

The Mentor Training Project: Concurrent Learning via Technology

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Abstract

A pilot Mentor Training Project (MTP) was conducted using distance education technology to improve the quality of mentoring provided by professional interpreters to interpreting interns in a college based interpreter education program. The goals of the project were:

- to provide mentors with information about mentoring and adult learning,
- to introduce students and mentors to each other before the actual mentoring experience,
- to help mentors understand the way students are taught to discuss interpreting, and
- to give mentors an idea of where the students are in their development as interpreters.

Mentors in the project were working interpreters with varying years of experience in interpreting and mentoring. The MTP included exploration and discussion of adult learning theories, general mentoring, and

information specific to signed language interpreting. Using a WebCT online instructional format, mentors also had the opportunity to observe and interact with current second-year interpreting students and to practice giving them feedback on their work.

Background

Portland Community College's Sign Language Interpretation Program (SLIP) requires that students complete at least one internship before they can graduate from the program. Two internships, with the first at the community college level and the second in a K-12 setting, are strongly recommended. Students are screened before they are permitted to enter internship: in addition to successful completion of their courses, they must also pass a "Qualifying Exam" which requires them to demonstrate their ability to interpret a lecture from sign to voice and from voice to sign with a minimum of 70% accuracy in each area. This figure may seem low, but it is only a starting point for entry into internship where they will continue to develop their ability to convey an accurate message.

Students are assigned to professional interpreters who serve as their mentors. They begin their internship by observing the professional interpreter, and then prepare to demonstrate to both the mentor and the deaf client(s) their ability to begin interpreting in this setting. By the end of the term, they are expected to take full responsibility for interpreting the class, or, in a teamed class, to take their turn in the rotation of interpreters. Only with the approval of both the mentor interpreter and the deaf client do they begin to provide interpreting services. The mentor remains with them throughout the internship, even after they have assumed the full interpreting responsibility, and is expected to provide professional guidance and daily feedback on their work, as well as to take over the interpreting if they begin to falter.

We have been fortunate to have excellent mentors for our students over the years, many of them past graduates of our program, but have found a smaller than usual pool of interpreting settings available in which to place students in recent years. Occasionally even those who have mentored for us for some time express doubts that they are "doing it right" and newer interpreters are often unsure when they are ready to begin to mentor. Therefore, our primary purpose in

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setting up the mentoring project was to expand the pool of potential mentors for our interpreting interns and to improve the effectiveness and self-confidence of our current mentors.

We had a number of goals for our project. Because of a belief that both "process" and "product" are important, we wanted to help mentors become more comfortable with both giving feedback on specific features of an interpretation, and with helping students explore their process, so that they could use both techniques to support student interpreters. We wanted mentors to recognize that feedback needed to go beyond sign choice and parameter errors to deeper issues in order to help students recognize patterns in their work and the likely causes of their successes or challenges. Another important goal was to help mentors understand where students were in their development both as learners and as interpreters, so that they could formulate realistic expectations for them. Professional interpreters may be unsure what a student interpreter should or should not be able to do, and thus either over- or under-challenge them, inhibiting the learning process. They may be reluctant to allow the student interpreter to work, perhaps fearful that it will negatively impact the deaf students, or reluctant to give up the feeling of control of the situation afforded by doing the work themselves. Likewise, if they are unfamiliar with adult learners, they may not realize that students' quest for a "black and white" answer to their questions instead of the ubiquitous "it depends" is an indicator, not of laziness on the students' part, but of a normal stage in the development of adult learners.

Finally, because our field is growing and changing so rapidly, and because training programs and texts differ, terminology our students are currently using in their classes may be unfamiliar even to very knowledgeable and skilled working interpreters. For example, interpreters not educated in the last few years may not have been exposed to the demand-control schema. A second example is over the years our profession has used "lag time," "decalage," and "processing time" to refer to the time between receiving the source message and producing the target language version. So, another goal was to ensure that both students and interpreter mentors spoke about their work in the same "language."

