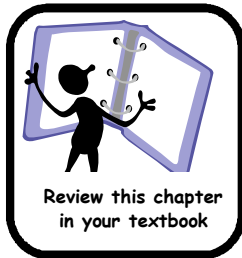


CHAPTER THREE Working in Multicultural Communities



Chapter Summary

As interpreters, we mediate communication between Deaf and hearing cultures. However, we work with increasingly diverse, multicultural Deaf and hearing clients. This chapter looks at some of the significant distinctives because meaning within communication is determined based on a person's frame of view, as well as the context within which the interaction is taking place.

To Focus Your Study

As you study this chapter, pay particular attention to the following ideas and information.

1. What cultural norms are at work among people you interact with on a regular basis? Were you aware of these differences?
2. Are there "entitlements" or "privileges" inherent with membership in a majority culture group?
3. What is the importance of the information and concepts in this chapter for sign language interpreters?

Learning Activities

In Your Own Words



Reflect on your learning in this chapter and record briefly the most significant points learned and why they are important to your journey of learning.

Cultural Distinctives

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1: Looking at Deaf Culture

In your own words, summarize five distinct characteristics of Deaf culture. Describe at least two experiences you have had where these values or norms were evident.



LEARNING ACTIVITY #2: Check With Our Experts

View the video clips on the CD for Chapter 3. Note how each individual describes him/herself. Do you identify with any of the experiences shared by the experts? What experiences are vastly different from your own? If you work with a person like this as a sign language interpreter, what will you need to know/be aware of in order to do your best work?

EXPERT	WHO IS S/HE	NOTES/REFLECTIONS
SUZIE	French Canadian Woman	
Anne	Kenyan Woman/Preacher	

Karen	Interpreter of Color	
Roger	Deaf Canadian Chinese Husband/Father	
Meena	East Indian Deaf Woman	

AJ	Deaf Poet and Artist with Cerebral Palsy	
Ruth	Late-Deafened Adult	
Boyd Bruce John	White Deaf Men	

<p>Aastrid Heather Jennifer</p>	<p>Deaf Women</p>	
---	-------------------	--

Comparing Cultures

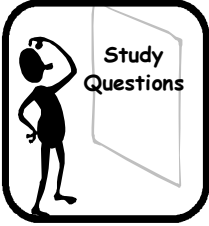
After reading chapter 3, review what you know about Deaf culture. Now listen to Anne describe the culture of her people in East Africa (CD: Chapter 3 — “Who Am I: Kenyan Woman/Preacher”) What similarities do you see between Deaf culture and Anne’s culture? What differences do you see? Can you guess three reasons for these similarities and differences?



Personal Application

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1: Identify the various ethnic and cultural groups of which YOU are a part and list the things unique to each of those groups that influence your sense of time, learning style, family constellation, etc. Record your discoveries in your journal.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2: identify six personal attributes that might affect your work as an interpreter (gender, age, physical build, ethnicity, etc.). What strategies will you use to deal with these attributes so they work for you rather than against you?



Study Questions

1. When considering the CONTEXT in which communication takes place, an interpreter must consider ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) The physical location of the interaction
 - (b) The style and color of clothing worn by the participants
 - (c) The cultural norms, values and traditions of each participant
 - (d) The universality of cultural frames
 - (e) The language preferences of each client present

2. In cultures based on sight ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Members are irritated by “visual noise”
 - (b) Visual signals are used for attention-getting and turn-taking
 - (c) There are more similarities to hearing-based cultures than differences
 - (d) One will encounter “visual” poetry
 - (e) There is an inevitable consequence of strained or poor eyesight

3. Greeting/leave-taking norms ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Are the most obviously different behavioral norms across all cultures
 - (b) Include norms related to physical contact and eye gaze
 - (c) Are identical among 85% or all minority groups in the US and Canada
 - (d) Are reflected in the indigenous sign languages around the world
 - (e) Are generally connected to particular linguistic phrases, as well as physical behaviors

4. Which of the following physical characteristics and behaviors might be distracting in a visual communication environment? (circle all that apply)
 - (a) A tic or repetitive twitch of the head, face or eyes
 - (b) Extreme obesity
 - (c) Red hair
 - (d) Muddy clothes and shoes
 - (e) Swiping hair out of one's face

5. Reciprocal signals ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Refers to a tally system used in some collectivist cultures
 - (b) Are found only in spoken-language cultures
 - (c) Include a set of head nods and eye behaviors used by individuals communicating to each other in ASL
 - (d) Are required in some cultures in order for communication to take place
 - (e) Are used to indicate one's status in Indo-Canadian culture

6. Describe the similarities and/or differences between hearing and Deaf cultures in the following areas:
 - ❖ Communication:
 - ❖ Display of emotion:
 - ❖ Eye contact/physical touch:

7. Describe the similarities and/or differences between Hispanic and Deaf cultures in the following areas:
 - ❖ Time:
 - ❖ Decision-making:
 - ❖ Family/elders: