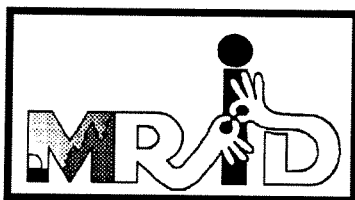
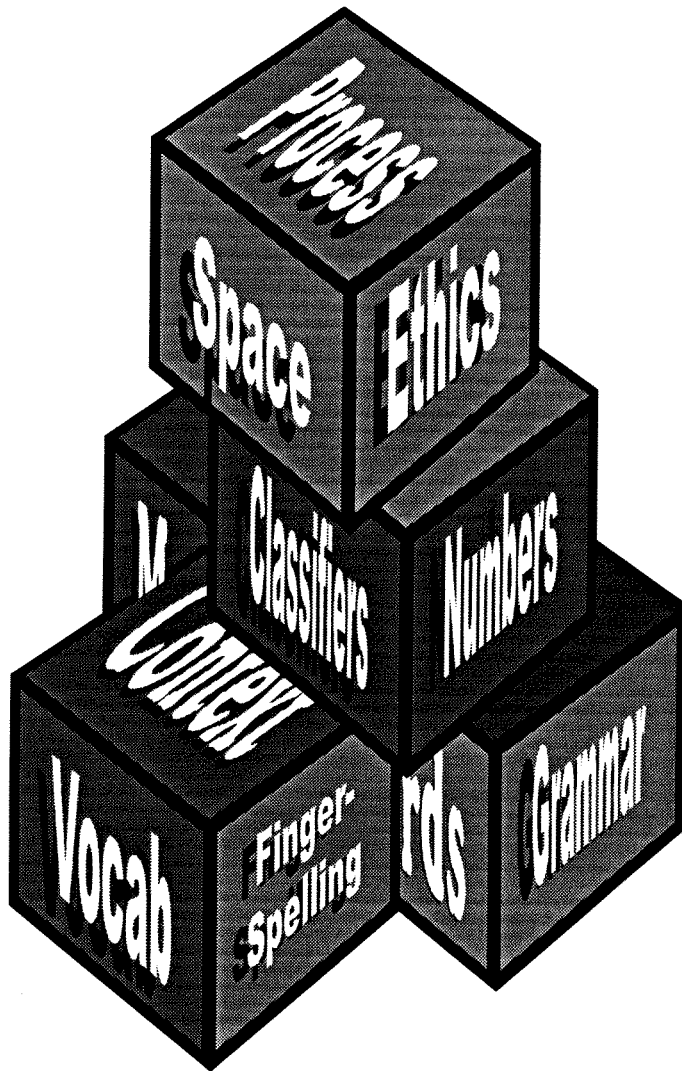




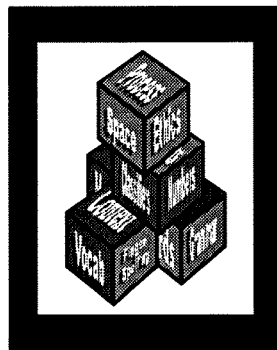
Self-Paced Modules for Educational Interpreter Skill Development



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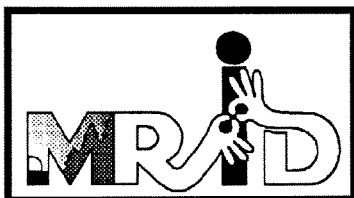
Self-Paced Modules for Educational Interpreter Skill Development



These self-paced learning modules are designed to be tools that educational interpreters can use to enhance their skills in pursuit of certification. Successful completion of this module series does not guarantee the interpreter will successfully obtain certification from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or any other certifying body, nor does it guarantee employment in an educational setting.

Any interpreter working with these modules must understand that the Minnesota RID, RID and/or Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning are not responsible for an interpreter's success or failure in taking any national certification test or in his or her pursuit of employment.

MRID, 1996



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Fingerspelling Table of Contents

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I. Goals and Objectives

This module will cover fingerspelling. Fingerspelling is a manual representation of the symbols of written English through use of ASL signs. Each 'letter' can be thought of as an ASL sign. This module begins with some background on uses of fingerspelling in ASL and the different types of fingerspelling. This module is therefore intended as a review of familiar information and perhaps a chance to understand fingerspelling in a new framework.

