



PREFACE

THE YEAR 2019 marked the 40th anniversary of the first meeting of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT), which was held in October 1979, in St. Paul, Minnesota. That conference, and each of the organization's subsequent gatherings, was followed by an edited volume of proceedings. These volumes are an invaluable resource. In addition to offering glimpses into the history of the organization and the evolution of the field of signed language interpreter education in North America, they contain a wealth of theoretical and practical information for interpreter educators. At the same time, the volumes of the CIT proceedings are perhaps not as widely read and used as might be expected. Although they are freely available to CIT members via the organization's website, they are not easily searchable (with the exception of the more recent volumes, dating to the 2010s), and papers published in the proceedings do not generally appear in search results in academic databases.

This volume has two primary purposes. The first of these is to commemorate the 40th anniversary of CIT by highlighting a number of significant papers from its history and providing updates to those papers. The second is to increase knowledge, appreciation, and use of the CIT proceedings among educators, interpreters, and other interested parties. Our hope is that this volume will serve as a resource for individuals interested in the history of and current state of signed language interpreting pedagogy, as well as a testament to the CIT's place in the development of the field of interpreter education.

Although CIT has had an international reach, it is based in the United States, and the majority of the papers published in the proceedings have been by educators from North America. This volume thus primarily reflects the North American context, and frequently refers to ASL-English interpreting and interpreter education. Nevertheless, the debates, topics, and content covered in this volume are relevant to signed language interpreter educators in other geographic and cultural contexts. Similarly, although the focus of CIT (and this volume) is on education of interpreters working between signed and spoken languages or between two signed languages, educators of interpreters working between spoken languages will also find much of value and interest in the volume.

Our first step in preparing this volume was to read through 22 volumes of proceedings published between 1979 and 2018 in order to select papers for inclusion. In selecting papers, we sought to include material that reflected the breadth and depth of the material published in the proceedings. After careful consideration of several criteria, including the relevance of the selected papers to the evolution of interpreter education, the enduring import of their content, and the desire to reflect a range of perspectives and approaches, we selected 15 papers for inclusion.¹ The authors of the selected papers were asked to write a commentary or update to their original paper; they were also invited to identify emerging scholars to coauthor the newly written material.

The 15 selected papers and the newly written responses comprise the bulk of the volume. In addition, the volume begins with two snapshots from the history of CIT—the first keynote, presented by Jeanne Audrey Powers in 1979, and the endnote of the last conference preceding the organization’s 40th anniversary, presented by Thomas K. Holcomb in 2018.

The volume concludes with a chapter titled “A Place at the Table? Reflections on the Past, Present, and Future of Signed Language Interpreter Education in the United States.” The chapter draws on interviews with twenty stakeholders who shared their experiences in the field of interpreter education, particularly with regard to audism and racism. The perspectives shared by these stakeholders sharply illustrate a number of issues with which the field must urgently contend.

Acknowledgments

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- our editor at Gallaudet University Press, Katie Lee, and the series editor for the Interpreter Education Series, Cynthia B. Roy
- Joselyn Fear, who provided technical assistance during the preparation of the volume

A Brief Note on Timing

We close this preface with a brief note regarding the timing of the preparation and publication of the volume. The authors of the newly written papers

1. The 15 original papers have been updated to reflect the current house style of the publisher; otherwise, the content remains unchanged, except where noted by the editors.

drafted their contributions in late 2019 and early 2020, with the deadline for submission of papers approximately coinciding with the World Health Organization's declaration of the global COVID-19 pandemic. We are conscious of the significant impact of the pandemic on humankind, as well as on interpreter education. We imagine that this impact and resultant changes may be a major topic in a future retrospective looking back on interpreter education in the mid-21st century.

READER'S NOTE

- The year following the title of each original paper reflects the year in which the conference presentation was delivered (see lists of conferences dates and venues on page xvii). In most cases, the printed conference proceedings were published the following year, so in-text citations within papers refer to the year of publication of the printed proceedings.
- The QR codes at the start of the Powers, Holcomb, and each response chapter lead to videos of ASL chapter summaries. If you are reading this on an e-reader or computer, you can click on the QR code to be taken to the video. To see the whole playlist, please go to the GUP YouTube channel and select the book's title in our playlists.