



Improving Rural Interpreter Skills

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Improving Rural Interpreter Skills

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Module 6: Growth Mindset



GROWTH MINDSET

Module content developed in part by [UNC-IRIS Project](#), [UNC-Project CLIMB](#) & Daniel Gough
[ASL Lectures](#) by: Jesús M. Rēmigiō, Erin Sanders-Sigmon, Naomi Sheneman & Jeremy Quiroga



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Overview & Objectives

Overview: This module focuses on understanding how to foster a growth mindset as a facilitator and mentor in the IRIS Project. This will be achieved by identifying the status quo in the interpreting field and unpacking one's biases and assumptions about rural interpreters.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Upon Completion of this module participants will be able to:

1. Define a Growth Mindset—what it means.
2. Describe how negative stereotypes can affect the educational experiences and outcomes of marginalized groups.
3. Explain how a Growth Mindset contributes to critical thinking.
4. Recognize the impact of stereotypes on marginalized learners in educational settings.
5. Discuss ways in which facilitators and mentors can foster the acquisition of a growth mindset among learners.
6. Identify strategies that can be employed to foster a growth mindset and to reduce or eliminate threats to growth potential.
7. Provide reference to relevant research and examples regarding the effects of negative stereotypes on marginalized groups' educational experiences and outcomes.
8. Discuss how promoting the status quo in interpreting hinders the growth mindset of learners.
9. Collaborate with colleagues to reflect on one's assumptions and evaluate how that impacts facilitation and mentoring.

Discussion: Reflecting on your own Journey, Part I



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

Before we go any further, it may be helpful to think back to your own formative interpreting experiences.

1. Think about a time in your career when you had an issue arise that you could not work through on your own or a struggle you faced where you may have benefited from discussions with another trusted colleague(s). What impact did this particular situation have on you as an interpreter and what lessons did you learn from working through the challenging situation with others?
2. If you were to mentor your “beginner interpreting self”, what advice would you give to yourself? What lessons have you learned that you want to be sure to pass on?



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Discussion: Reflecting on your own Journey, Part II



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Response post directions:

After reviewing your peers' posts, create a response post to at least one of your colleagues that addresses the following:

1. What new insight did you gain from their post that can be applied to your journey as an interpreter?
2. What parts of their story do you feel are most powerful and why? How might those parts contribute to someone else's journey?
3. As a mentor, how might you be able to use this exercise of sharing our interpreting journeys with the colleagues you will work with? How might it benefit them and others in the group?



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Understanding Mindsets, Part I

FIXED MINDSET

THE BELIEF THAT YOUR POTENTIAL WAS DETERMINED AT BIRTH.



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GROWTH MINDSET

THE BELIEF THAT WE CAN WORK HARD AND IMPROVE.



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Understanding Mindsets, Part II

Growth mindset: Goes Beyond Effort

It's NOT just about a student's effort. The educational environment is important for changing mindset.



Out of these two mindsets, which we manifest from a very early age, springs a great deal of our behavior.

Being open to the struggle that is often at the center of deep and robust learning requires a growth mindset. It is a process that involves developing greater levels of resilience.

Given the complex process of acquiring the competence needed for interpreting, developing a growth mindset is a valuable attribute for learners.

IRIS Project facilitators and mentors need to intentionally foster a growth mindset in the more novice interpreters they work with.



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What is Marginalization?

Marginalization defined

Marginalization is the social process by which individuals or groups are (intentionally or unintentionally) distanced from access to power and resources and constructed as insignificant, peripheral, or less valuable to a community or “mainstream” society (University of British Columbia, 2023).

Marginalized people do not necessarily belong to one particular demographic. Marginalization occurs due to ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, cultural background, socioeconomic level, and age. Marginalized groups are often at a disadvantage when it comes to obtaining health care, education, and employment that would improve their well-being. Marginalization can also be referred to as social exclusion.

As illustrated on the next few slides, we will consider how the experience of marginalization can impact one’s mindset.



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Mindset and Marginalization, Part I

The educational environment can have a big impact on a learner's mindset. This can be especially true for many marginalized groups that are surrounded by negative stereotypes. In the subsequent slides, Erica West Oyedele and Amy Williamson share examples from their research of the negative impact that stereotypes can have on marginalized groups.





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Mindset and Marginalization, Part II

West Oyedele (2015) demonstrates this in her [study](#) of the persistence of African-American/Black Signed Language Interpreters in the United States. She notes that for those in the field of education, vast amounts of literature points to disparate outcomes in higher education for learners who are from marginalized racial groups (Lohfink, 2005; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Walpole, 2008). When educational outcomes are less than equitable for those from traditionally marginalized groups in the United States, we see correlated adverse impacts to the labor market outcomes for those populations. This is especially true for African American/Black learners when compared to other primary racial groups (Fairchild, 2009).



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Mindset and Marginalization, Part III

In West Oyedele's study, she shares these personal experiences of interpreters of color:

- I grew up always seeing White people, and I learned how to navigate and survive in their world. I know that I can get by fine without any problem, and at the same time when a situation arises or there is a need to debrief after an assignment, I wish there was someone who really understood me, but typically I don't have access to that. [West Oyedele, 2015, p.80]
- Throughout the class each time I raised my hand I was never called on. After class, my classmates would even tell me they felt bad about it. [West Oyedele, 2015, p.64]
- I believe that as Black interpreters we have these lived experiences and so going into these situations we've learned from our own experiences how to deal with them and be professional at the same time. [West Oyedele, 2015, p.65]
- African American/Black interpreters all have a unique struggle (my opinion), the biggest issue is that non-African American/Black peers don't understand their cultural biases and seem afraid to address the issue. [West Oyedele, 2015, p.61]



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Mindset and Marginalization, Part IV

In her [study](#) of Deaf-parented interpreters (2015), Williamson found that deaf-parented individuals are also often marginalized in their educational pursuits. Anecdotally, ASL–English deaf-parented interpreters say that educational opportunities do not account for their experience as signed language users and cultural brokers. Yet standards for the industry of ASL–English interpretation require a postsecondary degree, or equivalent, prior to certification, and an increasing number of states require licensure before interpreters are allowed to work in that state (RID, 2014).

Ensuring the availability of educational opportunities to meet the particular needs of deaf-parented students will create a more appropriate pipeline through which native users of ASL may achieve certification, licensure, and education to a standardized level of service for consumers of interpreting.



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Reflecting on a Growth Mindset

Due to pervasive negative stereotypes that exist about race, gender, language and cultural identity, and disability, it is not uncommon for educational systems to have low expectations of marginalized groups of individuals that lead to educational biases and barriers.

This makes marginalized groups susceptible to racial vulnerability and/or stereotype threat—where the pervasive negative stereotypes can result in anything one does or any of one's features that conform to the stereotype make it more plausible as a self-characterization in the eyes of others—perhaps even in one's own eyes.

One of the roles of a facilitator/mentor is to foster a growth mindset. In order to overcome the negative stereotypes and reduce or eliminate the threat, both facilitators/mentors and learners have to think of intelligence as something that can increase; both facilitators/mentors and learners have to expect that it will take time and effort for learning or mastery to happen; and both facilitators/mentors and learners have to anticipate there will be challenges and mistakes as new things are learned...and embrace these as a natural and necessary part of the learning process.



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Coaching a Growth Mindset, Part I

Please watch the [Fixed vs. Growth Mindsets in Children](#) video.

To foster a growth mindset and to reduce stereotype threat:

- Both facilitators and learners have to think of intelligence as something that can increase.
- Both facilitators and learners have to expect that it will take time and effort for learning or mastery to happen.
- Both facilitators and learners have to anticipate there will be challenges and mistakes as new things are learned...and embrace these as a natural and necessary part of the learning process.



