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Editorial

The Evolution of Interpreter Education Research and Dissemination

Jemina Napier, Editor¹

Heriot-Watt University

Welcome to the first issue of Volume 6 of the *International Journal of Interpreter Education*. For this editorial, which will be my final editorial as Editor of *IJIE*, I would like to review the evolution of interpreter education research and dissemination over the last five volumes of the journal.

We have seen the contributions to the journal shift over time to reflect the way that interpreter education research is evolving as its own subdiscipline of interpreting studies. Franz Pöchhacker (2010) discusses the importance and the role of research in interpreter education, and the publication of a journal that is specifically focussed on this activity not only gives us the opportunity to disseminate our research and share teaching activities, but also provides validation to the scholarly examination and exploration of interpreter education in spoken and signed languages.

In my editorial for Volume 1 of *IJIE* in 2009, I suggested that there were “burgeoning relationships in interpreter education” and envisaged *IJIE* playing a significant role in contributing to best practices in interpreter education. I borrowed various metaphors from the interpreting studies literature to emphasize that we need to “mine for diamonds” in interpreter education (as per Angelelli, 2004), and to lead interpreting students by the hand and mentor them into the profession. The first volume was dominated by signed language interpreter educator contributors, and although *IJIE* is published by an American organization that focuses primarily on signed language interpreter education and training (the Conference of Interpreter Trainers [CIT]), we have witnessed a significant increase in the number of contributions to the journal from spoken language interpreter educators. This shift further validates the need for information exchange across languages and modalities, as I addressed in my editorial for Volume 5(1) in 2013.

In addition to several research papers, Volume 2 featured commentary papers in which experienced interpreter educators shared their thoughts, curricula, and perceptions on the application of interpreting theory to interpreter education. *IJIE* has provided a forum, in addition to the biannual CIT convention, for educators to share their

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ideas about what works well in the classroom. It was also in Volume 2 that we introduced the Student Section, whereby aspiring interpreter education scholars—graduate students who have completed research projects related to interpreter education and who are experienced interpreter educators but may not have the experience of writing for publication—could submit their written work to the dedicated section in the journal.

Volume 3 concentrated on discussions of broad educational theory in adult and higher education and how it can be applied in interpreter education. This broader discussion of learning and teaching theories has been a common theme in many of the articles in *IJIE*, and has provided a strong foundation to frame our discussions and considerations. In this volume, we also began to recognize the importance of providing student-centered learning, and empowering students to learn.

In 2012, the journal moved to two issues per year, in order to accommodate an increasing number of submissions. Volume 4(1) included papers that discussed testing of interpreting students, ethics, and technology. Volume 4(2) featured papers on educating interpreters that were presented at the Critical Link: Interpreting in the Community conference in Birmingham, U.K., in July 2010, and my editorial contrasted the emergence of community interpreting and research in the spoken and signed language sectors.

In 2013, Volume 5(1) continued the theme of comparing spoken and signed language interpreter education research by exploring the similarities and differences and intersections of modalities in interpreter education, and Volume 5(2) confirmed the growing trends in interpreter education research, and the importance of evidence-based pedagogy, featuring several papers that were presented at the CIT convention in 2012.

This current issue of *IJIE* provides insight into the psychological skills that we need to develop in interpreting students (Atkinson & Crezee), the student perspective on interpreter education (Mo & Hale), how interpreter education is evolving in China (Zhan), and an innovative approach to providing an intensive interpreter training experience (Bentley-Sassaman, Houser, & Morrison). We also have two book reviews that are particularly relevant to interpreter educators (Bowen-Bailey and Major).

It is with regret that I have tendered my resignation as *IJIE* Editor, but I plan to remain on the editorial board. It has been a rewarding experience to see the journal flourish and to see more interaction between spoken and signed language interpreter educators, and new and experienced researchers. CIT has called for expressions of interest for a new editor, and I encourage you to think about it or recommend the opportunity to your colleagues. Furthermore, there is still a rolling call for manuscripts, so do consider submitting something for consideration in the Research or Commentary sections. If you are not sure where your manuscript might fit, do not hesitate to contact the new Editor, or any member of the Editorial Board, for advice.

As with previous volumes, I end my editorial with a quote. This quote I feel encapsulates the ethos that I have tried to embed within *IJIE*, and the ongoing values that I believe we all wish to see in the further development of the spoken and signed language conference and community interpreting profession.

Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today (Malcolm X).

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Improving Psychological Skill in Trainee Interpreters

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Abstract

The general effects of self-efficacy and explanatory style on performance have been thoroughly researched in the field of psychology. This article is based on Atkinson's (2012) psychological skill model, which attempts to construct these factors to complement traditional conceptions of interpreter and translator skill, and apply them to interpreter and translator training. The authors discuss psychological skill, including factors of self-efficacy, explanatory style, and locus of control, and outline how self-efficacy and explanatory style can become a focus of interpreter training. Resources to help students conduct self-analysis on their occupational self-efficacy and explanatory style are provided in the appendices, in the form of scales educators can use in their classes. A range of ideas are highlighted to assist students in becoming aware of their psychological skill, and pedagogical suggestions are offered for changing and improving aspects of psychological skill in students.

Key Words: psychological skill, interpreters, self-efficacy, explanatory style, teaching

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Previous research has shown the importance of psychological skill to the performance and success outcomes of freelance translators, including factors of occupational self-efficacy, explanatory style, and locus of control (Atkinson, 2012).

In this article, we discuss the notion of psychological skill as it applies to freelance interpreters and provide some materials and ideas that can be used in education settings to support student interpreters and ease the entry-to-practice transition. The article includes three self-assessment questionnaires that interpreter educators can give to their students to use for diagnostic purposes in terms of evaluating their psychological skill. We also include some suggested activities that can be used in the classroom to help interpreters to improve aspects of their psychological skill.

1. Introduction

The interpreting industry in Australasia is primarily composed of freelance interpreters. Freelance work requires relatively high levels of particular skills—self-motivation, self-confidence, and self-promotion. The three main interpreter-training programs available in Auckland, New Zealand, result in diplomas, certificates, or degrees in interpreting, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The programs include a mix of interpreting theory, ethics, contextual studies (i.e., terminology and features of particular areas of industry, such as law, medicine, and business), and interpreting practice (AUT University, 2012; Unitec, 2012; University of Auckland, 2012). None of them, however, particularly emphasizes training students in the area of psychological skill to help them to prepare for the special challenges of freelance work.¹

Upon successful completion of these programs, students are expected to graduate with the traditional skill sets required to interpret competently within their areas of focus. Graduates are expected to be reflective practitioners as they move forward in their careers, with regard not only to their interpreting skills, but also to their psychological skills. In other words, they are expected to develop into both competent and confident professionals who are not only capable of performing the tasks assigned or offered to them, but are also reasonably confident in their ability to do so. Professionals skilled at self-reflection are able to, on an ongoing basis, identify their weaknesses and focus on areas to improve. Devoting time within an interpreting program to self-assessment and the enhancement of psychological skills will encourage this kind of reflection, and it may particularly benefit those practitioners who end up working as freelancers, given the potentially isolating nature of this type of employment.

¹ AUT University's interpreting program teaches one session on assertiveness, in the context of building resilience in responding to criticism. This partly relates to explanatory style, and the tendencies concerning how people respond to such criticism.

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1.1 The Concept of Psychological Skill

Psychological skill is defined herein as the effects of self-efficacy, explanatory style, and locus of control on interpreters' work. In this article, we center on self-efficacy and explanatory style, due in part to restrictions on the use of Spector's (1988) Work Locus of Control scale, which we applied in previous research (Atkinson, 2012). This study originally arose out of a perceived lack of research and teaching focus on the attitudinal/personality/self-evaluative side of translation and interpreting practice.

Traditional interpreter and translator training focuses almost exclusively on technical and linguistic skill advancement, leaving psychological skills largely untouched, or addressing them implicitly rather than explicitly. Based on previous research on translators, which showed statistically significant correlations between measures of success in translators and positive aspects of psychological skill (namely, good levels of self-efficacy and a positive explanatory style; Atkinson, 2012), it appears important to develop those skills in students who are starting out professionally.

Those who start out with low psychological skill will not necessarily fail in their profession (unless they have extremely low levels of psychological skill, to the extent that they may become paralyzed through depression or lack of confidence); but development in this area will help those about to graduate. Based on related research and findings drawn from the field of psychology (Atkinson, 2012; Shea & Howell, 2000), components of psychological skill can grow organically throughout the duration of one's interpreting career, assuming the absence of strongly negative events of the type that could make a person want to quit their career. However, the initial development stage of entry-to-practice can be tough for novice practitioners. An "inoculation" of good psychological skill, particularly of occupational self-efficacy, can make this early period easier to go through, and may mitigate attrition from the field by ill-prepared practitioners.

We have observed, among students we have taught, that people with good levels of psychological skill have some difficulty understanding the relevance of it to themselves, or even to others. Those who are more introverted, or who tend toward self-blame or negative thinking under stress, find such discussion more relevant to them, because they understand the impact that such thinking can have on the tasks or studies that they attempt (Bartłomiejczyk, 2007). Such effects may result in procrastinating or in not attempting the task at all, or they may be related to excessive anxiety (Chiang, 2009).

An important assumption in this article (supported by research), and one that should be explicit in interpreter training programs is that a good level of occupational self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Bandura & Locke, 2003; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998) and a good explanatory style (Laird & Metalsky, 2008; Weiner, 1986, 2006) are desirable skills. A "good level" of occupational self-efficacy is that at which a person feels confident enough to take on a task that is a little bit more challenging than usual tasks. This encourages people to stretch and develop themselves, rather than stay in their comfort zone. Having occupational self-efficacy at an optimal level also means that people will not attempt efforts that are technically too difficult for them—in other words, in which there is a high probability of failure. In interpreting and translation, this is particularly important, because the quality outcomes can be critical. "Good explanatory style," a related skill, means that a person's explanatory style is normally a positive one—an individual takes a reasonable amount of personal credit for successful outcomes, which in turn boosts self-efficacy and encourages further efforts. It also means avoiding a negative explanatory style, in which people tend to consistently blame themselves for failure and/or attribute success to luck. Such a negative style has been associated with helplessness, negative affect, quitting, and even depression (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Robins & Hayes, 1995). This is generally a negative state of affairs for interpreters and translators, particularly because working as a freelance interpreter or translator can be quite isolating, which may augment such problems.

1.2 Summary of Findings in Relevant Previous Research

Previous research has focused on the relationship between psychological skill and professional success. Using various measurement scales, Atkinson (2012) found—among an international sample of 92 professional interpreters and translators with a minimum of 6 months' of experience—that work-related self-efficacy was statistically significantly related to measures of success such as income, hours worked per week, quantity of jobs

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per week, number of years in the industry, and job satisfaction. This research was conducted using quantitative correlational methods to measure 21 work-related and psychological variables, and was further investigated using ordinal regression models that showed the contribution of occupational self-efficacy, in particular, to the researchers' ability to predict key measures of professional success among the sample.

Using these regression models, occupational self-efficacy (as a key component of psychological skill) was a strong predictor of income, allowing numerical prediction—from a set of both psychological skill and work-related variables—of participants' income bracket, level of job satisfaction, and the amount of work desired (Atkinson, 2012). Correlational analysis also showed that occupational self-efficacy, locus of control, and explanatory style were statistically significantly related to measures of professional success, such as income, quantity of work, and job satisfaction. Participant interview data analysis supported the hypothesis not only that psychological skill contributes to success, but also that it improves as a result of success. In interviews, participants mentioned that having higher levels of psychological skill was a factor that helped them to advance themselves, because they were confident enough to accept new challenges—the successful completion of which, in turn, led them to further develop their confidence (Atkinson, 2012). Participants reported facing difficulties involving dealing with client feedback, challenging client misunderstanding around the nature and financial value of language work, and promoting and networking their own business.

Core competences on which interpreter training programs generally focus include research, transfer, writing, decision-making skills for translators (Fraser, 2000; Göpferich, Bayer-Hohenwarter, Prassl, & Stadlober, 2011; PACTE, 2011); and cognitive, memory, and psycholinguistic issues for interpreters (Kurz, 2003; Liu, 2008). In Translation Studies, psychological and personality issues have tended to be ignored or regarded as insignificant (apart from in isolated studies, such as Hubscher-Davidson, 2009). Thus, one of the gaps that we see in interpreter and translator education and training is the explicit effort to build student confidence and create awareness among students of how their psychological skills and self-evaluations can affect their actions and choices.

Bontempo and Napier's work (2009, 2011, 2012) provides an exception to the relative lack of research on psychological factors in the field of interpreting (aside from cognitive, memory-related, and psycholinguistic issues to do with performance—i.e., *process research*). Bontempo and Napier have explored interpreter performance and pedagogical issues in terms of interpreter personality characteristics; Bontempo has also raised concern regarding the possible link between interpreter personality and vulnerability to vicarious traumatization at work (Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012).

Bontempo and Napier (2009, 2011) asked whether personality assessment can form a useful part of interpreter selection for training programs. *Personality*, understood here as a constellation of behavior characteristics with long-term stability, is perhaps most famously modeled using the "Big-5" construct (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990). Personality in general has some solid relationships with work performance—particularly neuroticism, which is correlated with negative occupational performance, and conscientiousness, which is correlated with positive occupational performance (Neal, Yeo, Koy, & Xiao, 2012). The perfectionism construct, related to general personality but actually part of motivation theory, has also been a relatively good predictor of positive performance (Rice & Slaney, 2002), although excessive perfectionism can also have negative effects. Self-esteem, although potentially more transient and changeable than core personality, and more related to what are sometimes labeled "core self-evaluations," is also related to performance (Judge & Bono, 2001b; Judge, Jackson, Shaw, Scott, & Rich, 2007).

Bontempo and Napier (2012) have observed the same general patterns in relation to interpreter performance, with the major predictors of sign-language interpreter performance of a U.S. sample of interpreters being self-esteem and openness to experience (a component of the Big-5 personality model). They conducted the same study with an Australian sample and found the major predictors of interpreter performance were self-esteem and conscientiousness (again, a component of the Big-5 model). These findings tie in with concern for aptitude testing of people applying for interpreter training programs, so as to select the best candidates and reduce the failure rate (Russo & Salvador, 2004).

However, we focus in this article on what can be done *after* students have been accepted to an interpreting program, irrespective of any preprogram selection procedures. By its very definition, personality is difficult to change; psychological skill is less so.

2. Methodology

The basic method proposed here is self-assessment, which can be undertaken by using the scales provided in Appendices 1a, 1b, and 1c, using a self-report methodology (also used in Atkinson, 2012). This is relatively simple: Students read the scales and follow the instructions, summing their total scores at the end. Strictly for students' own self-evaluation, we provide score ranges, indicating students' placing for each scale. The scales are validated, have been used in prior research, and have undergone quality control measures (see Section 3.1 below).