In this module you will discover the ten most frequent errors made by interpreters while fingerspelling. As well, you will learn strategies for improving your current strengths in reading fingerspelling.

At the completion of this module you will be able to:

- Identify and use careful, rapid and lexicalized fingerspelling.
- Identify errors in your fingerspelling and devise corrections.
- Identify error patterns in your ability to interpret fingerspelling from ASL to English.
- Identify strategies and practice activities to strengthen your ability to understand and interpret fingerspelled items from ASL to English.

II. Equipment and Materials

Equipment

- √ VCR and monitor
- √ video camera
- √ audio tape recorder/player

Materials

Print Resources

Battison, Robin. 1978. Lexical Borrowing in American Sign Language. Silver Spring, MD. Linstock Press.

Furness, Edna L. 1977. Spelling for the Millions. Nashville, TN. Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Valli, Clayton and Ceil Lucas. 1992. Linguistics of American Sign Language: A Resource Text for ASL Users. Washington, D.C. Gallaudet University Press.

What is Transliteration? Feb. 1995. The *RID Views*, Maryland, RID, Inc.

Required Videotapes

Bienvenu, M.J. and Betty Colonomos. 1991. ASL Numbers: Developing Your Skills. Maryland, MD. Sign Media, Inc. Series of Videotapes.

Deaf Culture Autobiographies, 1989. Salem, OR. Sign Enhancers. Videotape.

Elementary Education: Interpreting Practice. Salem, OR. Sign Enhancers.

Groode, Joyce Linden. 1992. Fingerspelling: Expressive and Receptive Fluency: A Video Guide. San Diego, CA, Dawn Sign Press.

Interpreting Practice: "Living Fully" Lecture. Salem, OR. Sign Enhancers.

Johnson, Robert E. and Carol J. Patrie. 1994. The Structure of Fingerspelling in American Sign Language. Waubensee Community College. Teleclass.

Patrie, Carol. 1995. Fingerspelled Word Recognition for Sign Language Interpreters. Washington, D.C. Gallaudet University. Videotape.

Secondary Education: Interpreting Practice. Salem, OR. Sign Enhancers.

III. Time

For this module expect to spend four hours a week for three weeks reading the background information and watching the required videos. Focusing on specific aspects of fingerspelling in your everyday work will enhance your continued development in this area.

A a B b C c D d E e F f G g H h I i J j K k L l M m N n

Pre - Test

IV. Pre-Test

For this module, you will be doing two pre-tests — one to assess your ability to use fingerspelling when interpreting from sign language to spoken English and the other one to assess your use of fingerspelling when you are interpreting from spoken English into sign language.

Sign to Spoken English

1. Get Ready: Select a videotape with a D/deaf signer that is at least 25 minutes long. You may choose an ASL signer or a more English-like signer. Any tape from the Sign Enhancers Deaf Culture Autobiography series would be appropriate. Preview a few minutes of several tapes until you find one that you're comfortable watching.
2. Get Set: For the pre-test, you will need to interpret into spoken English the first 12 to 15 minutes of the videotape you selected. Set a timer to go off at about 12 minutes or ask another person to be your timekeeper. When you get the signal, finish the unit of information that you are interpreting and then turn off the tape. You will interpret the next 12 to 15 minute segment for the post-test.

3. Go: Simultaneously interpret the first 12 - 15 minutes of the tape you chose without stopping it. Record your entire interpretation on an audiocassette.

4. Assessment:

a. Write down your answer to the following questions:

Overall, how did you feel about this interpretation?

Do you recall anytime you read the fingerspelling effortlessly? Why were you able to do this?

Do you recall any times that you "Panicked" when you saw fingerspelling? Why did you react that way?

Were you able to use context, your knowledge of the signer and / or your knowledge of the topic in order to successfully predict fingerspelling or to make sense of fingerspelling that you were not sure you had understood?

Did you use any techniques from the Gish Approach to handle fingerspelled items? Why or why not? If you did, how did those techniques work for you?

b. Transcribe your audio taped interpretation by following the directions below:

Find the name of a person who provides transcription services in your local phone book. Tell the transcriber to write down exactly what is on the tape including any use of sounds such as 'uh' or 'um.' The transcription should also note any pauses you made. Be sure the transcriber understands that they are not to fix any grammatical errors nor are they to leave out any repetition of words. Also ask that it be double or triple spaced so that you will have room to make notes. Compare prices for transcription work because they do vary. However, you will find it very useful to have an actual transcription of your sign to English interpreting work.

