

Keynote Presentation: Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz

Interpreter History from a Deaf Academic, Administrator, and Leader

Zaboosh *What Works* Online Conference | Thu 8 Oct 2020 6:00pm–8:00pm MST



Deaf Academics on Interpreting



Barbara Babbini Brasel (1925–2002)

The Effects of Fatigue on the Competence of Interpreters for the Deaf [MA]. San Fernando Valley State College. (1969)

Significant physical / cognitive fatigue after 30 minutes, & “It would be awkward to switch mid-lecture.”



Lawrence R. Fleischer (1945–2009)

Sign Language Interpretation under Four Interpreting Conditions [PhD]. Brigham Young University. (1975)

ASL vs. SEE, with and without access to preparation material:
1) ASL w/prep 2) ASL no prep
3) SEE w/prep 4) SEE no prep

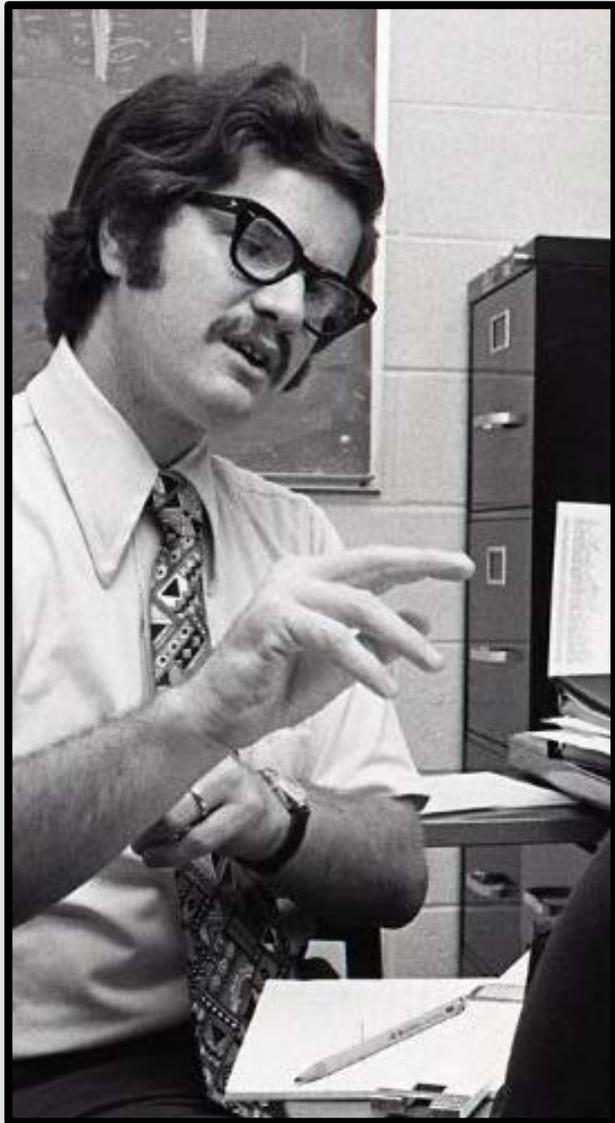


Malcolm J. Norwood (1927–1989)

Comparison of an Interpreted and Captioned Newscast among Deaf High School and College Graduates [PhD]. University of Maryland. (1976)

Overwhelming preference for captions rather than a superimposed CSC interpreter.

