

SIGN LANGUAGE THEATRE:  
EXPRESSION, LANGUAGE, AND TRANSFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

The expansion of potential meaning for a dramatic text should be possible when two languages are performed simultaneously. Sign Language Theatre, through simultaneous use of American Sign Language (ASL) and spoken English, offers an opportunity to determine if two languages can interact effectively to enhance meaning. If the interaction is successful for both languages, then it should be self-evident during performance. Videocassette recordings of Shakespeare performances produced by Sign Language Theatre were observed and specific segments analyzed to determine if this was true. It was discovered that there are evident strengths and weaknesses that exist and in turn must be acknowledged before meaning achieves a high degree of clarity. Sign Language Theatre has not effectively directed its attention to techniques that support enhanced meaning. Review of scripts, prompt books and internal memos indicated that minimal efforts were made to develop techniques supporting the use of two languages in performance application of post-colonial theory also offered explanations as to why these social and political events have prevented the full artistic development of Sign Language Theatre over the past thirty-five years. Close analysis also revealed that the translation process requires more study and development before Sign Language Theatre can develop as an art form. The combination of close analysis of the video segments and the

translation process led to the recognition of possible steps towards enhanced meaning in performance and identified potential areas of focus essential for the development of Sign Language Theatre.

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Everyone should know nowadays...  
that truth, life, or reality is an organic  
thing which the poetic imagination  
can represent or suggest, in essence,  
only through transformation, through  
changing into other forms than those  
which were merely present in  
appearance.  
--Tennessee Williams<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

For human beings language has served as a means to convey intimate and mundane thoughts and feelings. As Tennessee Williams has noted it is an organic process that requires the use of the imagination to successfully transform meaning across languages. Primarily, language expression has been through speech, though written and physical means have also had their place in history. In art, the spoken word has often utilized the forms of poetry, rhetoric, and theater as vehicles for language expression. In recent times, the new written and visual media of film and television have served to expand artistic expression and broaden interaction between cultures. Regardless of the expression employed, the spoken word has often included gesture and body language as a part of the essential message.

Deaf people, as a social group, traditionally have not had access to the spoken word. It is probable that there was an early reliance on body language and gestures to

convey meaning between deaf and hearing people. The human need for language eventually led to the development of formal signed languages. Despite this development, Deaf people have remained isolated from mainstream society for most of civilized history. It was not until the late twentieth century that the civil rights movement and federal laws converged to force change and interaction between minorities and American mainstream society.

As these changes came about a new form of theater, Sign Language Theatre, emerged in the United States. It introduced a new theatrical format: the simultaneous presentation of two languages, one that is expressed vocally and another that is expressed physically and relies on visual elements to convey meaning. In Sign Language Theatre the two languages were combined to serve as a basic departure point for artistic expression in a theatrical setting. This symbiotic relationship between the two languages of spoken English and American Sign Language (ASL) essentially invited two cultures to interact artistically. This interaction introduced new challenges for actors and audience members alike. These challenges have encouraged a creative expansion and exploration of this art form over the thirty-five years of its evolution. In a *Washington Post* interview David Hays, founder of the National Theatre of the Deaf, emphasized that “having deaf people perform plays in sign language...has resulted in a whole new artistic form—not dance, not theater, not mime, but all of those things swirled wondrously together.”<sup>2</sup>

Writing in the genre of drama obviously incorporates the understanding that physical performance will be linked to a response from an audience. The visual and auditory elements add an active referential basis for the interpretation of meaning. In this environment the production of a dramatic work also includes “mimic, gestural, proxemic

and kinesic systems or codes” which the audience has the opportunity to draw upon in their interpretation of the play.<sup>3</sup> With the introduction of ASL, the production is enhanced by “visual and aural language that is the most primitive of human sign-systems: the gestures and sounds of the body...[w]hen the body talks, it is the thing itself.”<sup>4</sup> Before an artistic production becomes reality it exists as action imagined by the writer using a specifically chosen literary form. When the literary form is transformed into performance it becomes an organic action because “the drama is, or can be, both literature and theater, not the one at the expense of the other, but each because of the other.”<sup>5</sup> The introduction of sign language, as a theatrical art form, presents an additional layer of visual information that should create the potential for a more deeply shared experience between actors and audiences.

In early scholarly work, two types of Sign Language Theatre were seen to exist. The first type is “Deaf Theater” which strives to produce and perform plays in sign language using an all-deaf cast. The audience consists mainly of deaf individuals and hearing people fluent in ASL. Performances of this type are focused on presenting issues relevant to deaf audiences and addressing cultural issues uniquely understood by members of the Deaf community. Deaf Theater productions are not necessarily presented simultaneously with spoken English. The second type is defined as “Sign Language Theatre,” which strives to produce various plays simultaneously in sign language and spoken English adapted for a mixed audience of hearing and deaf individuals. Productions in Sign Language Theatre are adaptations of traditional plays performed by deaf actors and hearing actors, and incorporating sign language into the performance. The hearing actors provide spoken language translation for what is signed for the benefit of

those who do not understand ASL. Within this essay, however, “Sign Language Theatre” (SLT) will be the term used to represent all types of theater that employ both spoken English and ASL in performance. This definition assumes that SLT is an art form that for artistic reasons simultaneously performs both languages regardless of the composition of the audience.

Research revealed that SLT spent most of its thirty-five year history proving that deaf individuals have the capacity, skill, and intelligence to successfully participate in the performing arts. Significant time has also been devoted to proving that ASL is a viable language that can be presented as eloquently as spoken English in a theatrical performance. For all practical purposes these two areas remain the primary focus of SLT. Unfortunately, this means that there has been a lack of scholarly investigation of this art form. Valuable time has been lost which could have provided significant inroads into new techniques and approaches for this type of theatrical performance

One crucial element of SLT that has the potential to make or break a production is the translation of the theatrical work from English to ASL. When translation occurs it should represent a transformation from one culture’s point of view to another culture’s point of view so the

translation signifies a change of something into something else that is in all essential aspects equal to it. In such processes, both the translated and the translation are of the same value and significance and nothing but a superficial change has occurred...thus everything that passes for a formation is really a transformation of one already existing sign into another.<sup>6</sup>

When the translation process involves a language that is spoken and another language that is visual, what has to occur to successfully transform the text to reflect similar

meaning within both languages? This question led to an exploration of Sign Language Theatre that involved archival research at Gallaudet University, the National Technical Institute of the Deaf, the National Theatre of the Deaf, and Cleveland Signstage Theatre. These searches identified potential videocassette recordings that could be used to conduct close analysis of various productions. The process also uncovered memos and other written commentary that could be used for historical references pertaining to the development and processes involved in Sign Language Theatre. There was also the opportunity to direct *The Digestible Comedy of Errors* at Cleveland Signstage Theatre that allowed close contact with the process and consequently became a part of this research paper. These various resources all contributed information essential for exploring the process of dual-languages in performance and its potential contribution to expanded meaning of a dramatic text.

## METHODOLOGY

Research for this paper was focused on productions of Shakespeare for three reasons. The first reason was to reduce the number of productions reviewed during the research process. The second reason was to include a postulate of post-colonial theory: that an oppressed culture will ultimately react against the dominant culture's most time honored literary documents. The third reason relates to my experiences as an actor, director, and playwright over the past twenty years. I have observed during that time that certain scripts, which are highly metaphoric or contain poetic language, are more difficult to translate into ASL than other types of scripts. Ironically, my most rewarding theatrical experiences have derived from these very same scripts.

The difficulty in translating any script into ASL is complicated by the absence of a standard written system that can document ASL because it is an "oral" language. It depends on visual interaction to transfer language information between individuals and groups. The process of translating any play into sign language becomes tedious and highly individualized because of the current lack of accessible notation systems.

Few actors involved in the translation process have the training, language background or bilingual fluency to work effectively with translations. They do not have

the patience to learn the complex linguistic notation systems used by most ASL linguists. Most SLT productions depend on sign language coaches to observe rehearsals and assist individual actors during the process of revising their sign choices. The interaction between actors and sign coaches remains a very subjective process. To complicate the process further, actors tend to be defensive about their sign choices for each dramatic production.

At this point most translation work still depends on the fluency, artistic skill and intelligence of those individuals involved in the translation process. To document the translation work individuals often use glossing techniques that assist observers, actors, and scholars in the process of recording what was signed for each production. Formal glossing techniques have been developed by linguists to help explain to lay persons the basic linguistic information in ASL phrases and sentences. After some study most individuals can learn the criteria for glossing ASL that can serve as a basic foundation of documentation for ASL sign choices. Clayton Valli explains that glossing is a process of

choosing an appropriate English word for signs in order to write them down. Glossing is not the same as translating, but, like translating, it is sometimes a difficult task. A gloss of a signed story will be a series of English words, written in uppercase letters, that correspond to the signs in the ASL story. Parts of English, such as plural markers, past-tense makers, and prepositions, do not appear in glossing unless they are produced in the specific story. The gloss will also include the nonmanual features, which are indicated on a line above the uppercase glosses for signs.<sup>7</sup>

This glossing system is complex and contains thirty symbols used to identify various features of ASL. Some symbols will clarify what the hands are doing. Other symbols will explain what the eyes, face, head, and body are doing. Finally there are a

few remaining symbols used to signify non-manual markers<sup>a</sup> that occur during the process of signing.

In some cases it becomes necessary to rewrite the script to provide a more accessible script for the actors. In these instances the process of rewriting strives to provide clearer English for translation purposes. An example of this process is provided later for *The Digestible Comedy of Errors* produced by Cleveland Signstage Theatre.

For all of the above reasons my research focused on the collection of videocassettes and associated written materials related to various sign language performances. My initial assumption was that a large number of videocassettes would be available for review. This turned out to be an incorrect assumption: it was difficult to find videocassette recordings in acceptable condition for research purposes.

Once the videocassettes were collected a review process was initiated and editing decisions were made to select specific segments for inclusion on the videocassette portion of this thesis. After the segments were selected the specific sign translation was documented for each segment. Since a current notation system is unavailable, each sign choice was written in a gloss format. I elected to use a glossing process that does not use all thirty symbols contained in the system. This was done to simplify the reader's understanding of the sign language translations. The symbols that I used to gloss certain ASL features are outlined in the table below.

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<sup>a</sup> Non-manual markers involve the use of a signer's eyes, face, head, and body to support specific grammatical functions that create "yes-no" questions or "wh-word" questions to support expressive indicators of what is being



Symbol	Explanation
ns	name sign
#	finger spelled word
neg	negative head motion
cl	classifier hand shape
++	repetitive motion and sometimes represents plural use of the word
directional	pointing to a subject, place or thing indicated
nm	facial expression or body action used to clarify meaning

To assure that my simplified approach to the glossing process was reasonably accurate I compared my glossing work to the videocassette portion of Peter Novak's work with scenes from *The Tempest*. The thesis included an index that documented his gloss choices using the traditional glossing technique containing twenty-seven of the established symbols for glossing. As a control experiment, I glossed sign choices for this piece independently of the gloss provided in Mr. Novak's thesis. Once that process was completed I compared my gloss choices with the gloss choices contained in his thesis and found the results to be highly similar. Appendix F includes a comparison of my glossing approach with Mr. Novak's to demonstrate the close similarity of the both glosses.

The glossing process was completed through repeated playback of each segment. Kim Stefani, a hearing person fluent in the use of ASL, documented the spoken lines for each taped segment. When this process was completed the original text was identified and matched to the signed and voiced segments. The videocassette segments along with Appendix B, which contains the completed gloss translation of all segments, were studied to investigate how the text, voicing and sign language translation choices interacted

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communicated.

during performance. It was through this combined process that close analysis of the productions could be achieved in an effective manner that allowed some conclusions to be developed concerning Sign Language Theatre.

## LANGUAGE AND MEANING

The viability and acceptance of sign language has historically been a very emotional topic. SLT began in an environment where concurrent social and political influences had converged to impact how language was perceived in the United States. An element of controversy related to bilingualism, especially in the area of education, introduced tension into the process of developing sign language productions for the stage. The issue of language use is understandably emotionally charged on both sides of the argument. There are members of the Deaf culture who have ardently advocated that theatrical performances be conducted only in sign language, and likewise members of hearing society who have opposed the use of sign language for any purpose.

This schism between hearing and deaf individuals notably involved SLT in the early 1960s. In 1967 the National Theatre of the Deaf was invited to perform for the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). This would be the first time a major production, using sign language, would be presented on television. Approximately two weeks before the show was to air an objection arose from the Alexander Graham Bell (AGB) Association. The organization released a telegram that stated, “We are opposed to any programming which indicates that the use of the language of signs is inevitable for deaf children or it is anything more than an artificial language, and a foreign one at that,

for the deaf of this country.”<sup>8</sup> This telegram was sent out nationally and to members of Congress. David Hays, founder of NTD, after much discussion and after rallying the support of the deaf community, issued a response that explained that “such television programs bring enormous cultural benefit to the deaf who are deprived of theatre” and that the program would show “highly gifted deaf people working in a developed art form of great beauty.”<sup>9</sup> Based on the strong support from the deaf community and Hays’s response NBC proceeded to air the program.

Concurrent with this lengthy controversy over sign language has been the perpetual and controversial movement against the idea of bilingualism of any sort in the United States. Jamie Draper and Martha Jimenez have commented that

not since the beginning of this century has language received as much attention in the United States.... But unlike the earlier period, when these issues were confined primarily to local and state arenas, the 1980s featured a campaign orchestrated at the national level by a powerful and highly funded lobby, US English.... The irony of the appearance of the English Only movement in the 1980s is that it advocates a return to a mythic area of English monolingualism in the face of growing demands for multilingual abilities in the world marketplace.<sup>10</sup>

This monolingual tendency creates a problem because writers, performers and directors do not normally think about performing in languages other than their own. Additionally most individuals have not been exposed to SLT as a part of their educational or artistic training. Traditional university and college theater programs do not include any emphasis on SLT as an alternative field of work, nor has sign language been emphasized or even introduced as a performance tool.

After thirty-five years SLT remains a very narrow niche within the performing arts. For most actors, initial contact with SLT will be awkward and may include some resistance to the time and training needed to develop additional specialized skills. Yet

when such training is made available for actors, both deaf and hearing, the resulting incorporation of ASL into a theatrical performance offers an opportunity to inherently change any previous conception of meaning contained within that production.

