Spanish-speaking community and other characteristics of a region.

In review of the above themes, one will note that the list of common themes has several items on it, as compared to the short list of unique differences occurring across the country. This is an important observation because this feature allows trilingual interpreters throughout the U.S. to unite with similar and shared goals. The work that has been accomplished constitutes a rich web of professionalism that is quite enlightening when understood. These themes are captured in the rich histories described in the pages of this chapter; it is notable that these themes continue to be relevant to the present day. They are contextualized within explanations of the history of trilingual interpreting in the U.S. This chapter begins by chronicling developments at the local level, and then looks at national efforts and events which have been notable in shaping the history of trilingual interpreting.

State and Regional Histories

California

This state has been home to many leaders in the field of trilingual interpreting, including Mathew Call, Caleb López, Arlene Narváez, Gilberto Partida, and Sergio Peña. They have contributed to the professionalization of the field at both the state and national levels. Their work within the state has focused on primarily two areas: representation within professional organizations of interpreters and provision of professional development opportunities for interpreters.

The period between 2007 and 2008 was a pivotal time in California trilingual history. The Southern California Chapter of RID (SCRID) assembled a trilingual committee, chaired by Chuck Scarpaci from LiNKS Interpreting agency, an agency contracting various trilingual interpreters at the time. Scarpaci would later step down as chair, expressing that a trilingual interpreter should hold that position. In August 2007, Mano a Mano held their biennial RID preconference in San Francisco, once more holding trilingual-themed workshops and other professional development activities. In April 2008, the SCRID Trilingual Committee hosted a

workshop presented by Constanza Wiens entitled "I am a Trilingual Interpreter (ASL/Spanish/English) ¿Estamos Tumbando Barreras?" at the Abram Friedman Occupational Center in Los Angeles.

Building on the momentum of 2007-2008, the National Center on Deafness (NCOD) 2009 Summer Institute included a two-day trilingual training for trilingual interpreters. In 2010 the Western Region Interpreter Education Center (WRIEC), a member of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC), hosted a trilingual roundtable with trilingual interpreters from the western United States. Feedback from this group would provide the foundation and direction for the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force established in 2011. In 2011 and 2012, El Camino College obtained a grant to provide a trilingual workshop series and mentorship opportunities and create materials for their interpreter education lab.

In July 2013, the first trilingual workshop in Sacramento was carried out, with two California trilingual interpreters, Arlene Narváez and Caleb López, serving as workshop presenters. Moreover, in 2013, after meeting all the requirements to establish a chapter of Mano a Mano, California Mano a Mano was officially recognized as a chapter of the national organization.

Florida

As with all of the regions of the United States and Puerto Rico, the leadership of a few has created the opportunity for trilingual interpreters to engage in professional development and advancement. In Florida, these leaders have included Lidia Amparo Añorga, Angela Roth, Lisa Schaefermeyer, and Rafael Treviño.

American Sign Language Interpreters, Inc. was founded in 1995 by Lidia Amparo Añorga in Miami. As the first president of the organization, Añorga's leadership position allowed her to advocate for trilingual interpreters. For example, the following year Añorga played an important role successfully advocating for appropriate compensation for trilingual interpreters in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Out-Patient Mental Health Program in Miami. Her work has also impacted areas outside of Florida. From 1993–1995, Añorga served as a consultant to Gallaudet University as they implemented trilingual interpreting services in the Pre-College Program, which met an important need for parents and family members of Gallaudet students who were Spanish speakers.

Angela Roth, an owner of an interpreting agency based in Florida for many years, has been one of the top advocates and visionaries for trilingual interpreters and interpretation services in the country. She has participated in multiple national efforts to document the work that trilingual interpreters do and fought for services and resources for interpreters. Roth has been, among others: a leader in the NMIP project, Mano a Mano's first president, and chair of the RID Diversity Council. She was one of the first Latinas to own and manage a trilingual interpreting agency, and has played a key role in discussions between RID and trilingual interpreter stakeholders on the topic of certification. Roth remains a staunch advocate for fair and equal treatment of trilingual interpreters.

Lisa Schaefermeyer is the former Florida Educational Interpreter Evaluation Chair. During Schaefermeyer's tenure in that position (mid-1990s), a Spanish version of the Florida Educational Interpreter Evaluation (EIE) was made available. The EIE, developed in 1985 by the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (FRID) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education and Miami Dade Community College Interpreter Training Program, assessed the specific and unique competencies needed by educational Interpreters in the K–12 setting.

Rafael Treviño is a trilingual interpreter and Florida native. Currently living in Miami, Treviño has contributed immensely to the work that has been carried out by NCIEC on the topic of trilingual interpreting. He and Kristie Casanova de Canales were the principal researchers of the initial focus group work that led to the development of trilingual interpreting domains and competencies (see chapter 5), also authored by Treviño and Casanova de Canales. He is a past Mano a Mano board member, and continues to take on roles in south Florida that allow him to advocate for the continued professionalization of trilingual interpreters.

As illustrated by this brief picture of the leaders in Florida, it is through leadership that trilingual interpreting in this region is able to advance. We recognize the role that each of these individuals and many more have played in the growth of the profession in Florida.

Illinois

Activity surrounding the topic of trilingual interpreting was also brewing in the Midwest during the 1990s. During that time, Chicago-based National Center for Latinos with Disabilities (NCLD) had, as an organization focus, the provision of holding educational workshops on immigration, ASL, Deaf culture, etc., to Latino families with deaf or disabled family members.

Historical Review

Two deaf staff workers played a key role within the NCLD. They were Carmen Aguilar and Marco Antonio Coronado. As a routine practice, Aguilar and Coronado hired trilingual interpreters for all of their meetings and events. This practice helped raise awareness, and interpreting agencies soon began seeking out trilingual interpreters. Deaf Latinos began to advocate for trilingual interpreting services and trilingual interpreters for their communication needs. This trend was also seen in religious services. The local Catholic Church with deaf parishioners began to hire trilingual interpreters for their services. This was highly noticeable in the local community according to Melva Rodrigues, a Chicago-area trilingual interpreter and community leader. According to Carmen Aguilar, before the trend to hire trilingual interpreters by agencies and the Church began, most trilingual interpretation had been conducted by family members. While forward thinking in practice, there were only a handful of trilingual interpreters in Chicago during those years. Even though those trilingual interpreters during the 1990s who were willing to be assigned to jobs requiring Spanish, they had not undergone formal trilingual training, and there were no united efforts to address the lack of training opportunities.

At the turn of the 21st century, momentum was building in the field of trilingual interpreting, due in part to the leadership of Mano a Mano. Chicago interpreter Ellen Kaufman became the Mano a Mano Region 3 Representative and during her short tenure a meeting of trilingual interpreters in the Chicago area took place. A major topic, at that meeting of approximately six to eight interpreters, was the need for professional development. The discussion continued with Melva Rodriguez as the next Region 3 Representative. Rodriquez sought out trilingual interpreters in the area and organized regular meetings. The meetings were often held at someone's home, and consisted of time devoted to a formal meeting, professional development, which included practice and training activities, and social interaction.

The annual training occurring in Big Spring, Texas at the same time was further impacting trilingual professional development in Illinois and the greater Chicago area. Melva Rodriguez attended a Big Spring Trilingual training, returned to Chicago with a strong desire to promote trilingual professional development, and organized the first trilingual-themed workshop for Chicago-area interpreters. Tim Mahoney, then a representative of Illinois RID, helped to secure sponsorship for the workshop from Illinois RID, and Carmen Garcia, a trilingual interpreter from New York, was the presenter. This successful professional development opportunity ignited the desire of many trilingual interpreters to continue their professional

growth, and recognized becoming an official Mano a Mano regional chapter as one avenue to accomplish this. Illinois Mano a Mano was approved as an official chapter by the Mano a Mano Board in 2009, and helping to make that a reality were Chicago leaders Esteban Amaro, Lucy Rodriguez, Melva Rodriguez, Diana Silva, and Alicia Soto. Currently, Illinois Mano a Mano offers three to four workshops per year that focus specifically on trilingual professional development.

New Mexico

New Mexico has also played a notable role in the history of trilingual interpreting, despite the comparatively small number of trilingual interpreters from the state. This contribution has been due, in part, to the leadership of people residing in New Mexico. Dr. Gilbert Delgado, former Superintendent of the New Mexico School for the Deaf, and Ralph Sedano, former Director of the Trilingual Interpreting Program at the Santa Fe Community College (SFCC), who are prominent figures in this history, along with Mary Mooney from El Paso Community College (EPCC).

In the early 1990s, Gilberto Delgado and Tina López-Snideman, Chair of the Spanish Department at Santa Fe Community College, sought and received a $500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop a unique program to train interpreters fluent in either ASL and English, ASL and Spanish, or all three languages, to work with the deaf and hard of hearing children from Spanish-speaking families. This project was the first of its kind in the country and had a profound positive impact on the role of trilingual interpreter education. In January 1993, Mary L. Mooney, on sabbatical leave from EPCC, was named as Interim Project Director, and tasked to develop the initial course outline and recruit its first cohort of students.

In the fall of 1993, Ralph Sedano took over as the full time coordinator/faculty of SFCC's Interpreter Preparation Program. Sedano was the only Hispanic deaf coordinator of an interpreter training program in the nation, and is recognized in "Who's Who in American College and Universities." SFCC was the only program in the nation where students could receive a degree in bilingual or trilingual interpreting (ASL/Spanish/English). Working alongside the NMIP, Sedano co-produced two videotapes with EPCC on issues of interpreting in the Hispanic Deaf Community. During this time, Sedano was also pursuing his doctorate in linguistics at the University of New Mexico. Sadly, a motorcycle accident resulted in Sedano's

untimely death in July 2007. Nevertheless, the program at SFCC continues, and offers associates degree in interpreting, with a trilingual option available to students. The NMIP was funded until 2000, when federal funding priorities were shifted to other areas.

New York

Like the other states discussed here, New York served as a stage for trilingual interpreting in the early and mid-1990's. There have been schools for the Deaf in New York with notable percentages of Spanish-speaking families, including Lexington School for the Deaf and PS-47. These schools also played a role in the education of deaf children from Puerto Rican descent. It may be the case that some of those students returned to Puerto Rico with the ASL they acquired while at these U.S. mainland schools, possibly contributing to the evolution of signed language on the Island.

One of the nation's pioneers in trilingual interpreting education is Carmen García. Before she became an educator, however, Carmen worked as a trilingual interpreter in New York. She reports that, while completing an internship experience in rehabilitation/mental health counseling for the Deaf at the New York Medical Center from 1994-1995, she took trilingual interpreting jobs, primarily in mental health settings. According to Carmen, since the Center had a special program for Deaf patients at that time, there were also other professionals who engaged in (trilingual) interpreting. Kathleen Friedman was the psychologist who spearheaded the program and provided interpreting services for her patients. Carmen also noted that Montefiore Hospital in New York City served as a site for trilingual interpreting and one of the interpreters who worked those types of jobs was Otisha Ayala. Another provider of trilingual interpreting services to Deaf clients from Spanish-speaking families during the 1990s was New York's Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), now known as the Adult Career and Continuing Education Services—Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCESS-VR).

From 1996 to 2004 Carmen ran the Professional Learning Center, a private vocational rehabilitation/interpreter training program partly funded by the State of New York. That program had a trilingual component for those students who wished to pursue interpreting between Spanish, ASL, and English. Later (from 2003-2007), Carmen developed the interpreter training program at Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Like her work at the

Professional Learning Center, Carmen ensured that students interested in pursuing trilingual interpreting were given the information and training needed to be successful in the specialization. Carmen moved to Spain after her work at Dutchess Community College, leaving a gap in the educational opportunities for trilingual interpreting students in New York.

However, recently there has been renewed interest in trilingual interpreting in New York. Specifically, in 2013, a group of trilingual interpreters in New York City under the leadership of Vernón León, came together to create a regional chapter of Mano a Mano. At the time of the writing of this book they are engaged in the completing the formal steps to become an official chapter. It looks like the future will be very exciting for New York with continued work in the field of trilingual interpreting.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico is an island in the Caribbean with a rich linguistic and cultural history that dates back to pre-European contact. Since the early 20th Century, when Puerto Ricans were granted United States citizenship in 1917, the Island has been influenced tremendously by the English language and cultural, educational, and governmental practices of the mainland. However, unlike some parts of the United States, such as the American Southwest, English has not replaced Spanish as the most commonly used language of the Island. Yet, English does exist alongside Spanish, and many Puerto Ricans are bilingual, with Spanish being their first language (L1) and English being their second language (L2). Unfortunately, the indigenous languages of the Island (e.g., Taíno) are not used in modern-day Puerto Rico.

The rich history of Puerto Rico serves as the backdrop for a discussion of deaf people, their languages, and the human services intended to support their life journeys—including interpretation. This is a history that should be described in some detail in order to frame the developments with respect to signed language interpretation, both bilingual (ASL/Spanish) and trilingual (ASL/Spanish/English).

There are certain aspects of Puerto Rican history as they relate to deaf people, signed language, and interpretation that should be highlighted, which include two 20th century educational institutions. They are the San Gabriel School for Deaf Children established early in the century in San Juan by the Sacred Heart missionaries from Baltimore, MD, an order of Benedictine nuns. Decades later, the Centre for the Deaf in Luquillo opened its doors (Williams

& Parks, 2012), which is reported to have been founded by a Lutheran group from Canada (Frishberg, 1987). Communication between the educators and the children at these institutions followed either a philosophy of oralism or Spanish-influenced signing with Spanish, though Frishberg (1987) reports that the Benedictine nuns brought ASL to the Island. In time, English-influenced signing (e.g., Signing Exact English) and Spanish-influenced signing (e.g., Signed Spanish) found their way into the educational system. Outside the realm of education, it is possible that a signed language was being used; however, details of early Puerto Rico signing, including thorough descriptions of lexical items and grammar, have not been made available in publications. It is likely that a signed language existed on the Island prior to the arrival of ASL; although the contact between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland most likely resulted in a rapid transition to ASL, and to what is now widely considered a Puerto Rican dialect of ASL (see Williams & Parks, 2012).

In spite of the use of signed language in the education of deaf children, signed language was generally not in the public consciousness in Puerto Rico throughout the first half of the 20th century. In similar fashion to what was occurring on the mainland during that time, there were no professional interpreters, despite the fact that deaf people were actively communicating with families, friends, and other networks. Depending on the deaf individual's contact with other deaf people in the community, communication also included home signs and/or elements of a more complex signed language used with their peers. It should be noted, too, that there also existed a paternalistic attitude toward deaf people on the Island, and communication between deaf people and hearing people may often have resembled a model of interpretation where interpreters served as 'helpers' rather than professional advocates and communication experts.

Beyond deaf education, where much of the world's deaf history has its roots, several notable historical events that characterize the early years of signed language and interpretation in Puerto Rico occurred in the second half of the 20th century. The following highlights several of the prominent events:

- In 1962, Francisco Quintero, a rehabilitation counselor, was sent to Knoxville, Tennessee to specialize in deafness. Upon his return to the Island, he became the only counselor to work with deaf clients. He also provided counseling services at Colegio San Gabriel, which had opened its doors in the early 1900s.

- In 1974, the Department of Health conducted a study on the incidence of hearing loss on the Island, which revealed that 97,962 residents of the Island had severe hearing problems. That figure was later increased to 126,793 by a study done in 1990 by the Office of the Ombudsman of People with Disabilities (OPPI in Spanish, Oficina del Procurador de las Personas con Impedimentos).

- The position of State Deaf Services Coordinator was established in the early 1970s and Mr. Quintero began to train a small group of hearing rehabilitation counselors, including Adolfo Olguín, Aida L. Matos, and Jenny Mimoso. These individuals participated in a six-week intensive training at New York University.

- In 1975, Puerto Rico's commonwealth relationship with the U.S. allowed for federal funds to be provided for a number of individuals to attend California State University, Northridge and obtain master's degrees in Administration, Supervision, and Education for the Deaf. This opportunity allowed Islanders to learn about the linguistic and educational methods used in the U.S., and share their experiences with others on the Island. These individuals were, effectively, the first working interpreters in Puerto Rico. Although they did not receive training in interpretation, these professionals had obtained a formal education and learned ASL, the signed language used on the mainland.

- It is reported that, in 1978, a group of 78 deaf individuals from the Puerto Rican community received ASL training on the Island by fellow community members. Of this group, 20 entered the vocational rehabilitation system as professional personnel. A division named the Interpreters for the Deaf and Readers for the Blind was opened; although it was later divided into two separate entities.

- Given the high demand for such support services on the Island, more personnel were trained in the early 1980s, and the Interpreters for the Deaf Unit was created under the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration (VRA). This unit received continuous mentoring and support through federal funds from the New York Training Center at New York University.

- In the late 1980s, a test to determine interpreting competency was created for interpreters working at VRA; although it has since been reported that the test was not developed using standard assessment metrics for establishing test validity and reliability. This was

the first such test to be developed on the Island. Only those aspiring to work at VRA

were eligible to take the test, which was discontinued in 2000.

As a result of VRA's early role in the training, hiring, and testing of signed language interpreters on the Island, for a few decades, becoming an interpreter was likened to becoming a vocational rehabilitation employee.

It has been anecdotally reported that the first group of interpreters encountered a number of difficulties when trying to communicate with their deaf clients. This may have been due to a number of factors including limited education in the case of some deaf individuals, and the use of multiple signing systems previously used in education on the Island. Oralism was pervasive in deaf education prior to the 1960s, and signing systems, such as Signing Exact English (SEE), were introduced to the educational system in the 1970's. Deaf people in Puerto Rico used some signs that were notably different than those introduced as ASL. (See Frishberg, 1987, for a brief description of some Puerto Rican signs.) Despite the challenges with communication, these first interpreters in Puerto Rico also served as advocates for deaf people, often playing the role of a parent, sibling, professional advisor, mentor, and friend. This practice may have furthered a paternalistic attitude toward deaf people, even though these hearing people may not have intended to do so.

It is also important to note certain developments generating from within the Puerto Rican Deaf community during this time. In 1978, the first non-profit organization of deaf people was organized and incorporated on the Island: The International Organization of Deaf Orientation (OIDOS, La Organización Internacional de Orientación al Sordo, Inc.). It began offering signed language courses in 1979, and eventually interpreting courses in 1991. In 1982, a different group, The Association of Interpreters for the Deaf in Puerto Rico (La Asociación de Intérpretes a Sordos de Puerto Rico), was established. Another organization of deaf individuals in Puerto Rico was *Sordos de PR, Inc*. Among the early presidents of the organization were Carla Sides and Yolanda Rodriguez, and Elizabeth Ríos as Secretary. Membership in each of these organizations has fluctuated over the years, and some of the organizations have become inactive. (See Williams & Parks, 2012, for a listing of other organizations on the Island.)

While the establishment of organizations by and for deaf people on the island in the last few decades of the 20th century influenced the community and the sign language, the migration of deaf people from the Island to the mainland for employment and education has played a major

role in shaping the Island's Deaf community. One factor that differentiates Puerto Rico from other Latin American countries is the American citizenship held by Puerto Ricans, allowing them to travel between the Island and the mainland with ease, and reside on the mainland if they so choose. As such, deaf people can leave the Island to attend schools for the deaf in the U.S., including colleges and universities (such as Gallaudet University and Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf), where ASL is used by their peers and educators. These individuals can return to the Island for visits or to live for extended periods of time, bringing their newly acquired ASL skills and knowledge along with them, and contributing to the evolution of signed language on the Island.

One question that has surfaced repeatedly over the years concerns how best to characterize the signed language used on the Island. Is it a language unique to Puerto Rico, is it ASL or an ASL-influenced variety, or is it uniquely different? During the mid-1980s, Maria Laguna worked with Susan DeSantis on a research project to address this very question. Funded by the Office of Developmental Disorders of Puerto Rico, the research titled "Diccionario y Análisis Básico del Lenguaje de Señas Puertorriqueño" was conducted at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico. Data from throughout the Island was collected in order to determine vocabulary and grammar features of the signed language used on the Island. Unfortunately, the research was never published. During that time a signed language linguist from the mainland U.S., published a brief description of aspects of the signed language used in Puerto Rico, in which she suggested that "Puerto Rican Sign Language (PRSL) is related but distinct from, the sign language used in the mainland United States." (Frishberg, 1987:104).

Due to the limited amount of published work on the topic, the question of how best to characterize the sign language of Puerto Rico remains an unanswered one. At the time of this writing, Laguna has reported to be currently working on a book that chronicles the history of deaf education in Puerto Rico. Additional references specific to Puerto Rico include Aida L. Matos' first book on sign language vocabulary for Puerto Rico, *Aprende Señas Conmigo* (1990). Although this book contains a number of Puerto Rican sign variants, it also includes a notable number of ASL signs. Reportedly, the book lacks details about the grammar of the language, yet it continues to be used as the reference text for sign language courses in the community.

In the 1990s, there was a notable shift in how people considered the word and concept of 'interpreter,' which until that time had held religious or charitable connotations. The shift was

due, in part, to government-funded services for deaf and hard of hearing people, in particular the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration (VRA), which served as the primary employer of interpreters. Moreover, those interpreters received training via teachers and mentors from the mainland. In this group of trainers who came to the Island were Joann Kranis from CUNY, Paula Sargent from Miami Dade Community College (now Miami Dade College), and Mary Mosley from the Interpreters Consortium Project in New York. From 1996 until June of 1999, CUNY at La Guardia Community College continued to manage these training efforts. Other important collaborators were Angela Roth, Mary Mooney, Yolanda Zavala, and Gerardo Castillo, who contributed to the professional development of the Island's interpreters. Support was given by RID Region II representatives Joann Kranis and Robert Hills, and grant funding from RID. Over time, funds were allocated from other entities, such as the NMIP, to support training in Puerto Rico.

Since Spanish is so heavily used in the Puerto Rican education system, mainland-influenced training in the 1990s challenged Puerto Rican interpreters who had to use materials written in English. The teachers and mentors from the mainland set high expectations for the Puerto Rican interpreters. Training approaches, interpreting-specific jargon, and new linguistic concepts and terminology, made it difficult for many interpreting students who did not have previous exposure to such topics. But the desire of the Puerto Rican interpreters to succeed served them well as they rose to the challenge of showing their mainland U.S. colleagues that they could learn and excel under this new system of education.

During the 1990s, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) took center stage and concepts concerning accessibility flourished in the vocabulary of interpreters in Puerto Rico and elsewhere. Interpreters in Puerto Rico were working in community settings to a greater degree and this influenced the development of the "freelance interpreter" system on the Island. In 1995, Edwin Díaz, Lillian Ramirez, and José Bertrán incorporated Deaf Oriented Services, Inc. (SOS, Servicios Orientados al Sordo, Inc.) with the purpose of providing support to the local Deaf community. This organization also helped with the professional development of a number of interpreters on the Island and continues to do so today. Since 2003, they have offered their interpretation services to the local news station, following legislation that supported this initiative. For the past decade they have coordinated an annual rally now known as "Oye mis

Manos," with the purpose of bringing attention to the rights and needs of deaf people on the Island.

One Saturday afternoon in 1996, a group of interpreters gathered and discussed the case of signed language interpreters in Puerto Rico. The discussion led to the conclusion that the challenges in trilingual interpreting were not unique to the Island but were shared by all trilingual interpreters, regardless of state or territory. From that meeting grew a new partnership aimed at addressing issues surrounding the profession of interpreting. Interpreters for the Deaf in Puerto Rico (ISPRI, Interpretes a Sordos de Puerto Rico) was adopted as its formal name, and the board of directors elected Gilberto García as its president. García served a term of two years, which coincided with the RID national conference in Long Beach, California. Edwin Diaz succeeded Garcia as the next president of ISPRI.

In 1999, Angela Roth and Edwin Diaz organized a summit on trilingual interpreting, sponsored in great part by the National Multicultural Interpreter Project, to be held before the RID national conference in Boston. Presentations and discussions relevant to trilingual interpreting populated the summit's program. The summit ended with an evening of music from Latin America, which overlapped with the beginning of the RID national conference, and various attendees at the summit remained for the RID conference events. It was the first time an RID conference was carried out with the notable presence of spoken Spanish. Later in 1999, under the direction of Edwin Diaz and Myrelis Aponte, ISPRI was changed to Puerto Rico Interpreters for the Deaf (PRRID), which continues under that name today. Other PRRID leaders have included David Rawlings, Ricardo Ortíz, and Victor Gastón. All have given significant value and growth to the profession in Puerto Rico. Aponte was the first local Puerto Rican to earn the RID national certification (CI), followed by Ortíz who earned his NIC, raising the bar on interpretation standards on the Island.

In 2002, Sign Language Interpreters Inc. and ASL Services Latino were the first two private interpreting agencies established in Puerto Rico. In 2007, with the popularity of VRS work, interpreters confronted a dramatic change in the practice and education of their profession. For the first time interpreters in Puerto Rico could find steady work as employees of VRS companies; however with this opportunity came new challenges. Many companies established services on the Island because Puerto Rico's interpreters had native fluency in Spanish and ASL. VRS companies scrambled to strengthen their training offerings, in an effort to increase the

amount and the quality of interpreters in a very short period of time. This was all good news for local interpreters who had previously only had part-time employment or interpreted as a hobby; with VRS they became 'professionals.'

The interpreter community grew strong and PPRID played an important role in the education of interpreters by providing continuing education activities on the Island, some of which gained national attention. In 2004, Myrelis Aponte as president of PRRID brought the RID Region II conference to the Island. The national attention it created brought more awareness of Puerto Rico's needs to the Region, with a particular attention to the trilingual needs of Puerto Rican interpreters. At the same time, the first degree program in Sign Language Interpretation was developed by Aponte, Maria Laguna, and a group of experienced interpreters at Universidad del Turabo in Gurabo; it opened in January 2005. Prior to this, without leaving the Island, aspiring interpreters were only able to take a few non-University-based courses if they sought to become an interpreter. However, the challenge of the new program at the Universidad del Turabo was notable, and the introduction of the program did bring some turmoil to the Puerto Rican interpreting climate. Yet, despite the controversy, that higher education program raised the quality of services for the Deaf community. During this time, several attempts were also made to establish a new testing system for interpreters on the Island. However, legislation was never passed and the RID bylaws did not support this activity. In 2008, both national and international attention was brought to the Puerto Rico when Aponte arranged for the Conference of Interpreter Trainers to hold their Biennial Conference on the Island. Over 400 participants from Puerto Rico, the U.S. mainland, Australia, Spain, Belgium, and several other countries were present for this event. This was an important event, particularly for those who train interpreters within academic and non-academic settings, both within Puerto Rico's shores and throughout the world. Academic education for interpreters has developed in Puerto Rico, and the Universidad del Turabo continues to play an important role in the training of interpreters. With the support of the Deaf community, public grants fund the program and provide financial assistance to students as they obtain their certificate or bachelor's degree in Sign Language Interpretation.

Currently, Puerto Rico is taking an important step towards developing their own testing system for interpreters. In 2013, under the direction of Edwin Díaz, a new local non-profit organization was established to create a test designed to serve the needs of Puerto Rican interpreters. This organization is called the Examination Board of Puerto Rico Sign Language

Interpreters (Junta Examinadora de Intérpretes de Lenguaje de Señas de Puerto Rico). The test concept is predicated on the fact that many interpreters in Puerto Rico are fluent in Spanish and ASL, but not in English, and as such other trilingual tests (e.g., the Texas Trilingual Certification Test) are not appropriate measures of their skills. The same holds true for the RID National Interpreter Certification Test because of its reliance on English fluency. Puerto Rican interpreters represent an important element of diversity within the interpreting profession, and their unique linguistic situation must be considered fully when assessing this group.

Puerto Rico has played a very important role in the history of trilingual interpreting in the U.S. Its interpreters are among the leaders in the profession, and they have given much of their time, energy, and talents to move the profession forward, both on the Island and outside of its shores. As is always the case, much work remains, but this medium-sized island in the Caribbean has contributed tremendously to the evolution of trilingual interpreting. It is difficult to imagine what the profession would be like without Puerto Rico's contributions and those of its interpreters and community leaders.

Texas

In Texas, multilingualism is a common way of life. There have been communities of Spanish speakers in Texas for centuries, with influences from Iberian Spanish (especially in the early years), Mexican Spanish (through the present day), and other varieties of Spanish from Central and South America. However, unlike Puerto Rico, many Texans use English extensively, especially since the mid-1800s, when Texas became a Republic, a territory, and finally a state of the United States. Since that time, English has been the default language for government, education, and many public services. In spite of the common use of English in various sectors, Spanish-speaking communities continue to have a notable presence in the state, and this fact has truly influenced the need for trilingual interpreting services.

The need for professional development in the area of trilingual interpreting and linguistic and culturally-related topics has been evident since the 1980s. In the late 1980s, the El Paso Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf hosted the 1987 Texas Society for the Deaf (TSID) Conference, which included Hispanic-themed cultural events with specific training in workshops that focused on Mexican Sign Language (LSM, *Lengua de Señas Mexicana*) and other topics that addressed the daily needs of interpreters working in Spanish-influenced settings along the U.S.-

Mexico border and elsewhere. In 1995, the TSID 32nd Annual Convention held a "Trilingual Issues Forum" moderated by Ester Saldaña, and in El Paso, T.J. O'Rourke published a book of ASL vocabulary items with Spanish glosses and explanations to assist Spanish-speaking parents communicate with their deaf children.

A significant "chapter" in the history of trilingual interpreting can be attributed to the Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TCDHH), when in the 1990's the agency took on the roles of advocating for and providing communication access for deaf individuals in Spanish-speaking families, and supporting trilingual interpreters in their professional development. TCDHH became involved in this capacity because of the frequent reports of interpreters needing to have Spanish language skills in addition to skills in English and ASL. In 1993, David Myers, as the new Executive Director for TCDHH, traveled through the state assessing the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people. In El Paso and the Rio Grande Valley area that borders with Mexico, Myers found that Hispanic deaf children were going to school and learning ASL and English, but could not communicate effectively with their Spanish-speaking families. Myers also learned that interpreter referral service providers were requesting more compensation for interpreters who worked in these trilingual settings, and that individual interpreters felt that they deserved additional pay. These interpreters made the argument that interpretation in these settings required language skills above and beyond what bilingual interpreters in Texas needed, and as such, "trilingual interpreters" should be compensated appropriately for their skills. The "con" argument noted that the skills of trilingual interpreters could not be verified due to the absence of trilingual certification. These trilingual concerns were echoed in town hall meetings throughout the state, which were designed to inform TCDHH of the issues, by Hispanic deaf and hearing consumers of interpreting services, by service providers, and by interpreters.

As a result of the outcry from stakeholders, interpreters, consumers, service providers, families, and others, David Myers secured funding in 1994 to establish and implement the Hispanic Trilingual Task Force to address issues regarding trilingual interpreting situations and needs. The Task Force, led by Myers, included TCDHH staff Billy Collins Jr., and Yolanda Chavira, along with Lisandra Cruz-Gold, Mary Mooney, Jose Prieto Jr., Rolando Quezada, David Quinto-Pozos, Angel Ramos, Julie Razuri, Eduardo Reveles, Rosie Serna, Raquel Taylor, and Yolanda Zavala. With input from other TCDHH staff and community partners, the group

met regularly at locations throughout the state, including but not limited to: Austin (TCDHH offices and Texas School for the Deaf), El Paso (El Paso Community College), and Harlingen (Valley Association for Independent Living). They began documenting services being provided by individuals who were considered as trilingual interpreters, chronicling the gaps that existed in various service areas. During TCDHH's 1999 Sunset Hearings before the Texas Legislature, Task Force member Raquel Taylor testified regarding trilingual interpreting needs. Her testimony garnered the attention of Senator Judith Zaffarini of Laredo, who included language in the Sunset Report recommending that TCDHH "develop guidelines for trilingual interpreter services; and provide training programs for persons who provide trilingual interpreter services." This language became a legislative mandate through Texas Legislature House Bill 1401 (1999). This government recognition of trilingual interpreters and the need to address issues such as remuneration and skill development were not trivial points, and this legislation made that fact clear. TCDHH was also tasked to assess the need for certification of trilingual interpreters.

Information about trilingual interpreting in Texas was obtained via a TCDHH survey done with the assistance of David Quinto-Pozos, then a doctoral candidate in linguistics at the University of Texas and a Trilingual Task Force member. The survey was sent to approximately 1,300 state-certified interpreters in 2000.[7] The survey was designed to obtain estimates about the prevalence of trilingual interpreting in Texas and the types of language features that frequently appear in these situations. There were 239 completed surveys returned (approximately 18%). One question on the survey asked if the respondent had ever been in a situation where their clients (deaf or hearing) used Spanish, Mexican Sign Language (LSM), or another type of language production that is influenced by either Spanish or LSM, such as signing ASL while mouthing Spanish words or signing ASL in a way that shows influence from LSM? If respondents answered this question in the affirmative, they were instructed to continue by replying to questions about their experiences in these situations. If, their response was "no" they were asked to skip to the end of the survey and answer three questions: two about compensation and one about training. Only those surveys with a "yes" answer to the above question were

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[7] The Texas state certification of interpreters is conducted by the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI), a unit of the current Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DARS-DHHS). In the past, DARS-DHHS services were provided by the TCDHH. Reorganization in 2003 by the Texas Legislature changed the unit from TCDHH to DARS-DHHS, effective in 2004.All TCDHH staff and programs continued under DARS after the reorganization.

tabulated; there were 102 "yes" surveys or approximately 43% of the original 239 that were received.

Of these 102 surveys, 29 were completed by interpreters who had worked in either El Paso or the Texas Rio Grande Valley. Of this group of 29, three claimed to find themselves in multi-lingual situations "every day," 9 reported that "an average of 1–4 times per week" was common, and 5 answered "an average of 1–4 times per month." These 17 unique interpreters were considered to be performing trilingual interpretation. Some of the results are reported in Gatto et al. (this volume). (See also Quinto-Pozos (2002) for a description of the entire survey, along with responses to questions regarding language use of deaf clients [i.e., what trilingual interpreters are exposed to on a regular basis].). As noted, this survey helped to document the limited existence of trilingual interpreting in Texas, and some of the language features that frequently appear with this specialized type of interpreting.

The results of the work of the TCDHH Hispanic Trilingual Task Force clearly reflected the need for trilingual certification; however, a request to the Texas Legislature to fund a trilingual test development project was not successful. David Myers turned to the National Center for Interpretation Training Research and Policy (NCITR) at the University of Arizona, which had developed psychometrically valid and reliable evaluation testing tools for TCDHH (i.e., Board of Evaluation for Interpreters [BEI]) in 2007, and suggested a partnership to pursue federal grant funding to develop trilingual interpreter tests. That effort led to a successful grant application to the U.S. Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. Work on the project began in 2003-2004 (see Dueñas Gonzalez et al., this volume), by which time TCDHH had been consolidated into the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and became the Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS). Yolanda Chavira (DHHS staff) and David Quinto-Pozos (then at the University of Illinois) were contributing members of the test development team (see Dueñas-Gonzalez et al., this volume, 2010, for a description of the development process and details of the test).

DARS-DHHS began testing trilingual interpreter candidates in 2010 as an addition to its BEI program being coordinated by Angela Bryant. The Texas initiative to develop Trilingual Certification tests, while based on a Texas need, was in reality a recognized national need originating in the 1990s. Texas was first to achieve a means of meeting this need through its

partnership with the NCITRP and its success in obtaining federal grant funds. These important tests, the only such tests that exist in the world, are often miscategorized as being "Texas tests." However, the NCITRP brought to the project strong Spanish language and culture expertise, and experience in interpreter test development, which is their specialty. NCITRP is headed by Dr. Roseann Dueñas Gonzalez, a pioneer in interpreter test development and developer of the federal Spanish language court interpreter tests that have been used for more than 30 years. As such, the Trilingual Certification reflects a broad-based framework, and many out of state candidates have taken the tests in addition to the Texas test-takers.

Texas has played, and continues to play, a very important role in the training of trilingual interpreters. Texas DARS-DHHS, through the coordination efforts of Yolanda Chavira and Randi Turner, sponsored weeklong intensive trainings from 2006–2011. Through use of excellent facilities provided by the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf in Big Spring, Texas, and in collaboration with various other partners, more than 200 interpreters received training to strengthen their trilingual interpreting abilities. This experience was significant for the trilingual interpreting community because it not only brought together Texas trilingual interpreters, but also interpreters from throughout the continental U.S., Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, and beyond. Training was conducted by experts in the fields of both spoken language and signed language interpretation. In keeping with the value of self-determination, experienced trilingual interpreters and critical stakeholders were identified and involved in the development of the curriculum and subsequent training. The DHHS training, with the inspiration, dedication, and efforts of Yolanda Chavira, set the stage for other trilingual trainings; which, too, with her direct involvement would be sponsored by the TSID, Mano a Mano, RID, and other sponsors.

National Histories & Action

In addition to the activities taking place on the local and state level (e.g., developments in Puerto Rico and Texas), the 1990s saw an increase in national efforts to support the work of interpreters working in Spanish-speaking communities. Two entities are particularly notable during this period: the National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP) and Mano a Mano. It was also during the late 1990s that a story about the labor exploitation of deaf Mexicans in the United States hit the national press. This event would be pivotal in the history of trilingual interpreting, as the legal proceedings illuminated the fact that such interpretation would also

require the knowledge of Mexican Sign Language (LSM) and spoken Spanish, as well as the complexity of skills needed to ensure full communication and the types of situations that trilingual interpreters often work in.

NMIP (1996–2000)

The National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP) was a vanguard effort funded by the United States Department of Education, Office of Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA Grant H160c50004), and its mission was to improve the quantity and quality of interpreting services provided to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind from culturally diverse communities. In service to that goal, the work of the NMIP focused on providing educational opportunities, recruiting culturally diverse interpreters, and enhancing cultural sensitivity within the profession. The NMIP included organizational representatives from RID, Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT), National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), National Hispanic Conference for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NHC), Intertribal Deaf Council (IDC), and emerging Asian deaf leaders. Hispanic/Latino leadership membership included Ivelisse Velez (NHC), Dr. Gilberto Delgado (educator), Yolanda Zavala (professional trilingual interpreter), and Gerardo Castillo (student representative). The project was led by Mary Mooney at El Paso Community College (EPCC), and El Paso was the primary gathering place for a consortium of teams representing various minority communities: African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American. With regard to the Hispanic/Latino component of the NMIP, Angela Roth served as the team leader for the interpreting branch and Dr. Angel Ramos provided leadership to the deaf team. Such partnerships were crucial for the success of the project. Roth reports that Ramos reached out to her because he needed an interpreter who could manage Spanish in addition to ASL and English. Ramos had attended the National Council of La Raza's (NCLR) Annual Conference in the past, and bilingual ASL/English interpreters working at the conference regularly struggled when presenters would switch between English and Spanish. To remedy this, Roth would work closely with trilingual interpreters, such as Ann Margaret Trujillo and Leo Hidalgo, to provide trilingual services for attendees of the conference.

The NMIP made a significant contribution to the trilingual interpreting profession by creating curricula for interpreter education programs, which included cultural and linguistic topics previously not found in many of the pre-existing programs throughout the country. NMIP

team leaders traveled to state conferences and regional meetings in order to provide updates and information about the Project, which served as a mechanism for interested persons to express their concerns, interests, hopes, and dreams for their profession. Transcripts of all the meetings served as the basis for initial development of "cultural competencies." The NMIP funded training and workshops where trilingual teams and mentored students developed protocols, and were able to practice presentation and interpreting skills in "safe" environments. NMIP extended opportunities to develop innovative projects such as documentation of LSM language models. NMIP also encouraged the system of having deaf/hearing Spanish/English partnerships, which allowed for the formation of interpreter teams that were both multicultural and multilingual. This design allowed for greater Hispanic/Latino participation and access to mainstream conferences that had higher attendance. It was from the NMIP team leader meetings that the idea of forming a more permanently structured organization was born, that being Mano a Mano.

There were various products of the NMIP that can be linked specifically to trilingual interpreting. The most notable being the development of a "Presenter Directory," an effort which encouraged trilingual interpreters to develop presentations for local, state, regional, and national audiences, the development of the first national directory of multilingual/trilingual interpreters, translation of the RID Code of Ethics later ratified by RID for use in Puerto Rico; translation of training materials from English to Spanish (e.g., theoretical models of interpretation), and the production of videotapes containing written Spanish/English captions, some of which are presentations in spoken Spanish and LSM. Sergio Peña, a quadrilingual (LSM/ASL/Spanish/English) interpreter, was a key resource for this effort. In addition to these tangible products, NMIP contributed greatly to the development of leadership and mentorship within the Hispanic/Latino interpreter community, and had an impact on the national visibility of this professional community. Finally, as noted above, NMIP contributed to the creation of Mano a Mano by assisting with financial support and professional expertise.

Mano a Mano

Mano a Mano is a national organization of sign language interpreters who work in Spanish-influenced settings; its formal beginnings can be traced to a gathering in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1999. It could be said that the creation of Mano a Mano was made possible because of the passion and motivation of leaders throughout the country, such as Angela Roth

and Mary Mooney. As noted earlier, Roth and Mooney were involved in the NMIP curricula-development efforts, and Roth and Edwin Díaz were key individuals in the Interpreters for the Deaf, Puerto Rico (ISPRI, Interpretes a Sordos, Puerto Rico) organization. These founders of Mano a Mano realized there was a need for trilingual interpreters to network with one another and discuss linguistic and cultural issues specific to their work as professionals.

The 1999 gathering in Boston, just prior to the RID conference, was the first national forum of Latino leaders in the interpreting community, and this event allowed for the discussion of crucial themes that had been affecting trilingual interpreters throughout the country. The entire assemblage was divided into four rooms, and each room was assigned a deaf and hearing leader who guided the audience through the discussion of the following themes:

1. Cultural recognition for the Latino interpreting community
2. Credentialing of trilingual interpreters (including certification)
3. Remuneration for trilingual interpreters
4. Professional development for trilingual interpreters, including training & education, workshops, and leadership

From these discussions emerged the four principles that guided Mano a Mano's work for the next several years. They were referred to as "the four pillars" in the early days of Mano a Mano. It was these four pillars that served as the future foundation of Mano a Mano's official mission statement.

The mission of Mano a Mano is to provide an infrastructure for access to trilingual interpreting resources, support professional development for trilingual interpreters, educate the public about trilingual interpreting, and advocate for appropriate policies concerning the provision of trilingual interpretation. To that end, Mano a Mano concerns itself with offering professional development opportunities for trilingual interpreters, such as organizing a biennial national conferences and helping to support regional/state affiliates with their workshop offerings. Mano a Mano advocates for trilingual interpreters with respect to credentialing issues and questions by engaging in communication and dialogue with RID and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), especially in regards to the topic of minimum standards for VRS interpreting. Mano a Mano also provides valuable resources for trilingual interpreters and those seeking to learn more about this type of interpreting by hosting a website and

maintaining a directory of trilingual interpreters. Mano a Mano was incorporated as a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization in 2003.

Subsequent to the 1999 conference, Mano a Mano has made its presence known at many of RID's National Conferences, such as in Orlando in 2001, Chicago in 2003, San Antonio in 2005, San Francisco in 2007, Philadelphia in 2009, Atlanta in 2011, and Indianapolis in 2013. During those conferences, participants benefited from a myriad of presentations, including those from deaf and hearing leaders in the United States and Latin America. Mano a Mano has hosted one- and two-day preconferences in conjunction with each of RID's. The 2011 RID Conference in Atlanta marked the first time that Mano a Mano hosted a trilingual track concurrent with RID's workshops; this development was the result of close collaboration between the two organizations and much support from RID. During the Atlanta conference, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the presidents of Mano a Mano and RID (David Quinto-Pozos and Cheryl Moose). The MOU called for Mano a Mano and RID to:

- work in close cooperation, actively exchanging information that is of common interest and/or might have an effect on both organizations and members
- work together to ensure interpreters who work in Spanish-influenced settings are encouraged to become involved in the leadership of RID
- identify and encourage Mano a Mano members to serve on RID committees
- collaborate to determine appropriate procedures and resources for the Spanish translation of RID articles of interest, documents, website information and conference materials
- collaborate on international, national, regional and local conferences
- publically recognize the importance of and encourage the involvement of interpreters who work in Spanish-influenced settings in the interpreting community as a whole
- recognize that both organizations are essential partners as we move forward, and that the continued collaboration between our organizations is a crucial and integral element to the future success of both organizations and members.

This Mano a Mano-RID MOU continues to serve as a guiding document for interaction and collaboration between the two organizations.

Historical Review

The Yahoo! Groups Trilingual Listserve

The International Network of Trilingual Interpreters (originally the National Network of Trilingual Interpreters) was established in late September, 2006. This Yahoo! Group listserv was founded by Kristie Casanova de Canales, a Spanish/ASL/English interpreter who hoped to address several ongoing challenges faced by such interpreters. Kristie noted that among those challenges are the following:

- Trilingual interpreters who do not live in metropolitan areas with significant Spanish-speaking populations are often geographically isolated, but still need input and support from their trilingual interpreter colleagues.

- Trilingual interpreters who *do* have local colleagues may still not be exposed to enough linguistic and cultural diversity to properly prepare them for the *global* work required by such settings as Spanish VRS and escort interpreting.

- Opportunities for professional development for such interpreters are scarce and it is helpful to be able to spread word of such opportunities quickly and to a maximum number of people.

- Hiring entities in need of trilingual interpreting services are often at a loss for where to look, and a listserv of such interpreters would help address this challenge by allowing word to be spread quickly and to the appropriate potential interpreters.

Desiring a free space where communication could occur asynchronously and regardless of distance, where files, photos and videos could be uploaded, and where posts would be archived and searchable, the INTI was established.

Though the mission statement explains that the primary focus is to "provide an online forum through which interpreters for the Latino Deaf community can collectively raise their skill level and expand their cultural knowledge," the invitation to join has not been limited to working ASL/ Spanish/English interpreters. Future interpreters, CDIs, Deaf Latinos, bilingual (Spanish, sign language) interpreters from Latin America, and trilingual interpreters with different language pairings have joined, asking questions of their own and sharing the wealth of their experiences.

The group has grown to over 260 members as of this printing and though the activity level of the group fluctuates, not a month has passed since its foundation without some exchange of information and dialogue among its members.

VRS

Video Relay Service (VRS) interpreting has played an important role in the employment of trilingual interpreters throughout the country, and it has influenced the development and enhancement of interpreter skills, including the skills of trilingual interpreters. VRS is a telecommunication service that takes advantage of the Internet to provide "real-time" communication between deaf or hard of hearing consumers and hearing consumers.[8] VRS accomplishes this by using sign language interpreters, videophones, and high-speed internet connections. In the United States, Video Relay telecommunications are regulated and funded by the FCC. Interstate VRS providers (i.e., the companies that provide the services) receive financial support from the Interstate Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Fund.

In July of 1993, TRS became available for the first time under Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title IV defines TRS as: "telephone transmission services that provide the ability for an individual who has a hearing impairment or speech impairment to engage in communication by wire or radio with a hearing individual in a manner that is functionally equivalent to the ability of an individual who does not have a hearing impairment or speech impairment to communicate using voice communication services by wire or radio" (ADA, 1990). Initially, TRS only applied to calls placed via teletype (TTY) machines. Although, VRS was being piloted in Texas as early as the mid-1990s (*Inside Gallaudet,* 2008), it wasn't until March of 2000 that the FCC concluded that VRS is a legitimate form of TRS. Texas had played an important role in both the development of ASL/English VRS and later, Trilingual VRS. As noted, initial trials of VRS began in Austin in 1995, with additional testing in Washington DC three years later. With the FCC's declaration of VRS as a form of TRS in 2000, the service became officially available to the state of Texas. Additionally in 2000, Texas petitioned for Trilingual VRS to be compensable from the Interstate TRS fund. This would allow providers to offer VRS for calls between deaf or hard of hearing and hearing (Spanish-speaking) consumers.

The evolution of VRS within TRS is an interesting one. The approval of ASL/English VRS came about because of the need for a "functional equivalent." This refers to TRS that is "(near) real-time" and "more articulate" than text-to-speech TRS. In other words, text-to-speech relay services with TTYs were not very efficient (see Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996). Two

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[8] ...Consumers of interpreting services are also regularly referred to as *clients,* or *video callers* in the case of video relay interpreting.

years after recognizing VRS as a form of TRS, the FCC allowed for the reimbursement of such services. Beginning in 2002, interstate VRS providers were compensated for their services through the Interstate TRS Fund administration. The FCC declared that, while VRS was not required, any TRS providers offering VRS had to abide by FCC regulations. However, in 2004, the FCC declared non-shared language TRS (i.e., Trilingual VRS) a value-added translation service, not to be compensable by the TRS fund. Community Services for the Deaf, the National Video Relay Service Coalition (which includes such organizations as the National Association of the Deaf), RID, and Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc., as well as 18 individuals submitted petitions challenging the FCC's decision.