- c. With your transcript in hand, watch the videotape again. When you see a fingerspelled word on the tape, stop it. Find the place on your transcript where you interpreted the concept that contains the fingerspelled word. With a highlighter pen, mark the English word(s) you used to interpret the fingerspelled item(s). If you didn't incorporate the fingerspelled item in your interpretation, make a note of it in the margin. Also, using the chart on the next page, write the item that was fingerspelled in the appropriate column. Continue starting and stopping the tape, highlighting your transcript and putting the fingerspelled items into the chart until you reach the end of the section you interpreted.
- d. Carefully assess your transcript by trying to identify consistent patterns. The questions below will help you with your assessment.

When you look at your chart do you see any similarities between the words in any given column? For instance, do you notice that names or loan signs or more often in one column than in another?

Look at your transcript. Examine your interpretation right before the highlighted fingerspelled item and right after the highlighted fingerspelled item. Do you notice any patterns? For instance, after you miss a fingerspelled item, do you notice that your interpreting work deteriorates? If so, for how long? Do you tend to use more words like 'uh' and 'um' when you come to a fingerspelled word?

Did you use any correction techniques? If so, were they successful? If you didn't, can you see places where you could have used them? Maybe you saw a fingerspelled word but didn't get it until later. Were you able to incorporate the information effectively?

Listen to your audio tape again. Does your intonation change when there is a fingerspelled item? For instance, do you use rising intonation to show that you have a question about the fingerspelled word you are seeing? How might that rising intonation be interpreted by your listening audience?

- e. Save your tape, transcript and chart! You will want to compare your post-test with these items.

F-10

I didn't understand the fingerspelled item and I didn't convey the signer's idea effectively in English.

I understood the fingerspelled item but didn't incorporate it effectively into an appropriate English Sentence.

I didn't understand the specific fingerspelled item but I was able to convey the signer's idea effectively in English.

I understood the fingerspelled item and incorporated it effectively into an appropriate English Sentence.

Pre-Test (English to ASL)

- a. Videotape yourself fingerspelling the familiar sentence, "the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog."
- b. Select a videotape with an English speaker and three model interpreters. Three appropriate tapes are listed at the beginning of this module under *Required Materials*. Videotape yourself interpreting the lecture. Watch your videotape and write down the items you chose to spell. View the three model interpreters and write down the words they chose to spell. Note the similarities and the differences. View your work from **a** and **b** again and make some notes about your fingerspelling habits. Look at the following: hand position, elbow and arm position, rhythm, palm orientation, hand configuration, transitions, pausing, speed, clarity, movement, directionality and mouth movements. Did you misspell any words? Did you correct any errors you made? If so, how?

Save your notes and your videotape. Re-evaluate this tape after you have completed this module through E1.

V. Overview and Activities

A. Uses of fingerspelling

Fingerspelling occurs in ASL in specific places and with specific purposes. One use is in conveying proper nouns: names of people, places, organizations, etc. Upon introducing proper nouns fingerspelling is produced at a “careful speed.” (Johnson, 1994). Examples of fingerspelled proper names: #M-A-R-T-H-A, #W-I-N-O-N-A, #C-A-P-I-T-A-L-I-S-M.

A second use of fingerspelling is to convey technical terms borrowed from English or other languages that use the Roman alphabet. The American manual alphabet can be used to spell words from languages such as French, Spanish, and Italian. Words like crepe, mesa, and cappuccino can be spelled in ASL. These fingerspelled terms are initially signed at a careful speed but may be signed at rapid speed if used repeatedly.

Examples of fingerspelled technical terms: #D-A-T-A, #B-Y-T-E, #M-O-D-E-M.

A third usage of fingerspelling is to show emphasis. Fingerspelled words of this type typically have a sign of approximately equal meaning, yet the signer will choose to fingerspell this term for emphasis. This type of spelling may take on a lexicalized form, that is to say that a number of changes have occurred to the citation form of the fingerspelling. Examples of signs fingerspelled for emphasis: #FUN, #WHAT.

