
The Ontological Beliefs and Curriculum Design of Canadian Interpreter and ASL Educators

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Abstract

This study involved interviews with Canadian educators in the fields of interpreter training and American Sign Language (ASL), which were conducted within a qualitative framework to explore their ontological beliefs concerning curriculum design. Questions posed included how their curriculum was fashioned and the nature of course delivery. Eisner's (2002) three curricula (i.e., *explicit*, *implied*, and *null*) were used as a framework to interpret the findings. The educators typically designed their curricula in-house and followed a "Designing a Curriculum" methodology (Mitchell, 1983). Most educators, however, did not mention the inclusion of representatives from the field, a curriculum expert, or a literature review, all of which are recommended by Sinnett (1976). Because some participants described a lack of documentation or the need to redesign resources, there existed an ad hoc quality to curriculum construction that made a scaffolding approach to teaching and learning problematic. The continued existence of disparate teaching resources, subject specialization, and lack of curricular integration could lead to educational silos and having separate language and interpretation programs in one department.

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Signed language interpreting, or visual language interpreting, is a relatively new field. Curriculum construction and the ontological beliefs of educators, the knowledge or facts they regard as significant to their curriculum, are but two of the many areas in need of further study. To investigate these areas, 34 interpreter educators and American Sign Language (ASL) instructors in Canada were interviewed and asked to describe how their curricula were created and delivered (see appendix) and encouraged to discuss the challenges they faced. The following manuscript is a synthesis and qualitative analysis of their comments, drawing upon Eisner's (2002) discussion of the explicit, implied, and null curricula. The decision to use this framework mirrored the methodology used by other authors (Sawyer, 2004) and was also grounded in the comments from the participants. For example, once the data analysis began, and as the principle researcher, I believed that the concepts of explicit, null, and implied curricula provided a significant lens for understanding the ontological beliefs of the participants and that it helped to discriminate between what they actually taught, what they had decided to leave out of their curricula, and what they hoped to accomplish through indirect instruction.

1. Review of the literature

As mentioned, Eisner's (2002) conceptualization of the three curricula that all schools teach (i.e. explicit, implied, and null) was chosen as the framework for this qualitative study and served as the major headings in the organization of this manuscript. In addition, a separate category was noted, curriculum development, which focused on the design of the above three curricula. A similar model was used by Sawyer (2004) to discuss the curriculum design of spoken language interpretation programs, albeit different labels were used, such as the "official curriculum" (p. 41) to denote the explicit and the "hidden curriculum" (p. 42) to mean a combination of the implied and learned curricula.

I first review the concepts of explicit, implied, and null curricula based on the definitions found in the literature (Apple, 2004; Eisner, 2002; Sawyer, 2004). Next, I present a brief review of the literature on signed language interpreter education with reference to spoken language interpretation programs that provide examples of these three curricula. Within a qualitative methodology, the initial literature review was expanded upon in response to the comments of the participants and to provide context for their insights. For example, several educators mentioned a mapping or Designing a Curriculum ([DACUM]; Mitchell, 1983) process that then became a property of the category of curriculum development, and so a further review of the literature was done in this area to contextualize the participants' comments (see Figure 1, Examples of Categories and Properties).

As a construct, the *explicit curriculum* is both the planned content and abilities that constitute the taught lessons (Eisner, 2002). Often this is conceptualized as a document (Sawyer, 2004), "which includes details about goals,

objectives, content, teaching techniques, evaluation and assessment” (Marsh, 1997, p.4). Much of this manuscript is given over to a discussion of this curriculum.

The *implied or hidden curriculum*, on the other hand, could be thought of as the process of student socialization (Eisner, 2002; Marsh, 1997). According to Apple this hidden curriculum encompasses “the tacit teaching to students of norms, values, and dispositions that goes on simply by their living in and coping with the institutional expectations and routines of schools” (2004, p. 13). Students typically work to discover this curriculum, to emulate the expectations of their instructors, and to read the *value code* around the amount of time and level of importance assigned to specific classes or activities (Eisner, 2002). In addition, Eisner states that the implied curriculum includes the inculcation of good work habits, such as flexibility and punctuality, initiative and independence, and adherence to routines that prepare students to enter the workforce. Eisner also asserts that an unstated and typically undocumented curriculum possibly makes up a great deal of what is actually taught.

The third curriculum that schools teach is described by Eisner (2002) as the *null curriculum*—consisting of two major areas: (a) the content that was purposefully not addressed in programs and (b) the abilities or cognitive aptitudes that were not required or fostered in learners. In some secondary settings, for example, students were not given the option of studying law, anthropology, the arts, communication, economics, as these were not part of the ethos of traditional teaching and so have not been included in the explicit curriculum (Eisner). Students then graduated with little to no understanding of critical topics, such as the legal system or their lawful responsibilities (Eisner). Eisner also argued that some educational systems preferred literal and verbal-sequential reasoning to abstract thinking, thus ignoring students’ creative, abstract, and cognitive abilities and potentially producing literal thinkers with less ability to think metaphorically.

1.1. *Explicit curriculum*

Beginning with the explicit curriculum, we review what the literature has said about signed and spoken language interpreter preparation programs. Concerns have been raised in Canada about the lack of a standard, explicit curriculum for signed language interpreters (Stratij, 1996) and a history in the field of educators not clearly documenting or sharing their efforts (Taylor, 1993). The same could be said for ASL programs in the United States (Smith, 1988). Several authors (Roberts, 1990; Sawyer, 2004) have noted a similar lack of resources (i.e., published manuals or curriculum guides) for spoken language interpreter educators and a lack of research of curriculum design for their profession (Albir, 2007; Sawyer). A review of the literature, however, uncovered a number of resources that could be used in the design of a curriculum for interpretation programs. As properties of the explicit curriculum, these resources are discussed in the following order: philosophy, curriculum resources, skill sets, models, and coursework.

1.1.1 Philosophy and mission

It could be argued that an identified mission statement and teaching philosophy are important first steps in the design of a program; therefore, it will be the first area that we look at in the explicit curriculum. Gile (1995) suggested a historical tension in the philosophical approaches to spoken language interpreter preparation in that educators believed interpreters were either born or made. Sawyer also noted two competing paradigms in spoken language programs in the 1980s and 1990s, either a pedagogy based on “cognitive science and linguistics,” or a holistic approach based on the liberal arts and humanities (2004, p.11).

Malcolm (1999) shared a similar observation to Gile’s (1995) about signed language interpreter educators, in that some teachers doubted interpretation could be taught. Malcolm also believed that instructors too readily adopted a model of practice, what Deninger described as a “remarkably unsuccessful pedagogical technique” (1987, p. 310). Within a pedagogy of practice, Finton described the teaching practices of some instructors as the “sink or swim” method of teaching interpretation (1998, p. 38).

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Instead of a model of practice, educators have been advised to adopt a teaching philosophy based on theories of learning and cognition (Deninger, 1987), a bilingual-bicultural approach (Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980), a constructivist philosophy (Albir, 2007; Napier, 2004; Sawyer, 2004), or the view of interpreting as a discourse process (Cokely, 1992; Napier; Russell, 2002). Apple (2004), in a general discussion of curriculum design, encouraged a social justice framework.

A number of theorists were also recommended in the literature on signed language interpreting for study, such as Piaget and Bandura (Deninger, 1987), Freire (Baker-Shenk, 1986; Gish, 1993; McDermid, 2009), and Vygotsky (Gish). One of the participants in this study mentioned the work of language acquisition theorists Cummins (1979) and Krashen and Terrell (1983). Cummins suggested at least two forms of language fluency, Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), an individual's ability to use language communicatively, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), an individual's ability to describe their language and its grammar. In a description of language learning, Krashen and Terrell pointed out the need to use language in meaningful ways and to use it incrementally in order to avoid overwhelming a learner's affective filters.