This process of dual-language interaction does not necessarily detract from the writers' intent. Instead it serves to strengthen the process of participants' understanding and offers an audience deeper access to the writer's work. Terry Eagleton proposed that

all literary works, in other words, are rewritten, if only unconsciously, by the societies which read them; indeed there is no reading of a work that is not also a re-writing. No work, and no current evaluation of it, can simply be extended to new groups of people without being changed, perhaps almost unrecognizably, in the process; and this is one reason why what counts, as literature is a notably unstable affair.<sup>11</sup>

Eagleton's observation can be taken a step further to suggest that there cannot be any viewing of a dramatic text that is not a re-visualization of that work. The process of conceiving meaning is a process shared between writer and audience. It is naturally influenced by external elements that are cultural and political because "literature has become a whole alternative ideology, and the imagination itself, as with Blake and Shelley, becomes a political force."<sup>12</sup>

Theatrical productions in general, and those of Shakespeare specifically, challenge a modern audience's language abilities through their unfamiliarity with certain idioms and metaphors belonging to other historical periods or cultural experiences. Most audience members watching ASL for the first time find the experience to be likewise new and different, akin to watching a production in a foreign language. It has been shown that foreign productions of Shakespeare, for example, have tended to offer a different experience for audiences because "foreign performances have explored scenographic and

physical modes more openly than their Anglophone counterparts, often redefining the meaning of the plays in the process.”<sup>13</sup> It should be a similarly unique experience for an audience to watch a performance in two languages. Unfortunately, little effort has been made to guide or deepen the audience’s experiences while watching SLT. In spite of all the difficulties posed by poetic language, metaphor, and the use of sign language the performance should provide an experience that is stimulating. Such experiences are not commonly noted, which indicates that SLT still needs to develop techniques that fully engage its audiences. It has been noted in modern performances, “certain ideas and experiences will be more potent or more probing, and some scenes more animated...[so] that to read or perform Shakespeare today is always to be involved in a kind of translation; there is no one who can claim to present the plays in their own language.”<sup>14</sup>

As SLT struggled to establish itself as a legitimate art form it also responded to specific influences best explained by post-colonial theory. This theory proposes that an oppressed culture will behave in specific ways as it struggles to remove various sources of oppression. For Deaf culture the primary source of oppression has been the suppression of sign language. The appearance of SLT set the stage for an ongoing battle for control between ASL and spoken English. This struggle for cultural control of language, while not always conscious for either culture, has existed and has distracted SLT from focusing on its artistic processes.

## TRANSITIONS: FROM ENGLISH TEXT TO SIGN LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE

In the process of making the transition from one language to another there will be attempts to clarify intent and meaning, and to find artistic compromises between the two languages. Much of the success of these efforts will depend on the language skills and sensitivity of the participants in a sign language production. Certain words, phrases, or concepts may be beyond the productions' ability to clearly translate meaningfully for a modern audience. There may be a need to work from a literal perspective in order to resolve difficult textual areas.

A production can rely to a limited degree on the audiences' visual experience of the performance for further clarification with an understanding that the audience will need to cope with inevitable moments of ambiguity. To alleviate this ambiguity it can be beneficial to include cultural references, readily understood by the audience, into the performance. This will help an audience comprehend with more ease the potential meanings within a performance. For these cultural references to work effectively audience members need to be aware of the cultural information incorporated into the performance. The process of incorporating cultural reference into SLT productions has achieved limited success because most audience members are not deaf nor do they use ASL as their primary language.

A sign language production is complicated further by the need to represent two cultures, functioning within two distinct and different modes of language, simultaneously on stage. Due to the dual reality present on the stage, productions in SLT pay most attention to significant moments and translate those moments with a high degree of clarity. To truly succeed, it becomes important for SLT to recognize the organic relationship between sign language and spoken English. Unfortunately this has not been a high priority in SLT and consequently it has limited what can be achieved during a simultaneous performance of ASL and spoken English.

In general, the transition from English text to ASL is a challenging one. The video segments for the more recent productions of SLT demonstrate a concentrated effort to provide the audience with meaningful experiences from both cultural perspectives. In this process of clarifying meaning, source texts were literally changed to permit cultural and linguistic access to both audiences. Cleveland Signstage Theatre's (CST) production of *The Digestible Comedy of Errors*, produced during the September/October part of their 1997 season, strove for a workable stage translation. This was achieved by revising the text during the early stages of rehearsal. Neil Thackaberry and I completed the writing of the revised text during the summer months. Page examples from the original prompt book are included in Appendix C for review. These pages show what the actors initially worked with during translation. By using an example from the prompt book, we can briefly explore the process used during the initial translation process. This example is based on video segment # 3. To help readers follow the process more easily, the format is divided into segments that follow the video for ease of review.



Segment 3: Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 202-210

Character	Original Text	Revised Text	Sign Gloss
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE	Thou hast thine own form	You have look like yourself.	<i>You look, "That."</i>
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE	No, I am an ape.	No, I am an ape.	<b>Now after, I am monkey.</b>
ADRIANA	If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass.	If you are changed to anything it is an ass.	<i>Monkey? Doubt it, you become donkey. [Action]</i>
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE	'Tis true; she rides me and I long for grass.	It's true, she rides me and I want grass.	<b>True, true, you ride me. Me eat...eat. [Action]</b>
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE	'Tis so, I am an ass; else it could never be.	That's it, I am an ass; what else could it be.	<b>I no choice, I am donkey.</b>
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE	But I should know her as well as she knows me.	But I should know her as well as she knows me.	<i>Me must know you, you know me, and do I know you?</i>
ADRIANA	Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,	Come, come, I will no longer be a fool,	<b>Finish++ I, not a fool,</b>
ADRIANA	To put the finger in the eye and weep,	To put my finger in my eye and weep,	<i>I not weep,</i>
ADRIANA	Whilst man and master laugh my woes to scorn.	While Dromio and my husband scornfully laugh at me.	<b>While (directional) you-two mock me</b>
ADRIANA	Come, sir, to dinner.	Come to dinner.	<b>Come, [Action]</b>

The actors used the column of revised text as their starting point for the translation process. Generally they took the revised text and worked backwards to the original text. The early steps involved becoming comfortable with the text and internalizing the various potential meanings for their lines. Once they had achieved this they then moved on to the process of making sign language choices for their lines. Looking at the original text and the sign language choices in gloss and on video should reveal differences that at the same time are clear to the audience. These translations strove to “reveal our distance from the original and to challenge a received conception of a play and the present experience of it”.<sup>15</sup> This translation process and the use of rehearsal time allowed the production to overcome the more difficult scenes contained within the plays.

One scene that can be especially noted is the rapid and comical exchange between Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Ephesus (3.2.71-161). The prompt book will show the early translation choices developed over a 5-week time period. In video segment #5 for *The Digestible Comedy of Errors*, one can view the final results and compare this to the early efforts to translate this scene. The word play introduced by Shakespeare in this scene was so difficult that company members at one time suggested deleting this scene from the production. To understand what kind of difficulties were present in the translation process we can look at a section of this scene.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE	
What's her name?	<b>What's (directional) (her) name?</b>
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE	
Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters,	<b>#Nell but really #Yard</b>
that's an ell and three quarters, will not	<b>Feet, 1,2,3—</b>
measure her from hip to hip.	<b>Wide. [Action]</b>
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE	
Then she bears some breadth?	<b>3+++? [Action]</b>
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE	
No longer from head to foot	<b>No, tall, round</b>
than from hip to hip: she is spherical,	<b>as (cl) globe. [Action]</b>
like a globe; I could find out	<b>I look can find</b>
countries in her.	<b>countries [Action]</b>

For this section we discovered that by playing with the notion of “three quarters” as the modern measurement of a yard that we could approximate the meaning contained within the lines. The use of “yard” provided textual clarification and at the same time allowed for a visual reference in the sign choice. Once the actor had set up the numerical value for a yard he could then demonstrate it as “three feet” which conformed to Shakespeares’ reference of “hip to hip.” When the actor arrived to the word “globe” he

came up with the use of a classifier<sup>b</sup> for the shape of a globe. This became the inspiration for the remainder of the scene using another feature of ASL. By using directionality<sup>c</sup>, the scene was supported by the second actor who physically represented the globe. The first actor also added spatial mapping<sup>d</sup> elements to the translation so that specific lines worked through visual representations to the other actor's body. From this point on the visual interplay between two actors served to clarify the metaphorical references in Shakespeare's lines.

These examples provide us with the basic concepts of how a translation process occurs in SLT. The translation process does not occur in isolation from the outside world. There are specific influences that post-colonial theory has suggested as factors that can encourage or prevent a successful organic process from happening between spoken English and ASL. Most individuals involved in this art form are unaware of these influences and for the most part have never heard of post-colonial theory and what it has to say about culture and art.

An actor working through a translation will unawares manifest these influences that affect each production of SLT. These influences cannot be effectively modified until there is an awareness of them. Only then will actors and artistic staff be able to achieve better translation work and improve interaction between the two languages during actual performances.

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<sup>b</sup> A classifier in ASL is the use of a specific hand shape to symbolically represent a class of objects. It is often combined with movement, facial expressions and body or hand orientation.

<sup>c</sup> Directionality in ASL generally refers to specific movement and location that offers independent meaning spatially or to a specific verb usage. Currently linguists are not in full agreement on a standard definition for directionality in ASL.

<sup>d</sup> Spatial mapping refers to a technique in ASL where the signer establishes location of objects, persons and things in specific areas of their immediate signing space. These locations then become fixed during the conversation and

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references to the various topics presented in the conversation are consistently referred to the same location previously identified during the initial spatial mapping process.

## POST COLONIAL THEORY AND SIGN LANGUAGE THEATRE

Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century there has been a movement to foreground Shakespeare's plays within the political context of our modern experience. This can be readily observed through a mainstream Broadway production of *West Side Story*, which re-conceptualized the story of *Romeo and Juliet* to reflect conflict between cultures that emphasized the experiences involving oppressed Hispanic culture in New York City. We have also seen through a recent 1996 production of *Romeo + Juliet*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, the re-conceptualization of Shakespeare through the experiences of oppressed gang society set in the Verona Beach area of Los Angeles. These types of productions strove to provide the audience with cultural references that assisted them in revisiting Shakespeare from renewed cultural perspectives. This can be perceived as an act of assimilation of the dominant culture's values in order to raise the self-esteem of the oppressed culture. Theater has also been appropriated as a means of expression for the oppressed cultures of the Caribbean Islands, American Black society, Aboriginal society, Nigeria, and South Africa respectively by such playwrights as Derek Walcott, August Wilson, Jack Davis, Wole Soyinka, and Athol Fugard.

Another culture that has felt oppressed is Deaf culture. When describing deafness as a culture the word "deaf" is capitalized to distinguish between the physical disability of

deafness and the cultural aspects of deafness. Deaf people who identify themselves as culturally Deaf perceive their experience of oppression as being closely associated with their use of sign language. Since the eighteenth century hearing people have held many strong opinions on how to educate deaf people. According to Deaf Heritage, “oralism<sup>e</sup> took a strong grip on education of the deaf in the United States in the 1860s and onward, there were attempts to suppress the use of sign language.”<sup>16</sup>

Frantz Fanon, in his post-colonial theoretical work, suggested that there are distinctive patterns of behavior present within an emerging culture. These patterns occur after the oppressing culture has ceased, by choice or not, the overt domination of the emerging culture. Specific behaviors will appear in various areas of the social group. For our purpose we will focus on how art is created and presented by members of the Deaf culture. A logical objection to this theory and its application to Deaf culture is that deafness appears within all social groups. Many people hold strong opinions, especially in the educational and medical fields, that deafness is primarily a medical problem, not a cultural phenomenon. Mainstream society perceives Deaf people as a group in need of medical intervention rather than cultural acceptance.

Deaf people, unlike other oppressed cultures, cannot make a decision to go home to a specific country or location that consists solely of Deaf people. Fanon notes that where there is an effort to create a culture then “every culture is first and foremost national...”<sup>17</sup> Fanon suggests that when the access to a nationalistic identity is blocked, for whatever reason, then the movement creates linkages such as the “movement toward

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<sup>e</sup> Oralism is a movement advocating the importance of deaf people to learn to speak and articulate clearly. It fully opposes the use of sign language as a means of communication because it perceives it as having harmful effects on the education of a deaf individual.

the Negro-African culture or the Arab-Moslem culture. It is not specifically toward a national culture.”<sup>18</sup> In that case, we can assume that for deafness the linkage becomes a Deaf-ASL Culture. Language is the most personal element of any culture and especially so for Deaf people. For this reason language becomes the most valid cultural foundation.

Language is the most obvious focus because it has been an area of deafness that has been consistently suppressed by Hearing culture. Theater is a very social and expressive medium and became an early resource to validate the beauty and functionality of signed language. Within Deaf culture, theater became more than just an artistic expression of ideas and meaning. It was recognized as a vehicle to prove the worth of Deaf people and to gain approval from mainstream society. Ultimately the use of ASL creatively became a means for tearing away from the negative experiences of the past.

Fanon notes that

this tearing away, painful and difficult though it may be, is however necessary. If it is not accomplished there will be serious psycho-affective injuries and the result will be individuals without an anchor, without a horizon, colorless, stateless, rootless—a race of angels [and] the intellectual who is Arab and French, or Nigerian and English, when he comes up against the need to take on two nationalities, chooses, if he wants to remain true to himself, the negation of one of these determinations.<sup>19</sup>

For this reason post-colonial theory is useful as a tool for considering what has happened with Sign Language Theatre over the past thirty-five years. The behavioral patterns suggested by Fanon are not binding on any cultural activity, yet the concepts developed potentially assist in understanding the emergence of SLT.

Fanon suggested in his early post-colonial work that the dominant culture is not simply content to control but “by a perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it”.<sup>20</sup> In Deaf culture there is no past to attack

because of the minimal documentation of the lives and experiences of deaf people. Hearing people have instead attacked ASL. The most famous example of an attempt to distort, disfigure and destroy sign language occurred during the Congress of Milan in 1880. According to Harlan Lane, author of *When the Mind Hears*, this session was the “most critical event in driving the languages of the deaf beneath the surface.”<sup>21</sup> The Milan Conference proposed that “speech is the sole power that can rekindle the light God breathed into man.... The fantastic language of signs exalts the senses and foments the passions, whereas speech elevates the mind much more naturally, with calm, prudence and truth and avoids the danger of exaggerating the sentiment expressed and provoking harmful mental impressions.”<sup>22</sup> During this meeting a resolution was passed supporting speech as the only means of educating the deaf and effectively banning the use of sign language for nearly 100 years. It was not until the 1970s that linguists acknowledged ASL as a valid language, opening the doors for the release of historical, cultural, and sociological information about deafness. Prior to this there was a prevailing sense by deaf people that assimilation was inevitable.

The fear that sign language would be eradicated led to efforts to film individuals using sign language in order to preserve the language for historical purposes. This was completed in the 1930s and “the sum of \$5,000, a large sum in those days, was raised in short order, and filming of the old masters of sign began.”<sup>23</sup> This fear of cultural loss and language continues to be deeply ingrained within Deaf culture, as presented in *Children of a Lesser God*, where Sarah, the principal deaf character, explains:

For all my life I have been the creation of other people. The first thing I was ever able to understand was that everyone was supposed to hear, but I couldn't and that was bad. Then they told me everybody was supposed to be smart, but I was dumb.



Then they said, oh, no, I wasn't permanently dumb, only temporarily. But to be smart, I had to become an imitation of the people who had, from birth, everything a person has to have to be good: ears that hear, mouth that speaks, eyes that read, and brain that understands.<sup>24</sup>

There have been a plethora of publications such as Jack Gannon's *Deaf Heritage*, Harlan Lane's *When the Mind Hears* and Oliver Sach's *Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf*, that verify the existence and validity of Deaf culture and Deaf heritage. These works and others like them have also recognized the linguistic verification of ASL as a legitimate language. This consciousness raising was instrumental in the establishment of the National Theatre of the Deaf and other Deaf theaters throughout the United States. David Hays, in an interview, commented that "it took a theater company which succeeded far beyond anyone's dreams to show the world how bright and sexy these people really were.... I said that to someone once. They said, 'Sexy?' That reveals the bias right there."<sup>25</sup>

In the early years SLT appeared to follow a pattern best described by Fanon and post-colonial theory. "In the first phase, the native intellectual gives proof that he has assimilated the culture of the occupying power. His writings correspond point by point with those of his opposite numbers in the mother country. His inspiration is European...this is the period of unqualified assimilation..."<sup>26</sup> Early videotaped productions showed this effort to validate that SLT can successfully replicate a classic dramatic production. Early efforts also attempted to prove that Shakespeare can be appropriated by Deaf culture. These early examples varied in quality and content, with a translation process that was inconsistent from both a signed and spoken perspective

ASL performances, as they evolved over time, also demonstrated the emergence of the second pattern indicated by Fanon. “In the second phase we find the native is disturbed: he decides to remember what he is. This is the period of creative work...old legends will be reinterpreted in the light of a borrowed aestheticism and of a conception of the world which was discovered under other skies...”<sup>27</sup> *My Third Eye*, produced by NTD in 1972, is the earliest example of an effort to “remember what he is.” The play is discussed later in this essay and provides insight into an early effort to reinterpret the world from the perspective of Deafness.