The fourth common usage of fingerspelling is for lexicalized signs. These are words borrowed from English into ASL which then undergo a systematic transformation in form and meaning. Examples of lexicalized signs: #JOB, #IF, #BACK, etc.

B. Types of fingerspelling

1. Careful fingerspelling

Robert Johnson, a linguist at Gallaudet University, gave a teleclass entitled, The Structure of Fingerspelling in American Sign Language. He and Carol Patrie, also from Gallaudet, have done extensive research on fingerspelling. Much of this module is based on their work. Johnson cites three types of fingerspelling:

- careful,
- rapid, and
- lexicalized.

Johnson says, "Careful fingerspelling focuses on individual signs that represent letters of the English Roman alphabet. The purpose is to represent the spelling of a word of a written language. One ASL sign is present for each spelled "letter." Form is largely invariant, except for very predictable influences of signs on each other." (1994)

Careful fingerspelling is produced at slower than average speed with the signer's eyes directed at the hand spelling. Johnson notes careful fingerspelling is used to introduce proper names, and in response to questions such as asking how an English word is spelled, or asking for the English word for an ASL sign.

Because each fingerspelled letter functions as a sign in ASL, we can describe fingerspelled words like we do other signs, by describing each parameter.

In careful fingerspelling each letter is important. The handshapes are exact. The location of the sign is in normal fingerspelling space: chest high, slightly out from center. Movement is minimal and the palm orientation is generally away from the signer. Carefully fingerspelled words are transcribed in English as follows: #J-O-H-N, #M-E-M-P-H-I-S, #C-H-E-E-R-I-O-S. Notice there are hyphens between letters, this is to show that each letter is emphasized.

To see examples of careful fingerspelling watch the video, *Fingerspelling Proper Names* by Sign Media. Do the practice exercises and multiple choice test to gauge how you are doing.

2. Rapid Fingerspelling

In rapid fingerspelling, the focus is on the entire word, not on each letter. Once a fingerspelled word is introduced into the conversation by careful fingerspelling, it may be spelled rapidly after that. Other words that are commonly fingerspelled will be executed with rapid fingerspelling upon first mention.

Adult signers may also choose to spell a word rather than sign it for the same reason hearing adults sometimes spell out words like 'candy' or 'bedtime' to each other in front of children. Any word written in the Roman alphabet can be represented in ASL.

3. Lexicalized fingerspelling

Lexicalized fingerspelling refers to the restructuring of the individual signs for each letter, to form a single sign or lexical item in ASL. Signs of this kind are typically represented in writing by the symbol '#,' then a word without hyphens: #JOB, #YES, etc. This reinforces the idea that the lexical item is a whole and not a collection of letters. During the lexicalization process the handshape of the individual letters often changes. Palm orientation also changes in predictable ways. After a fingerspelled sign has become lexicalized the location of the sign can become significant and provide grammatical information about subject and the object. Movement is added to some of the lexicalized signs. The direction of the movement conveys grammatical information, again just like the movement of non-fingerspelled signs do. Fingerspelled signs began as careful spelling of English words borrowed into ASL. Over time regular, predictable changes occurred to create the lexicalized signs. Robbin Battison, in his work, *Lexical Borrowing in American Sign Language*, lists and explains these changes. For a summary of his work see Valli and Lucas p. 185 -190.

To see examples of lexicalized fingerspelling watch the videotape by Sign Media *Fingerspelled Loan Signs*.

To see examples of all three of these types of fingerspelling, watch the videotape, *Fingerspelled Word Recognition for Sign Language Interpreters*.

C. English to ASL

This section will focus on the most common errors in fingerspelling interpreters make when interpreting from English to ASL. The information from this section is based on the findings of Marty Taylor, Ph. D. and published in the book, *Interpretation Skills: English to ASL*. It is hoped that this section will guide your production of fingerspelling as you try to avoid making these errors. You can also use this list of errors as a check list when viewing your fingerspelling on videotapes.

1. Misspelling

One of the errors that interpreters make is to fingerspell inaccurately. That is, either a word is misspelled, or letters are deleted or letters are added. Being well prepared for an interpreting assignment includes trying to predict vocabulary that might arise in a given situation. If this vocabulary needs to be spelled make sure you look up accurate spellings. Sometimes key words and new terminology are presented on overheads. It is not 'cheating' to turn around and check to see how a word or an acronym is spelled. If you are a poor speller, you may need to develop a specific plan to improve your spelling skills. You may want to jot down words that are troublesome to you and post them in your study area. There are also books available to improve your spelling, one is, Spelling for the Millions, by Edna Furness.