While not necessarily a philosophical approach, several methods of teaching interpretation were cited in the literature, such as grammar instruction (Stauffer, 1992) and a Demand-Control Schema framework (Dean & Pollard, 2001). In the Demand-Control framework, students prepare for interpreting by brainstorming and then reflecting on the demands placed upon them in four areas: linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and environmental (Dean & Pollard). To teach ASL, a Functional-Notional (Smith, Lentz, & Mikos, 1988) and Direct Method approach were recommended (Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980; Smith & Savidge, 2002). The focus of the Functional-Notional approach was on communicative competence and lessons are taught in context (Smith et al.). The Direct Method was described as being an immersion approach, with ASL being taught "without voice and without English equivalents" (Cokely & Baker-Shenk, p. xi). Some ASL instructors employed a revised Direct Method, which included instruction in grammar and scripts of ASL dialogues in a written English gloss to initiate dialogic activities (Cokely & Baker-Shenk).

1.1.2 Curriculum resources

Various curriculum resources were noted in the literature, the next property of the explicit curriculum that we address. As early as 1973, a curriculum for signed language interpreting existed (Sternberg, Tipton & Schein, 1973), which was followed by the creation of a taxonomy of aptitudes interpreters needed to perform a successful interpretation (Conference of Interpreter Trainers [CIT], 1986). Since 1988, a number of other curriculum documents have been created to teach signed language interpreting (Baker-Shenk, Bienvenu, Colonos, Cokely, Kanda, Neumann-Solow & Witter-Merithew, 1988; Baker-Shenk, 1990; Kelly, 2004; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1998; Resnick & Hoza, 1990; Taff-Watson & Northup, 1988). Of course at the same time, several curricula or teaching resources have also been created for instructors of spoken language interpretation (Albir, 2007; Gile, 1995; Sawyer, 2004; Seleskovitch, 1978; Seleskovitch & Lederer, 1995).

In 2000, Roy edited the first in a series of volumes for interpreter educators that cover various teaching methodologies and research. Concerned about the lack of attention (in the programs) to culture and race, a group of educators met to create the National Multicultural Interpreter Program ([NMIP], 2004) curriculum.² While not designed specifically for signed language interpreters, Pollard (1997) created a mentored curriculum for mental health interpreting. A variety of textbooks have also been published on the subject of signed language interpretation (Frishberg, 1986; Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Napier, McKee & Goswell, 2006; Solow, 1981; Steward, Schein & Cartwright, 2004) and ASL instruction (Cassell, 1997; Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980; Smith et al., 1988). In addition, CIT has published biennial conference proceedings and a number of position papers on interpreter education. While the contribution to the education of signed language interpreters of these resources has been significant, there were limitations as well. Some have concentrated on research (Roy, 2000) or were not designed to teach interpreting (Cokely & Baker-Shenk; Smith et al.; Taylor, 1993). Other resources focused

² See <http://www.epcc.edu/nmip/Curriculum/tabid/2763/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

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specifically on interpreting from English to ASL (Taylor) or ASL to English (Kelly, 2004), while others did not provide lesson plans or means of assessment (Humphrey & Alcorn; Pollard).

1.1.3 Skill sets

In addition to the resources mentioned above, several authors listed specific skill sets they believed should be included in the explicit curriculum of interpreter education programs, perhaps best described as pre-interpreting, cognitive abilities (Cokely, 1992; Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980; Colonomos, 1992; CIT, 1986; Deninger, 1987; Finton, 1998; Lambert, 1988; Stauffer, 1992). These skill sets include areas such as note taking (Winston & Monikowski, 2000), visualization (Stauffer), and mapping (Russell, 2002; Winston & Monikowski). Steffen (1998) found that some students were not motivated to practice these aptitudes until they were tied to a model of interpretation.

From a curriculum design perspective, many of the tasks noted above seem premised in the belief of interpreting as an individual, cognitive-psychological activity, not necessarily as a socio-linguistic or social phenomenon. An instructor who has adopted a philosophy of learning as being a social activity might instead teach activities such as team building or peer support and feedback. Similar to Sawyer's (2004) observations concerning the anecdotal nature of the curricula in spoken language interpretation programs, there is little empirical research to validate many of these tasks. Little seems to be known, for example, about the time required for their mastery or the ability of an adult student to develop these aptitudes.

1.1.4 Models

As a feature of the explicit curriculum, it has been argued that programs must incorporate a model of interpreting (Cokely, 1992; Janzen, 1994; Napier, 2006). A model, it was believed, could serve as the basis of program evaluation, help to operationally define needed competencies (Cokely), and structure feedback (Isham, 1986). One researcher noted how challenging it was to determine message equivalency without such a model (Slatyer, 2006).

In 1974, Ingram conceptualized possibly the first processing model specific to signed language interpreting. Since that time, and especially over approximately the last two decades, various models from spoken language interpretation (Gile 1995; Seleskovitch, 1978) have been incorporated into signed language interpreter preparation programs as well as a number of models postulated by signed language interpreter educators (Cokely, 1992; Colonomos, 1992; Gish, 1987; Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Russell, 2002). Although not considered a model of interpretation, Isham's (1986) article on text analysis has also been included in interpreter education (Resnick & Hoza, 1990).

Common themes in the models cited above include an emphasis on contextual or environmental information (Cokely, 1992; Colonomos, 1992; Gish, 1987; Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Ingram, 1974; Isham, 1986; Seleskovitch, 1978) and bilingual language fluency (Cokely; Colonomos; Seleskovitch). Many authors conceptualize the process as three broad stages in which the interpreter (a) disregards the source message form, (b) mentally represents the speaker's message in meaning-based or goal-based units, and then (c) produces an equivalent target text (Colonomos; Ingram; Seleskovitch). In general, while models help to broadly inform the ontology and pedagogy of interpreter educators, it is then up to the educator and students to determine the sequencing of learning activities, their intensity and duration, and assessment.

1.1.5 Coursework

The final property of the explicit curriculum of signed language interpreter education programs we address is that of coursework. Cokely (2003) believed that most signed language interpreter education programs began with translation and were followed by classes in consecutive interpretation, then simultaneous interpretation. Other areas for inclusion in the explicit curriculum included ethics (Cokely, 2003; Janzen, 1994; McDermid, 2009;

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Napier, 2006; Slatyer, 2006), a signed language (such as ASL; Cokely, 1992), and Deaf³ culture (Janzen, 1999). In the early 1990s, Malcolm reported that students at Douglas College took “Introduction to the Community, Wellness, Lifespan Development, and Working with Others” (1994, p. 8). During that same time period, practicum or placement courses were a requirement of the Canadian programs (Decator, 1994; Janzen, 1994; Malcolm, 1999), though some programs found it challenging to find hosts (MacFarlane, 1990). Russell (2002) noted a difference in opinion about the value of consecutive interpretation between the programs where the consecutive mode was taught and with hosts who didn’t seem to support it. Douglas College had also twinned their students with a working interpreter (Malcolm), and mentorship programs were recommended for recent graduates (MacFarlane; Malcolm).

1.2. *Implied curriculum*

Turning to the second of Eisner’s (2002) three curricula in the field of spoken language interpretation, the *implied*, this curriculum might include the objectives outlined by Gile (1995), such as: (a) the enhancement of the professional status of the field, (b) support for graduates in networking and employment, (c) standardization of practices through education, (d) the promotion of research, and (e) efforts to foster support for working practitioners. In the signed language interpretation field, the implied curriculum of programs was defined by one author (McDermid, 2009) as the inculcation of “good citizens” of the Deaf community in terms of five broad areas: attitude and values, cultural sensitivity, community involvement, ethical behaviour and a willingness to pursue life-long learning (McDermid). Within these five headings, it was hoped that programs instilled in students a commitment to volunteerism, community participation (Malcolm, 1994; McDermid), and the value of reciprocity (McDermid). Instructors were seen as being responsible for encouraging their students to become agents of change (Witter-Merithew, 1995) and to prepare their pupils for the workforce (Malcolm). At the same time, however, interpreters needed to be made aware of professional boundaries (Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Johnson & Taylor, 2004; McDermid; Witter-Merithew) and recognize that the Deaf and wider communities had different views concerning these boundaries (Page, 1993; Still, 1990).

The socialization of signed language interpreting students was also frequently described as the cultivation of an appropriate attitude (Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; McDermid, 2009). This attitude encompasses student characteristics such as the view of Deaf people as a cultural group, commitment to their program, independence, motivation, and a willingness to participate (McDermid). Authors also expected students to avoid certain behaviors, such as the role of victim or rescuer (Smith & Savidge, 2002), and behaviours described as oppressive (Witter-Merithew, 1995) or competitive (Shaw, 1997). Instead, it was expected that students demonstrate introspection (Witter-Merithew), respect (Humphrey & Alcorn; McDermid), ownership of their education (Witter-Merithew), a cooperative attitude (McDermid; Shaw), and a willingness to accept feedback (McDermid).

Several authors (McDermid, 2009; Smith & Savidge, 2002; Witter-Merithew, 1995) believed that the implied goals described above should be made part of the explicit curriculum. It was found that educators were reticent to challenge inappropriate or oppressive behaviors in their classes. It was suggested that these implied expectations be discussed and that further research with program alumni was needed regarding the efficacy of this unwritten curriculum (McDermid).

1.3. *Null curriculum*

Turning to the *null curriculum*, the third, and final, curriculum that Eisner (2002) described, a review of the literature identified topics that were not covered in Canadian programs, such as transliteration (Janzen, 1999). Transliteration could be thought of as the representation of a spoken language manually through the use of a

³ Editorial note: The author has requested that use of the upper case ‘ D’ in describing culturally Deaf people is retained throughout his article.

signed language. It was perhaps not taught, nor openly practiced, due to the recognition of Deaf culture and ASL in Canada (Malcolm, 1992). One educator suggested that the increase in research and knowledge about ASL meant more time was needed to teach the language and its features (Janzen, 1999). Coursework in specific disciplines (e.g., legal, medical) was also not a priority in the late 1980s in Canada (Dubienski, 1988); though a decade later specialized training had come to the forefront in the discourse of interpreter education (Madore, 2000; Malcolm, 1999). Offering specialized training, however, meant that there was less time available to spend on foundational skills (Dubienski).

In addition to consciously omitting specific topics, programs for signed and spoken language interpreting might also have left out specific cognitive skills. In a text for spoken language translators, Robinson referred to the necessity of learning cognitive aptitudes such as the ability to make “transfer patterns” (1997, p. 172) from three types of cognitive reasoning: deductive (i.e., the application of theory), inductive (i.e., from parts to whole), and abductive (i.e., intuitive) areas perhaps not covered in some programs. In a review of program assessments, West and Whitney (2000) wondered about the absence of higher-order or advanced cognitive skills, in particular those needed during student self-assessment in ASL-English interpretation programs. As the topic of transliteration was not covered in Canadian programs (Janzen, 1999), nor were the cognitive skills needed to perform this work, it was believed that if an individual could interpret between ASL and English, they could learn to provide transliteration services later (Russell & Malcolm, 1992).

1.4. Curriculum development

As identified from the comments of the participants of this study and a review of the literature, the process of designing a curriculum was significant and, therefore, was included as a major category. In a discussion of general curriculum development, Marsh (1997) described how some educators espoused a model based on a process of decision making or a variety of orientations (i.e., societal, student-centered, knowledge-based, cognitive processes, self-actualization, etc.). Sawyer (2004) described a model of development in spoken language interpreter education programs as being open or closed, based on the amount of student input allowed or how rigidly the written curriculum was followed. Apple believed that, historically, the creation of a curriculum was informed by individual, psychological theories of learning where content was “usually accepted as given, as neutral” (2004, p. 28). Within this paradigm, curriculum designers followed an “academic achievement model,” a merit-based approach that emphasized individual success and that incorporated metaphors of management and accountability, and they viewed education as a technical procedure to teach and master (Apple, 2004, p. 28). A more recent approach to curriculum was a sociological or “socialization approach” that took a critical look at “the social norms and values” being taught in schools (Apple, 2004, p. 29).

As a political process, Apple believed curriculum design and delivery was “repeatedly filtered through ideological and economic commitments,” whose function was replication and indoctrination into the dominant culture and unequal distribution of power (p. 8). The selection of materials, for example, created “high status knowledge,” leading to competition among the students for possession (p. 34). As the academic achievement model and the sociological model of education failed to consider issues of power or politics, curriculum designers had begun to consider a social justice orientation (Apple).

Turning to signed language interpreter education, the literature review identified a number of methodologies used in curriculum design, such as an *action research* approach (Napier, 2006; Slatyer, 2006) or *scaffolding* (Gish, 1993; Napier, 2006). Cokely and Baker-Shenk (1980) also believed a spiral philosophy was appropriate for ASL programs. Based on Donato’s (2003) discussion of the action research process, a curriculum designed within this framework could consist of four steps, in which the teacher-as-researcher develops a plan concerning some aspect of their pedagogy, implements the plan, documents the results, and then reflects on its impact. A curriculum based on a spiralling or scaffolding process would reintroduce content and abilities over an extended period of time, perhaps the entire program, thus providing for repetition; it would also require sequentially more complex abilities and deeper understandings from the students.

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As mentioned under the category of coursework, Cokely (2003) believed that signed language interpreter education programs typically followed a sequence of classes that began with translation, followed by consecutive interpretation, then by simultaneous work. Sawyer (2004) noted a similar linear design in spoken language programs but also found that some programs followed two other approaches in which students learned both translation and interpretation in tandem (i.e., a parallel model) or took common courses initially and then branched off to specialize in either one (i.e., Y-forked model). This segregation was challenged in signed language programs (Cokely, 2003; Russell, 2002), as was the separation of coursework based on source and target languages; it was argued that all classes required the same cognitive abilities (Cokely). Russell worried that when signed language interpreter education programs taught simultaneous interpretation last, students would value consecutive work less, perhaps an example of the value code that Eisner (2002, p. 92) believed programs unknowingly espoused.

Sawyer (2004) advocates for a top-down approach to curriculum design in spoken language programs, in which program outcomes are identified first and then followed by the design of individual classes. Based on the literature review, specific areas for consideration in the design process include philosophy, specific objectives, pedagogy (Madore, 2000; Sawyer), and assessment (Albir, 2007; Madore; Sawyer). A student-centered approach was recommended by some authors (Albir; Napier, 2004); it is also referred to as an open curriculum approach, as mentioned earlier (Sawyer).

In a survey of Canadian educators and program graduates, Madore (2000) questioned the model of development that education programs followed. Only two of the eight ASL/English interpreting programs in Canada, she believed, were categorized as following a structured approach, whereas three seemed to do so partially, and three did not seem to follow a model at all. In a similar view, Sawyer (2004) thought that in spoken language programs, curriculum design was driven by curriculum reform or individual innovation, not necessarily a structured framework. The lack of a program development model, Madore (2000) thought, could be tied to a number of factors, such as the instructors' lack of understanding concerning the interpretation process and lack of expertise in program development. As a result, she recommended that experts in program development be employed and a qualified review team be established (Madore).

1.4.1 DACUM

A popular model for curriculum design in ASL-English interpreting programs was the Designing a Curriculum (DACUM) process (NMIP, 2004; Witter-Merithew, et al., 2004). The DACUM procedure involves identifying occupational outcomes and then mapping those to specific courses in an appropriate sequence (Sinnott, 1976). Strengths of the DACUM include flexibility and the ability to quickly respond to a community's needs (Sinnott).

To complete a DACUM, however, requires a knowledgeable expert or leader, a comprehensive review of the literature, the creation of a panel of experts, and the identification of specific outcomes that can be measured (Sinnott, 1976). While the process identifies content, it does not necessarily address pedagogy (Sinnott). Similar to the performance-based or objectives-based model of curriculum design described in the literature, the DACUM process leads to a curriculum with perhaps an "over-emphasis upon behavioural outcomes," which are believed to be difficult to operationally define at times (Marsh, 1997, p. 4).