In the 1990s NTD made a second attempt to move further along in the second phase by reinterpreting “an old legend.” The theater produced an adaptation of *Hamlet* that was renamed *Ophelia*. The process of adaptation often represents dangerous ground for any theater, especially when an adaptation alters a highly regarded text from the literary canon such as Shakespeare’s. That play’s point of view was shifted from Hamlet to Ophelia suggests the possibility that the theater only attempted a partial effort to appropriate Shakespeare. Their movement towards Fanon’s second phase may have been tentative or the theater might not have been comfortable fully appropriating *Hamlet*. Instead a radical shifting of the play’s point of view was produced potentially to protect the theatre’s artistic reputation. This partial appropriation permitted the theatre some leeway as it attempted to move into new artistic territory.

In the program book, Jeff Wanshel, the director of *Ophelia*, indicated that for NTD’s production the play would be “another kind of revenge play: “ ‘Ophelia’s Revenge,’ in which the men yield center stage to the maiden”.<sup>28</sup> Thus the play became more than a cultural reinterpretation. It also included a feminist point of view. The cover

page of the playbook acknowledges that it is a play “with text pirated from William Shakespeare.”<sup>29</sup> The fact that the adapter, Jeff Wanshel, uses the word “pirated” is important. The word has several definitions, such as “one who robs and commits illegal violence at sea” or “one who appropriates and reproduces without authorization as for his own profit, the literary, artistic, or other work or any invention of another.”<sup>30</sup> This definition suggests that there was a form of planned violence and appropriation that occurred with this adaptation of *Hamlet*.

A similar case can be made for the production of *The Digestible Comedy of Errors* produced by Cleveland Signstage Theater (CST). The title of the play immediately informs us that the play has been altered in some manner. The play was produced with 6 actors, each actor performing multiple roles. The play’s structure integrated a style foreign to SLT. CST incorporated the physical movements of Commedia del’ arte and introduced the additional visual elements of masks in their approach to the performance. This process increased the complexity of the staging because the actors needed to learn a new way of making specific physical choices beyond their normal spatial movements using sign language. This factor required the theater to provide 5 weeks of training in Commedia del’ arte techniques prior to the actual planned rehearsal time.

The decision to use masks was a choice that directly confronted a taboo in SLT: not covering the face. When the face of an actor using ASL is obscured in any way, it causes the loss of grammatical information essential to clear ASL. The signer’s face provides important information similar to intonation and inflection with a spoken language. The use of masks forced the theater, and its actors, to overcome this difficulty by exploring the use of other parts of the body as substitutes for the facial features of

ASL. The decision to break one of the conventional rules of SLT conformed with Fanon's second phase, where the native becomes disturbed and seeks new means of expression for his culture. All of us involved with the production were aware that the use of masks would disturb the audience because they would have to struggle to identify how we replaced the facial features of ASL. We realized that it would be critical to use the physical elements of Commedia del' arte to their fullest potential to assist in clarifying meaning. The sign language translation focused on simple sentence structure, disciplined control of the signing space, and encouraged larger physical movements to support the grammatical information that was lost behind the masks.

Both *Ophelia* and *The Digestible Comedy of Errors* contain examples of the third pattern of Fanon's artistic process:

[F]inally, in the third phase, which is called the fighting phase, the native, after having tried to lose himself in the people and with the people, will on the contrary shake the people.... [H]e turns himself into an awakener of the people: hence comes a fighting literature, a revolutionary literature and a national literature.<sup>31</sup>

These two productions offer to us an initial look at the beginning of the third phase, which is theoretically still being played out in the experience and art of Deaf culture.

Even though this paper will note that the progress in SLT has been slow, there have been recent productions that have shown renewed efforts to permit both languages to work together effectively. In September 2000 Amaryllis Theater produced Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in Philadelphia. Through the support of Yale University their production process included six months of language translation work prior to the actual performances. As a result some of the principal actors were able to devote their full attention to the translation process during this six-month time frame. Although this

opportunity was available, not all of the company members could devote equal time to this longer translation process. The results of this production will need further review before any conclusions can be formed concerning its performances.

## THE EARLY YEARS

Video recordings of professional SLT productions of Shakespeare were not available until the 1990's. To observe the works of Shakespeare produced in SLT earlier than the 1990s it was necessary to review videos of productions performed at the college level by Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). These academic productions were not planned performances for the general public; therefore full accessibility was not the primary goal. Limited efforts were made to make the productions accessible to the hearing audience simply because some hearing individuals choose to attend these productions. Because the audience did consist of hearing members it forced the productions to use narrators or readers<sup>f</sup> to provide vocal support for the actors' signed lines.

George Detmold, an administrative official at Gallaudet University, noted in a departmental staff memo, dated August 30, 1973, that "we should concentrate most of our attention on providing a satisfactory evening for the deaf people in the audience. Unhappy hearing people always have other theaters to go to."<sup>32</sup> During these early productions the use of readers was viewed as more of a problem than an asset. Detmold felt "we have never (in my opinion) found a satisfactory solution to the problem of readers, if by satisfactory we mean above all criticism from the hearing people in the audience."<sup>33</sup> Copies of this memo and other written materials about the readers are provided in Appendix D.

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<sup>f</sup> Readers served the function of keeping the hearing members of the audience informed about what the signing actors were saying by paraphrasing, summarizing, describing and occasionally speaking the lines dramatically.

Dr. Leonard Siger, a professor at Gallaudet College,<sup>8</sup> recognized during the Gallaudet performances that ASL offered an experience that enhanced a classic production. Dr. Siger observed “the performances by the deaf are, in some ways, closer to the original presentations of classical drama than any other modern version.”<sup>34</sup> It was felt that sign language provided a theatrical function that had been long forgotten. “We sometimes forget how important the manual gesture was in classical and Elizabethan drama.”<sup>35</sup> Dr. Siger proposed that “[a]n actor, to express emotion, relies (or ought to rely) primarily on the movements and attitudes of his body....Sign language when properly used links emotion to information in a way not possible in spoken language.”<sup>36</sup> Here began the ideal for SLT, expressed not by Deaf culture, but by a hearing professor from Gallaudet College. The ideal was presented to an academic audience that had no fundamental appreciation of the issues other than the novelty of the idea. Yet the ideal was clearly stated in Dr. Siger’s conclusion:

when a play is translated into sign language, it is reduced essentially to a system of notations. The English words are chosen (or are replaced by other words) which can be signed. When writing for the ear, the dramatist must pay careful attention to the sound of the word. But when translating for the eye, we seek words that are expressed by the deaf with signs that are graceful in formation and movement in space, and which convey the thought most beautifully and powerfully to the eye.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately at the time this ideal was presented, there was no efficient way to share this concept with the early pioneers of SLT. This is another reason the art form has not evolved more rapidly over the past thirty-five years.

Although Dr. Siger was present on campus and involved with the productions his ideal for SLT did not transfer to the stage. The early focus was concentrated on presenting plays clearly in sign language. Efforts were made to assure that each signer, through their

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<sup>8</sup> Now Gallaudet University

sign translation, developed a distinct signing character. Gallaudet College's Dramatics Club, with the support of Dean Detmold, recruited faculty to help individually coach the actors. The original letter asked faculty to concentrate

on one character in the play...in such a manner that their usage of signs will be distinct from each other's, thus giving the impression of strongly marked personalities....One last word: it won't be necessary for you to have to attend the stage rehearsal; all you need do is make certain that the character assigned to you carries out his signs in a fluent and individualized way.<sup>38</sup>

(The full memo explaining the process is available in Appendix D.) It is important to note that the actors developed their signed translations outside of the rehearsal process. It is possible that each actor had very little awareness of the sign language translation choices made by other actors. In addition there was little concern for coordinating the voiced element of the play as this was considered more of an inconvenience than a necessity at this point in SLT productions.

The resulting translations were not necessarily of a high quality, even with the special attention provided by faculty, because some of the faculty members were hearing and/or non-native users of ASL. The focus was on keeping the process simple and focusing on the translation needs for ASL. The important factor was assuring that the deaf actor understood the text well enough to create a signed translation. Whether it came close to complementing the needs of the voicing elements was not a priority. Dr. Detmold provided the readers with a three-page memo consisting of general directions. One important part of this memo recognizes the lack of coordination between spoken English and ASL. To counter this fact Dr. Detmold encourages the readers

to provide information through a variety of styles. In one sense I want to confuse the hearing audience, so that they will never know exactly what style we are working in. If they once decide this, they will immediately complain (we are not



translating the signs right, or we are not reading Shakespeare right). Worst of all, I fear, they will notice an enormous discrepancy in the quality of the voices that the Readers provide. If we can say that we've planned the reading this way, for these voices, we won't get any complaints on that score.<sup>39</sup>

This approach was necessary because the readers were not an organic part of the production. Often they were seated in the front row of the theater using microphones or even worse located in other distant parts of the theater where it was difficult for them to see or be heard. At the time it was important to validate Deaf individuals as performers; nothing could be allowed to detract from that focus, not even the spoken English. Clarity and conciseness were not the primary focus at this point in SLT. Rather Detmold notes in his memo that

the text that was given the actors is in English, not sign language. You might call it Pidgin English.<sup>h</sup> It is a sort of interface between English and sign language, using many English words that have come to be accepted as codes for certain signs, avoiding word orders that are not common in sign language, employing many structure words that are necessary for meaning in English but have no literal equivalent in Sign. Signers understand that they will not attempt to translate these English words into Sign. The whole point of the text was to make Macbeth more easily accessible to a signer.<sup>40</sup>

At this point it is important to note that the issue was not to make the text accessible to the audience, nor to achieve any kind of textual clarity or language unity on stage. Rather the focus was to show that a performance could be mounted and performed in sign language by deaf people. The purpose of these productions was primarily to benefit Deaf culture.

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<sup>h</sup> A form of signing that developed due to the contact between English and ASL and contains features of both language in the process of signing. It may follow English word order, include various features such as prepositions, idioms, and mouthing of English words.

## THE ANALYSIS OF EARLY PRODUCTIONS

The video segments reviewed for this chapter include productions of *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *My Third Eye*. The reader will find the scene translations in Appendix B. These scene translations will include a maximum of three lines to represent the activities involved for each line in the scene. One line will be typed normally to represent Shakespeare's text. The sign gloss will appear in **bold** type and the voicing, if it is distinctly different from the text dialog, will appear in *italics*. Here is a line from *Macbeth* (Act 1, Scene 3) provided as an example of what will be seen in the Appendix and throughout this analysis.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Voiced Line</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;	<i>Once his father died he became thane of Glamis;</i>	<b>Because my father's death, I know I am Lord # Glamis</b>

This way the reader can quickly see the text and signed lines and any variances that occurred in the voicing. If text dialog is underlined, as shown below from a section of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (3.1.39-43), it indicates that the text was not signed or spoken during that specific video segment.

<u>Character</u>	<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
BOTTOM	<u>'Ladies,'--or 'Fair-ladies—</u>	<b>Ladies or Beautiful ladies</b>
BOTTOM	<i>I would wish You,'--or 'I</i>	<b>I wish you, I ask you</b>

	<i>would request you,</i>	
BOTTOM	<i>'--or 'I would entreat you,</i>	
BOTTOM	<i>not to fear, not to tremble.</i>	<b>not fear      not tremble</b>

The scenes chosen for analysis from these three productions will present some early indications of how SLT was typically presented. The segments will be reviewed in their order of appearance on the video. These early examples focus primarily on the signing actors. It is not until *Romeo and Juliet* that SLT demonstrated some integration of voice and sign. For the most part the voicing work was not of a professional caliber; these were college productions using volunteers from the faculty. There were some moments where the voicing and signing did not match up, and other moments filled with silence while one signing actor finishes their lines and the other waits to proceed. This impacted the voicing, as the signing actors were rarely required to maintain an awareness of how their signing matched the voice work. It was generally left to the readers to time their delivery to the signing actor. These early productions demonstrated why it is important for both sets of actors, using both languages, to maintain a constant awareness of each other during the performance.

## MACBETH

The five video segments reviewed in this section were edited from a 1973 tape of poor quality. As a result the video segments for these scenes are often difficult to view. However, there are events in these segments that will demonstrate some of the early efforts to coordinate sign and voicing elements into a Shakespeare production, which is why they have been maintained, despite their poor quality. Listening to the segments, one of the most noticeable features is the variance in voicing choices. This is the problem

already acknowledged by Dr. Detmold. Throughout these five video segments the readers often shifted between first person and third person perspectives and occasionally voiced Shakespearian verse.

*Video segment #1: Act 1, Scene 3, Lines 70-78<sup>41</sup>*

This segment remained in the third person for most of the scene. There was no attempt to speak in Shakespearean verse. The reader also opted at times to describe what Macbeth was feeling rather than employing the actual language of the play. Thus in the first line delivered the reader explained what Macbeth wanted from the three witches. As the reader progressed through the next few lines he remained in almost a narrative form. The tone of delivery also is rather flat and there was not much inflection in the lines as they were delivered.

The signer's translation choices were close to the original text. In the first line he left out "you imperfect speakers" because in ASL one does not need to acknowledge the speakers directly if they are within eyesight of the signer. To avoid the need for a name sign<sup>i</sup> for "Sinel" the signer substitutes the sign "father." This allowed the translation to be clearer for the audience watching sign language. At the end of the third line he chose to sign "well" which can be translated back into English to mean "alive & well."

The timing between the signer and reader were fairly close until the end of the scene where the voicing continued with "stay he tells them—I charge you." The close here was a little strange because the first half of the last line is narrative, but was finished by reverting back to the first person and the actual Shakespearian verse.

Video segment #2: Act 1, Scene 3, Lines 135-139

This clip continued to be spoken in the third person. The voicing and signing were in close relationship with each other. Again, the reader was not speaking in Shakespearean verse in this scene. This scene itself was well paced and actually came close to working effectively even though the translation itself was weak. The signer did choose very specific signs that permitted a strong, consistent delivery of the lines. He displayed a full range of emotions that conveyed the sense of dread that the character had about his thoughts. This was important because this crucial scene was an early indication that Macbeth had murder on his mind.

The signer and reader did not complete the translation for the closing lines, so the audience never heard or saw “doth unfix my hair.”

