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Expanding the collective narrative: exploring the experiences of American Sign Language/English interpreters of Asian heritage

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Expanding the Collective Narrative:

Exploring the Experiences of American Sign Language/English Interpreters of

Asian Heritage

By

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the experiences of Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islanders in the field of American Sign Language/English interpreting within the United States. This study was conducted in two phases, an online survey followed by one-on-one interviews either online or in-person. The information was gathered, coded, and then analyzed for common themes to see if there was a common trend or experience among this particular minority group. The literature review revealed that a majority of the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander community does experience microaggressions on a weekly basis, if not daily; however, this has not yet been investigated among current and former practitioners of American Sign Language/English interpreting. It was found that many Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreters experienced their interpreter education programs (IEPs) to be lacking in discussions about diversity and multiculturalism. The same holds true for practitioners who did not attend an IEP. Working interpreters often felt there was a lack of understanding and conversation about cultural differences and diversity among their peers and consumers. This lack of understanding can lead to more microaggressions and frustration experienced by the Asian and AAPI interpreter. To increase discussion and awareness, participants desired more education and discussion about race, racism, and microaggressions in their education and with their colleagues and consumers.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

Growing up in Southern California's Little Saigon, diversity was all around me. As a second generation Okinawan American, born to immigrant parents, I learned what it meant to be of Asian heritage while living in the United States. Going between languages, cultures, and customs was the norm. My two older sisters and I would often translate television shows, letters from the bank, and papers from school to our mother whose primary language was Japanese. We were raised in a Japanese household while living in an American city. However, I never fully understood the implications until I went to attain my undergraduate degree in Asian American Studies. Over the course of my studies, I learned about different Asian ethnic enclaves, assumptions, privileges afforded to me, as well as the disadvantages, and I wrestled with the complex, intersecting layers of my identity.

When I entered the field of signed language interpreting in 2008, I now had new layers to explore, analyze, and synthesize. When I looked for someone who had come before me to help me understand what it meant to be an Asian American interpreter, I found no one with more experience to guide me through this process. Yes, I had friends and peers of Asian heritage who were also recent graduates of the same program, but as much as I wanted to see what my future could look like in this field, I did not have access to anyone who had gone before me. This led me to think about other Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPI) interpreters working as American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters. Who were the other Asian and AAPI interpreters? Where did they reside and how did they find their forms of support? What is our history and where

does it fit within the collective narrative of the interpreting community? This thesis became my opportunity to explore questions about my own interpreting community.

Statement of the Problem

Being out in the field of signed language interpreting, living in the California Bay Area has afforded me the opportunity to meet and connect with several interpreters of color. However, the Asian and AAPI interpreter community is few in numbers and spread throughout the United States, concentrated along both the East and West Coast regions. Little is known about the common narratives and experiences of Asian and AAPI interpreters.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to better understand the Asian and AAPI community who work as American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters. My primary goal was to seek out common themes in our experiences as practitioners of ASL/English interpreting. This also allows for further study and investigation into the primary needs of the Asian and AAPI interpreting community and how these needs can affect one's interactions while in an interpreter education program (IEP) as well as further support and training that can be offered once they have entered into the field. The second goal was to collect demographic information on Asian and AAPI interpreters and how it compares to the current population of ASL/English interpreters in the United States.

Scholarly Contribution

The goal of this work is to add to the current literature for signed language interpreting studies. The research of the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) interpreter population and their overall experiences of culture, identity, and

racism within the practice can lead to several benefits for those in the field, as well as those involved with interpreter education programs (IEPs).

This research may also provide better insight on how to recruit and retain interpreters of Asian heritage, as well as providing support to other interpreters and interpreting students of color. Taking into consideration how African American/Black interpreters are treated in the field (Obasi, 2013; West Oyedele, 2015), it is possible that the experience of the Asian and AAPI community will parallel and support their findings, providing a foundation for additional research into different subgroups of the interpreting community.

Theoretical Basis and Organization

The basis for my research emerged from the works of those in ethnic studies. My research draws from theories developed in Asian American Studies while also including those from other marginalized groups. I also drew from Hofstede's (2009) model, which looks at culture and how it is used when discussing leadership and communication. This research will also look at interpreter education systems from a multiculturalism perspective, which "values diverse and multiple cultures within a society. Rather than seeing the 'melting pot' status where many cultures meld together into one, multiculturalism respects the unique identities and contributions of individuals and their cultures" (Merriam & Bierema, 2013, p. 220).

The second phase of this research was guided by "hermeneutical phenomenology" (Creswell, 2007, p. 59), which focuses on the "lived experiences (phenomenology) and interpreting the 'texts' of life (hermeneutics)" (p. 59). It was also influenced by "transcendental phenomenology" (p. 60), which identifies a phenomenon to study and

"focusing on one's experience and gathering data or information from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon" (p. 60). This will also include elements of a collective case study where several cases are brought together to compare and illustrate a particular issue (Creswell, 2007). Although this research contains elements and influences of phenomenology and has a case study approach, this is neither a phenomenological study nor a case study.

As I am a member of the Asian and AAPI community, this research may have a more emic bias, an "inside perspective, [which] follows in the tradition of psychological studies of fold beliefs (Wundt, 1888) and in cultural anthropologists' striving to understand culture from the 'native's point of view' (Malinowski, 1922)" (Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999, p. 781).

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study was how this study was distributed. A link to the survey was posted through social media and emailed through personal contacts; therefore, there was no guarantee that all members of the population of interpreters who identified as Asian, Asian American/Pacific Islander, or of Asian heritage had the opportunity to participate in the survey and, in turn, the interviews. Therefore the scope of the survey was dependent on networking, personal references, self-reporting, and snowball sampling by asking participants to continue to forward the survey (Hale & Napier, 2013).

Since it was not a requirement for participants to be a member of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), the data collected may not reflect the figures represented from RID's census and demographic information. As this survey was posted on social

media sites that were RID affiliated, again, there was no guarantee that all members of this population would have been contacted or had access if not a member of RID.

Another limitation was that the study does not focus on Asian and AAPIs from a specific community or subculture. This research was done with a broad scope in order to capture the overall experience of those who identify as Asian or AAPI. It was important to have as many members of the Asian and AAPI community participate as possible, so limiting participants by focusing on a subset of the Asian and AAPI community would have reduced the data collected. This study also does not reflect the experiences of the members of the Asian and AAPI Deaf community. Although there may be parallels in the experiences of those who are Asian or AAPI Deaf community, generalizations can not be drawn from the research shown in this study. Moreover, the research focused solely on Asian and AAPI interpreter residing in the United States. Therefore, the information gathered does not reflect the Asian and AAPI interpreting population in other parts of the continent and cannot be generalized to those residing in other parts of the world.

Definition of Terms

1st Generation: the immigrant generation (born in another country) (Poon & Byrd, 2013, p. 23).

1.5 Generation: those who immigrated before or during their early teens (Poon & Byrd, 2013, p. 23).

2nd Generation: children of immigrants (Poon & Byrd, 2013, p. 23).

Adoptee: This can be how people who are adopted identify themselves. This is an in-group term and cannot be used by those who are not part of this community.

Asian: "Refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam" (Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim, & Shahid, 2012, p. 2).

Asian American: an American of Asian descent.

Asian American/Pacific Islander—AAPI: An American of Asian descent or an American of Pacific Islander descent. When discussing the interview participants, due to the limited number of interpreters out in the field who identify as either Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI), all participants will be referred to as AAPI in the Discussion and Conclusion portion of this thesis.

Asian heritage: A person of Asian heritage; does not necessarily identify as Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander.

Cultural identity: Drawing from Adler (1998) the concept is akin to the idea of a national or social character, which describes a set of traits that members of a given community share with one another above and beyond their individual differences. Such traits almost always include a constellation of values and attitudes towards life, death, birth, family, children, god, and nature. Used in its collective sense, the concept of cultural identity includes typologies of cultural behavior, such behaviors being the appropriate and inappropriate ways of meeting basic needs and solving life's essential dilemmas. Used in its collective sense, the concept of cultural identity incorporates the shared premises, values, definitions, and beliefs and the day-to-day, largely unconscious, patterning of activities (Adler, 1998).

Deaf: the capitalization of this term is used when "referring to a particular group of deaf people who share a language – American Sign Language (ASL) – and a culture" (Padden & Humphries, 1988, p. 4)

Ethnicity: "a dynamic set of historically derived and institutionalized ideas and practices that (1) allows people to identify or to be identified with groupings of people on the basis of presumed (and usually claimed) commonalities including language, history, nation or region of origin, customs, ways of being religion and/or genealogy or ancestry, (2) can be a source of meaning, action, and identity; and (3) confers a sense of belonging, pride, and motivation" (Okazaki & Saw, 2011, p. 147).

Ethnic identity: "refers to identification or feeling of membership with others regarding the character, the spirit of a culture or the cultural ethos based on a sense of commonality of origin, beliefs, values, customs or practices of a specific group of peoples" (Yeh & Huang, 1996, p. 645).

Feeding: a term used to describe how information is passed from the support interpreter to the working interpreter; this can range from a word, phrase, or concept, depending on the information that is needed for an effective interpretation (Bar-Tzur, 2004).

Hapa: "adj. 1. *Slang.* of mixed racial heritage with partial roots in Asian and/or Pacific Islander ancestry. n. 2. Slang. a person of such ancestry. [der./Hawaiian: hapa haole. (half white)]" (Urban Dictionary, n.d.). "Originally a derogatory label, but is now embraced as a term of pride by many whose mixed racial heritage includes Asian or Pacific Island descent" (Fulbeck, 2010, front jacket). This term should be used by in-group members only.

Microaggressions: often brief exchanges that can occur daily, that can "send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group" (Derald et al., 2007, p. 273). Microaggresions are powerful because of their "invisibility to the perpetrator and, oftentimes, the recipient" (p. 275).

Mitigating comments: denial of racial comments or actions (Van Dijk, 1992). For the purposes of this study, they are comments that mitigate racial slights or actions due to the reaction of the person experiencing the microaggression.

Model minority: "an ethnic minority whose members are more likely to achieve higher success than other minority groups, especially in economic advantage, academic success, family stability, low crime involvement, etc. In the US, this term has been used to describe Asian Americans since the mid-1960s" (Chou, 2008, p. 219).

Pacific Islander: "a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. Pacific Islander Americans include people of Polynesian, Micronesian, and Melanesian cultural backgrounds" (National Education Association, 2007, Who is API?).

Race: a categorization of people into groups based on perceived physical and behavioral characteristics. It is often associated with societal assumptions, power, privilege, and social rankings based on these characteristics (Okazaki & Saw, 2011).

Team interpreting: "two or more interpreters are working together with the goal of creating a single fluid interpretation, capitalizing on each other's strengths, and supporting each other for consistency and success" (Russell, 2011, p. 1)

Transracial adoptee: a child from who is of one racial background, adopted by a family from another racial background (this term was used as an identity among the interview participants).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Signed language interpreters of color are grossly underrepresented, and specifically, signed language interpreters from the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) community are even more underrepresented (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., 2014). Here in the United States, the Asian immigrant population is the fastest growing minority group (Taylor & Cohn, 2013), yet they are still "underrepresented in fields such as education, humanities, social and behavioral sciences (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010; National Science Foundation, 2007)" (Liu, 2012, p. iii). The field of signed language interpreting is no exception.

Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) currently make up only 1.82% of the signed language interpreter population (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2014), whereas Asian/AAPIs as a whole constitute 5.8 % of the general population (Taylor & Cohn, 2013). Though they represent a small portion of the American population in general and within the profession of interpreting, it is still important to understand their role in the interpreting community, as well as represent their experiences in the collective narrative of our field. Since research in the field of signed language interpreting specifically focusing on the Asian and AAPI population is still being developed, studies from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and academia have been used for this research.

Identity

The Asian American community, in and of itself, is rich in diversity. Taylor and Cohn (2013) stated:

Asian Americans trace their roots to any of dozens of countries in the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. Each country of origin subgroup has its own unique history, culture, language, religious beliefs, economic and demographic traits, social and political values and pathways into America. (p. 3)

Although only seven categories are formally listed on the U.S. Census form, participants can specify their ethnicity (Taylor & Cohn, 2013). This can lead to upwards of 20 different ethnic minority groups that fall under the umbrella term of Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) (Alvarez & Juang, 2010; Taylor & Cohn, 2013). As a result of having many groups under this one label, the idea of what it means to be Asian in America varies greatly, not just in one's values, experiences of immigration, and opportunities for education, but also with the cultures, the customs, and the community history each person carries with them (Okazaki & Saw, 2011; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Poon & Byrd, 2013).

However, it is important to understand that the "Asian-American label itself doesn't hold much sway with Asian Americans … A majority (62%) say they most often describe themselves by their country of origin (e.g., Chinese or Chinese American; Vietnamese or Vietnamese American, and so on)" (Taylor & Cohn, 2013, p. 13). There is often a desire for shared experiences, or people often describe their experiences within the context of race, history, and the social politics of their cultural narratives (Okazaki & Saw, 2011).

Generation status is "another major marker in the Asian American community" (Okazaki & Shaw, 2010, p. 152). Studies often focus on children who are Asian immigrants, second generation Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPIs), or the 1.5-

generation (Okazaki & Saw, 2011; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Poon & Byrd, 2013). The term 1.5-generation "refers to people who immigrated to the US as young children and/or adolescents, while second generation Asian Americans were born in the US to immigrant parents" (Poon & Byrd, 2013, p. 23). Generation markers not only tie into identity, but are also frequently associated with specific historical markers within the history of the United States (Okazaki & Saw, 2013).

