Reproducing Whiteness in Sign Language Interpreter Education: A Critical Examination of Curriculum

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THESIS

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the intersectional d/Deaf community who extend unending patience to interpreters. For nearly twenty years you have graciously welcomed me into your world and I am forever grateful. I hope this work serves to improve interpreter education and by extension, our experiences working together.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASL   American Sign Language

CCIE   Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education

CEUs   Continuing Education Units

CWS   Critical White Studies

DEI   Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

IEP   Interpreter Education Program

ITP   Interpreter Training Program

RID   Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

I.   INTRODUCTION

Researcher Reflection: I work part time at a Video Relay Service (VRS) call center interpreting phone calls between Deaf and hearing people from all over the country at all hours of the day. Any time a hearing person calls a Deaf person's videophone phone number, the hearing caller is automatically routed through an interpreter who then connects the call to the Deaf caller's video phone or vice versa if the Deaf caller initiates the call. The interpreter can hear the hearing person and speak to them through a headset and converse with the Deaf person on a video screen via a web based video software similar to Skype or Facetime.

At any given time, there are between two hundred and one thousand interpreters working for this particular VRS company at various call center offices around the country. The call flow is set up so that calls get routed to the first available interpreter in the order that they are received into the system. Once connected with an interpreter either party can request that the call be transferred to a male of female interpreter or to an interpreter who, in addition to ASL and English, also offers service in Spanish. These are the only available interpreter specifications available to the callers, devised this way for efficiency of call flow and to prevent any possible discrimination.

In the five years I have worked VRS, I have fielded a handful of calls between Black Deaf women and Black hearing women to schedule, plan, discuss, prepare for and negotiate getting their hair done. These calls cause me anxiety because I know that my sincere desire to interpret competently will be sabotaged by my utter lack of cultural knowledge on this subject that is unique to Black American culture. I lack the experience and vocabulary for the various styles, supplies, products and negotiating expectations of doing Black hair in ASL and in English.

Mostly, these women hear what they assume is a white woman's voice interpreting the call and immediately know my inability to interpret this subject as acutely as I do. They are excessively patient with me as I slog through the conversation and attempt to give them pieces of communication that they can puzzle together and make sense out of. Either that, or they are familiar enough with each other and the shortcomings of VRS that they find some work around like, "just text me what you want" or "I'll stop by your place later today."

There are a handful of Black female interpreters who work at the call center office I work at and if they are working at the same time as me and my hair appointment call lasts long enough for me to send them an inter-office teaming request, it is possible that they might be able to assist me in getting through the call with a more accurate interpretation. Better yet, they could just take over the call as the primary interpreter, allowing me to assume a supporting role. However, the logistics of having a Black female colleague team with me during these calls has never successfully happened as they are usually busy interpreting their own calls or not working at the same time that I am. In fact, I have only successfully secured a Black team interpreter for cultural needs in a call twice in five years – neither call was about hair.

The scarcity of Black interpreters working in the field and in VRS makes me wonder if Black Deaf women ever experience of a smooth conversation about getting their hair done at all.

Interpreters interpret concept for concept, not word for word. What people say, how they say it, why they say it, when and where they say it is shaped by identity (Feyne, 2015). Many identities markers such as race carry a rich cultural history and context that has the power to shift the meaning behind an utterance. Devoid of racial and intersectional identity context the meaning is obscured. Communication is tied directly to the multidimensional human experience and therefore, without understanding the nuances of intersectional identity and culture at play on an utterance, an interpreter is at risk of misrepresenting the message and consequently the client(s) as well. Most interpreters are white, straight, middle class, able bodied, Christian, and otherwise representative of the dominant social class (McDermid, 2009a). In addition, most interpreters graduate from an educational system constrained to favor whiteness and representations of hegemonic power (Harris & Leonardo, 2018). The Commission for Collegiate Interpreter Education's (CCIE) Accreditation Standards (2014) attempt to intervene in this white cultural hegemony from within interpreter curriculum. The CCIE Accreditation Standards (2014) include tenants with affirmative action style requirements for faculty employment and curriculum design that calls for education on "multicultural and diverse populations" that is "systematically implemented and threaded throughout the curriculum" (p. 7). It seems to be the CCIE's desire that students receive a consistent exposure to culturally diverse educators and content throughout the undergraduate experience. After graduation, interpreters receive continuing education credits by attending seminars (among other avenues) presented by colleagues who are representative of a white dominant field and

that are hosted in primarily white dominant spaces (West Oyedele, 2015, p. 12). Opportunities

to learn about experiences of people occupying "othered" identities must be intentionally

sought.

Traditional Deaf Studies is critiqued for its straight white Deaf male dominance and its

paucity of scholarship on intersectional experiences of deafness (Shultz Myers & Fernandes,

2009). The sign language interpreting field is similarly critiqued for its white hegemonic

production of scholarship (McDermid, 2009b; West Oyedele, 2015). In response, there has

been a emergence of intersectional work seen published on d/Deafness and race, gender,

disability, sexuality and other topics within the last decade (Cogen & Cokely, 2015; Fernandes &

Shultz Myers, 2009; Feyne, 2015; Guardino & Cannon, 2015; MacDougall, 2012; McCaskill,

Lucas, Bayley, & Hill, 2011; Shultz Myers & Fernandes, 2009; West Oyedele, 2015). However,

little of this scholarship has been leveraged into interpreting curriculum to expose students to

intersectional knowledge and practices developing in the field.

Understanding the complex nature of intersectional identity and the systemic power of

white supremacy is an ongoing journey that requires a conscious commitment to unpacking the

relationship between bodies and institutional power (Bourdieu, 2003). In order to unpack this

relationship, we must also seek to understand the actors involved. Race, class, gender,

disability, sexuality and other intersectional identities of people manifest in a myriad of

experiences including how and why institutional power acts on and organizes those bodies in

society. As interpreters working between voices of those inhabiting these identities and as

interpreters who are often situated (physically and linguistically) between disparate

representations of social power, it is important to be tuned-in to human diversity beyond

hearing loss and the subsequent linguistic preference. The knowledge required for this kind of

sensitivity must be cultivated by stakeholders of the field throughout an interpreters' career. One of the first opportunities for seeding that kind of knowledge is in curriculum of interpreter education programs. My research seeks to understand what this looks like in current curriculum for interpreters, using ABC University's interpreter education program as a case study. Primarily, I am interested in understanding how ABC University's accredited curriculum embeds and delivers racially diverse content to its students. My secondary research questions seek to understand: 1) how ABC University's curriculum acknowledges and addresses other intersectional topics and diverse representation; and 2) what gaps in instruction offer opportunity for intersectional diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) curriculum development.

The purpose of this study is threefold. First, it seeks to decipher how standardized interpreter education curriculum incorporates and delivers education on racially and otherwise intersectional content to interpreting students. Second, to contextualize these trends within a larger discussion of institutionalized white dominance in the field of interpreting. Lastly, to reposition identified gaps in DEI instruction as opportunities for curriculum development with contemporary critical pedagogy practices. My primary research objectives are to understand how DEI instruction is currently interpreted and embedded into sign language interpreter curriculum, to identify gaps in DEI instruction within the curriculum, and to correlate how the current delivery of DEI instruction in interpreter education curriculum functions to reinforce white cultural dominance in the wider landscape of sign language interpreting. My secondary research objectives are to chart a more intersectional definition of diversity that better serves the educational goals of DEI instruction.

II.   REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review addresses three areas related to exploring how one accredited institution's bachelor's degree curriculum attends to the educational objective of providing students with a foundational understanding of the dynamics of power and privilege within cross-cultural interactions. The first section addresses research related to implications of identity representation and disruption within the context of interpreted interactions. The second section focuses on research related to traditional practices of interpreter education, including impact and needs assessments of content disparities within interpreter education. Lastly, the third section incorporates Deaf Studies and Critical Whiteness Studies into a methodology used to investigate how DEI instruction is embedded within interpreter education curriculum. Discussing these points of intersection will illustrate the relevance of a blended methodological framework for investigating the reproduction of whiteness through sign language interpreting education curriculum. Throughout this work, I include Researcher Reflections that further illustrate the need for more critical interpreter education curriculum that better prepares interpreters to navigate the intersectional dynamics of human communication.

A.   **Identity Constraints And Disruptions In Interpreted Interactions**

Researcher Reflection: When I was 24 years old, I took an assignment at a clinic which was meant to be a routine doctors appointment for a male Deaf Latino client who is gay and HIV positive. The clinic was one known to be welcoming to the LGBTQ community and specialized in LGBTQ health issues. The doctor was white and presented as a gay man.

It started off as a regular appointment regarding blood counts and general well-being. However, the "normalcy" of the appointment changed when the doctor asked the patient if he had engaged in any unprotected sex since his last appointment. The patient replied that he had and with multiple partners but all of whom were also HIV positive. The doctor's demeanor shifted to one of dubious frustration as he explained to the Deaf client that he was putting himself at risk

for a host of other sexually transmitted diseases including other strands of HIV. The client began describing other symptoms that he had noticed at which point the doctor asked me to step out of the room so he could further examine the client. I remained outside of the room while the doctor exited to retrieve a treatment, re-entered and administered the treatment.

There is a chance that had I been a man and a member of the LGBTQ community, I might not have been asked to leave the room during this diagnosis and treatment. However, I believe that at least part of the reason I was asked to leave was out of respect and modesty for all parties involved. As an interpreter, I am always concerned for my client in those moments that they are denied access to the interpreter who has been hired to ease the burden of communication for that window of time. This is not to say I believe he is incapable of communicating for himself in the absence of an interpreter. Rather, it is to note that for a segment of his appointment, he was denied an accommodation due to, what I am assuming, is a gender and identity difference.

On top of that idea, there is also the reality that every time I voice for this flaming gay Deaf Latino man, his voice sounds like a straight cis white woman.

Representation of race, class, and gender of the American Deaf population is not reflected by the pool of interpreter practitioners. The field of professional interpreters is overwhelmingly represented by white middleclass females (McDermid, 2009a). The perception of Deaf identity in interpreted interactions is often skewed by the presence of a sign language interpreter whose own identity does not reflect that of her clients'. Human expression and communication through language is a not a neutral act. Similar to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, communication is a social practice that structures attitudes and interpersonal power dynamics between people and groups (Lizardo, 2004). Language is gendered, political, classed and cultural (MacDougall, 2012). In this section I present scholarly works that explore the impact of culturally mismatched interpreter-client pairings.

Feyne's (2015) internationally acclaimed and groundbreaking work finds that in sign language interpreted situations, the hearing person's perception of the d/Deaf person's identity is interrupted by the presence and identity of the interpreter. Her study revealed after an

interpreted interaction the hearing person will remember the interpreter's identity as the Deaf

person's identity. Hearing people can confuse the discourse and sometimes even physical

presentation of the interpreter for that of the d/Deaf person regardless how divergent the

identities of each. The way that hearing people perceive the identity of others is highly

dependent on conventional social assumptions cued by vocality and discourse markers. Since,

in an interpreted interaction, the hearing person is depending on the interpreter for

communication, the interpreter's vocality and discourse presentation forms an identity

perceived by the hearing person that is mapped onto the Deaf person. Two people rarely

exactly mirror each other's identities resulting in the d/Deaf person's identity being regularly

skewed toward the interpreter's. Moreover, in Feyne's research (2015) some of the more

extreme results of this identity confusion included the hearing person assuming the d/Deaf

person was gay when they identified as straight and as lacking all authority when a certain

female interpreter took over for her male colleague.

This study is underscored by analysis of the dynamics of sign language interpreters and

gendered discourse. When working to produce an interpreted message as equivalent to the

source text as possible, MacDougall (2012) asserts that a female interpreter is not only limited

by her own cultural identity, but is also constrained by the audience's perception of her

gender. The study found that the hearing interlocutor or audience's perception of the

interpreter's gender establishes an expectation of a conventionally gendered communication

style. Regardless of the gender presentation of the Deaf signer, the linguistic packaging of the

spoken English interpretation must match the hearing audience's perception of the

interpreter's gender. If discourse it is not reconciled with its speaker's gender, the listener may

become significantly distracted by the gendered mismatch, struggle to comprehend and accept

the content as valid and sometimes reject the interpretation entirely (MacDougall, 2012). Thus, the interpreter's identity disrupts the hearing participant's perception of the identity of the d/Deaf participant (Feyne, 2015) *and* the interpreter is constrained to present a gendered interpretation of the message in order for the content to be received by the listener, even though this might require, for instance that a female interpreter feminize a message delivered by a Deaf man (MacDougall, 2012).

For decades, interpreter education and standard practices encouraged interpreters to strive for neutrality within an interpreted interaction and generally remain unobtrusive in order for the interpreter to blend into the background. Metzger (2000) claims that this notion of a perfectly unbiased and invisible interpreter is impossible and potentially damaging to the process of interpreting. An interpreter cannot evade her own humanity, emotions, opinions, or physical presence while she works. As discussed by Feyne (2015) and MacDougall (2012), her identity and presence is certain to affect the communication dynamics and product delivered through her. Therefore, Metzger (2000) implores interpreters to replace the "myth of neutrality" for a practice of learning about oneself, one's identity, values, opinions, tendencies, and constraints so that she may learn better strategies to manage these identity markers while on the job. Instead of striving to become invisible, an interpreter should acknowledge that her presence changes situational dynamics and learn to work within that reality.

The work of Feyne (2015), MacDougall (2012), and Metzger (2000) have enormous implications for the field of sign language interpreting when we consider the socio-cultural composition of working interpreters in the United States. Specifically, McDermid (2009a) published a comprehensive demographic survey of the field reporting that the pool of sign language interpreting is about 90% white and 76% white cisgender female. The majority of

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freelance interpreters hold a bachelor's degree or higher and are entering the field a full

decade younger than previous generations of interpreters. In contrast to approximately 90% of

the interpreting field represented by Whites, Latino interpreters make up just 5% of the field,

Black or African American interpreters represent 4%, and the last percentage of interpreters is

represented by Asian and other racial identities (Cogen & Cokely, 2015; McDermid,

2009a). Meanwhile, the cultural representation of d/Deaf consumers of interpreting service

more or less mirrors the configuration of race in the general American population (Cogen &

Cokely, 2015). The U.S. Census Bureau (2018) reports this as 60.7% White, 18.1% Latino, 13.4%

Black, and 5.8% Asian. Increasingly, white interpreters are finding themselves interpreting for

consumers with whom they do not share cultural knowledge or experience.

The social construction of the sign language interpreter is the result of many factors –

one of which is that interpreter education shifted from a grassroots community grown trade to

being located within colleges and universities. This complicates issues of access to the

profession due to white dominance being maintained within university systems excluding

nonwhites as students, faculty, or staff (Bradley, 2010; Brubacher & Rudy, 2017). This lack of

diverse representation in academia diminishes the rich cultural competence necessary from

which to draw when developing curriculum to address issues of cross-cultural communication

(West Oyedele, 2015).

B.   **Interpreter Education On Working Cross-Culturally**

Officially the field of sign language interpreting began collecting itself as a profession in

the 1960s and the establishment of collegiate education and training programs gained ground

in the 1970s (Ball, 2013). This progression is a direct result of multiple acts of legislation calling

for people with disabilities not to be excluded from education and employment opportunities

on the basis of disability. The National Technical Institute for the Deaf Act of 1965 established a

special program for Deaf education and trade skills to be housed at Rochester Institute for

Technology, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and early education under The Education for All

Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

secured d/Deaf peoples' right to accommodations in order to access public education at all

levels of academia. With the passage of these three laws, the demand for interpreters as

auxiliary aids exploded at a rate that conventional interpreter training methods could not

supply. In 1969, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf hosted the first official training

program - a fast track ten-week program that produced 500 interpreters during its existence

(Ball, 2013). According to Ball (2013) the initial days of interpreter training were ad hoc and

chaotic, without ethical standards, and required most interpreters to train-on-the-fly while on

jobs.

Since those early days of ad hoc interpreter training during a ten-week course,

interpreter education has grown into a four-year bachelor's degree offered at numerous

colleges across the U.S. Through its progression, stakeholders acknowledged the need for

education on cross cultural dynamics between interpreter colleagues and clients (Harrigan,

1997), leading to initiatives such as the National Multicultural Interpreter Project. The field is

critiqued for its slow progress to implement tangible change (Bruce, 1998; Harrigan, 1997;

McDermid, 2009b; Schafer & Cokely, 2016; West Oyedele, 2015). Furthermore, the

Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE) established an accreditation process for

interpreter education; accreditation that thirteen institutions with four year programs have

achieved. The current CCIE Accreditation Standards (2014) require that "curriculum addresses

knowledge competencies related to multicultural and diverse populations" (p. 8). More

specifically, program curriculum is to address "the effects of oppression and discrimination (e.g., audism, racism, sexism), the influence of power and privilege within multicultural and diverse populations, majority and minority culture dynamics and dynamics of cross-cultural interaction" (CCIE, 2014, p. 8). The standards also encourage programs to hire faculty of diverse cultural backgrounds and that "the students have documented exposure to diverse populations" (CCIE, 2014, p. 5).

