An Interpreter in my Classroom: What do I do now?

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Key Issues:

1. Mediated Education vs. Direct
   • Working with an interpreter does NOT mean the child has equal access
   • Child has different access and it is NOT the same experience as direct education with a teacher that shares their language
   • Education in mediated through the interpreter

2. Interpreter & Mediation
   • Interpreting - Human activity requiring a great deal of training
   • Even with training, it is still “mediated” through their experience, understanding, linguistic fluency, familiarity with teacher intent and goals, etc.
   • Classrooms – place of constructing knowledge – teachers/students – now have a third partner in the co-construction

3. Preparation & Pre-Teaching
   a. Prep with interpreter – what do you want students to be thinking about?
   b. Pre-teaching as cognitive support- teacher/interpreter/peer tutor/family
   c. Use of visual material
   d. Reducing dual tasking simultaneous demands

4. More Tips on Working Together
   a. Lighting
   b. Positioning
   c. Interaction Demands
      i. Discussions
      ii. Small Group – talking ball
      iii. Calling on Deaf child
      iv. Multiple speakers at same time
   d. Use Captioned media

5. Consider ways to mirror the Deaf Life in the classroom
a. Classroom presentations
b. Classroom field trips
c. ASL poetry lessons
d. Role models – Deaf lawyers, medical doctors, oil and gas engineers, etc
e. Success stories vs. can’t stories

6. Adjusting Classroom Practices
   a. Biggest one: Manage the classroom talk
   b. Your classroom is **Bilingual and Bimodal**
   c. Pause more often – count before responding to allow for interpretation to catch up
   d. Consider the fatigue factor of watching interpreter for 6 hours a day
   e. Balance the individual/small group/large group activities
   f. Understand the challenges of simultaneous interpreting/loss of natural prosody
   g. Fatigue- impact on accuracy and effectiveness

7. How do I create a relationship with the student
   a. Learn some survival signs like you are
   b. Social greetings – welcoming
   c. Feedback signs – positive and corrective
   d. Written notes – paper, computer, white board
   e. Text, email – depending on age of student
   f. Sticks in jar
   g. Wait for them to answer