Within the petitions were many arguments emphasizing the validity of Trilingual VRS as a form of TRS. The petitioners argued this form of TRS was not a value-added translation service, pointing out that the FCC already supported Spanish-to-Spanish TRS based on a large and growing population of Spanish users. The petitions also pointed out deaf Latino children's need for communication with family and community. Notably, a recent report of deaf children in the U.S. from Spanish-speaking households places the number at 7,948, or nearly 22% of the deaf and hard of hearing children enrolled in educational programs from Parent-Infant through 12th grade (Gallaudet Research Institute, 2008). This suggests that a substantial percentage of deaf children need Trilingual VRS to communicate with their Spanish-speaking family members when they are not in the same location. Additionally, the National Video Relay Service Coalition noted that "in Puerto Rico, where Spanish is the primary language, failure to compensate for ASL-to-Spanish VRS leads to the result that Puerto Ricans who are deaf or hard of hearing using ASL must have their VRS conversations translated into English, a language that is either not spoken or is a second language for most Puerto Ricans" (Federal Register, 2005).

Just 10 months later, the FCC reversed its decision, declaring Trilingual VRS a compensable form of VRS. The August 2005 reversal occurred for a few reasons. First, the FCC deemed that Trilingual VRS does meet the need of an identifiable segment of the population of persons with hearing and speech disabilities. Second, the Commission stated that recognition of Trilingual VRS is consistent with recognition of VRS as a form of TRS. Recognition of Trilingual VRS as a form of TRS was also deemed consistent with the FCC's focus on Spanish language access in other contexts. Finally, the FCC concluded that recognition

of Trilingual VRS as a form of TRS would not have an undue impact on the Interstate TRS Fund.

The final argument, that Trilingual VRS would not unduly impact the Interstate TRS Fund, was supported by several factors. When the FCC reversed its decision, Trilingual VRS calls constituted only one to two percent of all VRS calls.[9] Another assurance regarding the impact of Trilingual VRS on the TRS fund was that the cost of such VRS services would be no more than the cost of ASL/English VRS. Additionally, the FCC found that "no information has been presented that demonstrates that [Trilingual VRS] is too costly relative to the benefit derived from [this service]" (Federal Communications Commission, 2008). By January 1, 2006, Trilingual VRS was officially deemed a compensable form of TRS under FCC regulations. The FCC stated that all TRS providers offering VRS (including Trilingual VRS) would be required to provide the service 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and to answer incoming calls within a set number of seconds so that VRS consumers would not have to wait unreasonably long periods of time for service (FCC, 2008).

The Mexican Deaf Peddlers and Trilingual Interpreting

(Detailed information was contributed by Mary Mooney and Yolanda Zavala)

In the summer of 1997, the exploitation of a group of deaf Mexicans for purposes of financial gain raised national attention, and a key part of this story includes the legal proceedings that ensued and the interpretation services that were needed. The first event concerned a group of 37 deaf individuals from Mexico and other Latin American countries who were held against their will and forced to sell trinkets on the streets of New York City. However, it was soon learned that similar cases of exploitation and abuse were occurring in parts of the United States, including the Southwest. The headlines in the *New York Times* were clear: organized rings of exploitation, whose activity could be traced to North Carolina, Chicago, and parts of California, were taking advantage of deaf Mexican immigrants, many of whom had been smuggled into the U.S. to contribute to this $1,000,000 per year venture (for a sample of the news stories, see *New York Times*, August 21, 1997, October 24, 1997, and July 17, 1998). After these stories broke, the nation turned its attention to the terrible accounts of the inhumane living conditions that these immigrants were being subjected to and the abuse (both physical and psychological) that they

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[9] Unfortunately, at the time of this volume's publication, no updated statistics were available regarding the percentage of Trilingual VRS calls within VRS calls.

had endured. National court cases followed and the linguistic challenges faced by the interpreters (both hearing and deaf) opened the eyes of interpreting professionals across the country, who likely had never imagined having to interpret for deaf Mexicans who were not ASL signers. In some cases, the deaf immigrants in these cases used LSM, and in other cases they used only home sign systems. Presumably, of the languages in the courtroom, spoken Spanish was also used. After multiple trials, several individuals were indicted for their roles in immigrant exploitation and abuse. These cases raised awareness about the need to address the interpreting services for deaf individuals who now reside in the U.S. but have come there from Spanish-speaking countries. The following paragraphs chronicle this harrowing narrative.

National attention began to focus on the plight of deaf Mexican immigrants in the U.S., when on July 19, 1997, four deaf and "mute" Mexicans walked into a police station in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York, and with written notes, sign language, and gestures communicated to police that they had been forced to work for "little pay." This began many hours, days, weeks, and months of on-going communication and interpreting challenges as police attempted to investigate the plight of the "los muditos," who had been seen often in the neighborhoods on the No. 7 train line in the New York metropolitan area. Later, police searched two locations, which led to the discovery and rescue of 58 men, woman, and children who were being held captive. A total of 62 deaf Mexican immigrants were freed, including children and pregnant women (*El Paso Times*, July 20, 1997). Initially, the alleged perpetrators, accused of entrapping the immigrants, professed their innocence and attempted to portray themselves as "victims." This necessitated the need for police interviews, with the help of impartial interpreter teams, to determine the veracity of the many conflicting and unclear aspects of the case. Ultimately, seven Mexican nationals were arrested for the crimes, the vast majority of whom were Deaf, and arraigned on charges including smuggling, harboring and transporting illegal aliens, and conspiracy.

Members of the New York Deaf community took an active role in gathering and sharing information regarding the "Deaf Peddler Ring." Emails were circulated through interpreter networks requesting needed support. Additionally, emails were sent out to quash rumors, and to clarify that the group of "freed" deaf Mexicans had ***not*** received any police abuse and ***had*** indeed received interpreter services. There was active community outreach and involvement by the Lexington Center for the Deaf in Jackson Heights. The President of the New York City

Civic Association of the Deaf (NYCCAD), Stephen G. Younger, sent out an email stating: "I can assure you that these deaf Mexicans are receiving the best and most appropriate services. We do have certified interpreters, deaf interpreters, social workers who are fluent in Spanish, ASL, and Spanish sign language as well as an independent living specialist who is fluent in ASL/Spanish." The extended NYCCAD community was requested to donate clothing, doorknockers, and closed-captioned videotapes to supplement the basic necessities that were already being provided by the intervening agencies.

The term "Spanish sign language" was being regularly used to describe the language used by the immigrants, although in many instances LSM would have been a more appropriate label, this misnomer could have confused the interpreting process, Mary Mooney, the NMIP Project Director at the time, immediately shared the information she had about the situation with the national NMIP Hispanic Team Leaders and consultants, and stated: "This stresses the need for the national multicultural interpreter directory with clear language descriptions." On July 28th, Hispanic Team Leader Angela Roth provided a list of both hearing and deaf interpreters that could be recruited to assist in what was rapidly becoming a very linguistically complex scenario involving the accused individuals, the victims, and the witnesses. It was evident that interpreter teams with multi-linguistic and multi-cultural skills in signed, spoken, and written modalities were needed to bridge the communication needs. Sign Language Associates' (SLA) National Network manager Karen Crawford contacted NMIP to provide lists of recommended trilingual interpreters and delegated a member of the NMIP staff, Yolanda Zavala, to assist in organizing the needed teams. The situation required more than a dozen professional multi-lingual interpreters who were fluent in English, Spanish, ASL, and, perhaps most critically, LSM (personal correspondence August 29, 1997).

The NAD was "appalled about the still-unfolding reports on the inhumane exploitation of deaf immigrants across the country…forced to work long, arduous hours selling trinkets with almost no pay… that they were physically beaten, and that their money and identification papers were taken from them" (*Broadcaster,* Vol.19, No.7/8, July/August, 1997). The case culminated in the conviction of members of the Paoletti family, a Mexican family, whose deaf members had enticed undocumented deaf immigrants into this "slave ring." The *Broadcaster* reported that, according to New York federal courts reports, several of the charged Paoletti family members had pleaded guilty, and two of the defendants who had stood trial were

found guilty. NAD stated: "Our main concern was to make sure that the immigrants were treated fairly and the police and federal agencies involved could communicate through qualified interpreters and knowledgeable people from deaf community service agencies" (*Broadcaster,* Vol. 20, No.6, June 1998).

This situation in New York brought heightened awareness to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). It began to focus on cases in other parts of the U.S., and soon began to unravel a larger pattern of exploitation. In September 1997, *Silent News* reported that North Carolina law enforcement officers raided two houses in Sanford, breaking up a crime ring that had also been exploiting deaf Mexicans. Additional tips were reported to the police from cities including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, San Diego, Houston, and New Orleans. Later that same year, several arrests were made in El Paso, Texas Nancy Bloch, NAD Executive Director at the time, stated: "Law enforcement, social service, employment, and immigration agencies must be able to communicate effectively with deaf individuals and assure that they [immigrant deaf] receive the same civil rights and considerations as any other deaf person in this country." (*Broadcaster,* Vol.19, No.7/8, July/August, 1997)

From October 26, 1998 to November 4, 1998, as a result of the INS-increased investigations, another trial, known as "Operation Silent Crime," was underway in El Paso, Texas. From the experience in prior cases, the court system recognized that multilingual interpreters would again be required to provide interpreter teams for both pre-trial and trial proceedings. This team approach followed the NMIP philosophy that to be effective interpreters need to maximize the team's language strengths, of both hearing and deaf members, and employ many innovative strategies to meet linguistic and cultural demands to achieve maximum communication accessibility. During the pre-trial and trial proceedings, it was evident that such "Deaf Peddler Rings" brought a plethora of interpretation/communication issues to the national level, including: ethical concerns; cultural differences; multiplicity of communication processes and modalities; variation in clients' abilities to comprehend proceedings (due to a vast difference in Mexican and U.S. legal systems); educational and social services; the high frequency of code-switching and code-mixing; the use of foreign a sign language; sight translation of documents and reports; the use of videotape evidence; team interpreting; monitoring and correction strategies for misunderstandings/misinterpretations; the placement and logistics for interpreter teams; and the contrast between courtroom interpreter protocols and community interpreter

protocols. The initial Deaf Peddler Ring" trials exposed many inadequacies in our national interpreter referral systems; but at the same time it demonstrated that a national network of "trilingual" interpreters and competent team members could collaborate and be coordinated to meet critical needs. A NMIP report titled "El Paso Deaf Mexicans Slavery Trial" (October 26 to November 4, 1998), based on the interpreter teams' debriefings, documented the complexity of issues that occurred during this experience.

Highlighting Common Themes Again and Conclusion

One may note that in the brief histories outlined in this chapter there are many similarities between the various groups of trilingual interpreters throughout the country. They are united by the needs of their consumers for an interpreter with Spanish fluency and knowledge of different cultures of Spanish-speaking peoples. These interpreters are united by the settings in which they regularly work, such as VRS. They are united by the general need for training and professional development opportunities for trilingual interpreting, and that need has influenced the rise of local, regional, and national leaders. Finally, they are united by the desire to create local, regional, and national unions of trilingual interpreters in order to fight for the resources that needed to perform their work and for policies and procedures appropriate and commensurate with their work. However, as noted earlier in this chapter, the trilingual interpreting community is not monolithic. There exist multiple differences among regions and groups, and these differences are often influenced by language use and educational opportunities in a region, as well as the concentration of fellow trilingual interpreters and resources within a local area.

The history of trilingual interpreting is not yet complete. It continues to evolve as time passes and as the profession and its practitioners become more sophisticated in the work that they do. Here we have presented what we feel is a brief overview that focuses primarily on the last few decades, though there is likely much that has been left out of our account. As with any written history, too, there are likely errors or oversights contained, though they are not intentional. We hope you will continue to add to this brief account by adding other perspectives and missing or incorrect details. Together we will continue to write the history of trilingual interpreting!
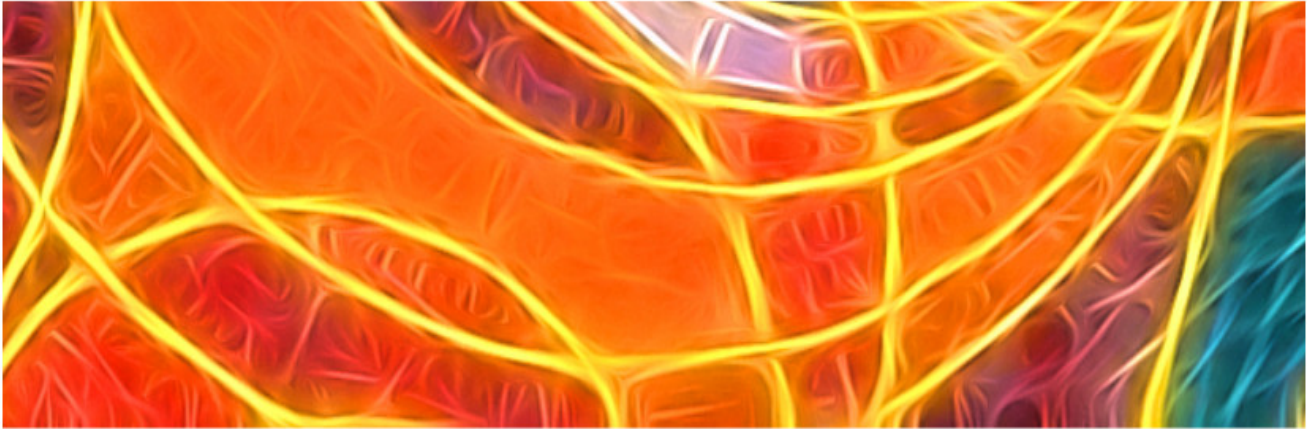
Part 2
Effective Practices
Work to Date

In the Stacks:
Literature Review

Erica Alley

"Why a literature review?...Because it demonstrates [understanding] of the field; justifies the reason for [the] research and establishes a theoretical framework and methodological focus. The literature review becomes your springboard for the whole thesis."

− Learning Advisor

Multiculturalism and Interpreting

There are communities of interpreters who work between several languages and cultures. This skill is in high demand and is growing at a rapid pace; however, our knowledge of the work is only beginning to develop. This article explores the work of trilingual interpreters of American Sign Language, Spanish, and English, in an effort to investigate the process used and challenges faced by this community. Various themes are captured in the set of writings that discuss trilingual interpreting or related topics, and they are laid out separately to assist the reader with understanding the diversity of this field of study.

As members of cultural and linguistic communities continue to come into increasing contact, we can no longer view the work of the interpreter as facilitating communication between two languages and cultures. Lightfoot suggests "we need to open our understanding of interpreting from a bilingual-bicultural model to a multicultural model" (2007, p. 17). McKee and Davis (2010) suggest that we have been living with the impression of a false dichotomy. They state: "The discourse of the sign language interpreting profession has tended to characterize consumers and languages in a binary distinction as Deaf or hearing, at times perhaps implying that these social categories are homogenous, mutually exclusive and all-encompassing primary identities" (p. vii). By ignoring the reality of the multilingual, multicultural Deaf community, we

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are creating barriers to the success of these individuals (Gerner de Garcia, 2000). The paradigm with which we have lived only serves to limit the way that we understand the interpreting profession.

Trilingualism and Triculturalism

Call (2010) expands upon the common definition of bilingualism and biculturalism in order to establish a standard definition of *trilingualism* and *triculturalism*. He defines *trilingualism* as equal language fluency in three languages, most likely as a result of being exposed to all three languages at an early age. He then defines *triculturalism* as identifying and claiming membership with three distinct cultural groups. For the purposes of this document, trilingualism will refer to fluency in ASL, Spanish, and English, while triculturalism will include Deaf, Hispanic or Latino, and mainstream American cultures; understanding that the terms Hispanic, Latino, and Deaf can additionally refer to a variety of communities with different cultural backgrounds.

Education of Hispanic/Latino Deaf Students

Through a series of focus group discussions with trilingual interpreting practitioners, hiring entities and consumers of interpreting services, Treviño and Casanova de Canales (2012) found that effective trilingual interpreters have foundational knowledge of deaf education. In addition, they found that knowledge of history, politics, popular culture, healthcare, legal systems, the immigration process, and attitudes toward deafness in Spanish-speaking countries and territories within interpreters' geographical area, will help interpreters understand the community in which they work.

Gerner de Garcia (1993, 2000) explains that the larger concentrations of Hispanic people in the U.S. are on the east and west coasts and in border states, such as California, New York, Texas and Florida, while a majority of the Puerto Rican, Dominican and Cuban population in the Northeast and Mexicans, and Mexican Americans in the Southwest. Gerner de Garcia notes that there are also large populations in other urban areas such as Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Chicago. The United States Census Bureau reports that 50.5 million people in the United States identify as being of Hispanic or Latino origin (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011). Three-quarters of this group report being of Mexican, Puerto-Rican, or Cuban origin. Recent census

data show that 41 percent of Hispanics reside in the West while 36 percent live in the South. In addition, 14 percent of the Hispanic population lives in the Northeast and 9 percent live the Midwest. The U.S. Census Bureau asserts that over half of the Hispanic population resides in California, Texas, and Florida. These census results support the information expressed by Gerner de Garcia.

In examining the school systems in these areas of the U.S., it can be seen that the academic achievement of Hispanic students is not always equal to that of children from other backgrounds, and can be attributed to a variety of factors. Children who are raised in differing cultures each have a unique style of learning, and unfortunately these differences are not always recognized by their educational systems. Gerner de Garcia (1993) notes that Hispanic children often prefer a cooperative learning environment and can be seen to achieve greater success when working with others, as opposed to working independently. She goes on to explain that families from diverse cultural backgrounds support their child's learning in varying ways.

Deaf children whose parents have immigrated to the U.S. may have come from a location that perceives deaf individuals as being unable to live independently. The family may not have had the resources to support their deaf child's previous education, given the lack of access to information about Deaf culture and signed languages. For example, deaf children in Spain were historically placed in educational environments that favored oralism, which led to a disparity in the education of pre-lingual versus post-lingual deaf children. It was not until 2007 that the Spanish Senate passed a law recognizing both Spanish Sign Language and Catalán Sign Language as official languages (Fraser, 2009).

Hispanic deaf students who currently reside in the U.S. may have the further challenge of being assessed in a language with which they are not native or proficient. If the child is assessed in a language that they are less familiar, this puts them at a disadvantage from their peers and may result in the unfair and incorrect labeling of the child. This challenge is compounded when Spanish dialects are taken into consideration (Gerner de Garcia, 1993). It is within this type of assessment meeting that trilingual interpreters will often facilitate communication. While it is important to recognize the child's dominant language in their educational program, it is also important to acknowledge all three of the languages to which the child is being exposed. This is equally important when considering the various cultures with which the child may identify. If given the right support, through the incorporation of multiple languages and cultural practices in

educational activities, the child, along with their family, can have greater participation in the educational process.

Deafness is not necessarily a barrier to the exchange of cultural information within a family. Often deaf children participate in cultural family practices (Ramsey, 2000). Cultural information can be conveyed in school as well through implementation of activities that center on culture. "Classroom activities that include diverse cultural experiences are likely to stimulate the interest and participation of children who can relate to a particular experience and share the perspective of a native of that culture" (Christensen, 1993, p. 24). Collaboration between the family and the education system serves to foster the development and maintenance of all three languages and cultures.

Deaf Mexican Experience

Ramsey (2011) found that after the closing of the Escuela Nacional para Sordomudos (Mexican National School for the Deaf (ENS)) in 1967, deaf Mexicans were no longer grouped into a single educational institution. Schools for the deaf in Mexico, including the historical ENS, have been primarily oral. Those teachers who incorporated sign language into their instruction were not formally taught Lengua de Señas Mexicana (LSM) and would often use what ASL they knew or create their own "school sign" (Parra, 1984, p. 4). The separation of deaf children from others, along with the lack of proper teacher training and inconsistent language use by teachers, ultimately led to poor education of the deaf in Mexico, which then lead to limited employment opportunities for deaf adults.

Both the women and men who participated in Ramsey's study (2011) shared that they learned LSM from the older generation of deaf Mexicans in their community. The participants expressed that the younger generation of deaf people in Mexico were often placed into schools with hearing children or with children who have other disabilities. They would then meet other deaf individuals through association with clubs, churches, or sports teams. It is through these social avenues that deaf youth meet older deaf Mexicans and are able to learn LSM. Interpreters who work with individuals from Mexico often notice extensive language variation for this reason.

Multicultural Interpreter Education

In regards to Hispanic/Latino culture, Call (2010) states that families often have multiple children, which means that a deaf child will commonly have hearing siblings who themselves will have the opportunity to become trilingual in Spanish, ASL, and English. These trilingual siblings will have access to cultural and linguistic information from all members of the household, as well as the school. Call asserts that, "it is these siblings who could become the greatest pool of potential in filling the existing shortage of ASL/Spanish/English trilingual professional educators and trilingual interpreters" (2010, p. 26). In order to foster the development of this knowledge, it is important to actively expose these youths to cultural information through school curricula as well as at home. This exposure will serve to build cultural knowledge that can be utilized by members of the Hispanic/Latino deaf community, as well as the trilingual interpreting community.

The National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP), in recognition of the change in the demographics of the U.S., established the goal of educating interpreters to work in a multicultural society. NMIP explored multicultural issues in interpreting from 1996 to 2000 with the mission of improving "the quantity and quality of interpreting services provided to individuals who are D/deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind from culturally diverse communities by providing educational opportunities, recruiting culturally diverse interpreters, and enhancing cultural sensitivity within the profession" (2000, p. 11). The group worked to establish interpreting curricula that demonstrate the inclusion of people from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Within the lecture regarding the Hispanic and Latino population, the NMIP further describes the knowledge needed in order to successfully interpret within the community. For example, in reference to cultural identity the authors state that "using the term 'Hispanic' alongside 'White,' 'Black,' 'Native American' and 'Asian' [in demographic surveys] has led to some confusion because the terms 'White,' 'Black,' 'Native American' and 'Asian' refer to race while the term 'Hispanic' refers to ethnicity. Spanish speakers cannot be categorized as members of a single race" (2000, p. 2). This is the type of foundational information that interpreters need in order to provide effective service. Considering the ubiquitous use of particular words/labels over a myriad documents, often it is all too easy to misunderstand the difference between these terms.

The participants in the NMIP explored topics such as: cultural terminology, demographics, cultural history, immigration, health, and education. They broached important themes within culture, such as the importance of family, cultural expectations regarding eye contact/physical proximity, and the significance of non-manual behavior. It is stated that, "Hispanics stand closer to each other, approximately 18 inches apart, while the dominant culture tends to maintain a distance of 36–48 inches. Lowering of head/eyes signifies respect, not humiliation" (NMIP, 2000, p. 25). In addition, the Interpreting Via Video Work Team of the NCIEC (2008) notes that, due to a small pool of trilingual VRS interpreters, it is common for an interpreter to see the same deaf caller more than once; therefore, callers may begin to consider the interpreter to be a friend or part of the family. They may ask the interpreter personal questions about their background, including how they learned Spanish.

Aside from generalist interpreter competencies (e.g., linguistic, interactional, cognitive) the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force (2012) lists additional skills and aptitudes needed by trilingual interpreters. For example, trilingual interpreters must be able to interpret an interaction in which a deaf consumer, an English-speaking consumer and a Spanish-speaking consumer are all present. They must also be able to perform sight translations of documents written in either Spanish or English, and then deliver them into either spoken Spanish, spoken English, or ASL. In addition, trilingual interpreters must be conscious of and flexible in their use of regionalisms, which may be unfamiliar depending on the consumer. They must also possess knowledge of the names and signs of countries and cities in Latin America, especially of those within their local geographic area.

Interpreters who are familiar with a variety of cultures possess knowledge needed to understand implicit information within a given message. Sequeiros (2002) discusses pragmatic enrichment in Spanish-English translation, which is used when working between languages that have grammatical incompatibilities, as well as varying cultures. Grammatical incompatibilities may include differences in the expression of time. Enrichment due to varying cultures is necessary when "assumptions required to interpret the original text successfully may not be easily accessible to the target audience" (p. 1078). Therefore, contextual clues that are evident to the translator are made explicit in the target language in order to facilitate comprehension of the original message. Decisions made by the translator lead to varying degrees of faithfulness to the source message. It is important to consider cultural and grammatical differences in order to

prevent misunderstanding. This type of skill can be honed through pursuit of multicultural education.

Organizations

Successful trilingual interpreters have the ability to apply their unique skill set in a variety of settings. Treviño (2012) notes that professionals in the fields of sign language interpretation, spoken language interpretation and translation can learn a lot from one another (e.g., consecutive interpretation and sight translation). He recommends that trilingual interpreters join professional organizations such as Mano a Mano, the American Translators Association (ATA), and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT). Treviño also recommends keeping abreast of current events in the field through online resources and participation in discussions hosted by organizations, such as the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC). There are currently a number of organizations that can serve as resources for trilingual interpreters.

In 1999, Mano and Mano was established in recognition of the need for trilingual interpreters to network and discuss linguistic and cultural issues unique to the work of those who interpret Spanish, English, and ASL (Mano a Mano, 2011). While the first meeting, which marked the inception of Mano a Mano, was held in Boston, Massachusetts, its reach extended much further as information discovered by its members was shared at subsequent Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) biennial conferences thereafter.

At the 2011 RID Conference held in Atlanta Georgia, it was announced that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between RID and Mano a Mano. This conference marked the first time that Mano a Mano and RID workshops were held in tandem. The Memorandum of Understanding demonstrated and solidified the relationship between these two organizations, emphasizing their mutual goal of ensuring quality interpretation service. The Mano a Mano website (www.manoamano-unidos.org) states:

> "The mission of Mano a Mano is to provide an infrastructure for access to trilingual interpreting resources, support professional development for trilingual interpreters, educate the public about trilingual interpreting, and advocate for appropriate policies concerning the provision of trilingual interpretation."

Through partnership, Mano a Mano and RID have agreed to work in collaboration with one another in order to ensure that information sharing takes place. This includes the translation and dissemination of important resources in Spanish, so that speakers of Spanish may access this material. Additionally, it is encouraged that Mano a Mano members become present in RID leadership positions so their perspectives may be better shared.

In addition to their work with RID, Mano a Mano also strives to collaborate with The National Council of Hispano Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCHDHH). The aims of the NCHDHH include the following: to ensure equal access in the areas of social, recreational, cultural, educational and vocational welfare, as well as increase awareness of the needs of the Hispano Deaf community. These aims are accomplished through education, advocacy, and leadership. Both organizations strive to provide resources and professional development for individuals within the community.

Trilingual Interpretation in VRS/VRI

With the advent of video relay service (VRS) the geographic divide between members of different cultural communities has become less concrete (McKee & Davis, 2010). Lightfoot (2007) asserts that interpreters who work in VRS settings would benefit from participation in training aimed at increasing cultural awareness due to their frequent encounter with culturally sensitive information with which they may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable. While this is true for a number of communities who use VRS, it is specifically visible in the Hispanic community. A large number of deaf children from Spanish speaking households reside in the United States and use VRS to communicate with their hearing family members; therefore, the work of trilingual interpreters is key to the successful delivery of interpreting service in this environment. In response to the growing need for trilingual interpreting service, the state of Texas petitioned for trilingual VRS to be compensable from the Interstate TRS fund. This motion, which was filed in 2000, was originally declined by the FCC, and trilingual VRS did not become readily available until January, 2006 (Quinto-Pozos et al., 2010). This change in the way interpreters provide interpreting service will lead to future investigations of the work of trilingual interpreters.

Research conducted by the Interpreting Via Video Work Team of the NCIEC (2008) found that trilingual interpreters working in VRS settings often encounter a variety of Spanish dialects as well as differing levels of linguistic fluency. They emphasize the challenge of

interpreting for deaf callers who have recently moved to the U.S. and are neither fluent in ASL nor their home nation's sign language. In addition, Quinto-Pozos, et al. (2010) found that deaf and hearing callers demonstrate a great deal of code-mixing and code-switching between English and Spanish, or between English and ASL. In regards to code-mixing and code-switching the researchers state:

> "The influence can take a number of forms: the mouthing of spoken language words while signing, the use of initialized variants that highlight the first letter of the spoken language word within the handshape of the sign (see Quinto-Pozos, 2008), and perhaps having spoken language word-order influence the signed language grammar that is being produced" (p. 35).

The complexity of trilingual interpretation in the video relay setting is compounded by the use of other sign languages, due to differences in the region of origin of the deaf VRS callers (Roth, 2009). Roth argues that it is possible to see "Mexican Sign Language (LSM), Cuban signs, Dominican signs, Puerto Rican signs, Colombian signs, etc., each with ASL variances, range and register" (p. 48). While this happens in VRS to a greater extent and at a much faster pace due to the rapidity at which VRS calls occur, this obstacle is relevant to trilingual interpreting in the community setting as well. Roth goes on to say that while ASL-English interpreters are presented with the hurdle of unknown regional signs, trilingual interpreters face the use of signs from other countries. She concludes that the key to handling this challenge is training, and encourages the development of workshops, curricula and educational materials.

Quinto-Pozos et al. discuss additional linguistic challenges that occur in these settings, such as nouns that indicate the gender of a referent and lexical items that vary according to dialect. Other identified challenges also arise due to the lack of visual access to the hearing participant in the call. For example, speakers of Spanish utilize formal variants of particular pronouns and verb conjugation in order to show respect to conversational participants. Without explicit knowledge of the age and status of the hearing interlocutor it would be all too easy for interpreters to breach this cultural norm.

Similarly to Roth, Quinto-Pozos et al. acknowledge a need for more training in the field of trilingual interpreting. The authors recognize that there is an insufficient number of teaming opportunities due to a small pool of trilingual interpreters in most geographic areas. They

discuss a variety of strategies employed by other interpreters in order to overcome these challenges, while acknowledging that more training is clearly needed. One strategy that interpreters report is the use of non-gendered words whenever possible. Other strategies include: asking for clarification from the deaf caller, utilization of cloze skills, fingerspelling a word phonetically to receive clarification from the deaf caller, utilization of information conveyed through lipreading, and avoidance of regionalisms. After the completion of a call the interpreter should consult other resources, such as books and the Internet, in an effort to discover the proper use of a particular word in a particular context. When presented with the challenge of pronunciation, interpreters report adhering to the pronunciation used by the hearing caller or basing their decision off of the language used in the call (i.e., English or Spanish).

A more recent study conducted by the Interpreting via Video Work Team of the NCIEC (2010) found additional strategies employed by video interpreters (both bilingual and trilingual) when presented with instances of cultural and linguistic variation in Video Remote Interpreting settings. These strategies include requesting a team (either deaf or hearing), utilizing third-person in the interpretation, switching to consecutive interpretation, or transferring the call to another interpreter. In addition, when clarification is needed, the interpreter may ask a direct question of the consumers. While these strategies appear to be effective in many cases, the authors note that there is a strong need for more research in this area as well as the development of training programs.

Trilingual Certification

Dueñas Gonzalez et al. (2010) discuss the creation and evaluation of a trilingual interpreter certification test offered in Texas through the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI). The University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy (UA NCITRP), along with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services-Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DARS-DHHS), created a trilingual interpreter certification process with the goal of ensuring quality trilingual interpreting services to the Hispanic Deaf community and their Spanish speaking families. The authors note that, in order to create a valid and reliable certification test, the organizations needed to consider authentic trilingual interpreting scenarios relevant to the members of the community who utilize the service. In order to achieve this goal, a variety of experts participated in the development of the

test to ensure that it would be truly representative of the work encountered by trilingual interpreters on a daily basis and inclusive of the skills needed to interpret successfully. For example, Dueñas Gonzalez et al. note that trilingual interpreters often work in a three-person interactive setting; which is described as one where three conversational participants, each speaking different languages communicate. This is the type of skill that the RID National Interpreter Certification test does not measure, but that? is imperative to trilingual interpreting.

Trilingual interpreters work in a variety of settings, including legal, medical, education, business/government, and VRS. The Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Trilingual Interpreter Certification test was designed to assess interpreting skills applicable to those different settings. In order to qualify to take the Trilingual Interpreter Certification test an interpreter must be at least 18 years of age, a certified ASL/English interpreter (either BEI or RID), possess a high school diploma (or its equivalent), not have a criminal conviction that could be grounds for denial or other disciplinary action associated with a certificate, and successfully complete a Spanish proficiency written test (DARS, 2011). The interpreter is then eligible to take the 80-question written portion of the Trilingual Interpreter Certification test, which examines Spanish reading comprehension, vocabulary, idioms, sentence completion ability, and listening comprehension.

The performance exam has two forms: advanced and master; which differ in difficulty, length, and topic complexity. Both of the tests consist of four parts: three person interactive, expressive interpreting (Spanish to ASL), receptive interpreting (ASL to Spanish), and two time-constrained sight translations (written English to ASL and written Spanish to ASL) (DARS, 2011). During the course of the three-person interactive test, the interpreter is required to interpret first into ASL before interpreting into either Spanish or English. This order was established so that consistency can be seen and the test can be rated appropriately. The sight translation component incorporated into the test is not weighed heavily in comparison with other portions of the test due to its infrequent use amongst interpreters (Dueñas Gonzalez et al, 2010). While there are several different components to the exam, the goal should consistently be to "render the source language message into the target language *without distortion or omission of any aspect of the message's meaning*" (DARS, 2011, p. 39). DARS goes on to say that the goal of the test is not to assess whether the interpreter uses perfect grammatical form, but to maintain that the deaf consumer receives the content of the message in a comprehensible manner with

consideration for the register needed in order to ensure clarity. Tests are scored based on delivery, adaptability, pronunciation, and fluency. Similarly to the expectations of interpreters who hold RID certification, an interpreter who successfully obtains their Trilingual Interpreter Certification must continue to attend workshops and trainings in order to maintain certification. Certified trilingual interpreters are expected to complete 5.0 CEUs related to interpretation, 2.0 CEUs in ethical related topics, and 3.0 CEUs in trilingual interpretation studies (DARS, 2011).

Conclusion

Given the expansion of the Hispanic community and the coinciding increase in the need for interpreters fluent in Spanish, English, and American Sign Language, there is a greater call for information regarding interpreting in this environment. Research regarding trilingual interpreting services has become a hot topic and it can be seen that education in this specialized field is increasing in the form of workshops and presentations. With the increase of information comes the ability to identify features of quality interpretations, which leads to the ability to evaluate an interpretation as well as offer certification in the field. We are now seeing a shift in the way trilingual interpreting is understood and practiced.

Identifying the Skills and Competencies of Trilingual Interpreters Through the Use of Focus Groups

Kristie Casanova de Canales
Rafael Treviño

"The main purpose of focus group research is to draw upon respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way in which would not be feasible using other methods…not to make a decision or complete a task…One of the first uses of focus groups was to explore the morale of U.S. troops during World War II."
— Reflections of Focus Group Researchers

In 2011, the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) commissioned a nation-wide focus group study of trilingual interpreters as one means of identifying the domains, skills, and competencies needed to provide effective trilingual interpretation. Over a six-month period, Kristie Casanova de Canales and Rafael Treviño canvassed the country, interviewing almost 100 stakeholders who represented practitioners, educators, employers, and deaf and hearing consumers. This report, which shares stakeholder perceptions and suggestions, and offers a view of the specific themes unique to trilingual interpreting, formed the foundation from which the field's first set of domains and competencies was crafted and vetted (chapter 6).

Executive Summary

This focus group study, with the aim of better understanding the work of the trilingual interpreter, represents the largest qualitative undertaking of its kind. The data informing the report was collected via 17 focus groups comprised of 83 participants representing the following five primary stakeholder groups: practitioners, interpreter hiring entities, deaf and hard of hearing consumers, English-speaking hearing consumers, and Spanish-speaking hearing consumers[10]

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[10] It also included one interview with an English-speaking hearing consumer.

The data revealed a host of trilingual competencies and skills, some clearly agreed upon and others that sparked lively discussion. One major theme that arose was the notion of "real world" versus "ideal world" interpreting. This theme manifested itself in an initial division of competencies and skills, being either "fundamental" or "exemplary." "Fundamental" skills were generalist competencies and skills that the participants felt all practitioners of trilingual interpreting should possess. "Exemplary" skills possessed by a practitioner who more closely resembles an "ideal world" trilingual interpreter. From these two initial themes came a final set of domains and competencies that a competent trilingual interpreter should possess to better assure effective communication.

This report shares the demographics and data obtained by the interviewers. It provides a presentation of the themes and includes comments that, while not specific to identifying the skills and competencies of trilingual interpreters, are germane to any discussion on trilingual interpreting. A discussion taken from each of the five stakeholder group meetings is included to give the reader a better understanding of their perspectives. The report concludes with a section offering the interviewers' recommendations and identifying questions to be addressed in future research.

Introduction

The 2000 U.S. Census Bureau reports that 12.9% (53,448,479 participants) of the nation's overall population is Hispanic. Gallaudet Research Institute estimates that 2.1 million deaf and hard of hearing persons use ASL as their primary language (2013). Experts working in the field of trilingual interpreting are seeing rapid growth in the field as a result of these demographics. As illustration, a survey conducted by the Western Region Interpreter Education Center (2010) of 35 trilingual interpreters, revealed that 50% of survey respondents indicated that at least 50% of their work is based in trilingual settings. Surveyed trilingual interpreters further reported that these trilingual settings carry a unique set of demands that include understanding accents and multiple varieties of Spanish; hearing English, then signing ASL while mouthing Spanish; attending to multiple registers; and code switching.

In the field of Video Relay Service (VRS) interpreting, the NCIEC's Interpreting via Video work team noted that "further investigation into the needs of trilingual interpreters is

important as the number of trilingual VRS interpreters increases" (2008, p. 63). This comment was made in light of the observation in the same report that "while the foundation of Spanish as a language is shared, there is significant variation among Spanish-speaking countries with regard to lexical items, usage, societal norms, and cultural norms." Quinto-Pozos et al. (2010) conducted an analysis of the challenges faced by trilingual interpreters in VRS settings that identified specific skills that need to be honed by practitioners in this field. They concluded that training opportunities need to be afforded to trilingual interpreters in order to improve services for consumers.

For these and other reasons, NCIEC established the National Trilingual Task Force (hereafter, Task Force) to focus on improving the interpreting needs of the Hispanic/Latino community, both deaf and hearing. The broad-based goal of the Task Force is to increase the number of qualified interpreters able to interpret between ASL, Spanish and English by enhancing leadership and awareness, determining effective practices concerning trilingual interpreting, and providing educational opportunities and related resources.

This study on the domains, competencies, and skills of trilingual interpreters aims to help the Task Force meet its goals. Funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration through 2015, the study is looking at settings beyond VRS, where the majority of trilingual interpreting research has been done. This study is also the first of its kind to include the input of hearing consumers of interpreting services. Like other research before it, the interviewers hope that this report leaves the reader with their own new set of questions and motivation for seeking answers.

Methodology

The interviewers began their work by identifying five primary stakeholder groups: 1) working trilingual interpreters ("practitioners"); 2) companies or individuals who hire trilingual interpreters ("hiring entities"); 3) deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind consumers; 4) English-speaking hearing consumers; and 5) Spanish-speaking hearing consumers. This range of stakeholders ensured that not only were the opinions of the practitioners considered, but also those of the people who use and hire their services.

In order to have rich discussions during the focus group sessions it was decided that participants should have sufficient experience from which to share input and draw

conclusions. As illustrated in Table 4.1 below, practitioners were required to possess two or more years of experience interpreting in trilingual settings, with preference given to practitioners who also possess certification or other credentials in interpreting. Consumers were required to have used trilingual interpreting services at least twice a year during the past two years, while hiring entities were required to currently be engaged in hiring the services of trilingual interpreters.

Table 4.1: Stakeholder Definitions and Criteria for Participation in Study

Stakeholder	Criteria for Participation
Practitioner: A sign language interpreting whose working languages are English, Spanish, and American Sign Language.	At least two or more years of experience (required) and certification (preferred).
Hiring Entity: A company or individual who hires trilingual interpreters.	Currently engage in hiring trilingual interpreters.
Consumer: A deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or hearing user of trilingual interpreting services.	Use of trilingual interpreting services at least two times a year in the past two years.

Participant recruitment approaches were designed for each stakeholder group. Since practitioners constituted the largest stakeholder group, more methods of recruitment were used to solicit maximum participation. The recruitment of hiring entities and consumers depended more heavily on personal recommendations by professionals in the field of trilingual interpreting and via efforts by the interviewers in Los Angeles, New York City, and Washington, D.C.

The recruitment effort for practitioners included an email solicitation sent to a database of approximately 300 trilingual interpreters, which is maintained by one of the interviewers, and to members of a listserv referred to as the "Network of Trilingual Interpreters." (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/trilingualinterpreters). Additionally, in an attempt to reach all of the stakeholder groups, the social media tool Facebook was used. In total, there was a response from 115 individuals interested in participating in the study. Table 4.2 shows that participant interest was generated in near equal proportion from the three primary recruitment tools (i.e., Facebook, email solicitation, and "other"). For purposes of

current discussion, "other" includes personal invitations made to deaf and hard of hearing participants by the facilitators in Los Angeles, New York City, and Washington, D.C., as well as efforts in Los Angeles and Miami to recruit Spanish-speaking hearing consumers.

Table 4.2: Participant Reports of Recruitment Method

Collector Method	Responses
Facebook	42
Email Solicitation	40
Other	33
Total	115

The majority of the 115 persons completed an online questionnaire. Some individuals without computer access were asked to complete a paper version of the questionnaire (see Appendices B, C, and D). The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect demographic data and determine if participant candidates met the qualification criteria described in Table 4.1. The online survey asked each interested individual to identify as a practitioner, hiring entity or consumer. Depending upon their response, the individual was then directed to a questionnaire specific to their stakeholder representation. Regardless of eligibility, those who completed the online questionnaire were asked if they would like to be considered for future studies on trilingual interpreting. By doing so, it was hoped that those who responded affirmatively would later help build a database of potential participant candidates to aid in future research on this emerging field.

Of the 115 respondents, a total of 68 (59%) participated in a focus group. The remaining 47 respondents either did not meet the qualifying criteria or chose not to join a focus group despite being qualified to do so. Some individuals were qualified to participate in more than one focus group (i.e., the participant was both a hiring entity and a practitioner). For this reason, although there were 68 individuals who fully participated in this study, they provided a total of 83 "acts of participation."

The great advantage of using focus groups as a qualitative research method is the ability to garner more in-depth insights into a topic, based on the feelings and experiences of the participants, and provide a mechanism for participants to discuss a larger range of issues than cannot be captured by a questionnaire. The interviewers recognized that success in this

research genre is largely dependent on the ability of participants to communicate openly and freely, and to do this they must feel they are in a safe environment (Edmunds, 1999). With this in mind, and in consideration of the topics to be explored, it was determined that the majority of the focus groups for practitioners would be conducted by teleconference. One practitioner focus group was held in person, this occurring at the 2011 RID National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, where a large number of trilingual interpreters were present.

There were three primary reasons for the decision to conduct the practitioner focus groups via teleconference. First, many practitioners personally know most, if not all, of the other trilingual interpreter practitioners in their local geographic area. The interviewers felt that less-experienced practitioners may be reluctant to share or disagree with more experienced practitioners. Second, teleconferencing would widen the pool of candidates to practitioners living in more remote areas rather than limiting the pool to those living in cities with a greater critical mass of trilingual interpreters. Third and finally, this option would allow the interviewers to form focus groups composed of practitioners who work in diverse settings, thereby gaining well-rounded insights on the topics discussed. The in-person focus group at the 2011 RID National Conference was the exception because it did not present the three reasons outlined above.

In total, 17 focus groups and 1 interview were conducted, representing the largest qualitative research study conducted in the area of trilingual interpreting to date. Table 4.3, located on the next page, provides the date, location, and number of participants in each focus group.

A total of nine practitioner focus groups were completed, but not all groups discussed the same interview questions. Given the extent of the interpreting domains to be covered and the time constraints, the interviewers divided questions into three separate domain clusters. Three practitioner focus groups received cluster "A," which addressed the domains of Language and Technology; three received cluster "B," which addressed the domains of Culture, Knowledge, and Self-care; and three received cluster "C," which addressed the domains of Interpreting, Professionalism, and Ethics. The interviewers facilitated all of the practitioner focus groups.

Table 4.3: Dates, Locations, and Total Participants of Focus Groups

Group	Stakeholder Domain Cluster (Total Participants)	Location	Date	Participants
1	**Practitioners** Domain A – Language & Technology (14)	Teleconference	7/15/11	2
2		Atlanta, GA	7/19/11	7
3		Teleconference	8/4/11	5
4	**Practitioners** Domain B – Culture, Knowledge, & Self-care (14)	Teleconference	8/9/11	7
5		Teleconference	9/1/11	3
6		Teleconference	9/15/11	4
7	**Practitioners** Domain C – Interpreting, Professionalism, & Ethics (14)	Teleconference	8/6/11	4
8		Teleconference	8/18/11	6
9		Teleconference	8/25/11	4
10	**Hiring entities** (8)	Teleconference	9/18/11	3
11		Teleconference	9/19/11	5
12	**Deaf/Hard of hearing Consumers** (16)	Los Angeles, CA	9/23/11	5
13		New York City, NY	9/21/11	6
14		Washington, D.C.	10/4/11	5
15	**English-speaking Hearing Consumers** (5)	Teleconference	9/27/11	4
16		Teleconference	9/29/11	1[11]
17	**Spanish-speaking Hearing Consumers** (12)	Los Angeles, CA	9/15/11	7
18		Teleconference (Miami)	9/30/11	5

Two hiring entity focus groups were facilitated by teleconference. For these groups this approach was adopted to maintain participant anonymity to the extent that it was desired

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[11] Because only one person participated, the session was designated as an interview.

and possible, as well as scheduling and other constraints. The interviewers facilitated these focus groups as well.

To facilitate optimum communication, three in-person focus groups were conducted with deaf and hard of hearing consumers. They occurred in Los Angeles in collaboration with the Western Region Interpreter Education Center (WRIEC), New York City in collaboration with the Regional Interpreter Education Center at Northeastern University (NURIEC), and Washington, D.C., in collaboration with Gallaudet University Regional Interpreter Education Center (GURIEC). Each was conducted by deaf facilitators chosen by the Regional Centers. Despite recruitment efforts, there were no participants from the deaf-blind community. Nonetheless, the interviewers believe that the analysis of the data provided by the deaf and hard of hearing consumers does have a degree of applicability.

Regarding English-speaking hearing consumers, recruitment efforts yielded only a small number of participants. One focus group, held by teleconference, was completed, along with one interview, also held by teleconference. The low number of English-speaking hearing consumers was attributed to these participants' infrequent use of interpreting services. Unlike deaf and hard of hearing consumers, who have a high frequency of interaction with trilingual interpreters, and Spanish-speaking hearing consumers who may be family members of deaf people and often attend educational and medical appointments with their deaf children, and communicate with their deaf family members through VRS, the English-speaking hearing consumer base is more limited to professionals, such as a school administrator or a therapist in a family counseling session. As a result of this low frequency of contact, the feedback that English-speaking hearing consumers can provide as it relates to specifics of competency and skills may be limited. The focus group and interview were both facilitated by the interviewers.

Two focus groups were conducted with Spanish-speaking hearing consumers, one in person and one by teleconference. The in-person focus group was conducted in Los Angeles in collaboration with the WRIEC by a local Spanish-speaking facilitator. Although the second focus group was conducted by teleconference, all of the participants of this group resided in Miami, Florida.

Practitioner Demographics

As mentioned in the preceding discussion, eight of the nine focus groups for practitioners were conducted via teleconference with trilingual interpreters from various backgrounds and geographic locations. The ninth focus group was conducted in person in Atlanta, Georgia. There were a total of 42 practitioner participants among the nine focus groups: three groups that addressed domain cluster "A" (Language and Technology), three for "B" (Culture, Knowledge, and Self-care), and three for "C" (Interpreting, Professionalism, and Ethics). The 42 practitioner participants include those trilingual interpreters who may have also participated in more than one focus group in order to address a different cluster of domains.

As can be seen in Table 4.4, a total of 29 females (69%) and 13 males (31%) participated in the focus groups. Of this number, 8 (19%) were 18–29 years old, 18 (43%) were 30–39 years old, 14 (33%) were 40–49 years old, and 2 (5%) were 50–59 years old. The practitioner participants represented 11 states, as well as 1 participant from Puerto Rico and 1 from Canada. The 11 states were: Texas; California; Florida; Arizona; New Mexico; Washington, D.C.; Maryland; Oregon; Illinois; New Jersey; and North Carolina.

