Language Use at RID Conferences: A Survey on Behaviors and Perceptions

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Cover Page Footnote

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Abstract

This study examines the language and communication dynamics at national conferences of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). RID conferences typically have thousands of attendees who vary in language background, type of linguistic experiences, and fluency. Data in this study were gathered through an online survey and, among other topics, included questions about behaviors, choices and perceptions of communication in structured and unstructured conference activities and language regulation at conferences. Findings indicate the majority of participants reported the perception that spoken English is used more prevalently than American Sign Language (ASL) at RID conferences. Further, 80% of respondents support the use of ASL during unstructured conference time. Slightly more than half of the respondents favored establishing a policy for language use at RID conferences. This empirical study was designed to examine language use at RID national conferences with the aim of offering insights into the linguistic perceptions and decision-making processes in a bilingual conference environment. Results may serve to guide organizations and conference planners on the development of language policy as well as increase awareness of stakeholders in the ASL-English interpreting community.

Introduction

By its nature, the profession of interpreting situates practitioners between two or more linguistic communities. Interpreters navigate many challenges in the process of negotiating communication between people who do not share the same language and, often, cultural values and norms. This study identifies and examines the language use, behaviors and perceptions of ASL/English interpreters and other stakeholders in the ASL/English interpreting community within the context of national interpreting conferences.

Interpreters occupy a shared space between languages and cultures in various arenas, including professional development opportunities. For interpreters working in American Sign Language (ASL) and English, the highest attended professional development activity is the biennial conference hosted by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), the national representative body of ASL/English interpreters in the United States. RID national conferences provide continuing education, skill development and networking opportunities. They are attended by a variety of stakeholders in the interpreting community: professional interpreters (both Deaf and hearing), ASL and interpreting students, ASL instructors, interpreter educators, and other individuals representing the various interests of the joint communities, (e.g., interpreter referral services, communication technology providers, and academic presses). This confluence of diversity requires interpreters to navigate a variety of individual and group communication

challenges—primarily between ASL and spoken English.[1] A sampling of the language use behaviors and perceptions experienced by conference attendees are identified and discussed in this study using sociolinguistic and language planning and policy (LPP) frameworks. Aims include gaining insights into the current use of language at the conferences that can guide future language planning for this multilingual environment. This study is grounded in research regarding language use, contact, ideologies, and policies, followed by an overview of interpreter identity, orientation, and space.

Language Use and Orientation

Language is inextricably tied to context. Such contexts, known as discourses, are characterized as "ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, [and] speaking" (Gee, 2008, p. 2). Social languages, languages dependent on occasion and purpose, emerge from discourses. Linguistic communities have a variety of frameworks to understand the roles and values of language use, including linguistic forms and functions, language choice made in various settings, and evaluations of language use.

Ruiz (1984) proposed three frameworks for examining language: 1) language-as-problem, 2) language-as-right, and 3) language-as-resource. The language-as-problem orientation emphasizes language diversity as a cause for discord, resulting in challenges of access or equity, economics, or education. The language-as-right orientation describes a belief in language as an expression of human rights. Finally, the language-as-resource orientation (Ruiz, 1984, 1990, 2010) accentuates the advantages of multilingualism and the manner in which language and linguistic skills contribute to the benefit of society. As a part of society, interpreters interacting in bi- and multilingual settings may encounter, internalize or act through all of these orientations, thereby influencing the languages themselves and the communities of language users.

Language Shift, Perception and Power

Groups with differing languages in contact with one another often develop linguistic accommodations. Language contact between ASL and English over many generations, primarily through the system of education for children who are D/deaf,[2] has resulted in several pidgin or contact forms (Lucas, Bayley, & Valli, 2003). Language shift due to languages in contact can be the result of asymmetric power dynamics based on social hierarchies or stereotypes. For example, a study evaluating language attitudes among signers in the American Deaf community found that signers perceived to be using ASL were rated more positively on language correctness and social traits (e.g., leadership, attractiveness, and confidence) compared to signers perceived to as using Signed English (Hill, 2012).

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[1] Spanish and other languages (both spoken and signed) are also in use at conferences and present other challenges for access.

[2] The capital letter "D" in "Deaf" refers to the Deaf society distinguished as a cultural and linguistic minority. The lower case "deaf" refers to persons with hearing loss regardless of cultural or linguistic identification.

Furthermore, language is increasingly tied to political agendas. In multilingual countries around the world, language can be a "divisive, even explosive, issue when people are allowed to align themselves for political purposes according to the languages they speak" (Wardhaugh, 1987, p. 4). The Deaf community is not immune to language political agenda: groups supporting oral language in deaf education (e.g., the Alexander Graham Bell Association) and opposing groups supporting ASL or bilingual education (e.g., the Deaf Bilingual Coalition) are active politically in the field of deaf education.[3]

Linguistic Ideologies and Influences

Attitudes and beliefs about language, or "linguistic ideologies" have a significant part in social relations, education and society (Reagan, 2011). These attitudes shape our social relationships (Ennser-Kananen, 2012), and serve as markers of group membership and status, both within those groups and in inter-group relations (Achugar & Pessoa, 2009). The concepts of inequality and equality and their interpretations are involved in the ideologies that create certain controversies (Kymlicka, 1989). English is an acknowledged language of privilege (Mady, 2012).

Communities that use signed language share experiences of linguistic oppression (Batterbury, Ladd, & Gulliver, 2007, p. 2900). Consider the skepticism surrounding the official recognition of ASL as a language in the 1960s (Armstrong, 2000), and the more current efforts to accept ASL as a foreign language credit in K-12 and post-secondary education (Pfeiffer, 2004). As of 2004, 40 U.S. states had recognized ASL for foreign language credit through legislation or state commission documents (Gallaudet University, 2004). However, Reagan (2011) argues that the need to legislate acceptance in the first place points to continued discrimination based on language and perceived or actual hearing status, causing ASL to be couched in a paradigm of disability rather than achieving status as a language without qualification.

Language policy and planning is more than a philosophical frame; it also attempts to address concrete societal problems. For example, LPP frameworks may improve language literacy and lead to social or economic mobility. Subjectivity is often an issue, as assumptions and understandings of world phenomena impact "good" language policy. Hornberger (2002) states that although standards for language planning have not yet cemented, it is suggested that planners need to consider the groups, interests and values being served by such policies in all stages of planning and implementation. These legislative and language policies are foundational to the study when considering the myriad of stakeholders involved in the ASL-English interpreter community.