Deaf Academics on Interpreting



T. Alan Hurwitz

Interpreters' Effectiveness

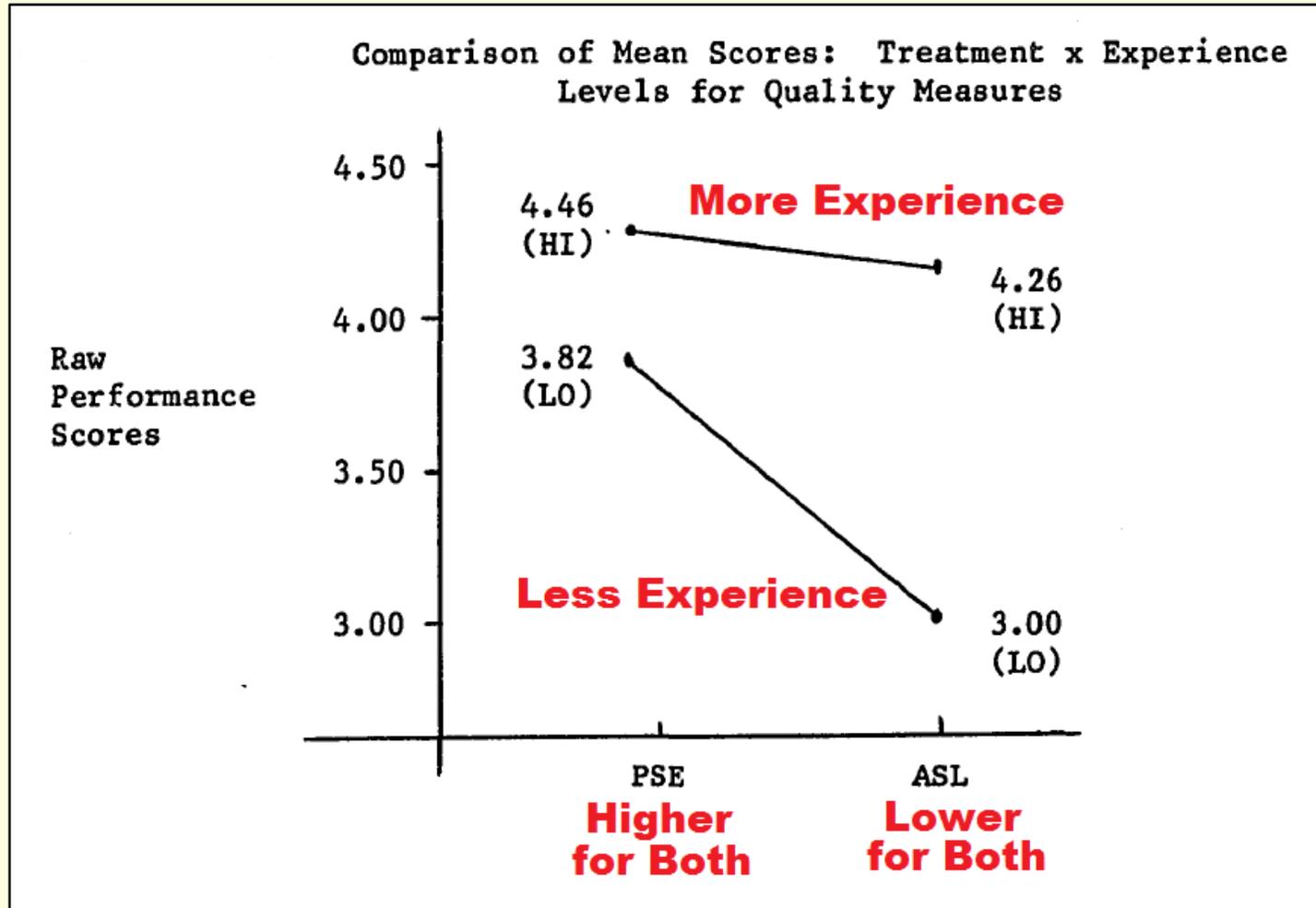
*in **Reverse** Interpreting: Pidgin*

Signed English and American

Sign Language [PhD] University

of Rochester, 1979.