In addition, a needs assessment interpreter education conducted by Schafer and Cokely (2016) unveiled that the practice of diversity education from a culturally diverse base of faculty are not being realized by most institutions. In a focus group of current or past students of color who had at least started an interpreter education program, the consensus revealed these programs felt like "white, hearing students being taught about white, d/Deaf people by white, hearing instructors" (Schafer & Cokely, 2016, p. 6). Ball's text includes documentation of only one non-white interpreter educator working to shape interpreter education. This lack of diverse racial and cultural representation in interpreter education directly negatively effects nonwhite students' experience. A study of Black/African American interpreters' experience in an interpreting education program found that an overwhelming majority of focus group and interview participants "reported having little to no discussion in their interpreter preparation programs about multiculturalism and/or cultural competence" (West Oyedele, 2015, p. 45).

By not addressing issues of cultural competence, differences, experiences, and oppressions within interpreter training programs, Bruce (1998) reports that interpreting students of color receive conflicting instructional feedback on their skill when their signing style differs from standard white practices. They also receive little preparation for transitioning between the predominantly white interpreter education experience to working with the

diverse communities of clients outside of the institution (Bruce, 1998). Cultural insensitivity

and micro-aggressions committed by colleagues toward their professional peers of color are

consistent problems that could have and should have been addressed during interpreter

education (Bruce, 1998; Harrigan, 1997; West Oyedele, 2015). The lack of interpreter

educators who are members of racial minorities is obvious and well documented (Bruce, 1998;

Harrigan, 1997; McDermid, 2009b; Schafer & Cokely, 2016; West Oyedele, 2015). Bruce (1998)

and West Oyedele (2015) emphasize the importance of having faculty of color and, ideally,

similar cultural backgrounds as being directly linked to students of color's levels of success in

education regardless the subject.

Before proceeding further into this work, I must address the merry-go-round of

vocabulary used to discuss matters of critical pedagogy. Keys words (and their various

iterations) of note used in the curriculum of Interpreter Training Programs, also known as

Interpreter Education Programs, the CCIE Curriculum Standards (2014), ABC University

curriculum, literature included in this review, and my own writing are diversity,

multiculturalism, equity and inclusion. Critical pedagogy is an overarching theory of education

that promotes an active analysis of power, intersectionality and social, and historical contexts

through curriculum design (Au, 2011; Groenke, 2009; Rhem, 2013). Ultimately it is this

organization of power and how it shapes ITP/IEPs into locations for the reproduction of

whiteness that I seek to better understand and document.

As discussed in depth later, language used in ITP/IEP curriculum reflects language

commonly used in pedagogy that attempts to assume a critical social lens by focusing on the

manifestations of power (Au, 2011, 2017; Rhem, 2013) but sidesteps a direct confrontation of

the dominating power at the root (Ahmed, 2004). Instead, I defer the term intersectionality

throughout this paper to recognize matters of race, class, gender, disability, sexuality and other

identity markers as they operate within systems of power. The original conceptualization of

intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) includes an inherent invocation of the critique of power and

how it is animated to compound oppression at the intersections of identity markers that

deviate from the dominant hegemonic (white, straight, able bodied, upper middle class, male)

social model. In addition to desiring a more critical vocabulary to work with throughout this

thesis, terms like diversity and multiculturalism actually threaten the type of critical

investigation and disruption of power that thesis intends. The problem with the word diversity

is "that the work is does depends on who gets to define the term, and form whom. Diversity

can facilitate ways that reproduce rather than challenge social privilege" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 7).

In her paper, "The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism," Sara Ahmed (2004) outlines the futility

of universities clinging to diversity as any kind of goal due to its subjective definition, the ease

with which it is co-opted by those in power to maintain their position, and how it outsources

accountability from the collective attitudes of individuals at the university to the abstractness of

the university as a monolith devoid of human contribution. She highlights the university's

objective to "look diverse" as a pitfall of complacency in "doing diversity" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 8).

Doing diversity requires a consistent examination of the manifestations of oppressive power.

Wayne Au (2011) similarly critiques the term multiculturalism for a lack of consideration of the

effect that power, historical context, and educational policy has on what multicultural

education is trying to achieve or why it is necessary. ABC University's curriculum standards

refer to principles of "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI). Diversity and inclusion are empty

terms of doing real social justice work (Ahmed, 2004; Au, 2011), but equity maintains the

potential for confronting power similar to intersectionality studies (Au, 2011; Crenshaw, 1991).

Since equity carries the potential (not a promise) for a more critical examination of power, and is a direct reference to ABC University's nod toward critical pedagogy, I use DEI and intersectionality to discuss more progressive curricular ideas to work toward. Conversely, I strive to avoid using the terms diversity and multiculturalism to discuss matters of critical pedagogy alluded to by ABC University's IEP curriculum and the CCIE Curriculum Standards (2014).

C.   **Deaf Studies**

Until recently, Deaf Studies was the growing body of work resulting from an oppression-resistance or reactive model (Shultz Myers & Fernandes, 2009, p. 30) of identity formation of the American Deaf community. "Rewriting deaf to Deaf is about disowning an imposed medicalized identity and developing an empowered identity rooted in a community and culture of others who share similar experiences and outlooks on the world" (Bauman, 2008, p. 11). This confession of Deaf identity development begs the questions *Whose community? Whose shared experiences and outlooks? Which experiences and outlooks?* There is a collection of attempts at community boundary formation that demarcate groups of people based on various attributes, values, or habits such as audiological hearing loss, adherence to norms of visually oriented behavior as opposed to audibly oriented, and the use and preference of sign language over spoken language. Rejection of auditory prosthetics, assistive listening technology, medicalization of deafness, or deafness as a disability are regular markers of historically praised Deaf identity and community values. Baker-Shenk and Cokely's (1980) popular venn diagram (Figure 1) illustrates various attributes of being culturally Deaf that allows flexibility in community membership to be inclusive of individuals who exhibit one or more (but not necessarily every) attribute of traditional deaf traits. This diagram establishes a

kind of hierarchical Deaf-centric community structure with peripheral members claiming just

one connection to deafness. The purest model of the Deaf community member resides at the

center of the intersecting circles. A favorite cultural label among the signing Deaf is "linguistic

minority" since it neatly skirts all medicalization and any implication of deficiency.
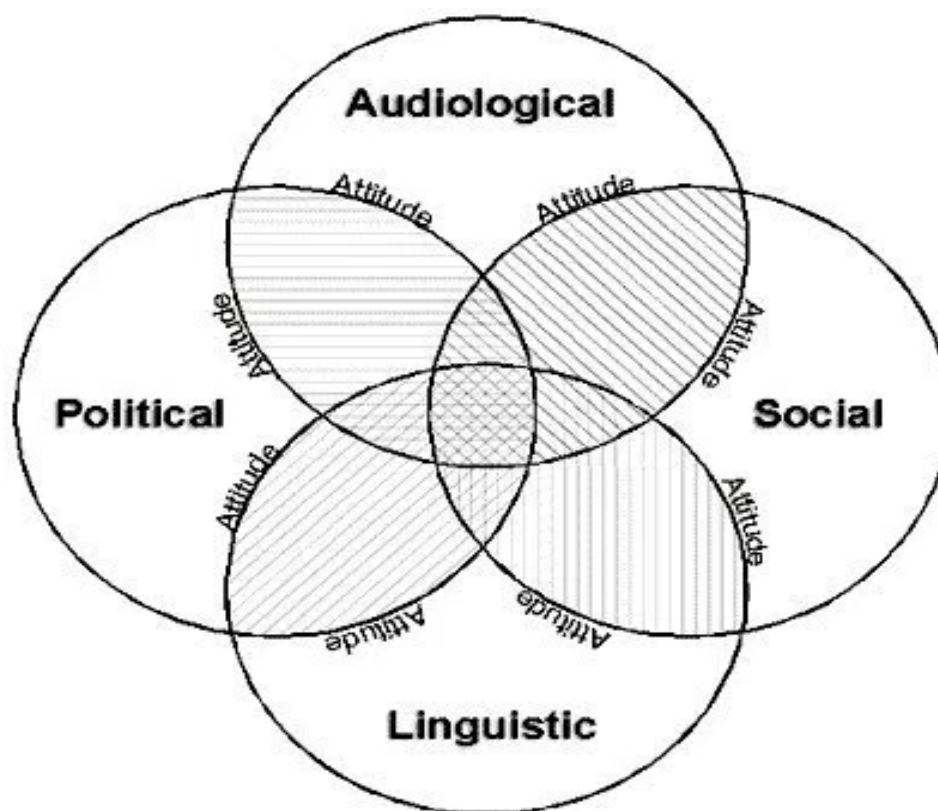
Figure 1. Baker-Shenk & Cokely's Deaf Culture Venn Diagram

This figure depicts a conceptualization of multifacted Deaf community membership. There are four traits of deaf life traditionally attributed to culturally Deaf people – audiological (diagnosis of hearing loss), social (associate with Deaf people and associations), linguistic (are fluent in and prefer using sign language) political (interested in political involvement to ensure the maintenance of access of these traits). People who illicit all four traits are located at the core of the community. This model differs from traditional Deaf community models by includes those who are not audiologically deaf as members of the community. For this reason it is also contested (Hauser et al, 2010).

It is not my intention here to dwell on the version of Deaf Studies that I do not intend to employ; however, it might be helpful to have a brief synopsis of how it developed as the first wave of the field. The turn of the 20th century was a tumultuous time for deafness in America. Larger numbers of deaf individuals are recorded as a result of disease outbreaks that left survivors with hearing loss such as Spinal Meningitis Measles and the Spanish Flu, which did not have the medical solutions available today. At the same time, oralism - the pedagogical practice insistent on lipreading and speech - had recently become the new preferred method of Western educative practices for Deaf children instead of the use of sign language that had dominated for nearly a century prior. In addition, the United States' eugenics movement was in full swing which included a call for congenitally deaf individuals to be sterilized so that they would not pass on what was believed to be undesirable, disabled "Deaf genes." These three important events present a picture of a large base of d/Deaf people being denied access to their most accessible and therefore natural language, let alone basic personhood. Though the most invasive practices of eugenics in the U.S. mostly went by the wayside by the beginning of WWII, Deaf people were still denied equal rights to language, education, employment, social opportunities, and other rights of basic citizenship. In 1967, a linguist at Gallaudet University, Dr. William Stokoe, discovered that American Sign Language (ASL) fulfilled the necessary parameters to be classified as a full and complete language as opposed to the previous misconception that it was simply a system of sophisticated gesture. This academic validation of ASL as a full and independent language galvanized the Deaf community's commitment to defining themselves as a proud linguistic and cultural minority and completely rejecting the "deficiency" model. Throughout the 20th century, d/Deaf folks fought to effect political and social change, to defend Deaf identity as a source of pride, secure the right to access

communication through sign language, and to access education, employment, and social mobility.

This 20th century Deaf identity development, shared experience took on a very narrow collection of experiences that served to delineate and inform the boundaries of a cultural Deaf community. This narrative of Deaf cultural identity and membership is widely documented in texts (Gannon, 2011; Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996; Holcomb, 2013; Leigh, Andrews, & Harris, 2016; Moore & Levitan, 2016; Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989) and is regularly presented in Deaf Culture classes across the nation. Of course there are variations on the theme but in short, the cultural Deaf community narrative is thus. Prior to the 1970s, a child was diagnosed as deaf as a toddler and sent to a Deaf residential school where they lived in a dorm with deaf peers. These schools offered one of two pedagogical camps: education through sign language (accessible = good) or education through oralism (oppressive = evil). Employment was often found in factory or warehouse settings such as the U.S. Post Office, print shops, or assembly line manufacturing[1]. If they attended college, they went to Gallaudet University - the only Deaf liberal arts college in the world - and learned to sign there if they had been raised with oralism. The lack of internet and videophone technology prompted a more active participation in Deaf clubs where storytelling was one of the most treasured cultural artifacts (Lenzerini, 2011) kept alive through a constant transferring of hands. This settled version of the Deaf experience, however, was not to last.

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[1] Firestone and Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company's headquarters are located in Akron, Ohio and during World War I and II employed hundreds of Deaf people (Goodyear, 1918) - enough to establish a permanent Deaf community there. The sign still used today for Akron is the sign that denotes rubber because of the enduring connection between Akron, the rubber plants, and Deaf people.

With the advancement of video technology, the internet, cochlear implants, changing educational environments, and other factors, the traditionally shared Deaf experience is petering out. Deaf people engage with each other via videophones and the internet instead of gathering at a Deaf club. The passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1972 began the systematic divestment in Deaf residential school across America (Moores, 2011). The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 provided Deaf workers new opportunities of diversified employment that broke up Deaf labor communities in places such as the post office and other warehouses (Houston, Lammers, & Svorny, 2010). Cochlear implants are often situated as the key factor in shifting the identity of the American Deaf community by changing the very understanding of what it has always meant to be Deaf. Some regard this change as a lasting legacy of eugenics paired with the advent of modern technology endorsing this corporeal intrusion of the body to attempt to eradicate deafness (Mauldin, 2016). With this shift in Deaf identity, culture, and community, our understanding of its formation and existence must shift as well. The prescriptivism of Traditional Deaf Studies, with its rigid definitions of Deaf embodiment and membership, is resistant to the plurality of intersectional d/Deaf knowledges. Whiteness is also a dominant power that seeks to maintain itself by resisting an inclusive, intersectional embodiment. I substantially expand on these and other ways that whiteness maintains social control even within the Deaf community in the following sections.

D. **Deaf Studies In Transition**

Though the above overview of Traditional Deaf Studies is still the dominant narrative, scholarship that investigates the intersectional d/Deaf experience is beginning to emerge. Preliminary scholarship of d/Deaf intersectionality such as race, gender, sexuality, and disability

present a critical movement in how to understand d/Deaf life and approach Deaf Studies going forward. Some of this knowledge is not new, but rather, recovered from racist, sexist, homophobic, and ableist legacies of marginalization. For example, Deaf Studies' recognition of a Black ASL dialect (McCaskill, Lucas, Bayley, & Hill, 2011) and Black Deaf life in historical and contemporary contexts (Anderson & Dunn, 2016a, 2016b) is history recovered to scholarship within the last decade. Of note is how Black Deaf communities in the United States were not immune to the legacy of segregation in America. The last Deaf school to desegregate black and white d/Deaf students did so as late as 1978 (McCaskill et al., 2011). The effect of segregated Deaf schooling and other spaces was that a Black dialect of ASL developed in these marginalized spaces unique to the Black Deaf experience; the Black ASL dialect is still identifiable to date (Hill, McCaskill, Lucas, & Bayley, 2010). The intersection of deafness and non-white racialized people is explored in other academic contexts (Ahmad, Atkin, & Jones, 2002; Anderson & Miller, 2004; Foster & Kinuthia, 2003; Stein, 2009; Toliver-Smith & Gentry, 2017) but the dearth of this kind of work leaves much to be explored.

Raymond Luczak is a prolific scholar on the intersection of Deafness and sexuality, editing two anthologies (Luczak, 1933; 2007) with another forthcoming in 2023 focused on the topic. In addition, he has contributed to multiple other works of fiction, poetry, and autobiographical writing through a Deaf white gay male sexuality lens. Outside of Luczak's work, the available academic work at the intersection of Deafness and sexuality is limited to less than a handful of published works (Bienvenu, 2007; David & Cruz, 2018; Miller, Biskupiak, & Kushalnagar, 2018) with some overlap into women and gender studies (Joharchi & Clark, 2014). There is even less work available on Deafness and gender (Baynton, 1996) whether one is searching for Deaf women's experience (Brueggemann & Burch, 2006; Kelly, 2016) or Deaf non-

binary experience (Forman, 2018). Najarian's article (2006) bridges Deafness, gender, and disability but seems to be a lone work. Numerous articles are available at the intersection of Deafness and disability in part as the d/Deaf community's historic hostile response to being regarded as disabled. Very recently, developmental disability as a result of language deprivation in d/Deaf children has emerged as field that directly links the deprivation of full language access at the onset of life with lifelong intellectual, emotional, and behavioral impairments (Gulati, 2019). In rare spotlights, Deaf intersections with race, disability (language deprivation), and criminal justice can be found in similar stories of unjust incarceration (Burch & Joyner, 2007; Tidyman, 1974). Though it is encouraging to see emerging focus on these types of stories, they are a micro-sample of the reality of Deaf, disabled, people of color wrongfully caught up in the criminal justice system. Both stories were recounted before the formal naming of language deprivation and feature black Deaf men; the intersectionality of their stories is a possible reason that their stories are not regarded prominently in the cannon of Traditional Deaf Studies. Further, the controversy of Deaf as disabled is still alive and well as can be noted in the scholarly work on the subject (Bauman, 2005; Baynton, 1996; Burch & Kafer, 2010; Chapman & Dammeyer, 2016; Kusters, 2011; Mauldin, 2018; Paul, 2018). The messiness of Deaf intersectionality clashes with the tidiness of a myopic Traditional Deaf Studies which has stymied its development in past years. The above sample of literature is not an exhaustive list but neither is it a gross understatement of what is available.