One may look closer at these ethnic groupings, for example, specifying East Asian, South East Asian, or South Asian. Although this provides a smaller umbrella term, there are still smaller communities and specific cultural groups that have their own unique history (Vo & Bonus, 2009). Understanding the unique history and experiences of each ethnic group helps to better understand how racialization happens within the United States, providing a better sense of what it means to be Asian in America (Vo & Bonus, 2009). As one looks at these ever-changing communities, it is important to understand the diversity that is present even within a particular ethnic community; for example, the numbers of biracial and multicultural Asian Americans are increasing due to the fact that there are more interracial marriages. As a result, the composition of each community becomes more diverse and multiracial allowing for a more complex identity (Vo & Bonus, 2009).

In Ra and Napier's (2013) article, the two researchers discussed the ideas surrounding what it means for an interpreter to be bicultural and navigating between two worlds. They brought up the point that before studying the languages, it is important to look at the cultural differences to have a complete understanding of what these cultural exchanges look like (p. 47). However, due to the lack of study of Asian language

community interpreting, it is important to learn more about the interpreters' community before trying to understand the communities they service (p. 46).

Culture, Education, and Career

Although it does not hold true for all Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) interpreters, growing up in immigrant families is a common experience for many AAPIs (Poon, 2014). How AAPIs decide to come into the field of American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreting is not yet clear; however, one researcher found career paths, "especially for second generation Asian Americans can be shaped by intersectionality in their identities as students of color and as children of immigrants" (Poon, 2014, p. 503). For many Asians and AAPIs, family still holds a great deal of influence on career choices, educational pathways, and future decisions (Liu, 2012; Poon, 2014; Poon & Byrd, 2013). However, there are often other factors that can influence a person to enter into non-traditional fields such as age, gender, acculturation, and perceived discrimination, to name a few (Poon, 2014).

Frequently, because families play a strong, influential role for all members, this emphasizes that one's actions are a reflection on the family and not just the self (Liu, 2012, p. 50). Because the family is so central to so many Asian and AAPI students, they try to enter into careers that will "bring honor to the family" (p. 52). This tends to lead Asian Americans to fields that offer upward mobility, financial security, and benefit for the entire family, not just the individual (Liu, 2012).

Career and values have been the focus for several studies in the Asian American community, often in comparison to their White, mainstream counterparts (i.e., Leung et al., 1994; Lowe, 2005; Poon & Byrd, 2013). As Poon (2014) looked more deeply into

the careers paths and opportunities that seem open to all, she found this does not always hold true for those of Asian heritage. While specifically researching second generation Asian Americans, when they have chosen a more non-traditional field (i.e., non-STEM careers), "some experiences were characterized by feelings of racial isolation as one of the few or only Asian Americans in their field" (p. 509).

Bruce's (1998) presentation focused on the recruitment of African American/Black interpreting students. She focused on looking not just at recruitment but including the cultural aspects of the African American/Black Deaf and signing community, as well as the cultural mediation that occurs within the group (Bruce, 1998). Recruitment of interpreting students of color has been a topic for several decades, as expressed by Mooney (1998) who stated, "If the profession of sign language interpreters is going to become more diverse, then the interpreter preparation programs are critical links in the development of the future professionals who are now 'in the pipeline'" (p. 252).

Understanding cultural mediation and how second language learners can succeed within an academic setting can require cultural mediation on the part of the student and the instructor (Morita, 2009). The study by Mindess, Holcomb, Langholtz, and Moyers (1999) also provided a small slice of cultural mediation, focusing on intercultural communication for signed language interpreters; however, their focus was mostly on the cultural exchange occurring between the Deaf and Hearing constituents. There are a few illustrations of cultural values between Eastern and Western cultures, for example, humility (or its opposite, boasting) and how it is utilized and interpreted, but in each culture can still be quite different (p. 141). Still, it is important to look at the multiple

layers of a person and how that could affect their interaction. ASL/English interpreters are often called "bicultural mediator[s] to describe what we do" (p. 153), but at times it feels as though being bicultural is not sufficient.

Racism, Microaggressions, and Stereotypes

Going deeper into the different Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities, there is extensive research analyzing the experiences of Asians and AAPIs not only in society, but in the workplace as well (Derald et al., 2007; Huynh, Devos, & Smalarz, 2011; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2009). Racism can and does look different for each minority group such that:

> Although it is generally accepted that African Americans and Latino/Hispanic Americans experience both overt and covert forms of prejudice and discrimination, Asian American are frequently viewed as a model minority who have made it in this society and experience little in the form of racism (Wong & Hagin, 2006). (Sue et al., 2009, p. 72)

Often, the racism that Asians and AAPIs experience comes in the form of microaggressions, which are "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group" (Derald et al., 2007, p. 273). These microaggressions can range from comments of "where are you really from?" to "you speak English so well!" in order to remind Asian and AAPIs that they are aliens in their own country (Sue et al., 2009).

One of the struggles often faced by interpreters of Asian heritage is the notion that they are not American, but rather a perpetual foreigner, someone who will never be truly

American like their European counterparts (Alvarez & Juang, 2010; Alvarez, Juang & Liang, 2006; Huynh et al., 2011; Poon, 2014). Often,

> the assumption that ethnic minorities do not fit the definition of what it means to be American may manifest itself in subtle, covert marginalizing incidents, such as questioning an individual's home-town, complimenting his/her command of the English language, or mistaking him/her as a foreigner (as cited in Liang et al., 2004). (Huynh et al., 2011, p. 2)

Another stereotype that maintains the idea of being a perpetual foreigner is the "model minority" myth (Chou, 2008; Juang & Liang, 2006). It is a term that is often used to refer to an "ethnic minority whose members are more likely to achieve higher success than other minority groups" (Chou, 2008, p. 219). This could be thought of in terms of economics, academics, stability, and low crime involvement; although this sounds like a compliment or praise, it is a new way of focusing on the cultural difference of a group instead of racial characteristics (Chou, 2008). "The notion of model minority isolates Asian Americans from the white 'Americans'. Above all, 'model minority' re-marginalizes Asian Americans just because of their cultural difference" (Chou, 2008, p. 222). When Asians and AAPIs succeed in academics, the workforce, or in fields such as medicine or technology—or are the cause of catastrophic events, such as the Virginia Tech shooting that occurred in 2007—it is often taken to be a reflection of the entire community rather than the actions of an individual (Okazaki & Saw, 2011; Sue et al., 2009). It is never a success or failure that is attributed solely to one person but to the collective (Sue et al., 2009). This is often an unwanted burden or attention, usually attributed to the value of collectivism of the community. However, this stereotype has

"negated the dynamics of Eastern culture and has clouded the diversity of Asian American communities, being blind to the different classes and cultures among Asian Americans" (Chou, 2008, p. 223). This ignores the idea that there are many communities with independent needs.

Similarly, another minority group that experiences assumptions "about how they speak, how they behave or the depth of their knowledge" (West Oyedele, 2015, p. 52) is the African American/Black community. This runs parallel to many of the experiences of those in the Asian and AAPI community (Derald et al., 2007). The experiences of students and working professionals have supported the idea of microaggressions that occur in the workplace, with both consumers and colleagues (Derald et al., 2007, p. 50). How one relates to these experiences can vary from person to person; as with any experience, it is up to the individual to determine how to best handle the incident, which is often seen as a catch-22 (Derald et al., 2007). A catch-22, defined as "a requirement that cannot be met until a prerequisite requirement is met, however, the prerequisite cannot be obtained until the original requirement is met" (Catch-22, n.d.), can create a cyclical experience for the person of color.

Trying to figure out if the comment or action was an unintentional slight, proof of the occurrence of a microaggression, and deciding whether to confront or ignore the incident are just a few of the reactions a person of color may experience (Derald et al., 2007). When a person of color attempts to confront the incident and what took place, they are often told they are being "oversensitive or paranoid or told that their emotional outburst confirm stereotypes about minorities" (Derald et al., 2007, p. 279).

When discussing incidents of racism or microaggressions, people of color are frequently told "not to overreact and to simply 'let it go.' Usually, Whites consider microaggressive incidents to be minor, and people of color are encouraged (often times by people of color as well) to not waste time or effort on them" (Derald et al., 2007, pp. 278-279). There is also the possibility that if the experience is shared, the person listening denies that the incident could have occurred in the manner suggested, then trivializes it or claims it was not a significant occurrence of racism (Juang & Liang, 2006). How one discusses the actions are just as important for understanding racism and microaggressive incidents; hence, the "use of disclaimers focus on a more permanent attitude rather than on the specific (negative) opinion now being expressed about some specific outgoing member or some specific ethnic or racial action or event" (Van Dijk, 1992, p. 90). According to Van Dijk (1992), there are four types of denials that can occur when talking about racism and racial comments. Taken from his article, they are listed as:

1. act-denial ('I did not do/say that at all');

2. control-denial ('I did not do/say that on purpose'; 'it was an accident');

3. intention-denial ('I did not mean that'; 'you got me wrong');

4. goal-denial ('I did not do/say that, in order to…'). (p. 92)

Similar to the discussion by Derald et al. (2007), there is a constant catch-22 when the other party, friends, or counselors are unwilling to acknowledge that there may have been any wrongdoing in the first place. When parties (e.g., interpreters and their clients) are unwilling to acknowledge the everyday experiences of Asian and AAPI interpreters or clients, this may lead to cultural misunderstandings, which is a similar occurrence in the field of counseling, by therapists and their clients (Derald et al., 2007).

Identity, Race, and Interpreting

As American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters who are constantly

working between cultures and languages, it is important that interpreters include the Deaf

consumers within the interpreting process, which is essential to the success of

communication (Napier & Rohan, 2007). "As Edwards et al (2005) have stated in their

study of ethic [*sic*] minority interpreters in the UK, it is important to look at the common

issues in consumers' experiences of working with interpreters" (Napier & Rohan, 2007,

p. 193). Ra and Napier (2013) conducted a study analyzing the experiences of Asian

language interpreters in Australia. They too found that there were cultural aspects that

were necessary to take into consideration when interpreting. The study was not solely

focused on interpreting from one language into another, but many of the Asian

interpreters would take into consideration customs and behavior patterns, culture related

terms and expressions, cultural concepts and the meaning of gestures (Ra & Napier,

2013, p. 52). The language that interpreters use can be "an important element of identity,

and aspects of identity, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, as well as moral

status, are constructed and ascribed in the process of using language. 'Speaking for'

others is a political issue" (Temple & Edwards, 2002, p. 6). Temple and Edwards also

describe the concept of boundaries or 'borders' and how interpreters are constantly

repositioning themselves in between these conversations and communication. Assuming

that the interpreter is not part of any interaction, but rather "neutral mouthpieces,

faithfully and passively translating back and forth between languages" (p. 10), ignores the

influence of the interpreter during the communication interaction. As Temple and

Edwards (2002) found in their research, the act of interpreting is not so neutral, but rather they provide this example:

As this interpreter performed the activity of translating the words of the interviewees to me and vice versa, she also performed the activity of constructing her own identity and those of the research participants. The very act of interpreting itself (her ability to do so) placed her as an educated, English-language proficient woman who can deal with public and private sector apparatus. Further as she interpreted the interviewees' accounts of their difficulties, and traumas in accessing and using child health services and other facilities, and chose the words best suited to convey their meaning to me, she constructed their social location and identity border in opposition to her own in significant ways. Her words also implicitly drew myself into her border constructions, as someone who was similarly 'educated' and placed alongside her in relation to the 'uneducated' interviewee group. (p. 14)

However, at other times, this was not the case. The interpreter was able to empathize with the interviewee and conveyed her understanding through body language, the interpretation itself, creating a connection with the interviewee and positioned the interviewer as an 'outsider,' excluded from the discussion due to a lack of cultural knowledge (Temple & Edwards, 2002). However, when the interviewees felt a sense of shared culture with Temple, the interviewer being fluent in Polish, Temple and Edwards (2002) found there was often an assumption of:

a shared knowledge of history and cultural traditions and a certain sympathy with Polish perspectives on these. Many of these assumptions centre around the idea of

what constitutes a 'Polish' way of life, and having been to a Polish Saturday

School and attended a Polish Catholic Church and club certain shared values are

often assumed…Comments such as 'you know' were common in the interviews.

The border here between being 'Polish' and 'not Polish' is defined to include me

because of my background. This process of positioning, however, is fluid and

contextual and never final. (p. 15-16)

It is important to recognize that

Differences of 'race'/ethnicity, gender, class and so on are gathered round

borders, and the concept allows us to acknowledge the cultural space in which

'difference' becomes the point at which identity and knowledge construction and

contentions surface and shift around language. Difference is experienced and

lived as central to identity and ideas. (Temple & Edwards, 2002, p. 17)

It is with this approach and the understanding that culture is not stagnant but rather a fluid

and continuing process, that changes depending on the dynamics and interactions

"between the ethnocultural communities and institutions of the larger society" (Kirmayer,

2012, p. 155).