Original Text	Voiced Lines	Sign Gloss
Whose horrid image <u>doth unfix my hair</u>	<i>In my mind</i>	<b>In my mind</b>
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,	<i>That makes my heart beat fast, faster</i>	<b>And that makes my heart pound</b>

This omitted phrase, however, could have been wonderfully translated into ASL using a classifier combined with the “4” hand shape. Using this classifier would have created an iconic image of hair standing on end. This is a sign used frequently in normal conversation. It is surprising that it did not make it into this translation, as it would have complemented the line very well and added to the intensity of this scene.

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<sup>i</sup> Name signs are abbreviations of names of people or places which can be fully expressed through one sign, rather than the laborious fingerspelling of each letter of the name.

In the final portion of the scene, the signing actor powerfully delivered his lines in a visual manner. At the same time close analysis of his translation indicates that he does not effectively complete the last line, “My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical.”

Original Text	Voiced Lines	Sign Gloss
Against the use of nature? Present fears	<i>Nothing in the real world he thinks could be as awful</i>	<b>Nothing in real life as bad as I envision</b>
Are less than horrible imaginings:	<i>As his imaginings. He is frightened</i>	<b>Those pictures scare me</b>
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical.	<i>And doesn't know what to do.</i>	<b>Not know what I do.</b>

The translation was not even close to the text and seemed rather bland and avoided attempting an accurate translation of the final line. In its place is a passive statement that “he does not know what to do”. The voice work was descriptive, at best, and did not support the sense of dread that the character should have conveyed to the audience at that moment.

Video segment #3: Act 1, Scene 4, Lines 48-53

For this segment the reader spoke in the first person and followed the text closely. The voicing still does not follow Shakespearean verse, but there is no narration or descriptive quality to the voicing. The signer followed the text closely and actually achieved a nice translation.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step	<i>Prince of Cumberland...that is a step</i>	<b>---of #Cumberland, that next</b>
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,	<i>I must jump over or else fall down</i>	<b>I must leap ahead, then fall back, back</b>
For in my way it lies.	<i>Because he blocks my way.</i>	<b>Because that blocks me.[Head Shift]</b>
Stars, hide your fires;	<i>Stars...go out,</i>	<b>Stars! (cl) There around, Finish!</b>

Let not light see my black and deep desires.	<i>I want no light to see my black desires.</i>	<b>Me want no light see my black desires</b>
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,	<i>My eyes must not see my hands, but let everything happen</i>	<b>My eyes must not see hands, let everything happen</b>
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.	<i>That my eyes are afraid to see.</i>	<b>That my eyes fear to see.</b>

The actor made a choice to invert the order for “On which I must fall down, or else o’erleap” which supported his sign movement towards the significant sign choice “blocks.” At this point he paused and used a head shift that allowed his eyes to shift and stare at the king. This clarified Shakespeare’s meaning for the line “ For in my way it lies” by signifying that “it,” through the actor’s head shift and eye gaze, was the king. Together these physical actions combined with the sign choices clearly stated what was troubling Macbeth. There was no doubt what it was that “the eyes fears,” which allowed the scene to close on a strong note.

Video segment #4: Act 1, Scene 5, Lines 13-18

This scene was delivered in Shakespearean verse. There was a minor voicing slip in the third line where the pronunciation was changed from an “o” to “of”, otherwise the reader followed the text closely. The signer made an interesting sign translation choice for the second line.

Original text

Sign Gloss

What thou art promised:	<b>What 3 witches promised you,</b>
yet do I fear thy nature;	<b>still I fear for your character</b>

The actor signed “what three witches promised” which clarified the meaning of Shakespeare’s text by referring to Macbeth’s earlier scene with the witches. This scene contained better voicing, however the deaf actress delivered her signs in a very controlled manner. Her facial expressions were minimal and offered little visual support for the voicing. It may have been that the signing actor was not very comfortable with her sign translation or was simply delivering her signs by rote memory. As a result she dropped her character in this scene.

Video segment #5: Act 3, Scene 4, Lines 89-92

In this segment the reader tried to deliver the lines in verse. If you listen carefully you can detect at the end of the first line that the reader’s voice was up but had an unsure quality to it. Because of that uncertainty it appears that the reader lost his place and did not finish the first line. The reader managed to pick up his place by the second line of the scene. At the end of the scene Macbeth ended his signing with a sharp emphasis that was lacking in the voicing. As a result the two languages were at a dissonance with each other at the beginning and ending of this scene. The deaf actor also made a choice to literally sign the word “general.”

I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,	<i>Fill full</i> , [Voice is up, unsure]	<b>I drink—general—joy for all of you.</b>
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;	<i>And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;</i>	<b>And to him I drink (ns) Banquo, I truly miss</b>
Would he were here! To all, and him, we thirst, and all to all.	<i>Would he were here.</i> [Voice ends without exclamation]	<b>I wish (ns) Banquo here. To all Drink!</b>

This was not the best sign choice for this line, which perhaps could be attributed to a slip in usage by the signer. At any rate a better sign to indicate the meaning of “general”



would have been either to delete the signing of this specific word in the translation or to use the sign #a-l-l which in ASL is a finger spelled loan sign.<sup>j</sup> This sign choice and the manner that it would have been signed would have provided a sense of a community for the toast. He also makes a choice to substitute “we” for “I” in the second line, which personalized the line for the audience watching the character of Macbeth. I am not sure Shakespeare intended this effect on the audience. Without production notes it is impossible to know if this was an error or a specific sign choice at this point.

Overall the work in this early production does have some merit and if the attitudes had been different during this time period we might have actually had a very good performance of *Macbeth*.

#### A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM

This 1981 production provides signs of an evolution in the reader’s role at Gallaudet University. At this point the reader was still absent from the stage. However, the voicing by the readers attempted to remain consistent throughout the play. They closely followed the text and generally voiced in prose throughout the play. The quality of their voicing still lacked the professional edge of later trained productions. Listening to their work it became apparent that there was not a deliberate effort to present the lines in any specialized way, but simply to make sure that the hearing audience had some means of remaining aware of what the actors were signing in the performance.

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<sup>j</sup> Finger spelled loan signs are signs have been derived from the action of spelling a specific word. Over time the hand shapes for the various letters of that word merged into two distinct sequential hand shapes that represent, as a sign, the specific word with embedded meaning contained within the sign itself.

Video segment #1: Act I, Scene I, Lines 226-251<sup>42</sup>

This monologue by Helena was signed so rapidly that it was almost impossible to understand. Watching the segment carefully I could catch various signs during the monologue, yet none of the signing was coherent enough to be easily understood. Obviously the pacing was a serious problem for this monologue because the actor hardly paused through the entire monologue. The actor did not try to emphasize key words and just plowed through the text; probably relying on rote memory. There only moment where the actress did slow down was near the end of her monologue.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,	<b>When that promise warm from (ns) Hermia feeling</b>
So he dissolved, and show'rs of oaths did melt.	<b>He weakens, promises melt away</b>

At this point in the speech she paused for a moment after “melt away” to act out for a very brief moment a sense of sadness before she launched into the final six lines of the scene. The video segment shows this particular moment clearly. This moment indicated that more could have been achieved from monologue if the actress could have worked with her voicing partner. The process of pairing up the voicing partner, at the very least, could have informed the actress of where the reader needed time to breathe in the scene. Just this much information might have allowed some of the emotional variety for the scene that the character of Helena was trying to evoke.

As I documented the sign gloss I gradually pieced together what the signed translation intended to say. Comparing the signed gloss to the text revealed that it was not necessarily a bad translation. The translation makes literal translation choices for certain lines as shown with the two examples below.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Things base and vile, holding no quantity, Love can transpose to form and dignity:	<b>Bad sinful, hard to keep limited</b>
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind:	<b>That's why Cupid's arrow-picture always choose blind love</b>

The major problem with the scene was the pacing. If the actor could have worked on pacing and delivery the scene probably would have worked better. Shakespeare's language is highly metaphorical and to the modern ear poetic speech sounds artificial. For the audience it would have been difficult to process information while listening to dialog that was well paced. I can only imagine what it was like for the audience in this scene where the reader was rushing through her lines. The hearing audience in all likelihood missed most of the details of this scene.

This represents a classic example of what occurs when the signing and voicing actors work in isolation from one another. When this happened the audience was exposed to instances where the voice work finishes before the signer or the signer finishes before the voicing actor. All of these contribute to less clarity and comprehensibility, which is exactly the opposite effect that a SLT production needs to achieve in order to build a loyal audience.

Video segment #2: Act 3, Scene 1, Lines 35-39

This scene showed an early effort to utilize the spatial novelty of sign language. In the scene the actor portraying Bottom tried to interact with another actor. He slipped his arms between the arms and in front of the other actor. This made it appear that the other actor was signing the lines. This is a popular tool in SLT and is used often as a sight gag.

Several other examples of this technique will be noted in scenes from other productions. This technique should to be carefully set up because it requires skilled interaction between the two actors. Otherwise it can often confuse the audience because the process can make it difficult to understand the lines. In this example the signing actor was much taller than the person in front of him, which made it hard for the actor to act effectively. While cute, this really did not move the scene forward in an effective manner.

Video segment #3: Act 3, Scene 1, Lines 93-106  
 (Lines 96-101 are deleted from this scene by the production)

This scene demonstrated a difficult process in SLT. The actor who portrayed Bottom needed to work through his translation without the benefit of any facial expressions, the perils of which have already been explained. By closely watching this scene you may sense what was lost in the process while the actor was wearing the ass headpiece. In this scene the actor did not provide enough physical elaboration to support the translation and help the audience comprehend what he said during this scene. The actor also appears uncomfortable using the headpiece. Notably in his last line, he fingerspelled the word “ass”.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you?	<b>What you see? See dumb (point to head) yourself, #ass.</b>

It was almost as if the word was tacked on as an after thought to the line. It might have been that the headpiece bothered the actor enough that he muddled his line at this point in the scene. Later, in the review of the video segments from *The Digestible Comedy of*

*Errors*, it will be pointed out how the actors overcame the problem of losing facial features during their signing process on stage.

Additionally, the actor portraying Snout demonstrated another problem with the use of sign language on stage. The line “O Bottom thou art changed! What do I see on thee?” was signed very fast. At the same time the actor moved so much during the signing that many repetitions of the frames on video were required to finally gloss his signs for the line.

Video segment #4: Act 4, Scene 4, Lines 199-216

This scene demonstrated a beautiful moment where Bottom realizes he no longer has an ass-head. At line 207, when he stopped his signing to work through the physical confirmation that his head was changed back to its original dimensions, we could see a moment where the spatial relationships of ASL permitted a visual and vivid representation.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
I have had a most rare vision.	<b>I have most beautiful dream.</b>
I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was.	<b>Have dream more than any man can say what my dream.</b>
Man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream.	<b>Man, stupid #a-s-s try to explain that dream</b>
Methought I was—there is no man can tell what	<b>I thought become—no man could know what me thought</b>
Methought I was,--and methought I had.	<b>I really become, really become [Mime action]</b>

What was remarkable was not simply the realization that his head was now normal. It was the facial expressions tied to the physical act of reconfirming spatial context that rendered the moment special. Through the use of sign language at this point, possibly the actor felt

the luxury of incorporating pantomime and other visual elements that he might not have considered in a traditional spoken performance. More examples of this type of physical quality will be highlighted in the productions of *The Tempest* and *Ophelia*. In these later productions, the special abilities of ASL are utilized on an even more visually vivid scale than the current example.

This offers an indication of what can be achieved when actors are aware of their physical space. In these instances they became willing to explore how they could work beyond the traditional spoken text to include physical elements into their performances. When hearing actors participate in a sign language production the most obvious change in their work is manifested in their willingness to use their physical skills more consistently in their work. This is something I have observed frequently during my time as artistic director of Cleveland Signstage Theatre.

This scene is also one of the few moments in the play where the pace actually slowed down, beginning with Bottom’s revisualization of what he perceives as a dream. As he drew to the closure of this speech that was dense with potential meanings particularly for the word “bottom” he slowed down further and allowed more physical action to occur.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
It shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom.	<b>“Bottom’s Dream”, why?, because it has no end.</b>
and I will sing it in the latter end of our play, before the duke.	<b>No bottom, ah! I’ll do that in play before the (ns) D (Duke)</b>
peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.	<b>To make it more important, at the Queen’s death!</b>

This scene actually allowed the spatial elements of sign language to hold forth and as a consequence added a rich dimension to the actors' lines. While the translation itself has been simplified by excluding references to the act of singing, which is a controversial idea in Deaf culture, it was nevertheless a moment where actor and director recognized the importance of and difficulties inherent in this particular speech. The actor tried to work into his translation several possible meanings for "bottom." He attempted to extend the spatial role of ASL by inserting a double meaning in the line, "because it hath no bottom" by first signing the formal ASL sign for "end" and then coupling it with a physical and visual indicator for his bottom towards the end of the speech. However, even with the effort made there were time limitations which limited the descriptive elements necessary in ASL to convey the depth of meaning possible within this speech.

As a side note, Deaf actors have historically received minimal training in the use of sign language or acting skills on stage. As a result a certain amount of clarity is lost merely through production on stage. Even after nearly thirty-five years of professional SLT, there is a serious absence of degree granting programs which in any way offer hearing or deaf actors the opportunity to train themselves in this style of theater.

## ROMEO AND JULIET

These video segments are from the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). This 1979 NTID production allowed the reader to become, to a limited extent, a voicing actor on stage. While voicing actors are not fully integrated into every scene, this was at least an early recognition of the importance of both languages on stage. Not only did this production include voicing actors on stage, it also asked one of the actors to sign

and speak at the same time. This is commonly called simultaneous communication (SIMCOM). It is a very difficult process to master and requires near native fluency in both languages. Even with such fluency one of the languages suffers the consequences of not being clearly presented. The voicing actors or readers of the production spoke in verse and the primary focus remained on the deaf actor. This is similar to what was observed at Gallaudet College, yet NTID appeared more willing to experiment with how voicing actors were used in performance.

Video segment #1, Prologue, Lines 1-14<sup>43</sup>

This scene was novel because it began with the voicing actor presenting the prologue using the SIMCOM technique. He was able to voice the lines in verse however, there were several places where he struggled to sign his lines. During the early part of the scene he partially signed one line as shown below, while he managed to voice the full line.

<u>Original Text/Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;	<b>Two lovers.</b>

At a later place in his speech he evidently became flustered and delivered the line differently from the text.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
And the continuance of their parents' rage,		<b>And continuous #of their "P" [mother/father] rage</b>
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove	<i>That nought, but their children's end, could remove,</i>	<b>That [5-claw] only their death remove.</b>



What caused him to become flustered began with his attempt to sign “parents” as an initialized sign.<sup>k</sup> He realized his error and in mid-sentence converted to the traditional sign mother/father, which is signed jointly to represent the conceptual meaning of “parents.”

The use of initialized signs has been controversial in Deaf culture because these signs are generally created using the first letter of the most commonly associated English word. For this reason these signs are not accepted as ASL. Linguistic studies have proven this to be a fallacy and have provided studies that show initialized signs as natural linguistic feature of ASL. In spite of this most deaf people will inform a signer who uses an initialized sign that it is not ASL. The actor evidently knew this, and tried to correct his error while performing. This was not a major signing error, but it was a cultural gaffe. In his effort to adjust he momentarily lost control of his strenuous effort to present both languages simultaneously and used a “5” claw hand shape for the sign “only” which normally is produced with the “1” hand shape. He struggled throughout the entire speech to keep the pace controlled enough to present both languages side by side. His process was awkward and stilted; not necessarily the best way to open a play. The director would have had more success with the opening monologue if he had determined a way to present the prologue using two actors, one voicing and one signing, which would have achieved a stronger introduction.