As a summary of the literature review, curriculum development in signed language interpretation programs could be considered multifaceted, involving consideration of explicit, implied, and null curricula. In regards to the explicit curriculum, and contrary to the beliefs of some educators (Stratiy, 1996; Taylor, 1993), there exist a number of curriculum resources regarding both signed (Baker-Shenk, 1990; Kelly, 2004; Resnick & Hoza, 1990; Roy, 2000) and spoken language interpreter education (Albir, 2007; Gile 1995; Sawyer, 2004; Seleskovitch, 1978; Seleskovitch & Lederer, 1995). In literature there are several examples of the application of learning styles and cognition to pedagogy (Deninger, 1987; Gish, 1993; Malcolm, 1999; McDermid, 2009; Napier, 2004) as well as information concerning specific coursework. There also exists a growing canon on the socialization of interpretation students (McDermid; Shaw, 1997; Witter-Merithew et al., 2004), the implied curriculum, and encouragement to bring these unwritten expectations into the explicit curriculum (Smith & Savidge, 2002; Witter-Merithew, 1995). In addition to what is being taught, interpreter educators have consciously, or unconsciously,

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omitted some topics from their programs, the null curriculum, such as transliteration (Janzen, 1999), and perhaps, specific cognitive abilities. Finally a number of models of curriculum design and development exist for programs to use, such as the DACUM model (Sinnott, 1976), the action research approach (Napier, 2006), and the linear, parallel, and Y-forked designs, as described by Sawyer.

2. Methodology

2.1. Selection of data and research participants

A purposeful sampling technique was used in which the instructors from all five existing ASL/English Interpretation Programs (AEIP) in Canada were invited to participate in this study (i.e., Douglas College, Red River College, St. Clair College, George Brown College, and the Nova Scotia Community College). The faculty members of four Deaf studies or pre-interpreter programs (i.e., Vancouver Community College, Red River College, St. Clair College, and George Brown College) and two professors from the University of Manitoba's faculty of linguistics were also contacted and invited to take part in this research. Many of the instructors in the Deaf studies programs at Red River College, St. Clair College, and George Brown College were cross-appointed to teach in the AEIP in their respective colleges. While the professors from the University of Manitoba did not teach in the interpretation program, they taught linguistics to the students from Red River College, as the two institutions had created a joint diploma (i.e., signed language interpreting) and bachelor's degree (i.e., general arts degree) program. The instructors at Vancouver Community College (VCC) did not work in the interpreting program, but Douglas College routinely required graduation from VCC prior to enrolment; therefore, this program and the Deaf studies or pre-interpreter programs in the other institutions were seen as the beginning of the educational preparation of students.

2.2. Participant demographics

There were a total of 34 participants in this study, 18 Deaf and 16 hearing individuals. Seven of the hearing instructors and none of the Deaf faculty members had graduated from an interpretation program. Five of the hearing instructors were members of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers and only one had a degree specific to teaching interpreting, from the Teaching Interpreting Program at Western Maryland College. An equal number of Deaf and hearing instructors held a master's degree (five Deaf, five hearing) and three of the hearing educators had obtained a doctorate. Thirteen of the eighteen Deaf staff had achieved either a bachelor's degree or a college certificate or diploma. Ten of the sixteen hearing instructors and nine of the Deaf staff had education-related degrees or coursework related to the field. Eight of the Deaf participants mentioned training with the *Vista Signing Naturally Curriculum*.⁴ Three of the Deaf instructors held ASL instructor certification and eight of the hearing staff were nationally certified interpreters.

2.3. Data gathering

The methodology for this research project began with a preliminary review of the literature to identify trends within the field of signed language interpreter education, followed by the creation of a questionnaire featuring open-ended questions (see appendix), which were forwarded to the program chairs for dissemination. Follow-up face-to-face interviews by the author were then conducted with all of the instructors, who later transcribed verbatim the notes from the hearing participants and translated and transcribed the notes from the Deaf participants. During the interviews, the participants were encouraged to discuss issues of relevance to them and

⁴A popular and widely used curriculum for teaching American Sign Language as a second language.

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were not limited by the research questions. The individual translations or transcriptions were then sent to each participant electronically for verification of content and further discussion.

Identifiers were created for each individual to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Two letters followed by a number, such as HP2 or DP3, indicated a hearing or Deaf participant, respectively. The choice of identifiers based on cultural affiliation as either Deaf (D) or hearing (H) proved to be fortuitous, as some interesting differences were noted in terms of course assignment, teaching philosophy, and resources used.

2.4. Data analysis

Within a broader, qualitative framework, an analytic-induction process was used to drive theory development (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Throughout the process, tentative themes were identified in terms of broad categories, and then relationships were examined for more specific properties (Bogdan & Biklen). An example of the major categories found, and their properties, can be seen in Figure 1.

Categories	Properties
Explicit Curriculum	Philosophy and Mission Curriculum Resources Skill Sets Models Coursework
Implied Curriculum	Socialization Preparation for Employment Student Self-Awareness
Null Curriculum	Transliteration
Curriculum Development	Scaffolding DACUM Ad Hoc

Figure 1. Examples of categories and properties

3. Findings

Having described the data gathering and data analysis process, we now turn to the findings of this study. These have been presented within the research categories described above as the explicit curriculum, implied curriculum, null curriculum, and finally, curriculum development.

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3.1. *Explicit curriculum*

3.1.1 Philosophy and mission

Five (three hearing, two Deaf) of the instructors reported having a mission statement that included their philosophy while seven (five hearing, two Deaf) knew that their program did not have a mission statement. Fifteen instructors (eight Deaf, six hearing) either were not aware of their program's mission statement or doubted that there was one.

When asked specifically about their philosophy of teaching, many of the Deaf participants reported following an immersion philosophy. This was also the philosophy posted on the program website at St. Clair College (2005). Five hearing and two Deaf participants labeled their approach as bilingual and bicultural. Two instructors admitted that they were not sure how to characterize their teaching philosophy.

For some of the hearing educators, the role of an instructor was about "shaping" students (HP7) and being student-centered, and acting as a "guide" (HP3). One teacher believed programs should be transformative and develop a student's ability to "think critically, act ethically, in becoming a change agent in their personal and professional communities" (HP3). Another recommended that programs "work from a sense of empowerment," as students were working with Deaf people who had traditionally been oppressed (HP5).

In terms of pedagogy, modeling or demonstrating was mentioned repeatedly (nine Deaf, three hearing), as was practice (five hearing, one Deaf) and an outcomes-based approach. Other methods or philosophies included grammar activities (three hearing, six Deaf), translation activities (five hearing, six Deaf), topic-based teaching (four hearing, two Deaf), a discovery model (three hearing, one Deaf), a Functional-Notional philosophy (three Deaf), the Silent, Silent Way (one Deaf), applied linguistics (one hearing), following the work of Cummins (1979) or Krashen and Terrell (1983) and a whole-language approach (one Deaf).

Pedagogical activities mentioned by the participants ranged from group or team work, lecturing, meditating, journaling, participation in a student and faculty retreat, the use of various games, class debates, peer dialogues, student-led presentations, peer feedback, and error correction techniques. Some classes were structured around topics generated by the students (one Deaf, one hearing). Two hearing instructors asked students to read and present on current articles from the field or present a case study in class. A Deaf instructor talked about having students answer questions from their peers as a form of lesson review. In a practicum class, the students were given a chance to grade themselves, which became part of the final assessment.

3.1.2 Curriculum resources

Twelve of the Deaf teachers talked about using the *Vista Signing Naturally Teacher's Curriculum Guide* (Smith et al., 1988). It was described as "best" by two instructors, "perfect" (DP16), "great" and "well laid out" (DP29), and "the broadest available" (DP37). Several teachers enjoyed working with the third level, the newest addition, as it includes information on grammar, new vocabulary, and classifiers. The hearing instructors did not discuss this curriculum.

The Deaf educators had some concerns about the *Vista* curriculum, for example, its emphasis on dialogues. One found that many students felt "intimidated having everyone else stare at them" during conversations (DP37). Another teacher doubted *Vista* followed a spiral philosophy, as there were few resources that incorporated prior learning. One teacher described *Vista* as just a list of topics, and three others felt compelled to create their own resources to supplement the curriculum. For example, one had to add vocabulary items, as some of the signs were American, and they would rather use signs from their community. Another teacher had to change the sequence of lessons to accommodate their students.