Deaf Academics on Interpreting



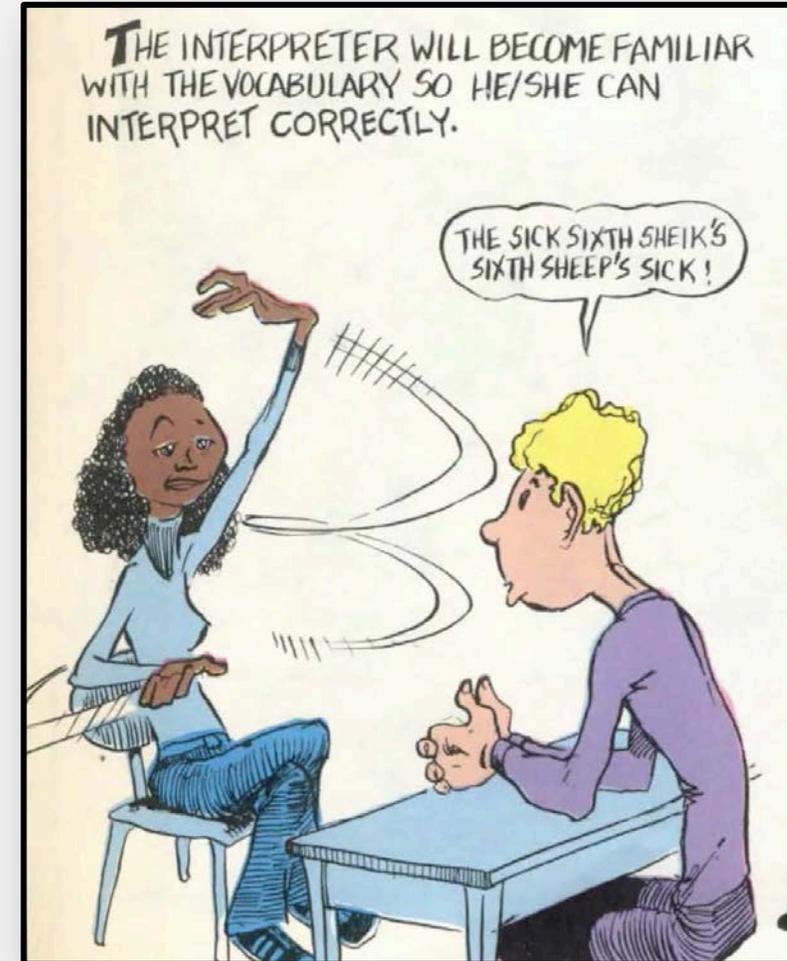
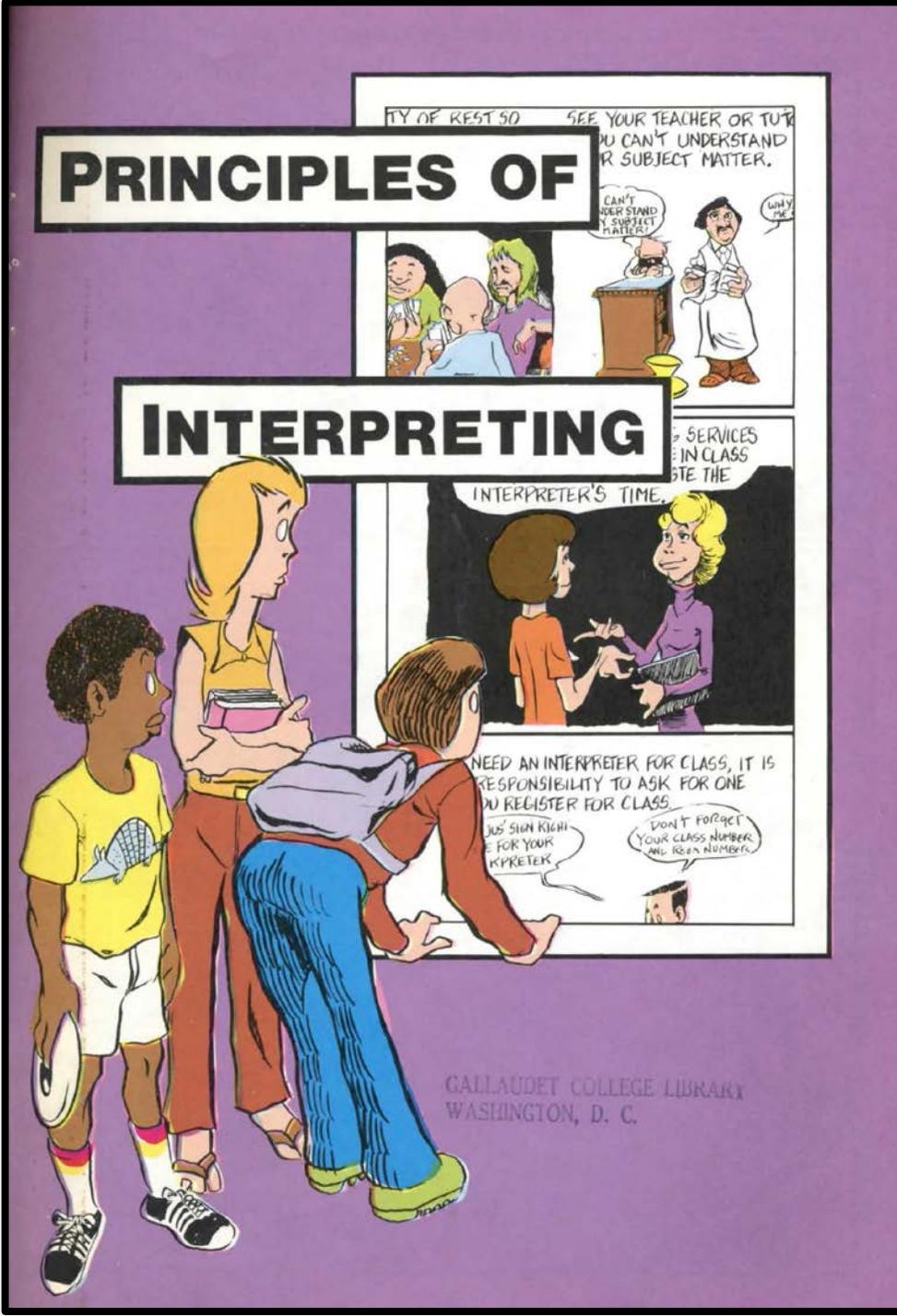
Scores on:

- ✓ Accuracy
- ✓ English Fluency
- ✓ Completeness
- ✓ Affect

PSE → English easier than ASL → English

Recommends DIs for non-standard ASL

Marilyn Mitchell-Caccamise & Alan Hurwitz *Principles of Interpreting* — NTID, 1978



Artist: Karl Dolgener

PRINCIPLE VIII Telephone Service (Intercom)

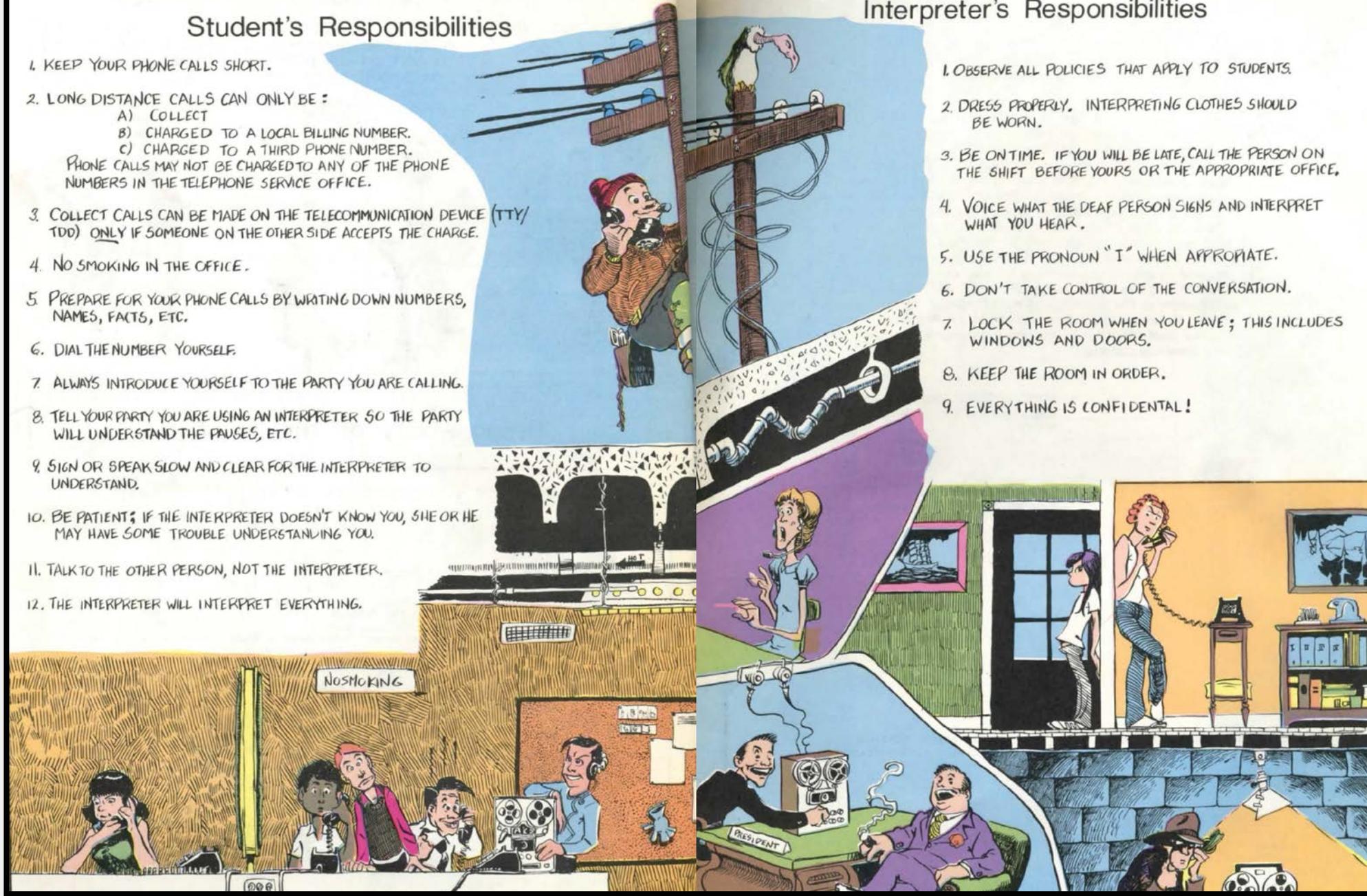
Student's Responsibilities

1. KEEP YOUR PHONE CALLS SHORT.
2. LONG DISTANCE CALLS CAN ONLY BE:
 - A) COLLECT
 - B) CHARGED TO A LOCAL BILLING NUMBER.
 - C) CHARGED TO A THIRD PHONE NUMBER.PHONE CALLS MAY NOT BE CHARGED TO ANY OF THE PHONE NUMBERS IN THE TELEPHONE SERVICE OFFICE.
3. COLLECT CALLS CAN BE MADE ON THE TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICE (TTY/TDD) ONLY IF SOMEONE ON THE OTHER SIDE ACCEPTS THE CHARGE.
4. NO SMOKING IN THE OFFICE.
5. PREPARE FOR YOUR PHONE CALLS BY WRITING DOWN NUMBERS, NAMES, FACTS, ETC.
6. DIAL THE NUMBER YOURSELF.
7. ALWAYS INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE PARTY YOU ARE CALLING.