These two examples provide a sense of the inherent difficulties for an individual presenting both languages simultaneously on stage. This is why later productions of *Ophelia* and *Comedy of Errors* show each actor presenting only one language at a time in

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<sup>k</sup> An initialized sign is one that usually begins with the first letter of the English word associated with that word. It is

performance, which allows for attention to one language and enables the actor to perform his or her scenes more effectively.

Video segment # 2-A: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 20-33

This scene demonstrated a common problem for deaf signers on stage. The actor in this scene was signing his lines while mouthing English-like words. He is not actually voicing his lines, nor was his voice supposed to be heard by the audience. The use of extensive mouthing by a signing actor suggests that he is still working directly from the English text and has not fully integrated this text into his ASL translation. In other words the actor did not see the signs in his mind. Instead he visualized the English words he had been working on in translation. This has a tendency to limit the performance process because the actor is still working from an externalized position. Until an actor internalizes the text and integrates it with the character's emotional life, the actor is precluded from displaying the full meaning of the text. As he was mouthing the signs it could be observed that his delivery was very stiff and the lines were delivered almost by rote. As a result the scene was very awkward to watch.

Later in *The Tempest* the actor performing the role of Caliban will employ a different kind of mouthing. He used mouth movements and sounds that are distinctly related to ASL grammatical features. They do not correspond to spoken English nor are they associated with what is being voiced by the hearing actor.

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controversial to use initialized signs because it is perceived as "Signing Exact English" (SEE).

This particular production of *Romeo and Juliet* is an adaptation, which did not make a strong effort to remain faithful to the original text. This can be seen in the first thirteen lines of this scene delivered by the character Capulet.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
<u>This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,</u>		<b>Tonight, give old traditional party</b>
Whereto I have invited many a guest, Such as I love; <u>and you,</u> <u>among the store,</u> One more, most welcome, makes my number more. While here, at my <u>poor</u> house look to behold this night Whereto I have invited many a guest,	<i>Whereto I have invited many a guest, such as I love. While here, at my house look to behold this night</i>	<b>Many++ people are invited</b>
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light. Such comfort as lusty young men do feel. <u>When well-</u> <u>apparell'd April on the heel</u> Of limping winter treads, even such delight	<i>Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:</i>	<b>You come to house and see beautiful girls</b>
<u>Among fresh female buds shall you this night</u>	<i>While here at my house; hear all, and all see,</i>	<b>Look, inspect carefully</b>
And like her most whose merit most shall be:		<b>Choose best compare, Juliet with other girls</b>
<u>Which on more view, of</u> And more of you are many, mine being one. May also stand in number, though in reckoning none, <u>Come, go with me.</u>	<i>And more of you are many, mine being one. May also stand in number, though in reckoning none,</i>	<b>Maybe you will like them better</b>

Of the possible thirteen lines at least ten were either cut or altered in some fashion. It appears, as previously observed in Gallaudet productions, that the signing and voicing actors have worked on their lines separate from each other. This was made apparent by the fact that after the first line of the scene was delivered, the signed and voiced lines

became conceptually different. The sign translation demonstrates little understanding of the text and grossly misrepresents the meaning of these lines. The signer did not appear to grasp the subtext for this scene when he attempted to sign what he thought the lines meant. A good indication of this can be observed from part of the example provided above.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
<u>Among fresh female buds shall you this night</u>	<i>While here at my house; hear all, and all see,</i>	<b>Look, inspect carefully</b>
And like her most whose merit most shall be:		<b>Choose best compare, Juliet with other girls</b>
<u>Which on more view, of</u> And more of you are many, mine being one. May also stand in number, though in reckoning none, <u>Come, go with me.</u>	<i>And more of you are many, mine being one. May also stand in number, though in reckoning none,</i>	<b>Maybe you will like them better</b>

This side-by-side comparison reveals that what the signer chose to sign did not correspond with the potential meaning of the text. Furthermore the voicing actor, with minimal time to voice the text, was forced to modify what was spoken. To speak the full text would have left little time between lines to breathe. A better sign translation could have been achieved if the signing actor had worked closely with the voicing actor. Such interaction could have produced a sign translation such as the one suggested below.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
<i>Whereto I have invited many a guest,</i>	<b>Many++ people are invited</b>
<i>such as I love. While here, at my house look to behold this night</i>	<b>#a-l-l (directional) I love. Stay here, my house, look++ tonight.</b>
<i>Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:</i>	<b>Stars, (cl-shape transfer from stars to women) come-to-earth, make tonight's darkness-light.</b>
<i>While here at my house;</i>	<b>My house, you learn, you</b>

<i>hear all, and all see,</i>	<b>see all. Become fascinated with the girl</b>
<i>And more of you are many, mine being one. May also stand in number, though in reckoning none,</i>	<b>Value (Point) seems most. Women here (directional) are many, (directional) my daughter one. She stands among them (directional) but compares to them (directional) not.</b>

This gloss is a closer translation of what was being voiced and demonstrates that the translation process cannot work effectively if the signing actor ignores the voicing elements of the production. It is important that the actors are aware of what can occur when both sign and voice collaborate to achieve a cohesive creative presentation. Sign language translation is not solely a cerebral event. Movement associated with the sign language choices and tactile experiences sensed by the signer all would contribute towards the search for clarity, economy of movement, physical presentation, and physiological experience related to the translation process. When time is sufficiently devoted to this process the end result creates a more visually and coherent signed presentation for the audience to see and appreciate.

*Video segment #2-B: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 34-44*

This scene was the second part of the previous scene. The actor who signed the servant's lines also voiced Capulet's lines in the prior scene and during the interaction between the two characters. This could have been confusing to the audience, to see the same actor speak for another actor and then as another character use only sign language in the same scene. It could work only after the rationale for doing so had been clearly provided to the audience.

A well-known example of using this approach is found in *Children of a Lesser God*. Early in the play James Leeds, one of the principal characters, discovered that Sara was deaf. As he conversed with her he repeats verbally what she says to him. Initially the action was performed for the personal clarification of what Sara was signing to him in the first few scenes. Indirectly this provided the audience access to what Sara was signing and after a few scenes the audience could adjust to the idea that James would be speaking for himself and for Sara. The audience does not become confused because they have been alerted in the play that this will be customary for the character of James Leeds.

This production attempted to experiment in the same manner. Unfortunately the same effort to alert the audience to this fact was not effectively made. It was only through repeated playbacks of this segment that I became aware of what was transpiring in the scene. Since traditionally voicing actors were not seen on stage, it would have been a novel experience for both hearing and deaf audience members to see this happening on stage. The audience would not have been prepared to see this technique used and consequently would have needed help adjusting to the novelty of this viewing experience.

The video segment demonstrated the director's decision to integrate the voicing and signing by having the two actors remain close to one another. The voicing actor peered over the shoulder of the signing actor to read the guest list given to them by Capulet. The director used the unique spatial relationship available to the actors as a form of interaction within the scene. This is one of the unique qualities ASL has to offer in a performance. In this case it was not only the interaction of two languages but also the physical interaction present within the scene. The director used the interplay between the two actors to establish mood and to gain some humor.

This type of physical interaction has been extended into interpreted performances for certain plays, through a process commonly called shadow interpreting.<sup>1</sup> Using this technique requires a director to be open to the idea of working with a double cast and willing to re-block the play to include the additional actors. In the 1990s CST produced a play called *Everything You Need to Know about the End of the World or An Evening with the Illuminati*. The theater used six actors to represent the three principal characters in the play. Two additional actors were included in the play to provide support similar to the chorus of a classical Greek tragedy. The actors involved in this production loved the experience. The audience, both deaf and hearing, and the critics did not know what to make of the experience. The technique is rarely used because the deaf audience does not like the split focus and hearing audiences find it more confusing to watch the process.

This scene appears to have been completely rewritten and the actor portraying the servant was not a skilled signer. The signed translation did not follow either the original or the rewritten text shown below.

Original Text	Voiced Lines	Sign Gloss
Find them out whose names are written here!	<i>I can't read, tis a meager hand</i>	<b>Find the people on the list, I read can't!</b>
It is written, that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil,	<i>a most peculiar hand, a wise</i>	<b>Writing terrible, writing dirty.</b>
and the painter with his nets;	<i>man could not make head or tail of it.</i>	<b>Philosopher's can't! No+++</b>
but I am sent to find those persons whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing	<i>See you this mark here, could easily be the tail hanging off an ass's back</i>	<b>Hee, hee maybe that's a donkey's ass</b>

<sup>1</sup> Shadow interpreting allows two actors to share one character. One actor signs and the other voices the character's lines together on stage. The techniques effectively doubles the size of the cast and can be problematic for a director to block successfully. Both deaf and hearing audiences have generally reacted unfavorably to this approach.

person hath here writ.		
I must to the learned.--In good time.	<i>So there will I hie my tail and hie my tail or lose my tail.</i>	<b>No, Capulet's dad typed it. If I don't leave he whip my ass. Hurry must!</b>

By comparing the columns above it can be seen that the voicing actor and the signing actor delivered their lines in total isolation from one another and the text. When the signer indicates that he cannot read it cancels out any further relevance for the text he is supposedly reciting to the audience. For those fluent in both languages it is difficult to watch and listen to this scene. The signing actor also chose to sign, “**Capulet's dad typed it.**” At first I did not believe the sign choice. Only after repeated replay did I concede that the actor had actually signed “typed,” as a character in a time period when typewriters did not exist. To this point the alteration of the script did not challenge the textual authority, but were made apparently to alleviate a difficult translation passage. Neither the rewritten text nor the signing choices supported the scene appropriately. It would have been better to cut this scene than to allow such wonderful potential to be inadequately presented.

*Video segment #3: Act 1, Scene 3, Lines 11-99*

*Video segment #4: Act 1, Scene 5, Lines 103-110*

*Video segment#5: Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 33-36*

These video segments were not used in the final analysis.

*Video segment #6: Act 3, Scene 2, Lines 1-31*

What was interesting about this scene was the dissonance between what was signed and what was voiced during the first 7 lines. The signing actor blazed through her



lines at a rapid fire pace. The sign choices for the first 6 lines were very brief, literal and distant from the actual text. This can be seen from the six line sequence provided below.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds, Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner		<b>Gallop Sun, Gallop from your home</b>
As Phaethon would whip you to the west,		<b>Quick whip west</b>
And bring in cloudy night immediately.		<b>Pull the night, fast-fast!</b>
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night, That runaway's eyes may wink and		<b>Sun say yes, go.</b>
Romeo leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.  <u>Lovers can see to do their amorous rites</u> <u>By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,</u> <u>It best agrees with night.</u> <u>Come, civil night,</u> <u>Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,</u> <u>And learn me how to lose a winning match,</u> <u>Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:</u> <u>Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,</u> <u>With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,</u> <u>Think true love acted simple modesty.</u>	<i>Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.</i>	(ns) <b>Romeo come to these arms not yet used or seen.</b>
Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;		<b>Come tonight, come (ns) Romeo Come day, pull night.</b>

This comprised a most difficult sequence of lines for the reader to follow. Most likely the brevity of the sign language translation forced the reader to cut lines from the text as identified in the first column. Even with these cuts it was most likely a difficult scene to vocally match the signed translation. The two examples below demonstrate the difficulty for the voicing actor at this point.

<u>Original Text/Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
As Phaethon would whip you to the west,	<b>Quick whip west</b>
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night, That runaway's eyes may wink and	<b>Sun say yes, go.</b>

One could try to voice the voiced lines to gain some sense of how difficult it must have been to keep pace with the signer. The sign translation consisted of three to four signs produced in a few seconds of time. This was inadequate pacing for the voice requirements of the spoken lines. This brings to light another problem with SLT. Sometimes the decision to delete text does not relate to the difficulty of the text. It is simply that the spoken English cannot keep pace with the signed translation. This scene shows how essential it is to provide proper training to actors involved in the process of sign translation.

*Video segment #7: Act 4, Scene I, lines 68-124*

In this scene the sign choices are brief and stilted. The reader often struggled to finish each line as shown in the two examples below.

<u>Original Text/Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
If, rather than to marry County Paris, Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,	<b>Can act what I show,</b>
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake A thing like death to chide away this shame,	<b>Can copy look like death</b>

The signing actor chose a very brief and choppy translation. His slow delivery of the lines occurred most likely because he was thinking of each line before he signed it.

<u>Original Text/Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift, and hither shall he come.	<b>While you sleep I will send a letter to (ns) Romeo</b>
<u>Order him to come, and</u>	<b>Tell him what 2-of-us do.</b>
And He and I Will watch thy waking,	<b>2-of-us watch you wake up.</b>
and that very night shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.	<b>then take you out of town, (ns) Mantua.</b>

The voicing actor had twice as much text to cover while the signed translation was happening. This created the odd pacing of this scene. It was not until the final four lines of the scene that the signing actor made sign choices that were full and complete. This brought the scene to a close effectively. This scene, which should comprise 56 lines, was cut in half through the deletion or alteration of specific lines such as provided in the table below.

<u>Original Text/Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  <u>To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall,</u> <u>Like death, when he shuts up the day of</u> <u>life;</u> <u>Each part, deprived of supple government,</u> <u>Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like</u> <u>death:</u> And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death	<b>Lips white, Pale, look dead.</b>

<p>And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.  <u>Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes</u>  <u>To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:</u>  <u>Then, as the manner of our country is,</u>  <u>In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier</u>  <u>Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault</u>  <u>Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.</u>  <u>In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,</u></p>	<p><b>Then you'll wake up.</b></p>
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There does not seem to be clear logic as to why certain lines are cut in the scene other than to note that the passages cut are the dense, descriptive passages that Shakespeare wrote to establish mood. It seems most likely that the time factor necessary for ASL to provide the descriptive elements necessary to clarify meaning prevented a fuller translation. This may have also been related to the skills of the actor responsible for the sign language translation. From observing this video segment it did not appear that the actor was a native signer<sup>m</sup>. These lines deleted from the scene present graphic images of the decaying aspects of death and create images of what it is like to be lying in death's repose. The deletion of these lines forgoes the audience's opportunity to visualize Juliet's determination and youthful brashness to shrug off such deathly imagery for the sake of love.

### MY THIRD EYE

This six-minute segment was selected from a five-part piece. It is included at this point for the reader's benefit. The play was introduced earlier in this paper as an example

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<sup>m</sup> Few deaf people are born into deaf families. A native deaf signer is one who has deaf parents and begins language development using ASL. Most deaf people acquire ASL in the school environment and depending on when that exposure occurs, it will effect how fluent they are with the use of ASL.

of Fanon's second phase of development for an oppressed culture. This production "written by members of the cast...introduced the audience to the world of deafness and to sign language and included an amusing 'side-show' where 'strange' people *talked* instead of signed."<sup>44</sup> The ensemble created the piece in ASL and the voice translation was developed based on the sign language translation. This was without a doubt a laborious process because notation systems do not formally exist for documenting sign language translations.