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Overall, one Deaf participant found the first two levels of the *Vista* curriculum fine for recreational classes but lacking in information for an interpreting program. The third level, on the other hand, was much too advanced for the students in a Deaf studies program, because it covers topics such as anatomy and diabetes.

Many of the Deaf faculty and one hearing faculty member described using the “green book” series (Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980). Two teachers characterized it as the best resource available, and another “still refers to it as the Bible for interpreting” as “it was the easiest text for students to grasp” (DP27). Concerns ranged from the lack of Canadian content to the belief it was outdated. Several other resources were mentioned, including:

- Cumulative trauma disorder text and resources from the National Technical Institute for the Deaf,
- Bravo curriculum (Cassell, 1997),
- University of New Brunswick curriculum (Baker-Shenk et al., 1988),
- Patrie's (2000) *Effective Interpreting Series: English Skills for Interpreters*, and
- Taylor's (1993) *Interpretation Skills: English to American Sign Language*.

3.1.3 Skill sets

During their interviews, faculty described a variety of curriculum activities or goals that were taught in the first year of their programs, such as pre-translation, pre-interpreting, and text analysis activities. As noted by a few of the staff, the students did not always understand or appreciate why they had to practice these various abilities. It was suggested that instructors discuss how these activities related to interpreting in order to elicit student interest, as some exercises were described as “a bit high schoolish [sic] in a way” (HP32).

3.1.4 Models

During the discussion of their curriculum, many instructors described one or more of the models of interpreting mentioned in the review of the literature (Cokely, 1992; Colonomos, 1992; Gile, 1995; Gish, 1987; Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Isham, 1986; Lambert, 1988; Seleskovitch, 1978). These were described as being helpful for the identification of miscues in a student's work, such as additions and omissions. They also helped the students identify where their process was successful or where it was breaking down, especially “that rehearsal, feedback, and monitor loop thing that runs in our head, the last part of the Colonomos model” (HP13).

While five of the six Deaf instructors teaching interpreting courses described a model or models they worked with, many of the remaining Deaf faculty, and one hearing participant, had little or no knowledge of the models. One Deaf participant had no interest in learning about them, and three Deaf instructors remarked that they left that to the hearing faculty to teach. For one Deaf instructor, interpreting was equated with learning ASL, which was described as a process of correcting students' mistakes while signing.

Two Deaf faculty members questioned the need to include models, and one felt it took up a lot of instructional time. Instead, it was suggested that students would be better off seeing “real life examples” (DP35). Two hearing instructors did not believe that specific theories, such as models of interpreting, belonged in placement courses, and so, the students were not expected to apply those while on site.

3.1.5 Coursework

Coursework for interpretation that is offered by the programs includes: translation theory, cross-language processing, critical thinking, community-based language and culture in action, introduction to interpretation theory, interpreting, consecutive interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting. Specialized coursework for students was also mentioned, such as classes in technology, physical and emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships and public speaking or communication. Recommended coursework in the first year includes ethics, to help students understand the role of an interpreter and to prepare them for their second year of study. Another

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participant mentioned a professional issues class that explores the field of visual language interpreting. For the second year of study, several participants mentioned introducing ethics at that time and others described coursework in professional and business practices for interpreters, field placement, and specialized settings or general interpreting settings.

It was suggested by a majority of the participants that interpreting and ASL be taught every semester and several Deaf and hearing participants talked about the need for additional English study as well. One Deaf instructor was worried that there was an over-emphasis on interpretation theory in the first year when there should have been more time spent in language (i.e., ASL) classes.

In addition to coursework, all of the programs required a practicum or series of placements. Several institutions also required a set amount of hours of community involvement, and three programs had established a student-run referral service, which provides free interpreting services to the community. Organizing placements was described as being difficult, a challenge, or a chore, that involved “a lot of begging to get hosts to accept the students” (DP27). Only one instructor described the process as being manageable. Locations include provincial schools for the Deaf, the local interpreting community, and due to the shortage of sites, students have also been sent to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester and Gallaudet University in Washington, DC.⁵

Challenges were noted by the participants when it came to their placement courses. Several instructors believed students weren't give an opportunity to practice consecutive interpreting, as only simultaneous interpretation was used or valued by the working interpreters. As a result, at least one instructor felt pressured to introduce simultaneous interpreting early in the program, to counteract what was considered a significant program weakness. There were several concerns about the students' readiness for placement, as some seemed to lack an understanding of their own community, making it doubtful that they would be successful in the Deaf community. Some students interpreted in situations where they didn't understand the vocabulary, such as medical settings, perhaps due to pressure from Deaf friends or their Deaf parents.

Of interest to note, from the comments of the participants concerning these courses, only the Deaf staff taught the Deaf culture and ASL classes. The hearing staff typically taught the courses related to the profession (i.e., introduction to interpreting, ethics, and business) and the practicum courses in which students were placed with working interpreters.

3.2. *Implied curriculum*

3.2.1 Socialization

Various implied goals were described by the participants concerning the socialization of their students. For example, the participants talked about the need for students to be motivated (seven instructors), not passive (six instructors), and not competitive (four instructors). Frequently, the instructors brought up the need to inculcate in students an appropriate/good attitude. This attitude encompasses respect, a sensitivity to issues of power, maturity (nine instructors), and introspection. It was also hoped that students would demonstrate independence or self-reliance while in the program and upon graduation, and a commitment to life-long learning.

As part of the implied goals of the programs, instructors often mentioned their desire for the students to (a) become sensitive to Deaf culture and recognize differences in Deaf and hearing values systems (six Deaf), (b) develop a cultural view of Deaf people, (c) understand professional boundaries, and (d) value community involvement. Deaf instructors, in particular, were concerned about their students' willingness to accept feedback on their fluency in ASL, indicating that some students would argue over vocabulary with their instructors, who were native signers.

⁵Gallaudet University is the only university in the world designed specifically for Deaf students.

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Ethical behaviour was also mentioned by a number of staff (six hearing, two Deaf) as an unwritten expectation for the students. To the participants in this study, the characteristics of ethical behaviour include confidentiality and neutrality. Some educators also expected that their students would be honest about their abilities with clients and, when working, would acknowledge and repair translation errors as they occurred instead of ignoring them.

3.2.2 Preparation for employment

In addition to the various social and interpersonal skills described above, the instructors talked about preparing students for the profession. Two instructors hoped, for example, that their pupils would learn to be a good team player with other interpreters. Attendance was raised by at least six participants and several faculty members also mentioned punctuality; it was noted that both were important once the students graduated and became a professional. It was also the goal of some instructors to ensure the students would become what they described as being productive members of society.

3.2.3 Student self-awareness

Many staff felt that students developed a deeper awareness of their own identity and career choice during the course of the program. According to eight instructors, some students realized that they did not want to become interpreters. Others discovered that they could not remain neutral or handle the workload, or that they did not even like Deaf people. Therefore, it was felt important that students must recognize their own sensitivity to some issues or settings. Some had “weird ideas about what it mean[t] to work with Deaf people” and wanted to “save” them (HP26). After learning about oppression, the students eventually started to feel that they were “responsible for all the oppression that has ever taken place,” which led to “an identity crisis” (HP26).

3.3. *Null curriculum*

In terms of the content of the null curriculum for Canadian interpreter education programs, from the comments of the instructors it would appear that coursework on transliteration and specific settings (e.g., medical, legal, and mental health) were not a part of the programs. As a group, a variety of teaching modalities and activities were described as being outlined in the section on coursework that tapped into different cognitive abilities (e.g., constructivist, logical, abstract, inductive, and deductive).

3.4. *Curriculum development*

When asked about their curriculum design, the instructors offered several pieces of advice. One suggested, “You need to develop the curriculum before you recruit the students” (DP6). Several instructors, particularly from Ontario, mentioned following the outcomes published by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (1998). Two Deaf instructors discussed the creation of lesson plans, but not a curriculum, and one Deaf teacher cautioned faculty not to stringently follow any one textbook.