As stated in the Continuing Education Activity Plan filed with RID, the goals were as follows:

Upon completion of the Sign Language Interpreter Mentor Training Project, participants will be able to:

- Describe the adult development schema of Perry and Belenky et al. (Perry, W.G., 1981; Belenky, M.F. et al., 1986).
- Describe their own learning styles and the variation in adult learning styles, using the Dunn and Dunn model
- (<http://www.geocities.com/educationplace/element.html>).
- Describe and apply principles of mentoring, demonstrating appropriate mentoring techniques.
- Assess an English to ASL interpretation for accuracy and target language use.
- Provide feedback to a student interpreter in an appropriate manner.

Project Structure

In order to provide the mentoring training, we applied for an in-house grant from the Staff Development Office of our college, and received funding to purchase textbooks and to pay a part-time instructor to develop and conduct the mentor project. Our mentoring project took the form of an online training for mentors run in conjunction with a Mock Interpreting II class in which second year interpreting students were enrolled in fall term 2005.

All second year interpreting students take Mock Interpreting II, which places them in an on-campus class without deaf students. Although we are limited to classes available, we make some effort to match students with a subject area in which they feel somewhat comfortable, and to choose lower-division entry-level courses rather than those in professional/technical programs. The students attend their assigned class, usually one hour three times per week, and practice interpreting it. Ideally, they use this experience to integrate and apply what they have learned about text analysis, assessing an interpreting situation, and researching and preparing for an interpreting assignment, as well as practicing their voice-to-sign interpreting skills. Each student is paired with a classmate who observes at least once a week to provide support and feedback. The instructor observes at least three times during the term: the first time for general feedback and support, and the last two for graded observations. Students document their hours and explore their experiences through journal writing as well as a once-a-week "recitation" class, where they discuss what they have learned. In addition to helping them to understand and learn

from their experiences, both the journal and the recitation allow them to practice confidentiality and impartiality in discussing their work. Journals are sent directly from student to instructor, and therefore may be used to convey information privately. In recent years, instructors have had the option of having the journal writing and submission done online, through WebCT, rather than in "hard copy." This also allows for a continuing online discussion to expand on topics brought up in journals and in the recitation session.

When it came to designing the mentor training, we realized that getting a group of interpreters together in one place at one time is often quite difficult, and that using an asynchronous online format would allow us to provide ongoing training without the need to juggle schedules. We also hoped that using WebCT would allow local working interpreters to become familiar with taking classes online and increase their confidence to allow them to be more comfortable if they later chose to participate in one of the growing number of online training opportunities available nationally. First and foremost, however, was the opportunity that the online format allowed the professional interpreters to observe and interact with the students they might someday mentor. Thus, mentors not only had the opportunity to read about and discuss the development of adult students, but to observe it in the students' online discussions. Students also had the opportunity to get to know potential mentors through the online course.

We were fortunate to have the assistance of our wonderful technology support specialist, Andrew Freed, who made it possible for us to join the two groups online. The Mock II students were automatically placed in the online class when they registered for the course. Allowing the mentors, who were not registered students, access to the class required first obtaining permission from the registered students for "outsiders" to be involved the online class, and then manually inputting the mentors' names and identification numbers to make them unofficial "students."

The WebCT class for both mentors and students was designed and conducted by Dot Hearn. Mentor participants accessed their course content from the Homepage of the WebCT site, from there, they could link to the mentor area. In this area were various links, including an overview of the course, summaries of the textbook chapters they would be reading, a weekly schedule of activities and readings, and links to useful Web resources. Mentors were able to access the students' portion of the course, with the exception of private emails, and students could likewise access the mentors' portion if they wished. After reviewing several textbooks, we chose Lois Zachary's *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships* (San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000). This book had the advantage of being accessible to a casual reader, offering concrete tips on interacting with mentees, and including exercises to help participants reflect on their experiences as both mentors and mentees. Aware of the hectic schedules of most working interpreters, we chose only the most pertinent chapters and exercises on which to focus during the course. Using funding from the grant, we purchased several copies of the book. We placed one on reserve in the college library and took the remainder to worksites shared by several participants. In addition to the textbook, participants were provided with supplemental readings in the form of online articles on adult learning theory, learning styles, types of assessment, and what to expect from interpreting students. At the beginning of the course, participants were given the opportunity to take the Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles Inventory (<http://www.geocities.com/educationplace/element.html>), and were provided with their individual results and explanatory materials.