Exploring this concept of positioning, borders, and culture as a fluid concept in

the field of interpreting, as well as interpreter education programs (IEPs), it is important

to take into account the idea of credibility of the speaker (Lawrence, 1998). Lawrence's

research discusses the importance of cross-cultural communication, interpreting from

English to American Sign Language and vice versa. One of the issues mentioned was that

of culture and how negotiation and awareness of the expectations can lead to the

credibility of the speaker with the audience members (Lawrence, 1998). The aspects of

credibility which overlapped for both Deaf and hearing audiences, were delivery, fluency, confidence, and enthusiasm; however, it was also equally important to have an established reputation and knowledge of the subject at hand (Lawrence, 1998). It is also important to realize:

> Using interpreters often causes confusion for audiences separating the interpreter from the speaker. Understanding the interpreting process and how it may affect the perception of credibility is important for speakers planning to use interpreters. The interpreter's style may have an impact over and beyond the message of the presentation. (Lawrence, 1998, p. 157)

Another important aspect of the signed language interpreting field is being able to work together, which is often referred to as teaming or team interpreting, and is an integral part of the interpreting process. Keeping in mind the goal of teaming is to have one interpretation, by capitalizing on each other's strengths, and supporting each other (Russell, 2011). Feeding, which is part of the interpretation process (Bar-Tzur, 2004), is effective when teams are willing to communicate feeding preferences and there is trust between the working interpreters (Russell, 2011).

However, credibility, teaming, and culture are not the only factors influencing the interpreting process according to Obasi (2013):

> As black sign language interpreters we need to juggle a number of complex issues which impact our visibility in the interpreting arena. We are left in the onerous position of being visible and invisible simultaneously. Far from being encouraged to embrace the visible aspects of our status as black people, we are

expected not to discuss it at all, even in the situations where it has become an external focal point for others. (p. 105)

Obasi (2013) conducted interviews with 12 participants who identified as Black signed language interpreters in the United Kingdom. From this she found emerging themes of perceived negative racial stereotypes and assumptions made by consumers and colleagues. Assumptions were often made that because the interpreters were Black, they were less qualified or the junior interpreter on the team, and they should not be taking assignments in 'high-profile' venues (e.g., conference/platform interpreting, theatre, etc.). West Oyedele (2015) also found that a "White team member may doubt the abilities of their African American/Black counterpart to interpret from ASL to English. They may make the assumption that the voicing of the African American/Black interpreter will sound 'too' black" (p. 15). This lack of trust may lead the White interpreter to feed, or offer corrections and suggestions during the course of the work, to a greater degree and to be more vigilant in their work causing more disruptions and undermining the credibility of their team (West Oyedele, 2015).

Another frustration that is also shared by these interpreters is they are judged by being Black first. As one of Obasi's (2013) participants stated, "so I think there is no real separation between your skill and the fact that you are a black person because they don't know what skill you have when they see you coming, they just see a black person" (p. 108). Obasi also found that in America, because the Deaf community is seen as White, so is the interpreting community; this in turn means that minorities are "not only measured using white norms, they are also invisibilised in and outside of the curriculum" (p. 109).

As the interviews continued, Obasi (2013) found that even for high-profile work where a Black interpreter would be a more appropriate fit, they were often overlooked in these situations as well. While many of them were used as resources to discuss cultural aspects of a culturally Black play, none of their White colleagues suggested that they (the Black interpreters) replace them or take the assignment. "Some of the participants in the study spoke of the extra dimensions they brought in such situations including cultural, linguistic, issues of representation with they saw as an 'added qualification' which was often overlooked by the mainstream" (Obasi, 2013, p. 111). West Oyedele's (2015) research participants also expressed a similar idea: "I'm not saying the Black interpreter will always be better, I'm saying most likely they are better prepared for that situation because of their experience and knowing how to navigate within that environment…typically" (p. 38).

This is not to say that a racial match is a perfect match for any interpreting situation; however, it is important to understand the "*thought worlds* at play in order to be able to know which tools are required to help provide the appropriately constructed [semantic] bridge" (Obasi, 2013, p. 111). This sentiment was also shared in West Oyedele's (2015) statement: "of course, interpreters—regardless of their racial background—can be a match for consumers who are African American/Black" (p. 37). Both Obasi's (2013) and West Oyedele's (2015) research contain parallel experiences even though they took place on different continents.

The identity and experiences of Asian and AAPI interpreters are influenced by a variety of factors; this includes generation status, personal history, their own cultural upbringing, and family influence (Alvarez & Helms, 2001; Dhingra, 2007; Iwamoto, &

Liu, 2010; Koh, Shao, & Wang, 2009; Okazaki & Saw 2011; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Yeh, Carter, & Pieterse, 2004; Yeh, & Huang, 1996). Due to the amount of literature that focuses culture, identity, race, education, interpreting, and the everyday experiences of microaggressions to those who are of Asian heritage, this research may provide guidance on how to reduce negative experiences of working Asian and AAPI interpreters and encourage growth, awareness, and education to those who interact with them.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will focus on data collection, interview, and data analysis. It will cover the targeted population, design of the study, how the data was collected, the interview selection, and the coding process.

Population

The goal of this study was to gather information pertaining to the experiences of the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreting community and to identify themes or patterns within this subset of the field. The targeted population was ASL/English interpreters of Asian or Pacific Islander heritage, over the age of 18, who reside in the United States. Participants did not have to culturally identify as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander (i.e., a person of Asian or Pacific Islander heritage who grew up in the United States could state their cultural identity as American. This was not a factor for exclusion from the survey or interview process).

Design

For the first phase of my research, an online survey was created based on West Oyedele's (2015) research and questionnaire. Modifications to the original survey, which focused on Black/African American ASL/English interpreters, were made to fit the demographics specific to my research (See Appendix B). The questions took note of generation status, ethnicity, and cultural identity to gain a greater understanding of the underpinnings of the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) interpreting community.

The second phase of this process collected the personal stories of working interpreters and their experiences in interpreter education programs (if attended) and those working in the field through one-on-one interviews. The information gathered was used to supplement and expand upon the information gathered during the first phase of this research. Looking deeper at the ASL/English interpreters here in the United States, and focusing on the subculture of the AAPI community, it was important, not only to gather demographic information, but also to include the perspectives and stories of the members.

Phase I: Survey and Data Collection

Survey development and distribution. As stated, the online survey developed for this research was based upon the work of West Oyedele (2015). Once the survey questions were modified to better fit the demographics of the Asian and AAPI communities, classmates and specific members of the target group were asked to pilot it. The initial participants were asked for feedback of their overall experience. Changes were then made to ensure questions were easily understood and would not exclude any potential participants of the Asian and AAPI community.

The online survey was then emailed to my personal contacts, via blind-carbon-copy. Utilizing the snowball method, interpreters who received the survey were also asked to forward it to other American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters who satisfied the participation requirements in their local network and regions. Different forms of social media were also utilized. A link was posted online through various Facebook interest groups such as Interpreters and Transliterators of Color (IToC), Asian Language Trilingual Interpreters, as well as on all five of the Registry of Interpreters for

the Deaf (RID) Regional Facebook pages; also, different Listservs and interest groups were contacted via email. The survey was accessible from August 3, 2015 through September 30, 2015.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections: Demographic Information, Interpreter Education Experience, and Field Experience. At the end of the Interpreter Education Experience and Field Experience sections, interpreters were given an opportunity to share any additional information that the survey questions may not have covered.

After the survey closed, there were a total of 64 respondents, out of which four responses were eliminated. Two were deleted because they did not reside in the United States, one did not identify as Asian or AAPI, and one was a duplicate submission. This left a total of 60 responses to code and analyze.

The survey was kept anonymous until the final two questions, which asked if participants would like to be contacted for a follow-up interview. If participants responded "yes," they were asked to leave their contact information. However, if participants responded "no," they would remain anonymous.

Willing interview participants were sent consent forms via email. If they neglected to provide an email address, the person was contacted by text or phone, requesting their email address. The consent forms and interview questions were then emailed to and signed by the participant before moving forward with the interview process. As soon as participants were emailed, their contact information was then erased, disaffiliating their information from the online survey.

Phase II: Personal Interviews

  Design. The interview questions, much like the survey, were based on West

Oyedele's (2015) work. Again, the questions were modified to fit the characteristics of

the Asian/AAPI community, with additional questions focusing on race, ethnicity, and

generation status.

  While the survey was still open, participants willing to be interviewed were

contacted from August 4, 2015 to September 14, 2015. After receiving their email

address (if one was not provided on the online survey) participants were emailed the

appropriate forms necessary to satisfy the interview requirements. This included an

explanation of the participant's rights, the goal of the interview, consent form, and list of

interview questions (see Appendices C and D). After receiving the email, participants had

the right to not respond, decline, or accept the interview. Once the participant accepted,

an interview date and time were established and a copy of the signed consent form was

scanned and email or faxed to me prior to the scheduled appointment. Interviews began

August 31, 2015 and concluded October 1, 2015.

  In total, there were 46 participants who agreed to a follow-up interview. All 46

were contacted via text or email and asked to make an appointment for an interview no

later than October 2, 2015. Seventeen participants responded and completed the

interview process by October 2, 2015.

  The online interviews were recorded via Fuze, a video conferencing platform with

recording capabilities. A secondary medium, a digital voice recorder, was used along

with Fuze as a back-up source in case the video failed to record. Interviews conducted in

person used the digital voice recorder only. The recorded interviews were then transcribed.

   Coding. After the interviews were transcribed, there was an initial reading of all the interviews; they were then re-read and went through a round of open coding (Creswell, 2007). Data within the transcripts were hand coded into 17 separate categories, grouped and then consolidated into five overarching themes of: Racism, Dichotomous Relationships, Stigma, Mitigating Language, and Improvements to the Field (See Table 1).

   After the initial open coding of the interviews was completed, the same codes were then used for the two open-ended questions from the initial survey in Phase I. These findings were kept separate and used for comparative analysis between the interviews and the results of the questionnaire. Next, themes from the interviews were analyzed. Codes grouped under each theme were then manually counted by re-reading the interviews. I then continued to explore related literature, allowing for in-depth research on the most frequently occurring codes and their relationship to the overarching theme. The process of coding, researching, and analysis allowed for broader understanding of these categories, which led to a more well-rounded research base.

   During the analysis portion of this research, due to time constraints, I could not analyze and represent all the themes and subcategories accurately. Therefore, I chose to focus on three of the five overarching themes to review in this study. In the following chapter, I will focus on Racism, Mitigating Language, and Improvements to the Field. The theme of Racism contained seven subcategories of: Microaggressions, Racism towards their Black Colleagues/Consumers, Lack of Awareness, Overt Racism,

Appropriateness for the Setting, Reaction to Asian/AAPI Interpreter, and Tokenism. The theme Mitigating Language had two subcategories of: Denial and Hesitation. Improvements to the Field had two subcategories of: Improvements and Diversity.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

During the course of this research, I collected demographic information and the experiences of Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) community members, over the age of 18, who are currently working as American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters in the United States or are now retired from the field.

Demographic Information

Online survey. The group of participants for this study were American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters (currently working or retired from the field), of Asian heritage, 18 years of age or older, and residing in the United States. There were a total of 60 responses which satisfied the criteria where 50 (83%) of the participants identified as female and 10 (17%) identified as male. A majority of the participants identified as 2nd generation Asian American/Pacific Islander as shown in Figure 1.

Generation Status of Survey Participants

- Native Hawaiian 2%
- 1st generation 10%
- 1.5 generation 13%
- 2nd generation 41%
- 3rd generation 14%
- 4th generation 8%
- 5th generation 2%
- Adopted 3%
- N/A 7%
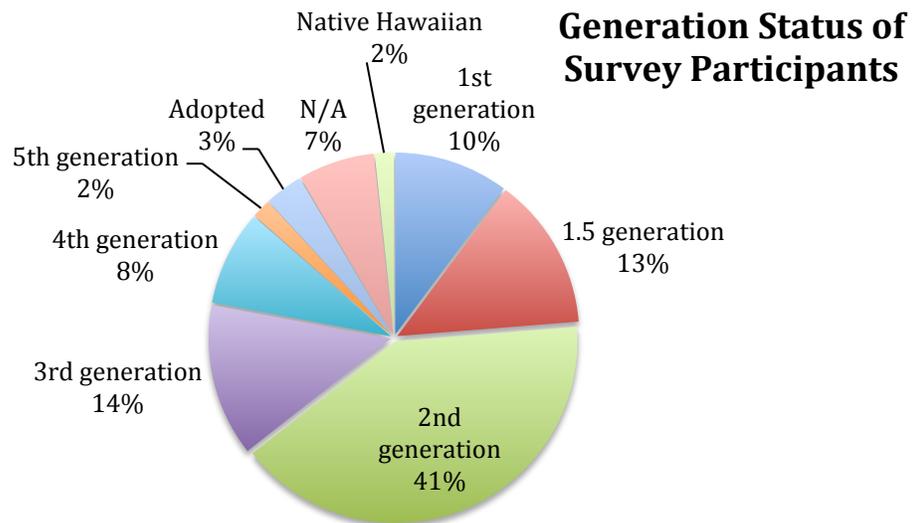
Figure 1. Generation status of participants

A large number of respondents (48%) were between the ages of 30-39 as shown in Figure 2 and no participants were 70 years of age or older.