There was a sense that instructors were committed to ongoing curriculum discussions and viewed the curriculum as a living document. For example, in one program the educators were committed to having monthly meetings; in another, curriculum changes occurred throughout the year, and then were discussed at year’s end. A third instructor described their curriculum as “becoming, because I don’t believe it ever becomes” (HP3). Another said that an instructor’s philosophy should change as they discovered new resources.

In terms of course sequencing in the first year, faculty described building the translation skills of their students, and some participants were planning on spending more instructional time in this area. In one program, the translation work began about halfway through the semester, after the students had practiced text analysis. Five of the hearing participants also described the introduction of consecutive interpreting in the first year. While the instructors were not asked to describe consecutive work, it may have involved an interpretation after a short

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utterance in ASL or English; as two instructors taught note taking as a topic, students might have been expected to interpret from their notes into ASL from longer segments of spoken English texts. After having conducted exit interviews with the students, one program made the decision to move simultaneous interpreting to the second semester of the first year. The students there were described as “eager to move on” to simultaneous interpreting, as they equated the ability to work simultaneously with more competence (HP20). It was felt this better reflected the experiences of working interpreters, who typically began interpreting simultaneously, but would then switch to consecutive work when overwhelmed. In the second year of study, six of the faculty focused on consecutive interpretation and several (three hearing, one Deaf) stated that simultaneous interpreting was begun in the second year.

To design a curriculum, models based on scaffolding or the DACUM process were mentioned, and these are explored next. From a general perspective, however, several instructors talked about the need to establish the course goals first, develop weekly objectives that include the book/chapter/videotapes to be used, and, finally, write the course descriptions.

3.4.1 Scaffolding

Eleven instructors said that they developed their curriculum with scaffolding or a spiral model in mind. To a Deaf instructor, scaffolding meant teaching classifiers in the first year, and in subsequent years, examining the categories in which each classifier fit. Two hearing instructors defined scaffolding as reinforcing the theory presented in the first year by repeating it a second, third, or fourth time; another believed scaffolding ensured continuity from course to course. A Deaf instructor was worried that other educators were not, in fact, following this process. Four instructors (two Deaf, two hearing) equated scaffolding to preparation. For example, when giving tests, they allowed the students to see sections (or the entire) videotape before interpreting, provided a warm-up on a similar topic, or asked the students to complete a quiz or generate questions prior to a test on the same topic.

3.4.2 DACUM

The DACUM process was recommended by ten of the participants, and only one person specifically mentioned not following a mapping process. As described by the educators, they had completed a map for their program, but several believed theirs needed reviewing. Only one teacher suggested that their program engage an external expert to guide them, who “. . . would tell it like it is, too. Say things like, what do you mean you teach this but test that?” (HP26).

Mapping involves the creation of a list of topics to cover in each course; it requires educators to examine common principles and student requirements, and then write objectives that are learner-based. In some instances, mapping helps identify program gaps and courses to keep or remove. It also encourages the instructors to verify program outcomes, as the topics in their courses must be mapped back to what they had taught. Mapping, from the view of two instructors, also helps them to design evaluation tools and ensures a consistent format for coursework.

3.4.3 Ad hoc

At least six of the Deaf instructors and three of the hearing teachers mentioned the lack of a curriculum for their classes or labs. Two Deaf staff found the documents they were given to be outdated. This lack of resources led at least five of the Deaf educators to substantially redesign the curriculum they were given. Some found this to be a challenge; although they might have felt competent teaching ASL classes, they were not experienced teaching at the level of interpreting students. One Deaf educator said he had developed the curriculum while “learning how to teach interpreting” and that his first few years were an experience in “trial and error” (DP2). A second educator described a process of creating activities or brainstorming information on-the-fly, while teaching. Still another

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Deaf instructor felt she was still learning the best teaching methods and never taught the same way twice, as her courses were constantly being revised.

A lack of curriculum planning might have explained why two Deaf instructors were not sure what to teach, or why another two did not know what had been taught in other sections. For example, one instructor wondered if classifiers should be part of the curriculum and how important they were for students. Another was not sure if she was spending enough time on a specific topic, or if she was covering too many topics too quickly. Another Deaf teacher was concerned about having to “make something up” when not given a lesson from the classroom instructor (DP16).

The hearing participants echoed similar concerns. Although their programs had a curriculum, its design was best described by two instructors as having happened informally or haphazardly. A third educator identified a lack of consideration of the research in their curriculum. A fourth cautioned that educators did not always share a similar philosophy, which led to a disparity in practices and expectations. A fifth, a hearing instructor, even questioned the definition of a curriculum and wondered, “What do you mean by curriculum, the content of individual courses or how they fit together?” (HP24).

Two instructors (one Deaf, one hearing) believed written lessons were not needed. The hearing educator thought the best philosophy was to empower the students and let the class go where it needed to go; the Deaf instructor did not believe lessons about ASL could be documented in written English.

4. Discussion

Based on the findings of this research, the following is an analysis that draws upon the literature review and the three curricula (i.e., explicit, implied, null) in which Eisner (2002) believed all programs engage. After having looked at the three curricula, we then explore curriculum development in the programs, drawing upon the models of curriculum design as outlined in the literature. Finally, we will briefly discuss the limitations of this study.

4.1. *Explicit curriculum*

4.1.1 Philosophy

One of the first aspects of the explicit curriculum that we will look at is a program mission statement and teaching philosophy. From the comments of the participants, a mission statement had not been drafted for most programs, nor was it a priority for many, and so might be identified as part of the null curriculum. When asked about their teaching philosophies, although some were not sure how to label their practices, other instructors reported following a number of different methodologies, including immersion and bilingual-bicultural, and the Functional-Notional approach. Based on the descriptions of their teaching activities, others followed what could be considered a revised Direct Method (Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980), an immersion approach that includes some translation and grammar exercises. The hearing instructors, in particular, and some Deaf educators, were also using translation-based activities.

It was not clear, however, how these philosophies or methodologies were used to teach interpreting as a discourse process, as recommended by a number of authors (Cokely, 1992; Napier, 2004; Russell, 2002) or how they fit into the framework of interpretation studies. For example, an immersion or Functional-Notional approach, which advocates for the complete separation of languages and the exclusive use of one language at a time, might be appropriate for a language acquisition program, but it is unclear how either one might be applied to an interpreting program.

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Based on a description of their pedagogy, many of the educators also described modeling or practice as a frequent pedagogical strategy. An over-reliance on either activity, however, ran contrary to the advice and experience of other interpreter educators (Deninger, 1987) who believe that practicing, in particular, is not a successful strategy and that the interpreting process can be taught (Malcolm, 1999). These activities also position teaching within a philosophy of learning as being an individual, behavioural activity (mimicry) and not to be found within a social or constructivist paradigm (Albir, 2007; Napier, 2004; Sawyer, 2004).

Only three hearing instructors described teaching methodologies within what might be called a social cognitive or social justice framework (Apple, 2004). These individuals believe their role as educators is to help the students transform and recognize issues of power and oppression (HP3, HP5, and HP7).

Given the nature of these findings, perhaps a program mission statement and a discussion of teaching philosophies are needed to clarify the philosophical and pedagogical expectations of instructors. A discussion of philosophy might include a review of modeling or practice as a predominant methodology. As an alternative pedagogy, it might be beneficial to explore a constructivist approach to teaching as four instructors had done through a discovery method of teaching. This philosophical approach seems better positioned to foster student independence and critical thinking, as required by the implied curriculum of several programs, when compared to a pedagogy of practice, for example. Also, with the understanding of the Deaf community as an oppressed minority, should programs not explore a social justice philosophy in an effort to ensure that issues of power are included throughout? Again, a social justice philosophy would speak to the goals espoused by the participants in the implied curriculum, such as respect for the Deaf community and recognition of oppressive behaviours.

4.1.2 Curriculum resources

Many educators lamented the lack of curriculum materials, another facet of the explicit curriculum; there are, in fact, many guides or resources available. As a collective, the instructors mentioned resources they had found helpful from both spoken language interpreting (Gile 1995; Seleskovitch, 1978) and signed language interpreting (Baker-Shenk, 1990; Baker-Shenk et al., 1988; Kelly, 2004; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1998; Resnick & Hoza, 1990; Taff-Watson & Northup, 1988).