At the same time the mentor participants were working through their content, the interpreting students were focusing their skill development and discussions on specific aspects of their interpreting, using Marty Taylor's *Interpreting Skills English to ASL* (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Interpreting Consolidated, 1993). Although funding did not allow us to purchase copies of this text for the mentors, we encouraged them to access it on their own, in conjunction with a discussion of types of assessments, and placed copies on reserve in the library for them to use. Students already had copies of the book from one of their first year courses.

Up to 2.0 RID CEUs were available for participation in the training. Because we did not meet face-to-face, we needed to find a way to determine and document the number of hours earned for participation. The following are the criteria we used:

Date	Activities	Quantity	Hours
10/17	Orientation Meeting*	Attendance	2
	Online discussion	Min. 1 post/1 reply	1
10/24	Online discussion	Min. 2 posts/2 replies	2
10/31	Online discussion	Min. 2 posts/2 replies	2
11/7	Online discussion	Min. 2 posts/2 replies	2
11/14	Online discussion	Min. 2 posts/2 replies	2
11/21	Online discussion	Min. 2 posts/2	2

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		replies	
	Practice assessment		2
11/28	Assessment of student interpreter.		5
12/5	Feedback to student interpreter.		1
	Total		20 = 2.0 CEUs

Table 1. CEU requirements.

Although grades were not given, we also provided a rubric to guide participants in knowing what we expected from their posts.

	2	1	0
Depth & focus of comments	Uses analysis skills to explore the subject in depth; makes substantive comments	Often uses analysis skills to explore the subject, but occasional comments lack depth	Rarely uses analysis skills to explore the subject; most comments lack depth
Use of specific examples or references	Consistently uses specific examples or references to support statements	Often uses specific examples or references to support statements	Rarely uses specific examples or references to support statements

Table 2. Expectations rubric.

Recruiting participants

For this training we targeted local interpreters with two or more years of interpreting experience who were interested in serving as mentors for PCC interns. There was no requirement of previous mentoring experience. The training was open to other interpreters, but all announcements stated that priority would be given to those willing to be mentors for PCC SLIP students. Dot created an email list of interpreters who had served as mentors for our students in the past and who had expressed an interest in developing their mentoring skills, and those who had expressed an interest in becoming mentors. This desire for training was expressed to Dot in her role as internship instructor at PCC. Dot sent a direct email invitation to this list of interpreters. One additional interpreter on this original list, who is from a rural area where our interns are not placed, was included in this first mailing because this interpreter was going to be mentoring for the first time and wanted to develop mentoring skills. General flyers were emailed to coordinators at the local colleges and K-12 educational programs where our interns are usually

placed, to the Oregon RID affiliate chapter email newsgroup, to the Region X IEC coordinator, and was posted on the RID website.

The brief application included information about years and type of interpreting experience, current areas of interpreting, mentoring experience, and willingness to be mentors for SLIP students. Our goal was to have at least one mentor participant in the pilot project for each of the Mock II students, since the mentors would be giving feedback to the students on a sample of their interpreting work. There was no maximum number of participants established, although we did agree that somewhere around 25 would be ideal.

A total of 17 interpreters applied for the pilot project. All of them were from the original target group and they were all accepted into the project. All of the participants were currently working in educational settings. With one exception, educational settings were the interpreters' primary or exclusive workplace. Their years of interpreting experience ranged from 2 years to over 30 years; mentoring experience ranged from none to over 20 years. The following chart shows the demographics of the participants.

Primary workplace	#	Certified	Pre-certified	Mentor exper?	Interpreter training
K-12 exclusively	6	1	1	1=N	4=PCC ITP; 1=ITP; 1=other
K-12 with college	3	0	1	Y	3=PCC ITP
K-12 with freelance	1	0	1	N	1=PCC ITP
College exclusively	2	1	0	Y	2=ITP
College with freelance	4	4	0	Y	2=PCC ITP; 1=ITP; 1=other
Freelance with college	1	1	0	Y	1=other

Table 3. Demographics of participants.

Elements of the Pilot Project

Week 1: Adult Learning Theory

We started the readings and discussions with the concept that in order to teach or mentor adult students, it is helpful to look at some of the theories about adult learning and development, and to consider some of the literature about learning styles.

We described two models of adult learning, which formed the foundation for this training. Mentor participants were told that the purpose of the models was not to label students, but to help understand stages that typical learners go through during the learning process. It is

essential to remember the subjects on whom the research for these models was based, and to realize that not all learners have the same life experience. Variations such as educational experience, culture, and socioeconomic status have a great impact on students' ways of knowing.

One of the models discussed was William Perry's model, published as *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development* (1970), based on a study he did of male students at Harvard. Though some criticize this theory because it was developed solely on men, later research indicated that the stages were similar for female students as well (Perry's "Cognitive and Ethical Growth: The Making of Meaning", 1981). Perry listed a series of "positions," that is, ways of seeing the world, through which adult learners pass. A more in-depth overview can be read at William J. Rapaport's website, *William Perry's Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical Development* (see references). The mentor project participants were reminded that students do not pass through these positions in lockstep, and that one person may use different positions in different parts of life.

The first of Perry's positions is dualism, in which learning is a matter of facts, or right and wrong answers, obtained from an expert or authority. One example of an adult in the dualistic stage is the belief that, "there is one right answer, and a good teacher knows it."

Perry's second position is multiplism. In this stage, learners begin to realize that there may be uncertainty or a variety of opinions about an issue, but at first have no way to evaluate them and choose among them. One example of an adult learner at this stage might be "There may be many answers to this question, but which one do we have to know for the test?"

Perry's third position is relativism. In these stages students have learned how to learn, and how to consider context in choosing among diverse opinions or multiple answers. One example of a learner at this stage is, "Yes, things are relative, but not everything is equally valid. I have to consider the context." Some research indicates that most college students do not reach the relativistic stages until after graduation (see Baxter Magolda, 1992, p. 189). While relativism is the goal for interpreters, this stage is not generally attained by interpreting students graduating from either two or four-year programs.

The other model discussed was based on research done on women, and reported in the book *Women's Ways of Knowing* by Belenkey et al. (1986). Later studies have shown that with the exception of the initial stage, "Silence," this model works for both males and females. This schema consists of five stages and parallels Perry's in many ways.

The first of these stages is silence. At this stage authority is all-powerful and all knowing. The learner sees herself as passive and dependent on authority.

The second stage is received knowledge, in which the learner sees herself as a receptacle for knowledge, but not as a creator of it. This is very similar to Perry's dualistic stages, in that the student sees authorities as the source of knowledge and that learning consists of gathering and remembering facts. In this stage, students have no tolerance for ambiguity, a quality that is necessary to function effectively as an interpreter, as well as to be successful in intercultural interaction in general (Lustig and Koester, 1996, p. 262).

Stage three is subjective knowledge. This position is similar to Perry's multiplistic stages, in that it acknowledges difference of opinion, but sees the recognition of truth as intuitive, rather than as proven by some external method. Each person has a right to her opinion, and one's own opinion should not be forced on others.

The fourth stage is procedural knowledge and emphasizes learning how to learn or learning how to think. That is using analysis in order to determine what is true. This may take the form of "separate" or "connected" knowing. Separate knowing has to do with the ability to use critical reasoning to develop arguments to support an answer. Connected knowing takes the form of understanding based on looking at an issue from another's point of view, "getting inside their head," so to speak.

Their fifth stage is constructed knowledge. In this stage, like Perry's relativistic positions, the student recognizes a variety of answers or viewpoints, and realizes that both context and the self are important in determining what is known.

There was a positive reaction to this information from the participants and they found it beneficial. As one participant said, "These categories are very helpful, in terms of understanding reactions I have experienced from mentees. They help to explain why some mentees are still asking for signs, regardless of their good training."