Interpreter Identity, Orientation, and Space

According to Schmidt (2000), as policy and rights regarding language are couched in linguistic ideology, debates are often not controverting opinions over language, but instead disagreements over identity and how identities shape the world. Pluralistic language policies promote an

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[3]Alexander Graham Bell Association http://www.listeningandspokenlanguage.org/ under "advocate" and Deaf Bilingual Coalition http://www.dbcusa.org/ under "advocacy."

increased presence and status of minority languages in the pursuit of linguistic and cultural equality. On the other hand, proponents of English-only language policies in schools treat the pluralistic approach as divisive, and advocate a shared sense of national identity through a monolingual model, as language is often seen as a "key component in national identity" (Wardhaugh, 1987, p. 24). On an individual level, a deaf person's decision to use ASL, English or another language or mode in a given interaction can be influenced by sociolinguistic factors, such as a desire to establish a social identity as a member of the Deaf community (Lucas & Valli, 1992). Since identity is multi-faceted and complex, examination in this paper will focus on linguistic identity, with a specific focus on ASL-English interpreters.

The path to becoming an ASL-English interpreter has undergone significant change since the profession began in the 1960s. Prior to that time, most functioning as interpreters acquired ASL as a first language or through contact with local deaf communities (Fant, 1990; Frishberg, 1990; Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001). By 1980, interpreters with hearing parents outnumbered those with Deaf parents by a ratio of 2:1 (Cokely, 1981). In a 1997 demographic survey of RID conference attendees, 50% of respondents reported learning to sign through interpreter education programs or workshops/classes (Stauffer, Burch, & Boone, 1999). Although the 1997 study did not address conference language use, the data offers insight into the changing demographics of ASL-English interpreters. By the early 2000s, it was common that students entering interpreter education programs had no significant ASL proficiency (Peterson, 2006). Due to numerous legislative efforts,[4] there was and still is a demand for qualified interpreters, which in turn has resulted in the establishment of greater numbers of interpreter education programs (Peterson, 2006). With the expanding number of advanced degrees in interpreting and the requirements for certification testing set forth by RID,[5] interpreters entering the field today are now more likely to have a degree in interpreting than their predecessors. As a result, interpreters are entering the field increasingly through academic, instead of community, means.

This shift indicates that most interpreters acquire ASL and knowledge of Deaf culture as late adolescents or adults. Election to learn a specific language in adolescence can occur for many reasons, such as following one's heritage or identification, following or going against a trend, peer pressure, desire to connect with a culture or community, or for economic advantage (Ennser-Kananen, 2012). Given later exposure to the language and community that uses ASL, it is probable that interpreters will identify more strongly with their primary language and culture rather than to languages and cultures, which they encountered as adults. Fishman (1989) states that teaching biculturalism in an academic setting has been critiqued as abstract, and as fostering a peripheral view of the minority culture. Such an approach to cultural education emphasizes the difference of what Foucault (1977) described in social science as the *other*. Current trends in ASL acquisition primarily through academia and cultural exposure through possible "othering" mechanisms have powerful potential influences on identity construction in ASL-English interpreters and the idea of bilingual and bicultural competency. Secondary culture taught in

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[4] Vocational Rehabilitation Act (1965), Rehabilitation Act (1973), PL-94-142: Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975), PL 95-539 (1978), The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act I, II.

[5] As of July 1, 2012, RID requires a minimum of a bachelor degree in any field to sit for a national certification exam.

abstract presents challenges for interpreters to fully understand and integrate nuances in the new culture, and may delay or prevent cultural competence.

The process of othering occurs in the interpreting, hearing and Deaf communities. Each group occupies a distinct linguistic and cultural space. This metaphorical space is powerful and utilitarian: it defines group norms, behaviors and sets lenses through which other spaces are evaluated. For example, the concept of DEAF[6] space has been posited as a space produced by [D]eaf people, built around visually-oriented possibilities: a "visually-mediated culture" that allows a realization of the culturally DEAF (Gulliver, 2006, p. 3). In contrast, hearing space might be constructed with an auditory orientation: for example, a public address system for communication, stadium-style seating, or fluorescent lighting. However, the definition of space encompasses more than physical arrangements. Spaces—Deaf, hearing or otherwise—and spatial practices allow social practices to permeate a spatial field, and can be permanent or mobile (Kusters, 2009).

If DEAF and hearing spaces do exist, then is there interpreter space? Interpreters, as linguistic mediators, occupy a borderland between Deaf and hearing space. An interpreter may be perceived as belonging more to one linguistic and cultural space over another, but single-categorical belonging may be hard to determine. As language attitudes are context-dependent and fluid (Achugar & Pessoa, 2009), shifting attitudes might suggest shifting group membership. Those occupying borderlands have been designated both guardian and suspect (Seidman, 2013) and such unsettled status can create a hybrid of identity (Eyal, 2006).

Understanding that many ASL-English interpreters are bimodal bilinguals (speech-sign), describing interpreter space will likely involve common behaviors of bimodal individuals. Hearing bimodal bilinguals have been shown to produce co-occurring signed and spoken language, known as *co-speech gesture* (Bishop & Hicks, 2005; Bishop et al., 2006; Bishop, 2010) and Deaf emerging bilinguals have been shown to code-switch,[7] or move between phrases or sentences of two or more languages, before being fully fluent or proficient users of either ASL or English (Andrews & Rusher, 2010). In addition, ASL learners have been shown to exhibit increased rates of co-speech gesture (Casey, Emmorey, & Larrabee, 2011).

Those who know more than one language show particular linguistic tendencies. They also report varying emotional impacts depending on language use. A study by Dewaele and Nakano (2012) demonstrated that multilinguals feel more authentic, logical, emotional and serious in languages acquired earlier in life than with languages acquired later in life, and self-perceived proficiency was an indicator in the feelings shift. According to Grosjean (2011), learning to function in a new language also affects individual behavior. In that report, participants mentioned speaking quickly, more politely, or behaving in an extroverted way in their first language. According to the study by Dewaele and Nakano, participants reported increased awkwardness and feeling less

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[6] Gulliver uses the all capitalized "DEAF" to mean "culturally Deaf and recognized as such by other Deaf people" (2006, p. 1).

[7] For purposes of this article, code-*switching* is distinct from code-*mixing*, defined as "unintentional and intra-sentential" (Kazzazi, 2011), where small units of one language interfere with the main language currently in use.

logical and more fake when switching from their first language (L1) to their second (L2). This suggests that language learning requires both a linguistic and a behavioral switch.

As languages and linguistic communities interact, a complex dance of linguistic and behavioral accommodation follows, and awareness of the communication participants is key. Multilingual awareness involves the construction and recognition of statements that go beyond symbolic, linguistic meaning to encompass a larger cultural context and an understanding of Self and Other (Bono & Melo-Pfeifer, 2011). Individuals choose to build and express relationships with different languages, goals and processes, where each interaction becomes a jointly created, or co-constructed, reality. Communicative interactions occur on an individual and group level for different social purposes. However, each interaction is part of a larger whole of public perception (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995).

RID conferences exist within a complex, overlapping linguistic environment. Such an environment requires continual co-construction between parties to effectively communicate. In this multilingual setting, diverse linguistic ideologies converge with identities to create a dynamic interpreter space. This study attempts to further characterize that space through identification and analysis of the language use, behaviors and perceptions of ASL/English interpreters and other stakeholders in the ASL/English interpreting community within the context of national interpreting conferences.

Method

Participants

The participants in this study had previously attended any conference sponsored by the RID. The participants included signed language interpreters (ASL/English and other language pairs), interpreter educators, interpreting students, ASL educators, ASL students, workshop presenters and exhibitors. Individuals who had not attended a national RID conference were eligible to complete the survey; however, data from these responses were aggregated independently and were not reported in this paper for logistical reasons.

The survey was approved by the Gallaudet University Institutional Review Board (IRB PJID 2215) prior to dissemination and supported in part by the Gallaudet University Small Research Grants Program. The survey took place in March 2013. Participants were recruited in four ways: 1) email announcements, 2) posted fliers, 3) distributed informational business cards and 4) Facebook posts. Email addresses were obtained for announcements using the RID searchable membership database. A stratified sampling procedure was used to randomly select participants from this stakeholder group. To attempt to obtain a representative sample, 10% of RID members from each state's total membership were randomly selected to receive email announcements. For example, Alabama had 108 registered members at the time of the survey, which means 10.8 (11 members) received announcements. Partial percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number.

Snowball sampling[8] procedures were used to obtain data from other stakeholder groups. Email announcements were sent to region representatives and presidents' councils, boards and representatives of RID special interest groups (e.g., Deaf Caucus, IEIS, Legal/Court, IDP, DeafBlind, Interpreter services, LGBT, interpreters of color, CDIs, VRS and Students), the RID national board members, Regional Interpreter Education Centers, interpreter education programs, the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), and American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) chapter presidents. All those contacted were asked to forward the email announcement to others who may have had an interest in participating. In total 1,942 potential participants were contacted directly by the researcher. Stakeholder groups were not screened for RID membership.

A total of 346 people participated in the survey and 345 responses were eligible. Not all participants responded to every question. Total responses are indicated for each question. Subject data were recorded, stored and managed using SurveyMonkey, which was then integrated with SPSS, a statistical analysis software. One participant was disqualified, in that s/he had not attended at least one RID conference at any level.

Participants were given the option to select multiple occupation categories or write in an occupation. Relevant write in responses included: researcher (3); consultant (2); captionist, Deaf community member, mentor (2); agency owner (2); educator, retiree, attorney, and several under administrative categories (7); and social service professions (6). Participants not identifying as interpreters were 6%. Interpreters reporting not holding certification and/or being a candidate for certification constituted 8%. Write in responses were also allowed for identity and included CODA (11), SODA (1), Woman, American, and White. See Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Characteristic	*f*	*%*
Occupation		
Interpreter	225	91
Interpreter educator	100	40
Interpreting student	12	5
ASL student	4	2
ASL educator	56	23
Identity		
Hearing	205	80
Deaf	47	18
Hard of Hearing	7	2
DeafBlind	1	<1

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[8] Snowball sampling is a procedure in which subjects recruit others from their network of acquaintances. This procedure is often used when a study targets a limited, small or rare subgroup (Ranjit, 2011).

The majority of respondents (62%) reported holding a degree or certificate in interpreting. Most (68%) respondents also reported holding a degree in a field other than interpreting. See Table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of Degrees

Degree	Interpretation		Other	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
AA	73	29	25	10
BA	49	19	83	34
MA	28	11	84	34
PhD	4	1	19	8
N/A	101	40	35	14

Study participants were diverse in age and experience level in interpreting. Table 3 shows the diversity in years of experience, ages, and geographic representation.

Table 3

Participant Demographics

Characteristic	*f*	*%*
Years full-time interpreting		
0-4	45	18
5-10	47	18
11-15	28	11
16-20	39	15
20+	75	29
N/A	22	9
Age range		
18-29	24	9
30-39	58	22
40-49	72	28
50-59	77	30
60+	27	11
Region		
Region I	33	13
Region II	77	30
Region III	63	24
Region IV	46	18
Region V	38	15
Reside outside the U.S.	2	0.8

At the 2011 national RID conference, student members were 5% of attendees; in this survey, students made up 6.5% of respondents. At the 2011 conference, certified members were 78% of attendees; in this survey, certified members were 83.5% of respondents.

Nearly all (99.6%) of the respondents reported learning English before the age of 12. Comparatively, 24% learned ASL before age 12, 20% learned between the ages of 12 and 18 and 56% learned ASL after age 18. No respondents reported not knowing ASL at all.

A majority of participants reported very strong ability to produce (79%) and understand (86%) ASL as well as produce (91%) and understand (93%) English in non-interpreting situations. A majority (89%) reported feeling very much or completely bilingual in ASL and English.

Instrument

Data was collected using the online survey platform SurveyMonkey. The survey consisted of 47 questions and was divided into five sections: 1) conference participant experiences, 2) conference presenter experiences, 3) case scenarios, (4) language experiences, and 5) background information (see the Appendix for the full survey). The survey questions were presented in English as well as ASL. The introduction to the survey and the survey itself were translated into ASL by the researcher and two Certified Deaf Interpreters.

Procedure

Participants were directed to the survey via an online link. Questions were presented in written English with optional ASL translation videos alongside. Participants responded by clicking on their choice of written answers or, in the case of the interaction scenarios, typing in short English narratives.