Age of Survey Participants
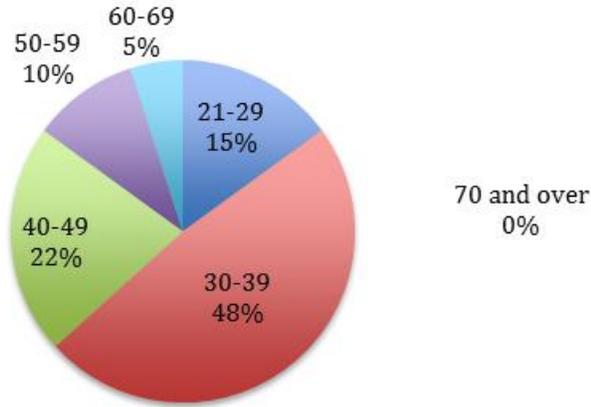
Figure 2. Age range of participants

The majority of the participants (55%) resided in the Pacific region of the United States as indicated in Figure 3, whereas Puerto Rico and the West-North Central region of the United States had no responses.

Regional Representation
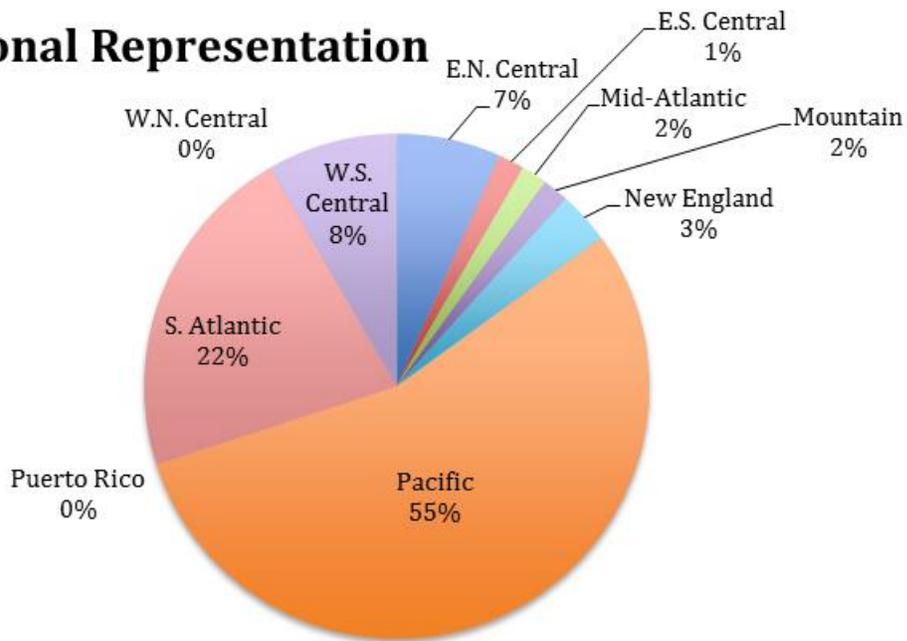
Figure 3. Regional Representation of Participants

The states included in each region can be found in the online survey (see Appendix B).

The following figure (Figure 4) shows the cultural identity of all 60 participants, as self-reported.
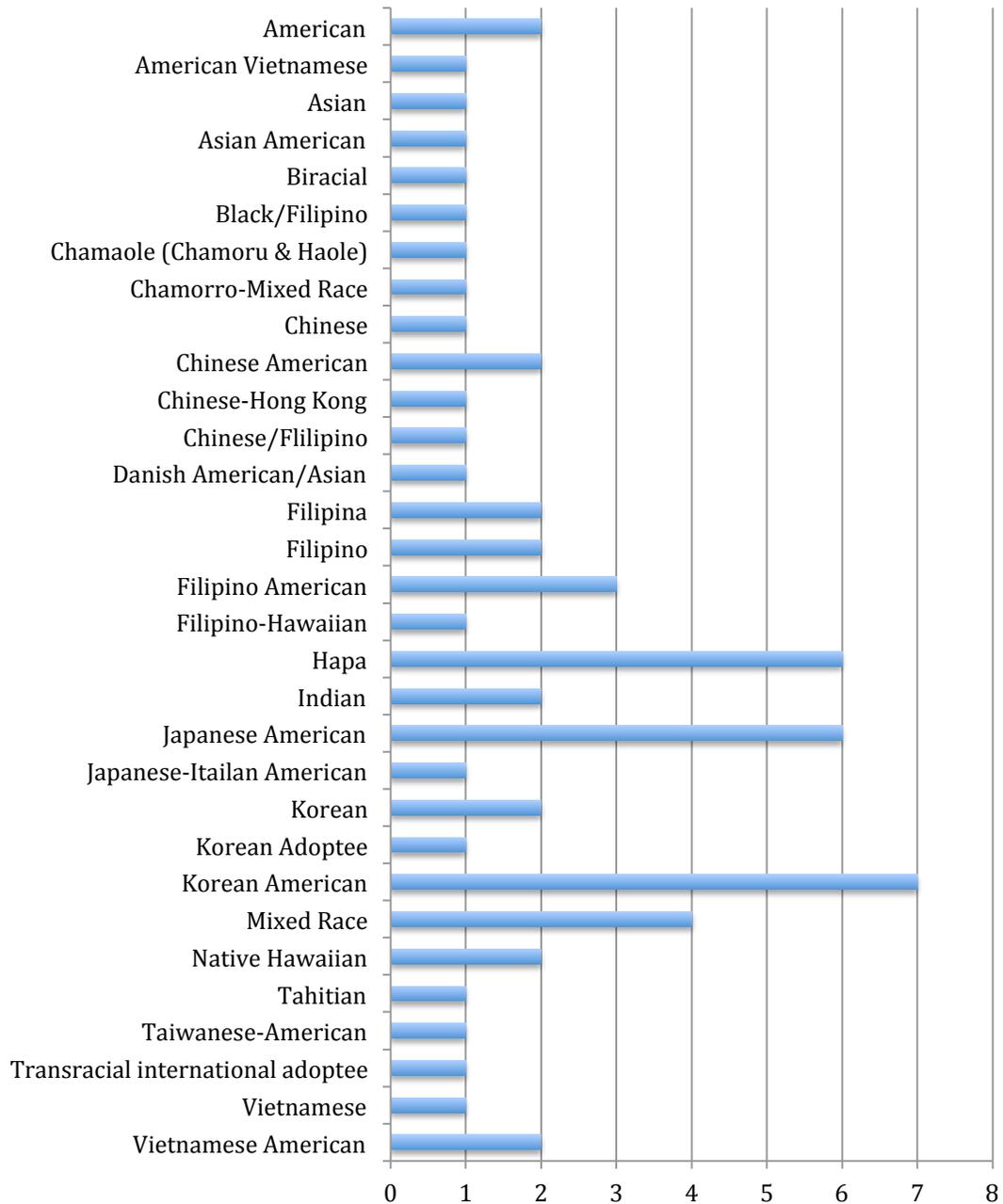
Figure 4. Cultural Identity of Participants

Out of the 60 survey respondents, a total of 42 participants had attended an interpreter education program (IEP). Forty of the participants have attained either a Certificate of Completion or a degree in interpreting (Figure 5).
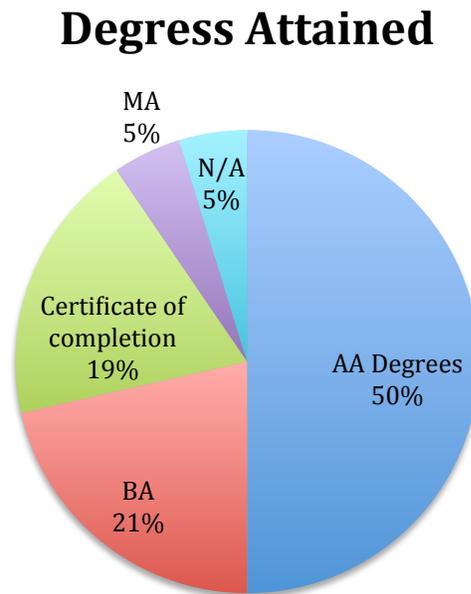
Degress Attained

Figure 5. Degrees Attained by those who attended an interpreter education program

Interviews. As in the survey portion of this study, the interview participants had to be American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters (currently working or retired from the field), of Asian heritage, 18 years of age or older, and residing in the United States. There were 17 participants; 3 identified as male and 14 identified as female. From these 17 participants, there were a total of 11 different cultural identities represented, as shown in Figure 6. The generational identities were as represented in Figure 7:

Cultural Identity of Interview Participants
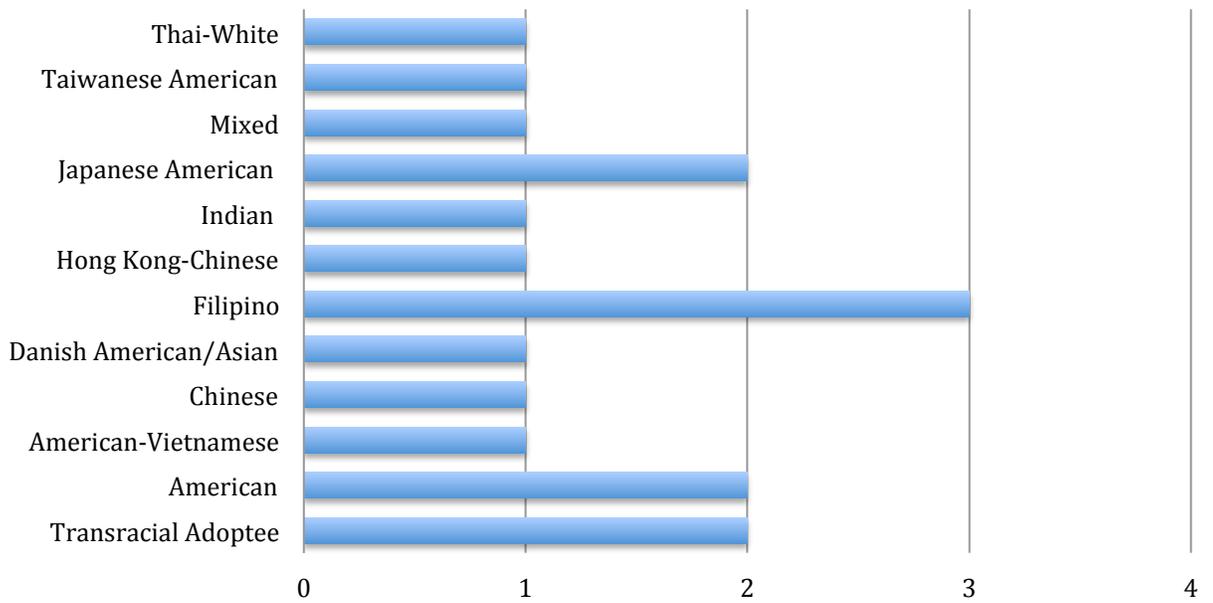
Figure 6. Cultural Identities of Interview Participants

Generation Status of Interview Participants
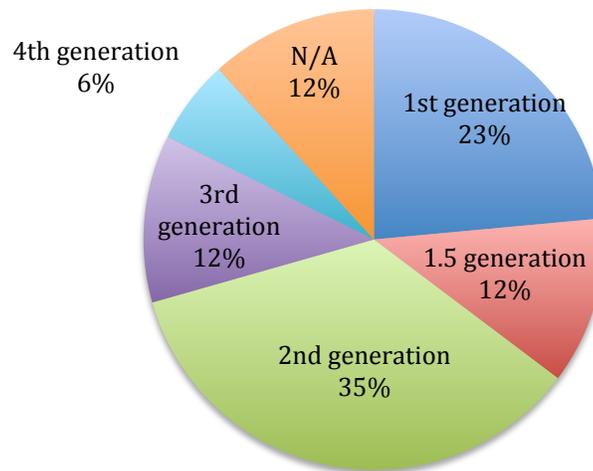
Figure 7. Generation Status of Interview Participants

Overarching Themes

As stated in Chapter 3, the interviews were recorded through Fuze, transcribed, and then coded to look for emerging themes throughout all the interviews. As shown in Table 1, there were originally 14 different codes, which were then consolidated into five overarching themes of Racism, Dichotomous Relationships, Stigma, Mitigating Language, and Improvements to the Field.

Table 1

Asian and Asian American Sign Language/English Interpreter Interviews: Themes and Codes

Theme	Racism	Dichotomous Relationships	Stigmas	Mitigating Language	Improvements to the Field
Codes	Microaggression	Deaf/Hearing	Negative perception of Deafness	Denial	Diversity
	Against Black/African American Colleagues	Black/White	Stigma	Hesitation	Self - Awareness
	Lack of Awareness	Male/Female			
	Overt Racism	American Culture/non-American			
	Appropriateness for Setting				
	Reaction to Asian and AAPI				
	Tokenism				

Theme: Racism

The theme of Racism incorporates several codes within the interviews. Subcodes for this category include: Microaggressions, Racism towards their Black Colleagues/Consumers, Lack of Awareness, Overt Racism, Appropriateness for the Setting, Reaction to Asian/AAPI Interpreter, and Tokenism.

Throughout the 17 interviews, there were 79 references to microaggressions; 25 references to racist actions or comments against Blacks/African Americans; 25 references to incidents where a lack of awareness was exhibited by another; 22 references to overt racism (comments or actions); 19 references to appropriateness for setting (i.e., a cultural or ethnic match to the setting); seven references to the reaction from others; and three references to tokenism.

Microaggressions. Based on the literature review, I was not surprised by the number of references to microaggressions or that it was the highest number coded; this was supported by the research in the literature review. Throughout the interviews, interviewees provided examples of being questioned by the consumer(s) about where they were "really from" or asking if they (the interpreter) had an accent. Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) often experience this form of racism, in and out of the work environment. Another had been asked if they were a citizen, while others had been asked how long they had resided in the United States. Being perceived as a *perpetual foreigner* may "manifest itself in subtle, covert marginalizing incidents, such as questioning an individual's home-town, complimenting his/her command of the English language, or misstating him/her as a foreigner (Liang et al., 2004)" (Huynh et al., 2011, p. 2).