The self-assessment procedure might run as follows. First, the students complete the scales and add up their scores, as per the instructions given. This gives them an idea of where they stand with the psychological skill components. The interpreter educator then explains the general range of scores and what they mean regarding psychological skill. It is vital that students complete the scales first, before explanation, because this will help to reduce effects such as social desirability bias (Nederhof, 2006).

The next crucial step in self-assessment is dealing with the results. After students complete the self-assessment, we recommend that they be given the opportunity to talk to the interpreter educator if any concerns arise. This is particularly important for those who may feel significant self-doubt after looking at their scores. The educator can provide information, after using the scales, noting what scale indications might be problematic, based on the information given here in the appendices. The debriefing is a standard technique for social science research, in case that research brings up some problem or anxiety on the part of the participant (Sieber, 2004). The same basic principle applies here, except that in this case we are also interested in teaching and improving on the basis of such feedback, rather than in simply reducing potential harm.

After the students have had time to think about their own responses, there should be an opportunity for the scores to be discussed in a general manner in the classroom. For example, the ranges and general significance of each part of the range can be discussed with students. It is recommended that this be done in as encouraging and supportive a manner as possible, so that students do not come away with the impression that they are "stuck" where they are. On the other hand, it may be that those with extreme scores could benefit from assistance and perhaps career counseling (offered discreetly), so they can verify for themselves whether they are suitable for interpreting, in terms of the "person-job fit" model (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

3. Materials

3.1 Self-Evaluation Scales

All three scales have been tested psychometrically by their original authors and have been used subsequently by other researchers. They have had their internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) tested by the main author; the alpha values were adequate for the explanatory style scales and very good for the occupational self-efficacy scale (Atkinson, 2012).

3.1.1 Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale

The Occupational Self-Efficacy scale was originally designed as a work-related self-efficacy scale by Schyns and von Collani (2002). It was designed to measure the degree of self-efficacy that users had, and focuses on their occupational self-efficacy rather than general self-efficacy. In essence, the scale measures how confident people feel towards their particular job—how capable they feel about using the skills they have to solve problems and to create successful outcomes. Note that *self-efficacy* is not the same as *self-esteem*, because it does not include a component of self-worth as a person (Judge & Bono, 2001a).

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3.1.2 Two Explanatory-Style Scales

The explanatory-style scales were originally designed as a single general-use scale for looking at locus of responsibility for negative and positive events (Brewin & Shapiro, 1984). This entails users making judgments on whether they see positive events and negative events as being caused by themselves or caused by external forces, such as situational factors or other people's actions.

The original scale involved two sections—Responsibility for Positive Outcomes (RPO), and Responsibility for Negative Outcomes (RNO). Factor analysis showed that there were at least two factors in the scale (Brewin & Shapiro, 1984), and our research showed that this separation was justified (Atkinson, 2012). The RPO section of the scale is divided into two sections, with three questions asking whether respondents consider that positive outcomes are due to luck, other people, or other *external* forces, and three questions asking whether respondents consider that positive outcomes are due to *internal* causes, such as effort and skill. The RNO scale, on the other hand, has six questions asking respondents about their perceptions of responsibility for negative events that happen to them. Most people will end up being higher on one scale than on the other, as these nominally measure opposing ends of the same construct.

4. Discussion and Recommendations

Explicit teaching about psychological skill will assist students in increasing their metacognitive awareness of how the presence or absence of this skill affects them, helping them understand the mechanics of how the components work. There are a number of options for teaching students about psychological skill. Three of these that we focus on are explanation, modeling, and role-play, which range from the theoretical to the practical (Sample scenarios are provided in Appendix 2). The descriptions here of these are necessarily brief.²

4.1 Explanation

Explanation describes to students how the components of psychological skill work within us—in other words, the theoretical mechanics of the components. The method of delivery is fundamentally a lecture about the basic details of self-efficacy and explanatory style in a user-friendly manner (lecture with examples, backed up with PowerPoint or similar media). Explanation of the components is an essential first step in developing student understanding. Many people are not consciously aware of the effects of particular types of self-evaluation on their subsequent behavior. Explanation can be supported with a video clip or other visual presentation to emphasize the key points. Visual presentation also provides a good link into the modeling method of teaching.

Half an hour or so to explain the basics of psychological skill should be sufficient. Accompanying the explanation with plenty of real-life examples can be useful in helping students to understand how these principles operate. Examples can be particularly helpful for those students who come from cultures in which Western-style psychology has yet to have a large influence in the public consciousness and/or is not part of the educational milieu. In our teaching practice in Translation and Interpreting (T&I) Studies, we have observed some students in this category who have benefited from examples to clarify their thinking about the components of psychological skill and how these might work for them.

4.2 Modeling

Modeling is the opportunity to learn from others by observing their behavior and then modeling that behavior. It takes education a step further from explanation, and builds upon it. Modeling is a fundamental component of learning, particularly of procedures and of behaviors (Bandura, 1971; Dowrick, 2012) and is described in

² The primary author is currently working on another article that outlines these methods in more detail.

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Bandura's theory of observational learning (Fryling, Johnston, & Hayes, 2011). Modeling can be achieved in the learning setting by having students observe behavior between various actors or watch videos. Role-play, another way to teach psychological skill, can also provide modeling in the classroom setting.

For example, the instructor can demonstrate the difference between explanatory styles regarding a single event, such as a criticism of interpreting performance, and show a number of ways in which the interpreter can explain the outcome. In an excessively negative explanation, the interpreter blames herself in a negative and unconstructive manner; in an excessively positive explanation, the interpreter blames others or the situation for her performance. The instructor can then present a "balanced" situation, in which elements of both personal responsibility and external causes are integrated and turned into something that the interpreter can deal with, without going to the extremes of self-punishment or refusing to take responsibility.

Modeling can also be demonstrated by showing video footage of professionals' responses to challenging work situations, or by inviting in professionals to discuss their experiences. A custom-made film clip might present a range of different situations, in which the principal actor performs a think-aloud-type protocol, explaining thoughts and decisions as they happen. Invited professional interpreters might explain to the class how their self-efficacy and explanatory style have been put to use in a number of specific situations. (Using professional interpreters as guest speakers would require that they be briefed beforehand, to ensure that they understand psychological skill and can communicate relevant information to the students.)

4.3 Role-Play

Role-play is often very effective for learning, practicing, and honing particular behavioral responses or patterns of action; it also presents good opportunities for modeling (Johansson, Skeff, & Stratos, 2012; Lane, Hood, & Rollnick, 2008). In the classroom, interpreter educators can role-play different characters at once (in other words, play the part of two or more individuals in a conversation), or they can involve particular students who feel confident enough to take on a role with the educator or with other classmates. Students who are high in confidence and volunteer to participate may benefit less directly from such training, because they typically already have good psychological skill. Nonetheless, their contribution offers an excellent peer modeling opportunity for other students in the class.

Instructors can also have teaching colleagues, or even professional interpreters, participate in the role-play—professional interpreters would have an advantage in being familiar with the situations the role-play might involve. In another method of role-play, the interpreter educator might have a student read a script concerning client criticism of an interpreter's performance and model the responses of high and low self-efficacy. Here, the teacher demonstrates role-play and also provides a model for the students. This can give students the confidence to try such an activity themselves, perhaps in pairs or triads.

4.4 Conclusions

Based on the research discussed in the Introduction, we advise allowing at least one formal teaching session within interpreter education and training programs for the development of psychological skill. The session can include a consideration of burnout, stress, and trauma concerns for interpreters, and sharing strategies to mitigate these (Bontempo & Malcolm, 2012; Crezee, Hayward, & Jülich, 2011)—in other words, broad psychological issues affecting interpreters. The research drawn from the broader field of psychology is clear that self-efficacy and explanatory style can be influenced by intervention (Hyde, Hankins, Deale, & Marteau, 2008; Proudfoot, Corr, Guest, & Dunn, 2009; Sofronoff & Farbotko, 2002). Such intervention undertaken as a part of basic interpreter education, to build awareness of the role of psychological skill in improving interpreter resilience and enhancing professional practice, will complement the current emphasis on technical and linguistic skills. We hope that our recommendations also provide inspiration for further research in this area, to observe and measure the effectiveness of different methods for teaching psychological skill development.

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Appendix 1a: Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (Schyns & von Collani, 2002)

The following questions ask you about your general beliefs about work and about your work as an interpreter. Think of a range of situations, both past and future, and answer the following questions based on how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Even if you feel that the question may not apply to you, try to draw upon your experience to answer.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
1) Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations in my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2) If I am in trouble in my work, I can usually think of something to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3) I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4) When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5) No matter what comes my way in my job, I'm usually able to handle it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6) My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7) I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8) I feel prepared to meet most of the demands in my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Scoring

After students have completed the scale, they can sum their scores. Scores on this scale range from 8 (very low occupational self-efficacy) to 48 (very high occupational self-efficacy).

Score Ranges

The range of scores can be a useful guide to students: 8–16 = *very low* occupational self-efficacy, 17–24 = *low*, 25–32 = *moderate*, 33–40 = *high*, and 41–48 = *very high*.

Appendix 1b: Explanatory-Style Scale: Responsibility for Positive Outcomes (Brewin & Shapiro, 1984)

Please answer the following questions concerning your attitudes towards positive events in general life and in your work as an interpreter.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1) It will largely be a matter of luck if I succeed in life.	1	2	3	4	5
2) If I get what I want in life it will only be through hard work.	1	2	3	4	5
3) In my case getting what I want has had little or nothing to do with luck.	1	2	3	4	5
4) I have found that success in anything is built on hard work.	1	2	3	4	5
5) Most of my successes have happened without my really trying.	1	2	3	4	5
6) Success seems to me to have been largely a matter of having been in the right place at the right time.	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring

After students have completed the scale, they can sum their scores. The sum of scores of Items 2, 3, and 4 indicate the tendency towards believing in personal responsibility for successful outcomes. The sum of scores on Items 1, 5, and 6 indicate the tendency toward believing in the responsibility of external forces or other people for successful outcomes.

Score Ranges

The sum of scores for Items 2, 3, and 4 range from 3 to 15. A score of 3 indicates a very low degree of belief in personal responsibility for success, whereas a score of 15 indicates a very high degree of the same.

Concerning Items 1, 5, and 6, a score of 3 indicates a very high level of belief in personal responsibility for success, whereas a score of 15 indicates a very low belief in the same.

Table 1: Responsibility for Positive Outcomes scale scores

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	Low responsibility	Moderate responsibility	High responsibility
Items 2, 3, and 4	3–7	8–11	12–15
Items 1, 5, and 6	12–15	8–11	3–7

Appendix 1c: Explanatory-Style Scale: Responsibility for Negative Outcomes (Brewin & Shapiro, 1984)

Please answer the following questions concerning your attitudes towards negative events in general life and in your work as an interpreter.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1) I usually blame myself when things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
2) For most of my misfortunes and disappointments I have nobody to blame but myself.	1	2	3	4	5
3) When I have been criticized it has usually been deserved.	1	2	3	4	5
4) My misfortunes have resulted mainly from the mistakes I've made.	1	2	3	4	5
5) When relationships with others have gone wrong I have usually felt that I was to blame.	1	2	3	4	5
6) When people have not liked me I have usually felt there was something wrong with me.	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring

After students have completed the scale, they can sum their scores. The sum of scores ranges from 6 (largely blame themselves for negative events) to 36 (largely blame others or outside influences for negative events), and is indicative of the degree to which people blame themselves when things go wrong for them.

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Score Ranges

The ranges of scores for all items are presented below.

Table 2: Responsibility for Negative Outcomes scale scores

Low responsibility	Moderate responsibility	High responsibility
6–16	17–26	27–36

Appendix 2: Sample Scenarios

These sample scenarios can be incorporated when teaching and discussing psychological skill in the classroom. For each, instructors should present a back-story of some kind the students. The students should then be given a few minutes to consider the issue themselves. The instructor can then ask the students to discuss their feelings and ideas about the situation, perhaps first with a partner, then with the class, for those who wish to (this latter part may tend to attract the more confident students). How they respond and how they feel may be indicative of level of psychological skill. The reaction will be entirely personal to each student who considers the scenario, and the aim of the methodology is to develop self-reflection and promote in-class discussion.

Scenario Example 1: *You are presented with the possibility of accepting an interpreting job that is within your abilities, but one which you consider will challenge you significantly. Would you accept it or not, and what would be your reasoning process for making your decision?* Those with higher levels of self-efficacy will probably be happy to accept such a job, whereas those with lower levels may not want to stretch themselves (so much) beyond their comfort zone. In this situation, a person's "risk appetite" (perhaps better expressed as "appetite for challenge"), which is at least partly influenced by their self-efficacy, can influence how much a person is predisposed to try new activities.

Scenario Example 2: *You receive some negative feedback from a client concerning the quality of your interpreting. The client alleges that some mistakes were made which led to a contract being cancelled. Thinking about it carefully, you are fairly sure that the quality of your interpreting was of a high standard. How would you apportion responsibility for this event? Do you think that your interpreting influenced the outcome, or is it more likely to be some other factor?* A question such as this should tap into the students' explanatory-style tendencies, and get them to start thinking about how they explain the causes of events. How they respond to a situation like this should also be reflected in the way in which they used the Responsibility for Negative Outcomes scale (see Appendix 1c), which will indicate how much responsibility they tend to take.

Translation and Interpreting Education and Training: Student Voices

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Abstract

The authors present the results of a small-scale study of students' perspectives about Translation and Interpreting (T&I) education and training offered in New South Wales, Australia. The study consisted of three phases: (a) the analysis of 13 current T&I education programs offered by five tertiary institutions approved by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI); (b) the distribution of an online questionnaire to students of those programs; and (c) face-to-face interviews with a select sample of these student respondents. Overall, the data collected suggested students' educational experiences were largely positive. However, there were some differences found in the responses from university students as opposed to vocational college students. The results of the study may help inform the design and improvement of T&I courses in Australia and elsewhere.

Key words: T&I education and training, student satisfaction, student expectations, T&I theory vs. practice

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Australian Context

Demand for interpreters and translators, especially in community settings, has been very high in multicultural and multilingual Australia since the early 1950s (see Ozolins, 1991, for a historical overview). The high demand, especially for community interpreters and translators,² led to the establishment of a national accreditation body, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) in 1977, translation and interpreting (T&I) degree programs in the 1980s, and a national professional association, the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) in 1987 (see Hale, 2004).

In Australia, two types of tertiary institutions offer NAATI-approved T&I programs: the vocational education and training (VET) sector institutions, which include colleges of technical and further education (TAFE) as well as private colleges; and higher education (HE) institutions, which include universities. Originally, all courses concentrated exclusively on community interpreting and translation, with conference interpreting added to the suite of university courses in more recent years. Most formal T&I programs are in New South Wales (NSW), the Australian state with the largest population; NSW also has the highest number of non-English speakers (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). NAATI-approved courses must comply with the NAATI guidelines on course content, contact hours, and final examinations as stipulated in its “Guide to Approval of Courses in Translating and Interpreting” (http://www.naati.com.au/approved_aust_courses.html) for initial approval, maintenance of approval, amendments, and reapproval. Nevertheless, although they all follow the same general guidelines, T&I programs vary in length of teaching period, curriculum design, and content.

It is almost universal practice for public service agencies in Australia to expect translators and interpreters to be accredited by NAATI at the professional level for available languages,³ but participation in formal T&I education and training programs of any kind prior to gaining NAATI accreditation is not compulsory. Therefore, there are two pathways to accreditation: via the completion of a NAATI-approved course/program of study, which includes assessment of T&I competence throughout a 1- to 3-year program, or by taking a one-time examination, lasting between 1 and 3 hours, prepared and administered by NAATI. As a result of the varied pathways, practitioners who have achieved the same level of NAATI accreditation, with the same language combination, may have very different academic backgrounds, with some practitioners having only a secondary-school level of

² Community interpreting and translation in Australia is referred to as *public service interpreting and translation* in Europe. See Hale (2007) for a detailed definition of the term.

³ See naati.com.au for a list of languages in which accreditation is available.

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education and others having completed postgraduate (including graduate diploma, master's, and PhD) degrees in T&I.

NAATI recently commissioned a review of its testing and accreditation practices, the full report of which can be found on its website (<http://www.naati.com.au/PDF/INT/INTFinalReport.pdf>). The first of 17 recommendations in the report states that “all candidates complete compulsory education and training in order to be eligible to sit for the accreditation examinations, in accordance with the new suggested model” (Hale et al., 2012, p. 7). The recommendation is supported by the findings of a national survey, which formed part of the above-mentioned independent review. However, the debate about the usefulness of T&I education and training was revived in a subsequent NAATI-conducted consultation.⁴ Over the years, some untrained practitioners have argued on the AUSIT e-bulletin that T&I education and training is unnecessary, supporting the idea that interpreters and translators are “born” rather than “made” (see Kruger & Dunning, 2009; Mackintosh, 1999, for an opposite view). Comments on the same e-bulletin have suggested that educators have a vested interest in promoting education and training and therefore cannot be trusted to be impartial in their arguments. This is one good reason for more independent evaluations of the effectiveness and usefulness of education and training for interpreters and translators.

1.2. The Value and Effectiveness of T&I Education and Training

Much has been written in support of education and training for interpreters and translators and on different pedagogical approaches and formats (see, e.g., Angelelli, 2006; Berk-Seligson, 1990; Cambridge, 1999; Hale, 2007; Mackintosh, 1999; Sawyer, 2006; Slayter, 2006). In the academic world, the debate is not about whether interpreters and translators should be trained or not; that is generally accepted. The debate focuses more on the approaches that should be used to achieve the most effective results. Sawyer (2006, p. 11) argued that effective training must incorporate all the areas of “knowledge, skills, and abilities” that interpreters will need to perform adequately. In relation to the goal of achieving such a task, Roy (2000, p. 1) commented that the main question posed by all educators associated with professional courses is “how best to teach students a body of knowledge, as well as a professional skill, that adequately meets entry-level requirements.” Most educators are confronted with the difficulty of achieving their ultimate goal amid time limitations, lack of resources, and inconsistent student ability levels (see Hale, 2007, for a discussion on challenges faced by educators). Similarly, there are different types of courses, in terms of duration, content, and educational level, that will inevitably deliver different results. All of these variables must be considered when assessing the effectiveness of education and training.

One of the most salient debates surrounding education and training has been whether T&I students should be “trained” to become practitioners by other practitioners, using the “master–apprentice” approach (see Pöchhacker, 2010, for a full discussion on the debate), or whether they should receive a more academically oriented approach to education (Sawyer, 2004), where the practice is informed by the theory. Another related debate has been the extent to which T&I education should be evidence based, informed by the results of applied research rather than based only on personal experience (Angelelli, 2006; Gile, 1990; Hale, 2007; Shlesinger, 2009). Angelelli (2006), for example, lamented that the curricula of courses that teach medical interpreting in the United States narrowly focus on technical skills and rarely include the results of research. Similarly, Hale (2007) argued for cross-fertilization among research, training, and practice.

It is important to note that T&I educators are always trying to improve their methods and many scholars have suggested improvements on pedagogy and curriculum design based on their own teaching experience (e.g., Kearns, 2008; Koskinen, 2012; Lederer, 2007; Rico, 2010). However, less has been written about students' or graduates' views about the usefulness of the education and training they have received (Li, 2000, 2002; Takeda, 2010). Even fewer studies have analyzed the effects of education and training on performance as compared with untrained practitioners (see Chacón, 2005, for one example). Erika Gonzalez's (2013) recent doctoral thesis tried to fill this gap by comparing the attitudes, theoretical knowledge, and technical performance of trained and untrained community interpreters in NSW Australia. She found differences not only among trained and untrained

⁴ NAATI has recently posted a report of the consultations conducted by NAATI itself on the INT report. This can be found on their website (naati.com.au) as a discussion paper.

interpreters, but also among those who received a VET and those who received a university education. It appears that the type of education received can play a role in determining the performance outcome for interpreters.

Although most educators routinely seek feedback from their students on each subject they teach at the end of each semester, such feedback is rarely made public and therefore not shared with other educators. Takeda (2010) argued that “in order to improve their teaching practices, interpreting teachers should be encouraged to pay close attention to students’ needs, expectations, wishes, concerns and opinions regarding their learning experience” (p. 39). It seems to us that a combination of approaches should be used to assess pedagogical effectiveness. This project has concentrated on eliciting feedback only from students and graduates.

1.3. Students and Graduates’ Feedback on Their Education and Training

The few studies that have looked at student and graduate satisfaction with their education and training have used a similar methodology, which includes surveys and individual interviews. Li (2000) conducted a study of the level of graduate satisfaction with regard to a 3-year program in translation in Hong Kong, which also included some subjects in interpreting. One question asked graduates to indicate their perceptions of how well the training reflected translation work in real life. Although none chose the answers *very well* or *well*, 85.6% of graduates assessed their translation training to be *adequate* (38.1%) or *somewhat adequate* (47.6%), with only 14.3% indicating that their training did not reflect the reality very well. Hale (2011) conducted a study of Australian spoken and signed language interpreting practitioners, asking them to rate the usefulness of the training they had received. All respondents but one (98.3%) considered their formal training to be useful in order to practice effectively as a community interpreter, a much more positive response compared to the Hong Kong study.

Li (2002) conducted another study of Chinese–English translation students in Hong Kong, asking them about their motivation for choosing the course and their satisfaction with it. Of note, only 17% of the respondents said that their motivation for choosing the course was to become translators. A high percentage of students (62.9%) considered that practical subjects were more helpful than theoretical subjects, and most thought specialized subjects were the most helpful in developing their skills. Such feedback is important for educators to ensure that any theoretical subject they teach is clearly relevant to improving specific practical skills and applying interpreting and translation knowledge and techniques in the real world. Indeed, the debate about the link between theory and practice is not new (see, e.g., the discussion in Chesterman & Wagner, 2004); nevertheless, it is important for educators to continue to reinforce the importance of teaching only relevant theories or of making their relevance clear to the practice.

Another type of course that has been delivered in Australia for T&I training purposes is the non-language-specific short, informal training course. Student feedback for such courses is normally positive (Hale & Ozolins, in press; Slatyer, 2006). However, the actual performance outcomes of such non-language-specific short courses are yet to be determined, with limited data collected regarding program exit competencies and successful future work performance. Hale and Ozolins (in press) found that the candidates of a short 40-hour course, run in English only, were very positive in their feedback. The students were asked to comment on what they considered could improve the course, and unsurprisingly, most said they needed more practice in their chosen language combination. They undertook two different types of assessment linked with their training program. The first was a test on the contextual, theoretical, and ethical knowledge acquired during the course, based on the lectures delivered by the course trainers in English. The second form of assessment was a bilingual interpreting test run and assessed externally by NAATI. The results indicated that the students performed very well in the first assessment task, obtaining an average result of 88%. However, they did not do so well in the second assessment task, with only four out of 14 students passing the external NAATI examination with the minimum pass mark of 70%. This result suggests that more time in interpreter training programs is needed to develop *language-specific* interpreting skills, in order for students to successfully pass such an examination.

It must be noted also that, regardless of a course’s length, it will always be impossible to teach students everything they need to know in order to be successful interpreters and translators. An effective course will equip students with the tools and strategies they can use in the future in order to continue to develop their knowledge and skills outside of the classroom, and to be lifelong reflective practitioners.

2. The Study

The primary objective of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of a sample of Australian T&I training programs from the students' perspective, aiming to answer the following research questions:

1. Are there any major differences between the various types of T&I training programs sampled in terms of curriculum design?
2. How do the current students perceive the effectiveness of these programs in preparing them for T&I work?
3. What aspects of education and training programs do students find most helpful, and least helpful?

2.1. Methodology

The study⁵ employed a mixed-methods research design, combining elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, consisting of three steps: (a) curriculum analysis, (b) online survey, and (c) follow-up interviews. The first step consisted of an analysis of the online descriptions of the different curricula, which was used to inform the design of the questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire were then used to design the questions for the follow-up interviews. The semistructured interviews also gave interviewees the opportunity to elaborate on their answers and clarify their points of view.

2.1.1 Desk Research: Curriculum Analysis

The five institutions selected for curriculum analysis included two from the VET sector and three from the HE sector. These institutions were selected based on the NAATI list of approved courses. At the time of data collection, there were only six approved institutions in the state of NSW, which were the three universities and one TAFE college selected for the study, and two private VET colleges. One of the private colleges was excluded because we were not given access to the required information, which made data collection impossible. The VET sector institutions were Petersham TAFE, a state-government-funded institution, and the Sydney Institute of Interpreting and Translation (SIIT), a privately funded college. The universities were the only three in NSW that offer NAATI-approved programs: the University of New South Wales (UNSW), the University of Western Sydney (UWS), and Macquarie University (MU).

Fifteen programs from those five institutions were then confirmed by the list of approved courses from NAATI (at the time of May 2012). Two Australian Sign Language (Auslan)–English interpreting programs were eliminated from the list. This was due to a number of reasons: the Auslan programs were offered at only one institution; our expertise is only in spoken language interpreting; and we also considered that there would be differences that could make comparisons difficult (see Napier, 2006, for an overview of Auslan–English interpreting programs at MU). Therefore, the curriculum analysis included 13 programs in total, with program qualification awards ranging from diploma level (lower than an undergraduate bachelor's degree) to master's degree programs.

All the course descriptions and other information on the programs were gathered via the Internet. Full lists of core units and elective units were collected and compared.⁶ The units were categorized according to the content suggested by their title. The items were first compared across the VET and HE sectors, followed by a comparison within each subgroup.

⁵ The study was part of the first author's research project for her Graduate Diploma of Arts in Research, which was supervised by the second author.

⁶ Note that programs can change subject titles/content and course information gathered at the time of the study may no longer be current.

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2.1.2 Method: Survey and Interviews

A survey was designed and administered online via the KeySurvey software. The survey was in the form of a questionnaire, which elicited demographic information from respondents, then, via a set of Likert scales, gathered data on students' levels of agreement with a number of statements regarding the programs' curriculum design, content delivery, usefulness to future career, and other aspects. At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to leave suggestions for program improvement and to offer any other comments.

The questionnaire was piloted with a small group of T&I graduates (10 students from one university and one private college) to test the questionnaire design. Changes were implemented based on the results of the pilot, after which the link to the online questionnaire was sent to the program coordinators in the five institutions, along with a "call for participants" poster for distribution to students via their internal systems or posted in a public area in their institution. As a result of this snowball sampling approach, the response rate cannot be calculated, because the size of the sample is unknown. The study received the approval of the UNSW Human Ethics Committee (#12015).

Nonprobability sampling on the basis of accessibility was necessary, and although the snowball technique was applied, the self-selecting respondents naturally fit into quotas that match the current T&I student population in Australian institutions, where the majority of program participants are Chinese-speaking students. At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to contact the researchers if they wished to participate in a follow-up interview. Interviews were recorded with the interviewees' consent and later transcribed. The transcripts were then used to conduct a thematic content analysis.

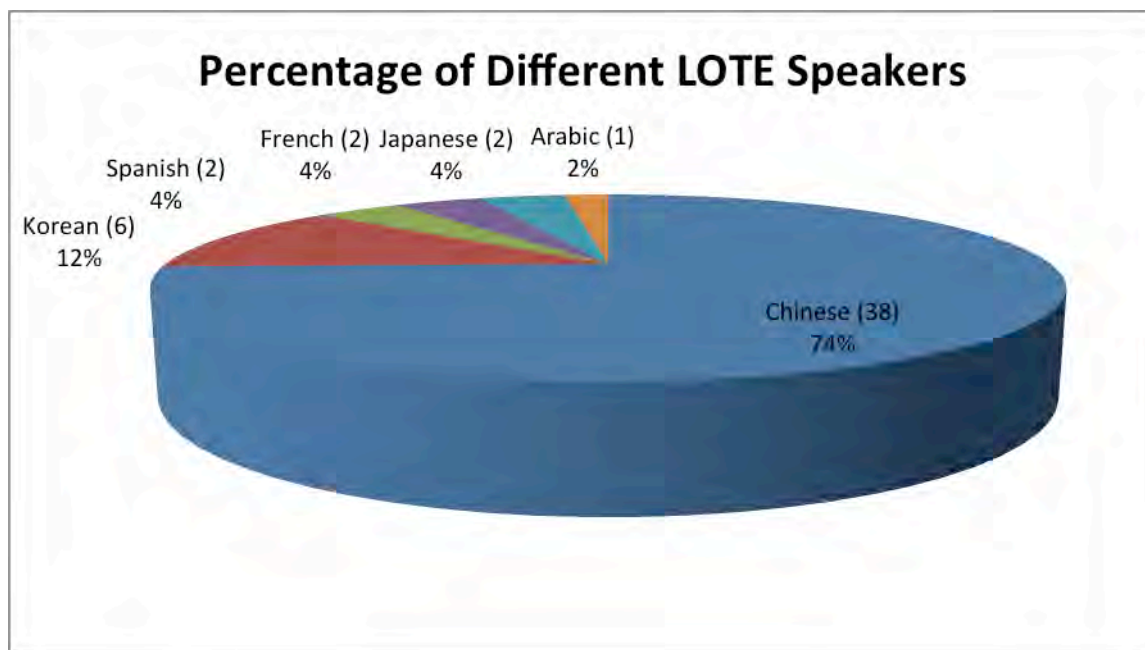
2.1.3 Participants

Fifty-five survey respondents completed the questionnaire, with 51 valid responses received. The majority of respondents (74%) were Chinese-English students, with only 13 respondents representing Korean-, Spanish-, French-, Japanese-, and Arabic-speaking students (see Figure 1).