A second common concern was the lack of resources with Canadian models of Deaf culture and ASL. Increased Canadian content could be addressed by scheduling time for the staff to develop materials in-house or by encouraging the sharing of resources nationally. Perhaps professional interpreting groups or Deaf associations could be approached to be volunteers for this project.

4.1.3 Models

Several hearing instructors and a few Deaf educators mentioned incorporating a model of interpretation into their program, whereas many others did not feel comfortable or support the inclusion of a model. For example, instructors in ASL classes, placement courses, and some interpreting classes or labs either did not mention a model of interpretation or questioned the need for one. The lack of a model precluded the benefits associated with following one, for example, as the basis of program design and evaluation (Cokely, 1992) and to structure feedback (Isham, 1986). As an interpreter educator, Steffen (1998) found that sequencing pre-interpreting skill sets and tying them to a model also helped to make the lessons more meaningful for students and reduced their resistance to practicing these disparate skill sets. One might also wonder what students read into the lack of a model of interpretation and its importance, the unwritten “value code” described by Eisner (2002, p. 92).

4.1.4 Coursework

The coursework offered by the programs in this study mirrored much of what has been written in the literature. For example, instructors mentioned curricula including classes in translation, consecutive and simultaneous interpretation, ethics (Cokely, 2003), Deaf culture (Janzen, 1999), and placement courses (Decator, 1994; Janzen, 1994; Malcolm, 1999). Comments from the participants also supported ongoing ASL and English classes. In

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regards to the educators' comments about placement courses, it would seem that programs must consider the "value code" (Eisner, 2002, p. 92) of the field when students attend practicum sites. Professional interpreters, for example, viewed simultaneous work as requiring "high status knowledge" (Apple, 2004, p. 34) compared to the consecutive mode. This is an area in need of exploration and discussion within the field if the programs hope to gain support for consecutive work.

It appears that some subject specialization had occurred, in that the Deaf instructors teach the language and culture courses, or while working in the interpreting labs, focus on ASL acquisition or vocabulary. As mentioned earlier, many of the Deaf teachers either follow an immersion or Functional-Notional methodology or they are unsure how to teach interpreting students, relying on language-learning texts, such as the Vista curriculum. The hearing instructors, on the other hand, teach most of the interpretation courses and use interpreter-specific texts. This division of labor has been supported by the participants and perhaps serves as an example of Apple's (2004) observation that curriculum design or delivery is a political process. In this case, the programs ensure that Deaf instructors are employed as cultural role models and as native language experts.

Given the subject specialization noted above and disparate teaching resources and philosophies between the instructors, from an interdisciplinary framework, it might be beneficial for both Deaf and hearing program staff to review their practices in order to ensure a consistent, cohesive curriculum delivery. Perhaps the inclusion of a model of interpretation would help to create a common framework for their pedagogy, as well as a platform for a much needed discussion of teaching philosophies. Otherwise, the result could be the existence of educational silos, where the Deaf and hearing instructors teach in almost virtual isolation, as had come to happen, based upon the comments of some participants. This isolation and specialization may have led to the existence of two distinct programs of study in one department, an ASL course taught by the Deaf instructors and an interpretation course taught predominately by the hearing instructors.

4.2. *Implied curriculum*

In addition to describing their expectations for the explicit curriculum, the participants shared many undocumented or unofficial expectations concerning the students they taught, their program's implied curriculum. These expectations entail a number of goals, such as preparing students for the profession, but also pertain to values and the socialization of students into the Deaf community. In this regard, Apple's (2004) observation that educational programs serve to indoctrinate students into a specific ideology seems relevant. As the programs did not explicitly state the values or attitudes they expect of students towards becoming a good citizen of the Deaf community (McDermid, 2009), it is not clear how they avoid replicating the wide-spread view of the "deaf as disabled" and deal with oppressive behaviors in students who entered their programs with this ideology. According to their comments, some students have resisted this implied curriculum and had left the programs without an understanding of Deaf culture. Several instructors were also unsure of how to deal with what they deemed inappropriate attitudes and behaviors.

As suggested by the literature (Smith & Savidge, 2002; Witter-Merithew, 1995), perhaps programs should make explicit their implied curricula and actively challenge inappropriate behaviors in students. It was unclear, however, how their current teaching philosophies and methodologies (i.e., immersion, modeling, Functional-Notional, and translation) fostered this curriculum. As mentioned earlier, perhaps a social justice approach is more appropriate to explore issues of oppression and power, yet only three of the hearing instructors described teaching within this philosophy.

In addition to an unwritten expectation of socialization, interpreter educators hope their students will demonstrate or develop a number of characteristics, such as motivation, maturity, and independence. These traits are considered to be particularly important given that some graduates are destined to work as independent contractors. Perhaps the current model of a closed and explicit curriculum, as described by many of the instructors might be replaced with an open curriculum design (Sawyer, 2004) or some combination of the two. An open

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design, in which the students would experience a higher level of choice and independence, might encourage the development of the implied curriculum and the characteristics expected by the teachers.

Some instructors are worried about a competitive attitude in students, in contrast to a cooperative nature, as is expected in their implied curriculum. This competition among the students may have been fostered by the closed or set curriculum design (Sawyer, 2004) that some programs have followed. In the current model of a closed curriculum, for example, perhaps the students concentrated on individual survival, trying to meet the expectations set by their instructors and to read the “value code” of the program (Eisner, 2002, p. 92). As Apple (2004) described it, the students competed for what they perceived to be “high status knowledge” (p. 24). Perhaps an open curriculum would encourage a sense of interdependence, what Eisner referred to as a sense of conviviality, as the students and educators develop the courses and assessments together, thus fostering a cooperative mind-set.

The challenge for faculty members in initiating a social justice or open curriculum, and thus fostering the goals of their implied curriculum, will be to conceptualize teaching with the view of interpreting as a social process, in which issues of power and justice are routinely addressed. In this model, perhaps a significant portion of the activities and students’ grades would be based on group work with each other and with Deaf and hearing consumers, to reflect the nature of learning and interpreting as having a social component. Also, in such a curriculum, both Deaf community involvement and participation in a professional association might be promoted as central to the curriculum, fostering a view of learning as participatory and convivial.

4.3. *Null curriculum*

As part of the research process, and as mentioned earlier, the participants of this study did not mention teaching transliteration, perhaps an example of the null curriculum. They also did not describe teaching their students to interpret in specific settings (i.e., educational, medical, and legal). The lack of attention to educational placements was problematic, as during a discussion of graduate employment, many students had reportedly found work specifically in educational settings. Perhaps this is an area of the null curriculum that should have been reviewed with an eye for inclusion in the explicit curriculum.

In addition to the deliberate omission of specific topics, the null curriculum comprises cognitive abilities that were not required or taught. As a cohort, and as mentioned in the findings, the instructors include a wide variety of activities that foster different forms of reasoning or cognition; it could, therefore, be inferred that many different learning styles are required. However, some instructors emphasize the use of activities such as modeling, practice, or lecturing and, therefore, should be aware that these might only require deductive reasoning (i.e., the application of theory taught by the instructor) and tap aptitudes such as rote memorization or mimicry.

4.4. *Curriculum development*

In curriculum development, the final category identified by the research process, it was found that many, if not most, of the participants had engaged in some form of systematic curriculum design that typically involved a DACUM or mapping process. According to Sawyer’s (2004) description of curricula models, the documentation of a curriculum through a DACUM method could be characterized as a closed design. At the same time, there was some evidence of an open curriculum (Sawyer), as several educators include activities in their classes, such as student-led presentations, student-generated topics, and student self-assessments. The prevailing philosophy of the participants also describes the curriculum as being a living document. There was, for example, much discussion about the need to renew and review curriculum and pedagogy, perhaps at set times each year.