2. Acronyms and Abbreviations are signed inaccurately

Acronyms and abbreviations are fingerspelled in special ways. Acronyms are abbreviations that are pronounced as words, for example: SCUBA is an abbreviation for a Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus, CSUN is the abbreviation for California State University at Northridge. Acronyms are signed letter by letter with careful fingerspelling. A slight circular motion indicates the signing of initials. Sometimes a term, such as an organization or college name, will be used in English that

has a well know abbreviation in ASL. The interpreter should sign the abbreviation. As an abbreviation becomes used again and again in a given conversation the signing style changes from careful to rapid. When this happens the circular motion is deleted.

3. Omissions

Sometimes we hear a word or phrase, but don't include it's equivalent in our interpretation. When the word is important, for example a person's name, or a specific technical term, and it doesn't come through in our target message, that is considered an error.

4. Spelling a word that should be signed or signing a word that should be spelled

As you read previously, there are some English words that have ASL signs but are sometimes fingerspelled for emphasis. To not do this would be an error.

Proper names such as titles of books or movies, names of people, or theories should be spelled. It would be inaccurate to sign #M-R- CHAIR or #B-R-E-N-D-A DOOR, if the people's names are Mr. Chair or Brenda Door. On the other hand, fingerspelling too many words that have sign equivalents and are not being emphasized is also an error. There is some debate as to whether a single word in English should be divided into a sign plus fingerspelling in ASL. The prescriptive grammarians tell us not to do it. However one can observe D/deaf signers using mixed signs such as MOTHER #H-O-O-D, and LIFE #S-T-Y-L-E. Watch for what is used in your Deaf community and take their lead.

5. Inaccurate non-manual features for emphatic fingerspelling

Sometimes a word is fingerspelled to show importance or to stress this word as opposed to another. When fingerspelling is used for emphasis the appropriate non-manual feature must also be present. The eye-gaze should be at the hand or at the addressee. The letters should be clearly produced with 'strong precise movements from one letter to the next' (Taylor). Overuse of this emphatic style is also an error since the effect is lost if it is done too often.

6. Uneven Rhythm

Fingerspelling should be executed at an even pace. There should be a slight pause between letters (longer if using careful fingerspelling). A longer pause occurs between words fingerspelled in a row, as in a title. If certain clusters of letters are spelled faster that is an error. If the pauses within a word or a title are uneven, that is an error.

7. Unclear Fingerspelling

The individual letters in 'careful' fingerspelling should be well formed: not sloppy or tense or cramped. The movement between letters should be smooth and even paced. Do not form extraneous letters when moving between letters.

8. Incorrect Hand Position

"The hand should be in a visually comfortable position with the arm bent and the hand slightly in front of the shoulder area, not the face." (Taylor, 1993) In 'careful' and 'rapid' fingerspelling the hand stays in roughly the same location throughout the spelling of a word. There is a slight outward, horizontal movement. There should be no vertical motion, no bouncing or excessive twisting. The palm orientation for the majority of letters should be toward the addressee or slightly rotated toward the signers body.

9. Speed Doesn't Match Addressee's Skill and/or Preferences

The rate at which we fingerspell should be determined by the addressee. Overly slow fingerspelling can be annoying and may seem patronizing. Remember spelling slower emphasizes a word, continually spelling too slowly might be perceived as 'shouting.' 'Lexicalized' fingerspelling and 'rapid' fingerspelling, by definition, are not signed slowly.

Fast fingerspelling tends to get sloppy. Spell only as fast as you can while still maintaining clarity. Never spell faster than is comfortable for the viewer.

10. Presence or Absence of Mouthing

The presence or absence of mouthing the English word while spelling it is a personal preference of the D/deaf addressees. It would be an error if the person you are interpreting for has let you know that mouthing is distracting and you continue. Likewise, it would be an error to not mouth for a deaf person who depends on non-manual cues to aid in reading fingerspelling.

If mouthing is present, the interpreter should be mouthing the entire word, not individual letters. The mouthing should coincide with the spelling neither preceding it nor following it. Unnaturally exaggerated mouthing or tongue thrusting is also an error.