Thirty-eight (68%) survey respondents were HE students, 11 (20%) were VET private college students and six (10%) were VET TAFE students. From the HE sector, 34 (62%) were master's degree program students. Slightly over half (55%) specialized in translation only, 40% specialized in both T&I, and the remaining 5% specialized in interpreting only, as can be seen in Table 1.

Five respondents volunteered to participate in further interviews, and each participant was interviewed by the first author for approximately 30 minutes. The five interviewees were students from the same university and all in their first semester, but they were affiliated with two different programs. Two were male and three were female. One of them was studying part time. Two were international students; the other three were Australian citizens.

Figure 1. Language other than English (LOTE) background of respondents.



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Table 1. Demographics of the online survey participants.

Question	Response percent	Response total
Q1. In which type of institution are you enrolled?		
University	69.09%	38
TAFE (VET)	10.91%	6
Private college (VET)	20.00%	11
Q2. In which program/courses are you enrolled?		
Diploma	7.27%	4
Advanced diploma	20.00%	11
Bachelor of arts (T&I)	0.00%	0
Graduate certificate	5.45%	3
Graduate diploma	5.45%	3
Master's degree	61.82%	34
Other	0.00%	0
Q3. In what semester are you?		
1st	52.73%	29
2nd	34.55%	19
3rd	12.73%	7
Other	0.00%	0
Q4. What are you specializing in?		
Translation	54.55%	30
Interpreting	5.45%	3
Both	40.00%	22

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Comparison of the Curriculum

The 13 T&I programs that were included in the analysis appear below in Table 2. The information was collected from online handbooks or official websites of each institution as of May 2012. As the table shows, only one university offered an undergraduate bachelor degree in T&I, the other universities offered postgraduate programs, and the VET-sector colleges only offered diplomas, which are qualifications beneath undergraduate degree level. Table 2 further compares the courses by accreditation type and level, and the varieties of approved languages. Our analysis showed that universities offered more language combinations than the two VET institutions. For example, UNSW offered up to eight language combinations (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Indonesian, Korean, Russian, and Spanish) whereas SIIT only recruited Chinese speakers. However, Petersham TAFE had up to five language combinations (Mandarin, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese), subject to resources and demand. Chinese (Mandarin and/or Cantonese) was the most popular LOTE in these T&I programs; it was the only language available in all 13 programs.

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Table 2: Institution, programs, accreditation, and language combinations.

Institution	Course	Accreditation type and level	Approved language(s)
Macquarie University	Postgraduate Diploma in Translating and Interpreting	Professional Interpreter and Professional Translator (both directions)	Chinese (translation only), French, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin (interpreting only), Spanish
	Master of Translating and Interpreting	Professional Interpreter and Professional Translator (both directions)	Chinese (translation only), French, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin (interpreting only), Spanish
University of New South Wales	Master of Arts in Interpreting and Translation Studies (MAITS)	Professional Translator (both directions)	Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish
	Master of Arts (Extension) in Interpreting and Translation Studies (MA Extension)	Professional Interpreter and Professional Translator (both directions)	Chinese (translation only), French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin (interpreting only), Russian, Spanish
University of Western Sydney	Graduate Diploma in Translation	Professional Translator (both directions)	Arabic, Chinese (translation only), Japanese, Spanish
	Graduate Diploma in Interpreting	Professional Interpreter	Arabic, Japanese, Mandarin (interpreting only), Spanish
	Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation	Professional Interpreter and Professional Translator (both directions)	Arabic, Chinese (translation only), Japanese, Mandarin (interpreting only), Spanish
	Master of Interpreting and Translation	Professional Interpreter and Professional Translator (both directions)	Arabic, Chinese (translation only), Japanese, Mandarin (interpreting only), Spanish
Sydney Institute of Interpreting and Translating (SIIT)	Advanced Diploma of Translating	Professional Translator (both directions)	Chinese
	Advanced Diploma of Interpreting	Professional Interpreter	Mandarin
	Diploma of Interpreting	Paraprofessional Interpreter	Mandarin
Petersham College - Sydney Institute TAFE NSW (Petersham TAFE)	Diploma of Translating and Interpreting	Paraprofessional interpreter	Korean
	Advanced Diploma of Interpreting	Professional Interpreter	Mandarin, Korean

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Although all NAATI-approved programs must comply with NAATI's guidelines, there is some flexibility permitted, which leads to the differences across programs. Each institution also must comply with its own institutional requirements. Institutions in the VET sector, which follows a competency-based teaching system, must also comply with the requirements of government-endorsed training packages. These packages prescribe the core units of competency and provide a list of elective units. Compared to the three universities studied, the VET institutions had less flexibility with regard to curriculum design.

The curriculum analysis found strong similarities across the three universities and noticeable differences between the university and the VET programs, which supported Gonzalez's (2013) results. The universities divided their programs into three major areas: (a) interpreting and translation theory and practice, (b) language and discourse, and (c) research. Under the first theme, all universities had specializations in both interpreting and translation (in legal, medical, community, business, and conference interpreting and in technical, specialized, and community translation, as well as translation technologies and subtitling). In most cases, each subject was self-contained and covered the many theoretical and practical aspects of the specialization, including issues that relate to professional and ethical obligations, setting-specific knowledge, as well as technical skills such as modes of interpreting. In relation to the second strand, the universities offered subjects in discourse analysis, pragmatics, and cross-cultural communication, as well as linguistics and language studies. Some universities offered research-methods subjects and a dissertation as part of their NAATI-approved programs, whereas others offered such research components as part of their other T&I programs that were not approved by NAATI.

Essentially, the universities offered the type of content suggested by Angelelli (2006), which includes the "development of skills in at least six different areas: cognitive processing, interpersonal, linguistic, professional, setting-specific and socio-cultural" (p. 25). The VET courses, on the other hand, concentrated almost exclusively on specific competencies that need to be acquired in order to work as either a translator or interpreter and divided them into separate units of competence. These included units of competence with titles such as "prepare to translate," "maintain effective management practices," and "analyze texts to be translated." This is due to the different nature of training packages in the VET sector as compared to HE curricula, which highlights the general inherent differences between universities and VET institutions in Australia. Universities have traditionally offered academically oriented courses whereas the VET sector has traditionally offered vocational/practice-oriented courses. The major noticeable difference between the HE and VET programs is the absence of discrete units in the VET program that deal specifically with the theories of interpreting and translation and in relation to T&I research. Apart from this, however, it seems that very similar content is taught by all institutions, but presented in different ways.

In addition to the regular subjects/units, all NAATI-approved programs require students to complete 75 hours of field practice for translation or interpreting. The practicum component was generally similar across all institutions in that they required students to do field observations, such as going to court to observe legal interpreters, or to obtain practical work experience such as doing free translations for community groups or nongovernmental organizations. Some institutions organized simulated practice with law or medical students of the same university, in the way of moot court exercises, for example. Some organized formal placements in T&I agencies or with companies that require T&I services during their business day. Some institutions set up virtual agencies and required students to undertake practice not only as interpreters and translators, but also as project managers, editors, and business owners. Petersham TAFE, for example, had an elective subject relevant to small business management called Monitor and Manage Small Business Operations.

One major difference found was the length of the programs. The analysis showed that course duration differed according to type of program and whether it covered both translation and interpreting, or just one or the other. The duration of programs ranged from 6 months full time for VET diplomas in either Interpreting or Translation to 1.5 years for a master of arts in both Interpreting and Translation at university level.

3.1.1 The Importance of the Program Descriptions to Potential Students

One of the survey questions was "Why did you choose this program?" Of interest, half of the respondents chose the option "course/program description." This response points to the importance of institutions' promotional

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materials about their programs. Moreover, one third of the respondents (34.55%) indicated that they received their information from the institution's website.

A major concern of the students when they were selecting a program was its reputation, with 12 of 55 students making this claim. The rest of the respondents provided various answers to this question, naming factors such as price (2/55), teaching staff (2/55), location (1/55), availability of certain LOTE courses (e.g., Korean, 1/55), qualification awarded (2/55), personal interest (2/55), out-of-business-hour class time (1/55), permanent residency in Australia (1/55), and "for a better future career" (1/55). However, in response to "How did you learn about the course/program?", more than half (29, or 52.73%) admitted that it was a "recommendation by the educational agent" that in turn led them to choose the program they chose. In other words, the course/program descriptions were not always the main source of information.

3.2. Student Evaluations of the Programs

The questionnaire consisted of a set of Likert scales via which students ranked their agreement with a number of statements about T&I program content and delivery. Overall, participants responded to the statements in a positive way (see Table 3 below). On a scale from 1 to 5, where 5 was the best score, the average ranking overall given to T&I programs was 3.5 out of 5. Most statements had percentages of positive feedback well above 50%, except for the last two statement about the usefulness of the practicum component and about whether the program met with all their expectations, which fell just under 50%.

Table 3: Responses to Likert scales.

Statement	(1)Strongly disagree	(2)Disagree	(3)Neutral	(4)Agree	(5)Strongly agree
1. The course/program has a good blend of practical and theoretical components.	0.00%	7.27%	23.64%	63.64%	5.46%
2. The applications of the theory are clearly articulated and implemented in the practical components.	0.00%	10.91%	23.64%	54.55%	10.91%
3. The course/program has provided me with a solid theoretical foundation on which to make practical judgments.	0.00%	9.09%	14.55%	52.73%	23.64%
4. The course/program has provided me with adequate skills development to perform as professional interpreter/translator.	0.00%	9.09%	21.82%	58.18%	10.91%
5. The course/program has provided me with a thorough understanding of the consequences of my interpreting/translation choices.	0.00%	3.64%	14.55%	61.82%	20.00%
6. The course/program has provided me with a deep understanding of professional ethical obligations.	0.00%	3.64%	14.55%	54.55%	27.27%
7. The course/program has provided me with all the knowledge and skills I need to start practicing as a professional interpreter/translator.	0.00%	18.18%	21.82%	54.55%	5.46%
8. The course/program has taught me about the results of research and their applications to interpreting and translation practice.	1.82%	16.36%	27.27%	52.73%	1.82%
9. The course has provided me with the tools to continue to acquire skills and knowledge after I graduate.	1.82%	9.09%	14.55%	60.00%	14.55%
10. The practicum component of the course was very useful.	1.82%	10.91%	30.91%	42.09%	7.27%
11. The course/program met all my expectations.	5.46%	14.55%	30.91%	45.46%	3.64%

Table 4 presents the statements in order of agreement. According to this survey, the programs were very successful (receiving over 80% agreement) at providing students with a thorough understanding of their ethical obligations and of the consequences of their choices. The next most positive responses, receiving over 70% agreement, were those that related to students receiving a solid theoretical basis that can be applied to the practice,

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and the necessary tools to continue to develop skills after graduation. With over 60% agreement from the students, it seems that students perceive that the programs provide them with the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills to perform their professional duties and tasks as professional practitioners. Less agreement was found for the statement that the application of research to practice was clearly articulated. This is probably because of the lack of any such opportunities in the VET sector courses. The least positive statements related to the usefulness of the practicum component and about the programs meeting all the students' expectations. These two received under 50% agreement. We speculate that the difficulty in finding adequate practicum placements for all language combinations may have contributed to the lower level of satisfaction with this component. However, with regard to the last statement, just over half of the respondents had higher expectations than what the programs were able to deliver. This is not uncommon for staff and students alike, who recognize that the duration of time is never enough to cover the many aspects of interpreting and translation that could be addressed in a course if more time were available (for example, note the views of educators presented in Hale, 2007). Nevertheless, the high degree of agreement with the statement about students being equipped with the tools to continue to develop their knowledge and skills after graduation is an important finding that can potentially counteract the limitations of any program.

All in all, the very positive results attest to the usefulness and effectiveness of T&I education and training in Sydney, Australia. These results corroborate those found in a previous study of Australian interpreters in which 98.3% stated that they considered their formal training useful for "effective practice as community interpreter" (Hale, 2011, p. 238). This is further supported by a recent survey of Australian practitioners, interpreter and translator agencies, educators, and NAATI examiners, in which 81.3% indicated that training should be compulsory for interpreters before becoming accredited by NAATI and 72% stated the same for translation (Hale et al., 2012). This finding is particularly important in view of the fact that currently any type of training is completely voluntary in Australia, leading to practitioners with the same level of NAATI accreditation having very different educational backgrounds.

Table 4 : Collapsed responses: Agree versus disagree in order of agreement.

Statement	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %
The course/program has provided me with a thorough understanding of the consequences of my interpreting/translation choices.	3.64	14.55	81.82
The course/program has provided me with a deep understanding of professional ethical obligations.	3.64	14.55	81.82
The course/program has provided me with a solid theoretical foundation on which to make practical judgments.	9.09	14.55	76.37
The course has provided me with the tools to continue to acquire skills and knowledge after I graduate.	10.91	14.55	74.55
The course/program has a good blend of practical and theoretical components.	7.27	23.64	69.1
The course/program has provided me with adequate skills development to perform as professional interpreter/translator.	9.09	21.82	69.09
The applications of the theory are clearly articulated and implemented in the practical components	10.91	23.64	65.46

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The course/program has provided me with all the knowledge and skills I need to start practicing as a professional interpreter/translator.	18.18	21.82	60.01
The course/program has taught me about the results of research and their applications to interpreting and translation practice.	18.18	27.27	54.55
The practicum component of the course was very useful.	12.73	30.91	49.36
The course/program met all my expectations.	20.01	30.91	49.1

The students' concerns were reflected in the open-ended answers and the face-to-face interviews with five university students. The results from these two sources showed consistency. First, students requested more practice or practical components, even though our analysis found that all the curricula already put reasonable weight on the practical components. Students tended to consider that practice was more important than theory, particularly if they were required to learn theory that was not directly linked or applied to the practice. This corroborates Li's (2002) study, in which students stated that they preferred practice over theory. Moreover, students also mentioned the practicum and requested better management of these kinds of units. Second, students valued prompt and constructive feedback from trainers. However, they made it clear that not all educators were the same, praising some very highly and complaining bitterly about others. Third, students commented that they would like to have a larger pool of elective subjects available to them. When asked for their opinions on language enhancement within the T&I programs, all the interviewees reported being confident about their own language proficiency while admitting they felt there were major problems with some of their fellow students; however, none of them were firm advocates of a language enhancement unit, because they were suspicious about the results a short language enhancement unit could possibly achieve. Instead, they all agreed that students should have a high level of bilingual skills when commencing the program and then seek out their own additional ways of enhancing and maintaining their bilingual competence.