*My Third Eye* is unique because most SLT productions of the past thirty-five years involved adapting existing dramatic plays into ASL. Most theaters simply reworked these plays to logically explain why the characters were signing instead of speaking their roles. Other theaters just performed the plays without bothering to provide a rationale for including sign language in the production. These plays generally included subtle references to deafness and Deaf culture. *My Third Eye* attempted to reinterpret the reality of mainstream society from the perspective of Deaf culture. The play was well received by Deaf audiences, but hearing audience did not quite know what to make of it because of their lack of cultural background in deafness. Hearing audiences could not immediately grasp the irony and sarcasm prevalent in this production. In one area of the play there was an indirect attack on hearing culture and how it communicates. This was a reversal of the classic attitude of hearing people towards Deaf people and sign language. The implication in this segment was that ASL is the preferred language.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
<i>Here is the exhibit.</i>	<b>Here is an example.</b>
<i>See for yourself.</i>	<b>See youself.</b>
<i>Body shapes are the same.</i>	<b>Body and figures are the same.</b>
<i>Limbs are the same.</i>	<b>Arms, legs, face are the same.</b>
<i>Their behavior, Ah!, different.</i>	<b>Their behavior, Ah! Different.</b>
<i>You and I use our eyes.</i>	<b>You and I use our eyes. [Eyes Action]</b>
<i>Hers are blank, weak.</i>	<b>Their eyes are blank and weak.</b>
<i>You and I use our faces.</i>	<b>You and I use our facial expressions.</b>
<i>Hers is frozen except around the mouth.</i>	<b>Their face are frozen except mouth.</b>
<i>You will notice the mouths will continue to move throughout this performance.</i>	<b>That moves constantly through their actions.</b>
<i>Hands are limp, soft and not used much. Why? They are not used for communication!</i>	<b>Their hands are soft and useless, why? They are not [foot stomps] used for communication.</b>
<i>Their mouths moves.</i>	<b>Their mouths moves, moves.</b>
<i>Throats trembles.</i>	<b>Their throats bob up and down.</b>
<i>Tongues wags.</i>	<b>Their tongues dart out.</b>
<i>Air is emitted.</i>	<b>Their breath blows out.</b>
<i>Heads cock.</i>	<b>Their heads move side to side.</b>
<i>We saw and found that these people</i>	<b>We see,see. Find out these people</b>
<i>Make signs with their mouths!</i>	<b>Make signs with their mouths.</b>
<i>Let our actors show you.</i>	<b>Sign-hands (neg) Mouth-sign (nod)</b>

This example shows subtle attempts to redefine the world. With lines like, “eyes are blank and weak” and “hands are soft and useless” it was implied that people who speak lack certain qualities that are valued in Deaf culture. I have included the full video segment for the reader to review. It can be noted that the scene was done lightly and suggests that this was all being done in good humor. However, beneath the surface there existed countless years of cultural rage. No other SLT production had attempted anything

comparable to *My Third Eye* until the 1992 production of *Ophelia*. Even then, NTD did not attempt to re-envision *Hamlet* through the eyes of deafness, but merely through the eyes of his beloved Ophelia.

## PRODUCTIONS OF THE 1990'S

The productions of *Ophelia* by NTD and of *The Digestible Comedy of Errors* by CST both show a noticeable focus on signing and voicing of a professional caliber. Both productions, in their own way, attempted to seize control of Shakespeare and make the works uniquely their own. Fanon suggested that the third phase of development would involve a process that awakens the culture to its own potential to be creative, independently of other cultures. Both theaters shook traditional conventions by incorporating theatrical elements into their work that were normally not considered applicable to Deaf culture. The inclusion of music, choreographed movement, and masks all represent departures from what SLT has normally considered acceptable for a production. It may turn out that both theaters were ahead of their time and are due greater recognition of their work.

Also included in this analysis is a 1993 thesis project by Peter Novak. This paper provided analysis of the signing of one scene from *The Tempest*. While not a full theatrical production the work in this scene has important features worth noting at the present time. One unique quality of the video segment is the absence of voice on the tape. The text is provided to the viewer using open captioning, allowing the viewer to focus



entirely on sign language. Time was available to the signers, during the process of this project's development, to fully expand descriptive elements associated with specific lines of the text. The translation process faced none of the restrictions on time or rhythm normally present when both languages are simultaneously performed.

The video segment does not contain vocal sounds except for the sounds made by the signers during their performance. These types of natural utterances and body contact sounds, normally produced by a signer using ASL, served the function of providing inflection and intonation to specific signed phrases. A table is provided below that demonstrates some of the sounds and facial features of ASL that have recently been identified by linguists.<sup>45</sup>

<u>Sound or Facial Feature</u>	<u>Grammatical Use/Meaning</u>
Puffed cheeks	1. A lot , a huge number of 2. Large, huge 3. Of great magnitude.
Intense face	1. Awfully large, surprisingly huge 2. Of awfully great magnitude 3. To an unusually great degree
Pursed lips	1. Very small, thin, narrow 2. Smooth 3. Quickly, easily
Pah!	1. Success 2. Finally
Pow	1. Splatter
Cha	1. Huge

More study is needed before an in-depth understanding of these linguistic features can be accomplished. These sounds are normally suppressed during a SLT production, as these sounds tend to distract the hearing audience. The video segments for *The Tempest* provide a sense of what SLT could be if its focus was independent of spoken English.

The sign translation glosses for all of the video segments in this chapter do not reflect any variances for the voiced lines. The sign choices were permitted to take as long as necessary to include all grammatical features of ASL in the translation process. These three productions were able to focus mainly on the sign translation and its relationship to the text because the voicing elements were fully integrated. Any pauses or shifts between the two languages were deliberate artistic choices. This represents one of the major evolutionary changes in SLT over its thirty-five year history.

## OPHELIA

Jeff Wanshel, the director of *Ophelia*, describes his play as one pirated from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. This adaptation supposedly has done violence to the text, therefore we can no longer solely judge the action of the play against the benchmark of Shakespeare's original. How much Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* influenced this production cannot be determined at this time. Stoppard's work was produced in 1988 and this production was mounted in 1992. It is possible that the success of Stoppard's play gave NTD the inspiration or perhaps the courage to attempt a reinterpretation of *Hamlet*. All of the essential and familiar moments that remind us of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are maintained within *Ophelia*. Hamlet's father has been poisoned, his mother marries the murderer, madness is rampant and Ophelia eventually drowns. What the playwright and the theater had changed, by looking at Hamlet's world through the eyes of Ophelia, was the play's frame of reality. Steven Winn, writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted, the

most striking—and strikingly feminist—thing about Jeff Wanshel’s play, ‘pirated from William Shakespeare,’ as the program acknowledges, is how closely it hews to the original. By making Ophelia an equal player in the life of the court of Elsinore---she sits through Polonius’ tedious advice along with her brother, Laertes, and huddles with Hamlet about the misdeeds of the King---Wanshel’s text doesn’t distort the tragedy. Rather, it refracts all the characters and their aspects through a new prism.<sup>46</sup>

*Ophelia* was declared to be an appropriation of Shakespeare despite Mr. Winn’s suggestion that it did not diverge significantly from the original (*Hamlet*). Review of the script does not support what Mr. Winn observed in his article. The language in the script is “like” Shakespeare but it is not precisely Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. There is language in the script not found in traditional versions of *Hamlet* as well as lines in the play that belong to other Shakespearean plays. The effort was not so much to replicate Shakespeare’s work word for word as to suggest a vague memory of it. Joe Pollock, a writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, notes “Wanshel’s script turns the play about 270 degrees, or not all the way around. He uses many of the classic lines and speeches, and they usually are performed by the same characters who speak them in more traditional productions.”<sup>47</sup> As SLT, production, *Ophelia* was seeking new ground while at the same time keeping the ground beneath the audience vaguely familiar.

Fanon indicated that when this type of shift occurs, there has been an important change within the culture. SLT productions were mainly produced to prove that deaf individuals could perform on stage and that ASL as a language offered equivalent artistic beauty in performance. Thus the artistic activity was pursued so it could be “read exclusively by the oppressor, whether with the intention of charming him or of denouncing him through ethnic or subjectivist means....”<sup>48</sup> To date that had been the focus of SLT, with the exception of *My Third Eye*. For all practical purposes SLT had

endeavored to charm. In this production the goal was apparently to shake our presumptions about how SLT presents itself. Music, movement, and language were manipulated to create a new experience. When this happened, new directions could be explored that permitted the culture to grow. Fanon proposed that

it is only from that moment that we can speak of a national literature. Here there is, at the level of literary creation, the taking up and clarification of themes that are typically nationalist. This may be properly called a literature of combat, in the sense that it calls on the whole people to fight for their existence as a nation. It is a literature of combat, because it molds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; it is a literature of combat because it assumes responsibility, and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space.<sup>49</sup>

In this production NTD assumed the responsibility to redefine time and space in a way that SLT had not previously attempted. This signaled to Deaf culture that it was no longer sufficient to prove the existence of Deaf culture or the beauty and viability of sign language. Fanon asserted this shift could be compelled by a need to do battle which “expresses above all a hand-to-hand struggle and it reveals the need that man has to liberate himself from a part of his being which already contained the seeds of decay. Whether the fight is painful, quick, or inevitable, muscular action must substitute itself for concepts.”<sup>50</sup>

Deafness and ASL, arm in arm for the past thirty-five years as acts of positive social work, could no longer be the sole rationale for the existence of SLT. The need arose to move beyond concepts and take responsibility for artistic form and purpose. Unfortunately, this seminal, original departure by NTD may not be fully acknowledged by the Deaf community for some time to because the production has not received the kind of attention needed from literary scholars that emphasizes the importance of this production.

The four video segments analyzed below cover some of the changes in this art form, most strikingly the professionalism present in performances. Dialog for this production was presented fluently in both English and ASL. Each language was allowed adequate time and space to express itself clearly with power and vigor.

Video Segment #1: Ophelia

This first video segment demonstrates a series of interchanges between the characters that seem to offer an indirect commentary about ASL’s capacity to define meaning. The first two lines presented Ophelia in the act of clarifying the relationship between the weeping willow and the drowning of Ophelia, which occurred in a prior scene not available on the video from which these segments were taken.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
The poet said, “weeping brook”.	<b>Shakespeare, his line said</b> (quote) <b>#Weeping Brook</b>
The maiden wasn’t weeping; the brook weeps.	<b>not mean girl, herself, crying, no! Water-river, it cries.</b>
The water splashes up and streams down like tears.	<b>Girl fell, (into water) water splashes, down (on her face) like tears.</b>

Later in the scene the Player-King described the “weeping tree” as having metaphorical qualities. In presenting his lines time was built into his ASL translation to basically draw pictures in the air.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
There is a willow: a weeping tree, mirrored in the brook.	<b>Here have</b> (quote) <b>#willow: that means crying tree.</b> (action)

During the moment indicated by “action” one can see on the video segment the time permitted within the play for the spatial qualities of the language to blossom. This was the second redefinition of the drowning event.

The third occurred when the First Player tried to explain what happened and during his line changed his mind on how Ophelia floats to her drowning. Again, the structure of the play permitted the actor time to fully express the concepts which can be so beautifully and graphically portrayed in ASL.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
FIRST PLAYER--	
I'd have done it differently. She drifts downstream...feet first	<b>Me sign different, me would say (cl)</b> [girl float down stream feet first]
No: head first. She spins a little, then she's pulled under...	<b>No: Head first then spin,</b> (action-pulled--directional) <b>under water</b>
PLAYER--	
And croaks.	<b>(cl)</b> [dead upside down]

Here we saw Ophelia feet first, then suddenly head first, followed with the graphic clarity of her being spun and sucked down into the watery void. The other player then completed the line using a classifier handshape for “croaks”: a handshape that looks very much like an animal upside down with its legs straight up in the air. The signing actors played off of each other in a way that effectively and dramatically completed specific lines in ASL.

The Player-King, as shown below, provided the final redefinition of the drowning event.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Then next time drown her your way. Suit the action to the word,	<b>Next time drown girl your way. Agree speak—sign match</b>
The word to the action; hold the mirror up to nature.	<b>Sign-speak match mirror-mirror ( action-reverses image).</b>

His translation for the difficult passage “word to action; hold the mirror up to nature,” was achieved by permitting the audience’s focus to shift fully to his signing during this line. The audience’s gaze was redirected to “see” his hands display the action of holding a mirror, which reflects back at us and reminds us how life and art often imitate each other.

Video Segment #2:Ophelia

This video segment demonstrates the professionalism of the actor performing in this scene. He presented himself with authority and his translation work was reinforced by his capability to present the dialog in a powerful and theatrical manner. He was in full control of the scene and most likely commanded the full attention of the audience. Both languages worked in harmony to project the pompous personality of Polonius. One example of the subtlety of his translation work was the utilization of an innovative way to fingerspell “Hamlets.” The conventional approach would be simply to plainly include the fingerspelled word as a part of the dialog. This actor, Robert DeMayo, chose to spell the five letters of Hamlet’s name and added the letter “s” as his hand made the transition into the crook of his arm. This created the sign for **baby**, which resembles the head of a baby held in one’s arms, while at the same time completing the spelling of “Hamlets.”

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Next thing you know the court will swarm with little Hamlets.	<b>Know what happens next? She (action) born, born, # Hamlet (s)-(Holds “s” and places it into crook of his arm to signify a baby’s head and sighs)</b>

Here the power of ASL to interact with the text and provide subtle visual reinforcement of the line was fully demonstrated. What was unfortunate about this was that it was observable only after careful and repeated playback of the video segment.

From this we can sense that the actor fully understood the purpose of his translation and strove to find an effective visual way in which to present it. He knew in that moment he had achieved something unique in his work that few will notice during the actual performance. It is the accumulation of these small moments that make SLT a visual delight. For audiences, both Deaf and hearing, much of what was uniquely presented in this translation, though captured for posterity on video, was perhaps overlooked in the live performance.

Video Clip #3: Ophelia

This segment reflects a sign translation that appeared incompatible with its expression in spoken English. Reviewing the sign glosses could lead to an assumption that the sign and voice actors were not on the same page for this scene. Only through the auxiliary study of the video does one grasp the full and subtle implications impossible to replicate in the written transcription. The signing actor had, in fact, chosen signs that provided the audience with the powerful sense of mood intended in the text.

Now o'er the one half world, nature seems dead	<b>Now the world cracks opens</b>
And wicked dreams abuse the curtained sleep	<b>People die, die, die, bad dreams fade Sun sets, curtains close, people sleep</b>
Witchcraft celebrates, and withered murder,	(cl) [nose] <b>Witch</b> (cackles) (wrings hands), <b>disappears, murderers appear,</b> (cloak up- (cl)-skeleton)
Alarmed by his sentinel the wolf, loose, howls his watch.	<b>Look, the wolf howls (ACTION)</b>
With stealthy pace towards his design moves like a ghost.	<b>Approaches us a ghost.</b>



The scene was fascinating to watch not because of the sign choices made, but because of the action between the signs. For example, the actor presented a representation of “witchcraft” using specific sign choices to define shape and size. He combined several hand movements to suggest a long curved nose, and wrung his hands and changed his facial expression to reflect the stereotyped look of a witch. Surely the audience could almost hear the cackle of a witch. Another example accompanied the line “his sentinel the wolf,” as the actor’s handshapes defined the wolf’s ears as being pinned back, instantly inspiring in the audience’s minds the vivid image of fear and danger. From pinned back ears, he skillfully shifted his hands to the recognizable shape and action of “howling.”