The modest collection of d/Deaf intersectional scholarship reviewed above presents little discussion of multiple intersections at play simultaneously, further indicating the infancy of this type of work. The majority of academic investigation remains limited to the intersection of Deaf and race, or Deaf and sexuality, or Deaf and disability, and so on. It is exciting to

imagine a day when Deaf Studies offers representations of a true intersectional approach that acknowledges the simultaneity of race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, and more. In addition to creating this work, d/Deaf intersectional scholarship must also jostle for positioning to be recognized as belonging to the traditional field of Deaf Studies (Shultz Myers & Fernandes, 2009). This added labor of defending its scholarly positioning in addition to its central contribution remains a barrier to the expansion of Inclusive Deaf Studies (Fernandes & Shultz Myers, 2009). There is much work to be done with regard to developing Inclusive Deaf Studies. In this thesis I discuss multiple intersections often at play but will focus the majority of attention on the intersection of whiteness, interpreter education and Deaf Studies.

E.   **Critical Whiteness Studies**

Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) is an organizing concept that investigates whiteness as the central force for social organization. Arguably, the institutional examining of whiteness began at the end of the nineteenth century by thinkers such as W.E.B. Du Bois (Du Bois & Edwards, 2007) and continued throughout the twentieth century with increasing popularity. The 1990s saw it develop into a widely accepted discipline of study. Some say that CWS is an offshoot of Critical Race Theory or should be organized under a Critical Race Theory categorical umbrella which, in its original iteration, investigated the relationship between race, law and power. Other scholars, however, have suggested the opposite - that CWS should function as the overarching organizational opposition since whiteness is central to the existence of U.S. racial ordering and power (Mills, 1999; Owen, 2007). In this section I introduce David S. Owen's (2007) methodical breakdown of whiteness, expand on the concepts of "white invisibility" (Dyer, 2008), and complicity in white supremacy (Applebaum, 2007; Sleeter, 1994). I then respond to the most obvious argument against CWS which is the concern that

centering whiteness as a topic of study is another way to venerate its power instead of liberating non-whiteness from white oppression (Applebaum, 2007; Owen, 2007; Wiegman, 1999). Lastly, I provide actionable steps toward disrupting whiteness in university settings as suggested in response to two decades of research on the structuring qualities of racial ordering (Ahmed, 2004).

1.   **What is critical whiteness studies**

Critical Whiteness Studies is a discipline of scholarship that is aimed at demystifying the power of whiteness in society (Applebaum, 2011). It recognizes whiteness as a social construction rooted in a history of explicit racial violence that maintains modern systems of violence through more covert operations. In his foundational essay, *Towards A Critical Theory of Whiteness*, David S. Owen (2007) outlines seven structural properties of whiteness. Structuring refers to how the property functions to establish a social order, erect mechanisms, and distribute resources to maintain that social order indefinitely. These properties are: a racialized perspective, structural advantage, normalization, invisibility, embodied practice, shifting borders, and violence (Owen, 2007). Some of these properties contain aspects that overlap with each other, and all of these properties regularly work together toward a reproduction of whiteness. These properties, which I briefly review in the following paragraphs are a launch point into understanding CWS scholarship.

First, Owen (2007) begins with the concept that the structuring power of whiteness requires a white perspective or standpoint. This white perspective often develops from groups of white people who isolate themselves or are isolated from peoples and ways of life that deviate from their own. White social order is perceived as prime and their whiteness becomes indelibly linked to that order. Pierre Bourdieu's (2003) concept of Habitus describes a cyclical

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process that can be applied to how this racialized perspective is developed and internalized. He

asserts that the social world is made up of structures maintained by individuals; and thus, the

resulting experience of interacting with that social world is internalized by an individual

(Bourdieu, 2003). If a white person's social world consists solely of others in likeness, the

individual's orientation is solidified in whiteness. Once whiteness is firmly established as the

racial set of values and group interest, it "becomes the prime determinants of socio-political

attitudes and behavior" (Mills, 1999, p. 19); all other ways of being in the world are categorized

as illogical and impossible. Weigman (1999) is critical of white whiteness studies scholars as

doomed to fail because their racialized perspective is an inescapable product of their being

white in the world, even after beginning to study it as a subject. The racialized perspective is a

lens so permanently fixed to the viewer, it might as well be the eyes themselves.

Structural advantage refers to whites' unique ease of access to citizenship rights,

wealth, political power and protection, education, residency and other institutional

supports. This is supported even in the founding doctrine of the country. The Declaration of

Independence is critiqued for its line "...all men are created equal…" which includes a hidden

racial classifier between all and men (Mills, 1999, p. 16). We know this because accompanying

doctrine diminished black personhood to three-fifths of a whole person and eschewed native

people from citizenship rights. The structural advantage of whiteness is deep, even embedded

in the U.S.'s founding doctrine but other examples of structural advantage are evident in

disparate distribution of day-to-day needs and experiences. An obvious example of white

structural advantage over non-whites is Jim Crow legislation and the segregation of public

structures and spaces in America as For Whites Only. Ongoing examinations of social

institutions uncover a long legacy of legal protections, bank loans, education, public assistance,

and other social supports distributed at disparate levels according to race (Alexander, 2010; Gustafson, 2012; Hinton, 2016; Schwemm & Taren, 2010). These white structural advantages have been in place since America's inception, obscuring their exclusiveness as the natural, normal course of social development.

The normalization of whiteness acts as an important property of ensuring its reproduction. Through imagery, rhetoric, legal protections, and economic endorsements, whiteness is presented as natural, normal, and mainstream (Dyer, 2008; Owen, 2007). The proliferation of whiteness through imagery dates back centuries as can be seen in Nordic paintings depicting middle-eastern religious icons as blonde haired and blue eyed (Collins, 2000). This tradition has been carried forward in American museums that predominantly feature white contributors (Blackwood & Purcell, 2014), history books that only include the white side of history (Mayers, 2012), and Hollywood's notorious legacy of whitewashing non-white roles by casting white actors to portray them (Lopez, 2017). This flood of white depiction and normalization then, presents non-whiteness as unnatural, abnormal, and outsider. The normalization of whiteness solidifies its persistence while simultaneously marginalizing non-whites as other. Due to its normalization and hegemonic status, whiteness is able to become an invisible agent in society.

The invisibility of whiteness takes the normalization of whiteness one step further; instead of naming whiteness as normal, natural and mainstream, these characteristics are simply assumed. We are able to see evidence of this assumption by the fact that words like race, diversity, and multicultural have taken on a distinct implication of non-whiteness. "As long as race is something only applied to non-white peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as a human norm. Other people are raced, we are

just people" (Dyer, 2008, p. 10). More than individual acts of explicit racist violence,

institutional racism is an inescapable system that maintains and reproduces a hierarchical racial

organization through economic and political oppression on non-whites (Applebaum, 2007;

Bourdieu, 2003; Dyer, 2008; Mills, 1999; Owen, 2007). The structured nature of systemic

racism offers another opportunity for whiteness to become invisible. Mills (1999) writes, "Even

when the overtly discriminatory patterns of the past have disappeared, the legacy of these

practices continues so that the system is reproduced even with no racist intent" (p. 30).

Whether functioning as an assumed norm or as a legacy of earlier implementation, white

invisibly manages peoples, property, and policy to its own advantage and maintenance. In

order to disrupt this elusive practice, we must name each mechanism of its reproduction and

make the invisible visible.

In addition to Owen's work (2007), another key property of the reproduction of

whiteness and white supremacy is white complicity. White complicity is the idea that white

people benefit from social systems that are designed to put them at an advantage at the

expense of others and do nothing to disrupt the arrangement. It "connects individuals to

systems in which the privileges of some are relationally predicated upon the unjust exclusions

of others" (Applebaum, 2007, p. 456). Complicity is often an accusation of an individual's lack

of action to intercede in someone else's wrongdoing. CWS also indicts white society, as an

entity, of a privileged complicity that violently maintains white power at the expense of non-

white groups (Kutz, 2000). Whites people's participation in society is free of molestation by the

systems of oppression (Applebaum, 2007). For non-whites, just being is an invitation for society

to intrude with violence ingrained within a disparate system. Recognizing one's own complicity

leads whites to feel an unbearable amount of guilt and then helplessness at not being able to

change the system (Helms, 1990). In an effort to alleviate this insoluble stress, many whites

retreat back into the system, justifying their innocence with claims of ignorance and contending

that their good moral intention will save them from perpetrating racism (Applebaum, 2006;

Helms, 1990). Complicity, however, is not necessarily tied to moral intention since the

structure, by nature, is racist. Focusing on morality lifts the focus from systems of oppression

which allows them to continue operating without interruption. Applebaum's (2011) writes that

this issue of "being morally good may not facilitate and may even frustrate the recognition of

such responsibility" (p. 3) to challenge systems of racism and white complicity. Working toward

social justice is not a competition of duality. Reducing systemic racism to a measurement of

good or bad and the subsequent human engagement with systemic racism as morally good or

morally bad cheapens the systemic reality that has direct consequences for non-whites. At

best, morality is not useful in the context of addressing white complicity and at worst, morality

is a selfish white navel-gazing that deflects attention away from CWS' abolitionist goals of

disrupting the white hegemonic social foundation.

Beyond the biology of skin color, scholars agree that there is an embodied and

performed white cultural capital (Applebaum, 2007; Bourdieu, 2003; Owen, 2007). Cultural

capital is the command of culturally specific styles of behavior, of dress, of speaking, and levels

of education that navigate a person through social structures and space (Bourdieu, 2003). "By

means of socialization and acculturation, it becomes part of our bodily dispositions and

comportment in the world" (Owen, 2007, p. 206). The enduring daily practice of white

behavioral expectations "...shapes ones being, one's cognition, one's experience in the world…"

(Mills, 1999, p. 21) and fulfill centuries of prioritization of white values, traditions, religions, and

social organization. The institutions established out of, to maintain and to reward white

dominance require people to conform to white normative behavior in order to unlock the benefits promised by these institutions. So in addition to looking white, whites perform an embodied loyalty to the empire of whiteness. Since white people are enculturated from birth in the ways of whiteness, "white people perform and sustain whiteness continuously, often without conscious intent, often by doing nothing out of the ordinary" (Applebaum, 2007, p. 456). This unconscious performance of whiteness reiterates the normalization of white dominance and allows whites to exonerate themselves from any culpability in the oppression of non-whites.

Owen (2007) discusses various levels and types of violence as another form of maintaining whiteness. Overt examples of violence such as lynching or massacres tend to be regarded (by whites) as random acts committed by individuals not representative of white society. Covert violence seems to lack a direct perpetrator and is often referred to as systemic and institutionalized violence through economic, educational, and territorial oppression (Gustafson, 2012). Justification for violence that ensures white supremacy is claimed, "…by producing the threat of its own extinction as the justification and motivation for violent retaliations" (Weigman, 1999, p. 117). This is best illustrated by the sitting president of the United States in numerous speeches including a Las Vegas campaign rally in 2016 when he announced about a black man in attendance "I'd like to punch him in the face. We are not allowed to punch back anymore. I love the old days. You know what they used to do to a guy like that in a place like this? They'd be carried out on a stretcher, folks" (Corasaniti & Haberman, 2016). Violence of all kinds is exacted by whites on non-whites as preemptive and reactionary solutions to ensuring the maintenance of whiteness. This violence does not always need an individual perpetrator nor explicitly cite race as the catalyst as in the case of the

Declaration of Independence or Trump's rally rhetoric. Nevertheless, it controls people and

power through corporeal violence.

2.   **A critique of critical whiteness studies**

Before concluding this section on Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), I must

address two critiques of the field. The first critique is that there is a danger in centering

whiteness as the focus of study and that by doing so, CWS inadvertently disregards the

experience of racialized peoples and acts as an agent of white supremacy (McClendon, 2004;

Wiegman, 1999). This danger is directly acknowledged by CWS scholars and addressed with the

explanation that CWS is and must be conducted with a liberatory intention and practice (Owen,

2007). While sloppy scholarship may create cause for concern that CWS perpetuates white

supremacy, the intent of the field is to illuminate white supremacy and racism where it has

hidden in plain sight for centuries. The task is to become conscious of racist structures so that

white society can become active participants in dismantling their hegemonic power

(Applebaum, 2007). A second critique is that in order to analyze structural racism, CWS takes

an essentialist view of whiteness and whites, and neglects the intersectional qualities of

whiteness such as class, immigration, gender, disability, sexuality, and temporal contexts

(Applebaum, 2007; McClendon, 2004; Nayak, 2007; Wiegman, 1999). CWS scholars address

this by acknowledging the shifting borders of whiteness that fluctuate with the context of time

and place (Mills, 1999; Owen, 2007). I propose that the individual embodiment of whiteness

and whiteness as a monolithic force must be investigated side by side to discover how the

animation of one supports the other. The micro and macro analysis of whiteness informs CWS

of multilevel power dynamics that maintain white dominance. Charles Mills' (1999) advises

"Above all it would mean rejecting orthodox frameworks and explicitly trying to work out the

internal logic of a racial polity" (p. 15). This critique of CWS is not unfounded but rather a

warning for CWS scholars to be mindful of the intention with which they conduct research,

progress the field, and center whiteness as an object for meticulous examination instead of

reverence.

F.   **Bridging Deaf Studies And Critical Whiteness Studies**

My aim is to situate this project in a methodology that brings Inclusive Deaf Studies and

Critical Whiteness Studies into conversation. Inclusive Deaf Studies does not reflect the

traditional prescriptive approach that centers on a visual orientation, the resistance of audism[2]

and use of American Sign Language (Bauman, 2008; Gertz, 2003; Humphries, 1975; Lane,

Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996). This traditional approach is critiqued for a presenting restrictive

view of deafness that divides people into in-group/out-group members of an experience

narrowly defined by white male Deaf scholars in their likeness. Instead, I am interested in using

an inclusive, descriptive approach to Deaf Studies that is intentionally disinterested in Deaf

membership status. This inclusive approach honors, observes and explores all things related to

the intersectional d/Deaf experience in America (Fernandes & Shultz Myers, 2009; Shultz Myers

& Fernandes, 2009).

Traditionally, the identity marker for defining the Deaf membership boundary is

audiological deafness. This singular sensory position triggers a chain reaction of similar

experiences and needs that would not exist if it were not for hearing loss. This proscriptive,

Deaf essentialist community boundary subsequently functions as a barrier for community

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[2] Audism is a set of beliefs that include: hearing people are superior to Deaf people; Deaf
people should be pitied for having futile and miserable lives; Deaf people should become like
hearing people as much as possible; and shunning of sign languages (Pelka, 1997, p. 33).

expansion since it ignores diverse experiences resulting from being Deaf *and* raced, gendered, classed, queer, disabled and linguistically diverse. Published in 1991, Kimberle Crenshaw's work on intersectionality notes that these identity attributes are always simultaneously at play and that we do not get to don or remove individual characteristics like a costume. In context, it is possible to emphasize and draw on one identifying quality more than another but it is never possible, for example, to *just* be Deaf instead of, for example, Deaf, gay, cyborg, and Latina (Brueggemann, 2009; Haraway, 1991). Some Deaf studies scholars claim that deafness is an ethnicity in itself and the Deaf-to-Deaf social connection is so innate that it transcends race, class, gender, and sexuality (Lane, 2005). This is similar to the popular 1990s concept of colorblindness - the idea society can and should transcend race to simply see people as people (Au, 2011). This provides (white) society with a moral high ground and easy escape from confronting the complicated issue of race in the U.S. (Ahmed, 2004; Alexander, 2010). Critical race scholars were quick to reject this idea of transcending race "because that approach too often leaves intact differential treatment of whites and [non-whites] and provides subtle confirmation of the idea that different races exist independently on social distinctions" (Ignatiev & Garvey, 1994, p. 14). A colorblind Deaf-ethnicity theory does not serve to broaden understanding of how the intersectionality of d/Deaf people shapes their lived experiences within a white dominant, ableist, society.

Traditional Deaf Studies rejects the notion of deafness as a disability. Harlan Lane (2005) asserts that the concept of deaf-as-disability threatens the future of the Deaf world and culture. The claim is that Deaf identity and cultural membership depends on distancing itself from disability in an attempt to dodge medicalization or ineffective solutions to social issues developed from a false conception of deafness. Ironically, both Deaf and Disability scholars

reject an identity defined by pathology but instead of working as allies, Deaf scholars adopt

ableist rhetoric against those with non-deafness related disabilities (Ha'am, 2017). When Deaf

people with disabilities engage with the Deaf community, they are regarded as Deaf first, and

disabled second – that is if their disability is recognized at all (Johnson & Nieto, 2007). This is

problematic since there are congenital and contracted conditions such as Usher Syndrome,

Waardenburg Syndrome, and meningitis that often cause deafness in addition to other

disabilities. Sophisticated medical developments support life for bodies who might have

otherwise perished from illness, injury, or premature birth and the result is often life with

deafness and other disabilities. The Deaf community has the potential to grow because of

these realities but its ableist boundaries work to ostracize those who embody the intersection

of deaf and disabled. Traditional Deaf Studies maintains a segregation between deafness and

disability by addressing these people as DeafPlus or Deaf with disabilities (Guardino & Cannon,

2015). This refusal to engage disability in discussions of deafness reveals Traditional Deaf

Studies' propensity for ableism and sabotages another opportunity for a broader understanding

of deafness. It shuts down any opportunity to be informed by Disability Studies - a potential

resource of allied scholarship and insight. It also reinforces the anti-intersectional Deaf identity

by implying that if a person is Deaf-plus-anything it can only mean disability; Deaf-plus-race,

class, gender, sexuality or other is not even on the radar. In so doing, not only does Deafplus

reinforce an exclusive boundary for Deafness, it further stigmatizes disability as being othered

beyond the spectrum of human diversity that does include race, class, gender, and sexuality.

The resulting Deaf ableism acts as a barrier to better understanding its own community –

especially those who embody the intersection of deafness and disability and would not be Deaf

if it were not for their disability. The social marginalization resulting from ableism mirrors and

supports the institution of white cultural hegemonic power which strives for an image of human perfection that is free from multiplicity and nuance.

Deaf scholar Brenda Brueggemann (2009) writes specifically about the nuanced betweenity of identity labels that uniquely shapes the Deaf subject's self-conceptualization. She discusses the relationship of the hyphen-space between two distinct classifications such as d/Deaf, Deaf-disabled, or ASL-English. Brueggemann (2009) explores this gray area of identity, claiming that people reside somewhere in-between identity labels instead of purely one label or another. Regardless of how people identify themselves, society often prevents an unadulterated realization of those identities. Brueggemann's embodiment of betweenity is complimentary to Crenshaw's intersectionality. A person experiences various identities (and their oppressions) (Crenshaw, 1991) as well as the betweenity of those identities. Betweenity is magnified by the more intersectional identity markers present. For example, a person identifying as a non-disabled Deaf ASL user often spends most of their day using some form of spoken or written English in order to navigate public spaces that are overwhelmingly hearing. They experience barriers to education, employment, and social mobility that disables their participation in relationship to their hearing peers. In fact, betweenity is succinctly illustrated by ASL at the intersection of Deaf and hearing worlds. One of ASL's signs used for the concept *public* literally translates to *hearing people* or *hearing culture*. By using this sign for concepts such as public library, public schools, public space, those phrases translate literally to *hearing people's library*, *hearing kids' schools*, and *hearing people's space*. In essence, this demarcates centuries old social boundaries for places that are open and available to them while also not accessible for them. Deaf people's betweenity is that they are members of society and also not. They are not disabled and they are; they are not English users

and they are. It is this relationship; the *and* between these identity markers, the they are *and* they are not, or yes *and* no that Brueggemann (2009) claims is the truer presentation of the embodied d/Deaf experience that deserves attention.

Shirley Shultz Myers and Jane K. Fernandes' (2009) published two complementary articles to broaden this idea of an Inclusive Deaf Studies that acknowledges intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) and the betweenity of identity. The articles carry an urgency to redirect, if not completely reconstruct Deaf Studies from the ground up. Their radical claim is that Deaf Studies' legacy is at stake due to its rigid prescriptive and proscriptive essentialism that has resulted in the suppression of its own growth in scholarship and knowledge.

> If scholars were merely describing what is, they would be studying empirically all the ways deaf people live. We would see more studies of native Black signers, of deaf families or communities such as oral deaf families or communities, of deaf children growing up in the United States in homes where Spanish is spoken, and of deaf families who support implants or who rely primarily on implants. Instead, too much academic study, particularly at Gallaudet, as well as at National Technical Institute for the Deaf, California State University, Northridge, Utah Valley State College [currently known as Utah Valley University], and Boston University, continues to concentrate on White Deaf families who use their version of ASL— established as the standard, whereas other forms of signing are, at best, called dialects and, at worst, wrong or impossible. It also proscribes study of their cultural norms, so that other cultural norms of other deaf people are seen as deviations from the norm of Deaf culture, as non-Deaf, or even as unhealthy manifestations of deaf people with unrealized Deafhood. (Fernandes & Shultz Myers, 2009, p. 19)

Deaf Studies scholar Frank Bechter (2009) also critiques the field's classic proscriptive approach as constrained to be a consumer of theory instead of a producer of it. He claims that Deaf Culture's efforts toward recognition as an autonomous culture, universal and essentialist in nature, does more to discourage the expansion and enrichment of Deaf Studies than it does to invite it. If the claims of the classic Deaf identity and the enshrined Deaf Culture as presented through white genetically Deaf-of-Deaf families is the limit of d/Deaf experience, then there is

little opportunity left for Deaf Studies scholarship. Bechter (2009) illustrates that many

important opportunities to document d/Deaf culture are at the intersections of d/Deaf and

hearing interaction. I propose that important opportunities of investigation are at the

intersection of d/Deaf and all other identity characteristics (e.g., hearing, race, gender, sexual

orientation, class, etc.). As guiding questions toward an inclusive and reflexive Deaf Studies,

Bechter (2009) proposes that the field attend to investigating "its own role in facilitating deaf

public voice. What discourses must it penetrate? What ideas must it theorize?...And what

organizational structure must it have in order to do so?" (p. 73).

Inclusive Deaf Studies opens up opportunity to discover uncharted territory for a

modern understanding of deafness. It starts from a position that all iterations of deafness,

language choice, association to deafness, race, class, gender, disability, sexuality are valid and

offer valuable insight to developing Deaf Studies as a discipline (Fernandes & Shultz Myers,

2009). This deviates from current trends that d/Deaf intersectional scholarship must defend

their positionality in context to Deaf studies before they even start talking. Current

intersectional Deaf scholarship is available but its validity and circulation is carefully controlled

by the gatekeepers of Traditional Deaf Studies (Shultz Myers & Fernandes, 2009), who are a

white, straight, male majority. The animation of power employed by Traditional Deaf Studies to

control the boundaries of Deaf membership and scholarship mirrors the ways that white power

organizes society at large. Traditional Deaf Studies is an extension of white cultural hegemonic

values of valid scholarship defined along the lines of the dominant and therefore normative

race, class, gender, ability and sexuality. CWS posits that a critical analysis of whiteness is an

entry point to disrupting systems of white reproduction and social oppression of nonwhites

(Applebaum, 2011; Dyer, 2008; Mills, 1999; Owen, 2007) and, by extension, non-normative

others (Ha'am, 2017; Fernandes & Shultz Myers, 2009). The anti-racist positionality of CWS and

its strategy to locate whiteness as the operative of marginalization offers guidance to Inclusive

Deaf Studies for how to proceed as it develops itself as a discipline.

III.   METHODS

This study seeks to understand how accredited interpreter education curriculum

embeds and delivers racially intersectional content to its students. Additionally, this study is

interested in understanding how interpreter education curriculum acknowledges and addresses

other intersectional topics, power, privilege and diverse representation. Lastly, this study seeks

to identify which gaps in instruction on cultural competence, power, and privilege offer

opportunity for curriculum development on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Curriculum is a living document of educative philosophies, content, techniques, and priorities

endorsed by an institution (Au, 2011). It is alive in two ways – first that it is in constant

development and adjustment at the hands of its authors. Secondly, it interacts directly with

educators and students to direct an educational experience. Utilizing curriculum as data for a

study gives us a snapshot and view into the current state and philosophies of the institution,

department, and education offered within a given program (Prior, 2003). In this case, most

syllabi are developed by the current professor responsible for each course which allows us a

more personal view of the instructional approach prioritized at an individual level in addition to

the institutional level (Charmaz, 2006). My desire to understand how interpreter education

programs deliver critical curriculum and address intersectional topics and representation is

partially inspired from critiques of interpreter education as already favoring whiteness in

content and delivery (West Oyedele, 2015). My interest in this topic also stems from personal

experience as a white female interpreter navigating dissimilar cultural environments that I was

not prepared for during my interpreter education. Qualitative Content Analysis' steps of coding

and using thematic patterns were used to inductively lead to results responding to the

following five questions: "Who is telling? Where is this happening? When did it happen? What

is happening? Why is it happening?" (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 109), with regard to my research questions.

A.   **Researcher Reflections**

Throughout this project I insert ethnographic "Researcher Reflections" to illustrate the impact of cultural mismatching between interpreters and clients. In these reflections I describe some of my most culturally conflicted professional experiences that I still think about years later. Situations like these contribute to my inspiration to investigate this topic as a masters' thesis. Each reflection includes a brief contextual description of the job environment, the clients' cultural identity as I understood it (while maintaining client confidentiality), the goal of the situation, and a synopsis of what transpired as a result of me (able-bodied, white, cis gender, female) being the assigned interpreter. I use this heuristic method to keep my research empirically rooted in the practice of interpreting. I also utilize it to provide the reader with an insider perspective of the real-world implications of the current situation. Siebers (2008) highlights identity, narrative, and experiences in connection with disability as a loci of new theory that disrupts a traditional beliefs and invites critique of conventional knowledge. My reflective narratives are representative of navigating identity through an experience that would not otherwise occur if the deafness were not present. Disability Studies literature highlights the researcher's opportunity to contribute to scholarship through a reflective process that examines the navigation of power relationships, even those present between the insider researcher and the other participants (Davis, 2000). This study does not engage live participation, utilizing content analysis as the primary method instead. However, my interest for conducting this study began with confronting power relationships that are mobilized by identity politics (Siebers, 2008) amidst interpreters and d/Deaf clients – in this case, the

researcher and a community of participants. Therefore, beyond providing a simple contextual reference point, the researcher reflections are an invitation to understand the dynamics of power at play in an interpreted interaction.

B.   **Qualitative Content Analysis**

For this project I use a Qualitative Content Analysis method to analyze curriculum used to educate interpreters on their craft and role in the field. Content analysis is the systematic categorizing of relevant themes found within a data set, and then coding, analyzing and interpreting meaning beyond the literal form of the printed material (Krippendorff, 1989). It seeks to qualitatively extrapolate the message of the content by systematically identifying patterns of meaning and connecting or contrasting them with social philosophies, structures, and systems (Morgan, 1993). Interpreters are uniquely positioned to appreciate that in order to understand the meaning of an utterance, the context that the communication is couched within must also be understood. The context of communication works to shape the significance of that statement. Curriculum is no different. It is delivered within a cultural time and context that works to shape the resulting message. This context can be leveraged to influence curriculum design to align more closely to a cultural and political agenda (Joseph, 2015). The relationship between social context and the curriculum content message must be examined to locate social implications and consequences of the content itself (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). Understanding the messaging in the data in context of the current social environment is what I intend to achieve in this project.

This method is appropriate for this study because it systematically reviews what ABC University has prioritized into a curriculum. Among other things, curriculum is a political statement with social implications. Analyzing the content that ABC University has published in

their curriculum illuminates the message they are sending through their curricular choices. This method is important to my field of study because documents such as curriculum act to shape the broader definition of the field and expectations for the future iterations of where the field is headed. As mentioned in the literature review, the field of interpretation has sustained a gross imbalance of racial and otherwise intersectional representation for decades (McDermid, 2009a). Curriculum is a contributing factor to this white reproduction. This method is valuable to this study because it mirrors the experience of prospective students who are shopping the various IEP/ITPs. Before entering an IEP/ITP, students might try to get a sense of the program by viewing available syllabi and other pieces of curriculum. Using this method offers insight to what a student might understand of the program based on what they glean from the curriculum.

C.   **Design**

This study uses a qualitative inductive reasoning design. There are three main phases of conducting any content analysis: preparation, organizing, and reporting (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The preparation phase requires the researcher to gather content to be analyzed, clean the data and to become intimately familiar with the material. Thorough investigation of the guiding concepts and literature at this stage informs the researcher on key ideas to keep in mind during the analysis process. Organizing the material requires the researcher to distinguish categories or units of meaning to be identified throughout the material. Reporting results discovered throughout the organizing phase expects the researcher to support her conclusions by presenting examples from the data and analysis process. To meet the standards of research required to produce a rigorous study, I implemented this three-phase approach. Figure 2 shows a visual representation of the design steps.

Study Goals

Goal 1
Decipher how education on racially and otherwise intersectionally diverse content is embedded in interpreter curriculum.

Goal 2
Contextualize identified themes within a larger discussion of institutionalized reproduction of whiteness.

Goal 3
reposition identified gaps in DEI instruction as opportunities for curriculum development with contemporary social justice education

Lens

Critical Whiteness Studies + Inclusive Deaf Studies Methodology

Methods

Literature Review

Inductive Qualitative Content Analysis as informed by Grounded Theory thematic review

Interpreter education program Accreditation Standards published by the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education

28 syllabi comprising the full curriculum of an accredited bachelors degree program for interpreter education

Products

Illustration of how current trends in interpreter education curriculum scaffold the institutional reproduction of whiteness.

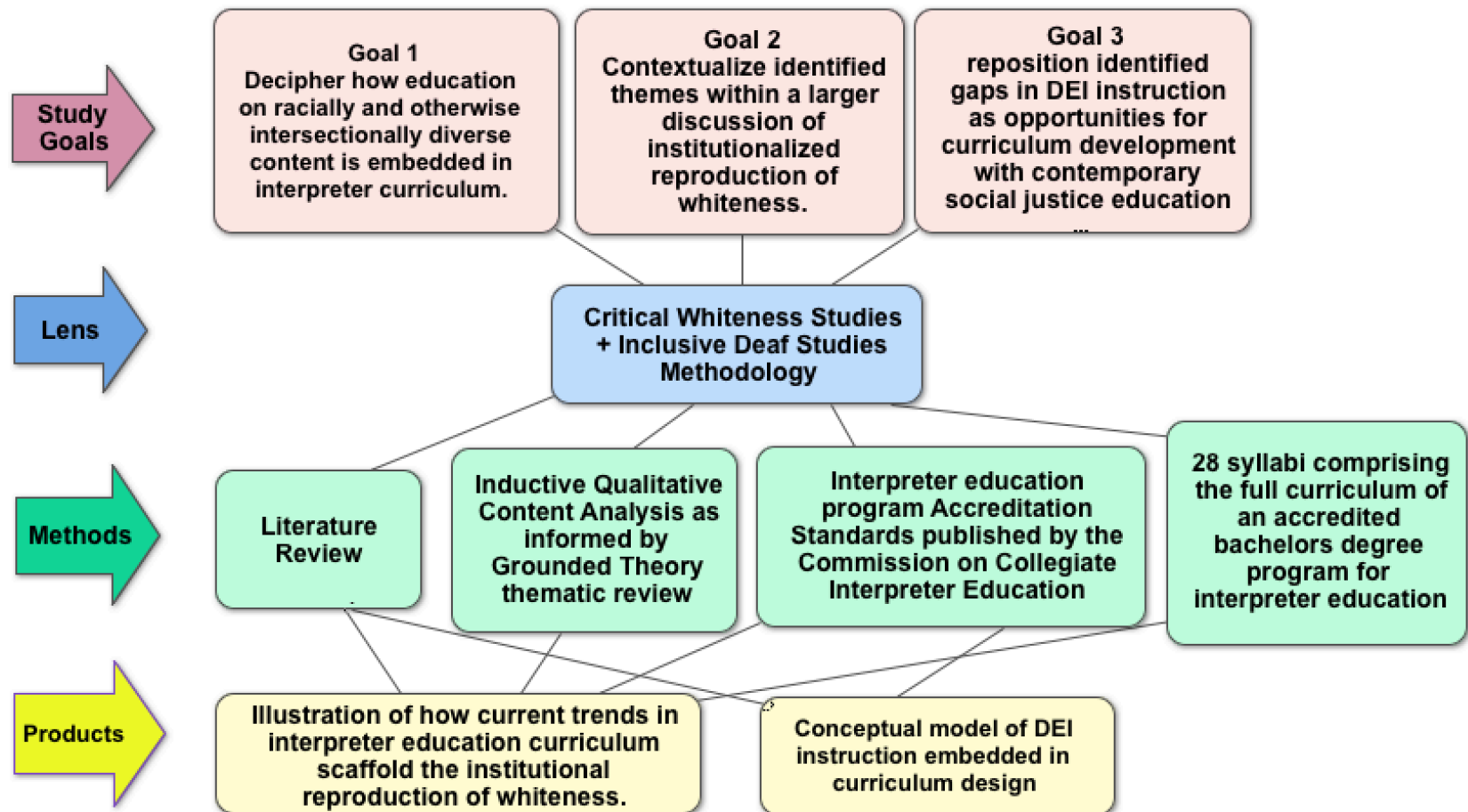Conceptual model of DEI instruction embedded in curriculum design

Figure 2. Flow chart of study design

40

1. **Data**

Curriculum Accreditation Standards: In order to understand what curriculum standards are expected by the sign language interpreting profession, I accessed the publicly available accreditation standards for interpreter education programs recently updated by the CCIE in 2014. This document lays out 10 standards for interpreter curriculum and sub-tenets within each standard. These standards cover:

1. Mission, Goals, and Core Values
2. Resources and Facilities
3. Students
4. Faculty
5. Curriculum Design
6. Curriculum: Knowledge Competencies
7. Curriculum: Skills Competencies
8. Curriculum: Interpreting Field Experience
9. Outcomes, Assessments, and Evaluations
10. Improvement, Planning, and Sustainability

College Curriculum Initiative for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: In order to understand what college wide curriculum requirements might aid in shaping ABC University's IEP curriculum, I briefly scanned their website for clues. According to the ABC University's website, in 2016 the institution established an initiative under the office of the provost for academic diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This initiative encourages professors to use an anti-racist framework when developing materials and offers a variety of resources for increased DEI in all institutional endeavors.