4. Conclusion

With this research study, we aimed to shed further light on the usefulness of T&I education and training viewed from the students' perspective. After a content analysis of 13 NAATI-approved T&I programs in Sydney, NSW, we set out to collect direct feedback from the current students of those programs. Students in the selected T&I programs were invited to participate in an online survey followed by face-to-face interviews. We acknowledge the limitations of this study, which concerned a small number of programs in only one city in Australia. However, because Australia is a pioneer in community interpreting education and training, with Sydney the location of the oldest and most established courses, we believe the results of our analysis can be useful to inform education and training in other areas, and in particular with regard to community interpreting. Despite the relatively small number of respondents, the research questions were addressed by the findings of the study. First, the similarities and differences between higher education programs and VET courses were highlighted in the curriculum analysis. Although Australia has a national accreditation system, it does not have a national pre-accreditation education or training requirement, and aspiring practitioners can choose to obtain accreditation via three pathways: by sitting a NAATI examination, by completing a vocational diploma, or by completing undergraduate or postgraduate degree programs. Gonzalez's (2013) study identified differences in knowledge, skills, and performance among three groups of community interpreters who had followed each of these three pathways. The results of our study shed further light on the reasons for such different outcomes, which may arise from the different curricula offered by universities and VET-sector courses. Our results showed that both types of programs had practical units and units

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on the code of ethics and related matters; however, the VET programs did not include theoretical and research-related units in their curricula. The university students interviewed all agreed that theory was important; however, they all expressed the need for increasing the proportion of practice time in the curriculum. This is not an unusual desire from students and educators alike. However, it is one that is unlikely to be satisfied in light of increasing budgetary constraints. For this reason, educators must explore alternative methods to provide more opportunities for practice without the need to increase face-to-face classroom hours. Improving the practicum component by offering students more opportunities to practice under a mentoring system with professionals could be one way of addressing this issue.

One interesting finding, which is somewhat peripheral to the programs themselves and often disregarded, was the importance potential students placed on the information found on official websites and on the advice of their educational agents. Such information and advice was crucial in their decision making about which program to choose. Program administrators must pay attention to the way they present their course information via their websites, because it can affect not only the number of students they recruit, but also the way future students form expectations about their programs.

The most important finding from this study, however, was the general support for T&I education and training. Overall, students found formal T&I education and training very useful and indeed necessary. None stated that they thought they had wasted their time and should have sat for the NAATI examination directly without undertaking any education and training. On the contrary, all respondents asserted that they would have wanted more time dedicated to education and training as they became more conscious of the complexities of the knowledge and skills required to become successful T&I practitioners.

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Professional Interpreter Training in Mainland China: Evolution and Current Trends

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Abstract

Professional interpreter training in Mainland China has developed tremendously since it was first included in higher education programs. China's unprecedented economic development, coupled with its rising strength in international affairs, have increasingly helped professional interpreter training obtain its academic status. Such a process has not only been rapid, but it has also shown characteristics typical of the higher education context in China. In this article, the author reviews the history and evolution of professional interpreter training in China and analyzes current trends. The author also points out some challenges and problems facing the training of interpreters in academic programs.

Key Words: interpreter training, Mainland China, academic programs, evolution, trends

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Professional Interpreter Training in Mainland China: Evolution and Current Trends

1. Introduction

Professional interpreter training in Mainland China emerged after China's adoption of the reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s, and it has been developing by leaps and bounds into the 21st century. The Chinese government's "going global" (*zou chu qu*) strategy strengthened the country's national competitiveness, which gave rise to the need for qualified translators and interpreters. The past few years have seen not only a wave of interest in professional interpreter training, but also its exponential growth across China. Against this backdrop, new trends, as well as challenges, have arisen regarding the status of interpreting as a discipline of study in Chinese higher education.

2. History and Evolution

Prior to 1978, no higher learning institution in Mainland China could claim to have a "professional" interpreter training program. Training in interpretation was seen as a part of foreign-language enhancement, and training in translation—at that time, mainly literary translation—was included in the 4-year program of a foreign language major (Zhan, 2010). Virtually no research was done to explore and account for the components of translation and interpretation in a complete syllabus of a foreign language program.

China's need for professional interpreters was still small then, given the country's limited participation in international affairs. It was natural that only a few excellent graduates from foreign language programs in the country's top-tier universities went on to pursue careers in interpretation, many for political purposes. Translation and interpretation, therefore, were seen as skills for which a good foreign language major should be qualified, without the need for additional (or professional) training (Zhong & Mu, 2008).

Considering that the first professional interpreter training school in the world was established in Mannheim, Germany, in the 1930s (Pöschhacker, 2004), China lagged behind in its professional interpreter training by nearly half a century. The first real effort was made after the People's Republic of China gained its legal position in the United Nations (U.N.) in 1971, when there was a sudden, surging need for translators and interpreters to work in the U.N.

In 1979, China established the first "U.N. Translator and Interpreter Training Class" (*yi xun ban*) at the then Beijing Foreign Languages Institute, as a joint program of the U.N. and the Chinese government; U.N. Language Services was directly involved in syllabus design, teaching, examination, and staff recruitment for graduates. This program, which ran for 12 consecutive sessions, was China's first initiative for professionalized interpreter

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training. Its success gave rise to China's first translation and interpretation (T&I) school, the Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation of Beijing Foreign Studies University, founded in 1994.

Prior to the establishment of this first T&I school, several universities in China had been offering collaborative interpreter training programs with foreign partners. Such initiatives, however, were projects of the individual universities, and were not guided or assessed by national education authorities such as the Ministry of Education or the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council. Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, for example, started its interpreter training program under the English Language and Culture Program with the British Council in 1993. Other efforts were made predominantly by Xiamen University, which cooperated with Deakin University between 1990 and 1993 to set up an experimental class of interpreting, and later with Westminster University between 1994 and 1998 to conduct interpretation training and research. These pioneering interpreter training programs laid a foundation for the later boom of interpreting programs across the nation.

In the early stages of its evolution, professional interpreter training in China showed some distinctive features, the most prominent being the incorporation of T&I into the academic discipline. In comparing the Chinese system of T&I education with that of the West, Gile (2010) stated,

In virtually all countries in the “West,” institutionally speaking, Translation is not officially an academic discipline per se. There are “schools” for translation and interpreting or “programs” for translation and interpreting, but very few “departments” of translation and interpreting. (p. 11)

In China, however, professional interpreter training soon acquired academic status, with the first Department of Translation and Interpretation established in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in 1997. With increasing interest and enthusiasm in the young (sub-)discipline, scholars of T&I studies soon moved into this specific field from various other disciplines, such as English language, literature, and linguistics. Since that time, professional interpreter training in China has gradually shifted from what Gile (2010, p. 12) called the “academic pole” to the “professional pole.” According to Gile’s distinction, the academic pole “could be represented by translation and interpretation courses within foreign language departments,” whereas the professional pole is “traditionally represented by ‘schools,’” with a philosophy “perhaps best represented by [the International Association of Conference Interpreter’s] AIIC’s documents on the topic.” The establishment of the Graduate Institute of Interpretation and Translation at Shanghai International Studies University and the School of Interpreting and Translation Studies at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, following Beijing Foreign Studies University, and the fact that these three major schools are members of the *Conférence Internationale Permanente d’Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes* (CIUTI), are the best examples of China’s development of the “professional pole” of interpreter training.

Needless to say, the transformation of professional interpreter training was achieved only as higher education institutions took an increasingly active role in the global community of education and research. Such a transformation involved developments in a number of areas in professional interpreter training, including creating T&I-specific degrees, standardizing the guidelines and methodologies of teaching, curriculum design, and connections with market demands.

3. Current Trends

3.1. Degree Programs

Boundaries between translation and interpretation as a means of foreign language acquisition and as a communication service are inherently and naturally blurred; therefore, Delisle (1988) distinguished between “pedagogical translation” and “translation teaching” and argued for the need for translator competence development. In the West, where it is not uncommon for an individual to master two or more languages, employers of translators and interpreters generally have a better understanding of the importance of professional skill training and look for credentials such as degrees or diplomas from professional training programs. In China,

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on the contrary, acquiring a foreign language is itself a task so demanding that the necessity of additional training for practicing translation or interpretation is largely ignored; the idea that mere proficiency in the working languages is enough for one to translate or interpret is still widespread. The establishment of the degree programs Bachelor of Arts in Translation and Interpretation (BATI) in 2005 and Master of Translation and Interpretation (MTI) in 2007 were thus key steps in the development of professional interpreter training in China.

Universities set up BATI and MTI programs following the national catalog, issued by the Ministry of Education for undergraduate programs and the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council for postgraduate programs. Universities must file an application, be assessed on their teaching and research capabilities, and obtain approval from either of the two offices before they may offer degree programs, have their names listed in the updated annual national catalog, and start recruiting students.

Since its initial establishment, the BATI program has been approved for 106 universities and the MTI program for 159 universities across the nation (as of the end of 2013). T&I is currently one of the most popular disciplines of study in China (Chai, 2007), and universities are increasingly applying as well as seeking approval to institute these programs. The trend is indicative of China's aggressive shift toward the Western tradition of professionalized interpreter training; moreover, the institutionalization of the disciplinary status of T&I parallel to linguistics and foreign languages and literature helps to clarify the distinctions and avoid confusions between language training and T&I training. Given the fact that this disciplinary shift took hold and expanded across the nation in only 5 years, a concern is whether the universities and the T&I market can indeed accommodate the new demand.

3.2. Student Recruitment and Employment

The BATI and MTI program handbooks, issued by the National Steering Committees for BATI and MTI Education in 2012 and 2010, respectively, describe the curricula and syllabi for the two programs. Despite similar general guidelines, BATI and MTI programs across China vary greatly in terms of recruitment numbers, program pathways, and specific courses—once universities gain approval for setting up a specific T & I program, they may decide for themselves how their program will be run.

Enrollment in the BATI program varies across universities, ranging from 15 to 90 students; in the interpreting pathway of the MTI, enrollment ranges from 5 to 60 students. Because universities in China generally see T&I programs as a new sector of growth, both in terms of attractiveness to students and benefit from higher tuition fees, the common mentality is to recruit more students. However, the actual numbers reached are influenced by various factors, including the geographic location of the university, history and quality of the specific program, faculty strength, resources provided, and competition among universities in the same region.

Students are recruited into the BATI program from the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (*gao kao*), in which they are tested on general subjects such as Chinese, math, and English—but not on their aptitude for interpreting. For the MTI program, students are generally recruited from the National Postgraduate Matriculation Exam, combined with an interview. Thus, in most cases, the candidate pool cannot meet the needs of recruitment for professional interpreter training programs. It is problematic too, that after students in the interpreting pathway of the MTI program finish the 2-year program, there are no professional interpreting exams. Students are awarded an MTI degree upon obtaining the credits and going through an oral defense for their degree thesis or report, but do not (need to) prove the professional competence of practicing interpretation work, which very often they have not developed.

It is therefore not surprising that after they graduate from specific programs of professional interpreter training, a large proportion of students do not get employed as interpreters, but rather make a living on their foreign language(s). Since the graduation of the first few classes of BATI- and MTI-degree holders, the interpretation market has not experienced the significant changes that were anticipated when the programs were first established. Because employers have not shown a particular interest or confidence in graduates who hold professional degrees of interpreting, the gap between market demands for truly competent interpreters and professional interpreter production in higher education still exists, particularly in second- and third-tier cities.

3.3. *Teaching Guidelines and Methodologies*

The establishment of BATI and MTI programs took place amid extensive discussions on teaching guidelines and methodologies. Zhong and Mu (2008) compared teaching T&I as part of foreign language teaching and as professional training of translators and interpreters, and illustrated the fundamental differences between the two. Trainers in China have looked to the experience of professional T & I programs in the West and have come to the consensus that teaching T&I involves imparting to students the nature, objectives, process, principles, and methods of translation and interpretation through skill development, with lots of practice. Translator or interpreter competence can only be gained through systematic training, not through mere foreign language enhancement or sharing of knowledge. With these guidelines, professional schools in China have adopted the “four principles of professional interpreter training” (Zhong, 2007), namely, T & I skills as the main objective of training, practice-oriented teaching, basic theories to guide practice, and progressive competence development broken down in different phases.

In 2007, the School of Interpreting and Translation Studies at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies submitted its English Interpreting Course series for the Ministry of Education’s National Model Courses competition, and its program was awarded the title of the first national model course of interpreting. On the heels of receiving this award, trainers at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies summarized and promoted their curriculum design as the “GDUFS model of interpreter training.” In the GDUFS curriculum, interpretation courses are arranged into four different tracks, each focusing on the development of a part of interpreter competence:

1. Language track: Chinese–English/English–Chinese interpretation with a contrastive approach.
2. Skill track: consecutive interpreting, sight interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, interpretation observation and appreciation, mock conferences.
3. Theme track: theme-based interpreting, business interpreting, court interpreting, interpreting for media, interpreting for diplomacy.
4. Theory track: interpreting theories and practice, introduction to interpreting studies.

3.4. *Training the Trainers*

Interpretation pedagogy can be divided into broad themes of *selection*, *assessment*, *curriculum*, and *teaching*. Regarding teaching, the quality of professional interpreter training also hinges upon the quality of trainers. A clear drawback to China’s T&I training programs is that most of the traditional translator and interpreter trainers have their training and research backgrounds in other disciplines such as English, linguistics, and literature. With surging numbers of BATI and MTI programs across the nation, the system has come to realize the importance of having translator and interpreter trainers that are frontline practitioners of translation and interpretation themselves. In a large country with only 31 AIIC members (as of the end of 2013), all of whom are based in the three metropolises of Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, the conference interpreting profession is somewhat underdeveloped and imbalanced. Because new interpreter trainers in universities of second- and third-tier cities have limited exposure to the interpreting profession, their teaching has mostly fallen short. It has therefore become urgent to hire and train more qualified teachers to meet the growing demands of professional interpreter training.

Chinese universities initially drew upon the rich experience of Western institutions and schools that had been successfully training interpreters for over half a century. Annually since 1997, the Translators’ Association of China (TAC) has been organizing T&I teaching summer workshops, in which experts from the Monterey Institute of International Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Shanghai International Studies University, and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies provide training for T&I instructors across the nation. The latest TAC workshop was held at Beijing International Studies University and drew around 60 trainees. In 2013, AIIC and

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TAC formally agreed to collaborate in training interpreter trainers; the first AIIC Training of Trainers (TOT) in Asia was held in July 2013 at Beijing International Studies University, with more than 30 trainees taking part.