All lines were delivered physically with poise, deliberate slowness, and strong facial expressions linked to body language, which combined to establish a specific mood. The translation, which at first glance did not seem to indicate success, was obviously alive with visual cues contained within the structure of ASL. It was these physical actions within the scene that enabled the scene to stand out in this video segment. Anyone who viewed this performance should have immediately sensed the mood of the scene. The scene is visually a delight to experience and is a strong example of the visual power of the language in performance.

#### *Video Segment #4: Ophelia*

This segment, brief in its textual composition, is rich in visual imagery. When the First Player suggested, “why not become the poison bottle” the scene fully shifted attention to the signing actor as he clearly and vividly acted out the process of becoming such a bottle.

<u>Voiced Lines</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Player King---	
Awful. Here's how you smell poison....	<b>Terrible. Here how you smell poison...</b>
Player---	
Why not become the poison bottle...	<b>Or yourself become poison bottle [Action]</b>
Player-King---	
Or become the poison itself	<b>Poison itself [Action]</b>
Players---	
And croak the gentleman	<b>[Action]</b>

The Player-King proposed to proceed alternatively by “becoming the poison itself” and again time was allowed to fully assimilate the imagery of the actor as the poison. The final line “and croak the gentleman” was reinforced by multiple reactions of all the players in the scene. The actors seemed to be having great fun presenting the visual actions within the scene by demonstrating multiple visions of death individually. At the end of the scene the actress incorporated a classic gesture to signify death by placing an “X” hand shape over each of her eyes.

This scene clearly showed how the two languages, working closely together, and recognizing rich elements of each, can powerfully enhance the performance. Time was allowed for each concept to be fully expressed in ASL. Unlike earlier productions, no voicing was added to describe what the signing actor was doing, leaving the audience with the opportunity to focus on and assimilate the visual imagery that accompanied the text. The lightness and humor of the scene would have been infectious to the audience. The expression chosen for this scene forced the audience to watch closely and brought them into the play as co-conspirators.

As these four video segments demonstrated, there are ways in which both languages can be expressed successfully on the stage. The time and investment in the

presentation and the translation process, supported by a higher standard of professional acting, created a powerful experience. The creative quality of these scenes directly depended on the creative skills and artistic efforts of the actors and director.

## THE TEMPEST

*The Tempest* video segment was obtained from a MA thesis project completed in 1993 by Peter Novak at Loyola University-Chicago. His thesis focused on 320 lines from Act 1, scene 2 of the play. Mr. Novak explains in the thesis preface that

the purpose of this thesis is to analyze the problems inherent in translating Shakespeare's *The Tempest* into American Sign Language. Shakespeare's works are written mostly in unrhymed iambic pentameter and therefore translation of verse into a language and culture where rhyme and verse have no meaning presents unique problems. The goal of this thesis is to discover an effective means of translating Shakespeare into American Sign Language and for Deaf culture.<sup>51</sup>

It should be pointed out that the assumption by Mr. Novak that ASL does not contain rhyme or verse has been recently nullified through extensive work of ASL poets. They have demonstrated that there are features within sign language that will cause rhyme to occur using, for example, the directional features or movement of specific signs to represent rhyme.

At any rate, the actors were provided with full freedom to explore the ASL translation process. For this reason the video segment focused on the sign language translation and provided open captioning as a substitute for the voiced elements of the scene. SLT rarely has this opportunity at the professional level because of its need to be accessible to a mixed audience. For this reason we have a unique opportunity to look at ASL in isolation and see how the language expands when it has free rein to do so.

Video Segment #1: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 319-320<sup>52</sup>

What was remarkable about this segment was the disparity between the brevity of the lines and the length of time that was necessary in ASL to express their full conceptual meaning. At most, it would take an actor 10 seconds to voice these lines in an actual performance. The signing actor was able to include as much descriptive information as needed in his sign language translation.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
PROSPERO Thou poisonous slave,	<b>True you slave, who?... that?... what?</b> <b>That your mother-</b> (cl-shape) <b>witch</b> (lips lick-lusty leer) <b>spread her legs wide to the devil</b> (action)
got by the devil himself	<b>The devil-father saw, lusted, rushed to her, two-together fornicated</b> (lustily) (till exhausted-shoulder shift)
Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!	(leg shape shift) <b>Pregnant,</b> (action) <b>hard birth, born, a baby, baby? That you!</b>

When viewing this video segment, even without hearing any sound elements, one could most likely gain a deep sense of the meaning of these lines. This is one feature of ASL that differs from spoken English where information is conveyed in an explicit manner that spoken English would choose to imply the same information in a more indirect manner. This can clearly be observed through the vivid facial expressions and the physical actions that were built into the presentation of these lines. The scene became almost sexually uncomfortable to watch as the signing actor included sign choices and facial expressions that were visually graphic. There could be no doubt what the devil and the witch have consummated. Nor could there be any doubt that the birthing experience was difficult.

At the end of signing “the devil himself” the classifier shape changed fluidly from a sexual position to the position of birthing. This shift of meaning was accomplished without changing the arm and hand shapes already established. The movement and position of the legs were reestablished to clearly define for the audience the shift from a sexually supine position to an upright position of birthing.

The facial expressions of the signing actor were strong and disdainful at the conclusion of the scene when he said, “That you!” This clearly established the relationship between Prospero and Caliban. There could be no doubt that a master-servant relationship existed between the two characters. From the way the signing was presented, clearly Prospero despised the way that Caliban was brought into the world.

The depth of this translation work would not have survived the normal production process of SLT simply because of the amount of time required to sign it. It would have been necessary to modify the sign choices to allow for English voicing of the lines without too much disruption of the verse pacing or the resulting uncomfortable silence.

Video Segment #2: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 321-324

This segment, which consisted of four lines, shows an example of how the signing actor economically translated into ASL the full meaning of the text.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
CALIBAN	
As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd	<b>My mother, witch spied a black bird, grasped it</b>

With raven's feather from unwholesome fen	<b>Plucked a feather, (action) dipped it in water</b> [ NM-Unwholesome]
Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye	(Action) <b>Sling on your body!</b> (Action) <b>Whistle-me, call the wind to surround me, (directional) blow back on you</b>
And blister you all o'er!	(Action) <b>Sores (cl) (appear) all over your face and body.</b>

In an actual performance, both the spoken English and ASL expressions would have been fluid and successful. The signing actor expressed most of the textual meaning through the use of classifiers and representational body language, rather than specific signs. In comparison to conversational ASL, this approach takes on a very poetic nature. The actions of grasping the bird and plucking the feather economically expressed what the text meant while still effectively conveying that information in a visual manner. When Peter Cook, the signing actor, acted out dipping the feather in the fen he also added facial expressions that defined the fen as being unwholesome. His use of a whistle command for, “a south-west blow on ye,” clearly demonstrated the character’s genetic origins and the ability to do some black magic of his own. He commanded the wind to surround him, as demonstrated by the movement of his hands, and then in a subtle shift the hands turned the wind back to Prospero to, “blow on ye.” He used the directionality of ASL to clearly show whom the wind blew toward and what happened when it returned to Prospero. The final line involved the use of a classifier to define the size, shape and the action of “sores” opening over Prospero’s face and body.

Video Segment #3: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 332-340

This segment was beautifully translated. The signing actor had wonderful control of his signing space and used emotion at various levels to emphasize the meanings of specific words.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, Which thou takest from me.	<b>Here island mine! My mother-witch ruled—then gave-to-me. You stole from me!</b>

As the actor signed, “this island’s mine,” his large, powerful concluding sign for “mine” demonstrated his full feelings of possession, which would be unwound during the description of the island later in the scene. He developed the translation to allow the reduplication of one hand shape to represent two different meanings within the same line. For “by Sycorax my mother,” he selects a signing sequence that in gloss is, “my mother witch ruled,” where the sign for “ruled” was held and then meshed into a directional movement which changed the meaning of the hand shape from “rule” to “gave me.” Here the signer has masterfully controlled the parameters of space and movement to alter the meaning of a specific hand shape. By retaining the hand shape and changing the aspects of the signed expression, the actor found an effective way to economize the timing of his dialog. This is a poetic device that is not used enough in ASL performances.

When we reach, “thou strokedst me,” the relationship between Prospero and Caliban was clearly defined by how the actor presented himself.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Thou strokedst me and madest much of me,	<b>(Action) You pet me, paid attention to me</b>

He created status by lowering his body position, crouching before Prospero, his knees bent and his facial expressions demonstrating that he did not know whether to bite the hand or not. Prospero was made alive by the action of his hand alone, reaching out to pet Caliban, whose facial expressions changed to visually demonstrate to the audience the effect of Prospero’s touch upon him.

At the phrase, “the bigger light and now the less,” he successfully signed both concepts simultaneously. By simultaneously signing both sunrise and set, he created sufficient time to fingerspell “moon” at the end of his line without the need to hurry the effect.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
To name the bigger light,	<b>Sunrise, name what,</b> (directional) (You) <b>fingerspell...</b> (I) <b>“oic”</b> (oh I see, understand)
and how the less, That burn by day and night.	(Simultaneous action) <b>Sunset dark, moon rises,</b> (directional) (I) <b>ask what?</b> (You) # <b>m-o-o-n</b>

In front of his signing space he established the setting of the sun with one arm and hand and almost at the same time stretched out his other arm until it extended behind him to demonstrate the rising of the moon. At the correct axis of the sun setting and the moon rising, he made a simple body shift to look backwards and moved smoothly into the remainder of the signed translation.

Finally he changed his style of signing, nearly frenzied and out of control, as he excitedly described the features of the isles, “the fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile.”

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,	<b>Lousy salt-water, Blah! Me know better water</b> (directional) <b>over there.</b>
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place	<b>Green, grow—rocks lousy—I know best!</b>



and fertile.	<b>-grow (directional) there! Show+++.</b>
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He used a facial expression shift to show his anger and dismay that followed his initial display of excitement about the island. His facial expression changed in conjunction with a specific slowing of the signing pace. This was achieved by using sign choices that were individually large in their delivery. At the beginning of his line each sign followed the next in steady succession that allowed him to slowly build to a climax in his final two lines.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Cursed be I that did so!	<b>Realize me stupid that I did show you!</b>

His chosen signs for toads, beetles, and bats were not the traditional, conversational signs for these creatures. Signing on the stage requires actors to make sign choices that can use large areas of space in the process of signing. This is a pragmatic process used to help the deaf audience see the signs better from their distant seats in the theater, a technique which can be compared with a speaking actor's projection of his voice. In this scene such projection was achieved by adding graphic and descriptive elements to the signs for a larger visual and dramatic effect.

Video Segment #4: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 363-365

The fourth video segment could be noted for its powerful, emphatic delivery of the lines. The sign translation choices were economical, direct and closely tied to the text.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
You taught me language; and my profit on't	<b>Your language, give, learn, for-for</b>
Is, I know how to curse.	<b>Can sign dirty curses</b>
The red plague rid you	<b>I wish you (cl) drop dead</b>

For learning me your language!	<b>For giving me your language!</b>
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The compounded sign, “for-for,” at the end of the first line was an efficient way of saying in sign language, “What for?” In the third signed line, the choice was the use of a sign language classifier, “drop-dead” that used hand shapes that resemble an animal dead, upside down, with its legs sticking in the air. This was a sign choice that was very emphatic for the concept of death and complimented the text use of, “the red plague rid you.”

The final line was signed with a powerful emphasis, especially on the word “your.” This line would have imparted special meaning to the deaf audience because “your” would have implied the English language. It would have ignited the age long resentment of members of the Deaf culture of being forced to use English instead of ASL as their primary source of communication with the world. The actor reinforced the depth of feeling by choosing to sign the line forcibly and nearly out of control. This was a wonderful, brief, example of a powerful and compact moment containing embedded cultural meaning for the deaf audience. It would have transferred to the stage in a very dramatic way.

These four video segments demonstrate the power of ASL when it has the full opportunity to be expressed through the use of actions, expressions, classifiers, hand shapes and timing. Because this was a thesis project there was additional time, beyond the normal four-week rehearsal period, to prepare the text and translation. There was also the luxury of focusing on a few hundred lines of text allowing a more thorough understanding and presentation of the text in sign language. As previously mentioned however, this type of opportunity rarely occurs in SLT because of the sharing of stage

space with spoken English. The economic realities of the American stage dictate that SLT will remain linked to a dual presentation mode.

## THE DIGESTIBLE COMEDY OF ERRORS

In 1997, five years after *Ophelia*, CST also entered Fanon's second phase. CST risked disturbing the deaf members of its audience by presenting *The Digestible Comedy of Errors* using *commedia del' arte* techniques that included the use of masks. Masks, for linguistic reasons previously discussed in this paper, are typically avoided in SLT performances concerned about their Deaf audience members. The theater and its artistic staff wanted to explore new territory by moving beyond the historical conventions of SLT. Neil Thackaberry, General Manager, and myself as Artistic Director, felt strongly that regardless of conventional perceptions of what SLT could or could not do, experimentation was necessary. We both were convinced that the art form needed to challenge traditional conventions to achieve artistic growth. We both felt that what was discovered during the process of working through these difficulties was worth the pain and effort.

Traditionally, *Errors* has a cast of 15 characters; it was attempted with six actors for artistic and pragmatic reasons. One of these reasons was the budgetary challenge faced by the theater through most of its history, which forced the artistic staff to constantly seek efficient approaches to staging various plays. There had been a desire to mount a Shakespeare production for quite some time, but the cast size for most Shakespeare plays prevented any productions from occurring in the past. Larry Nehring, one of the hearing actors in this production, adapted the play for a smaller cast. This meant a doubling of

roles for each cast member that required actors capable of voicing lines for various characters and signing their own assigned roles. The size of the cast in *Errors* required careful consideration for assignment of roles among the actors. Innumerable scenarios were thought through before the final cast decisions were made for *Errors*. The theater finally settled on a modification of the play consisting of six actors, of which only two were deaf. The two deaf actors were cast as one pair of the twins and supported by four hearing actors who spoke all lines, changed costumes and masks frequently, and also maintained their own signing characters throughout the play. The theater took a huge risk by presenting Shakespeare in this modified form.

Historically SLT has maintained that the ASL part of the performances belonged exclusively to the deaf actors. The unequal treatment of Deaf and hearing actors along with the difficulties of giving both languages equal billing has often worked against the success of a production. While many hearing actors working in SLT have developed near native fluency in ASL, their sign language skills are largely ignored and their acting work is primarily restricted to voicing responsibilities.

CST strove to maintain an ensemble group that was evenly divided between deaf and hearing actors. At CST, a number of productions allowed hearing actors an atypical level of participation in SLT. The deaf members of the company sometimes complained about this approach during my tenure as the Artistic Director. They saw CST as a Deaf theater and felt strongly that more Deaf actors should be hired and cast in the primary roles of our productions.

Despite these artistic risks and cultural challenges, the production was a rewarding experience for the theater and the audiences who had the opportunity to see the play. The

use of masks and addition of *commedia del' arte* techniques forced development of a strong, clear and meaningful translation and enhanced the already visual and physical nature of SLT.

Video Segment #1: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 1-32<sup>53</sup>

[Note: Lines 17-29 deleted by the production]

This scene demonstrated how some of the characters could be deleted without disrupting the play's basic structure. Specific lines were cut to make this work and the basic information needed was retained within the scene. This video segment also showed how both actors worked carefully to clearly sign their lines and used very deliberate and large movements for each sign choice.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Is apprehended for arrival here;	<b>Arrested here</b>
And not being able to buy out his life	<b>Had not paid funds for the tax so</b>
According to the statute of the town,	<b>Following the laws here</b>
Dies ere the weary sun set in the west.	<b>He will die at sunset.</b>

Both actors attempted to end each line clearly with a slight pause. The table above shows the sign gloss ending with sign choices that have embedded pauses in their movement. These signs for “here,” “so,” and “sunset” set up unobtrusive pauses within their signed lines. This helped the voicing actors, who were often off stage changing costumes, to time the delivery of their lines effectively.