D. Transliteration

Both transliterations and interpretations will include fingerspelling. This will be especially true if the goal of the speaker is one that focuses on vocabulary. If the content of the talk includes English vocabulary that the D/deaf consumer may need to recognize, the name of presidents, state capitols or spelling words, the interpreter needs to represent those lexical items as specifically as possible. The best way to do this is by fingerspelling the specific lexical item. Interpreters may attempt to avoid fingerspelling, signing the gloss COMMITTEE for the English words "committee," "council" or "Congress." This is fine if the source message does not focus on the type of group that is being referred to. However, if the message is one where it is important to make a distinction between the groups, the word should be fingerspelled. In a transliterated message, the specific English word at the very least should be represented by mouthing.

Transliterations should strive for a target message that is "...a grammatically correct and coherent English text which remains true and accurate with regard to the source text." (RID, 1995) Elements of English that don't naturally occur in ASL are commonly fingerspelled in transliteration. Examples of these are; articles (the, an, a) time indicators (was, were, did), pronouns (they, he, she) and prepositions (of, to, beyond, into). These elements may be fingerspelled in an interpretation if there is a reason for their emphasis. In a transliteration, the consumer's use of such fingerspelled items is a good indicator of how much the interpreter should include them. The rules regarding careful, rapid and lexicalized fingerspelling remain the same in transliteration.



1. Watch videotapes of D/deaf speakers who use a more English-like signing. Jerry Jordon "Spaced Out!" from Gallaudet's Handful of Stories 1. is one possible text. Analyze use of fingerspelling. Note specifically what kinds of lexical items are fingerspelled. Would these items be fingerspelled in an ASL speech?
2. Using the Transliteration Model Series videotapes from Sign Enhancers, transliterate the spoken English lecture onto videotape. Compare your use of fingerspelling with the interpreters shown on the tape. Did you fingerspell more often or less often? What kinds of lexical items did you fingerspell? which did the fingerspell? Analyze the factors that led to your use of fingerspelling in your transliteration.

E. ASL to English



1. Video class

This activity requires you to watch the videotape entitled Fingerspelling: Expressive and Receptive Fluency - A Video Guide by Joyce Linden Groode. This two hour videotape will provide you with a framework for developing strategies to strengthen your skills in comprehending fingerspelling. The tape is presented in sign language although there is a voice translation for you to listen to if you would prefer. Although parts of this tape will probably be a review for you, many interpreters find it extremely helpful in terms of consolidating and reinforcing what they have learned about fingerspelling, either from classes or from experience. In addition, you will also learn some new techniques and strategies. It is clearly divided into sections so you can watch it at more than one sitting.

After watching the tape, meet with another interpreter and answer the following questions.

1. Define configuration, closure and context. Why are these three concepts important for understanding fingerspelling?

2. Does Ms. Groode believe that reading fingerspelling is similar to reading printed material? Why or why not?

3. How does Ms. Groode describe where D/deaf people focus when they read fingerspelling? Is your area of focus the same?

4. Interpreters are often frustrated when they realize that what they thought was one long fingerspelled word was actually two or more shorter words. What strategy can you use to see where one word ends and another one begins?

5. Is the fact that the fingerspeller's hand is not properly positioned a good excuse for not understanding the fingerspelling? How is it possible to read fingerspelling when you see only the back of the hand?

6. What are some fingerspelled items that often have specific mouth movements associated with them?

7. Do D/deaf people always mouth words the way they sound? What are some examples?

8. Will you see variations in fingerspelled letters depending on what letter precedes or follows a specific fingerspelling handshape? Give some examples.

9. Give examples to show how the following items are handled in fingerspelling: initials (such as J. F. Kennedy), articles (such as an, a, the) possessives (as in my mother's car), acronyms and double letters.

10. Which practice exercise did you find the most helpful? Which strategies will you incorporate into your interpreting work?

Bonus: What was your favorite part of the creative fingerspelling demonstration?

Re-evaluate your English to ASL pre-test based on what you have learned up to this point.

2. Activities: The following activities can be done once or several times. Set up a practice schedule for yourself that meets your individual needs.

- a. Select a videotape to work with. You may want to choose one of the tapes you previewed for your pre-test. Do the preparation work you need in order to interpret the tape as successfully as you can into spoken English. Decide whether or not you will interpret the tape consecutively or simultaneously.