We asked the mentors to discuss what stage(s) a student entering internship would be in according to these adult learning theory models. At PCC, this means the students are in the second half of the second year of the program, by which time they have completed 6-8 terms of prerequisite courses, and 4 terms of program courses. Several mentors discussed relativism versus multiplism, but many also felt unable to respond based on the minimal information they were given. This excerpt from one participant's posting sums up the general beliefs about this

question, “I would be hard pressed to predict what to expect from an ITP student, just based on knowing that the student is a second year ITP student. People come from so many different backgrounds and life experiences. These students have really gotten used to ‘It depends,’ but I'm sure they all internalize it at different levels and in different ways.”

Because of this feedback, Julie developed several mini case studies that would give the participants more information with which to work. The participants felt much more comfortable and were better able to apply the theories to the case studies. This additional information allowed them to look at a person’s overall situation and discuss it in more depth. This activity led into a lengthy discussion about how to provide feedback to students and mentees: a direct versus “sandwich” approach. (The “sandwich” approach is the one popular in many business models: tell the person something positive, follow with something needing improvement, end with another positive.) One mentor wrote, “I did my mini case study #1 assessment, then read some of the ones that you all had done, and I think I need to toughen up a little bit.... I realize that I am a great cheerleader, but need to stretch my skills to being a better provider of feedback. The risk with that for me is that I would open myself to conflict, arrrggg. Now I need to set some goals to work through my resistance to diving in and saying what I really want to say. ” In contrast, another mentor responded, “I think I have the opposite problem. I don't have enough praise or cheerleading, because I don't experience that as genuine myself, so I tend not to include it. I have to really consciously think about finding a strength that I can praise wholeheartedly, and remember to talk about it. I try NOT to sandwich it (all meat, no carbs, smile) so that we can enjoy it for its own worth. I guess that part about relation-building really impressed me in the [Zachary] book.”

Weeks 2-5: Zachary Chapters

Following the discussion and activities related to adult learning theory, they went on to readings and activities from the Zachary text, with additional supplemental articles. The Zachary chapters selected were “Grounding the Work,” (p.1-28) which focuses on learner-centered mentoring; “Tilling the Soil: Preparing,” (p. 65-92) which is about mentor preparation and motivation, and developing mentoring skills; “Planting Seeds: Negotiating,” (p. 93-116) which is about involving the mentee in goal-setting, measuring success, and accountability; and

“Nurturing Growth: Enabling,” (p. 117-143) which refers to creating a learning environment, offering both support and challenge, and giving feedback.

In “Tilling the Soil,” the mentor participants were asked to write a personal history timeline about their mentors. This proved to be a beneficial activity that provided several people with important insights that may impact their mentoring. One participant realized, “I recognize different teachers and peers along the way that I have benefited from in a similar way to a mentorship, but I have never actually had a mentor in a sustained sort of way. This could explain why I don't really have a model to look towards. In other words, I don't know how to behave as a mentor because I never saw one in action.” Another mentor noticed that her personal mentors have tended to confront her about issues. Her response, “I’m noticing a pattern here. ... Personally, apparently this confrontation seems to work on me. But I hate it. I guess I can receive it if I respect the person but if I don't then I just get defensive.” This post led into a discussion about different ways of providing feedback other than “in your face;” or how could a more “softhearted” mentor provide feedback to someone like this mentor who wants a more blunt confrontation. This activity and discussion was positive for all of the participants. Another mentor reflected on her own experiences with her mentor and related it to her own experience as a mentor now, “I remember when I was in my internship, my mentor said one of the reasons she liked being a mentor was that it gave her a chance to analyze her own work and to learn. At the time I thought she was being polite. She was a professional interpreter, she'd already graduated, what could she have left to learn....man was I clueless!! Now after having mentored myself a few times, I totally understand what she was saying. It's when the intern asks us why we do something that we have a chance to stop and think about why we do it.”