Interpreter Education Program Curriculum: In sourcing a curriculum that would offer relevant data to explore in regard to my research questions, I conducted a brief survey of the curriculum course breakdown from each of the thirteen CCIE accredited bachelor's degree programs for sign language interpreter education. Out of these, only four require students to

complete a departmentally offered course on the relationship between social diversity and interpreting. One of these four programs happened to be the one from which I graduated and still maintain personal and professional ties with. Knowing that this would add an insider researcher dimension to my study, I decided to leverage this alumni relationship for access to data, approached this program and was granted permission to use their full curriculum as my data source.

I was granted access to all 31 syllabi that comprise ABC University's interpreter education curriculum. Three syllabi were eliminated due to being independent studies courses that lacked syllabi and since those are based on student and faculty-supervisor agreement regarding a unique progression of study. Of the 28 syllabi, 18 courses are required and 10 courses are offered as electives of which interpreting majors are required to complete at least one. These courses and course level break down is illustrated in Table I.

TABLE I
ABC UNIVESITY IEP COURSE BREAKDOWN

Required Courses	Elective Courses
101 American Sign Language I	115 Introduction to Classifiers in American Sign Language
102 American Sign Language II	160 ASL Fingerspelling
125 Deaf Culture	211 Deaf Representations in the Media
128 Introduction to Career Opportunities within the Deaf Community	221 Historical and Cultural Perspectives on Deaf American Artists and Art
201 American Sign Language III	242 Music Interpreting
202 American Sign Language IV	252 Deaf Art Movement/De'Via: Discussions with Deaf Artists
228 Linguistics of ASL	260 Creativity and ASL
230 Interpreting Techniques	315 Deaf Education
235 Language and Translation	330 Theatrical Interpreting
305 Multicultural Issues	365 ASL Literature
310 Advanced American Sign Language	
325 Theory of Interpretation	
340 Consecutive Interpreting	
343 Advanced Interpreting Analysis	
341 Interpreting Discourse Genres	
342 Transliterating & Educational Interpreting	
481 Interpreting Practicum I	
482 Interpreting Practicum II	

I only included syllabi that contained the following sections: Course Description, Course Rationale, Course Objectives, and Texts/Materials Used. Only 12 of the 28 syllabi I used offer content for a weekly topics and class agenda breakdown which was not consistent enough to include in my systematic analysis. In fact, one challenge posed by the curriculum data is that, while there seemed to be a standard template design intended for the syllabi, many deviated from that layout. For example, all courses feature course descriptions but 6 required courses and 3 elective courses are missing course rationales. Four syllabi do not list any texts/materials

used. When I asked the department chair about these missing pieces, I was informed that due

to the ongoing evolution of content and lesson planning with each iteration of the class and to

best serve the needs of the cohort, some professors choose to publish this information as

needed only on the college's academic interactive online portal for students.

All syllabi include learning objectives but they vary greatly in quantity and quality.

Though most syllabi present three to eight standard learning objectives, two syllabi present

only two simple learning objectives contrasting another syllabus that presents twenty-three

complex learning objectives organized by heading and subcategory. The learning objectives

also vary in quality with some written in standard learning objective format including goals for

what students are expected to achieve in the course while others are written in a bulleted

format restating what is already covered in the course description. Many learning objectives

present in the data lack measurable objectives, contain multiple levels of learning in one

objective, or lack noun phrases that specify what a student is supposed to learn (Hauer & Quill,

2011).

Beyond Content Analysis: Content analysis focuses data analysis to the content that is

immediately available within the data. Within the 28 syllabi there are 46 texts listed with levels

of assignment ranging from none to regular. In an effort to understand the texts prioritized

within the syllabi and the add rigor to the study, documents collected for analysis, I conducted a

brief survey of the literature, their authors, content relevant to my research questions, and

their utilization.

2.   **Procedures**

Commonly referred to in Grounded Theory as the "initial coding phase," units of

meaning should remain relevant to the research question as well as find a balance between

being too broad and too narrow (Mertens, 2010). For example, units of meaning that are

multifaceted concepts may be too broad to be coded or reported properly while units of

meaning that are as small as a word might not contain enough meaning to be counted at all.

The initial codes are then examined in context of the comprehensive data sum to discern the

codes' reliability; in Grounded Theory this is referred to as the "focused coding phase"

(Mertens, 2010).

This study uses Kathy Charmaz's (2006) guide on grounded theory textual analysis,

specifically as informed by Krippendorff's (2004) work that elaborates on inductive analysis, and

syntactic and thematic unit distinctions. As these scholars advise, my initial coding progression

through the data employed a syntactic line-by-line strategy, becoming familiar with key words

and phrases that appear frequently within the data. Below are a few examples of this initial

coding progression:

TABLE II
INITIAL CODING SAMPLE

Deaf Culture	"…this course raises questions concerning the nature of sign language and its varieties, education of Deaf people, historical treatment of Deaf people, sociological and cultural issues important to the Deaf Community, including past and current political activism." "To provide students with an in-depth understanding of the history and Deaf community and American Deaf culture."	**Deaf history** **Deaf culture** **Deaf community** ↓ **Deaf as unit**
Multicultural Issues In Interpreting	"A broad introduction of multiculturalism will be followed by an in-depth look at the most common cultures and cultural issues interpreters encounter. Flexibility in the schedule will also allow for additional cultural groups to be studied. Guest presenters and field trips to cultural events will allow students to experience the richness of diverse communities and gain insight that can be applied to their interpreting and to their everyday lives."	**Multiculturalism** **Culture Issues – "issues" = problems? Conflict? Impass?** **Exposure** - "cultural groups to be studied" **tolerance, celebrating differences**
ASL Literature	"Students will be able to understand and appreciate the historical and cultural perspective from the Deaf community on a wide range of issues."	**Deaf history** **(One) Deaf Culture Perspective** **Deaf Community Unit**

TABLE III
SAMPLE OF FOCUSED CODING

Deaf Culture	"…this course raises questions concerning the nature of sign language and its varieties, education of Deaf people, historical treatment of Deaf people, sociological and cultural issues important to the Deaf Community, including past and current political activism." "To provide students with an in-depth understanding of the history and Deaf community and American Deaf culture."	**Singular Deaf History** – whose history? The text includes no discussion on intersections of race, class, gender, or sexuality comprising the Deaf community. Mentions disability to define itself in opposition. **Homogenous Deaf** = narrow subset of those who embody deafness.
Multicultural Issues In Interpreting	"A broad introduction of multiculturalism will be followed by an in-depth look at the most common cultures and cultural issues interpreters encounter. Flexibility in the schedule will also allow for additional cultural groups to be studied. Guest presenters and field trips to cultural events will allow students to experience the richness of diverse communities and gain insight that can be applied to their interpreting and to their everyday lives."	**Multiculturalism and diversity as tolerance.** No mention of power, privilege, intersectionality, disparities within Deaf community. No critical structural analysis to understand the multicultural "issues." Cultures and cultural groups as objects of study and observation. How much understanding of a culture can we expect from a one semester undergrad class? How are "the most common cultures" defined or decided?
ASL Literature	"Students will be able to understand and appreciate the historical and cultural perspective from the Deaf community on a wide range of issues."	**Homogenous Deaf** Who in the Deaf community is deciding on these issues, what exactly are they deciding and how is it effecting the diverse body of d/Deaf? Is there consensus? Is there even considerations for intersections? Lack of mention is total erasure racialized, gendered, classed, disabled, sexually non-normative Deaf and issues.

My subsequent coding progressions through the data were oriented toward directly responding to my research questions. With my research questions informing my analysis, the following two coding progressions utilized a focused, thematic strategy that synthesized meaning from larger sections of data and between my initial codes, drawing context from course texts for clarification on what is implied in the course description, rationale, or learning objectives.

The final phase of qualitative content analysis is analyzing the data and, for an inductive approach, reporting the results in a way that connects them to more macro social concepts. To investigate and interpret the data, the researcher is encouraged to consider such questions as, "Who is telling? Where is this happening? When did it happen? What is happening? Why is it happening?" (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 109). Interpreting how the data connects or contrasts with social theories and systems and how it contributes to answering the research question is the aim of this phase.

3.   **Data Analysis**

Within qualitative content analysis, there are two main approaches – inductive and deductive – and the objective of the study determines the approach (Bengtsson, 2016). An inductive approach applies when there is sparse or incomplete background knowledge of the issue from which to guide the analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Inductive content analysis moves from micro to macro, acknowledging specific details of the issue and connecting them to larger concepts and social phenomenon. Deductive qualitative content analysis does the opposite; it moves from macro to micro. The deductive approach starts from a rich foundation of contextual knowledge that informs and directs the study for instances of detailed findings.

Collegiate education of sign language interpreting is a growing field with a new but sizeable foundation of research and data. However, its reputation is not known for representing an intersectional cannon of academic work. In fact, sharp critique of the exclusive whiteness of interpreter education and its parent field of Deaf studies (Shultz Myers & Fernandes, 2009) has only seen an expansion of experientially divergent scholarship in the last fifteen years. As a result, the resources of interpreting pedagogy available for this project are narrow. This scarcity of foundational information within my focused topic leads my methods to reflect an inductive qualitative content analysis approach.
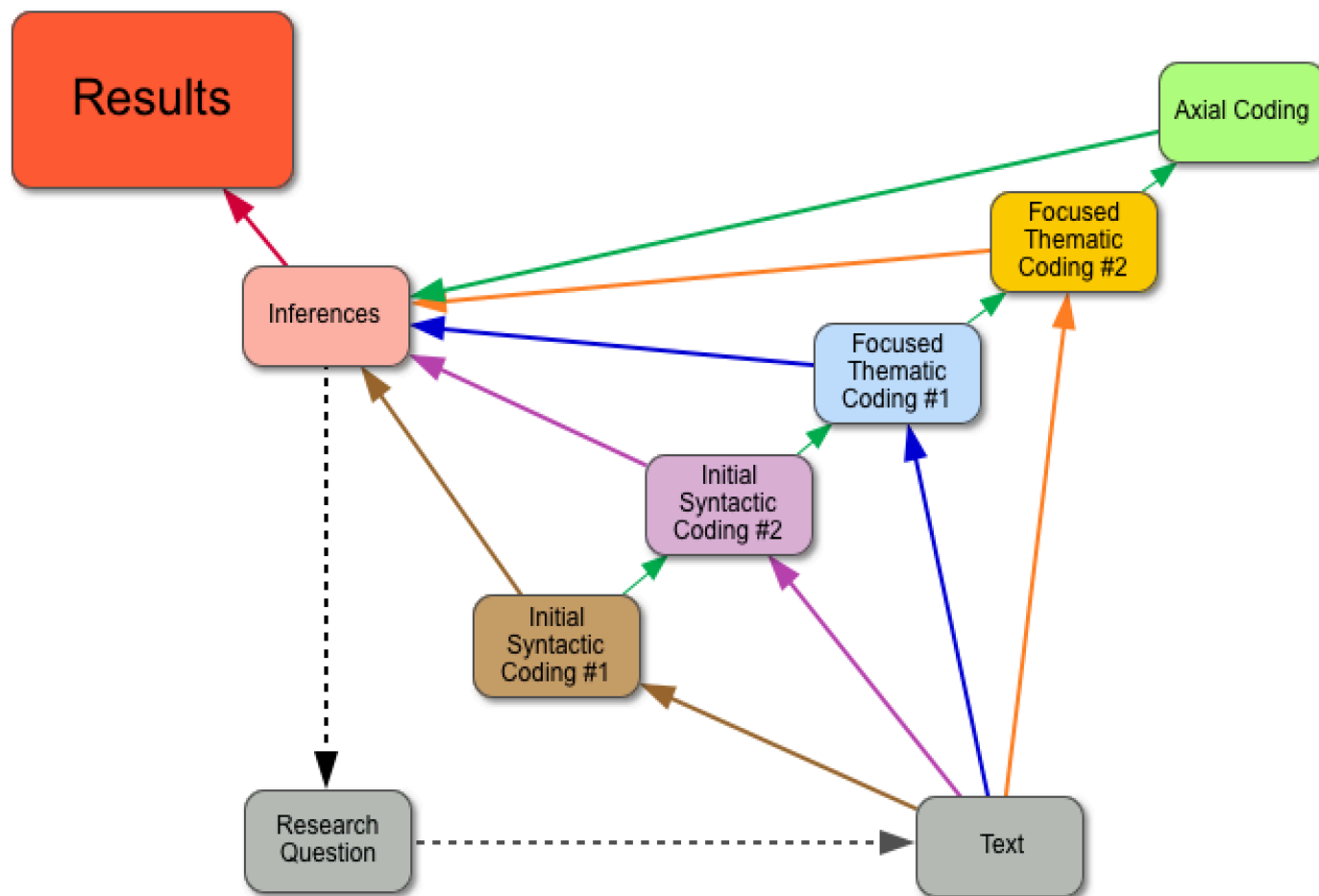
Figure 3. Flow chart of content analysis methods

Figure 3 illustrates my procedure of analysis. Starting at "Text," I ran through the initial syntactic coding phase, made inferences, returned to my research questions and the text before proceeding through the subsequent coding phases which all arrive at my results.

D.   **Ethics**

This study is exempt from IRB due to its non-involvement of human subjects or sensitive

personal information. On three instances the chair or other tenured faculty at ABC University's

interpreting department were consulted was for clarification of obscure or incomplete content

presented in the data.

The data consists of syllabi that ABC University considers proprietary intellectual

property of the university. In 49 states, syllabi are considered to be public documents with the

state of Missouri being the only exception (National Council of Teachers Quality, Inc. v. Curators

of the University of Missouri, 2014). The chair of the interpreting department explained to me

that a condition of my use of the data was that I would maintain confidentiality of data and the

university's name as my source. Though there is a legal allowance for curriculum and lesson

plans developed by one professor to be used by another without explicit permission, ethically,

many professors respect an implicit proprietary professional boundary. In an effort to maintain

professional relationship, educators generally do not use curriculum content or lesson plans

developed by another professor without permission.

Nonetheless, the chair expressed a concern resulting from two previous instances of

curriculum content, lesson plans, and power points being stolen from their program and used in

competing interpreter education programs. I agreed to use a pseudonym for the name of the

university and maintain the safety of the data content by leaving the hard copies of data in a

locked office on campus. However, I warned the department chair that in any research project,

there is a limit to the promise of confidentiality. I will do my part in protecting data content

entrusted to me but pieces of that data such as course titles and progressions are already

publicly available on ABC University's website. Course syllabi are available to students every

semester without any notice of copyright policy. The fact that I graduated from this program is publicly accessible information about me personally and professionally, easily leading anyone back to the name of the source university. All of these factors are examples of how I am unable to ensure complete confidentiality of my research.

E.   **Subjectivity And Positionality**

As previously mentioned, I am an alumni of ABC University's bachelors program in interpreting. I am also one of the many white, female, middle class, Protestant (non-practicing) interpreters who learned ASL as a second language. My background and training in disability studies informs my understanding and reflections of the content of this study. As an insider-researcher, the potential for bias is introduced. However, I argue that my status as insider researcher also allows for a more concentrated and insightful analysis of the content (Davis, 2000). Feminist studies scholars have argued this position at length, claiming that when academia shames researchers with insider-status, there is an interjected paternalism at play that perpetuates exclusion of minorities within the academic system (Roberts, 1981). Not only was my insider-status instrumental in the acquiring of data for analysis, which may not have been possible for an outsider, my experience leads me to more deeply analyze the material. Lastly, being a graduate student at University of Illinois at Chicago in the Disability and Human Development program has afforded me privileges throughout the length of this study which influenced my reading of the data as well.

IV.   RESULTS

The results of my data illuminated three points of entry toward understanding how the reproduction of whiteness is maintained through interpreter education curriculum. These points are: 1) a limited definition of "diversity" to refer only to the Deaf-Hearing spectrum and accompanying language modalities; 2) the siloing of instruction on intersectional identity, power, and privilege into one class instead of consistently embedding these topics throughout the curriculum; and 3) that the professors are ill-equipped to lead instruction on topics of intersectional identity, DEI, power, and privilege. These are three examples of how hegemonic power perpetuates systemic white dominance within the field of sign language interpreting. These three points also present tangible opportunities for intervention and change within interpreter education to which I will provide some suggestion.

A.   **Diversity Beyond The Binary**

Within the data, I found that wherever the concept of linguistic or cultural diversity was used, it referred only to the cultural divide between Deaf and hearing, the spectrum of hearing-loss and communication methods (i.e., American Sign Language, Pidgin Signed English, Conceptually Accurate Signed English, Signed Exact English, English, and so on) within the Deaf community. Further, throughout the curriculum, hearing society and the Deaf community are regularly discussed as mutually exclusive monolithic representations. With the exception of the one course that is designed to discuss multiculturalism and one reading assignment in an upper-level interpreting class, representations of hearing society and the Deaf community are devoid of any mention of intersectional identity. In this way, the definition of diversity utilized in ABC University's IEP curriculum is collapsed into a binary between Deaf and hearing. Some excerpts from the data that illustrate this point are:

… this course raises questions concerning the nature of sign language and its varieties…
(ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

This course will provide students with a better understanding of the language varieties and communication situations that will be encountered when working as ASL/English interpreters. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

In these excerpts, sign language varieties is named as a topic that the courses will discuss. The vagueness of "sign language varieties" could include foreign sign languages, or American dialects used by cultural communities within the Deaf community that are diverse in race, class, and sexuality. There is recent work done on dialects of Black ASL (McCaskill et al., 2011) and ASL used by the LGBTQ community (Blau, 2017), the impact of multilingualism on Deaf Latinos and Asians in America (Baker & Scott, 2016; Becker & Bowen, 2018), and emerging work in many more areas presenting an intersectional cultural view of sign language. Yet none of the subsequent data from this course offers information on these topics. Instead, what can be gleaned from the data is a focus on various communication methods that hearing educators have invented over the years in an attempt to make Deaf education through sign language easier. These invented sign systems such as Conceptually Accurate Sign English, Signed Exact English, Manually Coded English and other similar systems are not linked to racial, classed, gendered, disabled, sexualized or other intersectional experience of deafness.