National MTI TOTs were held six times between 2008 and 2013 at Shanghai Foreign Studies University, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University, and Beijing International Studies University to promote the ideas and methods of interpreter training for instructors of graduate programs. The National Steering Committee for MTI Education has required that every university with the MTI program send one instructor of interpreting, one instructor of translation, and one administrative staff member to workshops targeted to each. With the number of universities approved for MTI program growing over the years, attendance at the national MTI TOTs also increased. Trainers from the Interpretation Service of the U.N. and the European Commission brought international experience of professional interpreter training to these trainings. Another active organizer of TOT programs is Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, which hosted two MTI trainers training sessions in 2011 and 2012 for a total of 200 instructors.

As exchanges with foreign universities have increased, more teachers have been able to “go global” and participate in program observation or joint research at CIUTI-accredited schools. Instructors from major Chinese universities offering translation and interpretation programs at various levels are now receiving training in Paris, Geneva, Monterey, Leeds, London, and Bath, to name just a few Western locations.

4. Problems and Challenges

Professional interpreter training in Mainland China is growing on an increasing scale. However, the situation is not without problems and challenges. First among them is that the overwhelming majority of Chinese students enrolled in T&I programs are native speakers of Chinese and learned a foreign language only at school. Their L2 proficiency therefore quite often falls short of the requirements for a B language in professional interpreter training. Unlike in similar programs in more multilingual societies, language enhancement remains a key issue in China. The T&I programs need help to improve their language enhancement efforts, as well as aid in teaching interpretation to students whose L2 proficiency has not reached a sufficient level.

Instructors of professional interpreter training programs also could benefit from further training, because most of them, if not all, developed their foreign language(s) at school and are not in the best position to correct students' mistakes. The very limited number of native speakers of foreign languages in the pool of teachers makes high-quality training more difficult.

Most important, in a highly homogeneous country like China in which the population of native speakers of foreign languages is comparatively small, “the need for much translation into a foreign language is conspicuous and may require special attention,” as Gile (2010, p. 17) put it. Interpretation from L1 into L2 has not been heavily emphasized in Western professional schools, but it will be a major topic for interpreter trainers in China, and therefore demands a Chinese solution.

5. Conclusion

The training of professional interpreters in Mainland China, despite its relatively short history, has experienced rapid development, particularly in higher education. China's peaceful rising means that more of its voice needs to be heard in global affairs. Current trends in professional interpreter training will certainly continue well into the future. Given the challenges facing interpreter trainers in China, efforts should be made to improve the quality of such training with foreign language enhancement, syllabus development, training of trainers, and market standardization.

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Interpreter Boot Camp: Working Toward Achieving Interpreter Standards

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Abstract

A project was established in the state of Pennsylvania to mentor interpreters who scored between 3.0 and 3.4 on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), missing the state minimum standard score of 3.5 or higher. This article serves as a template for interpreter trainers interested in setting up an interpreter “boot camp” to assist graduates in bridging the gap from an interpreter training program to work in an educational setting. Four mentees and four mentors, two instructors from interpreting programs, and one educational consultant participated in the Pennsylvania Interpreter Boot Camp. Although not all mentees achieved the targeted 3.5 score when they retook the EIPA, all did improve their interpreting skills.

Key Words: boot camp, mentor, mentee, Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment

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Interpreter Boot Camp: Working Toward Achieving Interpreter Standards

Deaf children in the United States have a right to a qualified educational interpreter during classroom instruction under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; Classroom Interpreting, n.d.). The word *qualified* can have different meanings. In order to define it, states have enacted laws to restrict who can interpret in educational K–12 settings; many use a minimum score on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), a measure of interpreter performance. EIPA scores are based on 38 criteria and scored on a 1–5 scale. Of the states that require the EIPA, there is disparity as to what score deems an interpreter as qualified. Twelve states that use the EIPA to qualify educational interpreters require a score of 3.5 out of a scale of 5 (Classroom Interpreting, n.d.). Four states require a 4.0, and seven require a minimum of a 3.0 (Classroom Interpreting). The state of Pennsylvania requires a score of 3.5. To increase the pool of interpreters achieving this minimum, to meet the interpreting needs of the deaf students in the state, staff from the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN; the entity responsible for the provision of training for educational interpreters), in collaboration with the program coordinators of the state’s interpreter training programs, developed the Interpreter Training Program to Pennsylvania School Boot Camp. This article will discuss the inception, implementation, and results of this project.

History

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania School Code, Chapter 14, “Highly Qualified Personnel” (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2008), which mirrors the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), outlines regulations for educational interpreters (22 Pa. Code § 14.105(b)). The law states that all educational interpreters who work in K–12 settings must attain a minimum score of 3.5 on the EIPA or be registered with the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (as a nationally certified sign language interpreter). Interpreters are also required to earn at least 20 hours of staff development activities related to interpreting or transliterating annually (22 Pa. Code § 14.105(b)(i-iii)). When the law went into effect in 2008, approximately 100 educational interpreters met the state minimum standard. To assist with bringing aspiring educational interpreters’ skill levels up to the required minimum score of 3.5, a formal mentorship program was established. PaTTAN, an initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education that is responsible for providing professional development and technical assistance related to special education issues, included goals for establishing such a program in its State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), which was funded through the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

PaTTAN’s Educational Interpreter Mentorship Program was established in April 2008. The goal of the project was to expand the pool of highly qualified interpreters—those who had achieved a minimum EIPA score of 3.5—to work in educational settings, through a formal mentoring program, regional interpreting labs, and continuing professional development. Eighteen educational interpreter mentors were trained by experts from the DO-IT Center at the University of Northern Colorado. Mentors’ academic and credential eligibility requirements were a minimum score of 4.2 on the EIPA, a bachelor’s degree (preferred) or an associate’s degree from an accredited college or university, and at least 3 years’ experience working in an educational setting. The mentor training component consisted of 6 days of face-to-face training, which included methods of skill assessment, techniques

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for discussing interpreting performance, prioritizing of skill development needs, and strategies for enhancing reflective practice and decision making among K–12 interpreters.

Upon completion of the training, mentors worked one on one with individuals who had attained an EIPA score between 2.4 and 3.4. Each mentor had access to regional interpreting labs, which included professional development materials to support technical skills as well as the role and responsibility germane to the educational setting. At the time this article was written, 72 aspiring educational interpreters had been entered into the PA Educational Interpreter Mentorship Program. Of these, 49 attained a 3.5 or better on the EIPA. The remaining 23 participants continue in the program.

EIPA test administrators in Pennsylvania, acting as consultants for PaTTAN, discovered that the majority of students who graduate from American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter training programs (ITPs) were unable to reach the state minimum requirement score of 3.5. PaTTAN engaged ITPs in the dialogue to determine how to reduce the number of lower-scoring interpreters working in educational settings and increase EIPA scores to the 3.5 minimum. This effort additionally met one of the goals of the SPDG, collaboration with preservice programs.

In 2009, PaTTAN began conducting quarterly meetings with the state's three ITPs. Since the meetings began, a fourth ITP was established. (Two of these programs grant bachelor's degrees and two are community college programs granting associate's degrees; all focus on general interpreting.) Through informal discussions, the participants formulated ideas for helping to prepare qualified interpreters to enter the educational setting. An idea for a "boot camp" emerged, and an educational consultant from PaTTAN and two instructors (each representing a different ITP) further met to brainstorm setting up a program that would enhance the skills of new interpreters to meet the state minimum standard. Because the state already had a pool of qualified mentors who had undertaken extensive training, this seemed like a viable project to help bridge the gap and increase the number of educational interpreters in Pennsylvania meeting the state-established minimum requirements for qualification. The result was aptly titled the ITP to PA Schools Boot Camp.

Mentoring and Sign Language Interpreting

In classrooms all across the United States, deaf children are placed in a mainstream setting with an educational interpreter. For these students, the interpreter is their gateway to language and education. However, in a study of the skill level of educational interpreters, Schick, Williams, and Bolster (1999) concluded that "educational interpreters who work in public schools are not always qualified to provide a child with an adequate interpretation of classroom discourse" (p. 150). As a result of interpreted messages that may be incomplete, these deaf children are not always receiving equal access to education.

The negative impact of unqualified interpreters on the language acquisition and education of deaf students has been discussed in the work of Monikowski (2004); Schick, Williams, and Kupermintz (2006); and Standley (2005). Most ITPs in the United States are housed in 2-year community colleges, resulting in a short period of time to teach both language and interpreting skills. Many ITP graduates score below the common minimum 3.5 score on the EIPA (Schick et al., 2006) and lack necessary language skills. Winston's (2004) discussion of various issues related to the interpretability of the classroom further highlighted the complexities of interpreted education, highlighting crucial elements that ITPs may not have time to incorporate into their teaching. Schick et al. (2006) proposed the question, "What training is required to ensure that schools are able to hire graduates who are ready to work?" (p. 15). With this question in mind, this mentoring-focused project was developed.

According to the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC),

A mentorship is a supportive relationship established between two or more individuals where knowledge, skills, and experience are shared. The mentee is someone seeking guidance in developing specific competencies, self-awareness, and skills in early intervention. The mentor is a person who has expertise in the areas of need identified by the mentee and is able to share their wisdom in a nurturing way. The mentorship established between two or more individuals is unique to their needs, personality, learning styles, expectations, and experiences. In this relationship, the mentee has the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and observe a more experienced

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professional within a safe, protected environment. Through reflection and collaboration between the mentor–mentee pair or group, the mentee can become more self-confident and competent in their integration and application of the knowledge and skills gained in the mentorship demonstrating best practice. (n.d., para.1–2)

The relationship between a mentee and a mentor are as important as the mentorship itself. The individuals involved must have complimentary personalities. They also must have the same vision regarding the purpose and expectations of the mentorship. It is equally as imperative to understand each other's perspectives.

The NCIEC has published reports related to the needs of interpreters. The "Interpreter Practitioner Needs Assessment" (Winston & Cokely, 2007) discussed the results of a survey aimed to discover if interpreters felt prepared with the education they had received, where they currently work, settings in which they would like to work with proper training, perceived gaps in training, and specific training needs for the future. There were 3,903 interpreters who responded. The survey included demographics about the respondents and resulted in 16 conclusions. Interpreters noted inadequate educational opportunities and identified areas in which they would have wanted more training. Respondents strongly felt they needed more mentoring opportunities to improve their skills. Tenet 7 of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Code of Professional Conduct is Professional Development, which can take place in the form of mentoring (RID, 2005).

The "readiness to work gap" has been referenced in several articles (Bontempo & Napier, 2007; Patrie, 1995; Resnick, 1990; Wiesman & Forestal, 2006). Pearce and Napier (2010) referred to this gap as "the time in which an interpreter graduates from their training program but is yet to either be accredited/certified by the sanctioning body or develop sufficient professional practitioner experience" (p. 62). New interpreters are often sent out on jobs with little or no support; many educational interpreters work in isolation and are not typically afforded many opportunities for skill development.

As previously stated, the developers of the Boot Camp felt it was important to consider the characteristics of the interpreters to be invited to participate as mentors. Gordon and Magler (2007) stated that an effective mentor is supportive, patient, aware of roles and responsibilities, a clear communicator, an effective guide, committed, empathetic and respectful. According to RID, "Depending on the goal of the mentoring relationship, the mentor should have a working knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL); English; other languages, if relevant; interpreting methodologies; ethics; business practices; or other skills or knowledge salient to the mentoring relationship and the interpreting process" (RID, 2007, p. 2). The selection of interpreters to be mentors in the Boot Camp was based on these characteristics, as well as on their experience of training through PaTTAN's Educational Interpreter Mentorship Program.

Participants

Mentees

The ITP to PA Schools Boot Camp was developed to provide formal instruction coupled with one-on-one mentoring in an intensive 3-week program. The participant criteria were interpreters who (a) had graduated from an ITP within the previous 2 years, (b) had scored between 3.0 and 3.4 on the EIPA within the previous 2 years, and (c) expressed interest in working as an interpreter in the educational (K–12) setting. The interpreters who were selected as mentees agreed to (a) attend all days of the Boot Camp, (b) work with their mentor during the time between the Boot Camp and EIPA retake, and (c) retake the EIPA.

The state of Pennsylvania currently has four ITPs. At the time of this first Boot Camp, however, only three of the programs had recent graduates; the fourth was just getting established and had no graduates. For the purposes of this article, we will identify the two bachelor's degree programs as Programs A and B and the associate's

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degree program as Program C (see Table 1). It was important to have representation from all programs in the state that had graduates, and the Boot Camp met this goal (Program A had two graduates participating).

Table 1: Participating interpreter training programs

Variable	Program		
	A	B	C
Degree granted	BS	BA	AAS
No. of participating mentees	2	1	1

For this project, the number of mentees was limited to four. The PaTTAN consultant approached instructors to identify recent graduates who had expressed a desire to work in the K–12 setting but had scored between 3.0 and 3.4 on the EIPA. Three of the four mentees met the criteria. One had a score of 2.9 but was permitted to participate so there would be representation from the ITP from which she graduated. At the end of the Boot Camp, the mentees had to retake the EIPA test at the same level and language choice as they did with their first EIPA test.

Table 2: Mentee characteristics

Variable	Mentee			
	Cora	Cathy	Caitlin	Cindy
Date EIPA taken	12/12/11	7/25/11	12/3/10	3/16/2012
Level	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Elementary
Language	PSE	PSE	PSE	PSE
Score	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.9
Program	A	A	B	C

Note. PSE = Pidgin Signed English.

Mentors

Four mentors participated in the program, paired with the four low-scoring educational interpreters. The mentors were chosen out of the preexisting PaTTAN Educational Interpreter Mentorship Program mentor pool because each of them had undertaken extensive mentorship training through PaTTAN. Participants received training in utilizing the Ten-Step Discourse Analysis Process (Witter-Merithew, 2001) in their mentoring. Other materials provided by PaTTAN for their mentor program included a collection of resources called a “hub” of DVDs, books, and flip video cameras. These materials were provided by PaTTAN for this project as well. Therefore, each mentor had experience with the materials in the hub that were utilized during the Boot Camp. The mentors were also given the liberty to bring personal resources that they had found effective over the past four years of mentoring through PaTTAN’s Educational Interpreter Mentorship Program. The four mentors chosen for the Boot Camp were identified through review of number of mentoring hours (ranging from 65 to 192 hours), rate of improvement of previous mentees assigned to these mentors, as well as character traits of the individuals.