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Coaching a Growth Mindset, Part II

Principles to adopt

Mistakes are good! One of the hardest parts of creating growth mindsets in learners is showing that mistakes are good. Too often in our culture, mistakes are viewed as shortcomings, actions we have to cover to avoid looking foolish. But a growth mindset embraces mistakes and sees them as important signposts on the way to learning. The question, then, is how can you normalize mistakes for your community of learning?

Encourage mistakes! So much of learning is innovation and experimentation. Learners must be encouraged to make mistakes as part of their journey to gaining specialized interpreting competence. Mistakes are a gift to the community of learnings. They provide us all with an opportunity to learn. Learners should also be on the lookout for what types of mistakes they are making. Identifying which mistakes a learner is making will target where the skills development work should focus.

The power of “not-yet”. Emphasize that the effort of doing something new will pay off eventually. Mastery is a process that takes time, risk and practice.

Be fascinated & curious. Use mistakes as opportunities to explore and devise new strategies.

Discourage rumination. Provide opportunities for learners to move forward. Often, we will ruminate and feel bad over their mistakes. This is not a forward movement. Springboard to new strategies instead.

Cognitive wobble occurs when someone is introduced to an intellectual dilemma that requires them to think more—to go into a metaphorical learning pit to figure out something. The role of the learning community in the growth mindset is to create cognitive wobble.

Synchronous Session: Unpacking Together



This module **requires your attendance** at a synchronous session. Your facilitator(s) will share the exact details of the date and time of this session.

During this session come prepared to describe how as an emerging facilitator and mentor negative stereotypes can affect the educational experiences and outcomes of marginalized groups.



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Mindset Knowledge Check

NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this knowledge check

1. What type of mindset(s) do you see exhibited in the [Pursuit of Happyness](#) (2006) film clip, and what evidence do you see (behaviors, words, resulting actions) that guided you in your thinking?



Correct response: Specific answers will vary, however, both types of mindset are exhibited in this video.


Understanding Status Quo

What is status quo?

Over these next few pages, we will explore the current state of interpreting practices and discuss its impact on the profession and how it influences facilitator's status quo.

The term "status quo" refers to the existing or current state of affairs, particularly in a given industry or field. It signifies the facilitator's prevailing practices, norms, and challenges within the profession.

Understanding the status quo in the interpreting world involves recognizing the current state of the profession, its challenges, and the broader impacts on career opportunities, quality standards, cultural competence, and technological adaptation. Facilitators and mentors alike must navigate this evolving landscape to ensure the profession remains dynamic, responsive, and relevant in an ever-changing global context.

 To check your current understanding of status quo complete the quiz on the next page before going further. This quiz is designed to gauge your understanding of the current state of interpreting practices and challenges within the profession.



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Status Quo Pre-Knowledge Check

NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this knowledge check

1. What is the definition of "status quo" in the context of the interpreting world?
 - a. The process of becoming an interpreter.
 - b. The current state of affairs in interpreting, including prevalent practices and challenges.
 - c. The highest level of interpreting certification.
 - d. A type of interpreting technique.
2. How has the diversity of the interpreting workforce evolved in recent years?
 - a. The workforce has become less diverse.
 - b. The workforce has remained the same.
 - c. The workforce has become more diverse, reflecting multicultural societies.
 - d. There is no diversity in the interpreting profession.
3. What is one potential impact of biases, assumptions, or preconceptions on facilitators within the interpreting profession?
 - a. Biases can improve the quality of teaching.
 - b. Assumptions have no impact on facilitators.
 - c. Preconceptions can lead to a lack of openness to new ideas or methods.
 - d. Biases, assumptions, and preconceptions always have a positive impact.
4. Why is it important for facilitators to explore and address their preconceptions?
 - a. It is not necessary to explore preconceptions.
 - b. Preconceptions do not impact facilitators.
 - c. Preconceptions can lead to biased feedback and judgments.
 - d. Preconceptions are always accurate and should not be challenged.



Correct responses: 1. B, 2. C, 3. C, 4. C.