Results

Results of the 47 survey questions follow. Some questions gave the participants the option to comment. A representative sample of the comments is included here.

Conference Attendance

Over 83% of respondents reported having attended at least one national RID conference. Although regional or local conference attendance was not an area of focus, this study found that 72% of respondents reported attending between 1-10 local or state conferences in their home state while 77% reported attending 1-10 regional conferences in their home region.

Accommodations

At conferences, 40% reported using accommodations (such as interpretation or captioning services) to access information. The services with the highest reported use were spoken English to ASL interpretation (28.5%) and ASL to spoken English interpretation (25.5%). Trilingual

(Spanish-English-ASL), English captions and FM system use comprised 4-6% of reported accommodations used.

Language Use Perceptions

Table 4 shows participants' perceptions of conference attendees' language use in general at RID conferences. Many participants perceived general language use occurring in English more than ASL, while almost one-third perceived mostly Sim-Com and 17% perceived a balance of ASL and English.

Table 4

Perceptions of Language Use at RID Conferences

Language	*f*	*%*
ASL more than English	18	6
Sim-Com	82	29
Balance of ASL and English	50	17
English more than ASL	128	45
Not sure	9	3
Totals	287	100

Table 5 shows respondents' perceptions of language use by conference attendees at RID conferences during structured conference time (e.g., workshops, keynotes) and unstructured time (e.g., break times, social events). Structured time was largely perceived as occurring in a balance of ASL and English (39%) or mostly or all English (31%). Most (63%) participants perceived unstructured time as occurring in mostly or all English.

Table 5

Perception of Language Use During Structured and Unstructured Time

Language(s)	Structured Time		Unstructured Time	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
Mostly or all ASL	77	27	21	7
Mostly or all English	89	31	183	63
Balance of ASL and English	113	39	82	28
Not sure	8	3	3	2

Language Preference

Sixty percent of participants reported that presentation language of a workshop (spoken English or ASL) does not influence their decision to attend. Thirty percent reported favoring workshops in ASL while 10% reported favoring workshops presented in spoken English. Common themes emerged from respondents' comments were related to such areas as on presentation topic, language fluency, and equal access. Sample participant comments follow in Table 6.

Table 6

Language Preferences

Theme	Response example
Presentation topic language	"It depends on the subject matter."
Language fluency	"I have been to a few RID sponsored conferences and the presenter code-switched through the presentation. That was hard to watch."
Native language	"I like to see workshops presented in ASL, especially native users of ASL. However, I prefer a presenter present in the language that is most comfortable for them."
	"Spoken English is my native language and I prefer learning in my native language."
Equal access	"This is about putting everyone on the same footing (except possibly for guests who don't sign)."

Table 7 demonstrates conference participant preferences in language use during structured and unstructured conference time. Slightly over half preferred more structured time in ASL and the majority preferred more unstructured time in ASL. By contrast, participants indicating preferences for more structured and unstructured time in English were fewer than 20%.

Table 7

Language Preferences for Structured and Unstructured Time

| | Structured Time | | | | Unstructured Time | | | |
| | ASL | | English | | ASL | | English | |
Response	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	147	51	48	17	172	60	18	6
Disagree	48	17	137	48	25	9	162	57
No preference	93	32	101	35	90	31	107	37

Table 8 shows responses to the statement "When I come into contact with someone I do not know at a conference for the first time, I am usually addressed in:" Sample participant comments follow.

Table 8

Language of First Contact

	English		ASL		Sim-Com		Other	
Frequency	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Never, Rarely	40	16	45	17	44	17	42	45
Sometimes	88	35	112	44	97	38	4	4
Often, Always	123	48	98	38	104	41	1	1
Not sure	3	1	2	1	10	4	46	50

Comments

"The focus of RID is on working interpreters. The vast majority are hearing second-language users. Sessions should be accessed by one's primary language/communication mode unless the topic necessitates something different."

"It depends on the individual. I always approach people using ASL...it is the most respectful way in Deaf culture."

Language Policy Support

In response to the statement "I would be in favor of establishing a policy for language use at RID conferences," 28% of participants strongly agreed, 29% agreed, 18% were not sure, 15% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. Selected themes and participant comments are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Perspectives on Language Policy

Theme	Response example
Individualism and Rights	"There are times where as an interpreter I am tired of using my L2, I'm not against it, but a concrete decision takes my individual decision out of the picture. If I decide to speak, I get negative looks. It is my right to use my L1."
Accessibility and Inclusion	"It is all about Deaf-Heart and respect to the ASL community."
	"I don't want to discriminate against any language user, but it would be easier for Deaf to join a conversation if ASL was only used. But if there are not any Deaf in the group, I don't see why it should be enforced. It should be a preference."
Linguistic Capability	"By the nature of the organization, almost everyone in attendance is either fluent in ASL or working towards fluency."

"Unfortunately, the majority of folks who attend RID conferences are not yet bilingual and bicultural... all the more reason to establish a policy so that they are enculturated [sic] immediately upon seeking further education in the field."

Logistics	"It would take a lot of money and logistics to require formal communication at conference be in ASL…Still, I do think that a flexible language policy—one that reflected the values of RID while still recognizing the reality of where our field is at—could be a good addition."
	"I understand either way, but to hear it makes it easier to make notes."
Resistance to Mandate	"RID should not dictate any individual's language preference. Each person has to be able to communicate in his or her most comfortable mode or language."
	"While you can legislate actions, you cannot legislate attitudes… [it] requires an educational campaign rather than a policy."
Membership Identity	"We are an interpreter-driven organization, not a consumer-driven one."
Policy Details	"I would support a policy of attendees using their native/primary language."
	"I would support a general policy for language, i.e., commitment to equal access, but not a policy that says only ASL should be used or only English should be used."

Table 10 details responses on personal language use at RID conferences. The majority (70%) of participants indicated that they typically communicate in ASL.

Table 10

Responses to the Statement "At RID conferences, I typically communicate in English/ASL."

	English		ASL	
Response	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	96	33	200	70
Disagree	171	60	63	20
Not sure	20	7	23	8

Table 11 shows responses on the perceived comfort of others in communicating in English or ASL. Seventy-four percent reported that other people seem comfortable communicating in ASL, while 67% reported others seem comfortable communicating in English.

Table 11

Responses to the Statement, "Others seem comfortable communicating with me in English/ASL."