To match mentees with mentors, the PaTTAN consultant interviewed each potential mentee to gain knowledge of the individual’s character. The PaTTAN consultant also reviewed the mentees’ EIPA results pertaining to strengths and targeted areas for skill development. The PaTTAN consultant then matched each mentee with the mentor who would best meet the skill development needs and personality traits of the mentee.

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Table 3: Mentor characteristics

Characteristic	Mentor			
	Elaine	Eleanor	Elsie	Ellen
Years as mentor	14	5	27	15
EIPA score	5.0	4.5	4.2	4.2
Years working in K–12	17	6	36	23
Education in interpreting	AAS in interpreting	AAS in interpreting	MA in school counseling and guidance	AAS in interpreting

Boot Camp

Logistics

A location for the Boot Camp was needed. One of the participating institutions, University A, had a classroom and lab area that met the needs for the morning classroom lectures as well as private rooms in the library equipped with flat-screen TVs, VHS and DVD players, and computers. The dining accommodations were arranged so that the mentees and mentors could eat in the cafeteria. Overnight accommodations were arranged at a local hotel.

Curriculum

With the mentees' consent, the educational consultant provided the two instructors a copy of the mentees' EIPA results. The instructors identified patterns of weakness common to all four mentees: (a) discourse mapping, (b) appropriateness of fingerspelling, (c) prosody, (d) emphasis and register, and (e) sign to spoken English (voicing) with emphasizing important information. The EIPA scores of each of the mentees in each of these targeted skill areas are listed in Table 4. Classroom lectures and activities were developed around these areas, and materials for the curriculum were chosen from a hub of resources that PaTTAN had provided to each mentor: a collection of EIPA practice materials and source texts from Digiterp Communications.

Focusing on the five identified skill sets, the instructors communicated via conference call and email to develop a blended curriculum, with the PaTTAN consultant providing support and guidance. Mentees received articles to read in advance that were accessible online, as were all of the resources to be used in the course.

Table 4: Targeted skills for the Boot Camp and participants' EIPA score in that skill

Skill	Mentee			
	Cora	Cathy	Caitlin	Cindy
Discourse mapping	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.3
Appropriate use of fingerspelling	3.3	2.7	3.0	2.3
Prosodic information	3.3	2.7	3.0	3.0
Prosody register	3.0	2.7	3.0	2.7
ASL to English:	2.5	3.0	2.5	2.5

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Emphasizing important words

During the morning, there was focused instruction on each of the five targeted skills. In the afternoon, the mentees and mentors met one on one for activities and focused practice based on the morning sessions. Each morning the mentees recorded themselves interpreting predetermined stimuli, focusing on a specific skill set for the day, and reviewed and discussed the recorded work with their mentors in the afternoon.

Preparations

Prior to arrival, mentors and mentees received each other's contact information and established contact. Some mentors assigned work for their mentees to complete before the first day. All participants arrived at the hotel the day before the Boot Camp began; during dinner, the instructors and PaTTAN staff made final preparations, and the mentees sat separately and got to know each other.

Day One

On arrival at the university, the mentees recorded a baseline interpretation sample—a text at the appropriate grade level. Three of the mentees had taken the Pidgin Signed English (PSE) secondary stimulus exam and one had taken the PSE elementary stimulus, and they recorded baseline samples of these as well. In order to simulate testing conditions, each mentee was taken to a separate room for a warm-up period, was given the lesson plan for the stimulus content and a piece of blank paper to use for planning purposes, and had 10 minutes to review and make notes. After the preparation time, the mentees interpreted the stimulus, using flip cameras for recording. The videos were transferred onto laptops for the assigned mentors to view. The mentors collected their mentees' notes as well, to understand how they used their preparation time.

The instructors began the classroom portion by asking the mentees to describe their preparation for the interpretation: Three of the mentees wrote synonyms for some of the key terms; one mentee wrote nothing. All of the mentees said they mainly practiced fingerspelling the key terms outlined on the lesson plan.

The instructors began by talking about the importance of planning the interpretation, using the Ten-Step Discourse Analysis Process (TSDAP; Witter-Merithew, 2001). The instructors described each step and the group practiced together with a short English text. Participants were then given a longer English text to repeat the process with a partner. They then produced an interpretation of this text that was recorded and used in the afternoon session with their mentors. The participants said they felt that the TSDAP helped improve their interpretations.

After lunch, the mentees went to designated rooms in the library to meet with their mentors for 3 hours, to review the mentees' baseline video and the video recorded after conducting the TSDAP. The mentors and mentees discussed the videos and established plans for skill development. The mentees were assigned "homework" for that evening. All participants then gathered back in the classroom for a short debriefing meeting. The mentors, the educational consultant, and the instructors then excused the mentees and met alone to discuss how things went the first day. The mentors shared how each mentee was doing and offered each other suggestions for the next day's lessons and activities.

In the evening, the mentees and mentors returned to the classroom for skill-building activities following a short lecture, which on the first night focused on spatial mapping and classifiers. For the first activity, mentees watched a Pixar animated short video with no spoken language, while the mentors had their backs to the screen. The mentees used classifiers and their use of space to show the story to the mentors, and then everyone watched the video again together. The mentors gave feedback and offered suggestions for improvement. Then the mentees and mentors switched places; the mentors described the video clip and then they all watched the video and discussed using space and classifiers.

For the second activity, the mentees were each given a photograph and had to use only classifiers and their signing space to describe it while the mentors drew pictures based on the descriptions; then the drawings were

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compared to the photographs. This activity was performed with roles switched as well. The evening concluded, and the mentees went back to the hotel to work on their individual assignments.

Day Two

The second day of Boot Camp focused on prosody and spatial mapping. The instructors led short lectures on these topics and showed videos in which the mentees had to identify when spatial mapping was used. First, the mentees watched *Mirrored Math* (Bowen-Bailey, 2002), which consists of one clip of a hearing math teacher teaching a lesson on number lines and another clip of a deaf teacher teaching a similar lesson. The mentees interpreted the first video from English into ASL. The mentees then watched the ASL model, noting and commenting on the use of spatial mapping and prosody. If there were areas that the mentees did not note, the instructors pointed out those examples.

Later in the morning, another video clip was presented, from the CD-ROM *Goats, Trolls, and Numbskulls* (Bowen-Bailey, 2003): a lecture on the talking animal folklore genre featuring the story “The Three Billy Goats Gruff.” The mentees once again used the TSDAP and produced and recorded interpretations of the text for review with their mentors in the afternoon sessions. Utilizing the storytelling aspect of this text, the mentees could apply concepts of prosody and spatial mapping when interpreting from English to sign language, following the TSDAP to first plan out how they would use space and cohesion markers. Once they completed their TSDAP and interpretation, the group discussed the process.

After lunch, the mentees and mentors again went to the library to view the recorded videos and to work on skill development activities. They met for 3–5 hours, and both groups commented that they did not realize how fast the time flew by! The mentees found this individualized attention to be a critical component of the Boot Camp. At the end of the day, the mentors, educational consultant, and instructors debriefed. The mentors commented on the mentees’ motivation—the mentees were already incorporating the feedback they had received into their interpretations; the mentors noticed a difference after just one day. The mentees’ drive was inspiring to the mentors as well as to the educational consultant and instructors.

For the evening activity on prosody, the mentees and mentors created scenarios using the sound “bah” that they acted out. The mentees could use only the one sound, raising and lowering intonation to get the mentors to guess whether the scenario was a question, an accusation, or a statement of shock, sadness or happiness. This activity was a challenge for some, because the mentees could not act out the scenario along with making the sound “bah,” but it proved to be fun in the end. The mentors and the mentees took turns doing this activity.

Day Three

On the third morning, the instructors discussed the use of fingerspelling and sign-to-spoken interpreting in the educational setting. Again, the instructors led the lectures with the use of video examples, and the mentees completed a TSDAP process for the two texts that were used. In both texts, ASL was the source language. The texts (“Leila” and “Justin”) were from the EIPA practice videos (available from www.boystownpress.org). The recorded interpretations from the mentees were used in their afternoon sessions with their mentors. The goal of the texts was to help the mentees sound more natural in their spoken English interpretations, using prosody, cohesion markers, and proper sentence type (e.g., making a statement instead of asking a question).

The mentees and mentors met again in the afternoon for more on-on-one intensive skill development. This afternoon the mentor and the mentee created a skill development plan for the mentee to work on the following week. There was no structured evening activity; the mentees used the time to work on assignments the mentors had provided. Mentees took the skill development seriously throughout the course. Mentors appreciated the mentees’ motivation and were pleasantly surprised at the amount of improvement they saw in just a few days.

Day Four

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The final day of the Boot Camp was a wrap-up. The mentees arrived and went through the same exercise they had done on the first day when establishing their baseline videos; they were given the lesson plan and scratch paper for notes, and 10 minutes of preparation, then they were recorded interpreting the text. There was a notable difference in how the mentees prepared for this interpretation compared to the first baseline recording. For the first recording, all four mentees had made minimal or no notations. However, for the second, three of the four mentees used content prediction techniques they had learned, listing possible concepts, spatial mapping of content, and predictions of vocabulary that might warrant fingerspelling. The fourth mentee, who wrote nothing prior to the baseline taping, wrote a list of possible vocabulary terms. The mentors and mentees met and finalized an action plan for the following week.

The mentees then met privately with the instructors to talk about their experiences in the Boot Camp. The mentees spoke candidly, expressing their gratitude for the Boot Camp and describing the wonderful relationships they developed with their mentors, and they talked about how much they felt they had grown in such a short period of time. Mentees also provided feedback on how to improve the Boot Camp for the future.

Experiential Learning Theory Applied to Boot Camp

Interpreter education approaches learning through the students' experiences. Teachers set up assignments in which students have to interpret segments, self-analyze their work, receive critique from peers and the teacher, and apply those comments to improve their work in the future. This is the *experiential learning theory* (ELT) process (Kolb, 1984), grounded in how students experience learning. There are four abilities to the ELT cycle: concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualization (AC), and active experimentation (AE). Kolb (1984) described how students should go through the process:

[T]hey must be able to involve themselves fully, openly, and without bias in new experiences (CE). They must be able to reflect on and observe their experiences from many perspectives (RO). They must be able to create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories (AC), and they must be able to use those theories to make decisions and solve problems (AE). (p. 30)

This cycle of learning directly applies to the mentees' experience during Boot Camp. First, during the classroom portion, the instructors explained to the mentees the skill that was being focused on for that day. The mentees did video recordings where they had a concrete experience of interpreting a text. After the interpretation was recorded, the mentees were asked to reflect on their experience of interpreting and apply what they had learned from the lesson to their interpretation (RO). In the afternoon, the mentees went with their mentors for one-on-one time. The mentors and mentees viewed the recording, and the mentees were asked to reflect on and analyze their work (AC). The mentors came up with strategies to foster improvement in targeted areas for the mentees to apply to their next interpretation (AE).

As the mentees went through the cycle, they learned from their experiences. The mentors guided the mentees along the path of learning and showed the mentees how to incorporate new strategies and techniques into their interpretation skills. The tools that the mentees learned during the Boot Camp are ones that they can apply throughout their career as sign language interpreters.

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Summer Institute

After Boot Camp

Over the following week, the mentees and mentors worked together on skill development. The mentors assigned homework and the mentees completed tasks. Most of the mentoring during this week was from a distance through means such as Skype, email, and online Dropbox servers. The mentees and mentors then met again a week after Boot Camp ended, at the PaTTAN Educational Interpreter Summer Institute, an annual two-day training that PaTTAN provides for Pennsylvania educational interpreters working in the K–12 setting. The training focus of the institute is identified by reviewing that year's EIPA scores and determining areas of need for skill development. National presenters are brought in to address specific skill deficit areas. However, because the law states that working educational interpreters in Pennsylvania are required to earn a 3.5 on the EIPA, the target level of difficulty for this institute is relative to a 4.0 or higher, which was beyond the level of the Boot Camp participants.

During the Institute, the mentees and mentors gathered for a final meeting. To prepare the mentees for the retake of the EIPA, the culmination of the Boot Camp, instructors went over basic test-taking strategies. The mentors and mentees shared what they had been doing during the week between the Boot Camp and the Summer Institute, and the meeting ended with a fun game to help ease tension. On the morning of the test day, the mentors and instructors met with the mentees for last-minute advice and nurturing.

Results

All of the mentees who participated in the Boot Camp improved their EIPA score. Not all the participants earned the state minimum requirement of a 3.5, but all made improvements.

Table 5: EIPA Comparative scores

EIPA attempt	Mentee			
	Cora	Cathy	Caitlin	Cindy
Original	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.9
Retake	4.0	3.5	3.3	3.4

Cora and Cindy's scores jumped by 0.6 and 0.5 points, respectively. Cora had been working as an interpreter since she graduated from her ITP. Cindy had just taken her EIPA a few months prior to the Boot Camp. She received her scores in April and the Boot Camp began in June. Even though Cindy did not score a 3.5, the Boot Camp clearly impacted her skills exponentially. Cindy had not been working as an interpreter, but she had been working with deaf people in other capacities since her graduation.

Cathy improved her score by 0.3 points. She had been working as an interpreter from the time she graduated until the start of the Boot Camp. Through her efforts, she improved her score to achieve the state minimum needed—but the score belies her actual improvement. Caitlin had not been interpreting since graduating from the ITP, and her EIPA scores were the oldest: She had taken the test a year and a half prior to Boot Camp. We can speculate that had she taken the EIPA more recently, her baseline score may have been lower, and thus her improvement greater, due the fact she had not been working as an interpreter or with deaf people.

The mentees felt enriched by this learning opportunity. One mentee noted that the Boot Camp was “a wonderful life-changing experience. The positive encouragement that the mentors displayed day in and day out was amazing. In the few days I was there, I grew to become a better interpreter and it made me more passionate

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about interpreting.” The mentors also saw improvement; based on the EIPA retake, it was evident that the Boot Camp successfully assisted all the mentees in skill development.

Table 6 shows the breakdown of the targeted skills the instructors and mentors focused on during Boot Camp. In nearly all categories improvement is evident. The only outlier is Caitlin’s score.

Table 6: EIPA Comparative scores by skill

Skill	Cora	Mentee		
		Cathy	Caitlin	Cindy
Discourse mapping				
Original	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.3
Retake	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Appropriate use of fingerspelling				
Original	3.3	2.7	3.0	2.3
Retake	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Prosodic information: Emphasis				
Original	3.3	2.7	3.0	3.0
Retake	4.3	3.0	2.7	3.7
Prosody register				
Original	3.0	2.7	3.0	2.7
Retake	4.3	3.0	2.7	3.7
Sign to voice: Emphasizing important words				
Original	2.5	3.0	2.5	2.5
Retake	3.0	3.5	3.5	2.5

Conclusion

The Interpreter Boot Camp was ultimately a success. Every mentee who participated increased her EIPA scores. Even though only two out of the four achieved the 3.5 or higher required to work as an educational interpreter in the state of Pennsylvania, they all improved. The mentees commented that the experience was worthwhile and that they learned a lot in such a short amount of time. Mentors benefited as well. Reflecting on the Boot Camp, one mentor wrote to the PaTTAN Educational Consultant:

With your direction, your team brought together preeminent authorities in the field to provide the training and tools necessary to “grow” a mentor. As a result, not only was I able to support and assist my peers in “jumping the bar,” but personally and professionally I was tremendously enriched.

We hope that other states look at how these ITPs collaborated to orchestrate the ITP to PA Schools Boot Camp and consider replicating the program or creating a similar course. Raising EIPA scores by working with low-performing ITP graduates enlarges the pool of qualified educational interpreters; and it represents a step toward the ultimate goal of providing access to effective interpreting services for all children who need them.

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Book Review: Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators

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Crezee, I. (2013). *Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Key Words: healthcare, educators, guidebook

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Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators (John Benjamins, 2013), by Ineke Crezee, offers a significant contribution that is useful for both interpreter education programs and practitioners with a focus on healthcare. Whereas other works focus more on strategies and programmatic approaches for teaching interpreters about healthcare settings, Crezee's primary intent is to support practitioners in their work; but its organized and accessible format also makes it an excellent resource that educators can use to help acquaint their students with healthcare settings. Perhaps just as important, it is also a resource that students can continue to use after graduation, making it a worthwhile investment.

Interpreters in healthcare settings are often called into situations regarding which they do not have an in-depth knowledge, such as a meeting with a rheumatologist, an appointment with a cardiologist, or a visit to an endocrinologist. Unless interpreters work as part of a large staff, they are generalists in a field full of specialists. Out of this reality comes a need for an effective resource to support the quality of interpreting services for both patient and provider.

Crezee, an interpreter, translator, and educator based at Auckland University of Technology, responded to this need by writing *Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators*. In a conversation I had with Crezee about her motivation for the book, she was clear that the idea was not her own. Instead, it came from her students: In 1996, a woman who worked as a Vietnamese-English interpreter approached her and explained the type of book that she was looking for as an interpreter in healthcare settings. Ideally, the student thought, the book would be divided into different specialties, with chapters including an overview of the particular body system, an explanation of Latin and Greek roots in medical terminology that might be employed, common conditions and their signs and symptoms, and procedures or tests that might be used in diagnosis and treatment.

Crezee realized that there was no such resource and decided that she needed to write the book herself. She took on this challenge and originally self-published a book that became a constant companion to numerous interpreters and translators working in healthcare in New Zealand. Crezee's primary mission was to provide a practical resource—both for practitioners and educators—that would help raise the standard for interpreters and translators in healthcare settings. The success of the “Blue Book,” as it was called (because of its cover) by the community of interpreters and translators who used it provided the foundation for this updated edition.

A Guided Tour

I consider this book to be a “guidebook” for interpreters working in healthcare settings. If you were planning a trip to a foreign country, you would look for a dependable guidebook to help you navigate unfamiliar territory. Similarly, this book provides interpreting students and practitioners with a guide to the unfamiliar territory of the healthcare setting. Crezee's book is more than simply a textbook for those interested in interpreting in healthcare; it is a resource that interpreters can carry with them as support in their professional journey—useful whether it is the first trip into this territory or one of many.

Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators is written in English. For interpreters working in signed languages, the numerous charts and images are beneficial for the visual forms of communication. Yet the text will be of benefit regardless of the language that is paired with English.

The Contents

The book is divided into three sections. In Part I, Crezee shares general thoughts on interpreting in general, the need and requirements for interpreting in healthcare settings, considerations on how culture shapes the work interpreters do in healthcare as well as how patients perceive the healthcare experience, and a framework for preparing for medical terminology.

In Part II, Crezee focuses more specifically on healthcare and, in different sections, gives insight into the types of settings and staff that interpreters might encounter:

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- primary physicians/general practitioners
- outpatient clinics and specialist clinics
- hospitals
- emergency departments/ERs
- informed consent
- pre-operative and post-operative procedures
- intensive care
- obstetrics
- child health
- speech language therapy
- mental health
- oncology

Each of these sections contains a description of what might be expected in the setting. Many, although not all, contain “some notes for interpreters and translators,” which provide practical considerations to prepare for working in the setting.

Part III focuses on healthcare specialties. These sections have a consistent format that includes the Latin and Greek roots of terminology one might encounter, the anatomy (structure) and physiology (function) of parts of the body that might be important in these settings, health professionals who might be encountered in the setting, disorders that patients might present, common drugs used, and common investigations or treatments employed.

The specialties addressed are

1. Neurology
2. Cardiology
3. Respiratory system
4. Hematology
5. Orthopedics
6. Muscles and motor system
7. Sensory system
8. Immune and lymphatic system
9. Endocrine system
10. Digestive system
11. Urology and nephrology (The urinary system)
12. Reproductive system

How to Use This Book

In the opening of Chapter 1, Crezee shares a suggestion for how to use the book. She writes, “Health interpreter educators may want to use the book as a course text, while health interpreters may want to use this book as a reference, checking briefly on anatomy, terminology and most commonly encountered conditions before leaving to interpret in a certain setting.” These two options are helpful to think about. For interpreter education, the book could be a wonderful introduction to what is involved for interpreting in a healthcare setting. A larger benefit, however, is the valuable resource it offers working interpreters.

It is not reasonable to expect that interpreters (whether students or experienced practitioners) will master every healthcare setting they find themselves in. However, a resource like this helps interpreters to effectively prepare for an assignment in a time-limited way. Much of the information contained in the book exists on the Internet, but Crezee has done the work of distilling the information into a much more concise and trustworthy form. She gives interpreters a “temporary mastery” of the information—that is, readers can review a chapter, commit the information to short-term memory, and use it within a short period of time that allows them to be more

effective in a particular setting. Having the resource at their fingertips means interpreters do not have to commit the time and effort that medical professionals need to gain a more “long-term mastery” for access at a variety of times and settings.

Conclusion

Educators and interpreters alike will welcome Crezee’s contribution. Crezee has done the field a favor by distilling relevant information about healthcare settings and practice into a well-organized and accessible format that both introduces students to healthcare settings and supports interpreters and translators as an ongoing reference.

Book Review: Advances in Interpreting Research

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Swabey, L., & Nicodemus, B. (Eds). (2011). *Advances in interpreting research*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins.

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Advances in Interpreting Research, edited by Laurie Swabey and Brenda Nicodemus, is a welcome book in a field of research—interpreting studies—that is relatively new and arguably lacking in strongly developed methodologies and research-based pedagogies. The book addresses this issue with chapters that tackle an interesting mix of related topics, ranging from discussions of the theoretical underpinnings of interpreting studies, to reporting on methodology in research and initiatives in education, to very practical advice for new researchers in the field. At first glance through the contents and authorship for this book, the reader could easily assume that the book is heavily weighted toward signed language interpreting. Several chapters will appeal most clearly to those with an interest in signed language interpreting; however, the majority of chapters are targeted at, and relevant for, the wider field. The editors explain that they compiled the volume after observing a paradigm shift, in that practitioners and educators want to incorporate more evidence-based research into their practice, but they do not necessarily have the schema to do so. The intended audiences for the book are interpreters, interpreter educators, and aspiring researchers, and I agree that it would be a very relevant resource for all of these groups.

The volume begins with Franz Pöchhacker's chapter, which situates current interpreting studies within the wider research field. The chapter goes right back to the underlying philosophical approaches of the field, and the diverse array of theoretical conceptualizations of the topic, stemming from interpreting studies' origins in a variety of other disciplines (being written about from the "outside"), before it became a field in its own right. Pöchhacker also outlines the range of methodological approaches that have been used, and highlights the exciting possibilities of mixed- or multimethod research. The chapter may be theory heavy for those new to research, or for anyone who is not a frequent reader of academic texts, but it is worth investing the time to read this extremely insightful, balanced and fairly comprehensive summary of where we have come from as a research field.

Next, Debra L. Russell provides a clear guide to the research process with a focus on research questions. She provides practical tips for defining a topic based on the researcher's interests; setting relevant, interesting, and answerable research questions; strategically using the literature and feedback from expert researchers to refine them; and then going about collecting the data needed to answer the research questions. Russell makes the chapter especially relevant and easy to read by relating her advice to her own research experience (including her doctoral research). This chapter would be invaluable to any novice researcher in our field, and a must-read for any PhD candidate wondering how to narrow down a topic for study.

Barbara Moser-Mercer's chapter takes the reader back again to the big picture, discussing the field of interpreting studies using Shneider's (2009) descriptive framework of the different stages of a scientific discipline. She suggests that the field is largely in Stage 2, wherein researchers are still describing the range of phenomena that comprise the field of study. However, she sees the field heading toward Stage 3, which will entail, among other things, more specific knowledge, new paradigms, new methods, and a sharp increase in publications. Her chapter conveys a clear and important message that in order to ensure a prosperous and exciting future for the field of interpreting studies, the field must take great care at the current time to invest in the development of robust methodologies, and educators must teach students how to become good and methodologically sound researchers.

Melanie Metzger and Cynthia Roy describe their experiences in collecting and analyzing naturally occurring interpreting data involving a signed language. This is a valuable addition to the volume, given that the field of signed language interpreting research lags markedly behind spoken language interpreting research in this regard—not least because the use of video recording is a necessity, not an optional extra to audio recording. Focusing on a 3-year pilot study they conducted, the authors outline the problems they faced—in gaining ethics, approval collecting data, recruiting participants, setting up cameras in small spaces, and transcribing and analyzing complex interaction involving two modalities—and how they responded to them. They also suggest a number of practical recommendations for the proposed creation of a corpus of signed language–interaction data. This chapter is an absolute must-read for any researcher of spoken or signed language interpreting planning to collect naturally occurring data.

Minhua Liu's chapter is a review article focusing on methodologies in recent interpreting studies, based on research articles published in the journal *Interpreting* between 2004 and 2009. Her analysis is meticulous and gives a useful snapshot of both qualitative and quantitative interpreting research in recent years, and she also discusses the increasing use of mixed-method studies in the field. As well as highlighting potential new directions for research, Liu describes some methodological weaknesses of studies, or, more often, gaps in the information

provided to the reader about the study. A clear and useful appendix is also included, in which all of the studies included in the analysis are laid out, with key information about methodology, data, and analysis.

Jemina Napier's chapter is an accessible guide to publishing research on interpreting. It is aimed at novice or aspiring researchers, and is an autobiographical account, at least in terms of research. That is, Napier refers to her own research and publishing journey throughout, and shares her own opinions about the merits of publishing. Given that she is a highly prolific publisher of interpreting research herself, this is advice to be taken seriously. Her main point is that research is crucial for advancing theory and practice, but has zero impact if it is not published. Napier gives practical tips for coming up with research ideas, explains how and why collaboration is useful, and gives advice on what and where to publish. This chapter complements Debra L. Russell's chapter extremely well.

Lorraine Leeson discusses the complexity of issues surrounding assessment within signed language interpreter education, a topic that has not been well represented in the literature to date. This chapter is clearly targeted at educators, that is, those involved in creating, administering, and judging the effectiveness of tests. It canvasses a wide range of topics, from the need for distinction between testing learner achievement and language proficiency and interpreting competency, to issues relating to test design and identifying minimal levels of competency needed by interpreters. Throughout the chapter, Leeson constantly poses questions that those involved in the assessment of interpreters should consider, and in this sense the chapter is useful to all interpreter educators, not only those testing signed language interpreting.

Jens Hessman, Eeva Salmi, Graham H. Turner, and Svenja Wurm's chapter is a call for signed language interpreting as a profession to become more engaged with research. To this end, they describe an initiative to develop students as researchers: the EUMASLI (the European Master in Sign Language Interpreting) program, which is run across three European countries and comprises a blend of face-to-face, video-conference, and distance learning. The program is built upon an ethos of research-based practice, and the authors suggest that through knowing not only what they do, but *why* they do it, interpreters can become reflective practitioners, which in turn will empower the profession as a whole. While this points made in this chapter are very relevant to the wider field, some of the details—for example, the discussion of International Sign as a useful teaching topic in the EUMASLI program—is probably much more meaningful for readers with backgrounds in signed language and signed language interpreting.

The book then shifts to focus on issues more specific to signed language interpreting. Applying the framework of narrative inquiry, Rico Peterson provides a personal account of his experience as a practitioner in order to argue the need for a distinction between interpreting and the work of “communication assistants” in video relay service in the U.S. He conveys a clear sense of the conflict that lies between his passion for the work on the one hand and the impact of privatization of this service, including a lowering of competency and certification standards, and inadequate working conditions. On the surface this chapter seems to appeal to a very specific audience, and its personal and subjective nature is another point of difference from many other chapters in this volume. However, it is an illuminating read even (or maybe especially) for those outside of the field, and may have relevance for the impact of privatization on other interpreting services.

Robert Adam and Christopher Stone explore the fascinating, “hidden,” history of signed language interpreting through a description of historical documents, in order to uncover the role of deaf people as language brokers (or “ghostwriters”), who interpreted and translated for other deaf people throughout history. Their research focuses mainly on documented instances of ghostwriting by deaf people in Europe, North America, and Australia, and they show that some things that may seem new to us (e.g., aspects of the modern day deaf interpreter's role), have in fact likely been going on for centuries. Their chapter thus provides a historical context for modern day signed language interpreting.

Finally, Laurie Swabey and Brenda Nicodemus highlight the scarcity of research on bimodal (signed/spoken) health care interpreting in the U.S., and outline the systemic factors that have given rise to this state of affairs, including a lack of scholarship in the field, a lack of incentive or opportunity for educators in the field to have advanced degrees, and a general lack of research-led practice. They argue that in order to change this situation, we need to change the way we view this type of work, and create a specialization of health care interpreting within the field. As well as highlighting these gaps, the authors provide both compelling and practical suggestions for how this could happen.

In summary, this is an extremely useful book for educators, interpreter practitioners, and novice or aspiring researchers in the field. Regardless of its clear skew towards signed language interpreting research, the majority of the book is relevant to the field of interpreting studies as a whole. The collection of chapters gives a real sense of the background of the field, current gaps in research and research-based practice/education, and importantly, a sense of what conducting research on interpreting is actually like. I particularly appreciated the book's strong focus on methodology, which is generally a weakness of the field, and of signed language interpreting research in particular. As well as canvassing a diverse range of topics, the book is well edited, stimulating, and easy to read.

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