Table 4.4: Demographics for Practitioner Participants

Sex

Sex		
Female	29	69%
Male	13	31%

Age

Age		
18–29 years	8	19%
30–39 years	18	43%
40–49 years	14	33%
50–59 years	2	5%

Education

Education		
High School diploma	3	7%
Certificate or Diploma	5	12%
Associate's degree	10	24%
Bachelor's degree	15	36%
Master's degree	9	21%

Background

Background		
Mexican	10	24%
Puerto Rican	7	17%
White Non-Hispanic	6	14%
Nicaraguan-Mexican	4	10%
Colombian	4	10%
Multi-ethnic	3	7%
Cuban	2	5%
Tex-Mex	2	5%
American	2	5%
Latino	1	2%
African-American/Black	1	2%

Years of experience

Years of experience		
2–5 years	19	45%
6–10 years	10	24%
11–15 years	4	10%
More than 15 years	9	21%

Table 4.4 also summarizes "level of education" data from the practitioner participants. The number of practitioners whose highest level of education was high school was 3 (7%). Five (12%) had completed a certificate or diploma and 10 (24%) had completed an associate's degree. Fifteen (36%) had completed a bachelor's degree, and 9 (21%) had completed a master's degree. For the 26 participants who provided the information regarding higher education, the concentration of study or majors consisted primarily of Interpretation, but other areas represented included Social Work, Sociology, Psychology, Spanish, Linguistics, Deaf Education, Deaf Studies, Chicano Studies, Community Studies, Education, and Journalism.

Summarized in Table 4.4 is the ethnic and national or racial background information of each practitioner participant. Of the 42 practitioners, 24% identified as Mexican, 17% as Puerto Rican, 14% as White Non-Hispanic/European-American, 10% as Nicaraguan-Mexican, 10% as Colombian, 7% as Multi-ethnic, 5% as Cuban, 5% as Tex-Mex, 5% as American, 2% as Latino, and 2% as African-American/Black.

The focus groups represented a broad spectrum of practitioners with varying years of experience interpreting in trilingual settings: 45% had been interpreting for 2–5 years; 24% had for 6–10 years of experience; 10% had for 11–15 years; and 21% had for 15 years or more of experience. Fifteen of the practitioners did not have national certification, while the remaining 27 possessed a CI, CT, NIC or above; 3 of the 42 participants held Texas Trilingual Master certification, 1 held Texas Trilingual Advanced certification; and 1 practitioner held an NIC in addition to certification as a medical (Spanish-English) interpreter.

Hiring Entity Demographics

Both hiring entity focus groups were conducted by telephone with a total of eight participants representing companies based in California, New Mexico, Texas, Maryland, Florida, Puerto Rico, New York, and Washington, D.C. Some provide services nationwide in the U.S., while three of the participants represented companies providing VRS or VRI services, or both. An additional three hire trilingual interpreters work in Spanish-speaking countries. Other settings for which these participants hired trilingual interpreters included healthcare, educational, vocational rehabilitation, conference, and legal.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Demographics

All focus groups for deaf and hard of hearing consumers were conducted in person, and occurred in Los Angeles (5 participants), New York City (6 participants), and Washington, D.C. (5 participants). Each focus group was facilitated by a deaf person and included a deaf note-taker. In one instance, the focus group facilitator participated to a certain extent, but because the person's role was primarily that of facilitator, the demographic information for this individual is not included in the figures below.

Table 4.5: Demographics for Deaf/Hard of Hearing Consumer Participants

Sex

Female	7	44%
Male	9	56%

Age

18–29 years	1	6%
30–39 years	3	19%
40–49 years	10	63%
50–59 years	1	6%
No response	1	6%

Education

High School diploma	1	6%
Certificate or Diploma	3	19%
Associate's degree	2	13%
Bachelor's degree	3	19%
Master's degree	5	31%
Doctorate	1	6%
No response	1	6%

Background

Peruvian	2	13%
Colombian	2	13%
White Non-Hispanic	2	13%
Puerto Rican	1	6%
Mexican-American	1	6%
Dominican	1	6%
African-American/Black	1	6%
Hispanic/Latino	5	31%
No response	1	6%

Although the sex of the deaf/hard of hearing participants was almost evenly distributed with 9 males and 7 females, there was a disparity in the age spread: 1 was 18–29 year old; 3 were 30–39 year olds; ten were 40–49 year olds; 1 was 50–59 year old; and one person did not provide a response. Over half of the participants held at least a bachelor's degree; 1 had a high school diploma; 3 had completed a certificate or diploma; 2 had an

associate's degree; 5 had a master's degree; 1 had a doctoral degree; and 1 person did not provide a response.

The ethnic or racial composition of the consumer focus groups was varied, although almost all identified, in general, as Hispanic or Latino: 2 identified as Peruvian; 2 as Colombian; 2 as White Non-Hispanic; 1 as Puerto Rican; 1 as Chicano/Mexican-American; 1 as Dominican; 1 as African-American/Black; 5 as Hispanic/Latino; and 1 did not provide a response.

English-Speaking Hearing Consumer Demographics

Both focus groups for English-speaking consumers were held by telephone. All of the 5 participants were female. Two were 18–29 years old, 2 were 30–39 years old, and 1 was 40–49 years old, and they represented three states, these being Florida (2), Illinois (2), and New York (1). There were 3 whose highest level of education was a bachelor's degree, and 2 who had completed a master's degree. The concentrations or majors represented were Psychology, Linguistics, Theater, Spanish, and Social Science Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis in sign language. The ethnic, national, or racial background breakdown included 3 who identified as White Non-Hispanic/European-American, 1 who identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1 who identified as Multi-ethnic.

Spanish-Speaking Hearing Consumer Demographics

As noted in Table 4.6 on the following page, a total of 12 Spanish-speaking consumers participated in one of two focus groups. Of this number, 10 were females and 2 were males. And of this number, 2 were 18–29 years old, 3 were 30–39 years old, 4 were 40–49 years old, and 3 were 50–59 years old. The 12 participants represented two states: California (7) and Florida (5).

Table 4.6: Demographics for Spanish-speaking Hearing Consumer Participants

Sex			Background		
Female	10	83%	Not specified	3	25%
Male	2	17%	Venezuelan	5	42%
			Mexican	3	25%
			Guatemalan	1	8%

Age			Education		
18–29 years	2	17%	Did not complete high school	5	42%
30–39 years	3	25%	High School diploma/ equivalent	2	17%
40–49 years	4	33%	Certificate or Diploma	1	8%
50–59 years	3	25%	Bachelor's degree	3	25%
			Master's degree	1	8%

Five of the 12 consumer participants did not complete high school. There were 2 whose highest level of education was high school, or the equivalent of high school, and 1 had completed a certificate or diploma. Three had completed a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, and 1 had completed a master's degree or its equivalent. For the three participants who provided information regarding higher education, the concentrations or majors represented were Engineering, Industrial Relations, and Management. In terms of ethnic, national, or racial background, all hearing consumer participants who responded identified as Hispanic/Latino: 5 as Venezuelan, 3 as Mexican, and 1 as Guatemalan. Of the 12 in these groups, three did not specify a nationality.

Results

Identification of Skills and Competencies

Following the analysis of the focus group data, the interviewer identified an initial slate of necessary competencies, skills, and knowledge required by competent trilingual interpreters. For the purposes of this report, the following definitions are used: (1) *knowledge* is considered the "acquaintance with facts, truths, or principles, as from study or investigation" (http://dictionary.reference.com, 2012); (2) *skill* is the "ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc. to do something well" (Witter-Merrithew & Johnson, 2005); and (3) *competence* is the "possession of required skill, knowledge, qualification, or capacity" (http://dictionary.reference.com, 2012). In some instances, the terms "skill" and "competency" are used interchangeably when referring to the sense of

being able to perform a certain act. "Knowledge" has been included in this slate because, while possessing certain knowledge does not require the ability to perform an act, it does change the perspective with which interpreters approach their work.

The skills and competencies listed as "fundamental" are those that all trilingual interpreters must possess in order to accomplish the task. Those listed as "exemplary" go beyond the fundamental skills in that they approach more closely the ideals desired by consumers of interpreting services.

- *Fundamental Skills and Competencies*
    - Interpreting Skills
        - Consecutive Interpreting
        - Simultaneous Interpreting
        - Sight Translation
    - Turn-Taking Management Skills
    - Linguistic Competency
        - Client Language Assessment Skills
        - Spanish Literacy
    - Cultural Competence Professionalism
- *Exemplary Skills and Competencies*
    - English-Spanish Interpreting Skills
    - English-Spanish Translation Skills
    - Advanced Linguistic Competency
        - Recognizing and comprehending multiple varieties of Spanish
        - Recognizing and comprehending various accents
    - Knowledge about Latin American Deaf People
        - History of deaf people and evolution of signed languages
        - Competency in the use of Latin American signed languages
    - Knowledge about Latin America
    - Knowledge about U.S. Legislations

Fundamental Competencies and Skills

The fundamental skills and competencies presented below represent what stakeholders often associated with the "real world" or viewed as the minimum skills needed for successful trilingual interpreting. They included fluency in Spanish, ASL, and English; client language assessment skills; Spanish literacy; cultural competence; consecutive interpreting skills; simultaneous interpreting skills; sight translation skills; turn-taking management skills; and professionalism.

Linguistic Competency

Linguistic competence refers to the ability to produce and accurately interpret messages for a variety of functions (e.g., to address a group formally, to ask questions, or to debate) in a given language. In terms of linguistic competency, each of the five stakeholder groups recognized that trilingual interpreters must be fluent in Spanish, ASL, and English, though this was defined differently by different participants. Some hiring entities noted that it is rare to find such "balanced" trilingual interpreters, as they often have notable weaknesses in at least one of three languages. Several practitioners observed that trilingual interpreters need a command of English and Spanish grammar and knowledge of both standard and regional Spanish. However, some practitioners who tend to work with clients from only one geographic region and linguistic background asserted that they do not need a command of other regional varieties of Spanish. The majority of practitioners alluded to the need to be able to work across all registers in each of the three languages. A small number of participants referred to the need for Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)[12] (Cummins, 1979) in all three languages to accomplish register mastery. Again, some practitioners asserted that because of the settings and communities in which they work, a command of the formal Spanish register and CALP in Spanish was not necessary. In addition, while the majority of practitioners implied that attaining a high level of fluency is most challenging for them in Spanish, there

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[12] BICS refers to the language skills needed in social situations - the day-to-day language needed to interact socially with other people. CALP, in contrast, refers to formal academic learning. This includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing about subject area content material and includes skills such as comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring. CALP is needed to manage context-reduced linguistic situations.

were two Spanish-dominant participants who noted that English fluency is the greater obstacle for them, particularly with regard to attaining certification.

Deaf consumers emphasized the need for fluency and "clear" signing. One participant lamented that interpreters' lack of proficiency in ASL often results in having to fingerspell, repeat more, and otherwise alter their own communication style in order to be understood. Another consumer suggested that training should be added to address commonly misunderstood Spanish words. Two consumers noted that while understanding the gist of a message (the concept) is vital, appropriate word choice is also important. Several deaf and hard of hearing consumer participants emphasized "total fluency" in Spanish, including correct use of informal and formal forms of address ("tú," "vos," or "usted") and knowledge of financial and other specialized terminology in Spanish, as well as in ASL and English. One consumer indicated that a college degree should be a minimum requirement for trilingual interpreters so that they are able to interpret advanced or academic discourse, while others countered that experience could substitute for a degree in this regard.

Spanish-speaking hearing consumers expressed the opinion that "balanced" trilingual interpreters are scarce. These consumers illustrated the importance of fluency in Spanish by highlighting common problems they encountered when trilingual interpreters are not fluent in Spanish: forgetting words in Spanish, coining Spanish words from English ones, committing outright errors, articulating concepts consumers cannot understand, and not conserving the register of the interaction. One consumer noted that interpreters lacking fluency in Spanish sometimes lower the register of technical discourse to the level of "baby talk," explaining: "Deterioran y tergiversan, y utilizan palabras que son inexistentes en español" ("They deteriorate and distort [the language], and they use words that do not exist in Spanish"). One consumer accepts this lack of fluency in all but the most high-stake scenarios, explaining that she understands that interpreters are learning on the job, helping deaf people and having big hearts. Another, however, emphasized that interpreters must take their profession seriously and that, for trilingual interpreters, this implies a high level of fluency in Spanish.

Client Language Assessment Skills

It is widely recognized that interpreters should possess the ability to assess the language use of their clients for a variety of reasons. It helps interpreters understand their

clients, ensures that expressive interpretations reflect the language use of the client, and alerts interpreters to situations in which they may need a different interpreter or an additional (deaf or hearing) interpreter for the assignment. Practitioner participants noted that they need to possess enough linguistic competence in order to accurately assess their clients' language needs. Some practitioners noted that an understanding of power dynamics and client goals is helpful in successfully assessing language use and needs. One practitioner noted that experience working with people from other countries improves one's ability to accurately assess language in trilingual settings, while another noted that, due to the presence of a third language, additional (informal) pre-conference time may be needed for an accurate language assessment. Deaf and hard of hearing consumers, as well as Spanish-speaking hearing consumers, stated that it is important for trilingual interpreters to match clients' language level, and this implies a need for accurate assessment of the clients' language use in addition to linguistic proficiency.

Spanish Literacy

Trilingual practitioners were asked whether or not they believed trilingual interpreters should be able to read in Spanish. There was disagreement regarding the importance of this skill and the level of Spanish literacy trilingual interpreters should possess. The majority of practitioners indicated that Spanish literacy is important and some cited it as vital. Practitioners who felt Spanish literacy was important cited the following reasons: reading Spanish-language materials is useful in preparation for certain assignments; it is an important part of those interpreters' professional development; it provides the interpreter with more access to knowledge written in Spanish; and Spanish literacy is often a necessity during the course of some assignments.

One hiring entity noted that staff trilingual interpreters at their workplace are requested to read forms in Spanish to consumers who cannot read Spanish. An English-speaking hearing consumer noted: "In terms of fingerspelling, it would be important to be able to spell correctly in both languages." Another English-speaking hearing consumer reflected on their experiences using trilingual interpreters while abroad: "If one of your responsibilities is to help people get around, then being able to read street signs and maps [in Spanish] is important." A third English-speaking hearing consumer commented on Spanish

literacy: "I think the preparation part of interpreting […] necessitates [Spanish] reading skills." Supporting this, one practitioner reflected that in conference settings, as well as in community work, Spanish literacy could be necessary for either preparation or to carry out a sight translation of a Spanish language document.

A participant from one of the deaf and hard of hearing consumer focus groups noted that there may be a greater need for Spanish literacy among educational interpreters than among community interpreters because the former setting might require more sight translations of forms and other documents. While the topic of Spanish literacy skills was not addressed directly in the Los Angeles focus group with Spanish-speaking hearing consumers, their counterparts in the Miami group were unanimous and emphatic in their assertion that trilingual interpreters should know how to read and write in Spanish.

Cultural Competence

While communicative competence refers to the ability to use language for a variety of functions, both expressively and receptively, *intercultural* communicative competence acknowledges that culture is present in every linguistic exchange and refers to one's ability to produce culturally appropriate messages and to accurately interpret culturally infused messages. Given that cultural competence is a requisite component of intercultural communicative competence, stakeholders were asked questions that explored their views about the level of cultural competence trilingual interpreters should possess. Each of the five stakeholder groups underscored the importance of cultural competence, gave specific examples of why it is important and described what it means (to them) for a trilingual interpreter to be culturally competent. One practitioner noted that cultural mediation, which requires cultural competence, is important and appropriate. This practitioner warned that interpreters must be able to culturally mediate in ways appropriate to the situation. Another practitioner noted that cultural competence impacts an interpreter's ability to appropriately determine where consumers should be positioned in a room. This practitioner explained that an interpreter must consider the need for visual and auditory access in every situation, but must also understand and take into account the cultural implications of where elders are placed in the setting, the hierarchy of family members, and the power dynamics at play. All practitioners who addressed cultural competence in their focus groups indicated that it is a

vital competency. Some practitioner participants attempted to prioritize cultural competence, judging it to be almost as important as, just as important as, and (in one case) more important than linguistic competence.

Hiring entities also weighed in on the issue of cultural competence. They agreed that cultural competence is indeed important but varied in their opinions regarding the degree of its importance. One hiring entity participant commented that cultural competence is at least as important as linguistic competence, if not more so. While another noted the danger of an interpreter being "too acculturated," referring to an interpreter who may be extremely competent in one particular Latin American culture, to the exclusion of others. The hiring entity that made this comment also noted that such an interpreter may not be as open to learning about other cultures relevant to trilingual interpreting. Another hiring entity observed that while cultural competence is valuable in general, it may be more important in VRS than in conference settings. Other participants in the hiring entities focus groups noted specific manifestations of cultural competence: the interpreter advises when a client may not be willing to speak up because of the client's cultural background, or when a client is adaptive to other cultures (so that he or she is able to behave in a culturally appropriate manner, rather than stubbornly insisting on his or her own cultural standards); the interpreter is diplomatic (particularly when working abroad); the interpreter understands differences in gender roles in various cultures; the interpreter understands and observes different cultures' eye-contact expectations; and the interpreter may engage in more cultural mediation than bilingual (ASL/English) interpreters.

Deaf and hard of hearing consumers emphasized that culturally competent trilingual interpreters should understand the rules of how close people stand to each other (proxemics) and how much hand-touching or shoulder-touching is appropriate (haptics), and the norms for the cultures involved. They should learn about the cultural differences between the home countries of the clients they work with, know about Latin American foods, and be familiar with [American] Deaf culture and Latino Deaf culture. Further comments from these consumer participants indicated that culturally competent trilingual interpreters feel allied with both the deaf and hearing worlds, pursue training and education to enhance cultural sensitivity, and are not arrogant about their cultural knowledge. However, one participant's commented that some interpreters may arrogantly think they have attained cultural

competence and not realize their limitations, or how much more the interpreter has to learn. One consumer participant suggested that trilingual interpreters should interact outside the work environment with their trilingual Latino deaf consumers in order to become more familiar with their communities and ways of life. Another noted the importance of cultural competence and cultural mediation; an example of the need for cultural mediation would be a deaf teacher successfully conveying, through a trilingual interpreter, information about "Spirit Week" or an upcoming school dance to a Spanish-speaking parent.

English-speaking hearing consumers provided specific input regarding what encompasses cultural competence and why it is important. One consumer noted that "if you interpret in an educational setting you should know what classrooms look like [in the home culture of your clients]." To illustrate, some education systems are much more hierarchical and students are expected to sit quietly and take notes as the teacher speaks, while in other cultures children are allowed to interject, such as by raising their hands. One participant noted: "I think that knowledge is very helpful in terms of being able to help the student participate successfully in class." In terms of interpreting in medical settings, one English-speaking hearing consumer noted that an awareness of how different cultures talk about illness and the body is important, and indicated that interpreters should know how much discretion is required regarding such talk in Latin American cultures. For example, this consumer commented that understanding how doctors tend to treat patients in different cultures is a useful component of cultural competence. Participants in this stakeholder group also noted other components of cultural knowledge that trilingual interpreters should possess, such as understanding how males and females interact with each other in a given culture, how deafness is viewed and talked about in other countries and cultures, and what words (related to deafness) are considered either benign or offensive.

Spanish-speaking hearing consumers echoed the opinion of other stakeholders' that cultural competence is fundamental. Two participants rated the trilingual interpreters they have worked with on a scale of 1–10 (with ten being fully culturally competent). Of the two consumers, both rated their experiences relatively low, one rated trilingual interpreters with a "4" and the other rated them with a "5." Conversely, two other participants indicated greater positive experience, but did not offer a numerical rating. Some Spanish-speaking hearing consumers noted that cultural competence involves understanding the cultural influences on

different Spanish-speakers' speech styles, citing that many interpreters do not use "usted" (the formal variant of "you" in Spanish) in culturally appropriate ways when addressing the consumer directly. Several consumers also noted that trilingual interpreters do not need to know everything about every culture, but do need to continuously learn about the cultures of their clients. One consumer indicated that cultural competence might begin with an attitude; relating their own experience of moving to the United States and making a conscious decision to not criticize the surrounding differences, but rather embrace them. This consumer also noted: "Tú puedes verlo, lo positivo, y tienes que enriquecerte de eso" ("You can see it, the positive side, and you must let that enrich you").

Interpreting Skills

The interviewers strove to determine the differences that exist between the interpreting skill sets of bilingual (ASL/English) and trilingual interpreting settings. Practitioner participants commented that while expansion, listing, and explanation are important skills for all interpreters, trilingual interpreters may depend on them more heavily because of the deaf consumer's language use (e.g., countries of origin, levels of ASL proficiency, etc.). Other comments by practitioner participants focused on mouthing. Several of these participants noted they will mouth words in Spanish while producing certain signs in ASL, in order to facilitate successful communication. One interpreter indicated they might mouth in English while producing ASL signs, then subsequently mouth the word in Spanish in order to increase comprehension.   Again, several practitioners indicated that trilingual interpreters need to know how to use "tú" and "usted" appropriately.

One salient comment made by a hiring entity was the need for interpreters to appreciate that transfer of skills is not automatic. They referred specifically to trained, bilingual ASL/English interpreters who may be fluent in Spanish, but have not been trained to interpret into or from Spanish: "There's some assumption that the knowledge of Spanish and the experience as an interpreter means that there will be some automatic transference. There's a lack of appreciation by the interpreter, that [regardless of whether] they worked a lot to be able to work between English and ASL, but if they haven't done that work with Spanish [the interpreting skills] are not going to be there."

Identifying Skills and Competencies

Some deaf and hard of hearing consumers reinforced the belief that trilingual interpreters should be able to mouth in Spanish while signing ASL. One consumer explained that this enables consumers to ascertain a trilingual interpreter's fluency in Spanish and affects their own confidence in the interpreter's competence. Another deaf consumer lamented that some trilingual interpreters cannot always understand consumers when they mouth in Spanish while signing, and indicated this is a receptive skill trilingual interpreters should possess. With regard to general interpreting skills, one consumer noted that trilingual interpreters need "equal receptive and expressive skills." Others noted the need for a nationwide evaluation and measurement system. Mirroring the sentiments of the practitioner participants, some consumers indicated they felt interpreters must know how to use "tú" and "usted" appropriately.

Regarding the use of formal and informal pronoun variants, Spanish-speaking hearing consumers echoed the sentiments of the practitioners and deaf consumers, and expanded on them. One consumer explained that "usted" is a more formal way of saying "you" (second person singular) than "tú." He indicated the former should be used any time an interpreter directly addresses the Spanish-speaking hearing consumer: "Un intérprete profesional no puede tratarle a la persona – 'Tú, ¿qué dices?'" ("A professional interpreter cannot address someone saying – 'What do you [informal] think?'"). Several consumers also commented that when interpreters do not use personal pronouns appropriately during their interpretations, they can create confusion for the hearing consumers about who is speaking. The comments indicate that these consumers also expect first person pronouns to be used when the interpreter is interpreting. More general comments included the opinions that interpreters do not know how to interpret well, that they need more training, and that they should study so that, even if trilingual interpreting is not a setting in which they work regularly, they will be well prepared.

Consecutive Interpreting

The interviewers inquired about consecutive interpreting in order to reveal stakeholders' opinions about the importance of being able to process a message in a source language, hold it in short-term memory, and render that message into the target language(s) only when the consumer has finished speaking or signing. Practitioner participants noted that

consecutive interpreting skills are a prerequisite for trilingual interpreters, citing that this mode of interpretation is often necessary in VRS, legal, medical, counseling, and conference settings. Moreover, any three-person interactive setting will require consecutive interpreting. This situation refers to an act in which the practitioner interprets from one source language into two target languages. The interpreter, for instance, may hear Spanish and interpret into ASL simultaneously, but then re-interpret the same message, consecutively, into English. Several practitioners noted that consecutive interpreting skills are particularly important in high-stakes or demanding settings when additional processing time is needed. These practitioners also referenced research studies to support their assertions, studies which indicate that consecutive interpretation yields more accurate renditions. While every stakeholder group did not mention consecutive interpreting skills explicitly, one hiring entity did indicate the importance of this skill set.

Simultaneous Interpreting

This study further solicited participants' opinions about simultaneous interpreting in order to determine the generally perception regarding the importance of this skill. Practitioner participants were the only stakeholders asked explicitly about simultaneous interpreting skills. This skill set was unanimously viewed as important and was cited as the default mode for sign language interpreters. One practitioner did indicate that they felt interpreters should master consecutive interpreting before moving on to simultaneous interpreting. Hiring entities did not prioritize between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting skills, but did deem both as fundamental skills. One English-speaking hearing consumer noted that both skills are important and added: "It's important to be able to determine which of these approaches will work best in a given setting;" indicating that the ability to interpret simultaneously or consecutively *and* the ability to choose well between the two options were important.

Sight Translation

Sight translation consists of producing an interpretation into a target language from a written source. For the trilingual interpreter, this may take several forms: a written Spanish document that the interpreter reads the text and then translates it aloud into English; a written

document rendered from text into ASL; or a written English document read, then translated aloud into Spanish or rendered into ASL. Practitioner participants were divided over whether sight translation is a requisite skill for trilingual interpreters. Several identified it as moderately important. One practitioner noted it is part of the nation's only trilingual interpreter certification exam.[13] Others noted they have been required to sight translate documents (Spanish to ASL, Spanish to English, English to Spanish, and English to ASL) while working in medical, governmental, educational, and community (e.g., Department of Motor Vehicles) settings. Several interpreters indicated it is not a skill they draw upon frequently, but acknowledged the need could arise unexpectedly in almost any trilingual interpreting setting. One practitioner attempted to quantify the importance of sight translation skills, stating that they are less important than Spanish-English interpreting skills, but more important than Spanish-English translation skills.

Other stakeholder comments regarding sight translation were more limited but of equal importance. Deaf and hard of hearing consumers acknowledged that sight translation is called for during some interpreting assignments. At least one hiring entity stated that while their company contracts out the bulk of its translation work, staff trilingual interpreters do occasionally need to perform sight translations. Another hiring entity, however, noted that their company's interpreters "aren't supposed to interpret consent forms at such places as hospitals where they are usually available in Spanish." Finally, when discussing sight translation, one English-speaking hearing consumer noted that although it has not been a necessity in their experience, it would be a good skill for a trilingual interpreter to have.

Turn-Taking Management Skills

Turn-taking management skills refer to the strategies interpreters use to cue consumers to when the floor has been yielded or not yet been yielded to them, and address overlapping or interruptions, which can prevent interpreters from being able to interpret accurately. Practitioner participants offered many comments regarding the turn-taking management skills that should be possessed by a trilingual interpreter. Citing the addition of another language and culture and the possibility of a three-consumer interactive situation,

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[13] Administered through the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters, includes both Spanish-to-English and English-to-Spanish sight translation

several practitioners stated that trilingual interpreters should have even stronger turn-taking management skills than their bilingual counterparts. They noted interpreters should also be able to take culture, gender, and clients' relations to each other (power dynamics) into account. It was suggested that pre-conferencing be utilized to establish a plan to address issues of power dynamics prior to the interpreted situation. Pre-conferencing topics included, among others: establishing how the interpreter will convey expectations and manage turn-taking, using vocal fillers (particularly in VRS settings) to fill silence and limit hearing consumers' interruptions of deaf consumers, using body-shifting and eye gaze to indicate speakers, and indicating that the floor has been yielded.

Hiring entities also expressed that they value turn-taking management skills. One participant echoed the importance of using visual and auditory fillers to limit interruptions, particularly in VRS and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) settings. This participant noted an ability to educate and explain the need for turn-taking to Spanish speakers as important. When discussing turn-taking management, one English-speaking hearing consumer acknowledged this skill is an important part of cultural and interpreting competency and admitted that, at times, she has to be reminded of the turn-taking approach.

Professionalism

The term "professionalism" is sometimes used as a catch-all for competencies and skills that do not neatly fit elsewhere. For purposes of this study, the term refers to personality traits (as opposed to knowledge or skills) and to involvement in professional organizations and trainings. For instance, practitioner participants were asked if there were any organizations or trainings that trilingual interpreters should be involved with that are different from those of their bilingual colleagues. While not everyone viewed such involvement equally, the majority of practitioners assigned some degree of importance to being involved in a way that is different from bilingual interpreters. They mentioned Mano a Mano, the Network of Trilingual Interpreters listserv, the National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT), and participation in the annual, week-long trilingual interpreter training in Big Spring, Texas (provided by the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services).

Identifying Skills and Competencies

Hiring entities expressed that they did not expect a different type or level of involvement than ASL/English interpreters, but did mention the same organizations listed above. The list generated by this stakeholder group also included involvement in RID at the national, state and local levels, and in spoken language interpreter organizations. One hiring entity noted that they expect trilingual interpreters to take advantage of trilingual interpreter training opportunities, stating: "For example, at the past RID Conference, our trilingual interpreter was implicitly expected to attend the trilingual program." Deaf and hard of hearing consumers also expressed an expectation that trilingual interpreters demonstrate a different type of professional involvement. As noted in an earlier section, one consumer noted that trilingual interpreters should socialize with Latino deaf individuals so they can familiarize themselves with those individuals' ways. Another deaf consumer suggested that trilingual interpreters hold an annual conference in order to exchange cultural and linguistic information and relevant knowledge.

Exemplary Competencies and Skills

The exemplary skills and competencies presented below represent competencies and skills stakeholders often associated with the "ideal world" or the "ideal trilingual interpreter." They include enhanced skills in the areas of English-Spanish interpreting, English-Spanish translation, in addition to knowledge of varieties of Spanish, Latin American deaf people, history of the deaf and of signed languages, and of Latin America and U.S. legislation. Moreover, exemplary skills include enhanced proficiency with regard to accents and competency in Latin American signed languages.

English-Spanish Interpreting Skills

For some interpreters, trilingual assignments are characterized by the fact that, while the influence and presence of Spanish and English may vary, sign language is always present. This, though, is not the case for all trilingual interpreters, and so the interviewers sought to ascertain if stakeholders felt interpreters should be prepared to interpret strictly between English and Spanish. Practitioner participants were divided over whether interpreters should also possess strong English-Spanish interpreting skills, in addition to their sign language skills. When asked directly, the majority of practitioners indicated that trilingual interpreters *should* possess such skills. However, the importance given to this skill set varied. Those who

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felt such skills are necessary noted that this type of interpreting is sometimes required of trilingual interpreters in conference, educational, medical, and community settings. Practitioners who indicated interpreting skills with this language pair cited them as having less import than ASL/English and ASL/Spanish interpreting, but stated that they had not needed to perform Spanish/English interpreting. Some practitioners noted that from their own experience it had not been necessary, but that it would be a good skill to develop further. One participant indicated that they would not accept an assignment that required this skill, unless the topic was familiar and they had a team with well-developed English/Spanish interpreting skills. Other reflections included the observation that Spanish/English interpreting is a different skill set than signed/spoken language interpreting, and that it requires handling the auditory interference of two oral languages during simultaneous work. One practitioner noted that expectations regarding eye contact are different when interpreting between spoken languages, expressing that they considered eye contact as less important. Another practitioner stated that ethics vary between the two fields (signed/spoken interpreting vs. spoken/spoken interpreting). The example given was that in spoken language interpreting expansion is not ethical if the other consumer party is not informed of its occurrence.

Other stakeholder groups did not discuss this skill set as explicitly needed, but several examples did indicate there may be circumstances when the skill is necessary. For instance, one hiring entity (English-dominant, who speaks Spanish) noted that they sometimes need the trilingual interpreter to interpret Spanish utterances they do not understand into English. Within the deaf and hard of hearing consumer group, at least one participant explicitly stated that trilingual interpreters should be trained to do English/Spanish interpreting as well as ASL/English and ASL/Spanish. One English-speaking hearing consumer, while making a point about interpreter-consumer relations, stated that they have required English/Spanish interpretation of trilingual interpreters, and also underestimated the difficulty of the task: "I might have unknowingly said something that does not easily translate into Spanish [linguistically or culturally]."

English/Spanish Translation Skills

In addition to asking about sight translation, the interviewers inquired about the importance of traditional translation skills, whereby an interpreter begins with a document

(or video) in the source language and produces a document (or video) in the target language. Specifically, the interviewers asked about English/Spanish translation. While sight translation was generally recognized as a fundamental skill for trilingual interpreters, this was not the case with translation skills. The majority of practitioner participants felt that document translation is a profession in its own right and requires training and skill sets that interpreters tend not to possess. Discussion among some practitioners indicated that they advocate basic translation skills, as they may be helpful in preparing for assignments. Conference settings and graduation ceremonies were cited as examples. However, those same practitioners stated they would not advocate that trilingual interpreters translate standing documents without extensive training in translation. One interpreter explained: "If it's a paid translation that someone will be printing and distributing, I would leave that to a professional translator. I don't do that, but I might do translation as prep work for an assignment."

Within the hiring entity focus groups, comments referencing English/Spanish translation skills revealed that this is not an expectation for their trilingual interpreters. One participant commented that interpreters in their company have never been asked to do document translations. Another participant indicated that their company concurs with the practitioners' views that translation requires a different skill set, explaining: "The huge majority of [our] translations are completed by a translator in Mexico." However, two participants in the deaf and hard of hearing consumer groups did note that in their experience educational interpreting settings have sometimes required English/Spanish document translation. As noted by one participant, the interpreter is not always able to match the consumer's language and register when translating into a text document, and that is problematic.

Advanced Linguistic Competency
Varieties of Spanish

An earlier section in this report explained that Spanish language use not only varies from setting to setting but also from region to region throughout the U.S., Latin America, and other Spanish-speaking nations. The interviewers sought to determine whether or not knowledge about regional variations constituted a fundamental competence. The comments

provided indicate that such competence may be best viewed as exemplary rather than fundamental. Practitioner participants offered insight regarding the importance of competence in regional varieties of Spanish. Some practitioners indicated that it is enough to understand regional varieties, but one need not be able to produce them. Several participants also indicated that knowing how "tú," "vos," and "usted" are used in each Spanish-speaking region is perhaps the most important element of regional Spanish for interpreters. Practitioners further indicated that the setting determines the importance of such knowledge. One individual noted that command of a regional variety might be more important in intimate settings, while another noted: "It's better to match the variety of Spanish between the interpreter and the Spanish-speaking consumer in legal settings, but in a conference, where there are more consumers, perhaps a form of Spanish free of regionalism should be used." Several practitioners noted that it may be unrealistic to expect interpreters to become fluent in every regional variety of the language, and suggested it may be more appropriate for interpreters to know about the varieties used by the communities in which they regularly work.

Hiring entities were more concise in their discussion of this topic. One participant noted that knowledge of regional vocabulary differences is important. Another explained that regionalisms and dialectical variation must be managed. The English-speaking hearing consumers yielded several comments about regional variation. One consumer participant noted that it is important to know "enough about the particular dialect in any of the three languages to understand how language is used…but I'm not sure that's always possible. To compensate, interpreters need to be able to pay attention to regional variations and incorporate them as appropriate on the spot." Another English-speaking hearing consumer cautioned that while some knowledge of the regional variety in use may be better than none, this is not always the case. "In some cases, having someone that is [partly but] not completely fluent [in a particular variety] might create problems," underscoring the importance of interpreters to accurately disclose their level of command of the varieties in use. In another focus group with English-speaking hearing consumers, a participant concurred that it is "important to know how to work with consumers from different regions," but they did not offer comment regarding whether this requires receptive or productive proficiency, or both, in regional varieties of Spanish.

Deaf and hard of hearing consumers expressed their expectations that interpreters should know idiomatic expressions, regionalisms, and "slang." One participant reflected that there should be a course offered for interpreters that addresses this topic. Another echoed this opinion, suggesting that interpreters consider taking a "dialect class" for each Spanish-speaking region.

Spanish-speaking hearing consumers had varying ideas about the courses that would be appropriate for interpreters. Referring to trilingual interpreters, one participant noted, "Hay que tomar un curso de español neutro" ("A course in neutral Spanish needs to be taken"). One consumer explained that, for them, problems arise when someone uses regionalisms that they don't understand. "Si a ti te toca un intérprete que es mexicano y mi hija o alguien te está diciendo algo y él te lo dice en un modismo mexicano y uno es venezolano, te quedaste en la luna" ("If you have a Mexican interpreter and my daughter or someone is telling you something and he [the interpreter] says it using a Mexican regionalism and you're Venezuelan, then you're lost"). One consumer acknowledged that it would be ideal if interpreters had a perfect command of regional varieties, but that since this is "casi imposible" ("almost impossible"), interpreters should avoid regional Spanish and render more universally understood interpretations.

Accents

For the purpose of this study, "accents" refer specifically to spoken English and Spanish. Discussions regarding accents addressed the ability to understand diverse accents, the importance of having a "native-sounding accent," and whether interpreters should attempt to imitate their clients' accents. Practitioner participants had varying opinions regarding the importance of both "accent-matching" and "native-sounding accents." One practitioner commented that interpreters do not need to change their accents to something more generic or closer to the client's accent unless they feel their natural accent will negatively affect the interpretation. Another practitioner agreed and emphasized the importance of interpreters being judicious enough to know when such a change may or may not be necessary. One participant asserted: "We really should not try to take on an accent that isn't ours. We don't usually do it convincingly."

In direct contrast, a participant in another focus group affirmed, "Working the field, interpreters are usually able to pick up an accent, and also let go of it." Practitioners differed in their level of confidence about an interpreter's ability to convincingly alter an accent, and their assessment of the importance of doing so. One participant noted it is important because sounding native or matching a consumer's accent can influence deaf and hearing clients' confidence in the interpretation. A practitioner observed that in more Anglo-centric regions or settings, a native-sounding English accent may be more important. Another noted: "We must keep realistic goals in terms of accent. Depending on your palate and age, you may not use certain sounds and may not be able to master learning them. It will always be that way." Some considered it important to use "neutral" (native-sounding, more universally understandable) accents, others considered it important to match consumer accents, be it Chiapan Mexican Spanish or East Texan English. Others still asserted that interpreters should maintain their own, natural accents. One common, though not unanimous, observation was that understandability is more important than an exact match. If the message is interpreted accurately in the proper register, is enunciated, and is understandable, then accent is a less important concern. Although the Spanish-speaking hearing consumers in one focus group did make reference to an "American accent," grammatical and lexical deficiencies, not accent, were purported to be the main source of misunderstanding of the interpreter by Spanish-speaking hearing consumers.

Knowledge about Latin American Deaf People
History of the Deaf and of Signed Languages

One practitioner noted that knowledge of the history of other signed languages is helpful but not particularly critical. This was expressed by a participant who noted that knowledge about the history of other signed languages was more of an "in an ideal world" competency. Practitioner comments indicated that knowing about the history of deaf education in a client's home country is valuable. In particular, one participant noted that knowing whether the education has been primarily oral or has included sign language (and to what extent) can help interpreters make choices about how much mouthing or fingerspelling to incorporate into an interpretation.

Identifying Skills and Competencies

In the hiring entity groups, one participant stated that it is important to understand what the attitudes are toward deafness and disabilities in a client's country of origin. A deaf consumer noted that many cultures look down on deaf people with pity, treating them as lower-class citizens. They noted that this mentality will affect the interpretation event, indicating that it is important for interpreters to be aware of such perspectives. Another noted: "Trilingual interpreters should be aware of the missionary influences onto the native Latin American sign languages that might have been influenced by Western sign languages. Make sure trilingual interpreters become scholars in culture and history."

Competency in Latin American Signed Languages

Practitioners expressed a variety of views regarding the knowledge interpreters should have of signed languages in Latin America. For instance, one practitioner noted that interpreters should be able to recognize when a person is using foreign gestures, lexical items, or structures. Another commented that while it is good to know if the deaf consumer is using something foreign, it is difficult at times to discern this. The same practitioner noted that, while interpreters cannot be fluent in all signed languages, they may wish to focus on learning more about the sign language used by large numbers of their clients. Practitioners in a different group supported this sentiment, adding that knowing the names of significant towns in a client's respective country is important. Other observations included that it is important to know if ASL has influenced the sign language used in the client's country of origin, what body language and gestures in a given Latin American country might mean, and that an ASL sign may exist in another sign language but have a different meaning (false cognates). Some practitioners indicated that cultural competency and linguistic (Spanish) competency can, to some degree, compensate for a lack of knowledge about other signed languages. One practitioner stated that knowledge of Latino and deaf cultures were of greater importance than knowledge of other signed languages. Others emphasized the importance of utilizing resources in order to effectively manage interpreting situations that involve influence from other signed languages. These participants noted the usefulness of their trilingual colleagues and of deaf interpreters as a resource in such situations.

Hiring entities commented on the importance of knowing about Latin American signed languages. One participant noted that for work abroad, knowledge of the destination

country's signs is very helpful. Another hiring entity, who has also contracted trilingual interpreters for work abroad, echoed this in a different focus group, stating that: "Ideally, the trilingual interpreter should study the sign language of [that] country."

Deaf and hard of hearing consumers added their perspective, recognizing both the inability of interpreters to become fluent in every Latin American signed language and the need to have interpreters who are indeed competent in different Latin American signed languages. One participant reflected that in thinking about the future, it would be nice to have interpreters who specialize in a given country's culture and signs. This view of "specialization" was recommended by another consumer, who noted that it would be good for trilingual interpreters to become experts in one or two countries' signed languages and cultures. Another consumer recommended: "Make sure you focus on your own area of expertise with a Latin American sign language and history." Variations of this assertion were presented by several deaf and hard of hearing consumers, in which participants recognized: "It's hard to know all of the different signed languages," and recommended that interpreters focus on one or two that are most prevalent in their work. Moreover, it was noted that interpreter agencies should give the deaf consumers information about their interpreter's knowledge of Latin American culture and sign language. Lastly, members of one deaf and hard of hearing consumer group agreed unanimously that gestures vary across cultures, and indicated that interpreters should be aware of the meanings of gestures in context.

English-speaking hearing consumers also shared their insight and feedback. One participant noted: "I guess geographical signs are important. For example, there are regional signs that Puerto Ricans use that a trilingual interpreter might need, just as bilingual interpreters need to be aware of regional signs in the U.S." Another noted that their deaf clients sometimes use country-specific and region-specific gestures, and noted that when the interpreter is familiar with any signs or gestures native to that client's country of origin, it is helpful. Sign language competency that goes beyond ASL, this same consumer noted, is helpful.

Knowledge about Latin America

The interviewers asked participants questions regarding the degree of knowledge interpreters should possess about Latin America. Participants were asked about history,

popular culture, geography, economics, political, education, healthcare, and legal systems of Latin America. Practitioners' comments centered on the belief that knowledge about Latin American history can strengthen the interpretation for consumers who are not fluent in ASL. This knowledge, said one participant, can help an interpreter to better present information spatially. One practitioner noted that such knowledge increases cultural sensitivity, while another remarked that knowledge of Latin American history informs their lexical choices. That second participant explained that understanding where tensions come from might help one to decide between using, for example, "undocumented immigrant" or "illegal immigrant" in an interpretation. One participant noted that knowledge of Latin American history and history in general is valuable in educational settings, as well as in community interpreting. One interpreter lamented that their interpreter training program did not include a history requirement, and two participants expressed that there was an absence of education regarding deaf Latino culture or history in their education, which created a gap between their training and their daily work experiences.

When asked about current popular culture in Latin America, comments indicated that knowledge in this area is helpful. One practitioner participant noted that it can help establish a rapport with consumers and facilitate smooth interpretation. Another stated that, while knowledge in this area may not be as critical as some of the other competencies discussed, it is desirable to at least have a knowledge base that matches one's community of consumers. Knowledge of the names of different regional foods was also mentioned as important. When discussing political, education, healthcare, and legal systems, each was recognized as important, though comments indicated this type of knowledge occupied different places on interpreters' priority lists. A number of practitioners indicated that knowledge of healthcare and education systems of Latin America has been particularly helpful in their work.

Within the hiring entity groups, a comment was made that knowledge of Latin American countries' education systems can be crucial for trilingual interpreters working in educational settings. Another noted that, for trilingual interpreters who work abroad, knowledge of the destination country's laws and legal system is helpful.

A participant in one of the deaf and hard of hearing consumer focus groups stated that a broad base of "world knowledge" is important for all; this might be particularly true for younger or interpreters without an academic degree. Recognizing that one component of

cultural competence is knowledge about systems, history and pop culture, three deaf participants offered suggestions about how interpreters can pursue this knowledge. One consumer shared that knowledge of Latin American countries' healthcare systems is important. Another felt that knowledge of foods from different Latin American communities is important. One noted that interpreters may benefit from two-week immersion experiences with a family in a Latin American country, while another suggested interpreters watch Spanish-language movies to better understand the cultures of native Spanish-speakers. One participant suggested interpreters take relevant courses that would help them gain this knowledge, such as "Mexican Women's History" and "Gender in Hispanics."

Knowledge of U.S. Legislation

Participants were asked about what legislation-related knowledge trilingual interpreters should possess. Within the practitioner focus groups, several specific laws were mentioned, as well as several types of laws, including: 504, ADA, IDEA, PL 94-142, immigration law, social security law and family law. Practitioner comments indicated that knowledge in this area can boost one's confidence, enable interpreters to envision concepts, and help interpreters understand the underlying communication goals of an interaction. Though there were differences of opinion regarding the importance of knowledge related to immigration law, there appeared to be agreement that such knowledge was most important for assignments related explicitly to immigration issues and less so for other types of assignments.

The hiring entities shared their perspectives on the type of legislation-related knowledge trilingual interpreters should know. One noted that laws related to deafness and the provision of interpreters is important. Another indicated that basic knowledge of immigration and who has legal status in educational settings is valuable: "When we talk to families, they have a reason to not be honest because they cannot reveal some information, so it's a real skill to be able to develop trust." Regarding interpreters in educational settings, one hiring entity explained: "The trilingual interpreter has to remember that it can be very delicate; so being more sensitive to word choices is important. We have families that don't have an address here, but their child does, so [the family members have different roles]. The [trilingual interpreter] has to be aware of [them]."

Identifying Skills and Competencies

Deaf and hard of hearing consumers supported the belief that knowledge of immigration law can be helpful. One explained that trilingual interpreters should know the immigration process, the different types of visas and legal issues surrounding immigration services, and know how to fill in information gaps that may exist among deaf consumers. English-speaking hearing consumers were not specifically asked about legislation-related knowledge, but one participant did offer the observation that immigration and legislation-related topics have come up when working with trilingual interpreters, noting that such knowledge is "nice to have." Lastly, one Spanish-speaking hearing consumer indicated that they would appreciate interpreters having knowledge of immigration law. They made reference to the rights that Cuban immigrants have that Venezuelan, Colombian, and other immigrants do not have and indicated that, for a trilingual interpreter, knowing about these different rights "también es importante" ("is also important").

Emerging Themes

As focus groups were conducted, certain themes began to emerge. Sometimes the themes were not related to a particular competency or skill. Sometimes participants' comments were relevant but did not fit neatly into a list of requisite skills and competencies. Because the interviewers found these comments insightful and germane to a discussion on trilingual interpreting, they are included in this section on themes.

Credentials

Participants from three of the five stakeholder groups explicitly expressed a desire for a trilingual interpreting credential. For example, one hiring entity related a negative experience with a trilingual interpreter who lacked the necessary Spanish fluency. They explained that although the interpreter was credentialed in ASL/English interpreting and their Spanish was fine, the interpreter's trilingual interpreting abilities hadn't been assessed. The participant explained that their company had "no other assessment" except for how effective the interpretation seemed to be in the field. A deaf consumer commented that training in ASL, English, and Spanish linguistics is "a good start," but that more specific training, certification, and maintenance are needed to complete the trilingual interpreter preparation process. Upon learning about the nation's only trilingual interpreting exam administered by the BEI in Texas, participants in one Spanish-speaking consumer group responded

enthusiastically. "Aunque sea por lo menos en Tejas, ya existe una forma de identificarse" ("Even if it's only in Texas, there's a way to identify them [trilingual interpreters]"). "Me parece fantástico" ("I think it's fantastic").

Boundaries and Advocacy

Setting boundaries between interpreters and clients and interpreters advocating for clients were discussed at length in many of the focus groups. Opinions varied widely from group to group and often within groups. Participants compared and contrasted the roles of boundary setting and advocating in ASL/English settings versus trilingual settings. While there was no consensus, the interviewers hope that, by offering a sampling of the opinions expressed, readers will grasp the complexity of such issues and appreciate perspectives they might not have previously considered.

Some practitioners explained that trilingual interpreters often have different expectations from clients, citing that their clients may be less familiar working with interpreters and therefore not understand the interpreter's role, or that their clients may be less empowered and therefore may solicit more help from the interpreter. One practitioner agreed, noting that it is difficult to demonstrate professionalism and engage culturally in these settings. Another participant said that, while it is hard to find a balance, some interpreters do behave unprofessionally and then blame the behavior as adherence to cultural norms. Some practitioners indicated that more advocacy and more flexible boundaries may be appropriate in some trilingual settings because of cultural factors, but those participants insisted interpreters must avoid paternalism and be sure not to forget that their primary role is that of interpreter.

This idea of "walking the line" was reiterated within the hiring entity focus groups. One hiring entity participant noted that trilingual interpreters must be wary of getting too involved in their clients' situations. The key is to empower but *not* to take over. One participant noted that many trilingual interpreters have not completed an interpreter training program, and indicated that these interpreters may need to review the Code of Professional Conduct even more thoroughly because they tend to overstep advocacy boundaries. Other comments underscored the importance of confidentiality, stating that if the deaf community is small, the Latino deaf community is even smaller, and that confidentiality is crucial. One

participant noted an additional challenge when trilingual interpreters work abroad, that being whether the interpreter decides to follow the destination country's interpreter standards or adhere to those of the United States.