	English		ASL	
Response	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	191	67	212	74
Disagree	49	17	29	10
Not sure	47	16	47	16

Presenter Language Use and Perceptions

Thirty-four percent of survey participants reported having presented at an RID conference. Table 12 shows the language choices these respondents made for their presentations by frequency.

Table 12

Presentation Language Choice

	ASL		English		Other	
Frequency	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Never, Rarely	27	16	53	31	26	28
Sometimes	21	12	22	13	1	1
Often, Always	63	37	32	19	0	0
Not sure	4	2	5	3	8	8
N/A	56	33	57	34	59	63

Table 13 shows presenters' rationale for their language choice. Factors most influential were comfort using the particular language and feeling the topic was best conveyed in the particular language. Participants could select more than one response.

Table 13

Factors Influencing Presentation Language Choice

Response	*f*	*%*
Encouraged to present in that language	29	19
Topic best conveyed in that language	43	28
More comfortable using that language	50	33
Felt pressure to present in that language	18	12
Accommodations (e.g., hearing open mic while presenting)	17	11
N/A	63	41

In response to the question "With sufficient preparation, I am willing to present in a language/mode other than my primary (e.g. International Sign, or a spoken or signed language that is not your primary)," the majority of participants, 71%, agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (32%).Twenty percent responded with *disagree* or with *strongly disagree*, and 9% were not sure.

The survey included two case scenarios. Scenario 1 read: "You are attending your first RID conference and are looking forward to attending a specific workshop from an expert in the field. The workshop is advertised as being presented in ASL. As the workshop begins, it is clear that the presenter is using English-influenced sign to present. How would you react? Check all that may apply." Table 14 shows participants' responses.

Table 14

Audience Perception of English-influenced Sign in Presentation

Response	*f*	*%*
If I can understand the presenter, it would not matter to me.	189	72
I would be disappointed and may seek another workshop.	56	22
I would request ASL interpretation.	21	8
Not sure.	24	9

Language Use Influence

A majority of participants (74%) agreed with the statement "If someone addresses me in certain language or mode, I feel influenced to respond in a similar language or mode."

Scenario 2 read:

During the morning break at a RID conference, Leah, a hearing ASL-English bilingual, notices an old friend from her interpreter education program getting coffee. Excitedly, she walks up through the crowd and speaks: "Hi! It's been so long!" Her friend responds in ASL: "Wow! I know! What have you been up to?" If you were Leah, how might you react? Would you address the difference in language use? Please explain your answer.

Responses were analyzed and grouped in the following themes: skill development, linguistic comfort, identity (personal and organizational), preference and environmental influence. Most comments mentioned responding by switching from using spoken English to using ASL. Some responses included feeling "awkward," "chagrined," "embarrassed" or "criticized." Selected participant comments are provided in Table 15.

Table 15

Case Scenario Responses

Theme	Response Example

Skill Development	"I would probably continue the conversation in ASL. Any chance to practice my secondary language skills would be greatly welcomed."
Linguistic Comfort	"I'd probably Sim-Com. She is more comfortable with her language, and I'm more comfortable with spoken."
Identity	"I'd probably start Sim-Comming. I'm not going to pretend to be deaf if I'm not, but I will sign if others are around."
Environmental Influence	"I would respond in ASL or Sim-Com if Leah was not strong in ASL. I would want those native ASL users to be able to 'overhear' my conversation as well as any hearing person might be able to do."
Preference	"If she was alone and just preferred to sign then I would respect her choice but still choose to voice my side of the conversation."

Correlates

The following questions were selected for cross-analysis due to a strong suggestion of correlation. Note: Pearson Chi-Square statistics (χ^2) are based on n = 345 unless specified otherwise and reported in parentheses, i.e. (*p* = .35).

Presentation language preference and age of ASL acquisition. Presentation language preference of structured activities at RID conferences closely related to age of ASL acquisition (*p* = .000). Of those who acquired ASL before age 12, most favored workshops in ASL. Of those who acquired ASL between the ages of 12 and 18, half favored workshops in ASL. See Table 16.

Table 16

Preference for Activities in ASL by Age of ASL Acquisition

Prefer more structured activities in ASL?	Age of ASL Acquisition					
	Birth-11		12-18		18+	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	43	69	26	50	64	44
Disagree	9	14	7	13	25	17
No preference	11	17	19	37	56	39

Of those who favor workshops presented in spoken English, the overwhelming majority acquired ASL at or over age 18. See Table 17.

Table 17

Preference for structured activities in English by age of ASL acquisition

| Prefer more structured activities in English? | Age of ASL Acquisition | | | | | |
| | Birth-11 | | 12-18 | | 18+ | |
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	7	11	4	8	30	21
Disagree	40	64	23	47	60	42
No preference	16	25	24	45	54	37

Note: *p* = .000

Typical language choice, ability and preference for activities. Those reporting that they typically communicate in ASL are likely to report a stronger ability to understand ASL (*p* = .002) but not necessarily to produce ASL (*p* = .020). It is plausible to infer that those who report typically communicating in ASL also report wanting more structured and unstructured activities in ASL at RID conferences (*p* = .000). See Table 18.

Table 18

Preference for Structured and Unstructured Time in ASL Correlated with ASL Communication

| Response | Typically Communicates in ASL | | | |
| | Agree | | Strongly Agree | |
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
Structured Time				
Agree	63	47	59	89
Disagree	20	15	2	3
Not sure	51	38	5	8
Unstructured Time				
Agree	78	58	61	92
Disagree	8	7	0	0
Not sure	46	35	5	8

Responses of those who report typically communicating in English related to those reporting wanting more structured and unstructured activities in English at RID conferences (*p* = .000).

Perceived attendee and individual communication and policy support. Of those who report supporting a language policy, 54% feel that conference participants mostly communicate in spoken English and 26% communicate mostly in Sim-Com, therefore, 80% of those who support a language policy feel that conference communication happens mostly in spoken English or Sim-Com. Those who support a language policy also report agreeing with the statement "at conferences, I typically communicate in ASL" (*p* = .000). See Table 19.

Table 19

Position on Conference Language Policy Correlated with Communication in ASL

| Support for Conference | Primarily Communicate in ASL at Conferences | | | |
| | Agree | | Strongly Agree | |
Language Policy	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	70	53	57	86
Disagree	40	30	63	20
Not sure	23	17	7	10

Self-perception of bilingualism and support of language policy. A slight majority (55.1%) of those in support of a language use policy learned ASL after the age of 18 and 27% learned it before age 12. However, of those supporting a language use policy, 86% report considering themselves to be very much or completely bilingual in ASL and English. Those who reported feeling influenced to respond in a similar mode to how they are addressed seems to be related to those supporting language policy (*p* = .000). See Table 20.

Table 20

Position on Conference Language Policy Correlated with Language Influence

| Support for Conference | Influenced to respond in a similar mode | | | |
| | Agree | | Strongly Agree | |
Language Policy	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	66	46	49	57
Disagree	41	28	27	31
Not sure	38	26	10	12

Of all survey participants, 81% of participants responded with *agree* or with strongly agree with the statement "If someone addresses me in a certain language/mode, I feel influenced to respond in a similar language or mode," and 16% responded that they disagree or strongly disagree.

Table 21

Position on Conference Language Policy Correlated with Language Influence

| Support a Conference | Influenced to respond in a similar mode | | | |
| | Agree | | Strongly Agree | |
Language Use Policy	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Agree	66	46	49	57
Disagree	41	28	27	31
Not sure	38	26	10	12

Self-perception as bilingual and national conference attendance. Those perceiving themselves as very much or completely bilingual in ASL and English seem to relate to those reporting having attended a national RID conference ($p = .000$). See Table 22.

Table 22

Bilingualism Correlated with National Conference Attendance

Perception of bilingual fluency	Have attended a national RID conference		Have not attended a national RID conference	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
Very much	98	88	14	12
Completely	105	87	16	13

Discussion

Despite participants' identification of bilingualism, the communication mode of choice at RID conferences is reported as spoken English or Sim-Com. Since early acquisition predicts fluency, it could be inferred that most participants are not "balanced bilinguals" (Baker, 2011)—that is, having equal competency in ASL and English. However, it seems that conference participants are more likely to distance themselves from statements like "I typically communicate in English" by strongly disagreeing, while responding more neutrally (not sure or disagree) to statements like "I typically communicate in ASL." There seems to be reluctance towards spoken English usage, and an increased ambivalence toward ASL usage. Are conference participants unsure if they are using linguistically correct ASL, or unsure or unwilling to report not using it at all? This survey item requires more clarification to distinguish that kind of information.

Over 80% of participants reported that their choice to use ASL or English was based on immediate environment and the ease of using one language or the other. There is evidence supporting the frequent occurrence of code-switching and code-mixing in conversation among multilinguals for a variety of purposes (Kazzazi, 2011). However, it is important to consider what denotes a conversation space. In this survey, a common response to Scenario 2 was to that conference participants sign when a Deaf person is included or nearby. The behavior of hearing bilinguals picking up their hands only when a Deaf person is known to be approaching has often been expected and recommended as a way to foster access and connection, but according to Suggs (2004), that behavior has also been a subject of controversy. As Suggs explains, it could cause the arrival of the Deaf person to be "announced," or marked—standing out from the majority as different. Walker (2001) states unmarked status may connote anonymity and therefore privilege. Also possible in this scenario is mistaken identification or lack of awareness of proximate Deaf versus non-Deaf participants, which leads to inconsistent adherence to this practice.

This study focused only on *perceptions* of language use and not data showing actual language use at conferences. It then made sense that perception figured heavily into the analyses for relationships found between some question responses. For example, someone perceiving more prevalent use of spoken English at conferences was also likely to prefer using ASL, both

personally and among other participants. However, those not having a preference of workshop presentation language (about 64% of respondents) were more likely to report observing a balanced use of ASL and English at conferences.

Since bimodal bilinguals who have acquired both ASL and English from birth have been documented as being outnumbered by half (Cokely, 1981) and just over half of participants in this study reported learning ASL after the age of 18, the RID membership may then lack the linguistic competence to support their stated language use goals. Cokely (1981) found that interpreters with hearing parents have been shown to rate their ASL expressive and receptive ability far below interpreters with Deaf parents. As language acquisition, cultural competence and identity are intertwined, the predominant "interpreter identity" is one that may approach but not fully embody biculturalism.

The question of interpreter identity is not an easy one to answer. RID's membership is largely hearing, but the number of Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs) is growing. According to the RID, in 2010 there were 104 CDIs in the US (RID, 2011) compared with 92 in 2009 (RID, 2010). As of fall 2014, the RID's online member directory lists 150 CDIs. Deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind-identifying individuals constituted 20% of the participants in this study and most reported using accommodations to access RID conferences.

The results of this study suggest that ASL occupies a minority status at national RID conferences, although 80% of respondents reported wanting more unstructured conference time in ASL. It may be that many conference attendees are willing but unable to alter the language status quo on a large scale. Since those who support the implementation of a language use policy also report being influenced by the language choices being made around them, it is possible to infer that some prefer having structure behind them to assist in making the decisions that they want regarding ASL usage. Existing conference communication policies have outlined tenets that cite "fiscal responsibility" (presumably monies saved by not hiring ASL interpreters) as one reason to support ASL use among attendees, as well as "exposure to academic ASL" and to "enhance the use and comprehension of ASL among…members" (SCRID, 2008, p. 1). One current institutional ASL-English policy on bilingualism highlights the ability and choice to converse in ASL as promoting "cognitive flexibility" (Gallaudet University, 2013, para. 4). RID's vision statement asserts that "linguistic rights are recognized as human rights" and that "The Deaf community and the Deaf-Heart are vital and visible" (RID, 2014, para. 4).

It is important to consider potential policy carefully with an evidence-based approach in conjunction with an understanding of a group's goals. Successful networking among interpreters assumes that a conference participant needs to feel comfortable and authentic, which are markers of primary language use. Therefore, language competence impacts networking ability. Since this study shows only just over half of respondents (56%) to this survey are currently in support of a language use policy at RID conferences, to say nothing of the details of such a policy, more research is needed.

Limitations

Limitations to this study were of a technical, non-response, and question perception nature. Questions were written in English with ASL translations embedded through a YouTube link. For certain bandwidths, addition of video caused some technical difficulty while loading each page of the survey, which led to a higher rate of participant dropout and non-response as participants attempted to advance. Future online surveys with ASL translations may want to explore options to reduce demands on Internet bandwidth and connection speed.