Week 6: Zachary, Taylor, and Videotape Feedback

The original goal was for the participants to divide into small groups and do a group assessment of a sample videotape. We would provide feedback on this activity and they would proceed individually to provide feedback on students’ videotapes. Due to scheduling problems and difficulties locating a video sample, the practice assessment was eliminated. We did have an online discussion about providing feedback and this information was also included in the Zachary text. Dot also provided a brief overview of Taylor’s major features of an interpretation from her *Interpreting Skills: English to American Sign Language* book, as well as a listing of the

potential errors under each section. We also stressed the importance of looking at patterns of errors rather than citing individual errors. The summary was intended to give mentors other areas to think about when they were viewing the students' work, rather than teach them in-depth about Taylor's work.

This section also included reading and discussing the establishment of clear guidelines and boundaries for the mentoring relationship. There were personal stories of times this has or has not gone well. One participant put it very succinctly, "I would feel a bit frantic as to how to stop or change a situation if something wasn't going right [with the mentee's interpreting]. I now realize this happened because the mentee and I did not take the time to negotiate how to transition as smoothly as possible so that together we could have the least impact on the client. The mentoring guide will be so helpful to use to construct a solid plan before any interpreting takes place. Some things that seem so vital are the delineation of mutual responsibilities (so that the mentor, meaning me, is not a passive observer!) accountability assurances, clear boundaries, and relationship ground rules, (the student/client needs come first) protocols for addressing stumbling blocks (clear communication, no hurt feelings) and a consensual mentoring agreement so we can work together as a team."

Online Discussion Participation

The level of participation varied widely, from nothing beyond the original login during orientation, to those who read everything and participated heavily in discussions, as well as a few "lurkers" who, based on the WebCT statistics, read materials, but rarely joined the discussion. We tried to encourage participation in the discussions through tying CEUs in with discussion posts. To some participants this was not an important issue, therefore, not an incentive to be more "vocal." The discussions were good and quite in-depth, but we would have liked to have more across the board participation. In looking at the WebCT statistics, we were relieved to know that even some of the silent participants were probably still benefiting from the discussions based on all of the pages they read.

Name	Hits	Read	Posted		Name	Hits	Read	Posted
TA	685	317	28		AH	470	299	11
SA	428	262	31		HH	267	182	19
CB	490	154	5		LJ	765	378	29
SB	35	24	0		LL	669	377	12

DC	615	259	3		LM	186	107	1
AG	798	322	13		CP	470	263	9
MG	149	87	1		JS	35	9	1
TH	207	162	1		HW	225	74	12
DH	163	94	2					

Table 4. Mentor participation in online discussions

Reflections: What did and did not work

The goals of this project were met. The mentor participants learned about adult learning theory and how this applies to interpreting program students and about the importance of using a mentee-centered approach. One major benefit stated by participants was learning about the importance of developing a relationship with the mentee and the elements involved. As one mentor wrote, “The most beneficial information I learned had to do with what an intricate process building a mentor/mentee relationship really is, and that it doesn’t happen automatically; if left to develop on its own, in fact, the relationship will usually perish.”

Simultaneously, while this was one of the major benefits, it was also one of the drawbacks of this pilot project. The mentor participants were encouraged to have a dialogue with their student, to arrange for an on-site observation and meeting if their schedules allowed, and for the mentors to observe and participate in online discussions with the students. In reality, there was almost no involvement from the mentors in the online discussions with students. None of the mentors met face-to-face with the students nor did they do on-site observations, so the relationship building being discussed remained theory rather than practice. In feedback from mentors, they felt the lack of a developed relationship with the students. Future trainings will need to include specific activities that will result in more interaction between mentors and students, rather than simple suggestions that they meet or correspond online.

Another area which participants generally felt was not successful was the activity of providing assessment of the students’ interpreting work samples. The following is feedback from one mentor that accurately represents what the mentors felt in general, “Giving feedback on a videotape, which was contradictory to what was taught in the book [was not beneficial]. I had no chance to talk to the mentee so it was just a very uncomfortable task.” Several mentors also said they did not feel qualified to assess an interpretation because they did not have the tools to do that.