Turning to the deaf and hard of hearing consumer focus groups, the interviewers continued to encounter conflicting opinions. Some consumers stated quite plainly that the role of an interpreter is to interpret, not to advocate. Others stated, just as plainly and emphatically, that interpreters "must also be advocates, not merely interpreters/translators." Others seemed to walk a middle ground, holding the belief that trilingual interpreters must advocate for communication, but not for other issues. One participant reflected that perhaps there should be more latitude for trilingual interpreters to share their opinions with clients. Another client stated that: "interpreters should know their boundaries." However, given the clearly varied expectations of consumers, this may be difficult to achieve. Some participants of Mexican descent noted that in their culture having strict boundaries can cause the interpreter to be seen as cold and machine-like, while others in the same focus group insisted that there should be no difference, in terms of advocacy or boundary-setting, between ASL/English and trilingual interpreters.

English-speaking hearing consumers were similarly divided. One participant noted: "In bilingual interpreting there is more interpreting and less advocacy." This participant noted that turn-taking management challenges might necessitate that the interpreter advocate more for the communication process itself. Others agreed that advocacy for the communication process is always appropriate. One participant (an ASL/English interpreter who has periodically used trilingual interpreting services) reflected on working with a Spanish-English interpreter:

> "I noted a lot of explanation, or maybe you could call it cultural mediation, when the Spanish interpreter worked. I think a lot of expansion […] arose because the interpreter was explaining things about how the U.S. educational system works or that kind of background information the parent might not have had. That's different because when I do my job [as an ASL/English interpreter] I usually don't have to do that."

This comment highlights a difference that is present in some trilingual interpreting situations. Unfortunately, it does not provide any simple solutions or advice for trilingual interpreters regarding appropriate limits to advocacy.

Comments made by participants in the Spanish-speaking consumer focus groups further illustrated that there may be no simple solution. One participant recognized that trilingual interpreters are in a "tough position" with regards to boundaries. This participant noted that while their deaf daughter was in high school, her interpreter set very strict boundaries and would not provide any personal contact information. The interpreter, they related, "walked the line" by waiting until the student graduated and then provided Facebook and telephone contact information so that they could stay in touch after their working relationship had ended. The participant noted this as an example of knowing what one can and cannot do within the interpreter role, while not being too inflexible.

Another Spanish-speaking hearing consumer shared an experience in which they lamented that there were not enough resources for their deaf daughter, and the interpreter provided them with information (place, date, and time) about a gathering of deaf people. The participant felt that such information represents basic awareness and is appropriate to share, even if it is considered advocacy by some. The same participant noted that, "Sin menospreciar a los que son puramente bilingües, manejando el inglés y el 'sign language', sabemos que con ellos es más frío, pues llega ahí, hace su trabajo, recoge su papel y se va" ("Not to devalue those who are strictly bilingual, who work between English and sign language, but we know that they're colder; they show up, do their work, gather up their form, and leave"). Another participant noted the difference between bilingual and trilingual interpreters that they have worked with, stating that a bilingual interpreter who interpreted between English and ASL for their daughter at the hospital brought along a book and read while not interpreting: "Yo estoy segura: si hubiese sido un intérprete trilingüe, pues empieza a hablar conmigo" ("I'm certain of it: if it had been a trilingual interpreter, she/he would have started talking with me"). Some participants felt strongly that advocacy is the role of parents (in the case of deaf minors) while others felt that, as immigrants with limited knowledge of relevant resources and systems in the U.S., "hace falta esa mediación entre el intérprete trilingüe y el padre" ("there is a need for that mediation between the trilingual interpreter and the parent").

Identifying Skills and Competencies

Clearly, opinions and expectations are varied. All five stakeholder groups recognized that the trilingual interpreter may feel conflicted between what is required of him or her by the Code of Professional Conduct and what consumers want and need in terms of advocacy and boundaries.

Amplified General Competencies and Skills

The focus groups illuminated another common theme: while trilingual and ASL/ English interpreters share many of the same competencies and skills, trilingual interpreters need to possess them in greater amounts than their bilingual colleagues. Shared bilingual and trilingual traits and skills mentioned across all stakeholder groups included: punctuality, friendliness, professional dress, attitude of lifelong-learning, flexibility, humility, self-awareness, honesty, diplomacy, acceptance of feedback, avoidance of paternalism, good manners, and confidentiality.

In contrast, participants identified a number of areas deemed to be more critical for trilingual interpreters. For example, practitioners indicated that they often need more preparation time for trilingual assignments than for bilingual assignments. Several practitioner participants emphasized that trilingual interpreters must possess well-developed turn-taking skills, more so than their bilingual colleagues, in order to manage this challenge. Members of four of the stakeholder groups (practitioners, hiring entities, and English- and Spanish-speaking hearing consumers) noted that management of turn-taking in some trilingual settings, such as three-person interactive settings, is more challenging than in bilingual settings. These four groups agreed that trilingual interpreters need more expansive world knowledge than bilingual interpreters, referencing the need to know about various regions' foods and education, legal, and healthcare systems, information not usually found in bilingual settings. Practitioners, hiring entities, and English-speaking hearing consumers all commented that with a higher ratio of foreign-born clients, foreign geographic signs (particularly those referencing Latin America) may be used more frequently, and as such trilingual interpreters will need to know more geographic signs for regions outside the U.S. Participants from several groups indicated that trilingual interpreters may need to have more developed strategies for working with signers not fluent in ASL. Many participants re-emphasized the high degree of language-mixing (ASL, English mouthing, Spanish mouthing,

home signs, gestures from other countries, and signs from other signed languages) within trilingual settings, and recognized that this phenomenon necessitates additional linguistic and interpreting competence.

While cultural competence is important for all interpreters, comments indicated that more is demanded of trilingual interpreters in order for them to be considered culturally competent. Four of the five stakeholder groups expressed this explicitly. Additionally, though there was no unanimous agreement on the issue, several participants from different stakeholder groups felt that more cultural mediation may be warranted in trilingual as opposed to bilingual settings.

Comments from both hiring entities and practitioners indicated that trilingual interpreters may need more developed short-term memory than their bilingual colleagues, perhaps because there is the potential to have to interpret the same message into two target languages. Participants from the same two stakeholder groups also indicated there are different expectations of trilingual interpreters regarding professional involvement; trilingual interpreters should be involved in the same organizations as their bilingual colleagues (e.g., RID), but should also participate in trilingual-specific organizations and trainings (e.g., Mano a Mano).

Finally, several comments were made by different individuals comparing bilingual and trilingual interpreter skills. One hiring entity indicated that trilingual interpreters may possess stronger metalinguistic skills than ASL/English interpreters. A practitioner participant noted increased tenacity: "As an ASL interpreter you almost have to *try* not to be influenced by so many resources. As a trilingual interpreter, you have to go out of your way to find support." Some participants from the deaf and hard of hearing consumer group and the Spanish-speaking hearing consumer group indicated that perhaps trilingual interpreters should be "warmer" than bilinguals as a reflection of their understanding of Latino culture. One practitioner felt that the demands of trilingual work require trilingual interpreters to monitor more channels, be better multi-taskers, be more empathic, be more culturally competent, and be more creative.

Educational Opportunities

Another theme reflected across all stakeholder groups was the notion that trilingual interpreters need more educational opportunities than are currently available. Practitioners were asked to list software, hardware, Internet, print and other resources they rely on, and the responses indicated that interpreters often seek out resources not designed for trilingual interpreters and adapt them to their needs. Interpreters referenced a number of websites that help increase their linguistic and cultural competence, including:

- Wordreference.com
- Ethnologue.com
- Wikipedia.com
- Enbienespanol.com
- Dictionary.com
- M-W.dictionary.com
- Yabla.com
- Rae.es
- Laits.utexas.edu/spe/
- Aslpro.com
- Medlineplus.com
- Translate.google.com

Additionally, several visual, monolingual, and bilingual dictionaries in a variety of formats were mentioned by all stakeholder groups (e.g., smartphone apps, print copies, electronic dictionaries, etc.). Practitioners recommended the use of such resources as thesauri and idiom dictionaries, and Spanish-language television stations such as Univisión and Telemundo.

Resources developed specifically for trilingual interpreters, however, appeared scarce. Two participant comments referenced different chapters of the book *Interpreting in Multilingual, Multicultural Contexts*. Several interpreters mentioned the Network of Trilingual Interpreters listserv; a yearly week-long training for trilingual interpreters in Big Spring, Texas; the Mano a Mano biannual conference; and workshops for trilingual interpreters. One deaf consumer noted that in terms of deaf history, they knew of only one book, by Margarita Adams, and asked how trilingual interpreters can be required to have a

curriculum when publications are so scarce. This question led to a discussion of academic courses that would benefit trilingual interpreters, despite not being designed specifically for interpreters. One deaf consumer recommended "Mexican Women's History," "Chicano History," "Mexican Psychology," and "Gender in Hispanics" classes, which they had taken and found beneficial.

Discussing the need for formal trilingual-specific courses, one practitioner lamented the scarcity of such options and concluded: "We need more courses, more formal education, in trilingual interpreting." Members of other stakeholder groups appeared to agree. Deaf consumers, Spanish-speaking hearing consumers, and practitioners all indicated that trilingual interpreters need more formal classes to round out both their linguistic and cultural competence.

Finally, several stakeholders noted that in addition to a lack of trilingual-specific resources and courses, there is a lack of trilingual-specific testing and screening or evaluation tools. Several hiring entities indicated they have created in-house ways of evaluating trilingual interpreter skills. One participant explained that potential trilingual VRS interpreters in their company go through a process that includes mock ASL/Spanish calls to assess interpreter skill. Others cited combinations of ASL interviews, Spanish interviews, English interviews, résumés, personal recommendations, and in-house interpreting stimuli and evaluation instruments. At least two hiring entities noted they do not have any evaluation tool for Spanish/English or ASL/Spanish interpreting skills, and explained that they rely on consumer feedback to determine interpreter Spanish competency.

One deaf consumer suggested that more than one evaluation tool should be used in order to assess all aspects of an interpreter's linguistic competence. This consumer explained that trilingual interpreters should be certified or at least be of "certification quality," and then be assessed by an independent organization for Spanish fluency (e.g., Cervantes Center). Within one Spanish-speaking consumer focus group, a participant emphasized the need for evaluation tools: "Entonces ahí caemos en el punto importante con las certificaciones*"* ("And now we arrive at the crux of the matter: certification"). This participant demonstrated their awareness of different levels of national interpreter certification, local hospital policy requiring certified interpreters, and the notion that interpreters should specialize in different areas. One consumer in this group explained, "El asunto en todo el país siempre ha sido que

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los intérpretes trilingües son autoidentificados" ("The nationwide situation has always been that trilingual interpreters have to self-identify themselves"). This participant contended that consumers need a better way of identifying trilingual interpreters apart from those interpreters' self-declarations that "Bueno, hablo los tres idiomas. Yo me considero trilingüe" ("Well, I speak the three languages. I consider myself trilingual").

Summary Discussion

Practitioners

Practitioners who participated in this study represented diverse backgrounds and equally diverse opinions. Some participants do their trilingual work with a single demographic group within a single community, while others travel across the country and abroad, working with consumers from different countries and communities. Some participants are geographically isolated from their trilingual peers while others have trilingual interpreter colleagues in their vicinity. Some possess national certification, others state certification, and some hold no certification. Their educational backgrounds varied greatly, as did the order in which they learned or acquired the three languages. As a result, there was little consensus among all topics explored. There was a general tendency to distinguish between "the real world" and "the ideal world" expectations of trilingual interpreters. However, each interpreter labeled individual skills (i.e., Spanish literacy) as either a "real world skill" or an "ideal world skill" based on their own experience, motivation, and perspective.

Hiring Entities

Hiring entities wish for all parties to be satisfied, and their clients in any given setting come from at least two different cultures in bilingual settings. As such, linguistic competence is important to hiring entities. They are concerned that trilingual interpreters must walk a cultural "tightrope" when juggling the expectations of so many cultures. As illustration, one participant mentioned "Latino time," stating that an English-speaking client mentioned an interpreter's late arrival as an issue and reflected: "I think that may be a little more lax on the part of the [trilingual] interpreter [but not the] client with regard to the start time." Another participant responded that while they understand this, "my concern is that I work with [a paying client] that says, 'Where is my interpreter?'"

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Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumers

Deaf and hard of hearing consumer participants indicated that because they use trilingual interpreting services more frequently than other stakeholders and in a wider variety of settings, their expectations are higher and more realistic. Consumers readily acknowledged that trilingual interpreters cannot possibly become experts in every Spanish-speaking country's cultures and regional dialects. Instead, it was suggested that interpreters specialize in one or two cultures and dialects. Consumers were aware that interpreter's skills and competencies have a direct impact on their lives, and as such, suggested a number of activities to increase trilingual competence: two-week stays abroad, taking specific cultural and linguistic academic courses, gathering with trilingual colleagues annually to exchange information, and working with agencies to advertise their specializations to the deaf Latino community. One means of addressing the shortage of qualified trilingual interpreters, was the suggestion that Latino Codas be recruited as potential trilingual interpreters.

English-Speaking Hearing Consumers

English-speaking hearing consumer participants were familiar with deafness and had experience using an interpreter. However, in all cases they had limited experience using trilingual interpreters. One participant used trilingual interpreters extensively but exclusive to one setting. Another used interpreters less frequently and in only one setting. While having skilled and competent trilingual interpreters matter to this stakeholder group, they were not able to speak to the breadth of the topic of trilingual interpreting.

Spanish-Speaking Hearing Consumers

Participating Spanish-speaking consumers were by no means homogenous. Their educational, socio-economic, and geographical backgrounds were diverse, as were their opinions. There was some disagreement regarding whether trilingual interpreters should mouth in Spanish or in English while interpreting in ASL. The disagreement and its ensuing comments indicated that, for at least some consumers, there may be misconceptions regarding signed languages. Some participants appeared to equate ASL with English and felt that if interpreters mouth in Spanish, this is a disservice to the deaf audience. One consumer explained: "Si están haciendo interpretación y es 'American Sign Language', por naturaleza

tendrías que hablar [oralizar] a todo el mundo en inglés aunque otros [usuarios sordos] no manejan el inglés […] por la naturaleza que es el 'American Sign Language' tendría que ser en inglés" ("If they are interpreting into American Sign Language, by nature you would have to speak [mouth] to everyone in English, even though others [deaf consumers] aren't fluent in English […] because American Sign Language would have to be by nature in English"). With regard to mouthing while signing, some consumers recognized that mouthing (in either English or Spanish) is not always part of ASL interpretation. Some consumers noted that interpreters should be aware of their audience and ascertain the deaf person's preferences as it relates to mouthing in Spanish or English while signing ASL.

Spanish-speaking consumers also offered insight regarding the effectiveness of using two bilingual interpreters (one Spanish/ English and one ASL/English) rather than a single trilingual interpreter. The common opinion of this group was that there is a benefit to having two interpreters, as one can focus on the deaf or hard of hearing client (ASL/ English interpretation) while the other focuses on the Spanish-speaking client (Spanish/ English). Reasons given for this opinion was the recognition of the demands of trilingual work and that the divided concentration it requires may be too much for interpreters. In support, deaf and hard of hearing consumers reported that they felt disconnected from the communication as the interpreter struggles to manage the three-person interaction. Several consumers did note that if an interpreter "de verdad maneja los tres idiomas en su totalidad" ("truly speaks the three languages fluently") one interpreter may be enough. However, they questioned how often this would be the case.

Recommendations and Questions for Further Study

The interviewers, as part of the overall analysis, sought to determine if this study gleaned new information, if the new information changes current practice and if questions still remain. To this end, they looked at the data through the lens of four questions.

Is the knowledge gleaned already widely accepted in the field, or is it something new?

To a degree, some of the knowledge gleaned through this study is already widely accepted in the field. For instance, the finding that most stakeholders feel trilingual interpreters should be skilled in and prepared for both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting is not new; the interviewers' research merely lent more support to accepted

knowledge. On the other hand, some information is new. Before this study was conducted, it was not widely acknowledged that sight translation is a basic competency trilingual interpreters should possess. Thus, the study has both yielded new insights into the field and further validated existing expectations of trilingual interpreters.

Do the findings change the current perspective of accepted practice?

The findings of this study do not fundamentally change the interviewers' current perspective of accepted practice, with one exception. The interviewers embarked on this project with what might be described as a limited notion of trilingual interpreters' professional aspirations. That is, the interviewers presumed that most working interpreters desire to master both the skills and competencies described within this paper as "fundamental" and the additional skills and competencies described as "exemplary." Stakeholders' comments revealed that this is not necessarily the case. Due to many factors (age, personality, work situation, level of support, investment in the interpreting profession, etc.) not all interpreters share the aspiration to become the "ideal" trilingual interpreter. Learning and better understanding this has been critical. Encouraging people to move forward professionally must begin with the recognition that people have different visions for their own professional development. Only then can professional development opportunities be crafted to those who want to take advantage of them and in a way those interpreters find accessible.

What new insight has been gained?

Information gleaned from consumers offered important new insights into the competencies and skills trilingual interpreters need to do in order to do their jobs well. Consumers demonstrated that they do not fit neatly into a single box: their expectations are varied and sometimes contradictory. For example, some deaf and hard of hearing consumers indicated that they prefer their interpreters to mouth in Spanish while signing ASL. In contrast, some of the Spanish-speaking hearing consumers were adamant that trilingual interpreters *not* mouth Spanish while interpreting into ASL. Readers of this study will, the interviewers hope, have an increased appreciation for a wide array of consumer desires and needs.

Identifying Skills and Competencies

Another important theme that emerged from this study: beyond needing different skills than their bilingual colleagues, trilingual interpreters need *more* of the same skills. This insight is significant in terms of how mentors and interpreter educators focus their energies when working with trilingual or future trilingual interpreters. For example, the recurring observation that trilingual interpreters may need to invest more time in preparing for assignments, or that they will come into contact with non-fluent ASL users more frequently, is significant. This insight should drive curricula, or at least guide mentors and instructors as they work with trilingual interpreters.

What information remains unanswered?

The primary questions that remain unanswered upon the conclusion of this study are two-fold: 1) how do we train individuals with basic trilingual skills to reach a level of competence defined as "fundamental"? and 2) how can resources be created and made available to help interpreters get from the "fundamental" level to the "exemplary" level? The challenge lies in exploring and discovering efficient ways to support trilingual interpreters, and ensure that they have ample and appropriate professional development opportunities.

The information presented in this report has curricular implications, and the findings help to justify an increase in educational opportunities for trilingual interpreters. The interviewers recommend that the skills and competencies outlined in this paper be used to: 1) assist bilingual ITP instructors in identifying and supporting potential trilingual interpreters, and 2) inform curricula development of trilingual-specific interpreter training courses and workshops offered in colleges, conferences, webinars or other online methods.

Despite recruitment efforts, there were no deaf-blind participants in the study. The current study also had relatively limited input from English-speaking hearing consumers. Possible explanations for this are discussed in the Methodology section, but future research must determine approaches that will successfully recruit participants from these stakeholder groups. In addition, this study reflects limited input from Spanish-dominant practitioners, such as trilingual interpreters living in Puerto Rico whose first language is Spanish. Additional input from each of these three groups must be included in future studies to ensure greater comprehensiveness of the competencies and skills required for successful trilingual interpreting.

In summary, it is the goal of the interviewers that these findings be viewed holistically. This study has considered many approaches and brought new and important information to light that now enables the field to begin the process of competency and skill identification, construction, and vetting. In one respect, interpreters, ITP instructors, and all interested stakeholders now have more information regarding the needs, desires, and expectations of clients in trilingual interpreting settings. On the other hand, the study is neither definitive nor exhaustive. Further studies are needed, as they may reveal additional skills and competencies or present a different picture about how the skills and competencies should be prioritized. Employing the same research methods with different representatives of the same five stakeholder groups may present different input and different conclusions.

Trilingual Interpreting Domains and Competency Statements

Kristie Casanova de Canales
Rafael Treviño

"As an [ASL-English] interpreter, you almost have to try not to be influenced by

so many resources. As a trilingual interpreter, you have to go out of your way to

find support."

— Practitioner

Introduction

The document shared in this chapter describes the domains and competencies required of the trilingual interpreter. They are delineated into two broad categories: 1) *generalist competencies* that reflect generic and specialty area competencies required of all interpreters; and 2) *trilingual-specific competencies* that delve more deeply into the unique knowledge, skills, and competencies that differentiate trilingual interpreters from ASL-English interpreters. For the purposes of this chapter, a trilingual interpreter is defined as a specialist whose working languages are ASL, spoken English, and spoken Spanish, and who provides interpretation and transliteration services for, among others, Latino individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or deaf-blind.

The domains and competency statements described in this chapter reflect the findings of the effective practice studies conducted by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) Trilingual Task Force (Task Force) between 2010 and 2012. Their work included several years of discovery using industry-standard effective-practice research protocols. The domains and competency statements reflect expert testimony and data captured through a number of research tools as described in chapters 3, 4, and 6. They incorporate information solicited at conferences, via informal interviews and in round-table discussions. The document was also formally reviewed by eight trilingual experts (described at the end of this chapter) and again checked against data obtained in a follow-up survey (chapter 6).

Domains and Competency Statements

In addition, the domains and competency statements served as a major reference in the drafting of the RID Trilingual (ASL-Spanish-English) Standard Practice Paper (SPP) slated for publication in 2014. As part of the SPP development process, the domains and competencies were reviewed with great care, some might say with great scrutiny, by the experts who drafted the SPP before they were used to frame the Standard Practice Paper.

Key Findings

A number of key research findings guided the development of the trilingual interpreter domains (i.e., knowledge and skills) and competencies presented in this chapter. They include the following statements:

- Development of and participation in educational programs for trilingual interpreters are critical for the future development of the trilingual interpreter profession.
- The work of trilingual interpreters is most noticeable in VRS, educational, medical, mental health, conference, and immigration settings, as well as abroad.
- A defining feature of the work of trilingual interpreters that sometimes arises is interpreting in three-person interactive settings, in which a user of each of the interpreter's working languages is present and being served by the interpreter.
- Trilingual interpreters often work with Latino deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers whose sign language is influenced by Spanish, a sign language other than ASL, or both.
- Trilingual interpreters often work with Latino deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers who do not share their same Latino cultural background.
- Trilingual interpreters often work with Spanish-speaking hearing consumers who do not share their same variety of Spanish,
- Few trilingual interpreters report regularly working with deaf interpreters, although given the nature of the deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers that trilingual interpreters often serve, there is widespread consensus that more collaboration between trilingual and deaf interpreters is needed.
- The standards of professionalism, which dictate a certain professional distance between the practitioner and the consumer, are difficult for trilingual interpreters to maintain without seeming emotionally cold (i.e., unfeeling) and disinterested to their Latino consumers (whether deaf or hearing).

The authors believe the following document captures the distinct domains (i.e., knowledge and skills) and competencies that the qualified trilingual interpreter brings to interpreted interactions. It is intended that these domains and competencies be used as a foundation for building curricula specific to trilingual-interpreting preparation and as content for the education of working trilingual stakeholders, including deaf interpreters.

———————————◆———————————

Domains and Competencies

Generalist Competencies

The domains and competencies needed for generalist practice are delineated in the document entitled "Entry-to-Practice Competencies for ASL-English Interpreters" that was commissioned by the Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training (DO IT) Center and published in 2005. They include a variety of linguistic, interactional, interpersonal, cognitive, technical, academic, affective and creative competencies, and professional attributes that ensure effective performance in routine situations. In addition to the competencies unique to Spanish-influenced settings, the effective trilingual interpreter also possesses these generalist interpreting competencies.

- *Theory and Knowledge Competencies:* Academic foundation and world knowledge essential to effective interpretation.

- *Human Relations Competencies:* Interpersonal competencies fostering effective communication and productive collaboration with colleagues, consumers, and employers.

- *Language Skills Competencies:* Required levels of fluency in languages in which the interpreter works.

- *Interpreting Skills Competencies:* Effective interpretation of a range of subject matter in a variety of settings.

- *Professionalism Competencies*: Professional standards and practices.

Trilingual-Specific Competencies

The following domains and competencies focus on the specialized, trilingual-interpreter knowledge, skills, and competencies that extend beyond those expected of the generalist

practitioner described above. They are divided into the following five domains: 1) Foundational Knowledge; 2) Language, Culture, and Communication; 3) Consumer Assessment; 4) Interpreting Practice; and 5) Professionalism.

Domain 1: Foundational Knowledge

> *"Trilingual interpreters should be aware of the missionary influences onto the native Latin American sign languages that might have been influenced by Western sign languages. Make sure trilingual interpreters become scholars in culture and history."*
>
> *— Deaf consumer*

Trilingual interpreters must have a broader base of knowledge than their bilingual counterparts. More specifically, their knowledge base should include:

1. General knowledge about deaf education and attitudes toward deafness in Spanish-speaking countries and territories.

   a. Just as knowledge about deaf education in the U.S. helps ASL-English interpreters to better understand the American Deaf community, general knowledge about deaf education in Spanish-speaking countries and territories helps trilingual interpreters to better understand Latino deaf people.

2. Specific knowledge about deaf education and attitudes toward deafness for the countries represented in the trilingual interpreter's geographical area.

   a. For example, trilingual interpreters in California should focus on Mexico and Central America, while trilingual interpreters in South Florida should focus on Cuba and the Caribbean. Identifying what specific knowledge is relevant will be more difficult for trilingual interpreters who work in VRS or VRI settings.

3. General knowledge about history, politics, and popular culture in Spanish-speaking countries and territories.

   a. Just as knowledge about American history, politics, and popular culture helps make a well-rounded ASL-English interpreter, general knowledge about Latin American and Puerto Rican history, politics, and popular culture helps to make a well-rounded trilingual interpreter.

4. Specific knowledge about the history and politics of the countries represented in the trilingual interpreter's geographical area.

   a. Identifying what specific knowledge is relevant will be more difficult for trilingual interpreters who work in VRS or VRI settings.

5. General knowledge about the educational, healthcare and legal systems in Spanish-speaking countries and territories.

   a. Cultural mediation is an important task of any interpreter; however, this task is impossible for trilingual interpreters if they are unaware of how to compare the American educational, healthcare, and legal systems to those familiar to the Latino consumer (deaf or hearing).

6. Specific knowledge about the educational, healthcare, and legal systems of the countries represented in the trilingual interpreter's local geographical area.

   a. Identifying what specific knowledge is relevant will be more difficult for trilingual interpreters who work in VRS or VRI settings.

7. Knowledge of the federal and state laws and regulations related to the provision of both sign language interpreters and spoken language interpreters.

8. General knowledge of the immigration process, especially with regard to the rules that apply to the countries represented in the trilingual interpreter's geographical area.

Domain 2: Language, Culture, and Communication

"Si a tí te toca un intérprete que es mexicano y mi hija o alguien te está diciendo
algo, y él te lo dice en un modismo mexicano y uno es Venezolano, te quedaste en
la luna.
(If you have a Mexican interpreter and my daughter or someone is telling you
something, and the interpreter says it with a Mexican idiom, but you're
Venezuelan, you're going to be lost)."
— Spanish-speaking hearing consumer

The trilingual interpreter must demonstrate a number of linguistic, cultural, and communication competencies critical to effective interaction with the wide range of consumers with whom they work, including:

1. Native or native-like competency in English, Spanish, and ASL in a variety of registers.

Domains and Competency Statements

2. Ability to read and write in both English and Spanish.

3. Adeptness and flexibility in working across a range of registers, genres, and variations of English, Spanish, and ASL; especially in the areas of VRS, education, healthcare, mental health, conference, and immigration settings, as well as abroad.

4. In Spanish, adeptness and flexibility to use language free of regionalisms when interpreting for a consumer who does not share the same variety of Spanish.

5. Names and signs of countries and large cities in Latin America, with emphasis on the countries represented in the trilingual interpreter's local geographical area.

6. Knowledge of what body language and certain gestures mean in Latin America, with emphasis on the countries represented in the trilingual interpreter's geographical area.

   a. To illustrate, making a fist with the thumb between the index and middle finger (the handshape for the letter "T" in ASL) is an offensive gesture in many parts of Mexico and Central America. In Nicaragua, crinkling the nose can mean, "I don't understand." In Costa Rica, and other parts of Latin America, clapping one hand with the backside of the other hand and then dragging this second hand down means, "Let's leave."

   b. Interpreters can use this knowledge either to convey an idea or to avoid inadvertently offending someone.

7. Awareness of possible false cognates between ASL and the deaf or hard-of-hearing consumer's native sign language.

Domain 3: Consumer Assessment

"If you interpret in an educational setting you should know what classrooms look like [in the home culture of your consumers]. For example, some educational systems are much more hierarchical and students are expected to sit and take notes as the teacher speaks, while other cultures' children raise their hands, interject, etc. I think that knowledge is very helpful in terms of being able to help the student participate successfully in class."

— English-speaking hearing consumer

The trilingual interpreter must demonstrate the following competencies in determining appropriate interpreting and communication strategies with consumers.

1. Awareness of the Latino consumer's background (i.e. what country he or she is from) prior to the assignment in order to properly prepare.

2. Given the variety of consumers served in the United States, an understanding that trilingual interpreters never assume that their expertise in their own Latino culture or variety of Spanish excludes them from having to learn about others.

3. Understanding that trilingual interpreters should address Spanish-speaking hearing consumers with the appropriate formal use of language, such as "*usted*", when addressing them directly.

4. Ability to identify Spanish-speaking hearing consumer's language use (e.g., regionalisms, form of address, etc.) to determine a target language form.

5. Ability to identify a deaf consumer's language use (e.g., native ASL user, requires mouthing in Spanish, use of foreign signs, etc.) to determine a target language form.

6. Understanding differences in gender roles in various cultures.

7. An ability to understand and observe different eye-contact conventions and expectations in various Latin American cultures.

8. In three-person interactive situations, understand Latino family dynamics in order to determine how the consumer's position within the family might influence interpreting decisions or strategies.

9. Understand the history and significance of oppression in the Latino community (deaf and hearing) in analysis of power relationships among participants within the interpreted interaction in order to determine how the consumer's position within the power dynamic might influence interpreting decisions or strategies.

Domain 4: Interpreting Practice

"There's some assumption that the knowledge of Spanish and the experience as an

interpreter mean that there will be some automatic transference. There's a lack of

appreciation of the interpreter, that they worked a lot to be able to work between English

and ASL, but if they haven't done that work with Spanish [the interpreting skills] are not

going to be there."

— Hiring entity

Domains and Competency Statements

The trilingual interpreter demonstrates ability to use engagement, analytic, production, monitoring, and decision-making skills and strategies in the construction of meaningful interpretation for all consumers involved, including the ability to:

1. Interpret consecutively, and recognize when to do so or not to do so, in ASL-English, ASL-Spanish, and English-Spanish language combinations.

    a. Occurrence of consecutive interpretation between English and Spanish is usually limited to three-person interactive situations but remains an important competency for a trilingual interpreter.

2. Interpret simultaneously, and recognize when to do so or not to do so, in the ASL-English and ASL-Spanish language combinations. Occurrence of simultaneous interpretation between English and Spanish is usually limited to conferences on deafness or sign language interpreting. Therefore, trilingual conference interpreters must also possess this skill in English-Spanish interpretation.

3. Sight translate documents from English to Spanish, Spanish to English, English to ASL, and Spanish to ASL, especially with regard to documents and forms common in educational, medical, mental health, immigration, vocational rehabilitation, and legal settings.

4. Cue participants when the floor has been yielded to them, either by eye gaze, body shifting, or other appropriate means, especially in three-person interactive situations.

    a. Manage turn taking by using visual or auditory fillers to limit unintended interruptions, especially in VRS and VRI settings.

5. Mitigate overlapping sequences of speaking and signing or interruptions that prevent communication, especially in a three-person interactive situation.

6. Appropriately advise where parties should be situated in a room for optimal effectiveness.

    a. The trilingual interpreter must consider the need for visual and auditory access in every situation, but must also understand and take into account the cultural implications of where elders are placed, the hierarchy of family members, and the power dynamics at play.

7. Inform the deaf or hard-of-hearing consumer, English-speaking hearing consumer, and Spanish-speaking hearing consumer of the role of the trilingual interpreter before the

assignment, addressing ground rules for turn taking, especially in three-person interactive situations.

8. Effectively use expansion and other appropriate techniques that ensure clarity of the message into signed language, given the language needs of their deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers who come from various countries and have varied levels of ASL proficiency.

9. Prepare appropriately for an assignment by either learning or reviewing information that is relevant about their consumers.

    a. For example, if the trilingual interpreter will interpret for a Nicaraguan deaf consumer, the interpreter should review general information about Nicaragua and Nicaraguan culture, both deaf and hearing.

10. Identify, recognize, and differentiate roles as an interpreter and as an advocate, including boundaries expected within the profession and the Latino community (deaf and hearing).

11. When working as a team with a deaf or hearing interpreter, demonstrate ability to effectively negotiate aspects of the conjoint work with all parties involved.

    a. Foster a collaborative interpreting process, working together to verify meaning, gather clarifying information, manage information flow within the team, and affect a mutual monitoring process in the co-construction of complete and accurate interpretation for all consumers involved.

    b. In advance with the team interpreter, agree on language use, techniques and strategies to be employed and processes for adapting and changing course as needed.

    c. In advance with the team interpreter, agree on the use of consecutive or simultaneous interpretation, and management of switching between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting as needed.

    d. In advance with the team interpreter, discuss how to manage potential communication breakdowns between team members, including requesting brief team conferences, adapting language use, and replacing members of the team, when necessary, in a professional manner.

    e. Recognize and effectively navigate potential power dynamics (e.g. perceived roles, cultural disparities, discrimination, oppression, audism, etc.) within the team process.

> f. When two or more teams are at work, plan how and when to switch teams so that each team will utilize and build upon existing linguistic concepts to keep the transition from one team to another linguistically clear to all consumers involved.

Domain 5: Professionalism

> *"Sin menospreciar a los que son puramente bilingües, manejando el inglés y el "sign language", sabemos que con ellos es más frío, pues llega ahí, hace su trabajo, recoge su papel y se va.*
>
> *(Not to devalue those who are strictly bilingual, who work between English and sign language, but we know that they're "colder"; they show up, do their work, gather up their forms, and leave.)"*
>
> *— Spanish-speaking hearing consumer*

The trilingual interpreter demonstrates the following competencies aimed at continual development and enhancement of the trilingual interpreter profession:

1. An ability to pursue professional development activities that involve interaction with colleagues, peers, and other professionals.

2. An ability to participate in professional organizations for trilingual interpreters, such as Mano a Mano, National Council of Hispano Deaf and Hard of Hearing, other deaf Latino organizations, and the Network of Trilingual Interpreters listserv.

3. An awareness of organizations originally intended for spoken language interpreters and translators, such as the National Association of Judiciary Interpreter and Translators and the American Translators Association.

4. Knowledge of current trends in interpretation, linguistics, cultural studies, and research.

5. Knowledge of current trends in the use of Spanish by consulting dictionaries, such as those published by the Real Academia Española, and other resources.

6. Knowledge of current trends in the areas in which trilingual interpreters work.

7. Possession of academic and interpreting credentials in Spanish, English and ASL languages cultures, and interpreting.

> a. Including trilingual credentials (such as the certification provided by the Texas BEI or another that may emerge) and bilingual credentials (such as the ASL-

English interpreting certification provided by RID and the Texas BEI or the various Spanish-English interpreting certifications).

8. An ability to apply American cultural values to business norms, such as punctuality and conciseness in communications; apply Deaf cultural values to interpreting, such as attitude and respect; and apply Latino cultural values to interactions, such as consideration and respect.

9. Creativity in adapting training resources designed for bilingual interpreters (either English-ASL or Spanish-English) to aid in improving trilingual interpreting skills.

10. Knowledge and skill in educating agencies and clients about the misconception of "Spanish sign language" for referring to signed languages of Latin America, the information needed to adequately prepare for an assignment, and misconceptions about Latinos in the U.S. (both deaf and hearing).

11. Be fully cognizant to not engage in English-Spanish translation work unless qualified to do so.

Future Directions

> *"Aunque sea por lo menos en Tejas, ya existe una forma de identificarse; me*
> *parece fantástico.*
> *(Even if it's only in Texas, there's now a way to identify trilingual interpreters. I*
> *think it's fantastic.)"*
> *— Spanish-speaking hearing consumer*

Given its extensive effective-practices protocols and vetting process, these domains and competency statements should be used as the basis for many important and long-awaited initiatives in trilingual-interpreter education and practice. Among them, these domains and competency statements should be used to:

*   Prepare interpreter education program instructors on how to identify potential trilingual interpreters, provide them with supplemental or alternative assignments aimed at developing trilingual interpreting skills and competencies, and advise them on elective courses to take to develop foundational knowledge (such as Latin American History) pertinent to the work of trilingual interpreters.

Domains and Competency Statements

- Develop and implement a standardized curriculum, approach, and materials to use in the training of trilingual interpreters.

Resources

The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers website offers access to information on effective practices in ASL/Spanish/English interpreting. www.interpretereducation.org/specialization/asl-spanish-english/

Mano a Mano is an organization of trilingual (Spanish, English, and ASL) interpreters in the United States who work in communities and settings where Spanish is prevalent. www.manoamano-unidos.org

National Council of Hispano Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCHDHH) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure equal access of the Hispano deaf and hard of hearing community in the areas of social, recreational, cultural, educational, and vocational welfare. To this end, the NCHDHH maintains a national awareness program to educate the deaf and hard of hearing communities, as well as social and educational programs and organizations about the needs and issues facing Hispanic/Latino persons, and works collaboratively with them on amelioration. *www.nchdhh.org*

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) is the nation's premier civil rights organization of, by, and for deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the United States of America. Established in 1880, the NAD was shaped by deaf leaders who believed in the right of the American deaf community to use sign language, to congregate on issues important to them, and to have its interests represented at the national level. These beliefs remain true to this day, with the use of ASL as a core value. www.NAD.org

The Network of Trilingual Interpreters is an independent email distribution group, moderated by NCIEC Trilingual Task Force member, Kristie Casanova de Canales. It serves as a central place for relevant questions, answers, and information sharing, as well as to provide a sense of community and support for trilingual interpreters who work among English, Spanish, and ASL. groups.yahoo.com/group/trilingualinterpreters/

Interpreting in Multilingual, Multicultural Contexts (2010), edited by Rachel Locker Mckee and Jeffrey E. Davis, is the seventh volume in the Studies in Interpretation Series and contains

various chapters on trilingual interpreting. It is available from Gallaudet University Press.
gupress.gallaudet.edu/excerpts/IMMCcontributors.html

National Multicultural Interpreter Project was a U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation
Services Administration funded five-year project (1995–2000). Its charge was to improve
the quality and quantity of interpreting services to deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind
individuals from culturally diverse communities. One end-product of the project was the
publication of "A Curriculum for Enhancing Interpreter Competences for Working within
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities," an extensive curriculum for interpreting
educators. www.epcc.edu/NMIP/Pages/default.aspx

Glossary of Related Terms

audism	1. Prejudice or discrimination based on the sense of hearing; especially discrimination against D/deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.
	2. Behavior, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of individual or social roles based on hearing loss. (Lane, 1993; Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005; www.thetactilemind.com)
bilingual	A bilingual person is, in its broadest definition, anyone with communicative skills in two languages, be it active or passive. In a narrow definition, the term bilingual is often reserved for those speakers with native or native-like proficiency in two languages. (Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005; www.wordiq.com/definition/Bilingual).
competency	1. Areas of personal capability that enable people to perform successfully in their jobs by completing tasks effectively. A competency can be knowledge, attitude, skill, value, or personal value. Competency can be acquired through talent, experience, or training.

	2. Competency comprises the specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in employment. (Witter Merithew & Johnson, 2005; www.neiu.edu/~dbehrlic/hrd408/glossary.htm)
consecutive interpretation	The interpreter gives his interpretation after the speaker has finished a segment of his speech that may be a sentence or several sentences. (Seleskovitch, 1978; Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005)
interpretation	The process of conveying a message generated in one language into an equivalent message in another language. (Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005)
sight translation	The oral [or signed] rendition of a written text from one language into another. (Adapted from www.najit.org/Publications/Terms%20of%20the%20Profession.pdf)
simultaneous interpretation	Conveys a message into another language at virtually the same moment in time as it is expressed in the first language. (Seleskovitch, 1978; Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005)
target language	The language into which a message is interpreted. (Humphrey & Alcorn, 1998)
three-person interactive situation	An interpreted situation in which a Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing consumer, an English-speaking hearing consumer, and a Spanish-speaking hearing consumer are all present.

transliteration | Transliteration has traditionally been defined for the speaking-signing context, e.g. "...working between spoken English and a form of a signed language that uses a more English-based word order" (RID 1997/2007) that is, the same language, adapted for the visual mode. We suggest that the term may also be applied to the trilingual interpreter's work in describing the process of working between spoken Spanish and a form of a signed language that incorporates features of Spanish, such as mouthing and word order.

trilingual interpreter | A specialist whose working languages are ASL, spoken English, and spoken Spanish and who provides interpretation and transliteration services for Latino individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or deaf-blind

Process of Peer Review of Domains and Competencies

To ensure greater accuracy and appropriateness of the trilingual Domains and Competencies, the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force shared an initial draft document, authored by Treviño and Casanova de Canales, with eight experts throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. These experts were recommended by Mano a Mano and NCIEC Trilingual Task Force members for their expert knowledge of interpreting between ASL, Spanish, and English, and for having a good working knowledge of the generalist interpreter domains and competencies. Members of the expert review group were Dr. Myrelis Aponte-Samelot, Mr. Edwin Cancel, Ms. Yolanda Chavira, Dr. Robert Dávila, Ms. Ester Diaz, Dr. Tomas Garcia, Mr. David Myers, and Dr. David Quinto-Pozos.

In August 2012, the experts were asked to review the document and respond to a series of Likert scale statements and open-ended questions. The questionnaire solicited information in three categories: 1) accuracy and clarity of the domain and competency statements; 2) quality of

supplemental information provided, such as resources and glossary terms; and 3) the reader's overall impression of the usefulness of the document.

Category 1: Domain and Competency Statements

On a scale of 1–5, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree," the readers were asked to respond to the following statements:

1. The competency statements [in this domain] reflect real-world skills.
2. The competency statements [in this domain] reflect the most important skills a trilingual interpreter should possess.
3. The competency statements [in this domain] are correctly placed in this domain.
4. The competency statements [in this domain] are clearly articulated.
5. Overall, this domain reflects the competencies required by any individual who engages in trilingual interpreting at a "qualified" level.

The readers were then asked to share any suggested changes, as well as additional thoughts or explanations to their responses.

Category 2: Quality of Supplemental Information

On a scale of 1–5, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree," the readers were asked to respond to the two statements:

1. The section entitled Resources in this document was adequate.
2. The section entitled Glossary in this document was adequate.

The readers were then asked to share any additional resources or glossary terms they felt should be included in the document.

Category 3: Usefulness of the Document

On a scale of 1–5, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree," the readers were asked to respond to the following statements:

1. This document will be helpful to interpreter educators who hold expertise in the area of trilingual interpreting.
2. This document would be helpful to trilingual interpreter practitioners.

3. Overall, this document reflects the domains and competencies required by any individual who engages in trilingual interpreting at a "qualified" level.

Results

Survey findings revealed that 76% of the expert readers felt the quality of the *domain and competency statements* to be of the highest quality, with an additional 20% rating them of good quality. Six percent were neutral, while no one felt this category to be of poor or very poor quality. Survey findings regarding the quality *of supplemental information* were noted to be of lower quality, with only 27% feeling this category to be of the highest category and 43% rating it of good quality. Thirty percent indicated neutrality. None felt this category to be of poor or very poor quality. In terms of *usefulness*, 100% of the readers rated it at the highest mark possible. A breakdown of this data is chronicled in the following tables.

Table 5.1 Category 1: Domain and Competency Statements

1. *The competency statements [in this domain] reflect real-world skills.*
        Over all domains:
                82% of readers rated this statement as 5 (or "strongly agree")
                18% noted 4 (or "agree")

2. *The competency statements [in this domain] reflect the most important skills a trilingual interpreter should possess.*
        Over all domains:
                69% of readers rated this statement as 5 (or "strongly agree")
                 25% noted 4 (or "agree")
                6% rated 3 (or "neutral")

3. *The competency statements [in this domain] are correctly placed in this domain.*
        Over all domains:
                77% of readers rated this statement as 5 (or "strongly agree")
                23% rated 4 (or "agree")

4. *The competency statements [in this domain] are clearly articulated.*
        Over all domains:
                68% of readers rated this statement as 5 (or "strongly agree")
                24% rated 4 (or "agree")
                8% rated 3 (or "neutral")

5. *Overall, this domain reflects the competencies required by any individual who engages in trilingual interpreting at a "qualified" level.*

    Over all domains:

    85% of readers rated this statement as <u>5</u> (or "strongly agree")

    12% rated <u>4</u> (or "agree")

    3% rated <u>3</u> (or "neutral")

Table 5.2 Category 2: Quality of Supplemental Information

1. *The section entitled Resources in this document was adequate.*
    57% of readers rated this statement as <u>3</u> (or "neutral")
    29% rated <u>5</u> (or "strongly agree")
    14% rated <u>4</u> (or "agree")

2. *The section entitled Glossary in this document was adequate.*
    72% of readers rated this statement as <u>4</u> (or "agree")
    24% rated <u>5</u> (or "strongly agree")
    14% rated <u>3</u> (or "neutral")

Table 5.3 Category 3: Usefulness of the Document
1. *This document will be helpful to interpreter educators who hold expertise in the area of trilingual interpreting.*   100% of readers rated this statement as <u>5</u> (or "strongly agree")
2. *This document would be helpful to trilingual interpreter practitioners.*   100% of readers rated this statement as <u>5</u> (or "strongly agree")
3. *Overall, this document reflects the domains and competencies required by any individual who engages in trilingual interpreting at a "qualified" level.*   100% of readers rated this statement as <u>5</u> (or "strongly agree")

Specific expert reader comments were cross-referenced with other experts and NCIEC Trilingual Task Force members and, if agreed upon by the authors and the NCIEC Task Force, were then incorporated into the document.

In total, the Domains and Competencies were reviewed by NCIEC Trilingual Task Force members, an additional panel of external expert readers, and the RID Standard Practice Paper Ad

Hoc Committee. It also underwent one more review process with the distribution of a follow-up survey of interpreting practitioners, hiring entities and consumers (chapter 6).

Domains and Competency Statements

A Follow-Up Survey to Determine Competencies and Skills Needed for Effective Trilingual Interpreting

Erica Alley

Introduction

An article published by the Wall Street Journal in the spring of 2011 reported that the Hispanic population accounted for more than half of the growth in the United States between the years 2000 and 2010 (Reddy, 2011). The author attributed the surge to both higher birth and immigration rates. As can be expected with the growth of the general population, there has been a parallel increase in the number of deaf Hispanic children in the United States. Hispanic children can be considered the most rapidly growing minority group within the Deaf community (Christensen, 2000). Given the enormity of the Hispanic population there is a concomitant need for trilingual interpreters fluent in Spanish, English, and American Sign Language (ASL).

To date, there is very little research exploring the work of trilingual interpreters. Little is known about the experiences and effective practices of trilingual interpreters working with the Hispanic population. The study described in this chapter was conducted as a component of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) Trilingual Task Force effective practices work, and as a secondary means of validating the domains and competencies being identified by Treviño and Casanova de Canales (this volume). It explores the knowledge, skills and best practices of trilingual interpreters from the perspectives of trilingual interpreting practitioners, as well as members of the Hispanic Deaf community. Additionally, this study investigates trends in hiring practices in order to determine what skills hiring entities are seeking when working with a trilingual interpreter. We report on the study's methodology and results in order to add to the information available regarding typical trilingual interpreting practices.

Methodology

In order to gain insight into the effective practices of trilingual interpreters, a series of surveys were distributed to trilingual interpreting practitioners (see Appendix D), Hispanic Deaf

community members (see Appendix B), as well as hiring entities that have experience working with trilingual interpreters (see Appendix C). The surveys were constructed using SurveyMonkey, an online platform for survey development and were made available in Spanish, English and ASL. They were distributed to stakeholder lists prepared by NCIEC Task Force members, placed on Facebook, and sent to such organizations as the National Association of the Deaf and the National Council of Hispanic Deaf and Hard of Hearing for further distribution.

The surveys distributed to trilingual interpreting practitioners began with a series of questions pertaining to demographic information. This task was followed by questions aimed toward understanding trilingual interpreters' perspectives on common trilingual interpreting strategies, skills, knowledge and potential training needs. The interpreters were asked to respond to questions by using a Likert scale of importance ranging from "not important" to "extremely important." Using a similar scale, hiring entities were consulted in order to determine trends in their trilingual interpreting hiring practices. Questions focused on the importance of particular qualifications and credentials when hiring trilingual interpreters. Additionally, hiring entities were asked about their frequency of working with trilingual interpreters as well as the types of qualifications they expected when hiring trilingual interpreters.

