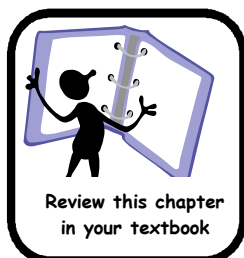## CHAPTER EIGHT:
How We Approach Our Work

Chapter Summary

This chapter looks at four historical philosophical frames that influence the way interpreters approach their work including how s/he interprets her/his role as an interpreter and the tenets of the professional Code of Ethics. The concept of linguistic and cultural mediation is discussed at length including the strategy of using expansions and reductions to maintain dynamic equivalence.

To Focus Your Study

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

1. Trace the history of sign language interpreting from the point of view of different philosophical approaches.

2. Describe each philosophical approach in practical terms.

3. Explain the significance of maintaining speaker goals and dynamic equivalence.

4. Define cultural and linguistic expansions/reductions and explain why they are used in an interpretation.

Learning Activities

In Your Own Words

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

Philosophical Orientation

The textbook seems to draw pronounced lines between the various philosophical approaches to interpretation. Look at the video clips in the companion CD for this chapter ("Philosophical Approach to Interpreting").

❖ Do the experts make a clear distinction between the various philosophical approaches outlined in the textbook when working with various clients and situations? If not, what might account for their choices and responses?

Record your perceptions and discuss them with at least two other interpreting students or professional interpreters.

"GOOD" Interpreters

Have you wondered how interpreters and clients describe a "good" interpreter? Review the file titled "Descriptions of a GOOD Interpreter" on the companion CD for this chapter. Develop a list or paraphrase of their perceptions then discuss them with your learning partner, identifying any patterns or commonalities. How will these insights influence you on your journey toward professional practice as an interpreter?

What Clients Want

Individual clients have specific needs and expectations of an interpreter. In the file titled "What I NEED In An Interpreter," some of our experts have expressed their individual needs from an interpreter. Watch the video clips in this file then discuss these expressed needs with your learning partner. Would you be able to meet each of these needs? If so, how do you know that is true? If not, what goals can you set in order to become qualified to work for each of these clients?

Separating your SELF from your WORK

Our interpreting experts have described the need to depersonalize the feedback they receive on their work from their sense of their inherent value as individuals. After viewing video clips in the file on the companion CD for this chapter, write in your journal about the concept of separating one's self from one's work.

❖ What are the pros of taking this approach? What are the danger of NOT taking this approach?

❖ When is it most likely you may personalize feedback?

❖ What steps can you take to insure a greater likelihood that you are able to separate your sense of your work from your sense of your self? (Be specific)

❖ When giving feedback to others, how can you best insure that the person to whom you are speaking does not personalize your comments?

Some Words for New Interpreters

The last video file in the companion CD for this chapter has some tips or words of wisdom from seasoned interpreters and some Deaf clients for new interpreters ("Tips for New Interpreters"). Discuss these tips and the other lessons learned in this chapter with your learning partner. Use this discussion to set specific learning goals for your personal and professional development over the next six-months.

Look at video clip on CD

Study Questions

Study Questions

1. Identify one strength and one weakness of each philosophical frame:

   (a) Helper

   (b) Machine

   (c) Bilingual-bicultural

2. An interpreter working from the _____ philosophical frame is most likely to incorporate linguistic and cultural expansions/reductions.

   (a) Helper

   (b) Language facilitation

   (c) Machine

   (d) Bilingual-bicultural

   (e) None of the above

3. A linguistic expansion or reduction is made because … (circle all that apply):

    (a) The concept being conveyed requires greater or lesser explicit transmittal as compared to the source language

    (b) Consecutive interpretation is being used

    (c) The client prefers English-based signs

    (d) The client prefers ASL

    (e) The concept being conveyed is not found in the target culture but is found in the source culture

4. A cultural expansion or reduction is made because … (circle all that apply):

    (a) The concept being conveyed requires greater or lesser explicit transmittal as compared to the source language

    (b) Consecutive interpretation is being used

    (c) The client prefers English-based signs

    (d) The client prefers ASL

    (e) The concept being conveyed is not found in the target culture but is found in the source culture