To increase students' appreciation of the richness of diversity within the Deaf community. (ABC University, 2017, p. 2)

This learning objective mirrors the effect of the above examples. On the surface, this excerpt seems to make space for the discussion of intersectionality within the Deaf community. However, when I search the subsequent data of the syllabus to understand what kind of "diversity within the Deaf community" (ABC University, 2017, p. 2) would be presented, I found

no evidence that the definition of diversity presented here includes race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, or other. Instead, the data presents various experiences of hearing loss and Deaf community membership as positioned by their hearing status, use of ASL, and personal or professional connection to the Deaf community.

Throughout the curriculum, deaf culture is defined simply in opposition to hearing culture and all charted discussion of social and political issues, artistic expression and employment opportunities in connection to deafness revolve around that binary. ABC University's IEP is keen on instilling in students the social-not-medical model of deafness by reiterating that Deafness is a cultural marker as opposed to a biological deficiency. This results in an inculcation that signing Deaf people make up a cohesive linguistic and cultural minority unit. Establishing these cultural borders seems to come at the cost of recognizing intersectional identities that make up the Deaf community, the differences in language use, and unique knowledges that come from a diverse embodied experiences of deafness. The following excerpts will illustrate how the data depicts "the Deaf community" as a one dimensional group identity.

> ...raises questions concerning the...education of Deaf people, historical treatment of Deaf people, sociological and cultural issues important to the Deaf Community… (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

> ... framework for...learning further about the current sociolinguistics and cultural aspects of American Deaf people. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

> ... an in-depth understanding of the history and Deaf community and American Deaf culture. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

> ... recognizes that the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community exists as a linguistic and cultural minority group … (ABC University, 2017, p. 2)

> ...understand and appreciate the historical and cultural perspective from the Deaf community... (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

...students are exposed to the lives and experiences of Deaf people… (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

In total, "The Deaf Community," "The Deaf and hard-of-hearing community," "Deaf people" and "Deaf culture" appear 59 times within the data. None of these include elaboration of intersectionality within the Deaf community. As discussed in the literature review, CWS asserts that in the absence of explicitly naming non-white or non-dominant representation, the inferred experience is that of the white dominant class. In ABC University's curriculum, the repetition of "the Deaf community" without any discussion or mention of intersectional identities has the effect of defaulting to an experience of deafness as canonized by the straight, white, male, middleclass, able-bodied, first wave Deaf scholars of the 1980s.

The texts that are used throughout the curriculum also reflect this white dominance through authorship and content. I have organized them and brief notation of their contribution to issues of intersectionality, power, and privilege in Table IV. I have included the cultural identity presented by their author as a tangential commentary on the patterns of content produced by the respective authors. This is not to say that white, cisgender females are incapable of writing critically on intersectionality, social power and privilege, race, class, gender, disability, sexuality and other identities situated in the hierarchies of social organization. There are authors of all backgrounds who write critically on whiteness and classism, the policing of gender and sexuality, and disability oppression. However, the texts and authors presented within ABC University's curriculum do not exhibit a critical response to white, cultural hegemony. One of the few texts that mentions issues of appropriate cultural match of interpreters to the job or client(s) is the one and only text in the entire curriculum to be authored by a person of color.

TABLE IV
BREAKDOWN OF TEXTS LISTED IN THE DATA

Out of 46 texts	Author Identity Presents as…	Content Notes	Is text assigned?
1	Black, cisgender male	• Self-published by author about music interpreting. • Includes discussion of gender and cultural representation and appropriateness in performance interpreting. • Does not discuss power or privilege.	No
1	White, cisgender female	• Required for required course. Addresses the intersection of gender in interpreting linguistically – not socially. • Does not discuss power or privilege.	Yes
1	White, cisgender female	• Includes a chapter on multiculturalism and disability in Deaf theatre. • Does not address intersections of race, class, gender, or disability. Does not discuss power or privilege.	No
1	White, cisgender female	• Text provides a survey of very generalized information on Asian, Black, and Latino cultural characteristics. • Instructs interpreters on various behaviors that help or hinder their work while on the job. Mentions cultural match of interpreter and client(s). • Does not discuss power or privilege. • Most of the information in this book has not changed since its first print in 1999 with the exception of an added chapter in 2014.	NA
1	White, cisgender female & White, cisgender male team	• Text is a reader. • Selections on race, class, gender and the institutional social structures. • Does not include discussion of the Deaf community or sign language interpreting.	NA
1	White, cisgender female & White, cisgender male team	• Published in 1988. • Illustrates the cultural model of deafness. • Does not address intersections of race, class, gender, or disability. Does not discuss power or privilege.	NA
40	White, cisgender men and women	None of the 40 others texts address intersectionality, power, privilege, race, class, gender, disability, or sexuality. Oppression is only mentioned in context to Deaf culture.	Varies

In conclusion, the examples shown here from the data illustrate how current curriculum

for interpreter education relies on a narrow definition of diversity that recognizes a one

dimensional deafness as the only deviance from mainstream hearing society. It utilizes an

essentialist view of both hearing and Deaf culture as being nothing beyond a hearing status,

spoken language choice versus signed language choice and excludes the recognition of the

intersections of race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, and others.

B. **Siloed Diversity Education**

Though ABC University's interpreter education degree program currently holds

accredited status, my results find little evidence of a curriculum designed to include instruction

on diverse populations "systematically implemented and threaded throughout the curriculum"

(CCIE, 2014). On the contrary, the curriculum compartmentalizes all discussion on the topic

into one class on multiculturalism wherein discussions on racial and cultural differences are

probably discussed. The course description and rationale along with further information given

in one of the learning objectives imply that this is the purpose of the class (ABC University,

2017).

> *Course Description*: This course explores multicultural issues as related to the interpreting profession and the Deaf Community. A broad introduction of multiculturalism will be followed by an in-depth look at the most common cultures and cultural issues interpreters and counter. Flexibility in the schedule will also allow for additional cultural groups to be studied. Guest presenters and field trips to cultural events will allow students to experience the richness of diverse communities and gain insight that can be applied to their interpreting and to their everyday lives.

> *Course Rationale*: The interpreting profession historically and currently is a profession that is primarily dominated by Euro American women. Both the Deaf community and others seeking interpreting services are very diverse. There is a national commitment to increase the number of interpreters of various cultural backgrounds and a growing need to better train all interpreters to understand on how to work effectively in diverse communities. This course is designed to provide interpreting students with practical tools and insights to use when interpreting in various communities. The goal of an interpreter is to facilitate communication between individuals who do not share common languages or cultures. This course is essential to the success of our future interpreters.

> *Learning Objective*: A student will gain knowledge and an appreciation for the various cultural groups listed and various issues related to each of the groups: African American, Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, Euro American, gay, lesbian, Latino, and Native American. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1-2)

The CCIE (2014) includes requirements for knowledge competencies in areas of diversity and

multiculturalism. The specific tenet guidance on this states:

> 6.3 The curriculum addresses knowledge competencies related to multicultural and diverse populations.
>> Evidence must also include documentation of the materials and resources used to meet this Standard (e.g., materials from the National Multicultural Interpreting Project or similar curricular materials).
>> Evidence must include documentation that the curriculum covers:
>> - the effects of oppression and discrimination (e.g., audism, racism, sexism);
>> - the influence of power and privilege within multicultural and diverse populations;
>> - majority and minority culture dynamics; and
>> - dynamics of cross-cultural interaction. (CCIE, 2014)

Sequencing of these topics must be reflected on the chart or curriculum map.

Ironically, keywords often found in efforts committed to DEI in education such as race, class,

gender, disability, sexuality, intersectionality, oppression, power, and privilege are wholly

absent from ABC University's curriculum. Even within the course designed to discuss issues of

multiculturalism, there is no mention of these key concepts. Even the key terms multicultural

and multiculturalism appear only within the boundaries of the one course with the exception of

part of the title of a text that is listed but not assigned in an elective course. It is not just that

these key words are missing but that the concepts behind them are also absent from the

curriculum – this is not a case of the concepts being systematically threaded into the curriculum

under different labels.

This is not to say that the program lacks the potential to systematically expose students

to diverse populations. However, given the state of the field and the pervasiveness of white

dominance in pedagogy, where the question is whether a program is absent of discussion on

diversity or else so sophisticatedly inclusive of the topic that they never explicitly mention it in a

course title or description – the truth is the former. For better or worse, the mention of race, power, and privilege as academic topics are now often leveraged as points of innovative pedagogical pride. If there were any discussion of diverse populations in an IEP/ITP, I expect it would be foregrounded as a marketable feature of the program as opposed to humbly integrated into a curriculum.

The CCIE Accreditation Standards (2014) also calls for students to be exposed to cultural diversity as modeled by faculty. This aspect seems to aim for exposing students to educative intersectional experiences defaulting from a more culturally diverse team of educators. This can be noted in tenet 4.6.

> The faculty are collectively diverse and/or the students have documented exposure to diverse populations.
>> Evidence must include strategies and efforts to recruit and retain faculty members who are diverse with respect to gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation (e.g., job announcements to groups such as RID, CIT, ASLTA, BLeGIT, National Alliance of Black Interpreters, Mano-a-Mano, NAD, National Black Deaf Advocates, National Asian Deaf Congress, and Sacred Circle). Evidence may also include information about faculty members who are engaged in research or collaboration with groups that expose students to diversity. (CCIE, 2014, p. 5)

Since the inception of the multiculturalism course nearly twenty years ago, the department has fiercely insisted that the course be taught by a person of color. The professor who designed the class is a black woman and every professor to teach the course since then has also been a black woman. In a passing conversation with the now chair of the department, I was informed that the department will never not hire a person of color to teach that class citing that it would be inappropriate otherwise. I have never heard anyone from the department be this insistent about any other teaching position in the department – it seems to be accepted that teachers of any racial identity are acceptable for all other classes. All full time faculty are white presenting.

The CCIE wants instruction on diverse populations to be "systematically implemented and threaded throughout the curriculum." However, based on available basic course breakdowns for all thirteen of the accredited IEP/ITPs, the standard for implementation seems to be the establishment of one class designated to focus on the subject of diversity and in some cases, the impact of diversity on the task of interpreting. In the case of ABC University, the curriculum breakdown in the data, including weekly discussion topics and assigned texts, does not present many opportunities to discuss intersectional diversity outside of the multiculturalism course.

C.   **Professors Lacking Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Instructional Competence**

Upon receiving the data from the department, I was informed that each syllabus is designed by the professor who teaches the course with few exceptions that include Deaf Culture, Theory of Interpretation, and Multicultural Issues in Interpreting. These courses' syllabi were designed by a previous professor but have been modified by the current professor. Based on the content the professors choose to include in their syllabi and how they presented that content, my results found a general lack competence on the actual issues present in an intersectional society (disparity of power, oppression, privilege, microaggressions, and so on).

As mentioned above, keywords of DEI instruction such as race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, intersectionality, oppression, power, and privilege are not found within the data. In order to discuss issues presented under these topics, the topics must be named within the curriculum. The scarcity of language on these topics throughout the curriculum left me questioning the professors' knowledge and ability to incorporate DEI principles into their course.

To increase students' appreciation of the richness of diversity within the Deaf community. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

This example from Deaf culture shows a carry over from multiculturalism's non-threatening appreciation of various cultures without calling into questions the hierarchies of power present among those groups.

Political and cultural views of music interpreting will also be discussed. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

Many of the "political and cultural views of music interpreting" involve issues of racial representation, cultural appropriation, and white privilege but those are mentioned nowhere in this syllabus.

1. A student will gain an understanding of what is meant by multiculturalism and how it affects the interpreting profession.
2. A student will gain knowledge and an appreciation for the various cultural groups listed and various issues related to each of the groups: African American, black, Asian, Pacific Islander, Euro American, gay, lesbian, Latino and Native American.
3. A student will gain an appreciation for diversity in the interpreting profession, and will be able to apply their insights when working in diverse communities.
4. A student will gain practical tools that can be used while interpreting and diverse communities including vocabulary appropriate social norms to follow and etc.
5. A student will gain practical tools to use when working with team interpreters from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
6. A student will be able to apply knowledge to decision-making when interpreting and when deciding the appropriateness of accepting assignments.
7. A student will gain an understanding of our diverse community by exposure to various interpreting environments and communities. (ABC University, 2017, p. 2)

In the learning objectives for the syllabi most focused on the question of race and cultural diversity in the field, there is still no language that signals an investigation of power or unpacking privilege. There is no structural examination of social order or control. Most learning objectives in the syllabus on multiculturalism remain at Bloom's learning levels of understanding, never moving into analyzing or evaluating.

If professors are equipped to include rich DEI instruction on these topics, then why is it not included more explicitly within the curriculum? Is there an institutional resistance to delivering content to students on these subjects? ABC University's formal establishment of an academic DEI department indicates otherwise. One assumption that is supported by the literature is that white instructors lack the academic experience and cultural competence for how to teach on the dynamics of power, privilege, intersectionality, and social justice.

Throughout the curriculum, there is a lack of specificity around issues of multiculturalism and diversity. Where the language seems to approach these topics, the absence of race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, intersectionality, oppression, power, and privilege from mention is conspicuous. Most conspicuous is that whiteness and white cultural dominance is never mentioned. Instead, whiteness is referred to as "Euro American." This is exhibited most clearly in a portion of the course rationale for Multicultural Issues in Interpreting.

> The interpreting profession historically and currently is a profession that is primarily dominated by Euro American women both the Deaf community and others seeking interpreting services are very diverse. There is a national commitment to increase the number of interpreters of various cultural backgrounds and a growing need to better train all interpreters to understand how to work effectively in diverse. (ABC University, 2017, p. 1)

The conspicuous absence of whiteness occurs again in the learning objectives of the same course.

> A student will gain knowledge and an appreciation for the various cultural groups listed and various issues related to each of the groups: African American, black, Asian, Pacific Islander, Euro American, gay, lesbian, Latino and Native American. (ABC University, 2017, p. 2)

The use of "Euro American" as opposed to "white" or even "Caucasian" seems suspect especially when in the same sentence wherein other racial groups are specifically named. It

seems like an effort to be politically correct but in a way that relies on an awkward linguistic gymnastics to avoid calling out white culture and whiteness directly. This course syllabus has always been under the care of black female professors – all of whom are experts in their field of interpreting but none of whom are formally trained in the pedagogy of, let alone the instruction of DEI topics. Based on my findings, there seems to be a broad lack of DEI instructional competence exhibited by professors through their own design of curriculum.

In this section I have provided examples from the data and from my method that exhibit a restricted definition of diversity, a curriculum structure that siloes education on diversity into one class instead of embedding it throughout the curriculum and professors' display of a lack of cultural and instructional competence on topics of power, privilege, intersectionality, oppression, and allyship. In the next section I will discuss these results on a structural level of their implications in the broader picture of interpreter education.

V.   DISCUSSION

Out of 13 CCIE accredited bachelor's programs nationwide, ABC University's IEP prides itself for offering one of the more culturally progressive curriculums for interpreting. To achieve accreditation, CCIE's standards includes (among other foundational interpreting skill requirements) language that insinuates an effort toward breaking down the hegemonic standard of whiteness in interpreting education. However, through qualitative content analysis of ABC University's curriculum, my results find evidence of educational practices designed to maintain and enforce whiteness in the field of interpreting. In a brief review of my results, three methods by which the ABC University's IEP enforces whiteness are limiting the definition of diversity to the Deaf-hearing spectrum and subsequent communication methods, siloing into one class the discussions of intersectional identities of race, class gender, disability, and sexuality, and lastly by depending on instructors who lack the cultural competence and instructional training necessary for designing and delivering an anti-racist education in interpreting. This white centric structuring of education is a product of historic models of institutions of social structure and power.

In this section I will discuss the implications of my research results for the field of sign language interpreting. First I will illustrate the incongruity of the intention behind multiculturalism education versus the result that is implemented. Next I will synthesize the consequences of the institutional endorsement of this incongruity. Lastly, I will explore Inclusive Deaf Studies as a point of entry for strategic change for current interpreter educators responsible for designing and implementing curriculum.

A. **The Problem With Multiculturalism**

Researcher Reflection: Video relay service (VRS) exposes interpreters to conversations they may not otherwise find themselves a part of. The job description of interpreting requires that interpreters interpret the message as best they can, staying true to the message and refraining from altering or editing the message according to personal opinions or values. This often entails interpreting statements in conflict with their own morals or that can be uncomfortable. I do not regularly feel challenged on this issue but one night at the call center I failed completely. I do not remember most of the call but how it ended will remain with me forever.