Finally, a survey was conducted focusing on the perspectives of deaf members of the Hispanic population when working with interpreters. These surveys aimed to gather information regarding the types of knowledge and skills that are considered important to the deaf community when working with trilingual interpreters.

Demographics

The demographic survey was completed by 48 hearing trilingual interpreting practitioners, the majority of whom self-identified as being female, between the ages of 30 and 50 years old, and of Hispanic/Latino descent. The practitioners in this study expressed that they primarily work as sign language interpreters; however, other roles identified included interpreter educator, language instructor, translator and in-home educator for trilingual families. It is interesting to note that, while 36 of the 48 interpreting practitioners in this study identified themselves as being a certified interpreter or translator, only six of the participants reported holding Texas Trilingual Certification. Other credentials included those offered by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) as well as varying state licenses, the Educational Interpreter

Performance Assessment (EIPA), state court certification, Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI), and Berlitz. Results of the demographic survey indicate that 57 percent of the participants have been interpreting in trilingual settings for fewer than ten years.

The deaf participants of this study were asked to complete a demographic survey similarly aimed at developing an understanding of the characteristics of the community who use trilingual interpreting services. It is important to note that, while this survey was widely distributed to deaf people within the Hispanic community, only two responses were received. Given the low response rate, generalizations about this population cannot be made; however, a preliminary review of the responses obtained can serve as a foundation for further studies. The survey was completed by one female and one male, both of whom expressed being between the ages of 18 and 29, and of Hispanic/Latino descent. One participant held a high school diploma, and the second participant had completed an associate's degree.

Deaf Community Perspective

While one participant noted that they work with a trilingual interpreter at least once each week, the other respondent indicated that they work with a trilingual interpreter only once per year. Interestingly, both expressed working with a trilingual interpreter at school. Their responses highlighted the importance of the trilingual interpreter's ability to read and write Spanish, understand Hispanic/Latino and American cultures, communicate well with consumers both before and after the interpreted event, and have knowledge of Latin American sign languages. While interpreters' knowledge of Latin American popular culture, history, geography, and government systems (e.g. education, healthcare) was considered very important by one participant, the other considered this knowledge of little importance. Both participants stressed the importance of the interpreters' knowledge of the American legal system, including laws pertaining to the Deaf community (e.g. Americans with Disabilities Act), as well as immigration and family law.

Hiring Entity Perspective

Ten hiring entities completed a survey designed to collect data regarding hiring practices around this specialized skill. Results of this survey indicated that half of the respondents are located in California. They typically recruit interpreters from within the state; however, trilingual

interpreters are also recruited from Florida, Washington, DC, Texas, New York and other areas with high populations of Spanish speakers. The frequency of need for trilingual interpreting services varied among the hiring entities that completed the survey; however, six of the participants indicate that they have contracted with a trilingual interpreter at least once per month over the last two years. One participant responded that they currently have two trilingual interpreters working part-time for their agency. In contrast, two participants indicated that they tend to receive only one trilingual request annually. Several of the hiring entities reported that, when they receive a request for trilingual interpreting service, they struggle to effectively assign trilingual interpreters due to factors such as short notice from clients, as well as limited interpreter availability. This is not surprising due to the unique skills that are needed as a trilingual interpreter.

The majority of trilingual interpreting hiring entities (88.9%) asserted that they determine interpreter qualification based on their possession of national RID certification along with the interpreter's self-reported expertise. This determination often occurs when there are no staff members who can accurately assess interpreters' skills. However, some agencies utilize independent screenings and request that interpreters provide them with other information pertaining to their experience, such as personal background or specialized certifications (see figure 6.1 below).

Figure 6.1: Tools Used to Assess the Skills of Trilingual Interpreters

One participant stated: "Self-identification [alone] is not sufficient, all credentials are taken into consideration in addition [to] in-house screening." Another participant responded: "We know many of the interpreters personally. We usually get their ASL certification level then speak to them in Spanish over the phone to evaluate their Spanish skills." Of course, when the hiring entity has the resources in place to conduct an independent screening of trilingual interpreters' skills, it ensures that quality interpreters can be assigned in response to varying need within the Deaf community. Just as not all ASL-English interpreters are appropriate for all interpreting needs, not all trilingual interpreters can be considered an appropriate fit for all Spanish speakers or members of the Deaf community.

Results of this survey indicate that trilingual interpreting is often needed in healthcare, legal, and educational settings (see fig. 6.2 below). Half of the respondents report experience hiring trilingual interpreters to work in an educational setting. One participant states, "During 2 out of the 4 most recent semesters we have needed trilingual interpreter(s)." Another shared that "most of our requests for trilingual services are for the legal and social service settings."
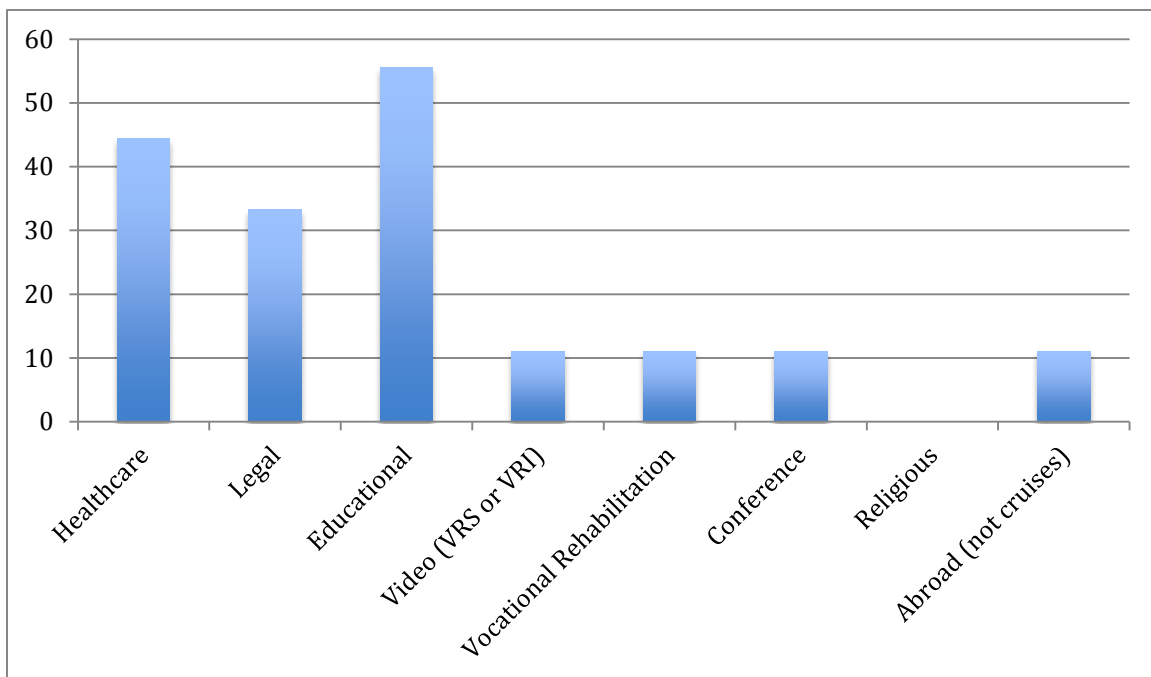

Fig 6.2: Hiring Practices for Trilingual Interpreters 2010-2012

Additional responses regarding settings that have shown need for trilingual interpreting service include immigration, citizenship, study tours, theater and social services.

Best Practices According to Trilingual Interpreters

The majority of participants in this study (93.7%) asserted that linguistic competence, including the ability to produce an accurate message, as well as the ability to assess clients' language and determine clients' linguistic need, is highly important. Similarly, 93.3 percent of the participants stated that interpreters' cultural competence is highly important. All of the participants stressed the importance of ethical decision-making. These fundamental skills are clearly critical among trilingual interpreters.

Participants also seemed to agree that consecutive interpreting (the ability to process a message in a source language, hold it in short-term memory, and render the message into the target languages when the speaker has finished speaking or signing) is equally as important as simultaneous interpreting skills (the ability to render a target language interpretation while the source language message is still being produced). Of the 46 respondents to the question regarding consecutive interpretation, 35 asserted that this skill is very/extremely important, 9 participants suggested that this skill is important, and 2 said that it is neither important nor unimportant.

Similar responses can be seen in the question regarding simultaneous interpreting. While 37 participants responded that simultaneous interpretation skills are very or extremely important, 7 participants stated that it is important, and one participant responded that simultaneous interpreting is not important. Other noteworthy skills identified by the participants were (60.5%), turn-taking management (74.6%), interpersonal skills (79.2%), professionalism (95.8%), and Spanish-English interpretation (81.2%). These results are not surprising given the variety of situations in which trilingual interpreters work. For example, 60.5 percent of the participants rated the skill of sight translation to be of high importance. If the deaf conversational participant is able to read Spanish, but not English, any documents conveyed in English may need to be sight translated into ASL. Additionally, 62.5 percent of participants felt that trilingual interpreters should be skilled in Spanish-English translation. Aside from linguistic skills, results of this survey indicate that trilingual interpreters must demonstrate interpersonal skills as they interact with clients who come from a variety of cultures.

The participants in this study raised an interesting point about interpreters' ability to demonstrate a native sounding accent in their Spanish interpretations. While 65.1 percent of the participants feel that knowledge of varieties of Spanish are very or extremely important, only

24.5 percent feel the same about having a native sounding accent. This is important to note as trilingual interpreters seek mentoring and/or educational opportunities. It may behoove trilingual interpreters to pursue knowledge of varieties of Spanish as opposed to striving to perfect their conveyance of a native sounding accent.

Additionally, while half of the participants feel that knowledge of Latin America, including its history, popular culture, geography, and economy is important, one fourth of the participants felt that competency in Latin American sign languages is neither important nor unimportant. Furthermore, there was a slightly greater value placed on knowledge of US legislation (48%), including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Public Law 94-142, social security law, immigration law, and family law, than on knowledge of Latin American policy (38%).

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, aside from fundamental interpreting coursework, trilingual interpreters would benefit from activities that focus on Spanish-English interpreting. Time would be wisely spent on the exploration of Latin American cultures, United States government and policy, as well as interpersonal skills and ethical scenarios, as opposed to devoting extensive time to the goal of "sounding native." The majority of hiring entities look toward RID certification when hiring trilingual interpreters. Trilingual interpreting curricula should be sure to include practicing materials from the RID National Interpreter Certification test.
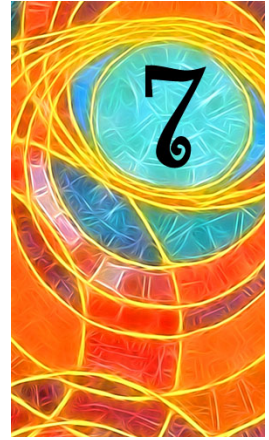
Follow-up Survey
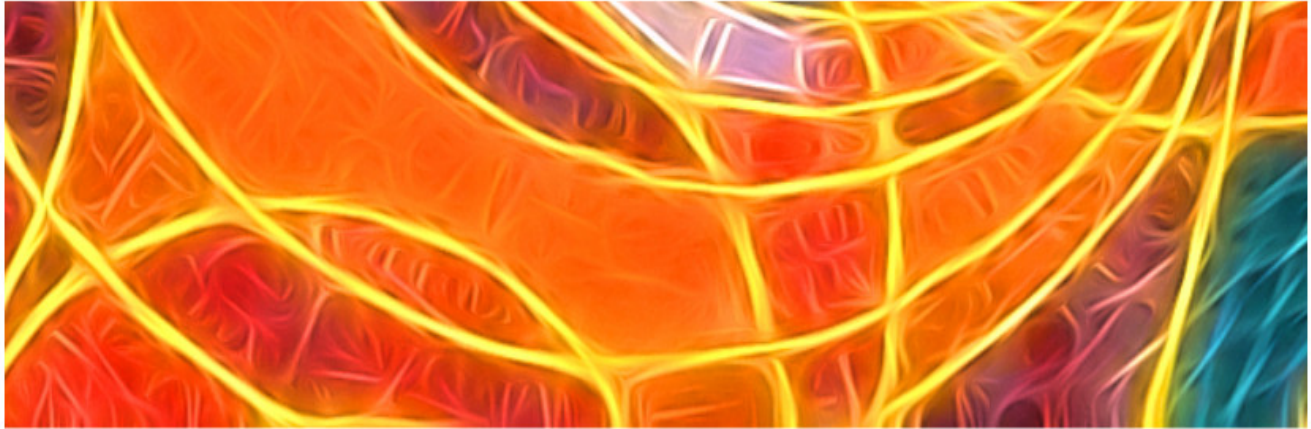
Part 3
A Look at the Work of the Trilingual Interpreter

The Face of Trilingual Interpreting

Myrelis Aponte-Samalot

"As a result of taking the time upfront for explanation and creating a safe place to ask communication-related questions, the pace was good for all of the interpreters, the lawyer was patient and the grandmother and the mother had three interpreting tools upon which to rely as they communicated with each other...If it could always be like this."

− Interpreter reflecting on a trilingual assignment

Professional Experiences

Case Scenarios of Four Interpreters Working in Spanish-Infused Settings

As trilingual interpreters we are faced with daily challenges. While sometimes frustrating, challenges pose opportunities for growth and understanding about the uniqueness of our profession. One of the most significant learning experiences we have is the sharing of successful and less successful events, which allows us to learn how to do things differently in the future. In this chapter, deaf and hearing trilingual interpreters from around the country were asked about such learning opportunities and their willingness to share with us their real life experiences.

In each case you will read about the interpreter's background and how they came to practice trilingual interpretation. They will share with you their thoughts and perceptions of successful and less successful experiences and outcomes. We hope you learn from their success, as well as gain insight from each experience. From novice to advanced trilingual interpreters, we are all able to learn from anecdotal and life experiences. Certainly, you will be able to relate to these cases and think about some of your own experiences.

"Between Countries"

Edwin Cancel

My name is Edwin Cancel I am an ASL Instructor at Western Oregon University. I hold several certifications: RID NIC, RID Ed: K-12, Texas BEI Trilingual Master. After obtaining my Master of Science degree in Deaf Studies/Deaf Education, I taught in the Houston, Texas metropolitan area as a high school and middle school teacher, and served as a Parent/Infant Advisor. While I was working on my teaching credentials I was also working on my interpreting craft.

My interpreting-related education includes both formal and informal components. I obtained an A.A. Degree in Interpreting at Santa Fe Community College (SFCC). At that time, SFCC offered a trilingual specialization. Since Spanish is my first language, I opted to take that route. This gave me the skeletal framework of the interpreter's job. However, the fleshing out came from working with, and for, Angela Roth. I have been interpreting since 1996, but can honestly say the learning never stops. Each situation, each venue, each client brings its own challenges and opportunities. I look forward to continued growth and improvement.

One successful trilingual experience I enjoyed occurred last year. I had the privilege of being hired by an international company to interpret for some deaf participants in a leadership-building program. Among these were two women from separate Latin American countries: Costa Rica and Colombia. Each of these countries has their own sign language, but the women were also familiar with ASL. The women each asked that I go from English to ASL, but would I please have Spanish on the mouth. Conversely, when they made comments or asked questions they would use their sign language and keep Spanish on their mouths. This allowed them to have full access to the program. It would've been easier had I known their sign language, but sans that I did the best I could.

I have had less than successful trilingual experiences, too. These have typically been in the VRS setting. In this setting one has very little time or no time to prep prior to the parties connecting. With that being the case, cultural and linguistic miscues, I think, are inevitable. For example, in one call I was sure the hearing Dominican caller said "cuarto," meaning room. I conveyed that meaning to the deaf caller, only to have my interpretation met by a confused look.

Upon asking for clarification from the hearing party, I found out he did say "cuarto" but he meant the more colloquial meaning of "money." A good laugh was had by all at my expense. I laughed too. I chalked it up to one more learning experience. What becomes exhausting, though, is not knowing when a misinterpretation is going to happen without being detected by either of the parties involved with the result being no laughing matter. It is impossible to know all the colloquial expressions of all the Spanish speakers in the world. While I was able to ask for clarification because I knew I'd made a mistake, what do I do when it isn't that apparent? I wish we had more trilingual interpreters to team with in each center, so they could act as a safety net for such occasions.

Edwin brings great examples of the importance of knowing or being prepared the best way possible in regards to the cultural and linguistic background of our clients. However, he brings up a challenging and true point, it is impossible to be able to know all the colloquialisms of the different countries that trilingual interpreters probably serve. This is why he makes a stronger point regarding engaging in the work as a team. This is true for all scenarios faced by bilingual interpreters, and it should also be true to our field.

"From IEP's to Court"

Sergio Peña

I am Sergio Peña, a certified interpreter in both ASL and Mexican Sign Language. I have a Bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies with a specialization in Linguistics from San Diego State University. My experience of more than 20 years in the field includes bi-, tri-, and quad-lingual interpreting within such settings as education, religion, artistic, community, medical, legal, and in the recent years VRI and VRS. I grew up in Mexico and therefore being a native Spanish speaker, I am able to have a better understanding and rapport with the Latino/Hispanic Deaf and hearing communities. I co-authored with Dr. Claire Ramsey a chapter of volume seven of The Interpretation Series, Interpreting in Multilingual, Multicultural Contexts, edited by McKee and Davis of Gallaudet University Press. I am a writer, coordinator, and teacher of the Interpreter Trainer Program at Universidad Autónoma de Baja California under the School of Languages in Tijuana, B.C., Mexico. I have the opportunity of being part of the task-force committee of specialists in the developing of the competency standards for sign language

interpreter's certification of Mexico. Also, I am a founding member of the National Association of Sign Language Interpreters in Mexico.

I have two stories to share with you. I chose to share my less successful story first. This was an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting where I was requested to interpret for the deaf teacher of a deaf child. My role was to sign ASL and voice English for the support staff. The parents were Hispanic and the father understood some English, however the mom did not speak any English. A bilingual instructional assistant was called in by the principal to do Spanish/English interpreting; of course, she had no training in interpreting and her Spanish is not native. During the meeting, I noticed that the mother was not participating at all in the meeting. The instructional aide was summarizing some and other times was telling her things like "oh, esta parte no comprendi, pero tal vez le vuelva a decir y se lo explico entonces" (in English: "oh, I didn't understand that part, but maybe they will repeat it and I will explain it then"). I stepped out of the interpreter role and briefly "sim-commed" saying that some of the information was not clear for the mother and that we needed to go back. The father interrupted and said in English, "Oh, it's not necessary, I understand enough English for the both of us. Let's keep going with the IEP meeting."

The meeting continued and the instructional assistant would just summarize the points that she thought were important. I would look at the principal and indicate that I was not content with how the languages were being handled. I offered myself to help out and the principal said it was not necessary, that it would extend the meeting too long.

As a result, the mom was so confused about her child's education that one day she saw me after school. She approached me and asked me why her child was not mainstreamed with an interpreter like other kids. I told her to talk to the teacher and I helped her then with English/Spanish interpretation. She told the teacher that her husband never explained anything of the outcome of the meeting, and what was worse: the father was no longer involved in their lives. He had left them, and she had no language to understand how to be involved in the child's life.

Now for my successful experience. I was called from family court to interpret a "trilingual" case. As I enter the courthouse I go straight to the bailiff and I tell him that I am the sign language interpreter (I speak and sign at the same time, just in case the person I will be interpreting for is present). The bailiff confirms with his head and turns to point at a Latin

woman present in the courtroom. I turn to look at her and our eyes meet, she looked at me with anger and scorn. I smiled at her and she turned her head.

Well, I thought, maybe it is because the trial has not been too much on her favor. And the worst was that this trial was to determine marital alimony, as her divorce case was about to come to an end. I sit at a reasonable distance from her to be able to sign to her and also to see her signs. I need to see if she used ASL with Spanish, or oral Spanish, or, LSM, or even home signs. When I begin to sign to her, she turns and does not allow me to communicate. The man, Caucasian, looked at me and smiled looking relaxed and secure, as though we were old friends. I smile back and sit at the back of the room to keep professional distance. When their turn came, I stood where she would be able to see all the judicial activity as well as the interpreter. Once again, after being sworn in, I direct myself to her and using ASL and Spanish mouthing. I tell her that I will using ASL and Spanish in my mouth, and that if she cannot understand me to please tell the judge.

At that moment, she changed her facial gestures, from anger to peaceful, she put an amazing smile on her face that went from ear to ear and she tells me in ASL, "muchas gracias," which is "thank you" with both her hands and mouth. She takes a deep breath and exhales with an indescribable sense of relief.

The judge begins the session and asks her if she could understand everything that the interpreter is signing, "because we had to bring him from far away, because you mentioned that you could not understand the previous interpreters." She responded in ASL, with a big smile in her face, "Si, a él lo comprendo porque usa señas y español en la boca" ("Yes, I understand him because he uses ASL and Spanish mouthing"). She also said, "Thanks judge, now you will be able to understand what I am trying to say and I will understand what my husband is saying that I do not understand."

The husband was saying that he did not have money. She commented that there was $100,000 in the bank and was explaining that the husband said the money was not his but from a family member, to whom he has to return the money. She responded saying that it was not true. The money was theirs because she sold a house in Mexico, her husband put some money in stocks, and told her that he lost the money. But, it happened that he gave the money to that family member to keep it until the divorce was final, because he was planning the divorce. He has his pension, in addition to the money, the house, and two cars, she mentioned. She continued

to say that the house was under his name and if the judge would investigate, he would find that he had put the house under his mother's name just before he presented the divorce papers.

The first day that I have a chance to interpret, I leave knowing that I will have to return next month. The judge asked for my availability, because they wanted it to be me who interpreted the whole process, and I accepted. As I am leaving to go to my car, she reaches me and crying touches my hand, thanking me, and signs with Spanish mouthing saying that "if it wasn't for me, there would be no justice." I responded to her by saying, "I was just doing my job." But, she responded that my job saved her life and her future. She thought that because she did not know English she would lose the case in the U.S. And that her husband would win his way because she was Mexican and did not know English, and it was not fair. Again crying she asked that I stayed with the case until the end.

I told her not to worry about that, that the court would call me to continue doing my job, but that she had to understand that he would not favor her. I told her that I needed to remain neutral in the process and that it was important to keep professional distance, but that I was glad that my services were useful to her. After a few sessions the judge decided in favor of her, she would recover everything up to 50% of the properties and even the pension for her ex-husband having misled the court. He was also fined for lying to the court.

At the end of this case, I thought: how many unfair situations have happened for not using the right language, method, or adequate system for communication, or when the wrong interpreter is assigned to a case? I guess we can only help one client at a time.

It is uncertain what each situation will present. There are scenarios where we do not know all the sides of the story and it may be even more difficult for the parties involved to understand the truth behind each case. This is why it is so important to pay attention to details, to maintain a professional relationship, yet be flexible toward cultural needs. What trilingual interpreters have learned from personal and professional experience is that often our deaf and hearing Hispanic/Latino families will not understand the importance of our professional distance. This case is a clear example of that. In addition, this case illustrates how important it is to ensure that the right method of communication be used. As advocates and as professionals it is often the interpreter's responsibility to communicate this particular need when our clients are not able to explain such specifications.

"Simultaneous Too Many"

Ricardo Ortiz

My name is Ricardo Ortiz. I was born and raised in Puerto Rico with Spanish as my first language. English is my second language, which I began to learn at six years of age, and ASL is my third language, which I learned at 27. My main residence is in Puerto Rico, and temporary residence in Washington, D.C., where I pursue my master's degree in Interpretation from Gallaudet University.

I met a deaf person for the first time in 1999 at 27 and began to take sign language courses soon after. Due to the limited resources in interpreter education in Puerto Rico at that time, I relied on self-study, training videos, and most valuable, the Deaf community. I began interpreting in 2001, when a deaf friend invited me to interpret for him. I fell in love with the language and the profession, and decided to become a professional interpreter. I began working between ASL and Spanish, except for the English classes.

My first full time job opportunity came in 2006 with the establishment of Video Relay Service (VRS) in Puerto Rico, which allowed me to travel to conferences and workshops in the mainland and gain extensive work experience. I began to incorporate English more often and became a trilingual interpreter. I obtained my QA level 2 in Florida in 2008.

I currently work for Sorenson VRS as a Trilingual Video Interpreter, for Servicios Orientados al Sordo, Inc.(a non-for profit organization in Puerto Rico) as an interpretation instructor, and as a freelance interpreter in the community. I have held the NAD/RID National Interpreter Certification (NIC) since 2010.

About 5 years ago, I interpreted for a large conference. It was a series of simultaneous workshops presented in ASL, Spanish, or English at the presenter's discretion. I recall one specific workshop presented in ASL. The audience had both English and Spanish speakers for which open interpretation was provided into English, and closed interpretation was provided for the closed captioning. I was part of the team for the closed captioning.

A multilingual-multicultural audience, most of them deaf professionals, and other interpreters who could monitor our accuracy by reading the captions, added pressure in our performance. Other challenges included technical jargon related to culture and linguistics, the delay when interpreting for closed captioning, hearing the open-microphone interpretation in

English, while at the same time I was trying to pay attention to the presenter's signs (this was a double edged sword). It often times interrupted my concentration and other times provided me with missed information.

However, I feel the interpretation was successful due to a number of factors. First, we had the presentation beforehand to review and had the chance to pre-conference with the presenter. We had the presenter's notes and could read from the PowerPoint projection as well. I had a great team with different skills, which complemented mine (my team had stronger English and I had stronger Spanish) and our Spanish was from different backgrounds, adding to our combined knowledge of different cultures.

We know that there is always room for improvement. Even though we made a good team, we had just met. Therefore we were not aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses. Even though we had a brief discussion about our teaming strategies, a more concise discussion on what we expected from each other, and how we liked the information to be fed to us would have brought our interpretation to a top of the notch one by being able to support each other in the most efficient way possible.

Approximately 5 years ago I interpreted for an IEP meeting at a middle school. It was in a conference room with a big oval-shaped table. Participants included English-speaking school staff (e.g., school counselor, psychologist, teachers, principal, and social worker), Spanish-speaking family, and deaf child.

Some of the challenges, considering my own skills, included: coping with switching between three languages, turn taking, technical educational English vocabulary, the power balance (all white American staff, Latino family, and deaf child), cultural differences (independent versus collectivist), age differences (children and adults as audience), and the lack of background knowledge.

The factor that hampered me the most was not having a team for the entire two hours of the assignment. Even though I was qualified for the job, being by myself created a series of other challenges. For instance: fatigue, decreased quality of the interpretation, difficulty dealing with turn taking, and more need to interrupt for clarification, among others. Since I realized it was going to be a problem, I made the staff aware and they decided to take a series of short breaks, each 30 minutes, so I could rest and regain some of that strength. They also helped by stating their names at the beginning of their turns to help me keep up with who was saying

what.

Ricardo brings great insight to the importance of a team, to be knowledgeable and well prepared. The use of a team interpreter would have greatly reduced the challenges by balancing the workload, helping each other by monitoring the quality of the interpretation, feeding information, taking notes, and providing valuable feedback. Even in those cases where you feel you have prepared well, the settings and live action can take a toll on the interpreting process. Ricardo makes the following recommendations and they are certainly on target towards the development of the profession.

First, to guarantee quality it is relevant that an ASL/Spanish bilingual test be developed to help further the quality of the interpreters whose first language is Spanish and seek to become trilingual interpreters. This is an important matter as there are qualified interpreters whose first language is Spanish and their stronger abilities are Spanish/ASL, yet given the fact that the current trilingual certification requires stronger English/ASL abilities, this test does not fill the gap for those Spanish/ASL interpreters. Furthermore, Ricardo mentions an important point: there is an imbalance of power between the three languages of ASL, Spanish, and English. Since English is the mainstream language, interpreters are expected to master it with fluency, something that is oftentimes not expected when working into ASL or Spanish. It is evident when people who are not as fluent in ASL or Spanish get hired, but people with the same or even stronger fluency in English fail the screenings. Most tests and screenings are designed for interpreters whose first or dominant language is English, creating a bias, which potentially does not result in hiring or certifying the most qualified person. This results in ongoing oppression and lack of respect for our deaf and Latino consumers. Understanding that we all come from different backgrounds and embracing those differences will result in a robust pool of interpreters and better service.

In addition, given his experience working in the VRS setting, Ricardo also mentions that, considering that the FCC permits the provision of Spanish VRS; which has an impact nationwide, the government and professional organizations should recognize the need of a national tool to assess the skills of interpreters working in this specialized setting. Perhaps the development of such a tool should be a priority of a research and development agenda.

"Family Matters"

Lillian Garcia Peterkin

Lillian Garcia Peterkin is the Communication and Outreach Coordinator at the National Interpreter Education Center (NIEC) and works as a freelance Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI). She currently lives in Connecticut. Lillian has a BA in ASL/English Interpreting from Northeastern University, and 25 years of experience. Her first language is ASL, initially modeled by an older deaf sister, she does not speak Spanish. During our interview with Lillian, she shared with us one successful story and one of particular challenge. Here is what she told us.

As a CDI, I am often called to the courts and state agencies. Approximately 10 years ago, I was summoned to a Department of Children and Family Services agency. The Department had a case whereby the daughter of a young deaf mother had been removed from the mother's home and placed in the custody of the maternal grandmother, a woman of Hispanic/Latino descent who spoke only Spanish. For more than six months, the Department had attempted to reunify the deaf mother with her toddler-age daughter but the Department was unable to conduct a proper assessment of the mother's parenting skills as a condition of reunification. After several failed attempts, it was suggested that a CDI be engaged as a third interpreter.

Seven individuals were present at the first meeting: 1) case worker; 2) lawyer; 3) Spanish-speaking grandmother; 4) deaf mother; 5) Spanish interpreter; 6) CDI; and 7) hearing sign language interpreter. The goal of the meeting was to determine if the deaf mother had obtained the needed parenting skills and understood the consequences should the deaf mother not adhere to the conditions of the reunification. It was important for the Spanish-speaking grandmother to understand her role as a support to her daughter, as well as the conditions of reunification.

Key to the overall success of the assignment was the case worker, who had not only done her homework as to how to facilitate three languages and cultures, but took time at the beginning to explain to each party the roles of the interpreters and the extended time in which it would take for all three interpreters to do their work. Time was given for interpreting and communication questions before she began. The Spanish interpreter appeared to understand my role as a CDI, and the hearing sign language interpreter was a person I had worked with in the

past. As a result of taking the time upfront for explanation and creating a safe place to ask communication-related questions, the pace was good for all of the interpreters, the lawyer was patient and the grandmother and the mother had three interpreting tools upon which to rely as they communicated with each other.

During this meeting, the case worker was able to complete her assessment of the deaf mother and approved the reunification. Several follow-up meetings took place and in each instance three interpreters were scheduled. If only all interpreting assignments could be like this one...communication happened and everyone was involved.

Let's move on to a less than successful trilingual experience. I was summoned to an end-of-life meeting for a deaf gentleman and his sister, a South American citizen who spoke no English. The Spanish interpreter knew basic sign language, but did not feel qualified to interpret in ASL. A hearing ASL interpreter was called in, as well as myself. The goal of the meeting, from the point of view of the deaf gentleman, was to ensure that he would be allowed to die at home, and to learn how hospice services would be administered.

In the course of the communication, the term "advocacy" was used. The Spanish interpreter signed the word advocate and spoke it in Spanish. Unknown to myself or the hearing interpreter, the Spanish translation used for "advocacy" inferred a sense of legal intervention. Within minutes, the tone of the meeting changed drastically and the deaf gentleman announced that he needed to leave, and did.

In the days following, the deaf case manager began a campaign to advocate for the deaf individual's wishes, while the hospice worker and the interpreters struggled to figure out "what happened in that meeting?" It was eventually learned that the deaf gentleman believed that his sister wanted him to die in the hospital and that he had no authority over the decision. Eventually, after much energy and explanation, the deaf gentleman understood that his wishes were being respected."

Lillian brings to us the importance of listening and being open in all working scenarios. When working with three or more languages, there is always the possibility of misinterpretations, missing information, and distractions due to many factors. With so many people involved in the first case study, the situation had every potential for confusion and ineffective communication. However, this situation was highly successful and demonstrated trilingual interpreting at its best. By keeping our eyes open to the needs, to lead by example, and

show our clients flexibility and excellent interpersonal skills, we are able to better manage all situations and be listened to.

"Learning That I Can"

Carmen Enid Méndez

For this interview Carmen was asked to share a successful and less successful story about her experiences as a Deaf Trilingual Interpreter. She decided to share some experience about her life story, because she feels you will understand her position better if you know more about her. As she noted: "For me there are no less successful stories, only opportunities for learning."

My name is Carmen Enid Méndez, I am a native Puerto Rican who grew up in the rural mountainous part of our beautiful island. I have a bachelor degree in computer science and a master's degree in drama and arts education. At the age of three months, I became deaf after a series of high fevers and treatment with an ototoxic antibiotic. Since then, my parents searched for various educational options and, even though at the age of four I attended Colegio San Gabriel de Niños Sordos (for deaf children), they immediately changed me to an oral-based system, and that was how I learned for many years. I was part of the mainstream in school and learned to communicate orally, with everyone around me being hearing people. My first language is Spanish, my second is English (as English is taught in schools in Puerto Rico since kindergarten), and my third language is sign language (in Puerto Rico we tend to say "some form of ASL," but this has not been documented). However, it was not until I got to the university that I met other deaf people and realized that there was "Sign Language" and that it was a way of communication for me. I immediately became fascinated with the language and began to learn from other deaf people. I visited a church that had interpreters and soon after became very involved in the religious setting, and sign language was to me like I had always lived with it.

The fact that in my life I had no deaf role models definitely impacted the way I thought about myself. Because of my passion for dance and drama, I grew up in the hearing world looking for opportunities to express myself. I became easily involved in talent shows and became the team leader of a hearing cheerleading and dance team. However, once I discovered the Deaf world I did not feel as secure about myself. I did not know about my talents in deafness and sign

language. Once I became very involved with the Deaf community at church, my talents began to bloom again. It was actually not until the 1990's that I realized that I was a "Deaf person." It was extremely challenging, especially the vocabulary used in a Christian setting. There were so many new concepts. These were the initial opportunities for me to explore what interpretation was all about. I remember asking for the meaning of concepts and words to be able to present songs and other messages to the deaf group. I became a pastor for the Deaf community in 1994 and practiced this leadership until 2007.

From 2003 until 2007, I became involved in the Puerto Rico RID Affiliate Chapter, opening new doors and opportunities for me. In 2004, at the RID Region II Conference in Puerto Rico, with the help of my friend and colleague Myrelis Aponte-Samalot, we were able to interpret for the audience cultural perspectives of the Puerto Rican culture. It was very encouraging for me to see how the challenge of interpreting songs and cultural folklore was so difficult. However, it brought new challenges and the opportunity for the first time for local Puerto Rican Deaf to see the Puerto Rican hymn and other folkloric art interpreted in ASL.

The year 2004 was a significant time for me, since it was full of growing opportunities. It was my first time at a "National Association of the Deaf" (NAD) conference, in Kansas City. That was the first time I saw so many deaf people like me in various leadership roles and I was able to visualize myself in all of them. I remember admiring every presentation and thinking to myself: "If they can do it, I can learn how to do it." I began attending as many conferences and workshops I could think of, from ASL to classifiers, to CDI training, to deaf advocacy workshops. They all played an important role in who I am now as an ASL instructor, as a Deaf Interpreter (DI), and as a Deaf community member. Even though I am not a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) yet, I have attempted the test. Yet some language barriers still exist, but I will not let that keep me from this goal. I will continue to pursue it until I become certified.

I worked as a DI at a local nonprofit independent living agency called "Movimiento para el Alcance de Vida Independiente." There I was able to practice and provide deaf clients with one-on-one needs and services. These were my first experiences as a DI. This was a time understanding what my role as a DI was, and all the linguistic challenges it brought. In Puerto Rico the language, I may say, is extremely varied. We cannot say it is true ASL, and DI's are not often recognized or used. That is really the challenge for Puerto Rican DIs. We are only a few Deaf who have obtained DI training and the work is extremely limited, not because there is no

need, but more so because there is a lack of understanding for our role. DIs in Puerto Rico tend to work using shadowing for the audience in conferences, and in some cases we have been used in court.

Most of my experience has been mediating between hearing people and Deaf from other cultures. While interpreting for Deaf both from the Dominican Republic and Columbia, it seemed easy. Even though the language is not the same, I am able to understand and mediate between the language and the cultural differences. However, the most challenging experiences came with a group from Venezuela. Not knowing Venezuelan Sign Language made my job extremely difficult. I certainly had to stop to learn their vocabulary and adjust to their cultural nuances. Even though that may have seemed a less successful experience, it allowed me to learn flexibility and understand that I had to be a fast learner.

In 2007, I became an ASL instructor for the first and only bachelor degree program in Sign Language Interpretation in Puerto Rico at Universidad del Turabo. Sharing daily teaching experiences with the students also opened new doors. Every involvement and every opportunity for learning has been an eye opener. I am currently the representative of the Deaf community in the "Junta Examinadora de Intérpretes en Puerto Rico" (Examination Board of Sign Language Interpreters of Puerto Rico), this is a new organization to develop a local testing system for interpreters in the island. I am also currently part of the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force, and continue to be active in the field and hope to become a well-balanced interpreter. Most of all, I want to become a role model and an example to other Hispanic/Latino Deaf who wish to become DIs. I am very proud of myself, because I have been open to learn. Now I know I can.

Carmen's story of motivation and desire to improve demonstrates the power of self-determination. It reinforces the notion that we may not know what to do in every situation, but if you recognize your limitations and open your mind to learning something new, you will improve as a person and as a professional. In this way you will provide the best of your talents and abilities to your deaf and hearing clients. Carmen has also taught us that language is not a barrier; it is a key with which you can achieve your dreams.

Summary

From IEP's to court, to VRS, conferences, family matters, and all diverse settings, it is certain that trilingual interpretation is a complex, yet interesting and developing field. The soil is

fertile for growth. Given the diversity of people, regions, and language use, much is still to be done. Research, adequate testing tools, and academic education in this area are crucial elements if we are to better serve the Latino/Hispanic deaf population. So think about the following questions as you read this publication. How can you be part of the growth of trilingual interpretation? What role will you play as a professional in the field? What do you see yourself giving in this area to the Latino/Hispanic Deaf community? How do you foresee the future of the profession? Hopefully, the cases presented in this chapter have added insight and strength to your professional development, and that the real life stories here have encouraged you to continue giving your best to the Latino/Hispanic Deaf community.

Personal Experiences

Brief Life Experiences of Four Trilingual Interpreting Business Women

Trilingual Interpreters enter the field from a variety of paths. Most are heritage speakers with long-established familial roots in Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Spain. The path for some come directly from the Deaf Community as CODAs, while other find their path by acquiring ASL as a third language. What they hold in common, though, is a strong belief in the need for linguistic competency in ASL, Spanish, and English, and knowledge of various cultures that characterize the users of these languages. Here is a brief snapshot of their paths to trilingual interpreting as shared through written responses and interviews.

Lisa Fragoso, VRS Service Provider

My path to trilingual interpreting came through El Paso, Texas, growing up in a family where my mother was Spanish-speaking and did not speak nor read English. I became the family interpreter. In terms of language acquisition, my first language is Spanish, followed by English when I attended school, and then American Sign Language. Growing up on the Mexican border exposed me to various regional dialects from Mexico, an extensive vocabulary allowing for fluency in a variety of registers, and an ability to identify family hierarchy within the culture. It further exposed me to the Latino/Mexican Deaf and their sign language, which maintains a unique syntax structure with non-manual markers not commonly used by Anglo Deaf, and

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gestures used by Latinos that are not sign language but actual manual gestures used among hearing Latinos.

It is not surprising that I am a trilingual interpreter. I seemed to grow up with the three languages all around me: Spanish family members; Spanish, deaf, and English neighbors; Spanish, deaf, and English co-workers. Cultural blending such as this is common in El Paso. My formal interpreting-related education was acquired in like fashion, through attendance at workshops and conferences held in Texas. From this exposure, my "interest" in sign language interpreting became a "desire" to become a professional interpreter.

My first paid interpreting job as a Texas certified interpreter was 23 years ago. I can still recall my first experience at VRS, which was about 10 years ago. The call originated from a deaf person who was calling a family member in Puerto Rico. While the call ended adequately, my lack of understanding of Puerto Rican regionalism and dialect made register selection feel struggled. I was not accustom to Caribbean accent and as such, made it hard to distinguish words. To describe the experience in a few words, it lacked finesse. In hindsight, had I taken workshops or opportunities specific to the Caribbean language that would have at least made me a "little prepared."

Over my 23 years as a trilingual interpreter, I have seen the demand for trilingual interpreters grow. Unfortunately, I have not seen the same sort of increase in the depth and breadth of educational materials focused on growing and developing the skills of the trilingual interpreters. Fortunately, for the our specialization, organizations like Mano a Mano, NCIEC, and Sorenson Communications have begun educational campaigns to enhance the skills of trilingual interpreters.

Emilia Lorenti-Wann

My name is Emilia Lorenti-Wann and I am currently living in Clearwater, Florida. I am President of Sign Language Access Inc. and hold CI, CT, NIC: Adv certifications. Around the age of eight I met a deaf neighbor. I didn't actually know the meaning of "deaf" because we lived in a VERY multicultural neighborhood. Everyone was from somewhere. I kept hearing my parents says "el es Sordo" (he is deaf). I thought: where do "Sordo" people come from? I knew Yugoslavians were from Yugoslavia; I was sure to find out where these "Sordos" came from in time.

At that time there were no TTYs, VP, or two-way pagers. My parents owned the building and mom and dad would always "interpret" for them when they received a phone call. Little did I know that this experience planted the seed to what career I would later choose. A number of years later I was working at the local drug store where a deaf man would come in everyday asking for a pack of KOOL cigarettes and a candy bar. I recognized the voice as "deaf" because my neighbors had the same voice. One day I asked him by writing on a paper: "How do I talk to you?" He came back the next day with a paper that said: "Go learn sign language." I was about to go to enter college and that is exactly what I did. I wanted to be an accountant but decided that I would instead be a teacher of the deaf. At that time, that was the only way to learn sign language. As it was, I was able to take ASL continuing education courses without having to become a teacher. I graduated in 1987 and off to work I went! As a native Spanish speaker my challenge was to master the English language, the majority language, and ASL. My Spanish had no place in this new world. Not until 1997.

That year was a change for all Latin sign language interpreters. There was an international case where deaf Mexicans were smuggled into the USA and were living in horrible conditions. All sign language interpreters who knew Spanish were asked to help. We did not know Mexican Sign Language, but the fact we had some basis of the language helped. Between Spanish/ASL and Certified Deaf Interpreters we all went to work. It was the first time we [Spanish interpreters] were needed. The hardest part of this opportunity was not only the multitude of languages, but most of us were from different Spanish speaking countries and had different cultural experiences. As a result, the situation made it difficult for us to understand some of the signs, no matter the gestures. We had to educate ourselves on not only the language and situation, but the culture as well. After this 1997 experience, more Latino Deaf started to ask for interpreters to do Spanish on the mouth and ASL on our hands, and Spanish parents of deaf individuals were requesting interpreters for meeting with Spanish doctors, therapist, and so-forth.

There were many opportunities in the community for Spanish/ASL interpreters. Knowledge of both cultures when in these settings is crucial. I witnessed a number of cultures colliding, and as the only one in the room who understood, I had to mediate those cultural differences using language. For example, at one assignment I had with a Spanish parent, a young deaf female, and their therapist who knew "enough" Spanish. The mother declares "Yo

SE que tengo una señorita en me casa!" Understanding the way the session was going, I knew Mom wasn't asking if the girl was engaged or if she was a nice girl. She was stating the child had better not been having relations. The therapist had not a clue why the mother would declare such a thing. I did! I signed "you virgin yes or no?" and the session went on as it was meant to be. That was the intent. It is very important not to just know the language, but the nuances of the culture.

Angela Roth

Angela sat down with the editors to share her story. Angela Roth is President/CEO and founder of American Sign Language Services, Inc., American Sign Language Services Latino (Puerto Rico), and Global VRS (formerly Gracias VRS), a National Video Relay Service provider. Both operate under the parent corporation of American Sign Language Services Holdings, LLC. They provide multicultural, multilingual sign language services and interpreter development, with focus on ASL, English, and Spanish. In addition to her business activities, Ms. Roth is currently serving as the Mano a Mano International Committee Chair and the Chair for the RID Diversity Council.

Roth comes from a Puerto Rican family and was raised in what she calls "el barrio," a sector of the Puerto Rican community in New York. She first learned Spanish in "el barrio," but her Spanish influence also comes from Puerto Rico and Kissimmee, Florida. She believes that this background experience provides her with a varied Latino cultural perspective. Some of her early memories include having to memorize how to respond in English to two questions prior to entering kindergarten: 1) what is her name? and 2) where does she live?

English became dominant for her later as she was educated and immersed in English. She was "shipped" to lower east side of Manhattan for schooling in the 4th grade, where she was one of only a few Latina students, among a vast majority of Anglos. She shared the same feelings with RID, as the only Latina representative. It is these experiences that make it important to her to support other Latinos in any way possible.

During our interview she shared an early experience interpreting for a Latina at a doctor's appointment. After the appointment, the doctor had pulled Roth aside and told her that, for the first time, he really understood that patient—including more of who she is as a Latina deaf

woman. Roth helped the doctor and his patient "connect," and that connection occurred because of her Latina background, which allowed her to capture the nuances of the client's ways of being.

In our interview, Roth noted similarities between trilingual interpreters, the Deaf community and interpreters with deaf family members. She commented that she feels that trilingual interpreters understand how some CODAs feel, because of their experiences interpreting for family members, in the same way many Latino interpreters have done for their non-English-speaking parents. She further notes that she is easily identified as Latina, "for better or for worse." At times, she is dismissed because of the color of her skin. She states: "Being easily recognized and subsequently dismissed is a life experience I share with the Deaf community."

For Roth the trilingual core values are: "Familia" (family), surrogate family, and English is a foreign language. She shares some final thoughts: "I think we will continue to grow, to have deaf entrepreneurs, VRS, VRI because of global connection. I think we're gonna rock it! I think Spanish hearing and deaf interpreters will be amazing and critical to the communities, as long as we don't implode. That's where it's going. It's going VRS and VRI."

Myrelis Aponte-Samalot

As we close this chapter full of well-respected colleagues, I, Myrelis Aponte-Samalot, wish to share my own story as an interpreter and entrepreneur. Growing up in my beautiful island of Puerto Rico, being already bilingual (Spanish/English) by the age of nine, learning ASL at the age of 16 from an interpreter and deaf friends at church (community courses were the only training option at that time), and having began interpreting at the age of 19, the experience has been a cultural and linguistic journey. Never thinking that my life would take such a turn from a microbiologist at 21, to a counselor for the deaf at 25 (taking ASL and continued education in interpretation during my graduate school years), being the first RID Certified Interpreter (CI) in Puerto Rico, and developing and running an Interpreter Training Program by the age of 30, once I became exposed to sign language and the Deaf community. I have never been able to depart from this profession. Even later on, as I completed my doctoral degree in psychology, my focus was always how to better serve the Deaf community.

Around 1999, I became involved as a board member of in the newly incorporated Puerto Rico RID Affiliate Chapter. Eager to push the profession to the next level, all of my energy was focused on providing the Puerto Rican Deaf community with excellent interpreting services. One thing I can say with pride is, for those unfamiliar with trilingual interpreting, do understand how passionate we are about communication and our culture. Understanding these values and how they impact "how business is done" in Puerto Rico came as a challenge for U.S.-based companies seeking to do business on the Island. It is about trust, commitment, long negotiations, and, of course, mutual benefits.

Given that Puerto Rico is such a small community, compared to the mainland, we had amazing resources when the VRS industry arrived. Everyone wanted a piece of the "natural" trilingual treasure; that being interpreters who were native Spanish speakers and fluent in English ASL, the best of all three worlds in this small piece of a gem called Puerto Rico. This arrival was so positive for the interpreters on the Island. Now, they were able to work in full-time jobs in what they loved, interpreting.

With all these changes came, raising the bar in the local interpreting abilities, we were all challenged to sign even better, learn language variations from various countries, and develop stronger voicing skills. In the development of the Interpreter Training Program we also had to make changes in the way we trained and provided practice opportunities. From my perspective, every challenge has made us stronger.

The past 20 plus years has taught me both in the personal and professional arena. The only way to move forward is to embrace change, handling my passion with much more grace. Change is a wonderful opportunity for growth.

Summary

Many of these interviewees are recognized as pioneers in this interpreting specialization. They have acquired their trilingual skills learning from each other, the Deaf community, and in some instances through the "school of hard knocks." They share their stories as way of encouraging new trilingual individuals to consider this interpreting specialization as a career, encouraging working trilingual interpreters to be continue to grow professionally, and challenging trilingual interpreting community to mobilize as a group to enhance educational and professional opportunities for all stakeholders. They hope you seize the opportunity.