8. TELL YOUR PARTY YOU ARE USING AN INTERPRETER SO THE PARTY WILL UNDERSTAND THE PAUSES, ETC.
9. SIGN OR SPEAK SLOW AND CLEAR FOR THE INTERPRETER TO UNDERSTAND.
10. BE PATIENT; IF THE INTERPRETER DOESN'T KNOW YOU, SHE OR HE MAY HAVE SOME TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING YOU.
11. TALK TO THE OTHER PERSON, NOT THE INTERPRETER.
12. THE INTERPRETER WILL INTERPRET EVERYTHING.

Telephone Service (Intercom)

Interpreter's Responsibilities

1. OBSERVE ALL POLICIES THAT APPLY TO STUDENTS.
2. DRESS PROPERLY. INTERPRETING CLOTHES SHOULD BE WORN.
3. BE ON TIME. IF YOU WILL BE LATE, CALL THE PERSON ON THE SHIFT BEFORE YOURS OR THE APPROPRIATE OFFICE.
4. VOICE WHAT THE DEAF PERSON SIGNS AND INTERPRET WHAT YOU HEAR.
5. USE THE PRONOUN "I" WHEN APPROPRIATE.
6. DON'T TAKE CONTROL OF THE CONVERSATION.
7. LOCK THE ROOM WHEN YOU LEAVE; THIS INCLUDES WINDOWS AND DOORS.
8. KEEP THE ROOM IN ORDER.
9. EVERYTHING IS CONFIDENTIAL!