One potential issue with the assessment concerns may be a matter of semantics. The word “assess” was used to mean looking at the student’s work sample and provide feedback the same as working with an intern in a “live” setting. This word was interpreted by some participants to mean they were to do an in-depth diagnostic analysis of the work and make a formal evaluation. From this experience, we have decided to include a glossary with the next training and will consider how best to use the words “assess,” “assessment,” and “feedback.”

We each had individual areas that we felt did not go well as far as our performances. Dot discovered more differences between facilitating classroom discussion related to mentoring and facilitating asynchronous online discussions than was expected. Due to Department Chair duties, Julie did not have as much time available to participate in the ongoing training as she had hoped and was, therefore, less involved. Both of us also felt we were not as prepared when the training started as we would like. For example, we did not have a sample video of a former student to use as a group assessment practice before the training started. We are addressing these issues. Because the Department Chair duties are rotated between the two full-time SLIP faculty, Julie has more time available to devote to the ongoing discussions in years when another faculty member is chair. Dot has taken more training in facilitating online discussions. Interpreting samples are now available.

Pilot Completion: Feedback from Participants

Mentors were asked for feedback about the training at its completion and again at the end of the second term after the training. The second feedback requested occurred after the mentors had each had the opportunity to apply what they had learned. Here are some of their comments.

“I probably spent 20-25 hours or more with this class. I don’t know if I would have learned as much with a traditional format. Mentoring is so much more than what I had been led to believe.”

“This class will help me organize more for a better mentor/mentee experience.”

“Some of the activities were hard to do without a mentee to work with. The assessment part did not seem to connect with the other readings and activities.”

“I felt like there were several parts to this project and individually, they were all great. But I felt they did not all fit together. Perhaps to do that, it would require more time and more transition. I think the idea of the project is great.”

“Being part of a larger group of mentors who now have a shared knowledge and way of talking about what we do. I have a bit better understanding of the LSIP program and its expectations. Thoughtful awareness of my own mentors, and that they don’t have to come from the interpreting field or have been a formal mentorship.”

Follow Up: Mentor Training Part II Fall 2006

Based on participants' feedback, we have designed "Mentor Training Part II," to address the part of the previous training which both we and the participants felt was not adequately covered due to time constraints: instruction on and practice doing an actual assessment of a sample interpretation, followed by participants' assessments of student work. In this part of the training, open to both new and part I participants, potential mentors work with experienced faculty and peers to assess model interpretations, and then provide specific feedback to students enrolled in ITP 281 Mock Interpreting II.

This training is similar in format to the initial session, using WebCT and providing RID CEUs as before. Objectives for this training are as follows. Upon completion of the project, participants will be able to:

- Assess a student interpretation in terms of its comprehensibility and congruency
- Assess the grammatical correctness of an interpretation
- Suggest possible underlying causes of interpreter errors
- Suggest possible strategies or practice techniques to remedy those errors

From September – November, 2006, both mentors and students participate in weekly online discussions of their readings from *Interpreting Skills: English to ASL* (Taylor, 1993). This time, mentor participants will read and discuss Taylor's text at the same time as students, who initially used the text in one of last year's Interpreting Process classes, use its sections to focus in on particular areas of their interpretations.

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Using a DVD provided by the program, mentors view and discuss a demonstration assessment of an interpretation, then perform and discuss a practice assessment of a second interpretation. We have received permission from some 2005 and 2006 graduates to use interpretations done while in our program as a sample for demonstration and practice purposes and have converted them from VHS to DVD and copied them for loan to participants. During this time, students are entering and becoming accustomed to their new Mock Interpreting assignments, writing journal entries and discussing their experiences with their peers. As before, with permission, mentors have access to student discussion.

In November-December, 2006, mentors will assess student interpretations (with student permission only) and provide individual feedback to their assigned students using what they have learned in their discussions to guide them toward specific observations about the students' work. They will both correspond one-on-one with their assigned students and hold face-to-face meetings with them to practice their feedback skills.

We are hopeful that this will round out their mentoring training, so that they can combine the adult development theory and process feedback methods from Part I with the specific skill-focused observation skills from Part II to enhance the quality of their interactions, and to improve the mentoring experience for mentors and mentees alike.

About the Authors:

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