The Business of Trilingual Interpreting

Myrelis Aponte-Samalot
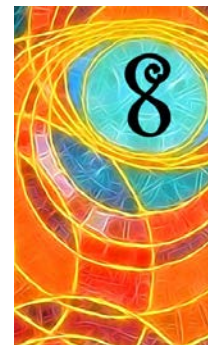
The business world is full of opportunity. Interpreters can work freelance and also develop their own companies, allowing for wonderful opportunities for professional growth. However, such growth does not come without its challenges, which is why in the interpretation field it is important to stay abreast of upcoming opportunities and be aware of possible pitfalls in the journey. The business of providing interpretation services is on the rise, partly due to the wide diversity of settings where sign language interpretation is needed, from community services to complex VRS and VRI long distance calls. Experienced business managers and working interpreters comprise a growing number of entrepreneurs pursuing the business end of trilingual interpreter referral.

Broadly speaking, there are a number of fundamental business tenets or acumen that every entrepreneur should possess. Fischer (2008) insists that entrepreneurs in this field know and prescribe to the legal, tax, and liability insurance requirements of "business." They must have a clear understanding of the "ins and outs" of certification (which is discussed in chapter 10). There must be strong knowledge of the ethics and the parameters regarding confidentiality, as well as knowledge of office management and marketing methods. Topics pertinent to trilingual interpretation business ownership include: recruiting; hiring; assessing trilingual (i.e. ASL/Spanish/English) skills; training and professional development; providing team support (either hearing or CDI); and remuneration considerations, among others.

In a departure from other chapters in this volume, this chapter engages the reader in a discussion not only about good business practices and recommendations from a number of business owners (also chronicled in chapter 7), but several other relevant topics. While geared for interpreter referral entrepreneurs, the information in this discussion may also be useful to those trilingual interpreters who interface with referral agencies. Whether someone is a freelancer or considering establishing their own agency, it is always beneficial to learn about the

logistics of the market and successful experiences in the profession. With these points in mind, Lisa Fragoso, Emilia Lorenti, Angela Roth, and Chris Wakeland share their perspectives regarding best practices and tools for providing effective trilingual services. These experienced interpreters and entrepreneurs come from diverse workplace settings, bringing their experiences from large international corporations, ASL/Spanish VRS settings, and local day-to-day freelance trilingual assignments. Certainly there are a number of other excellent trilingual interpreters and business owners that have yet to be interviewed.

Recruiting & Hiring

Time taken at the front end of recruitment and hiring lays a stable foundation for the future. Recruiting and hiring are among the most important elements of a successful trilingual referral service because the trilingual interpreter is the primary product and public face of this business market. They, by virtue of their abilities, influence the design and execution of an agency's overall vision and business plan. And by virtue of this specialized field, which is small and connected, who is hired and who is fired can have a rippling effect that extends far beyond a single event. Time taken at the front end of a hire will be well spent, as will time taken cultivating the skills, attitudes, and loyalties of new and long-standing interpreters.

Interpreter referral agencies operate within a culture dependent on significant trust between all parties involved. Trust is defined as having "confidence in and reliance on good qualities, especially fairness, truth, honor, or ability" (Encarta Dictionary, North America, 2007). It is important to recognize the importance of developing trust within an agency. According to Marillyn Hewson, President and CEO of Lockheed Martin, "If you don't have a bond of trust with the people who can help you succeed, business comes to a screeching halt." She offers these five guiding principles to aid in building trust within an organization: affirm and reaffirm core agency values; share the agency's vision and strategy; be open, honest and transparent; demonstrate the power of a handshake and offer sincere and genuine thanks (Hewson, 2013). However, the first step to establishing trust occurs at the initial hire, when both parties agree that the right interpreter is being hired for the right agency. To this end, it is imperative that the referral agency has a clear understanding of the various settings in which the prospective interpreter will be working and the skills needed to be successful.

Chris Wakeland shares what he believes is a crucial issue facing VRS; that being the ability to maintain a high quality product.

"It is a constant challenge to find, recruit, hire and train, and then keep training and finding good people. It is having a labor pool that is willing to be trained and then applying the additional training to the work. The issue from my level is not pay and compensation or opportunities for promotion; all that is so dependent on the market, the regulations, the economy, etc. What really matters is finding good people to work as trilingual interpreters and helping the trilingual interpreter understand the nature of the work they have committed to, then providing the support they need to be successful as interpreters. One of the things we have found to be of benefit is being open as the employer to the feedback from the trilingual interpreters and also being in the thick of it with the trilingual interpreters to read what the team needs. Often there is not good support outside of the field; so many times I see the team doesn't know what it doesn't know, so it's important to be on the watch for where the support needs to come from."

Lisa Fragoso notes, too, that a fundamental requirement to work in the VRS field is to be proficient in ASL, spoken Spanish, and spoken English. Whereas proficiency in these languages is key to the video relay position, trilingual interpreting-related hiring challenges exist due to the extreme paucity of trilingual interpreter training programs. Fragoso shares: "One VRS best practice is the use of a uniform hiring process for video interpreters. It is important to take into consideration the Spanish language component required for the position, knowing that most applicants may not have formal interpreter training in all three languages. The video interpreter hiring process should include consideration of knowledge, experience, company requirements, in addition to assessment of their skill set to determine level of proficiency in all languages." Chris Wakeland adds: "These assessments are created by our own Professional Development Department, comprised of a linguist and are not considered a certification testing, but rather indicators that the interpreter has significant skill-set level proficiency in the languages needed to perform in the VRS setting."

The Need for Assessment

One common misjudgment made by referral agencies is the practice of hiring trilingual interpreters solely on the basis that they are "heritage" Spanish speakers. Being a heritage

speaker does not automatically qualify someone as an adequate trilingual interpreter, even if that speaker has RID certification or another interpreting certification, but neither specific to trilingual interpreting. Most sign language certification assessments in the U.S. only evaluate for ASL/English capabilities and rarely, if ever, test for third-language cultural competence and management. Many heritage speakers possess skills in informal/casual language use, but often lack an adequate awareness of register for more formal interpretation assignments. With a diverse Hispanic/Latino population and varying cultural characteristics among Spanish-speaking communities, there is a unique knowledge base that must be demonstrated by the potential interpreter through assessment. Or, as shared by Angela Roth, "Abilities in other scenarios that are not from their primary culture should also be in their wheelhouse."

Given this practice, appropriate assessment protocols should be followed regardless of linguistic background, as part of an overall interview process. Many problems occur when the person responsible for recruiting and hiring potential interpreters is not fluent in multiple registers of Spanish. Chris Wakeland states that "language assessment is tough…each organization has its own set of unique criteria for defining what is important; perhaps they weigh the ability to understand sign language and put it back out to be more important than the ability to understand the two spoken languages." He also shares that there is not a "good all-in-one tool for assessing skills for what we do in this business." For this reason, in many cases, organizations are faced with developing their own assessment tools, or utilize individuals outside of the agency who possess the fluency necessary to fully assess an interpreter applicant's knowledge of the Spanish language.

The contributors offer these additional recommendations:

When Interviewing

- Have applicants submit digital portfolios, which provide examples of their sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign skills.
- Consider the applicant's certification(s), although it must be noted that this is not applicable for all situations. A "certified trilingual interpreter" may allow more certainty regarding the ability of the interpreter, not only to work from Spanish to ASL, but also the ASL/English abilities; remembering that many scenarios will require ASL/Spanish fluency.

- Make use of Spanish assessment services (e.g., Berlitz, etc.). However, note that this does not provide evidence of sign-to-voice abilities, only Spanish skills.
- When hiring, take into consideration not only the linguistic expertise, but also the ability of the applicant to form basic interpersonal relationships, and their ability to be adaptive.

When working with the Hispanic/Latino community, know that there will be some differences in the boundaries and ethical considerations involved.

- Consider an applicant's strength as a team contributor and how they will interact with other interpreters.
- Hiring both trilingual and bilingual interpreters can be beneficial. Bilingual and trilingual interpreters often possess unique skill sets, and when brought together in a team, they produce more successful interpretations.

When Assessing Skill

- To help assess skill sets that go beyond the interviewer's knowledge, turn to other professionals during the selection process. When possible, seek out native Spanish speakers who have had formal academic education in both English and Spanish. Heritage speakers, who acquire their Spanish at home, may not have the adequate language skills to provide quality interpretation in all discourse registers.
- Use practical diverse interpretation scenarios that provide employers with true evidence of an applicant's levels of ability. Use scenarios that are familiar to the candidate and those they are likely to experience while on a trilingual assignment.
- Assess sign-to-voice skills with the target spoken language being Spanish, in live settings with diverse registers.
- When assessing an applicant, and to evaluate the appropriateness of their voicing, utilize the help of a trilingual/bilingual colleague with professional skills in ASL and English.

After the Hire

- Encourage interpreting personnel to always continue one's learning of information about vocabulary, culture, regionalisms and dialects.

- Encourage interpreting personnel to be aware of variations in Spanish including cultural nuances that exist across Spanish-speaking communities.

Training, Education, and Development Needs

The profession of trilingual interpretation is finally gaining public recognition as a unique subfield that requires interpreters with unique skill sets. Yet, there remains a paucity of formal trilingual education, as evidenced throughout this volume. Continuing education is essential for developing stronger interpreters. Without formal post-secondary trilingual interpreting education, the vast majority of learning currently takes place only through professional development opportunities. By default, training often falls to the referral agency to enhance proficiency. Wakeland and Fragoso agree that it is "all about the ability of the employer to provide on a regular basis what is needed to enhance the skill sets." They have found that is common practice for trilingual interpreters to favor one skill over another. However, for Wakeland and Fragoso, as business managers they recognize that there are true differences in what an interpreter proficient in three languages is capable of doing that a professional proficient in just two languages is not.

It is challenging to develop educational materials for a field that is growing rapidly and responding to higher demands. This chapter's contributors suggest that agencies provide training that supports a well-rounded interpreter, and that additional training (post-hiring) may be necessary, particularly Spanish language vocabulary building. They further note that in their companies, training plans are based on trilingual interpreter feedback and that educational workshops are often developed in-house. Roth suggests that it may be good practice to promote ongoing mentorship and some kind of yearly educational stipend to support continued education. She also suggests that there is an increased need for mentors who bring both perspectives from an interpreter's primary and secondary culture.

Recommendations for Training:

- Develop more educational materials specific for ASL/Spanish/English interpreters.
- Take advantage of interactions in the local Hispanic/Latino community as a learning venue.

- Take advantage of interaction with current Hispanic/Latino employees to teach all personnel (including non-interpreters and owner) about the culture, language variation, and other nuanced considerations.

- Continue to support and participate in active Hispanic/Latino groups, such as Mano a Mano, to enhance knowledge and keep abreast of emerging issues in the field.

- Become an advocate and a role model within the local Hispano/Latino community.

- Make a difference in the community and share gained knowledge.

Providing Team Support

It is important for referral businesses to learn how to build successful teams. As with any business, what makes a job effective is the ability of the employees to work towards a common goal, and in the case of interpreter referrals that common goal is quality interpretation. Because trilingual interpretation settings are so diverse in terms of both language and cultural background, working in teams better promotes successful assignments. Witter-Merithew and Johnson (2005) explain that interpreting is not a discipline performed in isolation; there are a number of relationships involved to make an interpretation assignment successful. It is beneficial to establish diverse and strong teams so that different interpreters have the opportunity to work together. The more they work together, the easier it will be to adjust to every situation.

In arranging interpreter teams, Roth suggests that they should not be homogeneous. She points out that the members of a team should complement one another's skills, balancing out where they or their partner(s) may not be as strong. She goes on to say that "in the development of teams it is important to be cognizant of presenters' and/or audiences' perception needs. It is important to make sure you have interpreters with adequate background experience and cultural awareness paired together, but every so often expose them to other backgrounds and cultures different than their own to gain new knowledge and experience." Along these lines, both Roth and Emilia Lorenti agree that referral businesses should be open to forming teams that utilize both hearing and deaf interpreters. Hispanic/Latino CDIs can provide incredible insight to an assignment and are fast at connecting with the clients, a critical component to a successful

interpreting assignment. "By 'mixing up' your teams, you will find, not only that they are more diverse, but they are ready and better able to cope with new challenges."

Additional considerations include cooperation between interpreters and the unique setting of VRS. Because not all interpreters are willing to work gracefully together, one recommendation is to encourage peer mentoring and cooperative learning among the team through the use of team building strategies designed to develop stronger bonds and participation among team members. In the VRS setting, the development of an effective team may be somewhat difficult given the federal regulations on these types of assignments; which generally restrict it to one interpreter per call. However, Lisa Fragoso explains that in VRS "teams are permitted when you are able to establish teaming protocols and procedures that are implemented and utilized by all video interpreters."

Remuneration Considerations and Determining Trilingual Pay

Traditionally, equitable pay is not an easy topic to discuss. In western society compensation is usually driven by "supply and demand." Unfortunately, that system of compensation is also tied to the perceived "need" and the perceived importance of that need. With a 2010 census that places Hispanics/Latinos as the fastest growing minority population in the United States, the need for Spanish proficient interpreters in terms of numbers is clearly defined. However, within the field of interpretation, there is continued debate over the importance of the need for specially trained and more highly compensated Spanish proficient interpreters.

A seasoned trilingual interpreter appreciates the myriad of cultural and linguistic challenges occurring simultaneously during an interpreting event that go far beyond the number of languages being used at any given time. Angela Roth notes that "there is not 'just trilingual.' It should not always be a mix with English, no need to have an 'English-dominant' mentality. There are: bilingual: ASL/English situations, bilingual: ASL/Spanish situations, and trilingual: ASL/Spanish/English situations." She adds that ASL/Spanish situations are too often overlooked in a company's policies, and suggests that "bilinguals (ASL/Spanish) need to be additionally compensated, noting that too often in VRS work they are paid less although their work is more difficult. Roth goes on to explain that "many of these interpreters do speak English, but are non-dominant English users and have difficulty passing the RID NIC due to the English demands of

the test. Yet their ASL/Spanish skills need to be recognized, just as currently ASL/English skills are recognized;" which often is compounded by questions from individuals outside the trilingual specialization regarding how many languages are really being used at the same time during an assignment.

Fischer (2008) suggests considering both an interpreter's certification and "years of experience" when determining trilingual pay. Roth, Lisa Fragoso, Emilia Lorenti, and Chris Wakeland all agree that compensation in this field is most often based on language skills, interpreting skill, degree of education, range of experience, years of experience, and the type of assignment. Wakeland explains that compensation "will be dependent on regulation, market, and the economy." Fragoso further points out that "compensation may also be determined by such components as educational background in formal interpreting programs, non-certified vs. certified and level of certification, years of experience in education and community interpreting."

According to Angela Roth, for her company, several important skill sets are considered in determining which are applied to her interpreters' hourly rate and how much those skills are worth. Several questions arise in determining the value of the interpreter's time during an assignment: How many registers will be needed to navigate the discourse? How many linguistic nuances and dialects will be projected by the parties? How does one determine and promote compensation commensurate with additional skill sets?

Any conversation about trilingual remuneration should also include a discussion regarding the industry standard for trilingual pay, more specifically: what is accepted as the industry standard? The website Simplyhired.com uses salary data from "millions of job listings" to provide salary comparisons, allowing jobseekers to obtain information that guides career decisions and salary negotiations. The job title "Trilingual Interpreter" is listed on their site, and a search of their database states: "Average Trilingual Interpreter Salaries: Currently there is no salary data for 'Trilingual Interpreter'." Additional internet searches for trilingual salary data reveal virtually no further information. At the local level, no salary information has been readily obtained due to the nature of small business and their practices. Moreover, based on publically available materials, there appears to be little or no evidence-based information regarding best practices as they relate to trilingual compensation.

Contrarily, pay scales for bilingual interpreters and descriptions of how rates are applied in their work are readily available. This existing information does hold relevance for referral

agencies as they establish fee schedules and for freelance trilingual interpreters as they negotiate their rates. On average, bilingual pay differentials range between 5 and 20 percent per hour over the position's base rate, according to Salary.com. The National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy notes that pay differentials take many forms. For example, some states provide pay increases to employees who hold a bilingual job title, while other states base the pay differential on the extent to which an employee uses his or her bilingual skills in everyday work. In some states, unions negotiate with government agencies to secure pay differentials for bilingual employees. In others, the state government provides a single monthly stipend to employees meeting certain language qualifications (Migration Policy Institute, 2013). It has chronicled this information in its "Bilingual Pay Differential Sheet."

According to California's Department of Personnel Administration website, government employees in California who hold bilingual positions earn an extra $0.58 per hour. Similarly, the California Department of Rehabilitation offers a $100 a month bilingual differential. In Washington County, Oregon, employees in "bilingual positions" who spend 15–20 percent of their time in "regular and frequent use" of their bilingual skills earn an extra $30 per pay period. At the federal level, government employees also receive bilingual pay under a provision of the 2005 Defense Authorization Act. According to the National Association for Bilingual Education, that law approves up to $1,000 in monthly proficiency pay for bilingual active-duty military personnel, and civilian personnel may earn special pay up to 5 percent of their base salary (AOL Job Finder, 2009).

Referral agencies are fortunate in that the U.S. has established access laws, such as ADA, and often integrate them as part of their negotiation strategy with a customer.   Roth suggests that the strongest advocate for equitable pay for trilingual interpreters comes from the Deaf community, especially when community members demand access to ASL, Spanish, and English as they need it. Beyond "in-the-moment" advocacy for interpreting services, though, there must be well-designed, ongoing, proactive stakeholder education for all parties involved in a trilingual interpreting event. For the greatest impact, such education should be coordinated and shared by referral agencies, advocacy agencies, professional associations like the NAD and Mano a Mano, and trilingual interpreters.

Enhancing Cultural Competence

If one works in the field of trilingual interpretation, one recognizes the importance of cultural competence in effective interpreting. This tenet should also apply to interpreter referral agencies. Without knowledge and the willingness to embrace other cultures, a referral agency will not achieve its full potential as an entrepreneurship. Below is a list of linguistic and cultural considerations when hiring and operating in the trilingual field.

- Recognize the importance of connection to the Hispanic/Latino community. To understand the nuances of culture one must experience the culture.

- Recognize the importance of social interaction prior to and following an interpreting assignment. A pre-connection plays an important part in the interaction that will follow.

- Respect the importance of aesthetics in the Hispanic/Latino community. Remember that Latinos hold high value in how things "look." How one dresses for an assignment holds cultural value, and will be used to determine the full scope of success.

- Understand the core values of providing services to Latino families; which includes "la familia" and surrogate family members, and that English is more foreign than Spanish.

- In this culture, the focus tends not to be on what is most important for oneself, but what is most important for the family. Family unity is of high importance.

- Each Latino/a has a unique background and story, which they often embrace and are proud of. As a referral agent, allow your interpreters to share and teach each other about their culture. This practice generates a higher sense of unity among colleagues, and increases the knowledge of all trilingual and bilingual interpreters in the business setting.

Summary

The only way to move forward is by embracing change and, particularly if you are Latino/a, handling one's passion with grace. Change is a wonderful opportunity for growth. So for those seeking new ventures, here are some final recommendations provided by the author. First, visualize your goal. Make sure you set short and long term plans to achieve those goals.

Implement daily actions, review your progress, and, most importantly, find a mentor. In business, owners and managers tend not to share their trade "secrets," but follow the example of those who are already successful and use their practices as a guide. Last, but not least, take time to teach others and take time to listen and to share ideas. Always be flexible and let every interpretation assignment teach you about language, culture, and personal and business interactions. Make your journey through the business world a life lesson.

The field of trilingual interpretation is still in its infancy in terms of growth and development. There is strong a need for more trilinguals to become referral agents and interpreters, and provide a broader representation in the community. Encourage and support one another, because there is only way in which the profession is moving, and that is forward. Are you ready to embrace it?
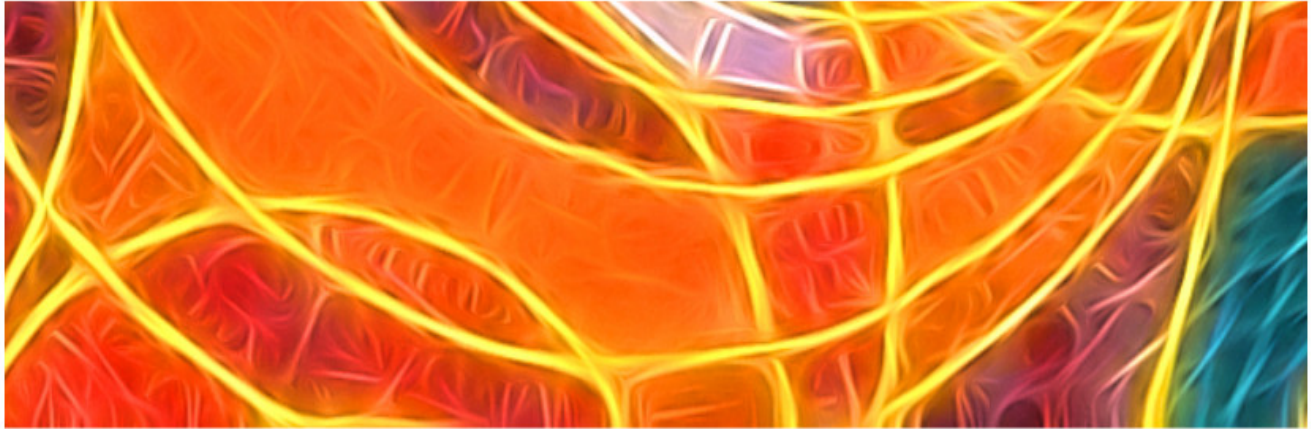
Part 4
Qualifications

Education and Training for Trilingual Interpreters

Beverly Hollrah

> *"Education is a rope that can carry us to greatness. It is
> one of the most important things in life."*
> *- Unknown Author*

The Need for Education

Education comes in many different formats and forms, but everyone needs it in order to succeed professionally and personally. The greater the education obtained by sign language interpreters, as it relates to language, culture, facts, and history, the more accurate the interpretation and ultimately greater the impact on its stakeholders. As professional interpreters continue to build their knowledge and skill, they simultaneously become more empowered to effect change for themselves and for those with whom they work. Doors once closed due to access barriers are opened wide for stakeholders to participate and make their voices heard. Their ideas, opinions, and findings impact business, politics, policy, religion, and the world around them.

The need for trilingual interpreters is becoming more visible and more critical than ever before as Spanish-speaking populations continue to grow in the United States and the demand for services increases. Yet, as crucial as their work is, educational opportunities for trilingual interpreters remain in great shortage. According to the RID Standard Practice Paper (RID, to be published), "trilingual interpreters must have a broader base of knowledge than their bilingual counterparts." Yet, the document goes on to disclose that, "With the exception of a few interpreter preparation programs that offer trilingual interpretation courses or a program of study that includes Spanish, there are few educational opportunities available specifically to trilingual

interpreting. Most practicing trilingual interpreters have acquired their skills through general exposure and study, thus both language proficiencies and cultural competence vary widely among trilingual interpreters."

Interpreters are essential in every conceivable setting, including legal, medical, mental health, corporate, educational, and VRS/VRI. It is a commonly accepted premise in the interpreting field that to be effective in a specialty area one must possess additional knowledge and extra training. Regarded as "high stakes" settings, these types of jobs often expose interpreters to greater liability and legal concerns. The intensive knowledge and skill required of the trilingual interpreter when interpreting in specialized areas clearly illuminates the need for additional education specific to managing such a scope of work.

It is widely accepted that flexibility and sensitivity are a must for the trilingual interpreter dealing with three languages and cultures simultaneously. "Interpreting [in this setting] cannot be business as usual. It is important to recognize that an interpretation that works for one situation will not necessarily work for all. It is incumbent upon us to assess the setting, understand what kind of communication is appropriate, and have it at our disposal" (Feyne, 2013).

Interpreting within the VRS/VRI setting is particularly challenging for trilingual interpreters and requires that they have a broad skill base. "The complexity of trilingual interpretation in the video relay setting is compounded by the appearance of other signed languages due to differences in the region of origin of the deaf VRS caller" (Roth, 2009). Roth argues that it is possible to see "Mexican Sign Language (LSM), Cuban signs, Dominican signs, Puerto Rican signs, Colombian signs, etc., each with ASL variances, range and register" (p.48). This obstacle is relevant to trilingual interpreting in the community setting as well; however it happens in VRS to a greater extent and at a much faster pace due to the rapidity at which VRS calls occur.

> *"Specialization and sub specialization result from efforts of professionals to remain competent in a constantly moving field. Even as new knowledge is being applied, people are working to make it obsolete. There is a need for some professionals to catch up, others to keep up, and some to get ahead. In an effort to meet professional and societal expectations, practitioners continue to study."*
>
> *Lowenthal 1981*

Research conducted by the Interpreting Via Video Work Team of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (2008) found that trilingual interpreters working in VRS settings often encounter a variety of Spanish dialects as well as differing levels of linguistic fluency. They emphasize the challenge of interpreting for deaf callers who have recently moved to the United States and are neither fluent in ASL nor their national sign language. In addition, Quinto-Pozos et al. (2010) found that a great deal of code-mixing and code-switching occurs between English and Spanish as well as between English and ASL" (Alley, 2013). Roth's conclusion is that the key is training and encourages the development of workshops, curricula, and educational materials (Roth, 2009).

From 2000–2005, the National Multicultural Interpreter Project (NMIP) recognized the need for specific education for trilingual interpreters because of the change in the demographics of the United States.

> "[The NMIP] established the goal of educating interpreters to work in a multicultural society. NMIP explored multicultural issues in interpreting from 1996 to 2000 with the mission of improving 'the quantity and quality of interpreting services provided to individuals who are D/deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind from culturally diverse communities by providing educational opportunities, recruiting culturally diverse interpreters, and enhancing cultural sensitivity within the profession' (NMIP curriculum overview, p.11). The group worked to establish interpreting curricula that demonstrates the inclusion of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds" (NCIEC, 2012).

Yet, once the curricula was completed and disseminated, slow progress was made towards incorporating it into the general interpreter education programs.

Results of Needs Assessments conducted from 2005–2010 by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers identified a need for education and training for trilingual interpreters. As reported on the TIEM's National Center website, some of the earliest findings of the NCIEC Needs Assessments highlighted the need for increased educational opportunities for interpreters working in languages other than, and/or in addition to ASL and English in the U.S. The NCIEC Practitioners Needs Assessment (2007) concluded that the "need for Spanish-speaking interpreters and interpreter education that is available and accessible in third languages, especially Spanish, is critical. Most respondents work with consumers from different cultural

backgrounds (approximately 85%), and believe there is a need for third language fluency to best serve these consumers (68%)" (TIEM Center, p.28).

At the 2011 RID Conference held in Atlanta Georgia, the membership officially recognized the importance of achieving excellence through education when it passed Motion 96.43, which stated: "Excellence in the delivery of interpreting and transliterating services is contingent upon the pursuit of lifelong learning." At this conference, Mano a Mano and RID executed its first "Memorandum of Understanding" (www.rid.org/userfiles/File/pdfs/News/Mano%20MOU.pdf). The Memorandum of Understanding demonstrates and solidifies the relationship between these two organizations, emphasizing their mutual goal of ensuring quality interpretation service" (Alley, 2013, pg. 9).

As can be seen from the last 13 years of history, increasing recognition is being given to the work of trilingual interpreters and their need for specific training and education. Organizations are working together to ensure trilingual interpreters are better prepared to serve deaf and hearing consumers.

The Availability and Scope of Education and Trainings to Date

Sign language interpretation has a relatively short educational history. The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf was established in 1964, while the first interpreter training program in the United States "opened its doors" in 1969. Of the approximate150 interpreter education programs in existence today, none have a comprehensive degree program in ASL/Spanish/English. One program in Texas offers a post-graduate certificate, and has done so for a number of years. In fact, until very recently there have been few training opportunities at any level available to trilingual interpreters.

Throughout their professional lives, trilingual interpreters participate and benefit from general interpreter education classes and workshops. However, specialization-specific skills and competencies have rarely been part of these programs. A review of all documented trilingual education and training programs provided through RID, Mano a Mano, the Texas Society of Interpreters for the Deaf (TSID), the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) revealed that less than 700 hours of instruction specific to ASL/Spanish/English interpreting topics were

offered between 2000 and 2013. Although some educational opportunities may have been overlooked or may not have been identified, it remains clear that limited education opportunities in trilingual interpreting have been openly provided.

During 2000–2013, only a few entities provided training that lasted more than six hours or offered the same activity more than once to build on previous knowledge. Rather, the vast majority of "education" was conducted in short workshops by a handful of entities, and most often occurring as part of larger conferences. Table 9.1 below, lists those entities that offered these more abbreviated trainings, along with the total number of workshops provided between 2000 and 2013.

Table 9.1: Training Entities

Entity	# of Hours Provided	Entity	# of Hours Provided
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) & its affiliates	102.5	Mano a Mano	85.25
Texas Society of Interpreters for the Deaf (TSID)	134	National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC)	39.5

The few entities that provided trilingual trainings of greater than six hours included El Camino College in Texas, the National Center on Deafness (NCOD), and the Interpreters Retreat in Florida. In 2012, CIT offered its first workshop (1.5 hours), while ADARA offered its first 1.5 hour workshop in 2013, and RID offered its first five-hour training at its 2013 conference in Indianapolis, which was not sponsored by Mano a Mano or reflected in a Mano a Mano conference track. These trainings perhaps signal a new recognition for the need by these entities.

Those familiar with the field of trilingual education may note the near absence of DARS-DHHS in the discussion thus far. DARS has been a pioneer in the promotion of educational opportunities for trilingual interpreters, and as a leader in the movement to professionalize this specialization. In 2003, DARS and the University of Arizona, National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy (UA NCITRP) began creation of a trilingual interpreter certification test "to ensure that people working in Texas as certified American Sign Language (ASL), Spanish, and English interpreters meet the minimum proficiency standards" (DARS, 2011).

In 2006, DARS began a partnership with the South West Collegiate Institute for the Deaf (SWCID) in Big Spring, Texas, to provide the Texas Interpreter Education Series. The annual one-week training event, conducted from 2006–2011, included specialty training for ASL interpreters, Hispanic trilingual interpreters, and deaf interpreters to upgrade their skills. Trilingual interpreters serious about improving their skills set their sights on attending this series because the program was of high-quality and it was the only intensive training available. Although many attendees resided in Texas, it was not feasible for every aspiring trilingual interpreter to take a week off of work or away from their families, or to travel to Texas. The series also limited enrollment to only 40 interpreters, or less, per year. Once recognized as a "gold standard" for preparing trilingual interpreters for the unique challenges they face, this program is no longer offered due to budget constraints. Currently, DARS is providing a level of trilingual education using online platforms.

When looking at the evolution of trilingual specialization, it can be noted that mobilization around trilingual education is occurring in positive ways: the need for training activities that are at least six hours in length is recognized, and depth and breadth of its content continues to improve. However, until 2009, an average of less than 40 hours of training per year have been available, with some of those years having no training offered at all. In 2000, TSID provided three hours of training specific to trilingual interpreters during their conference. This was small yet major, because it was the first training event to be recorded, which helped to further interest in trilingual interpreting. In 2001, TSID hosted another training event for trilingual interpreters, as did RID for a total of 10.25 hours of training. There were no training events in 2002, but the few training events happening between 2003 and 2005 netted approximately 26 hours of training (11 hours in 2003; 7 hours in 2004; 8 hours in 2005). From 2006–2010, aside from the training in Big Spring, TX, the number of training hours increased to 141, (16 hours in 2006; 19.5 hours in 2007; 18.5 hours in 2008; 80.5 hours in 2009; 6.5 hours in 2010). In 2011, Mano a Mano offered a trilingual track at the RID National Conference, contributing to the overall 69.75 hours of the training that happened during that year. However, without continuing support in 2012, the number dropped to 24.5 hours of training, but rose again to 109.75 in 2013 (prior to publication). The graph below shows the hours of training activities during the years 2000–2013.

Activities, 2000-2013
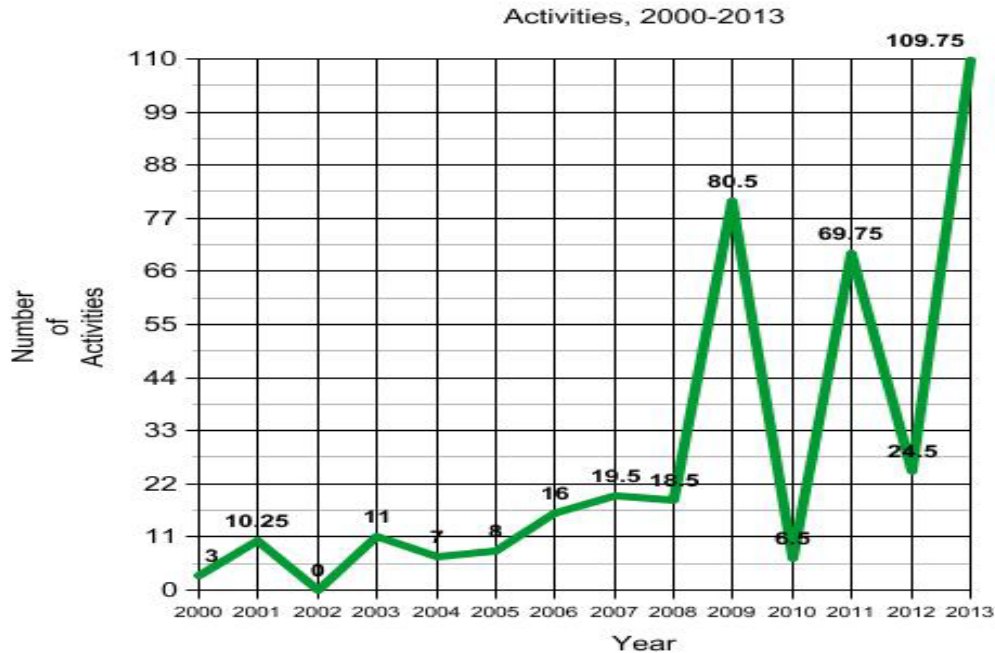
One new program worthy of note was the 20-hour NCIEC Trilingual Task Force Spanish and ASL Immersion programs in Puerto Rico. Sponsored by NCIEC, PRRID, Sorenson Communications, Servicios Orientados al Sordo (SOS), Sign Language Interpreters (SLI), and Hands Performance Crew, Inc., sixty individuals from across the United States and the U.S. territories participated in the total immersion experience. The depth of interest people had in this educational experience was shown in their swift response to the program. It very quickly filled beyond capacity and ended with participants wanting more.

What Has Been Offered in the Way of Topics

Through the years, excellent educational events on trilingual interpreting have taken place. Presentations and workshops presented cover a wide range of topics in categories such as culture, certification, language, skill building in interpreting, leadership, special issues, and general. The following chart shows specific presentations delivered between 2000 and 2013.

Table 9.2

Skill Building in Interpreting	
▪ Am I Supposed to Be Mouthing Spanish, English or What?	▪ Estoy Having Problems – Improving Your Spanish Proficiency
▪ Trilingual Interpreting ¿Que? What Does That Mean?	▪ Intralingual Skills Development for Trilingual Interpreters
▪ Tres Clientes, Tres Idiomas: Interactive Trilingual Interpreting Practice	▪ Sight Translation (English and Spanish)
▪ The New Trilingual Interpreting: Math-English-ASL	▪ Spanish-English Translation: Principles and Practice
▪ Are You a Minimal Language Skilled Trilingual Interpreter? ¿Enfrenta Ud. Obstáculos Como Intérprete Trilingüe Debido a Sus Deficiencias en la Mediación de Idiomas?	▪ Trilingual Interpreting: One Little, Two Little, Three Little Languages, Whoa!
	▪ Intralingual/Interlingual Skill Development for Interpreters
▪ Prevención y Corrección del Error Léxico en la Interpretación Directa	▪ Sign-to-Voice Interpreting: Intralingual Skill Building!
▪ Consecutive Interpreting Practice for Trilingual Interpreters	▪ Three Clients, Three Languages: Let's Practice Trilingual, Interactive Interpreting
▪ My Spanish Is Excellent but I Don't Sound Like a Native	▪ Intensive Sign-to-Voice and Voice-to-Sign Trilingual Interpreting
▪ Sight Translation from Printed Texts for Trilingual Interpreters	▪ How Do I Interpret '3rd Grade' for My Chilean Hearing Client? – The Terminology: The Fourth Language!
▪ Spanish Tenses and the Trilingual Interpreter	
▪ ¿Ah? ¿Qué dijo el Doctor? Huh? What did the Doctor Say? Medical Beyond Sign-to-Voice: Matching Register in ASL to Spanish Interpreting	▪ Interpreting for the Latino Community: Current Practices and Recommendations
	▪ I'm a Trilingual Interpreter, WHAT DO I DO NOW?
▪ The Role of a Community Interpreter in a Trilingual-TriCultural Setting	

Culture	
▪ Becoming More Interculturally Competent	▪ Interpreting in Latino/Hispanic Communities: Cultural Considerations (Interpretando en Comunidades Latinas/Hispanas: Aspectos Culturales)
▪ Hispanic/Latino Cultural Competency vs. Spanish Language Competency	
▪ Trilingual Interpreting: Increasing Service Provision Outcomes When Working with Trilingual Families	▪ Cultural and Professional Misunderstandings about Hispanics and Non-Hispanics
▪ Interpreting for Deaf Latinos – Cultural Dilemmas	▪ Dealing With Hispanic Cultural Nuances While Interpreting and How to Apply it to Minimum-lingual, Semi-lingual, and Non-lingual Hispanic Deaf
▪ Interpreters-Mediators in a Spanish/English World	▪ Terminology and Structure of the Educational Systems of Spanish-Speaking Countries

Language	
▪ Spanish 101 and the Trilingual Interpreter	▪ Mexican Sign Language (LSM)
▪ Translation Studies for Sign Language Interpreters PART 1 and PART 2	▪ Interpret-3: Trilingual Interpreting, "It's More Than Just the Language"
▪ Ah! Get It Now – Idioms and Proverbs	▪ Trilingual Interpreter Training Vocabulary Building
▪ Fundamentals of Translation for Sign Language Interpreters: Spanish to English	▪ ASL and Spanish Immersion Programs

Certification	
▪ The EIPA & Trilingual Interpreters: Why It Matters	▪ Texas Trilingual Certification Program
▪ Trilingual Certification Program	▪ Texas Trilingual Initiative Update
▪ Texas Trilingual Certification Testing Components	

Leadership	
▪ The State of Trilingual Interpreting: Understanding the Work, Mobilization and Leadership	▪ Community Leadership Training
	▪ Becoming an Effective Leader/Trainer

Education and Training

Special Issues	
▪ Trilingual Interpreting with a Deaf Interpreter	▪ My Trilingual Brain: Understanding How the Brain Works
▪ Examining the Challenges of Trilingual (Spanish-English-ASL) VRS Interpreting	▪ Sign Language Etymology
▪ History of the Spanish Language: Phonological Changes and the Debate on Neutral Spanish	▪ Professional Discussion - Trilingual Interpreters – "Crossing Into the New Frontera"
▪ Resources for the Trilingual Interpreter	▪ Trilingual Roundtable – Mobilizing the Field

As noted, most of the educational topics were offered as short workshops. None resulted in certificates of completion, although some did provide RID continuing education credit. In addition, these presentation topics reflect a thirteen-year period. Moreover, since the pool of trilingual interpreters is relatively small, many of the same presenters were used regularly to lead the activities. If more education and training were available, more interpreters would become skilled and able to lead activities. Compared to the hundreds of hours of educational activities available to bilingual interpreters each year, trilingual interpreters have received far less. Yet, the work of trilingual interpreters is considerably more complex and demanding than the work of bilingual interpreters. The lack of educational opportunities accessible to trilingual interpreters puts them at a disadvantage in gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to do their work.

> *"A continuing education programme should relate to the provision of professional services, exert a broad and long range effect on the field and improve the individual's professional competence. It should build on basic knowledge obtained in preparation for career entry. Continuing education should be "'...not merely a set of infrequent remedial sessions designed to enhance a skill" (Campbell 1983, p. 255).'"*
>
> McCormick and Marshall
> 1994

Other Related Training Opportunities

Seeking enhanced leadership within the trilingual interpreting community, the National Task Force on Trilingual Interpreting (ASL/Spanish/English) hosted a leadership event in August 2011. The event: "The State of Trilingual Interpreting: Understanding the Work: Mobilization and Leadership," led by GALEO, the Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials, was provided during the RID Conference in Atlanta, GA. The event was designed to inspire the participating trilingual interpreters to become leaders and, hopefully, educators. In 2013, two of the participants carried forward lessons learned from this training and led the five-hour leadership training for their peers at the 2013 RID Conference.

To further advance leadership and training skills of qualified but novice trainers, the Task Force created mentorship opportunities to learn the craft of "presenting." The mentorships are

between trilingual interpreters that are proficient in providing educational training or presentations and those that are less experienced or lacking in confidence. This investment in mentoring, especially when the mentors are well-selected, well-trained, and given the time to work with mentees, increases the potential of trilingual interpreters becoming educators themselves. Growing the number of skilled trilingual educators is a necessary element towards ensuring that educational opportunities are more widely available for new and experienced trilingual interpreters.

Although there is currently not a specialized trilingual interpreting certification exam through RID, many trilingual interpreters hold RID certification as bilingual interpreters. All certified members of RID must continue their education in order to maintain certification and membership in RID. Similar to this, interpreters who hold trilingual certification through the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) must also continue their education in order to maintain certification. To maintain certification in RID, interpreters must earn a minimum of 8.0 CEUs (80 contact hours) during each four-year certification maintenance cycle. To maintain BEI certification, trilingual interpreters are expected to complete 10 CEUs: 5.0 CEUs related to interpretation, 2.0 CEUs in ethical related topics, and 3.0 CEUs in trilingual interpretation studies (DARS, 2013).

Recommendations and Impact

Interpreters, whether bilingual or trilingual, must become lifelong learners dedicated to updating their professional knowledge, skills, ethics, and practice. Interpreters most commonly develop skills through formal coursework, mentorships, sponsorships and training sessions that are six hours in length or longer. However, there is wide-spread consensus among trilingual interpreters that past and current educational opportunities are insufficient to develop skills to the extent necessary.

Although students with potential to become trilingual interpreters do matriculate through traditional bilingual programs, incorporating multicultural strategies promulgated by the National Multicultural Program (2000) into interpreter education programs will strengthen student outcomes, leading to increased numbers and skill levels of novice trilingual graduates entering the workforce. The NCIEC Trilingual Task Force believes that interpreter education programs seeking to infuse coursework specific to trilingual interpreting in their programs should do so

with the understanding that: 1) coursework be developed and taught by experts in the field of trilingual interpreting and culture; and 2) that explicit competencies and skills to be learned correspond with those indicated in the research, and be clearly stated and outlined.

It has long been understood among interpreter educators that educational activities must be of significant scope and sequence, meaning that they must be provided for a minimum of six hours in length and the subject must be delivered sequentially over a span of time, in order for change to occur. For training to be effective, it must reach a learning threshold that allows for the internalization of knowledge, behavior and skill change. "Hit-and-run" trainings of short duration and that meet once or twice are generally unsuccessful in allowing interpreters to absorb information and practice skills in any meaningful way. Yet, to this point, workshops and training events for trilingual interpreters most frequently fall within this format— one hour, one day, one time. Rarely have educational events been offered for a sufficient period of time or depth needed for trilingual interpreters to feel confident in their work, whether it be theory or skills.

> *"May there never rise in me the notion that I know enough, but give me the strength and leisure and zeal to enlarge my knowledge."*
>
> Maimonides 1135–1204; daily prayer of a physician before visiting a sick man

It appears that the underlying causes for this lack of education are two-fold: 1) lack of funding; and 2) lack of experienced educators. Funding must be allocated to allow for organizers to plan and host more intensive trainings for more participants, and to allow for appropriate space and necessary resources to hold the events. Providing full trilingual degree programs to students who have not yet mastered the skill of bilingual interpreting may not be a prudent training strategy. Instead, introducing trilingual training at the in-service level may have greater appeal and impact. For working interpreters to engage in training of scope and sequence is both costly and time-challenging.

To mitigate cost, registration fees should be offset with additional funding. To this end, post-secondary institutions have an obligation to fund and offer post-graduation trilingual certificate programs, such as San Antonio College in Texas, and/or other training opportunities of scope and sequence. While programs of this nature often begin as grant-funded projects, they are

created with the understanding that the programs will become institutionally internalized and sustained.

Another significant impediment to creating educational opportunities for trilingual interpreters is the dearth of educators qualified to teach the specialization skills. There are many outstanding interpreter educators, but few who are specialists in trilingual interpreting. Conversely, there are many highly competent trilingual interpreters who may have not had the opportunity to learn how to be effective teachers. This dilemma is reflective of the "chicken or the egg" conundrum: In order to have qualified trilingual interpreter educators, you need to have educated trilingual interpreters, and in order to have educated trilingual interpreters, you need to have qualified trilingual interpreter educators. Active identification and support of potential and current trilingual educators is also an essential ingredient to increasing effective educational opportunities for trilingual interpreters. With the competencies and skills in place, critical attention will be given to the "growing" of trilingual educators.

An obstacle to effective training has been, in part, a lack of an agreed-upon slate of competencies and skills necessary for qualified trilingual interpreters. With the vetting and publication of an agreed-upon slate, a more standardized curriculum can be developed, taught, and evaluated for effectiveness. Action is needed to develop curricula specific to trilingual interpreters and to recruit and train more teachers. The NCIEC Trilingual Task Force has made the development, implementation, and promotion of such a curriculum a priority for 2014–2015.

Lastly, in keeping with best and effective practices, NCIEC promulgates the development of programs that incorporate industry standard evaluation methodology in all aspects of development and implementation. Evaluation should include both formative and summative strategies and focus on educational outcomes and the direct impact of the education on changed practice. The overall value of the learning program should be reviewed to see whether or not the program accomplishes what it has been designed to do. Information gathered can also be used to improve the quality and content of the program or specific learning activity. Evaluations are important for successful replication and useful in justifying program funding or to support the need for increased levels of funding.

Trilingual interpreters deserve the best education possible. The development of education programs and activities based on the most effective practice of trilingual interpreters is a matter of urgency. The need for trilingual interpreters is increasing with time rather than

decreasing. More long-term programs focused on specialized trilingual interpreting topics need to be established and funded, and more educators skilled in teaching trilingual interpreting need to be cultivated. The long-term impact of ensuring these things are in place will have a ripple effect allowing deaf consumers to have service from highly trained and qualified trilingual interpreters. In turn, deaf consumers using trilingual interpreters will function and contribute at a higher level than we currently see happening. Investing in educational opportunities is a reliable strategy for growth and is the key to people becoming truly independent and fully functioning citizens.

Since 2000, educational opportunities for trilingual interpreters have been more or less on the rise. This increase is in keeping with the demand for more highly skilled and competent trilingual interpreters within the United States. Yet, the educational activities provided are still minimal in comparison to those provided to bilingual interpreters, and are still inadequate to meet the needs of trilingual interpreters nationwide. Increased attention must be given to funding organizers and resources necessary for training events that are of significant scope and sequence, and to providing leadership training, mentorship, or other educational activities essential to developing skilled trilingual interpreting educators. It would be fitting for Interpreter Education Programs to incorporate curriculum specifically developed for trilingual interpreters and include tracks dedicated to trilingual interpreting specialization-specific skills and competencies. Response to these needs is crucial in order for deaf and hearing consumers to have equal access to participate and make their voices heard.

Constructing a Valid and Reliable Trilingual Interpreting Testing Instrument

Roseann Dueñas González
Paul Gatto
John Bichsel

In the United States, the provision of equal access to education and medical, legal, and social services for language minorities is often addressed at the federal and state levels by certification programs that ensure the availability of qualified interpreters. Among these language minority groups with a critical need for skilled interpreters are Hispanics who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and their families. Although there is a well-established need to provide proficient trilingual interpreters who can bridge three differing cultures and languages—ASL, English, and Spanish—only recently has a trilingual interpreter certification process been successfully completed. To satisfy the demand for qualified trilingual interpreters, the University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy (UA NCITRP), and its partner, the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services—Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DARS-DHHS), began developing, piloting, and validating trilingual interpreting certification examinations in 2003, thanks to a grant from the National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitative Research, of the U.S. Department of Education[14]. These examinations will first be used to certify trilingual interpreters in the state of Texas and will then be made available to other state and federal agencies for wider use.

Throughout the creation of the trilingual interpreter certification program the test developers adhered to strict standards of the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education

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[14] Grant #H133G04115

(AERA, 1999). The process included three important components: (a) Reviewing existing empirical research, (b) conducting new research and analysis of the work done by trilingual interpreters, and (c) adapting UA NCITRP's widely accepted interpreter testing model to ensure validity and reliability.