**Mitchell-Caccamise
& Hurwitz (1978)**

D/HH Student:

**Dial number yourself.
Announce interpreter.
Speak directly to H.
Sign clearly.**

Interpreter:

**Be on time.
Dress appropriately.
Interpret everything.
Don't control the call.**

40 years later...

A Shining Beacon

Fifty Years of the
National Technical
Institute for the Deaf

Edited by James K. McCarthy

Linda Siple & Alan Hurwitz

“How to Educate an Interpreter: 50 years of Interpreter Education”

A Shining Beacon (pp. 173–186) RIT, 2018.

“In the late 1960s when NTID was established, the demand for interpreters quickly overwhelmed this meager supply.

NTID was faced with a crisis of resources and had to respond with a creative solution.”

A Shining Beacon

Fifty Years of the
National Technical
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Edited by James K. McCarthy

How to Educate an Interpreter 50 Years of Interpreter Education

Dr. Linda Siple and Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz

The primary mission of NTID is to provide deaf students with an outstanding state-of-the-art technical and professional education. Additionally, NTID has a secondary mission to prepare professionals to work in fields related to serving individuals who are deaf and hard-of-hearing. This chapter discusses NTID's evolving and ongoing commitment to the preparation of professional ASL-English interpreters to facilitate communication between deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals and their hearing counterparts.

The early interpreters on campus were teachers of deaf students, children or siblings of deaf individuals, and religious workers or social workers who worked with deaf people. There was no formal interpreter education program—they learned by doing. In the late 1960s when NTID was established, the demand for interpreters quickly overwhelmed this meager supply. NTID was faced with a crisis of resources and had to respond with a creative solution. Dr. D. Robert Frisina, NTID's first director, recalled, "What better source of interpreters than RIT hearing students well versed in the technologies in which the deaf students were engaged?"¹ No one is certain who came up with the original idea to train RIT hearing students to be sign language interpreters, but that idea was the first step in an amazing journey.

I never met a deaf person until the fall of 1972 at RIT; I arrived on campus and was assigned to the third floor of Kate Gleason Hall. I remember walking down the hall to my room and feeling shocked

that many of the students on my floor were deaf. Many months later I learned that I had been randomly assigned to an experimental house that was half deaf and half hearing; every other room had two deaf students in it. Someone at NTID wanted to study the effects of having deaf students on campus and how hearing students would react.

At that time, the dorms didn't have any adaptive equipment for deaf students. There were no doorbell lights, no fire-alert strobes, no video relay centers, no cell phones, no personal computers. Deaf students had to depend on their hearing peers. Most of the hearing students on my floor quickly learned basic sign during the first few days. Over time, several of us took a real interest and regularly interacted with deaf students and learned enough sign to make phone calls for them. Five hearing students from my floor, including myself, applied for and were selected for the summer interpreter program to become student interpreters. The program only accepted 15 RIT students, so having deaf and hearing students live together had a very positive impact.

— Linda Siple²

Interpreting education at NTID started in the summer of 1969. The original program was called the Summer Interpreter Training Program. However, it became more commonly known as the Basic Interpreter Training Program (BITP). The BITP instruction,

Further Reading

Hurwitz, T. A. (Winter 2013). Thanks to Interpreters...A Legacy Story. *VIEWS* (pp. 30–31).

Hurwitz, T. A. (1995, July). Current Issues: Interpreters in the Educational Setting. *18th International Congress on Education of the Deaf*, Tel Aviv, Israel.

Stuckless, E. R., Avery, J. C., & Hurwitz, T. A. (1989). *Educational Interpreting for Deaf Students: Report of the National Task Force on Educational Interpreting*. National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

Hurwitz, T. A. (1988). *National Study of Deaf Consumers' Knowledge and use of Interpreters. Ad hoc Committee Report*. National Association of the Deaf.



**Forthcoming November 2020:
Dr. Hurwitz' memoir**

Let's Go In