The Current State of Interpreting, Part I

Four contributing factors:

- **Demand for Interpreting Services:**
 - The demand for interpreting services has increased significantly, driven by globalization and multiculturalism (Smith et al., 2020).
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote interpreting technologies (Liu & Wu, 2021).
- **Challenges in Quality Assurance:**
 - Ensuring high-quality interpreting remains a challenge, with variations in standards and training (Napier et al., 2018).
 - Machine translation and AI tools are emerging as both opportunities and threats (Baker & Chang, 2019).



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The Current State of Interpreting, Part II

Four contributing factors (continued):

- **Diversity in the Interpreting Workforce:**
 - The interpreting workforce is becoming more diverse, reflecting the communities they serve (Ozolins, 2018).
 - Cultural competence and sensitivity are increasingly vital for interpreters (Valero-Garcés, 2017).
- **Ethical Dilemmas:**
 - Ethical issues such as confidentiality and impartiality continue to be central concerns (Hale, 2007).
 - The interpreter's role as a cultural mediator is also evolving (Angelelli, 2004).

Understanding Biases, Assumptions, and Preconceptions in the Status Quo, Part I

In our role as facilitators and mentors in the interpreting world, it's vital to be aware of and address biases, assumptions, and preconceptions.

These cognitive factors can influence our actions, decisions, and interactions, potentially impacting the quality of education and training we provide.

Biases, assumptions, and preconceptions can subtly shape the way we design and deliver our courses, inadvertently favoring certain groups or perspectives within our interpreting communities.

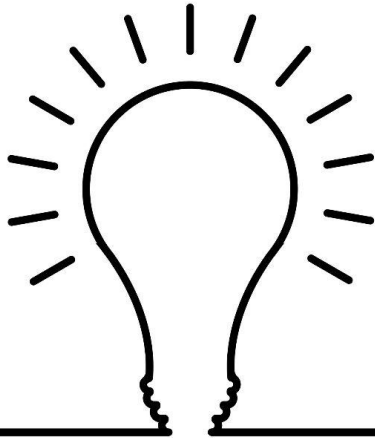


Understanding Biases, Assumptions, and Preconceptions in the Status Quo, Part II

Furthermore, these cognitive tendencies may affect our ability to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where all interpreters, regardless of their background or experiences, can thrive.

As facilitators and mentors, it's essential to recognize that these biases can operate both at an individual level, influencing our personal beliefs and actions, and at a systemic level, affecting the dynamics within the groups we mentor and facilitate.

By acknowledging and addressing these cognitive factors, we not only enhance the quality of our facilitation and mentoring but also contribute to a more equitable and inclusive interpreting profession.





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Types of Biases, Part I

Cultural Bias:

- *Definition:* Cultural bias involves favoring one culture over another, leading to unequal treatment of interpreters from different backgrounds.
- *Impact on Facilitators and Mentors:*
 - Facilitators and mentors may unconsciously favor interpreters from their own cultural background, unintentionally neglecting or marginalizing those from different cultures.
 - This bias can result in a lack of inclusivity and hinder the creation of a supportive learning environment where all cultural perspectives are valued.

Confirmation Bias:

- *Definition:* Confirmation bias entails seeking or interpreting information that confirms preexisting beliefs, potentially neglecting alternative perspectives.
- *Impact on Facilitators and Mentors:*
 - Facilitators and mentors may unintentionally reinforce their existing teaching methods or beliefs, overlooking innovative or alternative approaches to interpreting.
 - This bias can limit the diversity of teaching strategies and hinder the group's exposure to a broader range of perspectives and techniques.

Types of Biases, Part II

Stereotyping:

- *Definition:* Stereotyping involves making assumptions about individuals or groups based on their characteristics, which can lead to discrimination.
- *Impact on Facilitators and Mentors:*
 - Facilitators and mentors may unintentionally stereotype interpreters based on factors like age, gender, or language proficiency.
 - This bias can lead to unequal opportunities for interpreters and hinder their individual growth and development within the group.