The Extent of the Problem

Locally and nationally, the Hispanic population has grown dramatically in recent years, which has had a profound impact on all aspects of American life. Much of this impact can be directly attributed directly to the unique bilingual attributes of U.S. Hispanics. The failure to address language barriers in legal, medical, and educational settings has resulted in inequality, unfairness, and a lack of opportunity for many Hispanics. For Hispanics who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing the language barriers and their detrimental consequences are even greater.

Within the large population of limited or non-English proficient Hispanics is a large and growing population of Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals for whom the primary language spoken by their families is Spanish, and who often require language services in ASL, Spanish, and English to participate fully in society. As Quinto-Pozos, Casanova de Canales, and Treviño point out (this volume), roughly 12% of deaf children in the United States are from Spanish-speaking families. Moreover, that number is increasing as a percentage of the overall Deaf and Hard of Hearing school age population (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2006).

The trilingual language barrier impacts the lives of a remarkable number of Americans, and these facts only begin to scratch the surface of the problem. While there are no official figures regarding the ethnicity of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans, particularly at the state and local levels, the size of this community can be estimated using 2006 Pew Hispanic Center data on the size of the Hispanic population (44,298,975) and 1994 data on the prevalence of hearing disabilities among Hispanics (4.2%) (Holt, Hotto, & Cole, 1994). Based on these sources, there are an estimated 1.9 million Deaf and Hard of Hearing Hispanic Americans, about one half of whom come from families in which Spanish is the primary language. This large population systematically confronts a trilingual language barrier, a problem that is compounded by the need to navigate cultural differences that are indivisible from three different languages.

Currently, the pressing need for trilingual interpretation is frequently unmet, or is marginally addressed by costly, time-consuming, and ineffective alternatives. Often, individual

interpreters, who have not had their Spanish proficiency or trilingual interpreting skills evaluated, are compelled to engage in trilingual interpretation. These interpreters may not be adequately providing access to social and educational services, as is required by state and federal laws. This situation has created far too many instances where the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and their families are excluded from proceedings that directly and materially affect their lives. Early on, Texas DARS-DHHS formed the Hispanic Trilingual Task Force to begin seeking a solution, and in 2003 the DARS-DHHS and UA NCITRP received a grant from the Department of Education to create the first trilingual certification program.

The Challenge of Developing an Interpreter Certification Examination

The central task in developing any valid and reliable criterion-referenced test of interpreter proficiency is to empirically establish the knowledge, skills, abilities, and tasks (KSATs) that are minimally required for a proficient interpreter to responsibly discharge her responsibilities and provide meaningful access to opportunities and services for her clients. Once these KSATs have been identified, the challenge is to ensure that the test reflects them in appropriate measure, and thus can be used to assess whether or not a candidate possesses the minimum required level of proficiency. Additionally, the test must make this determination reliably and consistently. The result is a valid and reliable assessment instrument. The importance of these goals of test development cannot be overstated:

> Validity is the most important consideration in test evaluation. The concept refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences from the test scores. Test validation is the process of accumulating evidence to support such inferences. (AERA, 1999, p. 9)

Producing a valid and reliable instrument requires test developers to balance three different criteria:

1. Authenticity—the test should, as closely as possible, concretely reflect the actual practice of proficient interpreters, which should be determined empirically.

2. Representativeness—the test should reflect a representative sample of the KSATs required of a proficient interpreter.

3. Testing Requirements—the test should be structured in such a way as to meet all standards of testing practice, such as practicality, fairness to candidates, and consistent administration and scoring.

Balancing these criteria is extraordinarily difficult, not least of all because these criteria are often in competition. For example, in conversation, people frequently ask elliptical questions (e.g., "So, you wanna?") and offer one or two-word answers ("Sure."). The criterion of authenticity suggests that the test stimuli should reflect this kind of speech, as it is authentic speech that an interpreter will encounter. However, testing short, simple dialogue such as this is not practical because it does not contribute substantively to the assessment of a candidate's ability and is not representative of the KSATs required of a proficient interpreter. As a result, such questions and responses must be made more substantial and capable of eliciting valuable assessment information (e.g., "Sure" might become "I'd love to! I don't think I have anything scheduled then, but I'll need to double check my calendar. I'll let you know this afternoon. Will you be home around 4?").

Dialogues often heavily favor one language over the others; that is, one person does most of the talking. Again, while this is authentic, an interpreter certification test must assess a candidate's ability in all relevant languages, requiring that all languages are represented in suitable proportions.

Spoken/signed language is different from written language in many respects. Spoken/signed test stimuli must, therefore, be scripted to reflect the qualities of spoken/signed language to be authentic. In other words, authenticity demands that, to the extent possible, the scripts (and especially the video testing stimuli) present speakers/signers who look and sound natural rather than scripted.

The challenge to balance authenticity with representativeness while adhering to testing requirements demands that test developers make decisions that are essential to a practical, cost efficient, and valid and reliable instrument to assess interpreting proficiency.

From the beginning, test developers must document the construct and content validity of a performance test through a set of test specifications describing in detail the structure of the test and the type of test tasks that are involved (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Douglas, 2000). In addition, issues of authenticity and representativeness of the testing tasks reflected in the content,

settings, language, and interpreting modes must be submitted to expert judgments from various groups and their feedback and analyses should be solicited to convincingly document and substantiate the validity of the examination (Brown & Hudson, 2002).

Initiation of Trilingual Interpreter Certification

The trilingual certification project was initiated by David Myers, director of the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services— Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DARS-DHHS). Myers and his staff provided leadership, financial, philosophical, and technical support from inception through completion. In addition, the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) provided their expertise in the critical elements of ASL and research in parameters of the work performed by proficient interpreters for the Deaf and trilingual interpreters in the state of Texas.

The University of Arizona, with guidance from DARS-DHHS, also convened a panel of subject matter experts (the "Expert Panel") who contributed their extensive knowledge and experience to the project, from the initial design of the project through the final review of the resulting examinations. Throughout the development process, the Expert Panel served as an essential source of data. The Expert Panel included:

- Steven Boone, Ph.D., University of Arkansas; director of research, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- Yolanda Chavíra, coordinator, Texas Hispanic Trilingual Interpreter Task Force, DARS-DHHS; trilingual interpreter.
- Linda Haughton, Ph.D., federal court certified interpreter– Spanish; staff interpreter, U.S. District Court (Texas districts), 1983–2004.
- Davíd Quinto-Pozos, Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin; assistant professor, Department of Linguistics; former chair, Texas Hispanic Trilingual Interpreter Taskforce; trilingual interpreter.
- Douglas Watson, Ph.D., University of Arkansas; project director, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

Additionally, a group of community members and stakeholders, Deaf and hearing, were convened to review aspects of the examinations and supplementary materials to help ensure that they met the real world needs of the community the examinations are intended to serve. The

Participatory Action Research Group (PARG) members were recruited by DARS-DHHS and represented the leaders in the practice of trilingual interpreting in throughout Texas, including experienced trilingual interpreters, Deaf recipients of such services, and other stakeholders. The PARG included the following members: Edwin Cancel, Gerry Charles, Liza Enriquez, Gina González, Rogelio Hernandez, Linda Lugo Hill, Martha Macías, Mary Mooney, Julie Razuri, Eddie Reveles, Angela Roth, and Raquel Taylor.

As an essential step in validation, UA NCITRP held a Rater Training Conference for the trilingual interpreter performance pilot exams following their administration. The pilot rating team consisted of: Edwin Cancel, Yolanda Chavíra, Gina Gonzalez, and Davíd Quinto-Pozos. Additionally, they were aided by Juan Radillo and Donna Whitman, both of whom are Spanish/English federally certified court interpreters. The recorded ASL test stimuli were reviewed for fidelity to ASL usage by Lauri Metcalf, Department chair of American Sign Language and Interpreter Training at San Antonio College and former chair of the Texas BEI, and Douglas Watson, a member of the Expert Panel who is also Deaf.

Finally, several incumbent licensed interpreters in the state of Texas (as well as nationally) provided UA NCITRP with invaluable empirical data about the nature of the trilingual interpretation they encounter in their work. Many incumbents also participated in the piloting of the exams and gave insightful feedback about the exams, providing evidence for the exams' validity and enabling the development team to revise and improve the final instruments.

All of these individuals devoted their time and talent throughout the development process to this worthy project, helping ensure that the resulting exams faithfully and reliably assess candidates' level of trilingual interpreting proficiency. What follows is a more detailed account of that development process and the resulting exams.

National Center for Interpretation Testing Model

In developing the trilingual interpreter proficiency tests, the University of Arizona employed a test development model originally established by Roseann Dueñas González, director of the UA NCITRP. Roseann Dueñas González conducted the primary research, designed, and led the team who developed the *Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination* (FCICE), which has set the standard for reliable and valid oral interpreter testing for the past 28 years and is the only interpreter test developed by a federal government agency to

survive legal challenge (*Seltzer v. Foley*, 1980). The FCICE interpreter test model has been emulated by every state oral interpreting test that has been developed since 1980. It has also been employed by the state of Texas to redevelop its licensing exams for interpreters for the Deaf, which began in 2000. The hallmarks of this model are: (a) A rigorous, empirical foundation for test development; (b) a two-part testing design; and (c) an objective performance examination scoring system. Each of these aspects of the FCICE test development model is designed to maximize the authenticity, representativeness, and adherence to testing requirements of the exams that employ it.

Rigorous, Empirical Test Foundations

The aim of the test development process is to produce tests that authentically simulate the language and interpreting requirements of the settings at a complexity level that is commensurate with the need of the agency and the population to be served. Accomplishing this goal must begin with a sound investigation into the nature of the work actually encountered in the field and the determination of the KSATs required to responsibly discharge the duties of a proficient interpreter. All subsequent test development is then anchored to the findings of this investigation.

Rarely will a single source of data provide all the information required for test development. Moreover, using a multi-pronged approach to data collection allows for greater corroboration of data from disparate sources, as well as supplementation and expansion to ensure a robust, three-dimensional-view of the work being investigated. Toward this end, the FCICE model typically relies on at least four sources of empirical data: (a) review and analysis of extant research; (b) performance of a job analysis through the survey and interview of incumbents and other stakeholders, as well as through other data gathering techniques; (c) input from subject matter experts (the "Expert Panel") and other stakeholders; and (d) review and analysis of pilot administrations of the instruments, including feedback from pilot participants.

These sources of data are used to establish the essential parameters of the exams, including the settings in which interpreted encounters most often occur; the interpreting modes most often employed; the degree of register variation; the depth and breadth of general and specialized vocabulary required; the level of language proficiency required; grammatical and linguistic elements that are particularly challenging; and sources of potential cognitive stress (e.g., the length, complexity, and speed of discourse). Once established, these parameters (and

others) are incorporated into the exams in proportion to their frequency and importance in the authentic discourse encountered by incumbent interpreters. They inform all aspects of the proficiency exams, including their format, structure, content, timing, and scoring.

Two-Part Testing Design

In developing the original FCICE, González examined various possible predictors of interpreting proficiency, including such factors as level of education, interpreting experience, language proficiency, and other demographic variables. Her research found that the only reliable predictor of interpreting proficiency was Spanish and English language proficiency. Though empirically based, this also stands to reason: a proficient interpreter must possess a minimum level of proficiency in each of the languages she interprets in order to be able to comprehend the source message, process its meaning, and render an equivalent message in the target language fast enough to allow for effective communication.

Language proficiency is a necessary condition for proficient interpretation, but it is not sufficient in itself. For this reason, the FCICE model employs a two-part testing cycle, consisting of a written test of language proficiency for the respective languages, followed by an interpreting performance exam. This not only allows for a more comprehensive assessment of essential KSATs, but also ensures a cost effective assessment of required KSATs by screening out candidates who do not yet possess the requisite language proficiency from the more costly and labor intensive performance test.

It may be argued that, given the spoken/signed nature of interpreting, a written language proficiency test might penalize candidates whose written language skills are not as strong. However, it must be noted that the minimum level of language proficiency required of proficient interpreters is very high, and that literacy is, prima facie, a necessary component. Moreover, comprehension of written texts is essential to the actual tasks performed by interpreters (for example, sight translation), making it important to assess.

However, in the case of interpreters for the Deaf, and interpreters who work with other languages that are not typically written, this approach needs to be amended. Straightforwardly, a standard written test of ASL proficiency would not yield valid and reliable results. While notation systems for ASL exist, they are not typically used in the Deaf community, but are used for specific purposes. Unlike English (and Spanish), ASL is not, in its everyday use, a written

language. Alternative testing formats, such as video tests of ASL proficiency, would require great care to avoid imposing extraneous variables such as memory into the assessment, which would undermine its validity. For example, in a written English proficiency exam, a reading passage and subsequent questions are available to the candidate for reference throughout the exam. If a video ASL proficiency exam presented a passage and questions and then asked the candidate to respond, the candidate would have to both comprehend the passage and questions (which would be indicative of language proficiency) *and also* remember the content sufficiently to allow the selection of an appropriate answer. Alternately, if the candidate were able to view the ASL stimulus as often as she wished, obviating the requirements of memory, the ability to put time limits on the exam to help assess the candidate's ability to process ASL proficiently would be undermined. These problems are not insurmountable, but demonstrate the challenges of interpreter test development.

The University of Arizona had a similar experience in developing Navajo interpreter certification examinations for the federal courts and the states of New Mexico and Arizona. Written Navajo was developed relatively recently by academics interested in cataloging and studying the language. As such, most proficient Navajo speakers do not read Navajo and their Navajo proficiency cannot be validly and reliably tested with a written exam. Therefore, Navajo interpreter certification candidates are only required to pass a written test of English proficiency before taking the Navajo interpreter performance exam. In this case (as with ASL) it is essential that the performance exam contain a sufficiently broad and robust sample of Navajo (or ASL) to validly assess a candidate's ability to comprehend and produce the language in question.

Part 1: Written Test of Spanish Proficiency

The first examination developed as part of the trilingual interpreter proficiency battery was a written Test of Spanish Proficiency. In the recent redevelopment of its bilingual ASL/English interpreter certification, the Texas BEI has included a written exam of English proficiency as well. Because ASL/English interpreter certification is a prerequisite for trilingual candidates in Texas, no additional test of English proficiency was developed for this project (see "Meeting the Specific Challenges of Trilingual Interpreter Test Development" later in this paper).

The subject matter of the written Test of Spanish Proficiency was chosen in part based on the settings in which trilingual encounters most commonly occur. The test content was selected by Spanish-language educators and Spanish interpreters who considered readability, lexical density, and language complexity to ensure that the tests and items represented the 10–11th grade level. This level of complexity was based on the two factors of authenticity and testing requirements: (a) The level of language proficiency indicated by incumbents to be required by proficient interpreters (as determined by the job analysis conducted for the Texas BEI ASL/English interpreter certification); and (b) the testing consideration that, because the written test is only the first stage of the certification process, it should not falsely exclude good candidates by being too difficult. In addition, care was taken to ensure that Spanish regional variations that may be unfamiliar to candidates were not included in the exam.

The test of Spanish proficiency is 80 questions long, and 90 minutes are allowed for its completion. Here again, these specifications were determined empirically through the pilot process. The test consists of the following five subsections designed to assess candidates' Spanish proficiency at the lexical, syntactical, and discourse levels of languages:

1. *Reading Comprehension*, which tests the examinee's ability to read keenly and to analyze a written passage for explicit material, topics, assumptions, reasoning, rhetoric, and the interrelationship of words and ideas to whole passages.

2. *Synonyms*, which test direct knowledge of Spanish vocabulary and general as well as fine distinctions of the candidate's vocabulary.

3. *Usage/Idioms*, which test the candidate's understanding of the idiomatic expressions and syntactic and grammatical properties of the Spanish language.

4. *Sentence Completion*, which tests recognition of words or phrases that best complete the meaning of a partial sentence, with reference to both logic and style.

5. *Listening Comprehension*, which tests the aural ability of the candidate to comprehend spoken Spanish, attend to specific detail, derive main ideas, make inferences, and understand vocabulary in context.

In many respects, these subsections are fairly standard and familiar to many people who have ever taken any language exams (such as the SAT). However, several special considerations were taken into account in developing this exam, based on the potential pool of candidates. In the United States, many potential trilingual interpreters are heritage speakers of Spanish. While

"heritage speaker" is a complex, heterogeneous category, it is often the case that heritage speakers grow up in Spanish speaking families and Spanish is their first language, but their formal education is carried out almost exclusively in English. One result of this is that, for many U.S. heritage Spanish speakers, the development of their Spanish heavily favors spoken Spanish as opposed to written. Moreover, their Spanish proficiency tends to reflect a greater familiarity with common usage as opposed to standard grammar and vocabulary (which is typically learned in school). These characteristics are by no means true of all heritage speakers, nor are all potential trilingual interpreters heritage speakers of Spanish. Nevertheless, in the interest of fairness to candidates and obtaining an accurate portrait of their language proficiency, two subsections of the exam were weighted to reflect these characteristics. First, the usage/idiom subsection focuses more on assessing idiomatic knowledge and knowledge of actual language usage, rather than on standard grammar (note, however, that grammar is tested in context in the sentence completion subsection). The content of the usage/idiom subsection is no less complex or systematic than standard grammar, but better reflects not only the way in which heritage speakers are likely to have acquired Spanish, but also the Spanish they are likely to encounter as interpreters. Similarly, the listening comprehension subsection is weighted more than the reading comprehension subsection to reflect the natural way that Spanish is acquired by the population of candidates.

The Test of Spanish Proficiency was pilot tested with 37 Texas incumbent interpreters. In addition, UA NCITRP and DARS-DHHS took advantage of the fact that the 2005 RID National Convention was held in Texas, and piloted the exam with an additional 14 interpreters from around the country. Interestingly, an analysis of the pilot candidate scores showed no significant difference in the performance of the Texas and the national samples, suggesting that the test may be readily adapted for use in other areas of the country. In addition, the analysis indicated that the final written examination accurately assesses the disparate language elements that contribute to the Spanish language proficiency of this population, including intersection correlations showing that all five subsections measure different, but related facets of language proficiency.

In addition to analyzing the performance of the pilot candidates on the examination, UA NCITRP and DARS-DHHS solicited their feedback regarding various aspects of the exam itself, which is paramount to both enable a more focused post-pilot revision of a test and to provide an additional measure of an examination's validity and appropriateness for its intended purpose

(Downing & Haladyna, 1997). In addition to providing detailed comments, the pilot candidates were asked a series of questions using a Likert scale of 1–5, where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree." Some of their responses related to the above discussion are reported in Table 1.

In all, these comments reflect the validity that ensues from a careful test development process and attest to the appropriateness of the instrument for the assessment of trilingual interpreter Spanish proficiency.

Part 2: Trilingual Performance Examination—Empirical Data and Its Relation to Testing

As noted, UA NCITRP gathered empirical data from a variety of sources in order to make sound determinations about the KSATs required of proficient trilingual interpreters. The first sources of data analyzed were the extensive job analysis carried out on behalf of the Texas BEI on the nature of the work conducted by BEI-certified interpreters in the state of Texas and the input provided by the BEI on critical elements of ASL during the development of the bilingual ASL/English interpreter proficiency exams (González, 2003). Additional data was available from the DARSDHHS Texas Hispanic Trilingual Task Force, which was formed in 1994 to investigate Texas' need for trilingual interpreter services (two members of the Expert Panel, Davíd Quinto-Pozos and Yolanda Chavíra, were involved in the Task Force). The Task Force surveyed Texas incumbent interpreters in 2000 (prior to the UA NCITRP's participation) to learn more about the extent and nature of trilingual encounters. In 2005, a follow-up survey was performed, which included an addendum from UA NCITRP to gather more specific data. Both of these surveys provided important empirical data for purposes of test development. For example, in the original survey (with a sample of 247 interpreters), respondents indicated that roughly 45% of incumbent Texas interpreters encountered situations calling for trilingual interpretation. Table 2 shows the reported frequency of trilingual encounters.

Table 1. *Pilot Candidate Feedback on Test of Spanish Proficiency (TSP)*

Question	Response (Likert Scale)
"The emphasis on idioms over grammatical knowledge is appropriate."	89.1% Agree or Agree Strongly
"The emphasis on Listening Comprehension over Reading Comprehension is appropriate."	91.8% Agree or Agree Strongly
"The variety of subsections is appropriate to assess the Spanish proficiency of candidates."	94.4% Agree or Agree Strongly
"The topics of the Reading and Listening sections reflected the sorts of language an interpreter would encounter in a trilingual situation."	86.6% Agree or Agree Strongly
"The level of difficulty of the TSP is appropriate and reflects the level of language required of a proficient interpreter during a trilingual encounter."	81.3% Agree or Agree Strongly
"Overall, the content of the TSP is comprehensive and should elicit results that are valuable in assessing trilingual interpreters."	86.6% Agree or Agree Strongly

Sample Comments

- "This test was very difficult for me, but I feel that had it been any easier it would not truly reflect the skills of an interpreter."

- "This pilot test really reflects the everyday language that takes place anywhere."

- "We need this kind of testing for a trilingual interpreter."
- "In this side of the state [El Paso], [idioms] are used every day."
- "This exam uses much cultural awareness and definitely gives real world examples."

These data clearly indicate that trilingual encounters are a regular occurrence for many Texas interpreters. In addition, the original survey asked incumbents to "Rank the following interpreting skills in terms of how important they are for being a successful interpreter where you work."

Table 2. *Frequency of Trilingual Encounters*

Frequency	% of Interpreters*
Daily	7
1-4 Per Week	13
1-4 Per Month	15
1-6 Per Year	55

* Please note that the percentages in this table do not equal 100 due to incomplete survey responses.

The responses indicated that throughout Texas, when Spanish or Mexican Sign Language (LSM) is involved, the most important interpreting modes are: (a) Spanish to ASL, (b) English to Spanish, (c) Spanish to English, and (d) ASL to Spanish (See Table 3). The findings of the 2005 survey addendum reflected a similar distribution.

These data contributed to the decision to exclude LSM from the performance examination. While they are no doubt important, trilingual encounters that include LSM are less frequent. Most importantly, the inclusion of a fourth language in testing would greatly increase the complexity of the test, reduce the number of potential candidates, add a great deal to the scoring burden, and likely undermine the validity and reliability of the test. Representativeness by itself would dictate the inclusion of LSM, as well as the inclusion of mime, home signs, and so on. The result would be extremely idiosyncratic testing stimuli that would not assess all candidates on a fair and equal basis. This, then, is another example of the criteria of authenticity and testing requirements competing with representativeness.

The 2005 addendum to the survey was distributed to a much smaller group of trilingual interpreters in Texas (a total of 9 responses), as well as a group in Florida (4 responses) for comparison. The addendum was used to help establish the settings in which trilingual encounters most frequently occur, as well as to gather more information about the exact nature of the

encounters. The settings in which encounters occurred are presented in Table 4 (specific and detailed descriptions of encounters in these settings were also solicited through the survey).

Here again we see competing test development criteria. While authenticity would call for an emphasis on community interpreting scenarios, it is important to balance frequency with the relative importance of the settings. Some settings have significantly higher stakes than others, including those where interpreting errors greatly impact the lives and well-being of the people involved.

Table 3. *Most Important Modes When Spanish of LSM Is Involved (Weighted Rankings)*

Interpreting Mode	Ranking
1. Spanish to ASL	160
2. English to Spanish	153
3. Spanish to English	147
4. ASL to Spanish	147
5. English to LSM	141
6. LSM to English	129
7. Spanish to LSM	118
8. LSM to Spanish	105

Table 4. *Ranked Settings of Trilingual Encounters*

Texas (n=9)	Miami (n=4)
1. General/ Community	1. General/Community
2. Medical	2. Medical
3. Educational	3. Educational
4. Social	4. Legal
5. Religious	5. Religious
6. Legal	6. Social

For example, misinterpretations in a community setting may have minor consequences, but misinterpretations in medical, educational or legal settings can have dire, material, and long-lasting consequences. For this reason, higher stakes settings were given more weight in

determining the scenarios for the exams. This decision (as with all such decisions) was made in consultation with the Expert Panel and the PARG.

The addendum also asked about the nature of the trilingual encounters, and two areas are of particular interest. First, respondents reported what percentage of their interpreting encounters involved the following different combinations of ASL, Spanish, and English:

1. 1. ASL and English -- Two people, each using one of these languages

2. 2. ASL and Spanish -- Two people, each using one of these languages

3. 3. ASL, English, and Spanish -- Two people using a combination of these three languages (e.g., codeswitching, signing ASL with Spanish on the mouth, etc.)

4.   ASL, English, and Spanish -- Three people, each using one of these languages

As Table 5 indicates, the three combinations involving Spanish occurred in roughly equal measure (the Florida interpreters had similar results).

These data helped inform which language combinations should be included in the performance examinations, and suggested that all three of the combinations that include Spanish should be roughly equally represented. However, further inquiry with the Expert Panel and the PARG determined that testing the "ASL, English, and Spanish—Two people" combination in which codeswitching occurred largely duplicated the assessment of the ASL/English combination (on which all candidates would already be certified). This section was thus excised from the exam in an early draft in preference for more extensive testing of the other combinations.

The addendum also indicated that many trilingual interpreters regularly engage in sight translation (reading a written document and interpreting it into the target language). The BEI job analysis also found this to be true for ASL/English interpreters (González, 2003). This was the area with the starkest contrast between the Texas and the Florida interpreters. In Texas, 55% of interpreters reported sight translations occurring in about 10-20% of their interpreted encounters, whereas 100% of the Florida interpreters sight translated documents "very frequently."

Here again, this empirical data informed the structure of the exams, which include sight translations from Spanish to English, and from English to Spanish. These sections are weighted less than other sections, to properly reflect their relative frequency.

As mentioned above, these empirical data were reviewed, corroborated, and expanded upon by the Expert Panel and the PARG throughout the development process to ensure that the

resulting test specifications reflected both the actual practice of trilingual interpreters and the needs of the community.

Table 5. *Frequency of Different Interpreted Encounters*

Language Combinations	Frequency
Two people/ASL & English	62%
Two people/ASL & Spanish	14%
Two people/ASL, English, & Spanish	10%
Three people/ASL, English & Spanish	11%

Trilingual Interpreter Performance Tests

Two different trilingual interpreter performance exams were developed, Advanced and Master, to reflect two levels of proficiency. In general, the approach used in their development was identical. They differ in terms of complexity, and their respective complexity was delineated in three specific ways: (a) The complexity of the language used in terms of vocabulary and sentence length and structure; (b) the complexity of the topics/settings included (and the resultant level of complex terminology); and (c) the speed of speaker/signer, which was controlled to keep it consistent throughout the exams. While the differences in complexity that result from the manipulation of these variables should not be underestimated, we will nonetheless present the remainder of our discussion of the challenges of developing these performance exams in a general way, discussing the similar issues that affected both of these examinations.

Some of these challenges were described earlier in our presentation of the empirical research that supported the development of the tests. For example, at the beginning the settings of the scenarios and the interpreting modes to be included were both open questions, to be answered empirically. Based on survey data, Expert Panel and PARG input, and other considerations, each of the exams consists of five sections:

   A. Three-Person Interactive Interpreting: One ASL user, one Spanish speaker, and one English speaker.

   B. Spanish to ASL Interpreting.

   C. ASL to Spanish Interpreting.

   D1. English to Spanish Sight Translation.

   D2. Spanish to English Sight Translation.

The content of all sections of both exams consists of scenarios that reflect the topics, register, style, and level of complexity typically encountered in the settings identified in the survey and determined by the Expert Panel, with emphasis on education, healthcare, and social service scenarios. For example, the documents included in the sight translations are based on authentic documents of a kind that trilingual interpreters encounter in the field, such as a job application, which a trilingual interpreter in the United States would likely come across in English rather than in Spanish.

Steps to Ensure Validity and Reliability

The challenge to create a test that has high content and construct validity requires test developers to consider the essential linguistic and cultural complexity of interpreted encounters. For example, interpreted encounters frequently include specialized vocabulary, such as educational, medical, and legal terminology. In addition, a proficient interpreter must be able to navigate a variety of linguistic registers ranging from consultative and formal to colloquial and idiomatic speech (González, Vásquez, &Mikkelson, 1991). Similarly, there is tremendous cultural complexity embedded within the languages that an interpreter deals with. For example, when interpreting into Spanish, an interpreter must make culturally laden judgments in choosing an appropriate form of the second person pronoun, "you" (Quinto-Pozos, Casanova de Canales, and Treviño, this volume). Terms of endearment also present an additional culturally specific linguistic feature; for example, the Spanish word "gordo" (literally "fat") is often used as a term of endearment, equivalent to "dear" in English. The difficulty inherent in this process of developing an interpreter proficiency test is multiplied substantially by the addition of a third language, as well as the inclusion of a language, such as ASL, that is not commonly used in a written form.

As noted previously, a set of test specifications are essential to document an examination's validity. The test specifications for the Trilingual Interpreter Certification Examination contain precise information about the number and sequence of tasks on the test. The length of each task, including any time limits that have been established, instructions for each test task, the topic and setting of each test task, the interpreting mode for each task, the scoring method, including the number of points for each task and overall, expected responses, and administration procedures. According to Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing

(AERA, 1999), high-stakes examination developers should publish test information and sample tests to help candidates prepare for the exam and familiarize themselves with its structure and content; therefore, many of the test specifications are available in a candidate manual, along with an abbreviated sample test.

Another validation step meticulously followed by UA NCITRP and DARS-DHHS was to work with subject matter experts and stakeholders from the outset of the project. Each group contributed their particular expertise to the project, and their contributions have been enormous and indispensible to its success.

Objective Scoring System

The most important innovation in the FCICE model is the development of an objective scoring methodology that greatly eliminates rater bias and subjective and unreliable results (e.g., passing persons who should not pass, and failing persons who should pass). Formerly, interpreter evaluation was based solely on holistic multitrait scoring, which was overly complex with a high potential for subjective assessment and rater bias. The application of analytical scoring rubrics did little to ensure consistency of scoring across candidates and raters.

The FCICE objective scoring system introduced evaluation based on expert-judged, open-response scoring stimuli chosen specifically to reflect critical lexical, syntactical, and discourse elements of language derived from the testing parameters identified empirically through the job analysis, expert panel, and other sources—these include specialized terminology, register variation, rhetorical features, general vocabulary, grammatical structures, appropriate sociocultural discourse, the use of classifiers and non-manual markers, accuracy of fingerspelling, the use of sign space and grammatical space, and others. The FCICE objective scoring system requires that the testing parameters determined during the initial phase of development be scrupulously "loaded" into the testing stimuli during development, so that the scoring units and the text work together to create interpreting stimuli that are representative of the actual level of complexity found in the field.

Objective scoring units that reflect these parameters are identified throughout the examination by underlining and superscripted numbers and used as the basis for candidate evaluation. The objective assessment of a candidate's level of interpreting proficiency is determined by how many of these scoring units the candidate renders appropriately. For

example, the following sentence has three objective scoring units that the candidate must render accurately:

> I don't think I have anything scheduled[1] then, but I'll need to double check[2] my calendar.[3]

The candidate's rendition of these scoring units is judged acceptable or unacceptable by the raters, according to the scoring criteria. The result is that every candidate is scored based on the same parameters, significantly improving the consistency of the scoring. At the same time, this system ensures that each candidate is rated across the full range of testingparameters in proportion to their relative importance, so that no parameters receive undue weight in the overall assessment of a candidate. The function of this system is to assess an interpreter's ability to transform the full meaning from the source language and accurately convey *the equivalent meaning* in the target language, without omission, distortion, or addition. Consider this example from the Texas DARS-DHHS BEI Study Guide for Interpreter Certification Candidates (2006):

> [I]f the candidate sees the ASL gloss SKILL-TALENT-PROFICIENCY, it is important that the appropriate English word be chosen in the interpretation, so that the full meaning is conveyed. When interpreting for the Ms. Deaf Texas pageant, for instance, and the contestant signs, "For my talent this evening, I'll be performing a ballet," it is important that the interpretation conveys the English word "talent" rather than "proficiency" or "skill." (p. 45)

Use of the English words "proficiency" or "skill" would distort the meaning of the source message. Similarly, if a source message consisting of a doctor saying, "Be sure you give him ibuprofen to control his fever," were interpreted as, "Be sure you give him ibuprofen or aspirin to control his fever," meaningful information that was added to the source message would be inappropriately communicated, producing a non-equivalent target language rendition.

It is important to note here that the practice of expansion (e.g., noun listing) in ASL to communicate, for example, some English collective or mass nouns is not an error of addition. Rather, it is one of the methods used in that language to communicate some nouns of that sort (often combined with fingerspelling of the English word), and so can be an appropriate way to produce equivalent meaning in ASL.

The objective scoring process is strengthened by the creation of a list of acceptable and unacceptable items determined beforehand and expanded after each test administration. Experienced interpreter raters agree upon these items during the rater training sessions. This component of the rating process makes rating more efficient and ensures the consistent scoring of testing units by all rating teams.

Finally, the FCICE objective assessment model employs consensus scoring by a team of expert raters rather than composite scoring. In composite scoring, the scores of the different raters are averaged to produce the candidate's final score. Consensus scoring, on the other hand, requires that differences in raters' scores be analyzed until the rating teamcan come to a consensus on any disputed items. This method is far more sensitive to regional variations in language, changing usage, and other aspects of language, and takes into account the raters' disparate knowledge and expertise. The result is increased validity and improved fairness to the candidates.

Meeting the Specific Challenges of Trilingual Interpreter Test Development

As with any interpreter proficiency exam, applying the FCICE test development model to trilingual interpreter certification carried with it specific requirements and challenges unique to this particular combination of languages, and these will be discussed in this section.

First, however, it is important to briefly review the overall structure of the trilingual interpreter certification process.

1. *ASL/English Certification Prerequisite.* Early in the test development stage it was decided, in consultation with the Expert Panel, that the tests must assess whatever is uniquely relevant to trilingual interpretation and not to also test candidates' proficiency as ASL/English interpreters. While there is no doubt that proficient ASL/English interpreting is required in many trilingual encounters, full assessment of this skill in addition to all others required in trilingual settings would result in an extremely long test, and would thus interject extraneous variables such as candidate endurance and fatigue into the testing process, undermining the validity of the exam. Moreover, in Texas and nationally, valid exams already exist to assess ASL/English interpreter proficiency. It was thus decided that certification as an ASL/English interpreter would be a prerequisite for candidates for trilingual certification.

2. *Written Test of Spanish Proficiency Prerequisite.* Upon meeting the ASL/English Certification prerequisite, candidates are required to take and pass the written Test of Spanish Proficiency to become eligible for the trilingual interpreter performance examination. Two performance examinations were developed, Advanced level and Master level, to help ensure that trilingual interpreters have the requisite level of proficiency to work in even the most complex settings.

Numerous challenges had to be met to create a valid and reliable trilingual interpreting exam. For example, the unique nature of the objective FCICE scoring system developed by González, as described earlier, demands scrupulous attention to detail during the scripting process, to ensure that the resulting exams contain a representative sample of the relevant aspects of the languages being tested and language abilities required of interpreters, as established empirically. This process requires hundreds of hours and dozens of drafts to ensure that the relevant linguistic parameters are represented in the test stimuli.

This challenge is magnified by the inclusion of ASL in the testing stimulus. To the greatest extent possible, it is essential to maintain fidelity to the unique structures of ASL and prevent contamination from the scripting language. To this end, several steps were taken during development. First, during scripting notations were made to indicate specific ASL signs or approaches that should be used by the Deaf actors during the filming of the test stimuli. Second, Davíd Quinto-Pozos, Yolanda Chavira, both trilingual members of the Expert Panel, and John Bichsel of the UA NCITRP were present during pilot filming to consult with the Deaf actors who performed the scripts to help balance the needs of testing and the naturalness of their presentation of the stimuli. The resulting test stimuli renditions were then reviewed and the testing scripts were revised to ensure that they reflected the ASL stimulus. The panel of raters also reviewed and revised the scripts in light of both the testing stimuli and the pilot candidates' renditions. This was supplemented by an independent review of the scripts and their concordance with the ASL stimuli by Douglas Watson (a Deaf member of the Expert Panel) and Lauri Metcalf, then chair of the BEI and department chair of American Sign Language and Interpreter Training at San Antonio College. Finally, two sections that did not match the level of consistency of the other sections were filmed again to ensure clarity of the signing and the fidelity of the testing scripts with the contents of the stimuli. Similarly, the performances were

scrutinized to ensure that the Spanish (and English) test stimuli reflected standard usage in terms of pronunciation and fluency, and to avoid the use of regional variations that might be unclear to candidates. Of course, in the field interpreters routinely encounter such regional variations (in Spanish, English, and ASL); but, unlike the testing environment, they also have the opportunity to seek clarification from their interlocutors.

These challenges are among those faced during the development of any interpreting proficiency test. In addition, two features particular to trilingual interpreting deserve special note. First is the issue of fingerspelling. In any proficiency exam involving ASL, fingerspelling is a special challenge for candidates, in terms of both comprehension and production, and is rightly an important focus for assessment. In trilingual situations, it is still more complex because there is an additional transformation required of the interpreter. For example, a trilingual interpreter must be able to both comprehend and produce words spelled in Spanish as well as words spelled in English. More important, however, consider a scenario in which an ASL user is communicating with a Spanish speaker. Unless she is using a Spanish term, the ASL user's fingerspelling will consist of English. The interpreter's task is to first process the fingerspelling into English, and *then* to render the English word in the target language, Spanish. This additional step adds to the cognitive load already inherent in the interpreting process. As a result, it was important to include an adequate sample of this special trilingual feature in the performance examinations.

Perhaps even more important, trilingual interpreters must employ a mode of interpreting not found in ASL/English interpretation, which we have called three-person interactive. This is the instance in which a scenario has three interlocutors: an ASL user, an English speaker, and a Spanish speaker. For example, a Deaf Hispanic child's pediatric appointment with an English speaking doctor may also involve the patient's Spanish speaking parents. Certainly, when such scenarios arise in the field, there may be more than one interpreter available to work in a relay. However, this is often not the case, as evidenced by our survey findings, and one trilingual interpreter must interpret for all parties.

This process requires the interpreter to interpret for each interlocutor twice, once into each target language. In the above example, the doctor's English questions need to be interpreted into ASL for the patient, and also into Spanish for the parent. Moreover, "SimCom," in which the interpreter would sign the doctor's question while speaking it in Spanish, is not the best

practice, because the potential cross-contamination between languages may undermine the meaning of the source message. Instead, best practice dictates that the doctor's English question be interpreted first into one target language (e.g., ASL) *and then* into the second target language (e.g., Spanish) to ensure the conservation of meaning. This uniquely trilingual process places a premium on memory for the interpreter, in that the second rendition of the source message can only occur after both the source message *and* the first target rendition have been completed. The interpreter must be able to hold the source message in short-term memory long enough to allow this process to unfold.

In some respects, three-person interactive is similar to the consecutive interpretation mode frequently used in spoken language interpretation. In consecutive interpretation the interpreter begins her rendition of the source message only after the speaker has completed the message; for example, the interpreter renders the doctor's question into Spanish only after the question is complete. In this way it differs from oral simultaneous interpretation, which is interpreting into the target language with only a short lag time between the source speaker and the interpreted rendition. Simultaneous interpretation is in this way similar to the more typical practice of ASL/English interpreters.

However, there are at least two important differences between three person interactive and spoken language consecutive interpretation. First, in consecutive interpretation the spoken language interpreter is interpreting into only one target language rather than two. Second, during consecutive interpretation, spoken language interpreters often take notes as an aid to memory, a technique that is often impractical for a trilingual interpreter who must use her hands to sign. Both of these issues add to the cognitive load in trilingual interpreting.

Moreover, the process can be more complicated when taking protocol issues into account. For example, depending on the interlocutors involved, it may be more appropriate to interpret into a specific language first; for example, if an English-speaking pediatrician is addressing the Spanish-speaking parent, it may be more appropriate to interpret into Spanish first and then into ASL for the patient's benefit. Other circumstances, based on the level of authority, the position in a family, to whom a message is directed, and other cultural issues may call for interpreting in a different language order. This has an impact on the difficulty of the interpretation because if the doctor's English is interpreted first into Spanish, the interpreter must hold the source message in memory longer before beginning her rendition into ASL. Otherwise, she would be speaking over

and interrupting the doctor. Alternately, if she first interpreted into ASL, she could begin her rendition that much sooner.

For testing purposes, this point is important in two ways. First, in assessing a trilingual interpreter's three-person interactive ability, testing requires standardizing the order in which the candidate renders her interpretations to help ensure consistent scoring. The scoring process would be greatly complicated if the raters did not know which language to expect. To solve this, the directions on this section of the exam were standardized to require candidates to render their interpretation in a specific order regardless of what they would do in the field. In the above example, the interpreter would first render the doctor's question into ASL, and then into Spanish, even if the question were intended for the parent. The rationale for this order is both to improve consistency in scoring and to maximize fairness to the candidate because, by using this order, the candidate can begin her rendition as soon as possible. Similarly, the parent's Spanish reply to the doctor's question must be rendered first into ASL and then into English. Finally, the Deaf patient's ASL reply must be rendered first into English, and then into Spanish. During the pilot process, we worked hard to ensure that all candidates were aware of these testing requirements in advance, and that the directions during the exam were clear (protocols which will be followed during future general administrations of the exams as well). The pilot process allowed us to refine the directions and better prepare candidates for this section of the exam. Overall, pilot candidates reported that it was easy to amend their standard practice to conform to the testing requirements.

The second important consideration in testing three-person interactive is standardizing the length of the passages to be interpreted. In the field an interpreter can, if necessary, stop an interlocutor who has gone beyond the interpreter's ability to recall the message and even ask for repetitions. However, in a testing environment, the goal is to control as many variables as possible, so that the only variables that remain are those to be tested. This is one reason that the exams are recorded rather than presented live because doing so ensures that every candidate receives exactly the same stimuli. As a result, it was important to set a maximum length for each passage: on the Advanced examination the longest passage is approximately 30 words, and on the Master examination it is approximately 45 words.

Because of its centrality to trilingual interpretation, and the unique tasks involved, the three-person interactive is weighted to count for more than the other sections. Similarly, the sight

translations, because they are less common, are shorter and weighted lower than the other sections.

All of these considerations were at the forefront during the scripting process, and were subject to review, expansion, and approval by the Expert Panel and PARG (as was every aspect of the development process). Further, the final versions of the tests were subject to review and approval by the Texas BEI. They were also tested during the pilot process by candidates who were selected based on passage of the written Test of Spanish Proficiency. A total of eight candidates took the Advanced exam, and seven took the Master exam. After the rating team was trained in the scoring methodology and protocol, they scored the pilot exams. This provided the opportunity to analyze the exams' performance by assessing candidates' reactions to and renditions of the exam stimuli. With respect to the validity of the exams, there were two findings of note. First, there were no candidates who the rater panel subjectively felt was sufficiently proficient but who still did not pass, nor were there any candidates who passed but were considered by the rater panel not to have an appropriate level of proficiency to responsibly discharge the responsibilities of a trilingual interpreter.

Second, a criterion validity study correlated candidates' scores on the Test of Spanish Proficiency with their scores on the performance exam. This provided an independent measure of the candidates' level of proficiency along a relevant dimension. Our assumption was that the candidates' scores on the Test of Spanish Proficiency would correlate strongly with their scores on the performance exam. Such a correlation would add to the body of evidence supporting the validity of the performance exams. Further, the candidates were grouped into high, medium and low proficiency groups based on their written scores (keep in mind that all the performance test candidates passed the Test of Spanish Proficiency). A total of six candidates passed the performance exam (three Advanced candidates and three Master candidates). Of these six, five scored in the high proficiency group on the Test of Spanish Proficiency. This suggests both that Spanish proficiency is an important component of trilingual interpreting proficiency, and that the performance exams successfully distinguish between levels of interpreting proficiency. Interestingly, the sixth passing score (of the candidate who passed the Test of Spanish Proficiency but whose score was not in the "high" proficiency group) was achieved by a candidate who is a child of Deaf parents, and whose first language is ASL rather than Spanish. Under these circumstances, it stands to reason that this candidate's Spanish proficiency score

might be lower (though still, it must be noted, well within the passing range), but that her performance exam scores would indicate that she possesses the requisite level of proficiency.

In all, it is our hope that this snapshot of the test development process, and the resulting exams, illuminates not only the challenges inherent in interpreter testing, but also the challenges unique to trilingual interpreting and how they are represented in the exams. One performance exam candidate put it this way, "The test was very well organized and it focused on what I would encounter in interpreting situations. I feel it is a good tool for measuring our skills as trilingual interpreters."

Future of the Trilingual Interpreter Proficiency Tests

The development process of the trilingual interpreter proficiency exams is now complete. As of this writing (fall, 2009), the tests will soon be available for general administration in the state of Texas by DARS-DHHS, UA NCITRP's partner in the tests' development. DARS-DHHS will begin to certify successful candidates as trilingual interpreters, which will in turn greatly advance the professionalization of a field which was only recently recognized.

Moreover, the general administrations of the exams will afford opportunities for continued research and enable the adaptation of the trilingual exams for use in other states and organizations. The need for trilingual interpretation services is not limited to Texas, or even to border states, but is broad and growing. The pilot results of the written exam already provide evidence of the applicability of the exams to a wider population. However, testing requirements demand that the tests be reviewed for their applicability to new states or organizations prior to their use outside of Texas. Rather than simply administering the exams elsewhere, UA NCITRP must adapt them to ensure that they truly reflect the needs of the community that they are intended to serve in other states. For example, use by the state of Florida would require that the tests be reviewed to ensure an appropriate linguistic and cultural fit with the prevailing Cuban and Caribbean Spanish populations there. Similarly, the tests may require revision in order to be validly adapted for use in Puerto Rico, not only because of the variety of Spanish used there, but also because interpreters for Deaf people in Puerto Rico may encounter comparatively few trilingual scenarios and considerably more ASL/Spanish scenarios. Likewise, the settings of these scenarios may vary from those found in Texas and elsewhere.

Nonetheless, the work on trilingual interpreting pioneered in Texas by UA NCITRP and DARS-DHHS has the potential to make such essential services broadly available, providing access and new opportunities for this growing and underserved group.

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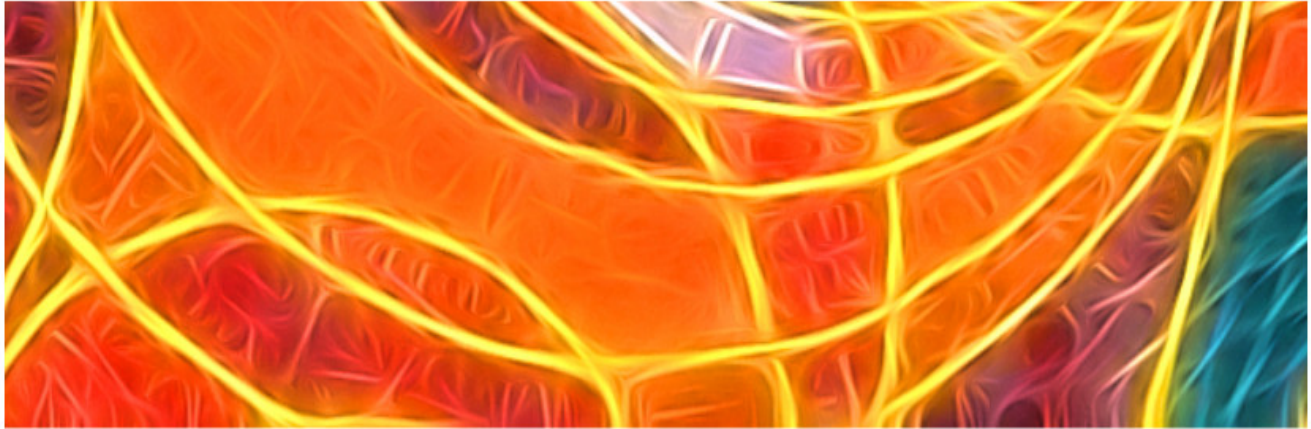
PART 5
CONCLUSION

Next Steps

David Quinto-Pozos

> *"It is said that trilingual video interpreters travel the world in a day, interpreting telephone calls that connect consumers around the globe."*
> *-Trilingual VRS Interpreter*

We began this volume by proposing definitions of trilingual (ASL/Spanish/English) interpreting in order to bring to light the complexity of this unique line of work. We unpacked elements of this complexity through the content of the various chapters. We presented a myriad of details about the evolution of trilingual interpreting, the skills and the knowledge sets that interpreters need to be successful trilingual interpreters, and the various ways in which trilingual interpreting has contributed to the profession of signed language interpretation over the last few decades. The chapters provided information about multiple empirical studies and their results, aspects of education, and personal accounts of trilingual interpreting given by practitioners and business owners. The content of this volume affirms that trilingual interpreting in the United States is, indeed, complex, evolving rapidly, and demonstrates evidence for professionalization of this specialization. This chapter provides a summary of some important themes that surfaced repeatedly, and it provides recommendations for steps that can be taken to continue to move the trilingual profession forward.