Many participants talked about how their curriculum design was informed by a philosophy of spiraling or scaffolding and most of the participants from Ontario talked about following the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training’s (1998) curriculum. Due to their disparate definitions of a spiral or scaffolding curriculum, however, these might be areas for further discussion. Some instructors, for example, appeared to have conflated

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the concept of preparation for assessments with a spiral or scaffolding design; they described activities that were performed only once, such as allowing the students to see a text prior to interpreting it. It should also be noted that the standards designed by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training only consist of a list of program outcomes and do not include a teaching philosophy, lesson plans, or information on assessment.

According to the progression of courses in most programs, from translation to consecutive interpreting to simultaneous interpretation, it appears that educators have been following a linear model, as described by Sawyer (2004). It was also interesting to note that three of the colleges had separate courses on ASL-to-English interpretation and English-to-ASL interpretation. This sequence of coursework, based on modalities and only one source language, is counter to the recommendations of Cokely (2003) who felt these required similar abilities. Instead, he recommended a model similar to Sawyer's (2004) description of a parallel model, in which different modes (i.e., translation, consecutive, simultaneous) are used, when appropriate, in each class.

Instructors might also wish to consider the implied value (Eisner, 2002) students perceive from the course sequencing described above. As one participant reported, the current structure has led students to believe that only simultaneous work is legitimate and that it is superior to consecutive interpreting and translation work, a hierarchy predicted in the literature (Russell, 2002). It may have also led students to believe that interpreting from one language to another requires special or more advanced aptitudes. This progression of modalities or separation of source languages seemed to create what Apple (2004) described as "high status knowledge" (p. 34) in the minds of the students. To change this perspective, programs might wish to encourage the use of all three modes (i.e., translation, consecutive, and simultaneous), a parallel model of curriculum design (Sawyer, 2004), and include both languages as source languages and target texts throughout the program.

4.4.1 Ad hoc

When it came to the curriculum design and lesson plans in some courses, there was an almost ad hoc quality, based on the comments of the instructors, in which lessons were created at the last minute or were constantly being revised. For example, several mentioned a lack of a curriculum, missing lesson plans, or the need to redesign the curriculum they had been provided. Participants commented that they were repeatedly changing the curriculum as they gained teaching experience and a deeper understanding of their jobs. Others were concerned that they could not document their lessons as that did not allow for a flexible student-centered approach or because ASL was a visual language and could not be represented in written English. This lack of documentation supported the findings of Madore (2000), which indicated that some institutions were not following a specific program design model; it might also help to explain the lack of resources, as described in the literature (Roberts, 1990; Sawyer, 2004; Stratiy, 1996; Taylor, 1993).

The lack of a documented curriculum seems to be an on-going source of stress for several instructors. It also called into question their ability to incorporate scaffolding or a spiraling curriculum design, which in turn raised questions about the level of support experienced by the learners. One is also left wondering if a lack of curriculum has led to a practice-based approach, or a "sink or swim" program, as described by Finton (1998, p. 38). How could instructors do little else if there was no progression of lessons to which they could refer?

When colleges are considering the establishment of an ASL-English interpretation program, they would do well to heed the advice of the participants of this study and establish the curricula before accepting students. This had not been the experience of several participants in this study. It should be recognized that a number of curriculum documents and resources exist (Baker-Shenk, 1990; Baker-Shenk et al., 1988; Kelly, 2004; Resnick & Hoza, 1990) and that there are texts demonstrating how to document an ASL curriculum (Cokely & Baker-Shenk, 1980; Smith et al., 1988).

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4.4.2 DACUM

Several programs followed a DACUM process to design their curriculum, and a number of themes emerged related to this process. The committee of experts established in most colleges consisted of program instructors, and not professionals from the field, as recommended by Sinnett (1976); which could lead to a potential source of bias in the curriculum design. Instructors might not be familiar with the demands of the field; certified interpreters might have unreasonably high expectations of the students. There was no mention of a DACUM leader or a review of the literature, which was an area of concern; many of the interpreter educators in this study did not have a background in education or curriculum development nor had many attended an interpreter education program. As several Deaf faculty members were worried about their ability to teach ASL at a more advanced level for students of interpretation, how could they then design a curriculum to do this through a DACUM process?

As recommended by the participants of this study and as described in the literature (Sinnett, 1976), if not yet in place, colleges might want to explore involving experts in curriculum design (Madore, 2000), draft a current review of the literature, and establish committees involving representatives from the field and potential employers of their students. Staff members who have the necessary experience and credentials could be given time to lead curriculum discussions within their own programs and be supported to share their expertise with other colleges as well. If feasible, additional training on curriculum design and models (Eisner, 2002; Marsh, 1997; Sawyer, 2004) might be a consideration.

5. Limitations of this study

As a function of the research process, there are a number of limitations to this study that need to be recognized. As the principle researcher, I was a colleague of the participants, and thus, there might have been a tendency for the instructors to present their best practices as a means of saving face. It should also be kept in mind that the interviews involved memory work and so some details might have been forgotten or remembered in a more positive light. Having said that, and as can be seen in the findings, the participants shared a variety of experiences with me, both positive and negative, perhaps a sign of their support for the research process. As this study involved translation from spontaneous ASL to written English, translation errors were a very real concern. This was controlled by asking the Deaf participants to comment on the English transcripts of their interviews for accuracy and for further information. As this study utilized only interviews as a means of data collection, additional research could be done to strengthen the findings, such as observing the delivery of the curriculum by the instructors, reviewing the written documents they have created, or interviewing students and/or graduates of the programs in order to determine the learned curriculum, as well as the other three curricula.

As a final note, the participants of this study should be thanked for their willingness to share their experiences and for their role in shaping this project. It is hoped that the information gathered and insights shared will help interpreter educators to continue reflecting on their ontological beliefs and aid in the development of their curricula.

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7. Appendix – Examples of Questions for AEIP Faculty

7.1. *Demographic questions*

- Gender?
- Education and field of study?
- Courses taught?

7.2. *Program questions*

- Can you describe the philosophy and mission statement of your program?
- Can you describe the outcomes of your program?
- What does your program evaluation entail?
- What are your duties as a faculty member?
- What courses do you teach and can you describe their content?
- Can you discuss curriculum design and decisions for your classes and program?
- Can you describe what a typical class would look like?
- What teaching methodologies do you employ?
- Can you talk about how you evaluate the students you teach?
- What readings or coursework have informed your practices?
- Can you discuss the model or models of interpretation you follow in your program?

7.3. *Student demographics*

Can you discuss the following areas concerning the demographics and background of your students?

- Age?
- Ethnicity?
- Competencies?
- Employment?

The Ancient Americas Educator Guide. Follow the epic tale of the peoples in the Americas. This exhibition will present the diverse and fascinating story of the ancient cultures of North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean, from the earliest humans in the Western Hemisphere to the end of AD 1400. Teacher Notes. The Ancient Americas. This Educator Guide is separated into five parts:

- Exhibition guide, including Learning and Teaching about Indigenous Cultures guide
- Bibliography:Teacher and student resources
- Noteworthy facts
- Vocabulary
- A walking map.

The Ancient Americas consists of 8 galleries. You will encounter over 2,200 artifacts, as well as numerous interactive stations, video presentations, and contemporary Indigenous perspective information panels. Educators who have an awareness of a student's development take each component into account, with an understanding of and focus on the following elements:

- cognitive development
- brain development, processing and reasoning skills, use of strategies for learning.

In every grade and course in the Grade 9 and 10 Canadian and world studies curriculum, and particularly in Civics and Citizenship in Grade 10, students are given opportunities to learn about what it means to be a responsible, active citizen in the community of the classroom and the diverse communities to which they belong within and outside the school.

- interconnectedness
- beliefs and values
- self-efficacy
- culture
- perspective
- community
- relationships.

Problem-centered curriculum design increases the relevance of the curriculum and allows students to be creative and innovate as they are learning. The drawback to this form of curriculum design is that it does not always take learning styles into consideration. Curriculum Design Tips. The following curriculum design tips can help educators manage each stage of the curriculum design process. Identify the needs of stakeholders (i.e., students) early on in the curriculum design process. The design of the curriculum should be assessed periodically and refined based on assessment data. This may involve making alterations to the design partway through the course to ensure that learning outcomes or a certain level of proficiency will be achieved at the end of the course.