Types of Assumptions

- **Assumptions About Participants:**

- Facilitators and mentors may assume that all learners have the same learning needs, preferences, or cultural backgrounds.
- These assumptions can lead to an ineffective one-size-fits-all approach to facilitating and mentoring, potentially leaving some interpreters underserved.

- **Assumptions About Interpreting Trends:**

- Facilitators and mentors may assume that the interpreting field evolves slowly.
- Such assumptions can result in a resistance to adapt to rapid technological changes or emerging trends within interpreting.

- **Assumptions About Personal Bias:**

- Facilitators and mentors might assume that they are entirely free from biases or prejudices.
- This assumption can hinder self-awareness and the ability to address biases that might impact interactions with interpreters from diverse backgrounds.

Exploring Assumptions

How do I explore my assumptions?

Facilitators and mentors can engage in self-reflection and self-assessment to explore their assumptions:

1. **Reflect on Personal Beliefs:** Take time to identify and critically examine your own assumptions about teaching, interpreting, and learners.
2. **Gather Feedback:** Solicit feedback from interpreters and colleagues to gain insights into how your assumptions may impact their learning experience.
3. **Continuous Learning:** Stay informed about emerging trends and best practices in the interpreting field to challenge and evolve your assumptions.
4. **Cultural Competence:** Develop cultural sensitivity and competence to avoid making assumptions based on cultural stereotypes.

Understanding Preconceptions

What are preconceptions?

Preconceptions are preformed opinions or attitudes about a subject, which can impact how we approach facilitation or mentorship. These preconceptions can significantly influence one's approach and interactions.

What are the impacts of preconceptions?

1. Lack of openness to new ideas or methods:
 - a. Preconceptions can limit a facilitator's or mentor's willingness to explore innovative facilitating/mentoring methods or new approaches to interpreting.
 - b. This lack of openness can hinder professional growth and the evolution of facilitating/mentoring practices.
2. Influence on feedback and participant's performance:
 - a. Facilitators' and mentors' preconceived notions about learners' abilities or backgrounds can influence how they interpret feedback or evaluate participant performance.
 - b. This bias can lead to unfair judgments and missed opportunities for constructive feedback.

GoReact Discussion: Exploring the Status Quo, Part I



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

As a facilitator and mentor within the interpreting field, it's imperative to engage in critical thinking and actively reduce biases, assumptions, and preconceptions. Here's a step-by-step guide with a focus on translating new insights into practical applications:

1. Reflect on Your Current Practices and Beliefs:

- **Critical Thinking:** Take dedicated time to critically assess your current practices and beliefs as a facilitator and mentor.
- **Ask Questions:** Challenge the status quo by asking questions like: "Why do I do things this way?" or "What assumptions am I making about my participants?"
- **Application Correlation:** Identify how your current practices align with what you've learned from the status quo series.

2. Identify Biases, Assumptions, and Preconceptions:

- **Deep Self-Examination:** Delve into your own thinking and values to identify any biases, assumptions, or preconceptions that might unconsciously affect your role.
- **Discussion Correlation:** Consider how these biases may have influenced your previous interactions with interpreters and mentees.
- **Application Insight:** Reflect on how reducing these biases can positively impact your future facilitation and mentorship.

GoReact Discussion: Exploring the Status Quo, Part II



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original Post:

Use GoReact to create a reflective video where you candidly discuss the following three ideas:

1. **Disclose assumptions** you hold as an emerging facilitator and mentor regarding about rural interpreters.
2. **Share insights into** what you've learned from the status quo series and reflect on whether these insights will influence your future facilitation or mentorship.
3. **Apply your learning** by outlining the specific steps you plan to take to apply these insights in your facilitation and mentorship roles.

Response Post:

After reviewing the responses from your colleagues, put your facilitator hat on as if you were the facilitator of this discussion post. Ask your colleagues questions that you may ask a participant in your COL to further the conversation and encourage critical thinking.



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