Continuing with Important Discussions

In this section, we touch on various themes that have surfaced repeatedly and continue to be relevant in the process of professionalization of trilingual interpreting, including the credentialing of interpreters and the availability of high-quality professional development opportunities. These are not new topics; they have been discussed for decades, and it is likely that they will remain in focus for the field of trilingual interpretation for the foreseeable future.

Perhaps one of the most discussed themes concerning trilingual interpreting at the present time is the credentialing of trilingual interpreters. Currently in the U.S., there exists a single certification test for trilingual interpreters, although various professionals have questioned its appropriateness as a measure to be used with the myriad of diverse profiles of trilingual interpreters throughout the country and Puerto Rico (e.g., see Dueñas Gonzalez et al., this volume; Aponte, this volume). This issue relates to a defining point about trilingual interpreting in the U.S.: the diversity of Spanish-speaking communities. Multiple dialects of Spanish are represented among the millions of users of Spanish in the U.S., and this fact cannot be understated because it plays a notable role in the work performed by trilingual interpreters. Currently, there are hundreds of trilingual interpreters in the field, but the potential remains for an even larger group of qualified trilingual interpreters to manage the development of this profession. The Spanish-speaking population of the U.S. continues to grow at a rapid pace, and that growth is also reflected in the percentage of deaf and hard of hearing people who are raised in Spanish-speaking households and communities (e.g., see Gallaudet Research Institute statistics). This demographic will influence the need for continued skills and knowledge development for trilingual interpreters—those already in the field and those who will be entering in years to come.

Another defining point that will continue to resonate in the field of trilingual interpreting is the availability and quality of professional development. Attention should be given to the local level as it provides interpreters of a region the opportunity to focus on linguistic and cultural characteristics of those who reside in their geographic area. In addition, trilingual-specific national and regional conferences need to be supported in greater measure, and more content related to trilingual interpreting should appear in ASL-English interpreting conferences. In tandem, national conferences and workshops allow trilingual interpreters to focus on the profession and its standards as a whole, and provide information that crosses regional lines and applies to all trilingual interpreters regardless of area of residence.

This volume continues to illustrate the need for interpreting education programs throughout the country to offer more trilingual-specific skills and knowledge development for prospective trilingual interpreters. And, in order to provide culturally-relevant and linguistically appropriate education, it would behoove programs to hire faculty who are qualified to teach these courses. The NMIP provided much information about the type of cultural content to be included

in interpreting education programs; it is incumbent on us all to add to this body of information, as well as create new materials based on effective practices to our interpreter program curricula.

Trilingual interpreters work in a range of settings, and it is not uncommon for them to be working alone for extended periods of time (e.g., see Quinto-Pozos et al., 2010). In some situations, a trilingual interpreter could benefit greatly from working side-by-side with a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI); this is the type of situation that is described in the case studies chapter (Aponte, this volume). This is particularly true if a deaf customer uses signs from a sign language that is not familiar to the trilingual interpreter, or if they possess minimal competence in any sign language. Such a scenario is common in the work performed by trilingual interpreters (especially in VRS interpreting), and more discussion should be focused on how to provide support to trilingual interpreters in these challenging situations.

What it means to be a competent trilingual (ASL/Spanish/English) or bilingual (e.g., ASL/Spanish) interpreter will continue to take center stage as a discussion topic within the profession. Of course, such discussions are usually linked to the tools available for assessing a professional's skills and knowledge. Throughout this volume we have discussed trilingual interpreter certification (e.g., see Dueñas Gonzalez et al., this volume; Aponte, this volume). Certification is one hallmark of professionalization in any field. The advancement of trilingual certifications and the continued population of the field with trilingual-certified interpreters must be on the national agenda. We do this not only for the benefit of the hearing and deaf recipients of trilingual interpreting services, but also for the interpreters themselves. We must not delay in ensuring that appropriate measures are in place for these interpreters to provide tangible evidence of their skills and knowledge.

Appropriate remuneration of trilingual interpreters must also be considered. In Chapter 1, Annarino provided a summary of the model proposed by Treviño and Cancel regarding trilingual interpreting. The task of trilingual interpreting is not trivial, and interpreters who perform that task appropriately should be awarded with payment that is commensurate with the work being done. In addition to having skills in English and ASL, these interpreters devote years to becoming skilled in multiple dialects of Spanish. They learn about various cultures and traditions represented within the Spanish-speaking world, and they familiarize themselves with educational, governmental, and other facets of Latin American life. For this tremendous amount of additional work and dedication, they should be provided appropriate remuneration.

Continued Professionalization and Growth

Research is undeniably one of the best activities for learning about the world and identifying ways to improve the human condition. This belief holds as true for professions that engage in the delivery of a social service (especially with regard to the use of language and communication) as it is for those professions who seek to understand human biology in order to develop methods for maintaining a healthy population. Research can inform us about business trends in the practice of trilingual interpretation, and it can provide key information regarding linguistic and cognitive aspects of the work that trilingual interpreters perform. Much can be learned by collecting and analyzing data that represent the practice of trilingual interpretation as it currently exists, as well as guide future research and the ultimate direction of the field.

A key activity that needs more attention is the teaching of trilingual interpreters. Interpreting education programs need to carefully examine how they train their students who wish to become trilingual interpreters. The entire process, from recruitment of appropriate students (e.g., students who have Spanish skills or have a set plan to develop those skills) to the inclusion of appropriate trilingual content within a program (e.g., aspects of the NMIP curriculum or future curricula that will be developed), to the provision of resources for students who complete a program and are transitioning to becoming credentialed signed language interpreters. This process will require appropriate mentorship opportunities for students and novice interpreters. Interpreting education programs need to incorporate appropriate content, but the content should also be taught by instructors with the knowledge and skills to guide students through the curriculum. Qualified teachers should be sought, but they may also need to be trained appropriately.

There are a number of activities that can support continued growth of the trilingual interpreting field, and a short list is presented here in an effort to highlight some of the ways that professionalization can continue to follow an upward trajectory. As with any profession, it will be useful to have more empirical research in order to examine the work done by interpreters and the unique business trends that characterize this practice. Much more attention must be given to the teaching and training of trilingual interpreters in postsecondary settings of interpreter training programs, which should include recruitment of future trilingual interpreters. More mentorship opportunities need to be available for trilingual interpreters as they develop their skills and

acquire the professional behaviors of a competent interpreter. To accomplish this task, it will require that experienced trilingual interpreters involve themselves as mentors, trainers, and educators. Moreover, more trilingual interpreters will need to assume leadership roles in the profession – whether it occur at the national, regional, or local level. The profession can only advance with the involvement of its members.

No profession is successful without leaders. Professionals who give of their time, energy, and talents to contribute to collective growth and improvement are the lifeblood of any career, and this is especially true of a young profession such as trilingual interpreting. To put it simply, we need leaders to continue to provide the trilingual profession with creativity, energy and motivation, insight, and character. This cannot be stressed enough; we need more individuals to assume leadership roles and work to continue to improve all aspects of the profession. We need trilingual interpreter leaders in national organizations, such as *Mano a Mano*, RID, and the National Alliance of Black Interpreters (NAOBI), to set agendas that focus on policy and practice matters that concern working conditions, standards of competence, and remuneration. We need trilingual interpreter leaders who can help us to reach beyond our borders and participate in organizations like the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI). We need trilingual interpreter leaders who can help to plan professional development activities, lead and moderate discussions, and provide the day to day support that our organizations need to move forward. *Everyone* should become involved. If an interpreter feels that they do not have the skills or knowledge to volunteer, they can reach out to a leader in the field. We should not be fearful of reaching out to established professionals; if they are able, they can provide direction and information for emerging leaders.

Final Thoughts

Trilingual interpreting has advanced significantly in recent decades, and this volume provides evidence of that fact. As with any profession, there is always work to be done, and the road is long and winding. The return on investment, though, is great as the field further professionalizes, and our stakeholders benefit from our work. Trilingual interpreting has come a long way. We are living in an exciting time of much change and advancement, and the future is certain to be very exciting. If we collectively contribute to the advancement of this field, we stand to benefit from all the rewards of being contributors to this exciting chapter of history!

Next Steps

Appendix A: Focus Group Tools

Invitation to Participate

The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) has established a National Trilingual Interpreting Task Force to further the trilingual interpreting profession. The overall goal of the NCIEC Task Force on Trilingual Interpreting is to increase the number of qualified interpreters able to interpret between English, American Sign Language (ASL) and Spanish by enhancing leadership, determining effective practices around trilingual interpreting, and providing educational opportunities and related resources. A critical component to accomplishing these goals is the identification of the competencies and skills needed to successfully interpret in trilingual settings. One method for doing this identification is through focus groups.

The purpose of the focus groups is to gather input from key stakeholders regarding the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for successful trilingual interpreting. We will be conducting focus groups with: 1) deaf and hard of hearing consumers of trilingual interpreting services, 2) hearing consumers; 3) companies and/or individuals who hire trilingual interpreters; and 4) working trilingual interpreters. The estimated duration of the focus group is 60-90 minutes and will be conducted via teleconference, unless otherwise specified.

At this time, the Task Force is seeking individuals who have two or more years of active experience working in trilingual settings. If you have this type of experience, we would like to invite you participate in this study. If you are interested in being considered for this study, please click on the link below to complete a brief screening survey.

LINK HERE

Your participation will contribute to advancing the field of trilingual interpreting. The information we glean from you will ultimately help interpreter educators better design curriculum because they will have a slate of evidence-based competencies and skills available for their use. In addition, the trilingual interpreting community will have a better understanding of the tasks involved in the work they do, and the Deaf Latino Community will have access to interpreters with greater skill.

Next Steps

Be assured that all screening survey and focus group information will remain confidential, and that no individual or company will ever be identified in the focus group results or report, unless permission has been granted by that individual or company.

On behalf of the NCIEC National Trilingual Interpreting Task Force, we would like to thank you in advance for taking time out of your busy life to consider participating in this important focus group.

Invitación a participar

El Consorcio Nacional de Centros de Educación de Intérpretes (NCIEC por sus siglas en inglés) ha establecido un Grupo de Trabajo Nacional de la Interpretación Trilingüe para avanzar en la profesión de la interpretación trilingüe. El propósito general de dicho Grupo de Trabajo del NCIEC es aumentar el númeo de intérpretes calificados que puedan interpretar entre el inglés, la lengua de señas americana (ASL por sus siglas en inglés) y el español. Esto se logrará mejorando el liderazgo, determinando prácticas eficaces en la interpretación trilingüe, y proporcionando oportunidades educativas y recursos relevantes. Un componente crítico para el logro de estas metas es la identificación de las competencias y habilidades necesarias para la interpretación exitosa en ámbitos trilingües. Una manera de identificar las habilidades necesarias es utilizar discusiones grupales.

El propósito de las discusiones grupales es obtener opiniones e ideas de personas interesadas en cuanto al conocimiento, las destrezas y las habilidades necesarios para la interpretación exitosa en ámbitos trilingües. Organizaremos discusiones grupales con: 1) consumidores sordos, hipoacúsicos, sordo-ciegos y oyentes que utilizan los servicios de interpretación trilingüe, 2) empresas y/o individuos que contratan a intérpretes para los servicios de interpretación trilingüe, y 3) intérpretes que, en el presente, ofrecen servicios de interpretación trilingüe . La duración de la discusión grupal será entre 60 y 90 minutos y se tomarán lugar via teleconferencia a menos que se especifique algo de lo contrario.

Actualmente, el Grupo de Trabajo busca individuos que han utilizado los servicios de interpretación trilingüe en los últimos dos años. Si eso le describe a usted, nos gustaría invitarle a participar en esta investigación. Si le interesa, por favor haga clic en el enlace abajo para llenar un cuestionario breve.

ENLACE AQUI

Su participación contribuirá al avance de la profesión de la interpretación trilingüe. La información que obtenemos de usted, a largo plazo, ayudará a que los educadores de intérpretes diseñen mejores planes de estudios porque tendrán una lista de competencias y habilidades, basada en evidencias, que podrán utilizar. Además, la comunidad de intérpretes trilingües entenderán mejor las tareas que componen su trabajo, y la comunidad de Sordos Latinos tendrá acceso a intérpretes más preparados.

Next Steps

Le aseguramos que tanto el cuestionario como la información proveniente de la discusión grupal se mantendrá confidencial y que ningún individuo o empresa será identificada en los resultados de las discusiones grupales o en ningún reporte a menos que el individuo o la empresa dé su permiso para ello.

De parte del Grupo de Trabajo Nacional de la Interpretación Trilingüe del NCIEC, nos gustaría darle las gracias de antemano por apartar tiempo de su vida ocupada para considerar participación en esta discusión grupal importante.

Appendix B: Focus Group Tools

Consumers Online Screening Questionnaire

For the purposes of this study, "trilingual interpreting" and "trilingual setting" mean an American sign language interpreting situation in which (a) the Deaf consumer uses foreign signs or fingerspells or mouths in Spanish; or (b) requires interpreting into or from spoken Spanish; or (c) requires Spanish sight translation.

1. Gender: Female   Male

2. What is your hearing status? (Please circle one.)

   Hearing   Deaf   Hard of Hearing   Deaf-Blind

3. Do you have Deaf family members? (Check all that apply.)

   _____ Parents

   _____ Grandparents

   _____ Siblings

   _____ Aunts or Uncles

   _____ Children

   _____ Other (please specify)

4. What is your age?

   _____ 18-29 years old

   _____ 30-39 years old

   _____ 40-49 years old

   _____ 50-59 years old

   _____ 60-69 years old

   _____ 70 or better

5. What is the highest educational level you have achieved?

   _____ High School

   _____ Certificate/Diploma

   _____ Associates | Major:

   _____ Bachelors | Major:

   _____ Masters | Major:

   _____ Doctorate | Major:

6. Ethnicity

    _____ Native American/American Indian

    _____ Asian/Pacific Islander

    _____ African-American/Black

    _____ Hispanic/Latino | Please specify:

    _____ White Non-Hispanic/European-American

    _____ Other:

7. What city and state do you live in?

8. During the past two years, how often have you used trilingual interpreting services?

    _____ Every day

    _____ Once a week or more

    _____ Once a month or more

    _____ Once a year or more

    _____ I have not used trilingual services at least twice a year over the past two years.

9. Check all the settings in which you have used trilingual interpreting services in the past two years

    _____ Healthcare

    _____ Legal

    _____ Educational

    _____ Video (VRS or VI)

    _____ Vocational Rehabilitation

    _____ Conference

    _____ Religious

    _____ Abroad (Besides cruises) | Countries:

    _____ Other:

    _____ I have never used trilingual interpreting services.

---

*If any of the items in **red boldface** are selected or if questions #8 or #9 are left unanswered, then the following message should appear at the end:*

THANK YOU for your participation!! Based on one or more of your answers, we will not be able to use you for this particular focus group study, but thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. However, we would like to keep you in our database. Your information will be kept confidential and only be used to contact you to seek your participation in future research on trilingual interpreting.

_____ Yes, you may keep my contact information and contact me about future trilingual interpreting research. | Preferred email:

_____ No, I am not interested in participating in future research on trilingual interpreting.

   Otherwise, the following should appear at the end:

Thank you for completing the survey. Based on your answers, you may qualify to participate in the focus group study on trilingual interpreting. We will be in touch soon via email.

Preferred email: _____

Consumidores Cuestionario En Linea

Dentro de esta investigación, el término "interpretación trilingüe" se refiere a una situación de interpretación de lengua de señas americana en la cual (a) el consumidor Sordo utiliza señas de otra lengua de señas o deletrea palabras (manualmente) o articula (con los labios) en español; o (b) requiere interpretación *al* o *del* español hablado; o (c) requiere traducción a la vista *al* o *del* español escrito.

1. Sexo: Mujer   Hombre

2. En cuanto a la audición, ¿cómo se describe usted? (Por favor, encierre una opción).

   Oyente   Sordo   Hipoacúsico   Sordo-Ciego

3. Tiene parientes Sordos? (Indique todas las respuestas que sean ciertas para usted).

   _____ Padres

   _____ Abuelos

   _____ Hermanos

   _____ Tios

   _____ Hijos

   _____ Otro (favor de especificar)

3. ¿Qué edad tiene?

   _____ 18-29 años

   _____ 30-39 años

   _____ 40-49 años

   _____ 50-59 años

   _____ 60-69 años

   _____ 70 o más

4. ¿Cuál es el último nivel de educación que terminó?

   _____ No terminé el nivel que precede los estudios universitarios (se conoce como preparatoria, bachillerato, secundaria, etc. según el país).

   _____ Terminé el nivel que precede los estudios universitarios (se conoce como preparatoria, bachillerato, secundaria, etc. según el país).

   _____ Certificado/Diploma

   _____ Un título universitario no postgrado (ejemplo: la licenciatura) | Concentración:

_____ Un título universitario postgrado (ejemplo: la maestría o el doctorado) |

Concentración:

5. Étnica

_____ Americano Nativo / Indio Americano

_____ Asiático/Nativo de la Polinasia

_____ Afroamericano/Negro

_____ Hispano/Latino | Por favor especifique:

_____ Blanco no Hispano/Euroamericano

_____ Otro:

6. ¿En qué ciudad y estado vive?

7. Durante los últimos dos años, ¿con qué frecuencia ha utilizado los servicios de interpretación trilingüe?

_____ Diariamente

_____ Una vez a la semana o más

_____ Una vez al mes o más

_____ Una vez al año o más

_____ No he utilizado los servicios de interpretación trilingüe por lo menos dos veces al año durante los últimos dos años.

8. Seleccione todos los ámbitos en los cuales ha utilizado los servicios de interpretación trilingüe durante los últimos dos años.

_____ Área de la salud

_____ Legal

_____ Educativo

_____ Video

_____ Rehabilitación Vocacional

_____ Conferencia

_____ Religiosa

_____ En el Extranjero (exluye cruceros) | Países:

_____ Otro:

_____ Nunca he utilizdo los servicios de interpretación trilingüe.

*Si alguien selecciona alguna de las respuestas en **letra negrita** para contestar las preguntas #8 o #9, o si no contesta esas preguntas, el siguiente mensaje aparecerá al final:*

¡GRACIAS por su participación! A base de una o más de sus respuestas, no podrá participar en esta investigación (de discusión grupal) en particular, pero gracias de nuevo por dar de su tiempo y por terminar el cuestionario. De cualquier forma, nos gustaría guardar su información en nuestra base de datos. Su información se mantendrá confidencial y solo la utilizaremos para ponernos en contacto con usted y solicitar su participación en futuras investigaciones sobre la interpretación trilingüe.

_____ Sí, pueden guardar mi información de contacto y comunicarse conmigo sobre futuras investigaciones sobre la interpretación trilingüe. | Dirección de correo electrónico preferida:

_____ No, no me interesa participar en futuras investigaciones sobre la interpretación trilingüe.

De lo contrario, lo siguiente aparecerá al final:

Gracias por llenar el cuestionario. Basado en sus respuestas, usted podría calificar para participar en la investigacion (de discusión grupal) sobre la interpretación trilingüe. Estaremos en contacto pronto por medio de correo electrónico

Dirección de correo electrónico preferida:

Appendix C: Focus Group Tools

Online Screening Questionnaire

Hiring Entities

For the purposes of this study, "trilingual interpreting" and "trilingual setting" mean an American Sign Language interpreting situation in which (a) the Deaf consumer uses foreign signs or fingerspells or mouths in Spanish; or (b) requires interpreting into or from spoken Spanish; or (c) requires Spanish sight translation.

1. Which of the following describe you? (Check all that apply)

    _____ I hire or contract trilingual interpreters independently.

    _____ I hire or contract trilingual interpreters for my company.

2. What is your hearing status? (Please circle one.)

    Hearing   Deaf   Hard of Hearing   Deaf-Blind

3. In what city or cities and state(s) is your company located?

    _____

4. From what city or cities and state(s) does your company recruit trilingual interpreters?

    _____

5. In what cities, states, and countries does your company provide trilingual interpreting

    services? _____

6.   During the past two years, approximately how often have you had to fill assignments that required a trilingual interpreter?

    _____ Every day

    _____ Once a week

    _____ Once a month

    _____ Once a year

    _____ **I have not had to fill any assignments in the past two years that required a trilingual interpreter.**

7. During the past two years, approximately how often have you had to hire or contract new trilingual interpreters?

    _____ Once a week

    _____ Once a month

_____ Once a year

_____ Twice a year

_____ **I have not had to hire or contract any new trilingual interpreters in the past two years.**

8. Check all the settings for which you have hired or contracted trilingual interpreters in the past two years.

_____ Healthcare

_____ Legal

_____ Educational

_____ Video (VRS or VI)

_____ Vocational Rehabilitation

_____ Conference

_____ Religious

_____ Abroad (Not cruises) | Countries:

_____ Other:

_____ **I have never hired trilingual interpreters or contracted trilingual interpreting services.**

If any of the items in **red boldface** *are selected or if questions #7 or #8 are left unanswered, then the following message should appear at the end:*

THANK YOU for your participation!! Based on one or more of your answers, we will not be able to use you for this particular focus group study, but thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. However, we would like to keep you in our database. Your information will be kept confidential and only be used to contact you to seek your participation in future research on trilingual interpreting.

_____ Yes, you may keep my contact information and contact me about future trilingual interpreting research. | Preferred email:

_____ No, I am not interested in participating in future research on trilingual interpreting.

Otherwise, the following should appear at the end:

Thank you for completing the survey. Based on your answers, you may qualify to participate in the focus group study on trilingual interpreting. We will be in touch soon via email.

Preferred email:

Next Steps

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Appendix D: Focus Group Tools

Online Screening Questionnaire

Trilingual Practitioners

For the purposes of this study, "trilingual interpreting" and "trilingual setting" mean an interpreting situation in which (a) the Deaf consumer uses foreign signs or fingerspells or mouths in Spanish; or (b) requires interpreting into or from spoken Spanish; or (c) requires Spanish sight translation.

1. Gender: Female   Male

2. What is your hearing status? (Please circle one.)

   Hearing   Deaf   Hard of Hearing   Deaf-Blind

3. What languages do you consider yourself capable of interpreting?

   _____ English

   _____ Spanish | Variety or varieties: _____

   _____ ASL

   _____ Other (spoken or sign): _____

4. What languages do you consider yourself capable of translating (written)?

   _____ English

   _____ Spanish | Variety or varieties: _____

   _____ ASL

   _____ Other (spoken or sign): _____

5. What is your age?

   _____ 18-29 years old

   _____ 30-39 years old

   _____ 40-49 years old

   _____ 50-59 years old

   _____ 60-69 years old

   _____ 70 or better

6. What is the highest educational level you have achieved?

   _____ High School

   _____ Certificate/Diploma

_____ Associates | Major: _____

_____ Bachelors | Major: _____

_____ Masters | Major: _____

_____ Doctorate | Major: _____

7. Ethnicity

_____ Native American/American Indian

_____ Asian/Pacific Islander

_____ African-American/Black

_____ Hispanic/Latino | Please specify: _____

_____ White Non-Hispanic/European-American

_____ Other: _____

8. Which of the following characterizes your role(s)? (Check all that apply.)

_____ Signed language interpreter

_____ Spoken language interpreter

_____ Translator (written documents)

_____ Interpreter educator

_____ Language instructor

_____ Other: _____

9. What city and state do you live in?_____

10. Are you a certified interpreter or translator?   _____ Yes   _____ No

If yes, how long have you been certified? _____

If yes, what certification(s) do you hold? _____

If no, what other interpreting or translation credential (such as QA) do you hold, if any?

_____

11. How many years have you been interpreting in trilingual settings?

_____ **Fewer than 2 years**

_____ 2-5 years

_____ 6-10 years

_____ 11-15 years

_____ More than 15 years

12. Check all the settings in which you have done trilingual interpreting work in the past two years.

 _____ Healthcare

 _____ Legal

 _____ Educational

 _____ Video

 _____ Vocational Rehabilitation

 _____ Conference

 _____ Religious

 _____ Abroad (Besides cruises) | Countries: _____

 _____ Other: _____

 _____ I have a staff position in which I practice trilingual interpreting regularly.

 _____ I have not interpreted in a trilingual setting in the past 2 years, but I have before that.

 _____ I have never interpreted in a trilingual setting

13. Have you taken any training specific to trilingual interpreting, interpreting between English and Spanish, or translating between English and Spanish?

 _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please specify: _____

---

*If any of the items in **red boldface** are selected or if questions #11 or #12 are left unanswered, then the following question should appear at the end:*

14. Thank you for completing the survey. Based on one or more of your answers, we will not be able to use you for this particular focus group study. However, we would like to keep you in our database. Your information will be kept confidential and only be used to contact you to seek your participation in future research on trilingual interpreting.

 _____ Yes, you may keep my contact information and contact me about future trilingual interpreting research. | Preferred email: _____

 _____ No, I am not interested in participating in future research on trilingual interpreting.

Otherwise, the following question should appear at the end:

15. Thank you for completing the survey. Based on your answers, you may qualify to participate in the focus group study on trilingual interpreting. We will be in touch soon via email.

    Preferred email: _____

PLEASE NOTE:

In the event we have a full pool of certified interpreters after reviewing the applications for adequate cross-representation, the following message will be sent via email to the interpreters with 2 or more years' experience but no certification.

"Thank you for recently completing a screening survey for a focus group study the NCIEC's National Task Force on Trilingual Interpreting is undertaking. We had an overwhelming response to our initial email and we have filled all the participant slots. However, should a vacancy occur, we would like to contact you to determine your continued interest and availability. Please let us know by responding to this email whether or not you are interested in being on stand-by for this focus group study."

Informational Summary of Research and Consent Letter to Participants[15]

Identification of the Competencies and Skills Needed by Interpreters who Facilitate Communication between English, Spanish and American Sign Language

The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) has established a National Trilingual Interpreting Task Force to further the trilingual interpreting profession. The purpose of the focus group study is to gather input from key stakeholders regarding the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for successful trilingual interpreting.

These focus groups will be conducted with: 1) deaf and hard of hearing consumers of trilingual interpreting services, 2) hearing consumers; 3) companies and/or individuals who hire trilingual interpreters; and 4) working trilingual interpreters.

The Task Force is requesting your valuable input through participation in a focus group.

You have been selected as a possible participant because you have demonstrated experience interpreting in trilingual settings as reflected on your completed Interest in Focus Group Participation Survey.

We ask that you read the information below carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Principal Investigator:

The Principal Investigators for this study are Pauline Annarino and Dr. Cheryl Davis of the Western Region Interpreter Education Center (WRIEC) on behalf of the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force. Conducting the focus group study are Kristie Casanova de Canales and Rafael Treviño.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to do the following things. Be available in person or via telephone to participate in a 60-90 minute focus group of 6-10 [trilingual interpreting stakeholders. Your focus group will be audio recorded and/or captured by written notes. The

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[15] Follow-up letter sent to participants who meet the minimum criteria.

information gleaned from the focus groups will be synthesized into a report which will be published or presented at conferences.

All print materials you receive will be available in both English and Spanish. Focus groups will also be conducted in English, Spanish or American Sign Language depending upon your language preference.

You have the opportunity to select your preferred focus group time and date from the menu below. Please respond to this email indicating your first, second, and third choices of dates and times. Once you are scheduled, you will receive a confirmation email with the date and time for your group, the conference line phone, number and the access code.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only interviewers will have access to the records. The audio recordings and/or written notes will not be included in the report nor made available to any individual or institution outside of the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force. Upon completion of the NCIEC Trilingual initiative (2015) all audio tapes will be erased.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University or the NCIEC Trilingual Task Force. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

Please direct any initial questions to:

Pauline Annarino

El Camino College

752 Terrado Plaza, Suite 205

Covina, CA 91723

(626) 339-6789

pannarin@elcamino.edu

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626 716-9276 (VP)

Skype: pgannarino

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged to contact** the Western Oregon University **Institutional Review Board** at irb@wou.edu or 503.838.9200.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Next Steps

WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Department of Education

Informed Consent for Research Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project:

Identification of the Competencies and Skills Needed by Interpreters who Facilitate

Communication between English, Spanish and American Sign Language

Principal Investigator: Pauline Annarino

Office Phone: (626) 339 6789   e-mail: pannarin@elcamino.edu

I, _____, hereby give my consent to participate in the research study

entitled **Identification of the Competencies and Skills Needed by Interpreters who Facilitate**

Communication between English, Spanish and American Sign Language, details of which

have been provided to me above, including anticipated benefits, risks, and potential

complications.

I fully understand that I may withdraw from this research project at any time without prejudice or

effect on my professional standing. I also understand that I am free to ask questions about any

techniques or procedures that will be undertaken.

I understand that in the unlikely event of physical injury resulting from research procedures that

the investigators will assist the subjects in obtaining medical care; however, payment for the

medical care will be the responsibility of the subject. Western Oregon University will not

provide financial compensation for medical care.

Finally, I understand that the information about me obtained during the course of this study will

be kept confidential unless I consent to its release. (*Return signature page to researcher; keep

remaining pages for your records*.)

_____

Participants Signature

I hereby certify that I have given an explanation to the above individual of the contemplated

study and its risks and potential complications.

_____

Pauline Annarino

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WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Departamento de Educación

Consentimiento Informado para la Investigación con Participantes Humanos

Título del Proyecto:

Identificación de las Competencias y Habilidades Necesarias para los Intérpretes que Facilitan la Comunicación entre Inglés, Español y la Lengua de Señas Americana

</div>

Investigador Principal: Pauline Annarino

Teléfono de Oficina: (626) 339 6789

Correo Electrónico: pannarin@elcamino.edu

Yo, _____, doy mi consentimiento para participar en el proyecto de investigación titulada **Identificación de las Competencias y Habilidades Necesarias para los Intérpretes que Facilitan la Comunicación entre Inglés, Español y la Lengua de Señas Americana,** los detalles del cual se me han dado arriba, con los beneficios y riesgos anticipados y las posibles complicaciones.

Entiendo completamente que me puedo retirar del proyecto de investigación en cualquier momento sin perjuicio o efecto en mi situación profesional. También entiendo que tengo la libertad y el derecho de preguntar sobre cualquier procedimiento o técnica que se llevará a cabo.

Entiendo que, en el improbable caso de lesiones físicas que resultan de los procedimientos de la investigación, los investigadores les ayudarán a los participantes a obtener atención médica; sin embargo, el pago de la atención médica será la responsabilidad del participante. Western Oregon University no ofrecerá compensación financiera por la atención médica.

Por último, entiendo que la información acerca de mí que se obtiene durante este estudio se mantendrá confidencial a menos que dé mi consentimiento para que se haga pública. (*Devuelva la página de la firma al investigador; guarde las demás páginas para sus archivos.)*

<div align="center">

_____

Firma del Participante

</div>

Por la presente certifico que he dado una explicación de la investigación contemplada y sus riesgos y posibles complicaciones al individuo indicado arriba.

<div align="center">

_____

Pauline Annarino

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Appendix G: Focus Group Tools

Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind Discussion Guide

For the moderator:

- Any Yes/No questions in the discussion guide should be expanded on if participants do not do so themselves: "Under what circumstances do you think that should be so?"

- The answers to some of the questions below may be different with regard to work settings and geographic locations. If the participants do not volunteer this information, it is important to probe along these lines for the pertinent questions:

  o Settings = "Would this apply differently depending on the setting, such as **Medical, Legal, Educational, Video, Work Abroad, Other**?"

  o Locations = "Would this apply differently depending on the **geographic location** in which the D/HH consumer lives or uses the (trilingual interpreting) services?"

I. Introduction (10 min.)

    a. Greeting

    b. Purpose of the focus group (research objective)

        i. "The overall goal of this particular NCIEC Task Force endeavor is to identify and vet competencies and skills specific to trilingual interpreting. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force is engaging in approximately 15-20 focus groups nationwide. The information gleaned from these activities will assist the Task Force to: 1) **identify a set of general competency domains for use in organizing the competencies and skills:** and 2) **craft a draft set of competencies to be vetted by trilingual stakeholders."**

    c. Ground rules

        i. "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that there is a note-taker present whose only purpose will be to document the comments made during the session. Please take turns, with only one person answering or commenting at a time. The session will last approximately one hour, so make sure you are comfortable. This study

seeks to gain your ideas and opinions on various topics related to trilingual interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers."

    d. Brief get-acquainted period – names, sign names, settings where each participant tends to use trilingual interpreting services most.

II. Foundational Knowledge

    a. What kind of general, global knowledge do trilingual interpreters need to possess that bilingual interpreters might not necessarily need? For example, what knowledge might they need about immigration, legislation, Latin American history, or Deaf history in Latin America? [Probe for Settings]

III. Language

    a. Sign Language

        i. What, if anything, should trilingual interpreters know about **signed languages from Latin America**? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

    b. Language mixing

        i. Some deaf and hard of hearing consumers "language mix". An example of "**language mixing**" is when a deaf consumer signs in ASL, mouths in Spanish, and fingerspells in English. Another example is when a deaf consumer introduces signs or structures from a foreign sign language."

        ii. What skills do you think trilingual interpreters need in order to approach interpreting effectively for consumers who language mix?

    c. Spoken languages

        i. The ADA defines a qualified interpreter as one who is able to "interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary." What Spanish and English language skills does a trilingual interpreter need in order to interpret "expressively and receptively"?

IV. Culture

    a. For this discussion, cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together to enable professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

b. What kind cultural literacy do trilingual interpreters need?

V. Interpreting

    a. What are the different settings that trilingual interpreters work in, and what different skills do they need for different settings?

VI. Professional

    a. What types of professional behaviors are demonstrated by trilingual interpreters?

VII. Ethics

    a. What, if any, aspects of ethics are different between trilingual and bilingual settings? For example, do the roles of advocacy or boundary-setting (between interpreters and clients) need to be different in trilingual settings? Explain. [probe for settings]

VIII. Closing (5 min.)

    a. Is there anything that we have not touched upon that you feel is an important skill or competency for a trilingual interpreter to possess?

    b. "Thank you for your time."

Next Steps

Appendix H: Focus Group Tools

Hearing Consumers Discussion Guide

For the moderator:

- Any Yes/No questions in the discussion guide should be expanded on if participants do not do so themselves: "Under what circumstances do you think that should be so?"

- The answers to some of the questions below may be different with regard to work settings and geographic locations. If the participants do not volunteer this information, it is important to probe along these lines for the pertinent questions:

    o Settings = "Would this apply differently depending on the setting, such as **Medical, Legal, Educational, Video, Work Abroad, Other**?"

    o Locations = "Would this apply differently depending on the **geographic location** in which the consumers live or use the (trilingual interpreting) services?"

I. Introduction (10 min.)

    a. Greeting

    b. Purpose of the focus group (research objective)

        i. "The overall goal of this particular NCIEC Task Force endeavor is to identify and vet competencies and skills specific to trilingual interpreting. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force is engaging in approximately 15-20 focus groups nationwide. The information gleaned from these activities will assist the Task Force to: 1) **identify a set of general competency domains for use in organizing the competencies and skills:** and 2) **craft a draft set of competencies to be vetted by trilingual stakeholders."**

    c. Ground rules

        i. FOR ON-SITE GROUPS: "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that this session is being recorded so please speak clearly and take turns, with only one person answering or commenting at a time. The session will last approximately one hour, so make sure you are comfortable. This study seeks to gain your ideas and

opinions on various topics related to trilingual interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers."

    ii. FOR TELEFOCUS GROUPS: "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that this session is being recorded, so please speak as clearly as possible and one at a time. The session will last approximately one hour, so make you are someplace comfortable. Because this is being conducted over the phone, please identify yourself by your participant number or name before speaking. This study seeks to gain your ideas and opinions on various topics related to trilingual interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers."

d. Brief get-acquainted period – names, settings where each participant tends to use trilingual interpreting services most.

II. Foundational Knowledge

a. What kind of general, global knowledge do trilingual interpreters need to possess that bilingual interpreters might not necessarily need? For example, what knowledge might they need about immigration, legislation, Latin American history, or Deaf history in Latin America? [Probe for Settings]

III. Language

a. The ADA defines a qualified interpreter as one who is able to "interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary." What Spanish, English and sign language skills does a trilingual interpreter need in order to interpret "expressively and receptively"?

IV. Culture

a. For this discussion, cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together to enable professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

b. What kind of cultural competency do trilingual interpreters need?

V. Interpreting

a. What are the different settings that trilingual interpreters work in, and what different skills do they need for different settings?

VI. Professional

    a. What types of professional behaviors are demonstrated by trilingual interpreters?

VII. Ethics

    a. What, if any, aspects of ethics are different between trilingual and bilingual settings? For example, do the roles of advocacy or boundary-setting (between interpreters and clients) need to be different in trilingual settings? Explain. [probe for settings]

VIII. Closing (5 min.)

    a. Is there anything that we have not touched upon that you feel is an important skill or competency for a trilingual interpreter to possess?

    b. "Thank you for your time."

Next Steps

Appendix I: Focus Group Tools

Hiring Entities Discussion Guide

For the moderator:

- The answers to some of the questions below may be different with regard to work settings and geographic locations. If the participants do not volunteer this information, it is important to probe along these lines for the pertinent questions:

  o Settings = "Would this apply differently depending on the setting, such as **Medical, Legal, Educational, Video, Work Abroad, Other**?"

  o Locations = "Would this apply differently depending on the **geographic location** in which the trilingual interpreter works?"

I. Introduction (10 min.)

   a. Greeting

   b. Purpose of the focus group (research objective)

      i. "The overall goal of this particular NCIEC Task Force endeavor is to identify and vet competencies and skills specific to trilingual interpreting. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force is engaging in approximately 15-20 focus groups nationwide. The information gleaned from these activities will assist the Task Force to: 1) **identify a set of general competency domains for use in organizing the competencies and skills:** and 2) **craft a draft set of competencies to be vetted by trilingual stakeholders."**

   c. Ground rules

      i. "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that this session is being recorded, so please speak as clearly as possible and one at a time. The session will last approximately 1 hour, so make you are someplace comfortable. Because this is being conducted over the phone, please give your participant number or name before speaking. This study seeks to gain your ideas and opinions on various topics related to trilingual

> interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers."

    d. Brief get-acquainted period – names, usual work settings

II. What do you look for in a trilingual interpreter in terms of language abilities?

III. What do you look for in a trilingual interpreter in terms of cultural competency?

IV. What kinds of interpreting skills do trilingual interpreters possess that are different than ASL-English, bilingual interpreters?

V. Think of the most ideal trilingual interpreter that you have ever hired. What qualities did he or she possess that made him or her stand out from other candidates?

VI. Think of a trilingual interpreter that you have hired who was not effective for a particular assignment or in general. What was he or she missing that other trilingual interpreters possess?

VII. What knowledge or abilities must a trilingual interpreter possess that a bilingual interpreter does not when working

    a. In a medical setting?

    b. In an educational setting?

    c. In a legal setting?

    d. In a VRS or VRI setting?

    e. In a foreign country for an American Deaf consumer?

    f. In other settings we have not mentioned?

VIII. What kind of professional involvement do you expect from a trilingual interpreter that's different than that of bilingual interpreters?

IX. What kinds of ethical considerations might a trilingual interpreter have to take into account that a bilingual interpreter does not?

X. Closing (5 min.)

    a. Is there anything that we have not touched upon that you feel is an important skill or competency for a trilingual interpreter to possess?

    b. "Thank you for your time."

For the moderator:

- Any Yes/No questions in the discussion guide should be expanded on if participants do not do so themselves: "Under what circumstances do you think that should be so?"

- The answers to some of the questions below may be different with regard to work settings and geographic locations. If the participants do not volunteer this information, it is important to probe along these lines for the pertinent questions:

  o Settings = "Would this apply differently depending on the setting, such as **Medical, Legal, Educational, Video, Work Abroad, Other**?"

  o Locations = "Would this apply differently depending on the **geographic location** in which the trilingual interpreter works?"

I. Introduction (10 min.)

   a. Greeting

   b. Purpose of the focus group (research objective)

      i. "The overall goal of this particular NCIEC Task Force endeavor is to identify and vet competencies and skills specific to trilingual interpreting. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force is engaging in approximately 15-20 focus groups nationwide. The information gleaned from these activities will assist the Task Force to: 1) **identify a set of general competency domains for use in organizing the competencies and skills:** and 2) **craft a draft set of competencies to be vetted by trilingual stakeholders."**

   c. Ground rules

      i. "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that this session is being recorded, so please speak as clearly as possible and one at a time. The session will last approximately one hour, so make you are someplace comfortable. Please identify yourself before speaking. EXPLAIN TURN-TAKING RULES, DEPENDING ON PLATFORM

USED. In addition, because this is being conducted over the phone, please give your participant number or name before speaking. This study seeks to gain your ideas and opinions on various topics related to trilingual interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers."

    d. Brief get-acquainted period – names, usual work settings

II.   Language (40 min.)

    a. Spanish

       i. Describe the **language fluency** required of trilingual interpreters.

       ii. What, if anything, is important for trilingual interpreters to **know about the different varieties of Spanish**, such as lexical differences, differences in the forms of address, etc.? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

       iii. How important is it for trilingual interpreters to be able to **use a variety of Spanish** different than their own? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

       iv. Should trilingual interpreters assume a **"neutral accent"**? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

       v. How important is it for trilingual interpreters to be able to **read and write in Spanish**? [Probe for Settings]

    b. Sign Language

       i. What, if anything, should trilingual interpreters know about **signed languages from Latin America**? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

       ii. What, if anything, should trilingual interpreters know about the **history of signed languages** used in Latin America?

    c. English

       i. Is it important for trilingual interpreters to have a **native-sounding accent in English**? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

       ii. Do trilingual interpreters need any **special training in English** that is a product of it being their L1, L2, or L3?

    d. Language mixing

       i. [Provide definition]: "Currently, there is very little research on "language mixing," which is commonly employed by many of our deaf consumers.

An example of "**language mixing**" is when a deaf consumer signs in ASL, mouths in Spanish, and fingerspells in English. Another example is when a deaf consumer introduces signs or structures from a foreign sign language."

  ii. How often do you encounter language mixing?

 iii. What related skills do you think trilingual interpreters need in order to approach interpreting effectively for this consumer?

III.   Technology (5 min.)

  a. What online, software, or hardware **resources**, if any, do you feel are crucial for trilingual interpreters to do their work? [Probe for Settings]

IV.   Closing (5 min.)

  a. Is there anything that we have not touched upon that you feel is an important skill or competency for a trilingual interpreter to possess?

  b. "Thank you for your time."

<center>**Trilingual Practitioners**

Discussion Guide "B"</center>

For the moderator:

- Any Yes/No questions in the discussion guide should be expanded on if participants do not do so themselves: "Under what circumstances do you think that should be so?"

- The answers to some of the questions below may be different with regard to work settings and geographic locations. If the participants do not volunteer this information, it is important to probe along these lines for the pertinent questions:

   o Settings = "Would this apply differently depending on the setting, such as **Medical, Legal, Educational, Video, Work Abroad, Other**?"

   o Locations = "Would this apply differently depending on the **geographic location** in which the trilingual interpreter works?"

I. Introduction (10 min.)

   a. Greeting

   b. Purpose of the focus group (research objective)

      i. "The overall goal of this particular NCIEC Task Force endeavor is to identify and vet competencies and skills specific to trilingual interpreting. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force is engaging in approximately 15-20 focus groups nationwide. The information gleaned from these activities will assist the Task Force to: 1) **identify a set of general competency domains for use in organizing the competencies and skills:** and 2) **craft a draft set of competencies to be vetted by trilingual stakeholders.**"

   c. Ground rules

      i. "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that this session is being recorded, so please speak as clearly as possible and one at a time. The session will last approximately one hour, so make you are someplace comfortable. Please identify yourself before speaking. EXPLAIN TURN-TAKING RULES, DEPENDING ON PLATFORM

USED. In addition, because this is being conducted over the phone, please give your participant number or name before speaking. This study seeks to gain your ideas and opinions on various topics related to trilingual interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers." Brief get-acquainted period – names, usual work settings

II. Foundational Knowledge (20 min.)

    a. What **legislation**-related knowledge has helped you when interpreting?

    b. What **legislation**-related information do you wish you knew when interpreting?

    c. What knowledge pertaining to **history** has helped you when interpreting?

    d. What knowledge pertaining to **history**, including Deaf history in Latin America, do you wish you knew when interpreting?

    e. What **immigration**-related knowledge has helped you when interpreting?

    f. What **immigration**-related knowledge do you wish you knew when interpreting?

III. Culture (20 min.)

    a. What role does **cultural competency** play in Spanish-influenced settings? Explain/expand.

    b. What role should the interpreter play in **bridging cultures**?

    c. What knowledge, if any, should trilingual interpreters possess regarding Latin American **public figures, news, television, and music**? For what reasons? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

    d. … regarding Latin American **geography and economics**? For what reasons? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

    e. … regarding Latin American **political, legal, educational and health care systems**? For what reasons? [Probe for Settings and Locations]

IV. Self-care (5 min.)

    a. What kind of **stressors** do you encounter in trilingual settings that you wouldn't encounter if that interpreting situation were bilingual? How do you handle them? [Probe for Settings]

V. Closing (5 min.)

    a. Is there anything that we have not touched upon that you feel is an important skill or competency for a trilingual interpreter to possess?

b.   "Thank you for your time."

For the moderator:

- Any Yes/No questions in the discussion guide should be expanded on if participants do not do so themselves: "Under what circumstances do you think that should be so?"

- The answers to some of the questions below may be different with regard to work settings and geographic locations. If the participants do not volunteer this information, it is important to probe along these lines for the pertinent questions:

  o Settings = "Would this apply differently depending on the setting, such as **Medical, Legal, Educational, Video, Work Abroad, Other**?"

  o Locations = "Would this apply differently depending on the **geographic location** in which the trilingual interpreter works?"

I. Introduction (10 min.)

  a. Greeting

  b. Purpose of the focus group (research objective)

      i. "The overall goal of this particular NCIEC Task Force endeavor is to identify and vet competencies and skills specific to trilingual interpreting. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force is engaging in approximately 15-20 focus groups nationwide. The information gleaned from these activities will assist the Task Force to: 1) **identify a set of general competency domains for use in organizing the competencies and skills:** and 2) **craft a draft set of competencies to be vetted by trilingual stakeholders."**

  c. Ground rules

      i. "My role will be to keep the focus group discussion on track. Note that this session is being recorded, so please speak as clearly as possible and one at a time. The session will last approximately one hour, so make you are someplace comfortable. Please identify yourself before speaking. EXPLAIN TURN-TAKING RULES, DEPENDING ON PLATFORM

USED. In addition, because this is being conducted over the phone, please give your participant number or name before speaking. This study seeks to gain your ideas and opinions on various topics related to trilingual interpreting in the United States and, as such, there are no right or wrong answers."Brief get-acquainted period – names, usual work settings

II.   Interpreting (30 min.)

a. In what **settings** do trilingual interpreters most often do trilingual interpreting?

b. How do you control or prevent any **biases** you may have toward your consumers? For example, toward hearing consumers who speak a variety of Spanish different than your own.

c. Is there a specific **paradigm or model** that trilingual interpreters should use when approaching their work? What is it?

d. What type of **preparation** for an assignment must a trilingual interpreter do that's different than a bilingual interpreter, if there is a difference?

e. What skills, if any, does a trilingual interpreter need in order to **assess the needs** of their deaf and hearing consumers? For example, to assess the Deaf consumer's signing or the hearing consumer's variety of Spanish.

f. Should trilingual interpreters know how to **interpret** between spoken English and Spanish? For what reasons?

g. … to **translate** documents between English and Spanish? For what reasons?

h. … to use **sight translation**? Under what circumstances?

i. … to use **consecutive interpreting**? Under what circumstances?

j. … to use **simultaneous interpreting**? Under what circumstances?

k. What kind of **turn-taking** management skills are unique to trilingual interpreting during in-person settings? Video settings?

l. Are there **any other elements of communication** that you have used while interpreting in Spanish-influenced settings in an effort to successfully create an interpretation your client(s) will understand? [Examples: Mouthing in Spanish; using a foreign sign; fingerspelling in Spanish]

m. What knowledge does a trilingual interpreter need to set up a **physical location** (i.e. placement of people in a setting), that a bilingual interpreter does not have to consider?

n. Where do you see the role of **Deaf interpreters** in trilingual interpreting?

III. Professional (5 min.)

a. What kinds of **professional competencies** must a trilingual interpreter possess that may be different than a bilingual interpreter?

b. Are there membership **associations or trainings** in which trilingual interpreters should be involved that are different than the associations or trainings for bilingual interpreters?

IV. Ethics (10 min.)

a. What role does **advocating** for our consumers (deaf and hearing) play in trilingual interpreting? [Probe for Settings]

b. What kinds of **boundaries** do you feel are important for trilingual interpreters to establish between themselves and their consumers? [Probe for Settings]

V. Closing (5 min.)

a. Is there anything that we have not touched upon that you feel is an important skill or competency for a trilingual interpreter to possess?

b. "Thank you for your time."

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