There were other incidents that highlighted these microaggressions, oftentimes overlapping with a lack of awareness. One specific incident, which appeared in three separate interviews, was that of non-manual markers (NMMs). Research on NMMs has been done for several decades (e.g., Baker & Padden, 1978; Baker-Shenk, 1985; Baker-Shenk & Cokely, 1991; Liddell, 1978; Reilly, McIntire, & Bellugi, 1990; Wilbur, 2009; Wilbur and Patschke, 1999). Wilbur (2009) explained that "nonmanuals may provide lexical or morphemic information on lexical items, or indicate the ends of phrases or phrasal extent" (p. 247). In other words, NMMs provide important information such as "lexical identification (telling one sign from another), adding adverbial information, showing syntactic domain, marking informational focus, among others" (Wilbur & Patschke, 1999, p. 3).

This was categorized under Microaggressions and Lack of Awareness. The three interviewees were each told by their White instructors that their NMM were not expressive enough. One AAPI said, "A lot of Asian interpreters are criticized because they didn't have enough facial expression, but that is because of the way we grew up, we were always told, we were never encouraged to be very animated." Another interviewee echoed this same sentiment by saying:

> As an Asian American, we tend to be less expressive within our face, with our facial expressions, so I think that there was a lot of – so I mean we were definitely encouraged to up our facial expression because of that…teachers being like, 'raise your eyebrows up'. And you're like, 'but my eyebrows *are* up'. And then they are like, 'higher', but my face literally doesn't move any higher.

This is not to say that exceptions need to be made for all Asian and AAPI students. Nor does this pertain to all Asian or AAPI cultures. However, being aware of the cultural nuances of a student's background can encourage an exchange of understanding rather than placing a mainstream cultural standard upon their education.

A few interviewees shared their experience within their IEP and commented how being a person of color led them to feel dismissed by the instructors. A participant described the experience as:

> Being shut down by classmates and professors even like if you tried to bring up like a cultural point or you disagree with somebody just because of their perspective as a Caucasian or like a majority the person representing the majority. Usually they would just kind of be like, "oh that's a good point," and then just keep it moving or just kind of ignore you.

When asked if this was an isolated event, the respondent said it was shared experience not only among her classmates of color, but also from students of color who had already gone through the same program. If their opinion differed from that of their instructor, if they wanted to provide additional insight or they had questions about an ethical situation had come up, they were often left unaddressed. Sometimes it appeared cultural competence was lacking. For example, another interviewee commented that:

> I, like, tried to bring it up in discussion once about well, "what if they [the consumer] start using the word oriental and that's not really a politically correct word. How do I address that?" I remember asking that, but the teachers and the mentors that I was asking that to, had no concept of that of, oh, *'oriental'* is a bad thing?

40

Some other slights of racism have come through while working with another interpreter (not a person of color) in a teaming situation. An interviewee commented about a team making a negative facial expression or comment about interpreting for speakers with Asian accents. One shared an experience where her team made an assumption that the speaker was Filipino, but was actually Cambodian. As the Pew Research Center suggests, one Asian or AAPI person is not interchangeable for another Asian or AAPI person, since there are dozens of communities that can trace their roots back to Asia (Taylor & Cohn, 2013).

Similar to the study conducted in the United Kingdom by Obasi (2013), interviewees also reported (about the perception of their teams as well as consumers) often being mistaken for students or the junior interpreter even when they were the lead or more experienced interpreter. One Asian American interpreter reported:

More often teachers will address the other team if the other team is not of color…they often won't address me even if I'm there alone. They will wait until my team who is not a person of color comes. I don't know if they are just more comfortable or if – sometimes people think that I am a student and I feel like they don't take me as serious. I feel like I have to be more, dress more professionally, or they just don't assume that I am there equally, that maybe I am a student teacher.

Some blatant forms of racism have occurred while on assignment. Several interviewees commented about having to prove to Deaf consumers that they are qualified as an interpreter and are capable of the task at hand. Working in video relay services (VRS), some have been asked to transfer to a White interpreter; others have had

consumers hang up on them, while others have been told that White interpreters are superior to Asian interpreters, which parallels the attitudes found in Obasi's (2013) study.

The effects of microaggressions on Asian and AAPI interpreters have yet to be studied. However, research conducted by Ong, Burrow, Fuller-Rowell, Ja, and Sue (2013) of the Asian American population suggests, "78% of participants in the total sample report[ed] some form of racial microaggression within a 2-week time frame" (p. 195). According to the study, it is important to recognize that "microaggressions are a lifelong reality in the lives of Asian Americans" (p. 197) and will likely have "a cumulative, inimical effect on health and well-being" (p. 197). Moreover, because of "their hidden nature [microaggressions are] often invisible to perpetrators, and this is compounded by public beliefs that Asian Americans represent a model minority who are not exposed to or are somehow immune to the effects of racism or discrimination" (p. 197).

Racism against Black/African American colleagues and students and overt racism. One of the findings I was not expecting was the number of times overt racism was recognized by the Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) interpreter against Black/African American interpreters. Through the literature review, I understood that the racist experiences were recognized by American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreters who identified as Black or African American, whether in the United Kingdom or in the United States (Obasi, 2013; West Oyedele, 2015). However, what I was expecting to see was aversive actions or comments of racism towards other interpreters of color being recognized by Asian or AAPI interpreters because of the change in societal norms having "evolved from the 'old fashioned' form, in which overt

racial hatred and bigotry is consciously and publically displayed to a more ambiguous and nebulous from that is more difficult to identify and acknowledge" (Derald et al., 2007, p. 272). Also, from Van Dijk's (1992) research, I was expecting to find more instances of denial and disclaimers (pp. 90-92). Surprisingly, 10 out of the 17 interviewees had references to racism, typically overt comments, against their Black/African American colleagues or classmates.

One participant had shared, while working in medical setting, a White, Deaf consumer called an orderly the n-word. Another interviewee remembered having a discussion with her Black colleague who stated,

> [he] was told by [his] supervisor to make sure he didn't sign Black. But all of his teachers at the two-year school he went to were all White. So he was like, "how would I sign Black? I wouldn't even know what that looks like.

Other interview participants stated that the racism they experienced was "not like what the African American/Black interpreters experience" or "I think the Black/African American interpreters get it much worse than we [Asian and AAPI interpreters] do."

Of the seven participants who did not reference acts or comments of Racism Against their Black/African American Colleagues, three did reference the Black community, but had a neutral or positive association. In overall coding, the Black/African American community was referenced in a neutral or positive way a total of 47 times in 13 of the 17 interviews. This seems to speak to the fact that because the African American/Black community is the largest community of color (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., 2014), they could be seen as allies or role models for the Asian/AAPI community, which is continually growing

Appropriateness for setting, lack of awareness, reactions to being Asian, and tokenism. As stated above, there were 19 references to Appropriateness for Setting, 25 references to Lack of Awareness, and three to Tokenism. The idea of Appropriateness for Setting was not just in terms of skill level or certification, but also taking into account the entirety of the situation. For example, it was used when culture, race, gender, age, event topic, and so on were mentioned in terms of varying assignments. The category for Lack of Awareness looks at comments made due to ignorance or lack of exposure. Tokenism follows "the practice of doing something (such as hiring a person who belongs to a minority group) only to prevent criticism and give the appearance that people are being treated fairly" (Tokenism, 2006).

Starting with Appropriateness for Setting, an interesting finding was comments that several participants made in regard to being a cultural fit for an assignment. Obasi's (2013) article relayed an incident where a White interpreter had taken an assignment to interpret a Black play. Other similar examples were given in which plays using Patois or Creole were interpreted by White interpreters in such a way that showed their lack of understanding and, in one case, insensitivity of the issues or the passion with which they were delivered. Some of the participants in the study spoke of the extra dimensions they brought in such situations including cultural, linguistic, issues of representation, which they saw as an "added qualification" which was often overlooked by the mainstream (Obasi, 2013, pp. 110- 111).

Several participants made comments about how Asian and AAPI Deaf consumers are excited to work with an Asian or AAPI interpreter. Others had made comments about how this brings in a level of comfort for their consumers. As one interpreter stated,

In terms of accepting jobs, just because you're certified or you're a good

interpreter, it does not mean you are appropriate for a job. And consider—and I

think it's really important for the interpreter not just to consider the environment.

For example, if it's an Asian American women environment—like space, not only

checking because maybe the people who are hiring the interpreter, the hearing

counterparts are, "oh, it's fine, you understand the culture, you're a certified

interpreter, you're definitely welcome." But also actually considering the Deaf

person's perspective on that, the Deaf Asian woman's perspective and their

comfort level with having a White interpreter voice for them and kind of be

aligned with them during an event. I think that's really important to consider and

also to remember that especially interpreting events that are not of their [the

interpreter's] own culture. That what they're [the interpreter] picking up, as

salient points may not be the salient points that everybody else in the room is

picking up on.

Much like Obasi's (2013) study when a White interpreter sought out assistance

from a culturally competent Black colleague, there was no thought past asking them for

assistance. Often the White interpreters would seek assistance in familiarizing themselves

with the culture and the linguistic nuances, but it rarely occurred to them to recommend

their Black colleague to team or replace them for the assignment. Another interpreter

commented about working with different coordinators and shared her thoughts:

[Coordinators have said] "I don't think it's right for people to be able to, you

know, request someone based on race, or gender for that matter." Which sort of

surprised me because I think well, yeah, I mean this person is sort of representing

you in a way if they are going to interpret for you, you can choose who you want

to have represent you however you want…I feel like people are more

understanding if it's like "oh it's a therapy session where you want to talk about

your Asian heritage and I was an Asian American interpreter," then they'll be

like, "oh, okay, I understand," but if you just want it for something else like a job

interview or, I don't know, whatever else it is that doesn't seem to have any

relationship to race, then people don't understand.

Echoing the above comments, another interpreter had emphasized that it is not

just about matching the consumer's preference, but being aware of the situation that

interpreters are entering and the space they are occupying in a given setting. This

interviewee stated:

A situation where you want to have an appropriate person that might be

discussing, like talking about White privilege or something like that. And if, let's

say, it happens to be a group of people of that same ethnicity in that group

discussing white privilege, I mean, you don't want someone to be standing out

and taking away from the actual message being discussed. And [you would want]

someone who probably understand the nuances of the culture. I wish people were

more mindful of that.

This is a reflection of the concerns of at least half of the participants in these

interviews. Salient information, cultural nuances, creating a connection, and access to the

information, is part of the responsibility of the interpreter (Lawrence; 1998; Obasi, 2013;

Ra & Napier, 2013; Temple, 2002; Temple & Edwards, 2002; West Oyedele, 2015). As

one participant put it,

We're there to provide accessibility and if the Deaf person isn't feeling

comfortable because you're not matching the situation ethnically, culturally, or

racially, they're not getting access because there's going to be a mental barrier for

them trying to take in information from you [the interpreter] who is not like

them…so I think having an interpreter there actually could be doing more harm

than good. I just want to emphasize that recognizing our own, who we are, and

our identities and what we carry when we walk into a situation and how that

really, really, really affects the situation more than we think, especially when we,

already as a hearing person, come in with so much privilege.

Coming into any situation, interpreters are there for communication access, but

they must also navigate the factors that can influence the message and the meanings

behind each exchange. Another interpreter explained that as a student he learned, "what

one person says and what their cultural background is, a [word or phrase] actually might

mean something different than what you grew up with in America...we make take it as

anxiety or depression and it doesn't mean anything like that." As Lawrence (1998) stated

in her discussion,

Lustig and Koester (1996) share several definitions of culture that view it as

learned and passed down through generations, including the knowledge, attitudes,

beliefs, values and norms that exist to guide peoples behaviors (p. 33). That

means culture determines and frames our perceptions of experiences in the world

including perceptions of credibility. (p. 153)

As we look at what helps to create relationships in this field, we must take into

account not only Deaf and hearing cultures, but the possible heritage and cultural

identities of our consumers. West Oyedele (2015), through her focus group, found "when consumers had access to an interpreter who shared their same racial background, they frequently reported feeling as though the interpreter was culturally competent and linguistically competent" (p. 37). However, both Obasi (2013) and West Oyedele (2015) showed that there was a lack of matching the consumer's needs when the interpreters were not of the same culture. West Oyedele's (2015) study showed "when the consumer and interpreter did not share the same racial identity, the consumer perceived the interpreter to be lacking in cultural competence" (p. 37). Although this study does not go into the needs of the consumers, several interpreters reported having positive reactions from Asian consumers.

This is not to say that "only black interpreters should interpret for black deaf people or that all black interpreters can interpret well in all such situations, that would be neither realistic nor accurate" (Obasi, 2013, p. 111); the same idea holds true for Asian and AAPI interpreters. For one participant, "it has felt more like 'it's only because you're a woman of color that we want you to be a part of this.' And so it sort of feels a little awkward to me with them." The feeling of tokenism and being a racial match should not be the only factors when considering an assignment and placement with the interpreter. Though they are important factors, they are not the only markers of a qualified interpreter.