There was potential response variance related to perception of the question being asked, for example in the question "How old were you when you learned ASL?" could be problematic on two fronts: the word *learned* does not qualify to what extent or level of proficiency, and ASL can be widely or narrowly defined. Another example is in the answer option "I would request that interpretation into ASL be provided"—there is no specification whether interpretation would be via a hearing interpreter or CDI, which may have affected responses. Another item in large part open to participant interpretation was "I would be in favor of establishing a policy for language use at RID conferences." The item was intentionally vague on the details of such a policy, leaving participants open to interpreting meaning. However, most comments on the item assumed an ASL-only policy.

This study attempted to obtain a representative sample of its target demographic: those who have attended an RID national conference. According to the RID 2011 Conference report on statistics regarding regional membership and membership category the breakdown of participant demographics in this survey approached a representative sample by region (3-5% deviation from national statistics) and membership category (1.5-5% deviation). However, due to the confines of this survey neither a representative nor a random sample was able to be achieved. With the aim of soliciting a wide range of stakeholders, potential participants and groups outside of RID's membership base were contacted. However, many may not have met the survey criterion of having attended at least one national RID conference. These factors may have contributed to the low response rate and are therefore considered limitations on the ability to make generalizations about the target demographic.

Conclusion

Language choice at interpreter conferences has been an issue raised in the past (Bienvenu, 2000). With a growing membership with different language backgrounds, preferences and needs for accessing information, "interpreter space" at RID conferences is becoming more layered and complex than hearing and Deaf spaces alone, where cultural and linguistic norms may exist separately. Results from this study suggest that most national conference attendees perceive themselves to be bilingual in ASL and English and also support increased communication in ASL. Considering the establishment of communication policies at the regional levels in Region V, and ongoing discussions on communication policy occurring in one local RID chapter in

Region III,[9] this is an issue that is impacted by evolution and awareness of language and language use. Whatever comes of developments, they may likely shape ideas and organizations on a larger scale as other language policies have (Wright, 2003). Further research is recommended to explore how language attitudes and behaviors among stakeholders in the interpreting community may change over time. Language use in any space where multiple languages and backgrounds converge continues to be shaped by group membership and identity, and awareness of the roots in the diversity of experience is key to establishing effective conference standards.

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[9] In March of 2013, Minnesota RID's freelance interpreter committee began to solicit statewide input via email from the MRID membership on what, if any, the communication policy should be regarding their monthly committee meetings.

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Appendix

Language Use at RID Conferences: A Survey on Behaviors and Perceptions

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey on language use at Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) conferences. This survey is comprised of 45 questions and requires between 10-15 minutes to complete.

This study seeks to identify communication practices at Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) conferences. If you have attended one or more **national** RID conferences, please base your responses on your experiences at national conferences. If you have not attended a national conference, please indicate the type of RID conference you have attended (Question 2) and base your responses on your experiences at local, state or regional conferences.

This independent study is not sponsored by any organization; however, it is inspired by discussions and efforts made by several organizations.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop your participation at any point. There are no risks associated with participating in this study. Your answers will remain completely anonymous. By filling out and submitting this survey, you will be giving your implicit consent to participate in this study.

To accurately report your thoughts and feelings on this issue, your complete honesty on this survey is appreciated.
If you require accommodations to participate in this survey, please contact the primary investigator.

As you begin, take a moment to consider: How do you see spoken English and ASL used at national RID conferences? How do you communicate at RID conferences, and why? What challenges do you perceive regarding communication at a bilingual conference?

DEFINITIONS
Interpreter Conference: a conference for ASL-English interpreters that is sponsored by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
Primary language: Also "native language" or "L1." The language first acquired after birth.
English: Spoken English (for the purpose of this survey).

SECTION I: Conference Participant Experiences
1. Have you attended a national RID conference?
   □ Yes   □ No
2. Have you attended RID conferences at the local, state or regional levels?
 Check all that apply.
   □ Local/State (my home state) approx. # attended: _____
   □ Local/State (other) approximate # attended: _____
   □ Regional (my home region) approximate # attended: _____
   □ Regional (other) approximate # attended: _____

3. What kind of language accommodations have you used at the conferences?

☐ English to ASL interpreting (English source message)
☐ ASL to English interpreting (ASL source message)
☐ Trilingual interpreting
☐ Spoken English to English captions, i.e., CART
☐ Spoken English via closed mic to an FM system
☐ Other:_____

4. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the accommodation(s)?

Poor   Fair   Excellent
  1   2   3   4   5   6   7

5. When deciding which workshop to attend at RID conferences, does the presentation language (ASL or spoken English) influence your decision?

Yes, I favor workshops in ASL.
Yes, I favor workshops in English.
No, the presentation language does not influence my decision to attend.
Comments

6. In your observation, what language is used at RID conferences during structured information (e.g., workshops, forums, keynotes)?

All ASL   Mostly ASL   Balance of ASL and English   Mostly English   All English Not sure

7. In your observation, what language is used at RID conferences during unstructured activities (e.g., break times, social events)?

All ASL   Mostly ASL   Balance of ASL and English   Mostly English   All English Not sure

8. I would like more structured information (e.g., workshops, keynotes) to be presented in ASL.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   No preference   Agree   Strongly Agree

9. I would like more structured information to be presented in English.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   No preference   Agree   Strongly Agree

10. I would like more unstructured activities (e.g., break times, social activities) to be presented in ASL.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   No preference   Agree   Strongly Agree

11. I would like more unstructured activities to be presented in English.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   No preference   Agree   Strongly Agree

12. I prefer to access more structured conference information (i.e. workshops, keynotes) in my primary language.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   No preference   Agree   Strongly Agree

13. I prefer to access unstructured conference information (e.g. break times) in my
      primary language.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   No preference   Agree   Strongly Agree

14. In general, when I attend an RID conference, it seems that participants:

☐ Use ASL more than English.
☐ Sign and speak simultaneously (Sim-Com) more than using only ASL or only English
☐ Use a balance of ASL and English.
☐ Use English more than ASL.
☐ I'm not sure.

15. When I come into contact with an **unfamiliar** person at an interpreter conference **for the first time** (e.g. registration table, small group break-out discussion), I am initially addressed in:

English:
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   N/A

ASL:
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   N/A

Sim-Com:
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   N/A

Other_____:
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   N/A

16. If someone addresses me in certain language or mode, I feel influenced to respond in a similar language or mode.
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree   Strongly Agree

17. I would be in favor of establishing a language use policy at RID conferences.
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree   Strongly Agree
Comments.