In my first year interpreting in VRS, I interpreted a call between a Black Deaf female and, from the sound of his voice, a Black male who were or at least had been until recently involved romantically. Toward the end of the call, the Black Deaf female reacted negatively to something man said and signed, "Whatever, nigger." I felt a hot wave of anxiety rush through me as I felt the processing in my brain come to a screeching halt. I regard the "N" word as the ultimate taboo for my personal vocabulary. Technically, it was her word and not mine but I was the one who had to say it out loud and, irrationally, could not bring myself to let the word pass my lips.

I voiced "Whatever" and chose to drop the second word in her phrase. In the videophone, she read my lips and knew I had edited her words. She changed from one sign for nigger to another, assuming that I did not know the first one she used. I freeze completely. She then stops conversing with the hearing caller and directs her communication to me and signs, "Say nigger." I remained silent in terror. Out of frustration with me – or possibly both me and the hearing man she had been talking with – she batted the air in a dismissive gesture with one hand and clicked off the phone with the other. Her screen flipped from an image of her in her bedroom to the default camera capture of me sitting in my call center cubicle, staring back at myself. I told the hearing man who was still on the line, "She hung up." He said "ok" and clicked off.

I debriefed with one of my colleague interpreters (who is white) and she reminded me that he is probably used to hearing a white woman's voice saying "nigger" to him as the voice of his girlfriend, that my job is to just interpret and the words are not mine, that callers have a right to say whatever they want and we disempower them by refusing to voice without editing their message or inserting our own values. The list of reasons why I should have voiced "nigger" is endless with no good reason not to given my job description.

Ten years into my interpreting career, I remain just as uncomfortable about voicing the "N" word as I was that night on VRS. If the same situation happened again tomorrow, I want to believe I would handle it better but know better than to assume.

There is an acknowledgement within the field of sign language interpreting of its pervasive whiteness and the disservice this causes to our colleagues and clients in terms cultural mismatch (West Oyedele, 2015). In response there is a collective desire to recruit a more diverse pool of professionals into the discipline. Even though CCIE and ABC University's IEP does not specifically state that they are working toward an antiracist educational framework, for purposes of this discussion I am going to assume that this is their intention by including curriculum requirements for systematically exposing students to multicultural diversity. The CCIE's efforts offer accreditation requirements that explicitly call for education on "multiculturalism" and "exposure to diverse populations" in multiple tenets of curriculum design and delivery. This is an example of interpreter educators' efforts to encourage diversity within the field by requiring students to learn about cultures and customs outside of their own, primarily white, experience. ABC University's course on multicultural issues in interpreting claims to use this approach in its content that offers students "an in-depth look at the most common cultures and cultural issues interpreters encounter" (ABC University, 2017, p. 1). However, using multiculturalism philosophy that advocates integration through celebrating cultural traditions is problematic. First, it adheres to a philosophy that social division happens out of ignorance of one another's cultural experiences and that this division can be cured by educating each other on cultural customs. Logistically, how many cultures and to what end must a student study before they are freed from bias? Secondly, multiculturalism relies on a definition of culture that is ambiguous on identity markers of marginalized groups. Some groups, such as the LGBTQ community or disability community, claim gay culture and disability culture respectively. However, their claim of culture is not always recognized by society or accepted as a legitimate representation of culture. In this way, multiculturalism is myopic in its

approach to issues of diversity since it requires that a group of people represent a settled

definition of culture that normally refers to geographic origin. The more versatile academic

concept of intersectionality utilizes identity markers instead of simple cultural association to

illustrate its concepts and could serve as a useful alternative to multiculturalism. Lastly,

multiculturalism reinforces whiteness by treating minority cultures as objects for study while

excusing whiteness from any examination. In this way, multiculturalism promotes the

invisibility of whiteness, enabling it to operate under the radar, free from detection or

disruption. By expanding on these three points it is my goal to illuminate how adopting

education on multiculturalism and diverse populations in the absence of the analysis of power

is backfiring on interpreter education's aim of unsettling whiteness' stranglehold on the field.

The idea that bias between cultural groups can be solved through education and

exposure is not new. In fact, the utility of educating populations on cultural differences

between groups can achieve the intended effect in some cases. Studies that experiment with

peacefully bringing together members of infamously divided groups such as Jews and

Palestinians (Galily, Leitner, & Shimon, 2014) or minority children over sporting activities

(Krouwel, Boonstra, Duyvendak, & Veldboer, 2006) report participant testimony along the lines

of, *When I got to know them, they were just like me*. However, the revelations experienced by

participants in these programs do not extend to cultural groups outside of those groups

included in the experiment. For example, while a Jewish participant may come to accept that

Palestinians do not fit their previous assumptions, that open-minded approach to the "other"

achieved during the experiment does not similarly apply to a person of Nigerian, Chinese, or

other outsider identity (Kowal, Franklin, & Paradies, 2013; Krouwel, Boonstra, Duyvendak, &

Veldboer, 2006; Leitner, Gailily, & Shimon, 2014). This exposure to diverse populations

facilitated within the experiment supports that conflict between focused groups of individuals can alleviate animosity between those focused groups of individuals but does very little to address habits of prejudice on a more macro level.

This is not to say that people should not be exposed to diverse populations. It is in these instances that students might alight upon an experience that opens up intercultural opportunities that the student might not have otherwise had. These are often seen as positive results, such as a hearing person's exposure to d/Deaf populations that motivate them to pursue further education on the subject or even become an interpreter. Still, this broadening of knowledge from one culture to another, like in the integration experiments, does not address the dynamics of systemic biases, power, and privilege that operate between a dominant white cultural hegemony and non-white population. Further, when researchers follow up with participants of the integration experiments only a few years after their initial endeavor, they find that the revelatory effect has worn off. Participants return to the routine of daily life within the segregated systems that shaped their pre-experiment biases and fall back into old habits. This result does not bode well for the hope that short-term exposure to diverse populations in interpreter education curriculum will result in long-lasting cultural sensitivity in interpreter education, between interpreters, colleagues, and clients.

In addition to the above concerns, mitigating social bias through multiculturalism education is ambiguous in its scope. How many cultures and to what extent must a student learn about them in order to achieve a functional understanding of the dynamics of living and working in a pluralist society? Which cultures and which aspects of those cultures must be studied to benefit an interpreting student's future work and satisfy the intention of a multicultural education? What is recognized as a culture? Geography? Ethnicity? Religion?

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Race? Class? Gender? Disability? Sexuality? Who gets to decide which cultures are presented, and how and by whom they are presented? The answers to all of these questions are contingent on who the professor is and how they develop their syllabus in accordance with their ITP/IEP department's desires. The kind of cultural education that will most benefit an interpreting student's future work subjectively depends on context and locations of the work they pursue as professionals. For example, the ethnic and geographic cultural knowledge most necessary for an interpreter working in New Mexico will be different than interpreters working in Alaska, Hawaii, San Francisco, or Chicago. Yet the ethnic and geographic cultural aspect is only a glimpse of a holistic view that recognizes the multidimensionality of intersectional identity. Productively covering an unspecified amount of endless material on multiculturalism in the typical fifteen-week semester suddenly seems impossible.

Secondly, multiculturalism relies on a definition of culture that is ambiguous with regard to boundaries and membership. As mentioned in the above paragraph, the question remains how "culture" is defined and presented within curriculum developed on the topic of multiculturalism. Some marginalized groups are not recognized by the mainstream as having a culture that is easily folded into multiculturalism such as disability and crip culture (Sandahl, 2003) or class culture. Some groups' culture such as LGBTQ and gender non-binary/non-conforming culture is subjectively recognized or discounted depending on the moral culture of the professor and institution. Collectively, women are marginalized the world over, but are not considered to have a specific culture. Due to this, feminist issues and issues of gender disparity are not included in discussions of multiculturalism – a point that is even supported in the data of this project. Multiculturalism relies on recognizing plurality within identity, but it is limited by being subjective with regard to which cultural identities are recognized as relevant.

The most concerning problem with multiculturalism is that it peddles "tolerant attitudes that spotlight compassion toward difference but leave untouched social hierarchies that favor the 'normal'" (Elman, 2012, p. 321). It professes to celebrate cultural differences but invests no time in analyzing how different cultures are affected by power. This is problematic since cultures do not exist in a vacuum. In our historically diverse American society but even more in modern global society, minority cultures are shaped and evolve in connection to dominant white hegemonic power. Black American culture would not exist in its current form in the absence of a relationship to whiteness. Native American culture as we know it today would not exist in the shape and locations it does without colonization, Mexican culture would not exist without white Europeans conquering the native societies that lived there originally, and so on. Cultural values of whites are enforced as legal policy that act on minority cultures and manipulate how members of these cultures relate to white people (Alexander, 2010). No culture in America exists independent of white cultural dominance. In order to fully understand the cultural dynamics of living in a multicultural society, we must critically examine the relationship between whiteness, power, and the othered. The absence of this type of scrutiny of power renders multiculturalism uncritical. If we neglect to critically examine the relationship between whiteness, power, and the othered, we are complicit – even accomplice – to the ways that whiteness operates to systemically control and oppress.

Not only does multicultural education act as accomplice to reinforcing whiteness, it operates as a primary force in reproducing whiteness through objectifying others and reserving subjectivity for itself. If multiculturalism questions the operation of power in American society, an immediate outcome is the realization that the implementation of multicultural education is in response to intolerance and erasure by the dominant class. Multiculturalism educated is

complicated, though, by the fact that it is often required by whites for whites to promote

tolerance, an effort toward political correctness, and to placate marginalized groups calling for

social justice. Instead of multiculturalism serving efforts toward social justice, it signals an

entrenchment of white dominance. Studying cultures without studying disciplinary power

(Foucault, 2012) positions populations as essentialist objects for consumption by the white gaze

(Yancy, 2008). Language used in the CCIE Accreditation Standards (2014) and in ABC

University's course on multicultural issues in interpreting reinforces whiteness as the assumed

identity that situates all non-white cultural representation as objects for study. Studies on the

social construction of the field support this as true (McDermid 2009b; West Oyedele, 2015).

This objectification of "the other" maintains whiteness' centrality. The mention of

multiculturalism or that the curriculum should "expose students to multicultural and diverse

populations" does not bring whiteness onto an equal plane with these diverse populations. On

the contrary, whiteness remains an authoritarian gatekeeper on if, how, and to what extent

other cultures will be offered to students for educational consumption. Whiteness

accomplishes this through objectifying all non-white culture but also through silence about its

own presence and power. It creates a facade of foregrounding non-white culture as a

prioritized, if exotic, educational topic while having the effect of solidifying itself as natural.

Subscribing to multiculturalism as pedagogy for the dynamics of cultural difference on the job

does not prepare interpreting students to have a better grasp of the power, privilege, and bias

is operationalized through body language, gesture, and language between herself, her

colleagues, and clients. In this way, interpreting students are not given the tools to understand

the effect of power dynamics at play in environments and within language in their work as

professionals. Instead, they are trained by a system that conceals whiteness from

comprehension and indoctrinates an understanding of culture that perpetuates white dominance. In order to disrupt this pattern an analysis of power must be coupled with a multicultural education. As discussed in the literature review, Critical Whiteness Studies insists that in order to productively work toward an anti-racist framework, whiteness must be recognized and repositioned as the subject for investigation. Aiming for anti-racism through a multiculturalism education that does not directly and critically address the operationalized power of whiteness has the opposite effect of promoting whiteness and marginalizing non-white representation.

ABC University's dearth of detectable action to understand and change its own racist curricular practices and the CCIE's accreditation endorsement of this white status quo curriculum model reveals that these institutions play an active role in reproducing whiteness in the field. Further, if we consider that ABC University prides itself for being a leader among IEP/ITPs in "systematically exposing students to multicultural and diverse populations" (CCIE, 2014, p. 7) and discussing the subsequent issues that cross cultural communication entails, we then wonder what the measure of diversity education of the other accredited programs is across the country. It becomes evident that interpreter education has a lot of work to do before it even begins to understand the power, privilege and effect of its own whiteness.

B. **An Alternative Interpretation Of Requiring Multiculturalism Education**

I would like to pause a moment to acknowledge that it is possible that my interpretation of CCIE and ABC University's antiracist goal through multiculturalism education is incorrect. It is possible that these requirements and institutions are interested only in expanding an awareness of various cultures but are devoid of any interest to transform students' personal relationship to dissimilar individuals. I am working from an identity and a cultural background

that views racism as fundamentally wrong, that acknowledges white dominant power as oppressive and limiting to the human experience, that regards anti-racist work as righteous and racial equality to be the assumed desire.

There are also plenty who argue that an interpreter's personal beliefs on race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, and others do not matter in context to their job. It is inevitable that an interpreter's identity and personal beliefs will, at times, be at odds with the work they are expected to produce. An interpreter cannot possibly go through an entire career of other people's conversations and find all clients and statements agreeable, so why bother including anti-racism as any kind of a goal in interpreter education? It may be argued that the purpose of ITPs/IEPs is to train a person on how to conduit messages between two or more languages. The professional expectation is that an interpreter leaves their personal belief system at the door and remains politically and personally neutral throughout the duration of the job. However, as discussed extensively in the literature review - interpreter neutrality is a myth (Metzger, 2000). It is an impossible ideal that cannot be attained. We depend on our identity expression to deftly navigate our daily world and cannot remove an identity from ourselves and leave it at the door like a knapsack. Personal identity is so intrinsic to how we interact with the world and with other people that we cannot prevent it from intruding upon our work (Feyne, 2015).

My professional experience with the organizational bodies in the interpreting field such as my own IEP, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), centers for continuing education, and the vast majority of colleagues I encounter, allows me to confidently say that the field I know desires to be anti-racist. In 2015, RID's national conference centered power and privilege as the thematic through line for the duration of the event. The membership body even voted to adopt a requirement that 1.0 out of 6.0 continuing education credits annually be on the topic

of power and privilege (RID, 2018). These explicit shifts in the interpreting field mark a conscious and collective desire to devote attention to grappling with these issues that do affect our work as interpreters. CCIE and ABC University's curriculum design standards are intending to work toward the horizon of social justice. To be sure, the strategies employed to that end elicit varying degree of success, and sometimes offensive failure. Nonetheless, my perception and hope is that CCIE and ABC University are intending for a more transformative education on intersectional issues effecting the interpreting field.

C.   **Accrediting The Status Quo**

CCIE is currently the only organizational body for accreditation and oversight of sign language interpreter education. They set the minimum standard by which the field of interpreting measures the efficacy of interpreter education. This minimum standard explicitly includes requirements for interpreter training programs to expose students to "multicultural and diverse populations" (CCIE, 2014, p. 7) throughout curriculum delivery. ABC University's IEP currently holds CCIE accreditation which means that their curriculum must satisfactorily meet the requirements. However, although ABC University's interpreter education degree program currently holds accredited status, my research found little evidence that the requirements are being met. This presents a conflict between what is presented as a requirement versus the deficient realization of how that requirement is actualized and then endorsed as an acceptable model of the original intention.

If the CCIE is willing to accredit ABC University's current curriculum as a model that upholds their objective for education on multiculturalism and diverse populations, it begs the question for how CCIE is measuring these standards. The endorsement of a program that: a) does not follow the CCIE's (2014) own requirement of DEI instruction "systematically

implemented and threaded throughout the curriculum" (p. 7); and b) does not present a critical

view of these topics in the few places that it does devote attention to is troublesome. Is the

affirmation of the problematic status quo a result of ignorance, low standards, or a clear

manifestation of the power of white supremacy in action? Like most positions of power in the

field of interpreting, the CCIE board is comprised nearly of all white members. It could be that

they are unaware of the problematic nature of multiculturalism in lieu of an analysis of power.

Perhaps they, themselves are not decided on how these topics should be taught and therefore

are unable to asses the quality of their delivery. If the CCIE's intentions are to placate the

masses but they are not truly invested in these topics for interpreter curriculum, they could

maintain intentionally low standards and mark even the smallest effort satisfactory. Another

possible cause but definite result is that accrediting this poor example of DEI education is that

the reinforcement and reproduction of whiteness is promulgated as the rule. ABC University's

current curriculum for interpreter education functions as a site for the reproduction of

whiteness and is endorsed by the academic community as being a model education. Though it

may not be what is intended, the reproduction of whiteness is ratified by the one and only body

for curriculum oversight – the CCIE – as a structural component for a model interpreter

education of the highest standard. If all accredited IEP/ITPs are similar in their construction, we

as a field must consider how this is affecting the goal of diversifying and what message we are

sending to current and incoming professionals of all backgrounds.

D. **A Need For Culturally Competent Instructors**

Researcher Reflection: Early in my career, I was booked to interpret a leather
event at a gay bar. I had two clients – one white man in his 30s and a middle aged
black man. The crowd for the event was mostly white, though there was some
diversity present. Most of the event attendees were dressed in black leather –
the attire ranging from modest and typical black leather pants and a T-shirt to

S&M style leather to leather "barely-there underwear." The sexual culture in the venue was bursting at the seams.

I was one of two women I saw at the bar. I was covered from neck to toe in black cotton and polyester. The cultural mismatch between me, my Deaf clients, and the crowd at the event was glaring. Myself being a cis straight white woman who, at the time, knew very little about gay culture, leather culture, or sexual expression in front of a room full of flaming gay men in leather.