Theme: Mitigating Language

As stated in the previous chapter's findings, Mitigating Language was another prevalent theme throughout the interviews. This code looked at the language choice of each interviewee when discussing racism that was seen or observed when directed at

themselves or their Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) colleagues or clients. Overall, there were 23 references, two of which were negations and were associated with discussions with teams, while the other 21 references were linked to the interviewees and their responses to their own perceptions of racism, racial comments, and racist actions.

The two negations used by the interview participants when asked about their experiences of racism with their colleagues or consumers were the comments, "yeah, but…," a disclaimer (Van Dijk, 1992), and "I have friends who are Black," an example of a denial of possible racism. Van Dijk goes on to explain that the use of a disclaimer is used to help save face, agreeing with the interpreter, while at the same time, asserting their point and limiting the acceptance of the person's idea. The second reference, a denial of racism, does just that. The statement reinforces the idea that a person cannot be racist towards Blacks because they have friendships with people in the Black community. This also is a strategy for saving face or keeping a "positive self-presentation" (p. 89) because they are "looking to avoid a negative impression in any situation, they are probably more anxious to avoid a general negative evaluation about their personality, than to avoid a negative judgment about one particular action in one specific situation" (p. 90).

When asked about personal experiences of racism in the field or while in their interpreter education programs, many of the participants used phrases such as, "she didn't mean for it to be [racist]," "she meant it as a joke," "that's innocent, I guess," and "I don't think it was intentional." How racism is discussed, not just with the majority, but also within the Asian American/Pacific Islander community is important to acknowledge

and analyze. Other comments included, "I think racism is defined by the person experiencing it," "I don't know if you would call that racism," "I wouldn't call it a racist experience," and "I don't think it was intentional." The comments above, and the remainder of the interviewees' remarks, are a reflection of the four types of denial discussed in Van Dijk's article.

Why these references are present is not yet clear. Although research has been conducted on racism discourse, there are many avenues left for research focusing on how we discuss racism in the field of signed language interpreter and the discourse used in intraracial group settings or dynamics. One possibility could be that minority groups, such as the Asian and AAPI community, are experiencing microaggressions, such as microinsults and micro invalidations rather than blatant forms of racism, like racial slurs (Derald et al., 2007). According to Derald et al. (2007) a microinsult "is characterized by communications that convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity. Microinsults represent subtle snubs, frequently unknown to the perpetrator, but clearly convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient of color" (p. 274). Microinvalidation is "characterized by communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color" (p. 274). These microaggressive acts are powerful because the doubt and responsibility to recognize the occurrence lies with the recipient.

One underlying reason for the use of negation by some of the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) interpreters' in their responses is that, as Derald et al. (2007) explained,

Microaggressive acts can usually be explained away by seemingly nonbiased and

valid reasons. For the recipient of the microaggression, however, there is always

the nagging question of whether it really happened (Crocker & Major, 1989). It is

difficult to identify a microaggression, especially when other explanations seem

plausible. (p. 275)

Van Dijk (1992) referred to this as justification. In daily interactions, "people may justify

a negative act or discourse relative to a minority group member by justifying it as an act

of legitimate defense, or by detailing that the other person was indeed guilty and,

therefore, deserved a negative reaction" (p. 93). If actions are justifiable, then there is no

possibility of offense and the person of color is left feeling like they have no cause for

recourse.

With the reaction of justification, Asian and AAPI interpreters, as well as other

interpreters of color, are often left to wonder if a microaggression was intentional or if

they were reading too much into the incident. One of the major dilemmas of a

microaggression is proving that it took place. Questions like: Did that really happen? Was

that deliberate? Do I respond? How do I respond? Is it worth my time and energy? go

through one's mind and must be answered before taking action.

If one does choose to confront the perpetrator, more often than not, the victim is

blamed for overreacting or being overly sensitive to the comment (Derald et al., 2007).

As persons of color, we are told to "not to overreact and to simply 'let it go.' Usually,

Whites consider microaggressive incidents to be minor and people of color are

encouraged (oftentimes by people of color as well) to not waste time or effort on them"

(Derald et al., 2007, p. 279).

As mentioned in the previous section, Asian and AAPI interpreters are able to recognize overt comments of racism towards the colleagues, and more specifically, those who are of the African American/Black community. However, if microaggressions are commonly a common narrative heard in and out of the workplace, Asian and AAPI interpreters are no different in their conditioning of not being able to recognize microaggressions. This could be part of the reason for their language choice in dismissing the actions and comments of their teams and colleagues. This could also discourage discussions about race and racism within the Asian and AAPI community. Being unable to recognize microaggressions, slights by a perpetrator, or excusing the actions or words of a colleague or consumer may be a reason for tolerance and less discussion about racially charged experiences.

Theme: Improvements to the Field

During the interviews, participants were asked what they felt was missing from their interpreter education programs (IEP) and in the field in terms of cultural competency. A total of 56 references were coded, 14 for IEPs and 42 for needs in the field.

Interpreter Education Programs. Starting with IEPs, responses were from 14 of the 17 interviewees who attended an IEP. Their responses were coded and then analyzed further into three categories of: Diversity Training, with eight references; Exposure to Organizations, with two references; and Instruction, with four references. Participants felt one of the greatest needs in their program was diversity training, focusing on things like multiculturalism, sensitivity, and cultural values. One participant said,

I would have wanted something more, that's for sure. If there was at least, maybe

a class on [cultural competency] that would be good to include. To have more

diversity…I work in VRS a lot and so I get people from The South, and then I get

to hear that and then – what they say and it can easily be different than from up

here (the West Coast).

Regionally, there are different cultural norms and assumptions that may not necessarily

be discussed in the classroom. Having access to different signing styles, customs, and

vocabulary in English and American Sign Language will allow us to work with a wider

spectrum of both Deaf and hearing consumers.

Another interviewee echoed this comment, wanting to have learned about

"working with communities from different backgrounds and addressing the struggles that

we have experienced as interpreters because of our cultural backgrounds." Many of the

participants shared the same sentiment, wanting courses focusing on diversity that

spanned beyond Deaf and Hearing cultures and bridging the language gap of

communication. A survey participant commented:

My ITP only thought of multiculturalism as being a CODA, deaf or hard of

hearing or Jewish. There are barely any other minorities such as black people,

maybe one minority for each cohort. It would be great to have a national Asian

interpreter organization akin to NAOBI (National Alliance of Black Interpreters).

This notion, that the only diversity discussion and lessons surrounding cultural

negotiations were about the Deaf and hearing dichotomy, was repeated throughout

several interviews. Having to learn about the cultural divide between these two groups

was often the main focus in the classroom. Of the 46 survey participants who attended an

IEP, 23 said that there was little to no discussion of multiculturalism as it pertains to the work with consumers. This is a trend that seems to be changing since 19 of them did have a moderate amount to a lot of discussion on this topic; however, it is still important to encourage these discussions while in the classroom.

Another participant stated,

There was no real discussion about anyone else's culture and there were certain things that I learned as I was working and you know Latino people will respond this way or you know families—extremely—just different cultural values that don't exactly match American values and how you may need to approach something a little bit differently, that that, I didn't get in school that I can recall.

Another participant felt that sensitivity training was lacking in her program. She felt it was important to be:

Sensitive to people of diverse backgrounds, so for example, like eye contact, and a lot of Eastern Asian countries, is, you know, that's a really big thing for Japanese culture and Korean culture and those kinds of things were never really discussed or mentioned….I think it would have been helpful for people to maybe have discussion on what it's like to work with people from diverse backgrounds and then how to be respectful and maybe just be more open.

When discussions about race and multiculturalism do not happen in an IEP, the field becomes our classroom, and we have to find new instructors to help us navigate these topics and discussions, if we decide to have conversations at all.

The next category, Exposure to Organizations, was a comment made by two participants who felt it would have benefited their careers to learn about other

organizations like Mano a Mano (a Spanish/English/ASL interpreter organization) or the

National Alliance of Black Interpreters (NAOBI) or member sections of the Registry of

Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), while still in her IEP. She went on to say:

> I just learned there's a national Deaf People of Color conference happening and
> it's like, "that exists?" I had no idea. I just wish that we were aware of that and I
> feel that should be an equal part of our learning about the profession as everything
> else.

Another interpreter had a similar perspective, stating,

> NAD [the National Association of the Deaf] does not represent all Deaf people, so
> just out of curiosity, for the last month, I have been going around asking the deaf
> people I have been working with "are you a member of the NAD?" None of them
> are members of NAD and I find that telling because we are using NAD as our
> source of authority or our relationship with deaf people, then we're missing a
> whole lot. And there's no relationship with NBDA, with NADC, with the Latino
> Deaf and hard of hearing…I don't know if interpreter training programs know
> how to introduce concepts other than deaf and majority culture Deaf.

One participant stated that one of the most valuable resources she gained from a

program was the network and connection to alumni. However, when networks to

communities of color in ASL/English interpreter groups is lacking, how can we build

support for interpreters once they have graduated? West Oyedele's (2015) study

highlighted the importance of having a network in place. She found that "having access

to organization such as the National Black Deaf Advocated and the National Alliance of

Black Interpreters were mentioned as a way to connect and as a way to grow

professionally among peers" (p. 59). This supports the idea of having a network once one enters into the field, and it allows for growth, exchange of ideas, and resources that interpreters may need while working.

The final category is the need for Representation in the Classroom. One study looking at female role models says,

> The lack of female role models is cited by academics as contributing to women's propensity to resign (Rosin & Korabik, 1995). Women often leave to join other, more synergistic organizations, where they feel their leadership qualities will be recognised, or set up their own businesses. (Sealy & Singh, 2010, p. 4)

Egalite, Kisida, and Winters (2015), in their recent study analyzing the effects of having an instructor with the same racial background as the student, found,

> Overall, the results presented here indicate that assignment to an own-race/ethnicity teacher has positive and potentially policy relevant reading achievement impacts for black and white students, and significant math achievement impacts for black, white, and Asian/Pacific Island students. (p. 50)

Having instructors or mentors that students can connect to culturally is an important part of the learning process. This is not to say that students cannot learn from instructors of different ethnicities, nor is it to say that students without such instructors or mentors are more likely to fail in the field. However, if future interpreters are unable to find a mentor or instructor with whom they can find a connection, this may increase the chances of them not continuing on in their program or in the field of interpreting. As one interviewee expressed:

I would have liked to have had more mentors or teachers who are also interpreters

of color who can talk about their experiences. Because out in the field, you do

experience microaggressions from your colleagues, from other interpreters as well

as the hearing counterparts that you work with, that I work with anyways. Also,

learning how to deal with that and how do you work around that, and you can't

have those kinds of conversations when the interpreter you're talking to is your

white instructor.

The same desire was expressed by a participant who said, "Another thing I wish

we had was mentoring, working with mentors who are from the same cultural

background." One idea as to why the need is so great could be the possible approach. A

survey respondent said:

Even though my educators recognized that there is a demand for more Asian

interpreters to work in the field, Asian students were still being taught as if they

were white, regardless of their background and learning styles. I wish educators

would be more aware of learning styles and needs of Asian interpreting students

as we often have to figure out our culturally influenced challenges and conflicts

on our own or among other Asian interpreters.

Due to the lack of access to instructors and mentors of color, one interpreter

sought to fill this need for herself by reaching out to other Asian interpreters. She said, "I

sought her [a mentor of color] out – I sought out the certain – just certain opportunities to

get exposed and to be part of the conversation, but again, you know I wish it was a thing

that could have happened to my program." She went on to explain:

I needed to have the Asian perspective, the Asian American perspective, not just from other interpreters but folks too…I understand what it means to be a member of minoritized [*sic*] or marginalized part of the community and I know what it means to have to navigate a predominantly white, in terms of racial and physical, the dominance of white hearing culture in the interpreting field is something that I knew I had to figure out my own way to navigate…so I went looking for them you know. My Spanish is terrible, but I went to Mano a Mano conference just so I could be there for a day you know? It's just, I just had to be there. I had to nourish that part.

This need to find others, to connect with our own community, is important to the success of interpreters of color in the field. Seeking out mentors on our own may not be enough if we do not have the resources or the awareness of organizations as previously stated.

In the field. This section includes all 17 interviews and focused on Improvements to the Field. All the transcriptions were coded in the interviews and were placed into five separate categories of: Self-Awareness, with 17 references; Trainings, with 12 references; Diversity and Intersectionality, with nine references; and Support with four references.

Starting with Self-Awareness, many of the interviewees mentioned this point in one form or another, recognizing most interpreters "don't know their own identities. They don't know where they fit in, they don't, you know, and that's because they're mainstream." For interpreters to really understand another community, they need to have a better understanding of who they are and how they fit into this field. ASL/English interpreters work between languages on a daily basis. It is work that requires constant

negotiation, communication, and the making of cultural decisions that cannot be done effectively without a thorough understanding of one's epistemic position. As one interpreter stated, "I think interpreters need to learn how to work better with our colleagues and recognize that they themselves, have their own biases. Like how they play out, in terms of how they interact with their colleagues." In other words, interpreters need to look closely at themselves and the motivations for their actions and decisions. Knowing how greatly our decisions are influenced by our biases and personal experience can help us improve not only our decision-making skills, but also our ASL/English interpretations.