18. At RID conferences I typically communicate in English.
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree   Strongly Agree

19. At RID conferences I typically communicate in ASL.
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree   Strongly Agree

20. Others seem to feel comfortable when communicating with me in English.
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree   Strongly Agree

21. Others seem to feel comfortable when communicating with me in ASL.
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree   Strongly Agree

SECTION II: Conference Presenter Experiences

22. Have you presented at one or more RID conferences?
　　　Yes
　　　No

23. In which language do you most often present at RID conferences? (Select one)
　　　☐ English
　　　☐ ASL
　　　☐ Other:
　　　Comments

24. Why? Choose all that may apply.
　　　☐ I was encouraged to present in that language.
　　　☐ The topic is best conveyed in that language.
　　　☐ I am more comfortable using that language.
　　　☐ I felt pressured to present in that language.
　　　☐ I was influenced by potential accommodations for access (i.e. presenting
　　　while simultaneously hearing an open mic interpretation)
　　　☐ Other:
Please comment on your reason(s) and/or concerns regarding your choice.

25. With sufficient preparation, I am willing to present in a language other than my primary. (e.g. International Sign, or a spoken or signed language that is not your primary)
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Not sure   Agree Strongly Agree

SECTION III: Case scenarios

26. You are attending your first RID conference on interpreting and are looking forward to attending a specific workshop from an expert in the field. The workshop is advertised as being presented in ASL. As the workshop begins, it is clear that the presenter is using English-influenced sign to present. How would you feel? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ If I can understand the presenter, it would not matter to me.
- ☐ I would be disappointed and may seek out a different workshop.
- ☐ The presenter's language use would negatively impact my experience in the workshop.
- ☐ I'm not sure.
- ☐ Other/Additional:

27. During the morning break at an RID conference, Leah, a hearing ASL-English bilingual, notices an old friend from her interpreter education program getting coffee. Excitedly, she walks up through the crowd and speaks: "Hi! It's been so long!" Her friend responds in ASL: "Wow! I know! What have you been up to?" If you were Leah, how might you react? Would you address the difference in language use? Please explain your answer.

SECTION IV: Language Experiences

28. How old were you when you learned spoken English?
- ☐ Birth-11
- ☐ Age 12-18
- ☐ Age 18+
- ☐ N/A I did not learn spoken English.

29. How old were you when you learned written English?
- ☐ Birth-11
- ☐ Age 12-18
- ☐ Age 18+

30. How old were you when you learned ASL?
- ☐ Birth-11
- ☐ Age 12-18
- ☐ Age 18+

31. In non-interpreting situations, rate your overall ability to **understand ASL**.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Very weak   Very strong

32. In non-interpreting situations, rate your overall ability to **understand English in any form** (spoken, written or English-like signing).

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Very weak   Very strong

33. In non-interpreting situations, rate your overall ability to **produce ASL**.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Very weak   Very strong

34. In non-interpreting situations, rate your overall ability to **produce English in any form** (spoken, written or English-like signing).

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Very weak   Very strong

35. In what contexts did you learn ASL and English? (Check all that apply.)

	ASL	English
At home	_____	_____
At school	_____	_____
In the neighborhood	_____	_____
At work	_____	_____
From friends	_____	_____
TV/media/internet	_____	_____
Other:	_____	_____

36. How often do you switch between ASL and spoken English OR mix ASL and spoken English in non-interpreting situations? (Circle the best response.)

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Not sure

37. When do you mix or switch between ASL and English? Choose all that apply. (comments)

Appropriate words/phrases available

Easier to talk about certain topics

It depends on the language skills of the people in my immediate conversation.

I feel more vulnerable to critique using one language or another.

N/A I do not mix or switch between ASL and English.

38. I consider myself to be bilingual in ASL and English (either spoken, written or English-like sign).

Not at all   Somewhat   Not sure   Very much   Completely

SECTION V: Background information

39. Age
- ☐ 18-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60+

40. Current RID region of residence
- ☐ Region I (listed regions)
- ☐ Region II (listed regions)
- ☐ Region III (listed regions)
- ☐ Region IV (listed regions)
- ☐ Region V (listed regions)

41. Occupation (Check all that apply)
- ☐ Interpreter
- ☐ Interpreter educator
- ☐ Interpreting student
- ☐ ASL student
- ☐ ASL educator
- ☐ Other:

42. I am (Check all that apply):
- ☐ Hearing
- ☐ Deaf
- ☐ Hard of hearing
- ☐ DeafBlind
- ☐ Additional (i.e., CODA):

43. *Interpreters*, please indicate the credential(s) you currently hold. (Check all that apply.)
  - ☐ I am not an interpreter.
  - ☐ I do not currently hold credentials/certification.
  - ☐ I am an RID Candidate for Certification.
  - ☐ NIC (National Interpreter Certification)
  - ☐ NIC-Advanced
  - ☐ NIC-Master
  - ☐ CI
  - ☐ CT
  - ☐ CDI
  - ☐ RSC
  - ☐ CSC
  - ☐ MCSC
  - ☐ OTC
  - ☐ NAD III
  - ☐ NAD IV
  - ☐ NAD V
  - ☐ IC
  - ☐ TC
  - ☐ Ed: K-12
  - ☐ CLIP
  - ☐ CLIP-R
  - ☐ SC:L
  - ☐ Prov. SC:L
  - ☐ SC:PA
  - ☐ ACCI
  - ☐ EIPA level _____
  - ☐ Other: _____

44. How many years have you worked as a full-time interpreter (20+ hours per week)
  - ☐ 0-4
  - ☐ 5-10
  - ☐ 11-15
  - ☐ 16-20
  - ☐ 20+
  - ☐ I do not work as a full time interpreter.

45. Did you earn a certificate or degree in interpreting?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No

46. What is your highest degree earned in interpreting?
  - ☐ Certificate
  - ☐ Associate's
  - ☐ Bachelor's
  - ☐ Master's
  - ☐ Doctoral
  - ☐ N/A

47. What is your highest degree earned in a field other than interpreting?
    ☐ Associate's
    ☐ Bachelor's
    ☐ Master's
    ☐ Doctoral
    ☐ N/A
Comment. In what field of study?

_____
If you know of other people who may be interested in participating in this survey, please forward this survey link to them.
Thank you for your participation!