There were a few organized activities at the event such as a mens' sexy ass contest and a "best leather" contest which were both just excuses to parade across the stage in the most sexually provocative way and then pick a winner. There was a "truth or dare," which asked participants to reveal sexual desires and/or else dared them to perform various sexual acts with someone else in the bar (mostly amounting to kissing, licking, and groping) among others.

One of my clients wanted to participate in the truth or dare game. This client spoke for himself which meant I was off the hook for voicing his "truth" answer in my white, female, naïve voice and vocabulary. I interpreted the question and he answered. He moved on from that to perform a dare which was to kiss another man at the bar, probably with some parameters I cannot remember. What stuck with me was after he finished the kiss, he looked around laughing and then met eyes with me and, still laughing, hid his face behind his hand. It could have been that he was simply hiding from the massive amount of attention and cheers he was receiving from the entire room but somehow I got the distinct feeling that my being there made him uncomfortable or self-conscious. This was a gay male space that may have tolerated my cis female presence but not necessarily participation in facilitating the event. My presence there was completely mismatched and for more than just issues of interpreting.

There seems to be an assumption that physical representation and personal experience with racial oppression equates teaching ability. There is a common belief among whites that white people wanting to learn about racism are entitled to topical tutelage by people of color. A common sentiment in response is that people of color do not exist to explain racism to white people (Applebaum, 2007). It is problematic that the white faculty at ABC University's IEP department who are responsible for hiring faculty and staff assume that, as an inherent result of a professor of color's physical embodiment, they can and should act as the singular wellspring of knowledge on matters of non-white raced experiences for classes of primarily white students. Interestingly, the IEP department's insistence on hiring a person of color to

more equitably represent multiculturalism issues does not carry over to their hiring of faculty and staff for the rest of the core interpreting classes. Their full time tenured and tenure track faculty are all white educators who are experts in their fields (interpreting, linguistics, Deaf studies) – only one of whom is formally educated in pedagogy (common across IEP/ITPs). None of the tenured or tenure track faculty advertise specialized training or continuing education on intersectionality, power and privilege, or for how to deliver DEI instruction in the classroom. The disconnect of insisting that only professors of color be procured to teach about multicultural issues, but disregarding this insistence of hiring culturally diverse instructors in a broader application within the department staffing smacks of tokenism. Further isolating the burden of DEI instruction for that professor of color is that no other course or professor is prepared to support DEI concepts throughout the rest of the curriculum.

This insistence that a professor of color represent and deliver the multiculturalism issues course to a classroom of mostly white students also carries implications for what and who is meant to be discussed in the course. As covered in the literature review, Critical Whiteness Studies asserts that, unless otherwise specified, the default and central racial position is white. The course description mentions that students will have "an in-depth look at the most common cultures and cultural issues interpreters encounter" and that the schedule will accommodate, "additional cultural groups to be studied." The language used here signals that interpreters are outside of these "common cultures" and "cultural groups" which follow CWS' claim that the unnamed racial positioning is white (interpreters) and the cultural groups are referred to as other. A learning objective from the same course underscores this point by naming the "various cultural groups" as "African American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, Euro American, gay, lesbian, Latino and Native American." This is not to say that non-white identities should

not be discussed. On the contrary – they should be, but not in the absence of investigating whiteness and its power relationship to people of color. Insisting that an "of color" embodiment should be a professional requisite to deliver curriculum to mostly white students about multicultural issues is tokenism. Further, when curriculum on "multicultural issues" is silent on whiteness and white power as a primary architect for the construction of race, whiteness is excused as a subject for interrogation and its mechanisms for social control – as well as our opportunities for intervention – escape again behind a cloak of invisibility.

As mentioned in the previous section, the membership body of RID voted to adopt a continuing education credit requirement centering on the topic of power and privilege. IEP/ITPs set the tone for priority topics to be attended to throughout the trajectory of a graduate's career. Collegiate interpreter education is not just the basics – it is the foundation for the minimum standard of knowledge and skill. RID's vote is in direct response to this knowledge and skills gap in the field that is resulting from decades of IEP/ITP curriculum that does not include these topics. Normally RID does not name specific topics to be counted for continuing education units (CEUs) – the two categories that must be satisfied are professional studies and general studies which range from more linguistic and technical skills for the former and general knowledge for the latter. However, by naming a specific topic for CEUs - power and privilege - RID is recognizing the gross disparity of knowledge and emergent need of progress in this area. Issues of power and privilege should not be siloed within the IEP/ITP curriculum nor should they be deferred as supplementary content that interpreters can afford to learn at some point down the road *if* they choose. Due to the indivisible nature of intersectional power, privilege and language inherent to the job, curriculum that does not systematically embed instruction on these matters is incomplete. In order to deliver this type

of content, we need professors who are experts on the topic, who can provide a wide range of

perspective, who can model personal experience as well as allyship and more broadly,

professors who demand and are able to embed this type of content throughout the curriculum.

E.   **Inclusive Deaf Studies**

Researcher Reflection: I often interpret at a center for independent living that is very politically active and regularly engages the community through cultural events and town hall meetings. This CIL prides itself on employing people with disabilities and presenting people with disabilities as leaders and the face of nearly every event they have. They strive to make each event universally accessible which means they regularly hire sign language interpreters. Their presenters and consumers are a diverse group in regard to race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, etc. Many of the service providers and personal assistants are also of diverse intersectional backgrounds.

Over the years, however, it seems slightly out of step that the interpreter should always be an able bodied white woman at events that are led, run, and attended by and for people with disabilities. Sign language interpreting can be mentally and physically demanding but not one that requires the absence of disability. In my entire career I have only met one interpreter who presented with a visible disability as a wheel chair user. I know one interpreter who still manages residual symptoms of a traumatic brain injury and another who walks with a significant limp from an old injury. I do not know if any of these interpreters identify as a member of the disability community. I know only one working interpreter who openly identifies as a member of the disability community, having an invisible disability. None of these interpreters live in my home state.

Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs) have recently seen a growth in recognition and demand. A Deaf interpreter works with a hearing sign language interpreter who interprets spoken language to sign language and then produces a more native or nuanced version of the interpretation that hearing interpreters may not have the intuition to produce. Deaf interpreters are often hired for situations with Deaf internationals, educational situations where children need native language models, with Deaf people exhibiting non-standard language variations for a variety of reasons, and in professional events, legal settings, and other high stakes scenarios to ensure fluency and clarity. Aside from having a low number of CDIs working in the field, the main reason Deaf interpreters are not often hired is because they present double the cost for customers for jobs that traditionally have been handled by only hearing interpreters.   Would CDIs be a more appropriate fit at the above mentioned CIL events that are run by and for people with disabilities?

Where is disability representation in the interpreting field? The supposition that the interpreters who do provide service at these jobs are not disabled is also tricky because of the prevalence of invisible disabilities. Visible or not, there are scant

few interpreters who identify as having a disability or as members of the disability community. It is also not a guarantee that an interpreter with a disability would feel moved to interpret events at disability community events, at risk of becoming the "token" interpreter. Having no representation of disabled interpreters to choose from in a large metropolitan area, however, is curious.

Since interpreter education builds much of its scholarship from Traditional Deaf Studies, but Traditional Deaf Studies is criticized for its white exclusively, it makes sense that an exclusive (and otherwise non-intersectional) understanding of deafness would lead to a racist understanding of interpreting praxis. I argue that white exclusivity here presents as a form of institutional racism, because it denies all other forms of existence, rejecting them and invalidating their experience and knowledge. If interpreting students have a myopic appreciation of the intersectional identities present within the client population, they will miss the opportunity to explore how intersectionality influences language and communication. Some intersectional scholarship is making inroads into Traditional Deaf Studies' white hegemonic bastion but the interventions are slow and still burdened with justifying their position within Traditional Deaf Studies' construction. Instead of trying to chip away at the structurally biased Traditional Deaf Studies, I propose that interpreter education and educators employ Inclusive Deaf Studies as the guiding discipline from which to inform future interpreter education.

Inclusive Deaf Studies (Fernandes & Shultz Myers, 2009) introduces a radical shift in borders around what is recognized as valued contributions to understanding d/Deaf embodiment and the community that interpreting students will work with post graduation. I argue that adopting an Inclusive Deaf Studies as foundational framework from which to build interpreter education curriculum offers educators a guide for achieving a more well rounded

educational product and environment wherein students of diverse backgrounds can thrive and serve the equally diverse d/Deaf community.

As discussed in the literature review, Inclusive Deaf Studies is a framework that invites the field to throw open the gates of its scholarship boundaries to those beyond the traditional and predominantly straight white male signing Deaf academics. Since the emergence of Deaf Studies in the 1970s, much work has centered around the Deaf-hearing binary model and a duty to buttress a signing Deaf identity against the oppressive pathologizing hearing and speaking hegemony. Fernandes and Shultz Myers (2009) argue that while necessary at the time, this reactionary scholarship has not changed since the 1970s and is stifling the projection of the field. They write "To carve out new territory, Deaf Studies must first broaden the group that is studied by cultivating sensitivity to biases and awareness of various systems of privilege. That is, it must not remain reactive but become consciously proactive. For example, just as audism is an issue for both deaf and hearing people, other rationalizations of privilege such as racism, sexism, and heterosexism are also issues for all deaf people and their allies" (Fernandes & Shultz Myers, 2009, p. 28). Interpreter education, as a product of deafness and drawing largely from Deaf studies to construct its own pedagogy, must also not remain reactive but become consciously proactive. If interpreting education adopts an approach similar to Inclusive Deaf Studies' proactive endeavor to understanding d/Deafness, then they must prioritize d/Deafness and interpreting with intersectional topics of race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, and others as central to understanding instead of compartmentalizing it as extraneous to a binary Deaf/hearing, signing/speaking conceptualization of sign language interpreting.

Interpreter education built from an Inclusive Deaf Studies paradigm requires a reimagining of the previously entrenched definitions of d/Deaf, interpreter, and community. Part of this reimagining necessitates discovering the intersectional d/Deaf scholarship that already exists but is often passed over as tangential to the core cannon of Deaf work. As mentioned previously in the literature review, examples of this is include the recent and seminal text on Black ASL - *The Hidden Treasure of Black ASL: Its History and Structure* (McCaskill, Lucas, Bayley, & Hill, 2011) and recent scholarship that has developed from its breakthrough (Toliver-Smith & Gentry, 2017). Raymond Luczak's offers two anthologies of entitled *Eyes of Desire: A Deaf Gay & Lesbian Reader* (1993) and *Eyes of Desire 2: A Deaf GLBT Reader* (2007), and Dr. Arlene B. Kelly's *Deaf HERstory: Making Strides* (2016). Contentious issues such as d/Deaf insider-outside identity and community membership is ripe for unpacking with regard deaf people who do not use sign language, are oral, have a cochlear implant, other non-traditional embodiments of deafness, as well as for immediate family members of d/Deaf people. Inclusive Deaf Studies could be the new frontier of d/Deaf theory but currently an academic search of the theory identifies only the two original articles by Fernandes and Shultz Myers (2009). The lack of cataloging of current scholarship available of under the umbrella of Inclusive Deaf Studies and gaps in the scholarship is a not a barrier – it is an opportunity to lay the foundation of this new direction.

I propose that the very first step toward understanding Inclusive Deaf Studies with the intention of future use in interpreter education is a systematic literature review of the work currently available that reflects Inclusive Deaf Studies theory but has not yet been formally catalogued as such. Toward applying this intersectional paradigm to interpreter education programs, a nationwide assessment of the identity representation of faculty and staff

interpreter educators and what subjects they teach might offer insight into the current social

arrangement for content delivery. Are professors of color, diverse gender and sexuality

representation and disability represented in educator and leadership positions in these

programs as opposed to token positions for multicultural education? If not, how can this

inform processes of recruitment, hiring, and retention? The multidimensionality of Inclusive

Deaf Studies can be explored through the development of new classes such as d/Deaf

literature. Currently, there is burgeoning scholarship on ASL literature (McDonald, 2017) but

this is limited to Deaf people whose language preference is ASL. Deaf literature includes writers

whose first language preference may not be ASL but who offer a valuable and intersectional

contribution to understanding deaf life (Jepson, 1992; Stremlau, 2002). It has the potential to

also include an intersectional perspective from writers who are associated with deafness

through familial, romantic, or professional association. An inclusive Deaf Studies paradigm

extends the borders of d/Deaf membership which exponentially expands the library of

resources that interpreter education can draw from.

This diversifying of literature and theoretical approach to deafness offers interpreting

students a more realistic view of the people they will encounter as clients. As traditionally

understood, Deaf culture has defined itself and is taught as being solely in opposition to hearing

culture and in resistance to audism. A culturally Deaf identity development model originated

by Tom Holcomb presents a five-step process that presents non-signing deaf people (step 1) as

living in personal ignorance and celebrates Deaf acceptance (step 5) as personal enlightenment

and a sophisticated ability to be at peace with the d/Deaf and hearing worlds. The praxis of

teaching Deaf culture and Deaf cultural identity in association to value judgments risks instilling

in students a bias against all other presentations of deafness and deaf identity. When I

graduated from my IEP, I had strongly internalized this bias and spent years unpacking the prejudice and judgment I felt against clients I met who did not sign fluently or express a desire to associate with the Deaf community. It disheartens me to hear current ITP/IEP students make similar disparaging remarks against d/Deaf identity presentation that deviates from what Traditional Deaf Studies teaches as good, best, and natural. Most concerning is how this bias will impact a client's experience and these students' ability to succeed as sign language interpreters post graduation. As illustrated throughout this thesis, my own confessions of unfamiliarity for understanding and navigating intersectional issues highlight a need for a more critical address of these matters in interpreter education curriculum.

One of the most important contributions that adopting Inclusive Deaf Studies affords is a disruption of the current white cultural hegemonic ideas of d/Deaf culture and people. Instead of locating intersectional d/Deaf scholarship as tangential to exploring the Deaf/hearing binary, intersectional d/Deaf scholarship is positioned as an imperative to understanding deaf life. Developing Interpreter curriculum from an Inclusive Deaf Studies framework has the potential to transform interpreter education into a more authentic preparation for what interpreters encounter on the job. It also carries potential for understanding the power dynamics of intersectional representation as opposed to a superficial acknowledgement of human differences. When diversity is accepted as the norm and not a deviation from the (white) norm, it can provide an inroad against barriers for expanding intersectional scholarship and educators of diverse backgrounds. If this ideal representation is embedded in interpreter curriculum and embodied within interpreter education program structure, ITP/IEP spaces potentially become inclusive spaces of belonging (Chatterlee, 2010) for a spectrum of students of various backgrounds and unique talents.

VI.   CONCLUSION

This study set out to understand current IEP/ITP practices of embedding intersectional content into curriculum. Once understood, this work aimed to discuss the implications of those curricular practices within the context of social structures of power. Through interpreting the body of literature on this topic and analyzing a model of accredited curriculum for a four-year bachelor's degree IEP, new insight was reached with regard to the intended educational messaging versus the actual result. This project adds to the body of literature by locating conflict between curriculum standards and developed curriculum on the topics of DEI, power, privilege, and allyship within IEP/ITP curriculum. Through using an inductive reasoning design, curriculum was systematically analyzed and collated to present three points of intervention for the current practices of IEP curriculum. These points are: 1) multiculturalism is a deficient model from which to develop an understanding of power, privilege, and allyship; 2) the white dominance of IEP/ITP educators results in a lack of cultural competency for designing curriculum with and delivering content on power, privilege, and allyship; and 3) that the accreditation endorsement of IEP/ITP curriculum despite its lack of embedded content on DEI functions to maintain the white cultural hegemony in the field of sign language interpreting. Especially in a field dominated by members of the white dominant class, interpreter curriculum must be held to a more critical standard if it aims to do its part in breaking down racist barriers for non-whites' entry into the field. In response, this thesis presents Inclusive Deaf Studies as a tool to leverage a more equitable discipline and cannon of work to draw from when creating interpreter education curriculum. Inclusive Deaf Studies starts from a place that seeks to broaden an intersectional understanding of d/Deafness and critiques Traditional Deaf Studies for its exclusivity. While Inclusive Deaf Studies acts as an entry point toward a foundational

scholarly shift in understanding d/Deafness and by extension, the expectations of an interpreters' role, there is much more to be done. Namely, Inclusive Deaf Studies must be more robustly developed as a theoretical discipline. Further, the CCIE and IEP/ITP educators must also buy into this shift and invest time in reconceptualizing what a rich and equitable interpreter curriculum must include.

A.   **Limitations**

This study has some limitations. While there is much literature on Traditional Deaf Studies, there is little literature yet available on Inclusive Deaf Studies. Inclusive Deaf Studies is an emerging field that has yet to be developed to a level as sophisticated as Traditional Deaf Studies has achieved in the past forty years. Also, there is little literature available on the curriculum evaluation and analysis for ITP/IEPs. As mentioned in the methods section, the data acquired for use in this study was inconsistent in many instances. These inconsistencies – in some places total gaps in sections of the data – might have skewed the results. Focusing on only one institution's curriculum might have limited my results – it would be worth conducting this kind of systematic curriculum review for the other twelve CCIE accredited IEP/ITPs. Lastly, my position as an alumni of ABC University's IEP degree could have ushered in a researcher bias.

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