When asked about changes that interpreters wanted to see in the field, in terms of what was lacking, many mentioned the inadequacy of training and understanding of cultural diversity. As a practice profession, we are constantly taking workshops, educational courses, and attending conferences for the opportunity to improve our work. One person wanted to see more education that focused on Anna Mindess's (1999) book, *Reading Between the Signs*, and more multicultural awareness. This participant continued to explain that this kind of education is not limited to the majority population, but should be "on the part of our colleagues and our consumers, too, because you know, just because you see an Asian person doesn't mean you go and say some you know, comments, or derogatory remarks or gestures." Suffice it to say that inappropriate remarks are not limited to those outside of the Asian and AAPI community, but general awareness and cultural sensitivity can benefit everyone in the field.

Others simply stated they wanted to be able to have discussions about race and racism that occurs in the field along with their personal experiences. The idea of bringing

communities together to discuss the struggles they face and having members of the

majority community present and participating, often led to concerns of being persecuted

or blamed for the struggles of an oppressed community (i.e., White individuals are

blamed for the struggles of the Black community, men are blamed for the oppression of

women, etc.; Arao & Clemens, 2013). However, being able to recognize the

microaggressions and racism that communities may face on a daily basis allows

opportunities for discussion, understanding, and learning how to be a better ally. One

participant encouraged questions and open dialogue by "having transparency…not being

afraid to ask questions or you know, especially there's a lot of times as with preferred

pronouns, that people just kind of guess and stick with one rather than asking, and it's ok

to be offended." Asking questions can help to clarify confusions, so applying dialogue,

discussion, and questions to cultural aspects of our work is just as valid, yet, sometimes,

this does not happen. When we look to have an open and honest discussion, being

offended is part of the human reaction as Arao and Clemens (2013) stated in their article,

From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces, which is a step to create a *brave space* for students to

discuss power and privilege. As people of color are often told "don't take it personally,"

this *brave space* model acknowledges that not recognizing and discussing how actions

and words affect those who do identify as persons of color will "prevent the person who

caused the impact from carrying a share of the emotional load and preclude the

possibility of meaningful reflection on her or his actions" (Arao & Clemens, 2013, p.

145). This comes with the understanding that feelings may be hurt and someone may be

offended; however, it is important to understand and to look at the reasons behind these

actions and responses. As one interviewee stated, "looking at why we think they're not

being sensitive might help us actually start a dialogue better than jumping on their backs and yelling at them."

Looking at power and privilege dynamics, it is important for interpreters to acknowledge and become aware of what that means for them. This is with the understanding that, as an interviewee stated, in addition to being hearing we have "additional power and balances that play into your interpretation and that is really critical for us as interpreters to recognize." Another colleague expressed the same sentiment saying it is important to recognize:

> What you have learned about the Deaf community and see how it applies to other communities. So instead of just teaching about Deaf people and oppression, there needs to be a broader scope with a focus on that…definitely power and privilege and microaggressions and I think it would be helpful because we work with – we don't just work with White Deaf people.

Many of the interviewees had also listed training was needed on intersectionality. As defined by Brah and Phoenix (2013),

> we regard the concept of 'intersectionality' as signifying the complex, irreducible, varied, and variable effects which ensue when multiple axis of differentiation – economic, political, cultural, psychic, subjective and experiential – intersect in historically specific contexts. The concept emphasizes that different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out into discrete and pure strands. (p. 76)

In other words, it is not just about being Asian or AAPI, male or female; it is understanding that our identities can overlap in any given situation or experience.

One interviewee felt "we need to define diversity as all communities, not just hearing and Deaf." Diversity incorporates the Deaf and hearing cultural negotiations that we include in our interpretations, but our interactions should not be limited to this dichotomous approach. Figueroa-Ruiz and Holcomb (2013) explained this concept:

> By applying it to Signing communities, intersectionality allows us to recognize multiple experiences and truths. It also helps us understand how identities aren't fixed, ranked, and static; rather, they can shift for specific situation. It allows for multiple identities without assigning each a certain value. (p. 15)

This concept does not only include interpreters already in the field. A few interpreters suggested reaching out to communities of color and introducing them into the field of signed language interpreting. This would not only allow for more diversity in the field, but it would then allow another perspective on interpreting as well as gaining new insights into other minority or oppressed communities.

The final codes of Support echo those in the Exposure to Organizations in the previous section. This also included the idea of networking, but also having a space for Asian and AAPI interpreters. One interviewee said, "There is no real place for Asian American interpreters to gather and to discuss and if we did, what would it look like?" Another stated:

> There is no organization for specifically Asian interpreters. I mean there is one for African American interpreters or Spanish-speaking trilingual interpreters, so I felt like, identity wise, it would be nice to be able to have a group where people can network and talk about different issues.

This response speaks to creating a space for Asian and AAPI interpreters to allow our voices to be heard. A space is needed for us to meet, find support, and to discuss the issues we face in this field among ourselves, so we can better serve our field.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout this process, it is evident that the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) community is highly diverse and complex in ways that have yet to be explored and researched. As the Asian and AAPI community is growing, so will the needs of Asian and AAPI interpreters.

Recommendations for the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander Interpreting Community

After these interviews and experiences focusing on race and racism, I recommend continuing education focusing on microaggressions and racism. Learning the language of racially motivated actions and comments can help start the conversation of how these interactions and racial slights can affect Asian and AAPI interpreters, in and out of the working environment. Dialogue not only among those in the Asian and AAPI interpreting community, but including those in the Deaf Asian and AAPI community can provide an added layer of meaning as well as encouraging a continued dialogue as the profession continues to grow.

Based on this research, I recommend active outreach and recruitment to all Asian and AAPIs throughout the United States. This will work to increase the number Asian and AAPI interpreters, which currently stands at 171 members, (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., 2014), and it will also help to serve the Asian and AAPI community, Deaf and hearing alike, that is quickly growing throughout the United States (Hoeffel et al., 2012).

One participant suggested reaching out to different Deaf Asian immigrant communities and the youth saying,

A lot of them, these kids we see, they've got so much potential, but nobody is out there telling them "do you know what? Just because you have Deaf parents from Guam, I bet they probably need somebody to help interpret for them. Have you ever thought about being an interpreter?" Lets reach out to them and explain to them this is a job.

Reaching out to these communities may open up possibilities for education, awareness of a possible career avenue, as well as making a connection with another Asian or AAPI community member.

Interpreter Education Programs

For Interpreter Education Programs, including lessons with the focus of multiculturalism, cultural competence, and self-awareness will provide opportunities for discussion and cultural exchange. I would encourage use of the Brave Space model and framework, as developed by Arao and Clemens (2013), to allow for a greater and deeper exchange of ideas and experiences for those in the Asian and AAPI community with the support of instructors and mentors. Being able to recognize microaggressions in the classroom as they happen can be a valuable teaching moment for instructors and students alike. When actions or comments are acknowledged, it could allow a space for students to dialogue about the incident, as well as providing an instructor the opportunity to model how to talk about the incident, implications, and effects.

I would also strongly encourage seeking and recruiting Deaf and hearing interpreting instructors of Asian heritage. Doing so will provide role models in the classroom as well as an educational resource for students. Egalite, Kisida, and Winters (2015) found that there is a positive impact when students are able to relate to the

instructor and see a reflection of themselves in the classroom. If we are able to find and connect with those instructors and mentors who are working interpreters, this will provide a foundation and they become guides into discussions of race and racism that may occur in the classroom or out in the field. Again, this emphasizes the importance of both understanding diversity and its effects on the person as well as having the network and connections in and out of the classroom to provide a supportive network through shared experiences of race and culture, possibly providing longevity and growth in the field and within the Asian and AAPI community.

Mindess's (1998) writings and presentation of cultural influence are an excellent starting point and should continue to grow and include more curricula built around cultural competence and diversity training. As Kirmayer (2012) stated, "In culturally diverse societies, the dominant culture, which is expressed through social institutions including the health care system, regulates what sorts of problems are recognized and what kinds of social or cultural differences are viewed as worthy of attention" (p. 149). We are constantly navigating between at least two cultures, and often times more, so becoming culturally competent in addressing the needs of the Asian and AAPI student can only add to the benefits when they enter into the field. Taking to heart what Mooney (1998) stated:

> Our field must take some "affirming actions" if we wish to continue our multicultural initiatives to better serve our multicultural and multilingual consumers. Interpreter education programs must accept and embrace the collective and individual opportunity and responsibility to develop viable

recruitment efforts to attract, and, more importantly, retain talented students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. (p. 252)

Discussion and an understanding of the effects of racism, microaggresions, identity, and interpreting are needed within our profession and educational discourse. Languages of denial, if still used within the educational system and within the field, may create additional barriers for Asian and AAPI interpreters as well as other interpreters of color. How this particular subject matter is handled can greatly affect the experiences of Asian and AAPI interpreters, their own self-perception and understanding of themselves as well as how they represent the community, whether it is or is not the desired outcome of these interactions.

I also suggest IEPs add to their graduation requirement for their students to take an intercultural studies or an ethnic studies course of their choosing. Another option would be to have interpreting students attend not only Deaf events in their local communities, but also attend other cultural events, different from their own cultural identity, which they might otherwise not have been exposed to.

Professional Growth

From the 17 interviews, 11 participants found their way into the field of interpreting by taking courses offered at the high school or college level; four had a Deaf member in the family, were Deaf, or had close friends who were Deaf; two were informed through school pamphlets and a newspaper announcement. Due to the fact that how one enters into the field of interpreting is so varied, there is no one-way to recruit; however, a common theme is exposure to the language or exposure to the field. Bruce (1998) listed 16 possible options for recruiting African American/Black students into the

field of interpreting, and I believe some of the same approaches can be applied to reach out to the Asian and AAPI community. However, more research focusing on recruitment for specific Asian and AAPI subgroups will have to be done in order to increase the likelihood of success since there are different obstacles for each minority community.

For the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, it has been proposed to have 10 hours or 1.0 continuing education units (CEUs) be focused on power and privilege training. This type of training could focus on how power and privilege change with each minority community. Understanding the relationships and the dynamics that occur within the Asian and AAPI community, then understanding those relationships within the Deaf Asian community would help bridge the gap that occurs in terms of self-awareness. I would also recommend that some of the training focus on microaggressions experienced by communities of color and how they manifest themselves in verbal and non-verbal communication. Offering interpreting workshops or courses with this approach will help practitioners gain a better understanding of the entire situation and perhaps some insight into the consumers they are working with.

Further Research

As this is the research focused on the Asian and AAPI ASL/English interpreting community as an umbrella community, this research provides only a snapshot of this complex population. As stated in the literature review, this group contains a minimum of 20 other minority groups under this one label. Future research focusing on East Asian, South East Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander communities can provide more insight into the each community's specific struggles, obstacles, and needs in interpreter education programs and out in the field.

As studies continue, further research into the diverse groups within the Asian and AAPI communities would be recommended as well. Studies focusing on those who are of mixed-race heritage, Asian and AAPI children of Deaf adults (CODAs), minority language speakers, and the plethora of other groups under this giant umbrella, can provide another aspect of cultural understanding and awareness.

In this study, the focus was on Asian and AAPI working interpreters. However, a study of current ASL students, students applying to interpreter education programs, and current students in IEPs can provide first-hand narratives of their journey to becoming involved with the Deaf community and their expectations of entering into the field. It can provide another layer of understanding to recruiting and retaining Asian and AAPI interpreters.

Moreover, this research focused on the interpreters, highlighting their service and experiences in IEPs and out in the field. Conducting another study focusing on the Asian and AAPI Deaf consumers and their experiences can shed light onto the impacts of having interpreters who are not a racial or ethnic match. This can provide perspective on the expectations within the Asian and AAPI Deaf community as it relates to cultural competence, awareness, power, and oppression. From this, workshops and lessons can be developed to create additional awareness when working with consumers from the Asian and AAPI community.

Studies focusing on microaggression in educational settings and students of Asian heritage can provide more guidance, not only for educators to become more aware of possible experiences in the classroom, but it can also provide insight when developing lesson plans for adjusting curriculum to fit the needs of students of Asian heritage.

This can also be tied into research about the learning style of students of Asian heritage. Understanding not only the educational needs, but also the learning styles that can vary due to cultural upbringing, values, language use in the home, generation status, and so on could lead to a more culturally aware educational environment that may eventually translate into future work situations.

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Dear Colleague,

My name is Christine Nakahara and I am a master's degree student at Western Oregon University in the College of Education under the supervision of Professor Vicki Darden. I am conducting a research study seeking to understand the experiences of Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in interpreter education and within the field of ASL-English interpreting in the U.S. I am requesting your participation in this questionnaire; it will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. This research has been approved by Western Oregon University's IRB.

Who is eligible to participate?

Professional and post-professional ASL-English interpreters, age 18 and over who identify as Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander.

Purpose and Benefits

The study is looking to identify if there are any shared experiences, amongst Asian/AAPI interpreters, and how those experiences impact their continuation in the field. The findings from this study will help identify gaps in the knowledge base that may exist in interpreter education and amongst ASL-English interpreting colleagues. These findings could assist in future research as well as changes to best practices, which may enhance the number of Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander ASL-English interpreters within our profession.

Discomforts and Risks

This project will require you to answer questions about your professional experiences. This may cause some discomfort since it will include a discussion about race within a small community, and your interactions with colleagues and peers. Even if you begin, you may discontinue your participation at any time by closing your browser. Any information related to responses will not be saved and the researcher will not see any responses. There will be no physical risk of any kind.

Consent and Participation

By participating in the questionnaire, you are giving your consent to have your confidential data collected and analyzed. Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. Even if you begin, you may discontinue your participation at any time by closing your browser. Any information related to responses will not be saved and the researcher will not see any responses.

Confidentiality

Your responses will only be viewed by the researcher and her faculty advisor. The responses will be kept in a secure location on a password-protected laptop. Your name will not be associated with the findings. If you provide identifying information, be assured that the write-up of data will use pseudonyms, and situations will be modified to obscure the identity of the individual. Remember that you may end your participation at any time for any reason without penalty.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact Christine Nakahara, Principal Investigator at cnakahara14@wou.edu or 408-781-9325 or Professor Darden, Thesis Committee Chair at (503) 838-8803 or at dardenv@wou.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact the WOU Institutional Review Board at any time regarding the study at (503) 838-9200. Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX B: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Note: This survey was first developed by Erica West Oyedele and modified to fit the Asian and Asian American Pacific Islander population

Demographic information

1. Please indicate your age

   - 18-20
   - 21-29
   - 30-39

   - 40-49
   - 50-59
   - 60 or older

2. Please indicate your gender

   - Female
   - Male

   - Prefer not to answer
   - Other:

3. What is your race (Please select all that apply) *
   The term race refers to the concept of dividing people into populations or groups on the basis of various sets of physical characteristics (which usually result from genetic ancestry).

   - American Indian or Alaskan Native
   - Asian, Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander
   - Black or African American
   - Chicano, Latino or Hispanic
   - White or Caucasian
   - Prefer not to answer
   - Unknown
   - Other:

4. What is your cultural identity? _____
   For example: Japanese-American, Hapa, mixed race

5. What is your generation status? _____
   For the purpose of this study, the first generation is identified as the first in the family to arrive to the U.S., immigrants who arrived as children or adolescents are considered 1.5 generation (other examples are: Nisei, 1.5, Fifth generation, N/A)

6. In which region of the U.S. do you live *Please choose one.*
   - New England: CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
   - Mid- Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
   - East North Central: IN, IL, MI, OH, WI

- West North Central: IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD
- South Atlantic: DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV
- East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
- West South Central: AR, LA, OK, TX
- Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY
- Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA
- Other: Puerto Rico

7. Please indicate your current professional status as it pertains to ASL-English interpreting *Mark one.

   - Professional interpreter (currently working as an interpreter)
   - Post-professional interpreter (no longer engaged in interpreting)

8. Which of the following categories describe your status in the interpreting community (select all that apply)?

   - Hearing
   - Deaf
   - Coda
   - Deaf of Deaf
   - Other:

9. Did you attend a formal interpreter education program? *IEP, IPP, ITP

   - Yes
   - No (You will automatically continue at question 30.)

IEP/IPP/ITP Specific Questions

These questions relate to the formal interpreter training that you received.

10. What degree(s) did you receive from your interpreter education program (select all that apply)? *Note: Please respond only as it pertains to your interpreter education, and not for other disciplines.

    - Associate degree
    - Bachelor degree
    - Graduate degree
    - Certificate of completion
    - No degree received (I did not complete my interpreter education program)
    - Other:

11. When did you graduate?

    - 0-5 years ago
    - 6-10 years ago
    - 11-15 years ago
    - 16-20 years ago
    - over 20 years ago

12. During your interpreter education how easily did you establish close relationships with your classmates? *Mark only one.*

- Extremely easy
- Quite easy
- Moderately easy
- Slightly easy
- Not at all easy

13. To what extent have you maintained close relationships with your classmates? *Mark only one.*

- Extremely well maintained
- Quite well maintained
- Moderately well maintained
- Slightly well maintained
- Not at all well maintained

14. How many students were in your class? *Fill in your answer.*

15. Other than yourself, how many of your classmates also identified as Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander?

- More than 10
- 7-9
- 4-6
- 1-3
- None

16. During your education how much time was spent discussing multiculturalism and/or cultural competency as it pertains to interpersonal relationships between colleagues?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

17. During your education how much time was spent discussing multiculturalism and/or cultural competency as it pertains to interpersonal relationships between interpreters and consumers?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

18. Overall, how effective were a majority of your educators when approaching topics of multiculturalism and/or cultural competency? *Mark only one.*

- Extremely effective
- Quite effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not at all effective
- N/A

19. Overall, how effective were a majority of your educators at being able to incorporate multiple cultural perspectives into their teaching? *Mark only one.*

- Extremely effective
- Quite effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not at all effective

20. Overall, how self-aware would you say a majority of your educators were in being able to recognize their own cultural biases and their impact on your training? *Mark only one.*

- Extremely self-aware
- Very self-aware
- Moderately self-aware
- Slightly self-aware
- Not at all self-aware

21. How comfortable were you during discussions of multiculturalism and/or cultural competency?

- Extremely comfortable
- Quite comfortable
- Moderately comfortable
- Slightly comfortable
- Not at all comfortable
- N/A

22. How many of the guest speakers that came to present in your program were Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander? *Mark only one.*

- More than 5
- 3-4
- 1-2
- None
- My program did not have guest speakers

23. How many educators taught in your program? *Fill in the blank*

24. How many of your educators were Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander? *Mark only one.*

- More than 5
- 3-4
- 1-2
- None

25. If your training program included formal mentoring, how many of the mentors were Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander? *Mark only one.*

- More than 5
- 3-4
- My program did not have formal mentoring
- 1-2
- None

26. How well do you feel your interpreter education program prepared you for the work you do as an interpreter? *Mark only one oval.

- Extremely well
- Very well
- Moderately well
- Slightly well
- Not at all well

27. How frequently did you experience overt instances of racism directed towards you within your interpreter education program? *Mark only one.

- Extremely frequently
- Very frequently
- Moderately frequently
- Slightly frequently
- Not at all frequently

28. How frequently did you experience overt instances of racism directed towards other Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander students within your interpreter education program? *Mark only one.

- Extremely frequently
- Very frequently
- Moderately frequently
- Slightly frequently
- Not at all frequently
- N/A

29. Is there anything else you would like to share about your formative educational experiences as an Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreter?

Interpreter practitioner related questions

The following questions will be used to help understand the experiences of

working Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreters in the U.S.

30. I currently hold the following interpreter related credentials *Mark all that apply.

- CSC
- CI
- CT
- NIC
- NIC: Advanced
- NIC: Master
- EIPA (3.0 and above)
- Ed: K-12
- SC:L
- CDI
- RSC
- OTC
- BEI Basic
- BEI Advanced
- BEI Master
- NAD III
- NAD IV
- NAD V
- None
- Other _____

31. How long have you practiced as an interpreter?

- Less than 5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- Over 20 years

32. How easy is it for you to establish close relationships with a majority of your colleagues?

- Extremely easy
- Quite easy
- Moderately easy
- Slightly easy
- Not at all easy

33. How easy is it for you to maintain close relationships with a majority of your colleagues?

- Extremely easy
- Quite easy
- Moderately easy
- Slightly easy
- Not at all easy

34. How often do you work with other Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreters? *Mark only one oval.

- Extremely often
- Quite often
- Moderately often
- Slightly often
- Not at all often

35. Do you currently, or have you ever had mentors who are Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islanders?

- Yes
- No

36. Do you believe that you have unique interpreting experiences on the basis of being an Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islanders?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

37. How often do you have experiences as an Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreter that non-Asian or non-Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreters may struggle to understand?

- Extremely often
- Very often
- Moderately often
- Slightly often
- Not at all often

38. Overall, how effective would you say a majority of your colleagues are at discussing issues of multiculturalism and/or cultural competency?
    - Extremely effective
    - Quite effective
    - Moderately effective
    - Slightly effective
    - Not at all effective
    - N/A

39. Overall, how self-aware would you say a majority of your colleagues are when it comes to recognizing their own cultural biases and their impact on consumers and colleagues?
    - Extremely self-aware
    - Very self-aware
    - Moderately self-aware
    - Slightly self-aware
    - Not at all self-aware

40. How frequently have you experienced overt instances of racism (a positive or negative attribute) directed towards you while on the job?
    - Extremely frequently
    - Very frequently
    - Moderately frequently
    - Slightly frequently
    - Not at all frequently

41. How frequently have you experienced overt instances of racism (a positive or negative attribute) directed towards other Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander colleagues while on the job?
    - Extremely frequently
    - Very frequently
    - Moderately frequently
    - Slightly frequently
    - Not at all frequently

42. How frequently do you consider leaving the field of interpreting due to racial attitudes?
    - Extremely frequently
    - Very frequently
    - Moderately frequently
    - Slightly frequently
    - Not at all frequently

43. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences as an Asian/Asian American interpreter?

44. May I contact you to conduct a follow up interview?
    If yes, please provide your contact information below.
    *If no, you may skip this question and submit the questionnaire.

    *Note: If you decide to share your contact information it will be disaffiliated from your survey responses so that it will not be possible in any way for your identity to be connected to your responses within this survey.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Dear Colleague,

I am a master's degree student at Western Oregon University in the College of Education under the supervision of Professor Vicki Darden. I am conducting a research study seeking to understand the experiences of Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) interpreters in the United States and I am requesting your participation in the data collection process. This research has been approved by Western Oregon University's IRB.

Invitation to Participate in a Research Study Leading to a Graduate Thesis

I would like to invite you to take part in this research study, which focuses on the experiences of Asian and AAPI interpreters. As an interpreter of color, your perspective on the current state of interpreting is crucial in helping the field understand the experiences of Asian and AAPI interpreters in relation to their colleagues and educators from other diverse backgrounds. Your input could lead to a better understanding of the needs of the Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander interpreter community and interpreter education programs.

What will you be asked to do?

If you decide to take part in this study you will be asked to participate in a recorded one-on-one interview that will last no more than 1 hour and may be conducted face-to-face, online via Adobe Connect, or other web conferencing software. You will need a high-speed internet connection and a webcam to access the online session. This interview will be recorded through Fuze, on video, or an audio recorder. It will be stored on my password secured laptop and all recording will be deleted three years from this thesis publication date.

Who is eligible to participate?

Professional ASL-English interpreters, age 18 and over, who reside within the U.S., and who identify as Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander.

Purpose and Benefits

The study is looking to identify if there are any shared experiences, amongst Asian/AAPI interpreters, and in what ways those experiences impact their continuation in the field. The findings from this study will help identify gaps in the knowledge base that may exist in interpreter education and amongst ASL-English interpreting colleagues. These findings could assist in future research as well as changes to best practices, which may enhance the number of Asian and Asian American/Pacific Islander ASL-English interpreters within our profession.

Discomforts and Risks

During the interview participants will be asked to answer questions about their

professional experiences. The primary investigator, to allow for further data analysis, will record this project. The researcher acknowledges that in small communities confidentiality may be difficult to maintain. Your name, location, and/or any identifying information will be changed in the final thesis. There will be no physical risk of any kind.

Who will see the information about me?

The primary investigator will see your responses, and the data will be shared in a graduate thesis with no identifying information – specific locations and names will not be discussed.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely on a password-protected laptop and only the researcher and her faculty advisor will have access to the records. If you provide identifying information, be assured that the write-up of data will use pseudonyms, and situations will be modified to make it nearly impossible to identify individuals.

Participation and Consent

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. Even if you begin, you may discontinue your participation at any time without fear of retaliation. If you decide to discontinue your participation, all data collected from you up to that point will be discarded. You consent is provided by signing the bottom of this document.

Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Western Oregon University Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact the WOU Institutional Review Board at any time regarding the study at 503-838-8589.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact Christine Nakahara, Principal Investigator at cnakahara14@wou.edu or 408-781-9325 or Professor Vicki Darden. Thesis Committee Chair at (503) 838- 8803 or at dardenv@wou.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact the WOU Institutional Review Board at any time regarding the study at (503) 838-9200. Thank you for your participation!

By signing below you indicate your willingness to participate in this study.

_____   _____   _____
Participant's Name (please print)   Participant's Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Researcher's Name (please print)   Researcher's Signature   Date

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Note: These interview questions were first developed by Erica West Oyedele and modified to fit the Asian and Asian American Pacific Islander population

Interpreter demographic related questions:

1. Where do you currently live and work?
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you been work in the profession? If retired, how long did you work in the profession?
4. What is your race?
5. What is your cultural/ethnic identity?
6. What is your generation status?
7. Did you attend an interpreter education program?
8. If so, what degree did you graduate with?

Interpreter education related questions:

1. How did you find your way to the field of interpreting; did you undergo training?
2. What types of discussions and/or courses about diversity, multiculturalism, or cultural competency did your training include?
3. How often did these discussions focus on the interpersonal relationships between interpreters and their colleagues?
4. How often did these discussions focus on the interpersonal relationships between the interpreter and the consumers?
5. What instances of racism were directed towards you, or your classmates, did you experience or witness?
6. In terms of cultural competency, what was missing from your interpreter training that you wish you would have been exposed to?
7. Were mentors (Deaf or Hearing) of color accessible to you during your mentorship?

Interpreter practitioner related questions:

1. How often do you work with colleagues who share your ethnic or racial identity?
2. How often do you work with consumers who share your ethnic or racial identity?
3. How often have you worked with a mentor who shares your ethnic or racial identity?

4. How self-aware would you say your colleagues are when it comes to recognizing their own cultural biases and their impact on consumers and colleagues?

5. How often have you experienced or witnessed instances of racism directed towards you, your colleagues, or your consumers?

6. In terms of cultural competency, what do you perceive to be lacking in the field of interpreting?

7. What else would you like to share about your experiences as an interpreter of color?

Potential follow-up questions:

1. Please tell me more about that.
2. Why do you think that is?
3. How does that make you feel?
4. Please share specific examples.