Your task for interpreting this tape is similar to the pre-test. You are to give the most effective interpretation you can produce without stopping the tape. This is the situation interpreters are in when they take their RID performance test. Not only do you need to develop strategies for understanding fingerspelling, you also need to develop strategies for when you don't understand the fingerspelling and you can't stop the signer. No matter how proficient an interpreter becomes, it is impossible to understand all the fingerspelling all the time.

For this particular interpretation, focus on using the Gish Approach. Try to incorporate as many of the details as you can. If you can't get the item on the detail level, move to the level that allows you to interpret a coherent, meaningful sentence. Before you start, also review in your mind what correction techniques you will use.

Interpret the videotape. If it is possible, focus a video camera on the monitor that you are watching. Record on your own blank tape the signed text that you are watching while you interpret into spoken English. The microphone on the camera will pick up your voice interpretation. That way, when you listen to your tape, you can also see the original text. This will also allow you to assess how much processing time you were using.

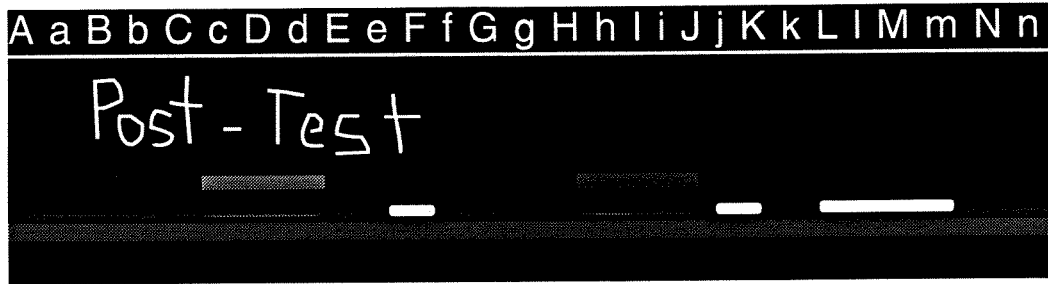
Assess your interpretation. What strategies worked for you? What strategies did not work for you? How would you approach the task differently the next time? Did your amount of processing time affect your interpreting? Were you able to successfully incorporate correction techniques?

- b. Select another videotape to work with. Again, do any preparation you need to do in order to interpret successfully. This time, though, you will use a different strategy. As you are interpreting, if you become "stuck" and unable to interpret at a detail level, stop the tape. However, think carefully about where and when you stop the tape. Often by seeing more of the message, the fingerspelled item will begin to make sense. **DO NOT** stop the tape immediately after the fingerspelled item. Wait at least until the signer has completed their thought.

Then, stop the tape and take a minute or two to think about the text. Often, by just giving yourself a little more time, the passage will begin to make complete sense to you. If this doesn't happen, rewind the tape and look at the complete unit of text again, not just the fingerspelled item. Again, if you don't get it immediately, give yourself a couple of minutes to think. If you still can't make sense out of the unit after seeing it two or three times, then think about what questions you would ask for clarification. After that, ask your partner for the word(s) or turn on the soundtrack (if there is one) to clarify the meaning of the missing piece. Can you figure out why you had a hard time with this particular item? You may want to make some notes in your journal about the word or the context to help you in the future.

- c. Watch videotapes that are specifically designed to emphasize fingerspelling. Some of these tapes were mentioned on the second page of this module. Fingerspelled Word Recognition for Sign Language Interpreter and Fingerspelled Loan Signs, Proper Names, Geographic Locations and Miscellaneous Items are all highly recommended.

- d. The ability to read fingerspelling does improve with practice. It is clear that the more fingerspelling you see, the more likely you are to improve. Some interpreters complain that they don't see a lot of fingerspelling in their daily work in educational settings. If this is true for you, set up times to practice fingerspelling with colleagues, videotapes and D/deaf teachers. There are many possibilities for activities with colleagues including spelling words from various categories (names of famous people, breeds of dogs, desserts, street names in your town, technical terms) and/or having someone tell you a brief story that includes information such as their full name, where they were born, where they live now, where they work, and the names of family members or pets. Try to set up a consistent practice schedule. If you are weak in fingerspelling, practicing often for a short amount of time is probably more beneficial than a few longer practice sessions.
- e. While you are working on this module, keep a journal. Write down fingerspelled words that you see D/deaf people and interpreters using. Also note words that are easy for you to read and more difficult for you to read. Can you detect patterns for what makes a fingerspelled item harder or easier for you to read? What strategies are working the best for you? Keep a log of your fingerspelling progress.



VI. Post-Test

(Sign to Spoken English)

1. **Get Ready:** Select a videotape with a D/deaf signer that is at least 25 minutes long. You may choose an ASL signer, a more English-like signer, a child or an adult. Preview a few minutes of several tapes until you find one that you are comfortable watching. The tape should be of high quality so that the signs and facial grammar are able to be read without straining your eyes. Any tape from the Sign Enhancers Deaf Culture Autobiography series would be appropriate.
2. **Get Set:** For the pre-test you will need to interpret into spoken English the second 12 to 15 minutes of the videotape you selected for the pre-test. Set a timer to go off at about 12 minutes or ask another person to be your timekeeper. When you get the signal, finish the unit of information that you are interpreting and then turn off the tape.
3. **Go:** Simultaneously interpret the second 12 - 15 minutes of the tape the you chose without stopping it. Record you entire interpretation on an audiocassette.

4. Assessment:

a. Write down your answers to the following questions:

Overall, how did you feel about this interpretation?

Do you recall any times you read the fingerspelling effortlessly? Why were you able to do this?

Do you recall any times that you “panicked” when you saw fingerspelling? Why did you react that way?

Were you able to use context, your knowledge of the signer and/or your knowledge of the topic in order to successfully predict fingerspelling or to make sense of fingerspelling that you were not sure you had understood?

Did you use any techniques from the Gish Approach to handle fingerspelled items. Why or why not? If you did, how did those techniques work for you?

b. Transcribe your audiotape by following the directions below

Find the name of a person who provides transcription services in your local phone book. Tell the transcriber to write down exactly what is on the tape including any use of sounds such as ‘uh’ or ‘um.’ The transcription should also note any pauses you made. Be sure the transcriber understands that they are not to fix any grammatical errors nor are they to leave out any repetitions of words. Also ask that it be double or triple spaced so that you will have room to make notes. Compare prices for transcription work because they do vary. However, you will find it very useful to have an actual transcription of your sign to English interpreting work.

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- c. With your transcript in hand, watch the videotape again. When you see a fingerspelled word on the tape, stop it. Find the place on your transcript where you interpreted the concept that contains the fingerspelled word. With a highlighter pen, mark the English word(s) you used to interpret the fingerspelled item(s). If you didn't incorporate the fingerspelled item in your interpretation, make a note of it in the margin. Also, using the chart on the next page, write the item that was fingerspelled in the appropriate column. Continue starting and stopping the tape, highlighting your transcript and putting the fingerspelled items into the chart until you reach the end of the section you interpreted.
- d. Carefully assess your transcript by trying to identify consistent patterns.

When you look at your chart, do you see any similarities between the words in any given column? For instance, do you notice a pattern of missing names or loan signs?

Look at your transcript. Examine your interpretation right before the highlighted fingerspelled item and right after the highlighted fingerspelled item. Do you notice any patterns? For instance, after you miss a fingerspelled item, do you notice that your interpreting work deteriorates? If so, for how long? Do you tend to use more words like 'uh' and 'um' when you come to a fingerspelled word?

Listen to your audiotape again. Does your intonation change when there is a fingerspelled item? For instance, do you use rising intonation to show that you have a question about the fingerspelled word you are seeing? How is that interpreted by the audience?

- e. Compare your post-test with your pre-test. What improvement can you see?

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I didn't understand the fingerspelled item and I didn't convey the signer's idea effectively in English.

I understood the fingerspelled item but didn't incorporate it effectively into an appropriate English Sentence.

I didn't understand the specific fingerspelled item but I was able to convey the signer's idea effectively in English.

I understood the fingerspelled item and incorporated it effectively into an appropriate English Sentence.

Post-Test

(English to ASL)

Videotape yourself interpreting “the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog” again.

Videotape yourself interpreting the same text you used for your pre-test.

Compare your pre-test with your post-test. What improvements can you see in your fingerspelling? What areas do you need to continue to monitor?

VII. Bibliography

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