The translation is very straightforward, explaining in simple sign phrases the basic ideas and information essential to the audience. This is important because the play was difficult to present because of the amount of information provided in the early scenes.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host,	<b>You go hotel</b> (ns) <b>“Centaur”</b> (Bulls Horns), (directional point)
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.	<b>Wait till I arrive here</b>

This signed translation, delivered by Antipholus of Syracuse, incorporated a description of “bulls horns” along with a pointing indicator to help inform the audience of the specific stage exit that represented the departure for the hotel. This helped the audience associate where the actors were coming from and going to during the play. *Errors* can be confusing because of the double twin concept introduced by Shakespeare to create the comical turns and twists of the play. It was also critical that information was carefully presented because the actors used masks and could not rely on their facial expressions to aid in the process. Careful attention was made to the delivery of the lines produced in sign language. They made efforts to choose signs that allowed for larger, slower, spatial use that allowed the audience to easily follow each sign choice in the dialog. They supported their sign translations by providing additional emphasis on specific signs or using carefully planned and controlled signs to help the audience comprehend the information contained in important areas of the text. As an additional aid for the audience the actors worked on developing specific physical mannerisms for each of their characters. This helped the audience to quickly identify each character with their entrances and exits, especially each set of twins.

Video Segment #2: Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 7-23

This video segment demonstrated how the actors used additional movement, sight gags, and body language to help clarify the text. In the example below the action consisted of the actor pinching the arm of Dromio at the end of his line. This introduced an element of humor into the scene and also demonstrated Antipholus of Syracuse's frustration up to that point.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
As you love strokes, so jest with me again.	<b>You still love pain more? (Action)</b>

The actors also moved towards specific areas of the stage to physically emphasize certain points of information for the audience's benefit.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
I did not see you since you sent me hence,	<b>I haven't seen you since you gave me gold and I left</b>
Home to the Centaur, with the gold you gave me.	(pointing) (with movement) <b>to Centaur</b>

The pace of the play gradually increased as the actors established each character's specific physical movements. These helped the audience recognize which character was on stage so they could perceive the comical miscommunication between characters.

Video Segment #3: Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 197-205

The actors in this scene were able to physically support a transition from one idea to another seamlessly. The ASL convention of interplay between actors was used to set up a concept for the audience. When Dromio noted, "No, I an ape," he went right into a large, very physical imitation of such an animal. This action was disrupted by a typical

*commedia del' arte* “Punch and Judy” routine when Luciana slapped him on the back of his head. As the actor fell to the floor, she straddled him. This changed the imagery from ape to donkey.

Later, as Dromio asked, “should I know her...?” towards the end of the scene, Luciana’s response included a sign for “mock.” The hand shape she is using allowed the pointing of the index and pinkie fingers back at her face, which reinforced the text line “to put the finger in the eye and weep.” The visual imagery presented through the actor’s sign choice clearly supported the concept expressed in this line of the play.

*Video Segment #4: Act 3, Scene 1, Lines 84-123*

This scene was problematic because of its length and the amount of dialog that needed to be presented to the audience. In a traditional production this would not have been an active nor physical scene to watch because it dealt more with background information that the audience needed to know about the characters. CST approached this scene through the use of the *commedia del' arte* style. The sign choices for Balthazar were deliberately paced so that specific sign movements knocked down Dromio at various intervals within the scene. This used the *commedia del' arte* style effectively because of the character mannerism of the actor portraying Balthazar and also the “Punch and Judy” nature of the physical abuse of Dromio during the scene. It also allowed Larry Nehring, the actor portraying Dromio, to vocally support Balthazar’s signed translation while remaining on stage. The physical business within the scene provided a covert way to include the vocal work of the actor. Dromio’s frequently supine positions limited the actor’s ability to fully expand the diaphragm for vocalization of the lines, yet he pulled



the technique off admirably. The inclusion of the additional actor provided enough sight gags to keep the audience interested in the scene without losing vital information.

<u>Original Text</u>	<u>Sign Gloss</u>
Have patience, sir; O, let it not be so!	<b>Have patience, not now enter</b>
Why at this time the doors are made against you.	<b>Why doors, blocked, right now</b>
And that supposed by the common rout	<b>Finish!</b>
Forever housed where it gets possession	<b>And gossip++++</b>

The scene was timed to enable specific sign choices to support *commedia del' arte* moments that were subtle and humorous enough not to detract from the scene's overall purpose. Just before the first line of Balthazar's speech the actor throws an arm out to halt the movement of Dromio's departure. As Dromio turns he walked right into the other actor's arm and was knocked down. The next three instances use the signs "now," "Finish," and "gossip" all of which contained natural movements that support the accidental collisions with Dromio as he tries to rise from the floor.

The actor who portrayed Antipholus of Ephesus did not know sign language prior to rehearsals. His style, stiff and angular, actually worked to support the specific characterization that he developed within the *commedia del' arte* framework. This was a process that was discovered as I worked with this actor on his translations. I realized that he would not be able to achieve the physical fluidity needed in his signing within the time frame that we had to complete rehearsals. Rather than trying to fix the impossible I worked with him to create a supportive process to his signing style and as a result his signing lent a quality to the character that would not have been present if the actor had been fluent in ASL. This formed a nice contrast to the work provided by the deaf actor in the role of Antipholus of Syracuse. The audience did not know the signing background of

this actor but his signing style influenced how they perceived him. The audience could see the contrast in signing fluidity between the two Antipholus's and note the “comedy of errors” that resulted from the oversight of this obvious contrast in the play. This is what I sometimes call a “happy accident” in the process of directing a theatre production.

Video Segment #5: Act 3, Scene 2, Lines 71-153

This segment represents a scene that was almost cut from the play. In the early process of translation those involved were in despair over how the dialog could be effectively translated. The dialog was especially complex for Dromio of Syracuse as shown below.

Original Text

Sign Gloss

<p>Marry sir, such claim as you would lay to your horse; and she would have me as a beast: not that being a beast, she would have me; but that she being a very beastly creature, lays claim to me.</p>	<p><b>Looks (directional) (at me) me like a horse, go find [Pantomime] See me, (like) animal, me not animal, she is animal who will have me!</b></p>
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From this point until nearly the end of the scene Shakespeare had set up some wonderfully descriptive text that was very funny. Yet, the production struggled with a solution that would help the signing actors incorporate enough meaning into their choices to allow the necessary timing for a successful scene. The sign gloss shows the complexity of the translation due to the physical action necessary for the translation to be clearly presented to the audience.

The sign translation needed a way to describe adequately all the elements that Shakespeare had built into the lines of this scene. The solution came about through an organic process of experimentation by the cast. It was noticed that the physical interplay between the actors seemed to help clarify the translation. This led to the idea of using

Antipholus of Syracuse as a physical globe to compliment Shakespeare's line "round as a globe, I could find countries on her." From this point on the actors developed an effective translation where Dromio of Syracuse fully described all the characteristics of Nell and the countries.

This physical interplay successfully began Dromio's line; "she would have me as a beast...." And continued with constant interaction between the two actors. When, "like a globe," Antipholus was spun, the actor portraying Dromio physically demonstrated all of the physical characteristics that Shakespeare described. For example the line, "I found it out by the bogs," was physically clarified in a humorous manner by pointing at Antipholus's buttocks. Signs were used that implied the physical act of passing gas corresponded to the odiferous "bogs." Working with physical interaction between the actors allowed the theater to present a difficult text with clarity. In traditional theater, the physical actions used are often not as vivid as those offered in a SLT production. For this reason the visual qualities of ASL offered the audience a powerful tool for illumination.

## CONCLUSION

For thirty-five years SLT has survived on the merits of its uniqueness and the novelty of its performances compared to traditional theater. This has diverted attention from what should have been an early question: what textual events occur when a text is performed in two languages simultaneously? To effectively answer this question, SLT needs to overcome several challenges to continue its artistic growth.

The first challenge is the recognition that both languages are radically different and do not naturally function as equal partners in performances. Each language uses a specific rhythm and pace for expression. In such an environment the ability to maintain clarity is continuously at risk unless participants working with both languages fully respect this process.

Success in SLT involves a learning process that not all hearing directors or actors will be willing to undertake within their professional training. Deaf members of an artistic team must also take the time to become fully aware of the linear discourse quality of English, specific speech production requirements, and vocal projection challenges that face hearing actors. Deaf actors need to further develop and refine their translation skills so that they may successfully transform the figurative use of English into clear, comprehensible ASL. It has been observed that SLT's success depends upon the

development of performance skills and sensitivity towards ASL, which hugely impacts the quality of a sign language production. Truly successful SLT requires a high degree of bi-lingual fluency for all production staff.

Furthermore, SLT needs to recognize the visual qualities and unique capabilities of ASL as a language. These function well beyond the realm of mime or pantomime. Each sign that is produced in ASL “is a multidimensional entity whose parameters are produced not linearly, but simultaneously”.<sup>54</sup> Not only is ASL capable of simultaneous representation of meaning, it can also provide visual and physical elements uniquely generated within the actor’s three-dimensional space. Research needs to be completed that demonstrates how ASL can creatively extend the traditional use of movement and gesture in dramatic performances. By expressing ideas using the whole body, as demonstrated in NTD’s *Hamlet*, a poison bottle and the poison itself can visually come to life. At the same time ASL is much more than just an enhanced kinetic awareness. It is capable of utilizing poetic devices such as metaphor, as was demonstrated in *The Tempest*. The audience often perceives these spatial qualities as literal pictures in the air. When the variables of language synchronization and visually poetic expression come together as an organic whole, then it becomes possible to achieve a successfully integrated performance.

Yet another challenge for SLT is to find a means to exist within the monolingual environment of American society. Hearing individuals interested in this art form, who are native users of spoken English, are accustomed to the linear order that English sentences require to semantically convey meaning. To adopt a multi-dimensional form, such as ASL, remains alien and awkward. ASL “does not adhere as stringently to a linear

sequential structure... its distinctive feature lies in its successful mingling of linear sign order and simultaneous expression through the use of spatial and movement dimensions.”<sup>55</sup> In addition to the foreignness of the language, hearing audience members also lack cultural awareness, which prevents them from capturing subtle cultural references in a sign language performance. Yet, American society, on a political level, has chosen to reject bilingualism. This attitude within mainstream society creates a level of tension for SLT and creates another barrier, whether conscious or not, for the successful artistic expansion of SLT.

One final challenge relates to the physical skills used in conjunction with ASL. Most theater programs include various levels of physical training for the stage, yet the skills taught at this level do not necessarily give actors the appropriate physical skills essential for SLT. The grammatical features of ASL require dynamic use of the entire body and especially the face. The use of space and facial expression in ASL extends beyond physical and cultural behavior typically acceptable in the mainstream. This means that hearing actors, in the process of acquiring physical skills associated with ASL, must override prior social inhibitions concerning movement and facial expressions that have been ingrained upon them by parents and society.

These challenges aside, SLT and Deaf culture have struggled valiantly to find a place and a voice within mainstream American culture. In the 1990s SLT began to exhibit the third behavioral pattern of Fanon’s post-colonial theory, where artistic efforts become “battlegrounds” for expression and eventually provide new understandings to both the dominant and oppressed cultures. Upon entrance to this phase, the process of artistic expression is no longer restricted to the act of responding to the former dominant culture:

it shifts to reflect relevant cultural experiences and their significance. Fanon suggests that “it is not alone the success of the struggle which afterward gives validity and vigor to culture; culture is not put into cold storage during the conflict. The struggle itself in its development and in its internal progression sends culture along different paths and traces out entirely new ones for it.”<sup>56</sup> If successfully accomplished this process will eventually awaken Deaf culture to its full potential for artistic and social expression. It is towards this final destination that SLT will hopefully lead Deaf culture: towards potential resolution of its obsession with past experiences and on a journey towards new experiences.

## NOTES

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- <sup>9</sup> Baldwin, 21.
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- <sup>17</sup>Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove Press, 1961) 216.
- <sup>18</sup>Fanon, 217.
- <sup>19</sup>Fanon, 218.
- <sup>20</sup>Fanon, 210.
- <sup>21</sup>Harlan Lane, When The Mind Hears. (New York: Random House, 1984) 387.
- <sup>22</sup>Lane, 393-394.
- <sup>23</sup>Gannon, 364.
- <sup>24</sup>Mark Medoff, "*Children of a Lesser God*" [play] 65.
- <sup>25</sup>Richards, The Washington Post, 30 April, 1995.
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- <sup>27</sup>Fanon, 222.
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- <sup>31</sup>Fanon, 222-223.
- <sup>32</sup>Detmold, Memo to Gil, et al, August 30, 1973.
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- <sup>50</sup>Fanon, 220.

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APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B  
SCENE TRANSLATIONS

Font Legend

**Times Roman Bold**= ASL Gloss of sign choices

Times Roman = Play dialog

*Times Roman Italic* = Lines voiced

Symbol Legend

NS = name sign

# = finger spelled word

neg = negative head motion

underlined text = lines deleted from the production

cl = classifier hand shape

++ = repetitive motion to indicate plurality

directional = pointing to a subject, place or thing indicated

nm = facial expression or body action used to clarify meaning

**Macbeth, Gallaudet University, 1973**

Directed by George Detmold

**Segment 1: Act I, Scene III, Lines 70-78**

MACBETH

**Tell me, explain not enough, tell me more.**

Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more.

*MacBeth wants to know more than they have told him.*

**Because my father's death, I know I am Lord # Glamis**

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;

*Once his father died he became thane of Glamis;*

**But how am I Lord of Cawdor? Cawdor lives**

But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,

*But how can he be thane of Cawdor while thane of Cawdors still alive.*

**and good--To become King?**

A prosperous gentleman; and to be king

*As for becoming King,*

**I can't believe that, I can't believe that**

Stands not within the prospect of belief,

*He can't believe that any more than he can believe*

**To become Lord Cawdor, Where get that information**

No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence

You owe this strange intelligence? or why

*Being thane of Cawdor! Where do they get their information?*

**You stop me here, this country**

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way

*Why do they stop him here on the heath*

**With your strange Prophecy about the future...**

With such prophetic greeting?

*With these prophetic greetings. Stay he tells them—I charge you.*

**Segment 2: Act 1, Scene 3, Lines 135-139**

MACBETH

**Why, Why I have that awful picture**

If good, why do I yield to that suggestion

*Why do I have this terrifying picture*

**In my mind**

Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair

*In my mind*

**And that makes my heart pound**

And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

*That makes my heart beat fast, faster*

**Nothing in real life as bad as I envision**

Against the use of nature? Present fears

*Nothing in the real world he thinks could be as awful*

**Those picture scare me**

Are less than horrible imaginings:

*As his imaginings. He is frightened*

**Not know what I do.**

My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical.

*And doesn't know what to do.*

**Segment 3: Act 1, Scene 4, Lines 48-53**

MACBETH

**----of #Cumberland, that next**

The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step  
*Prince of Cumberland...that is a step*

**I must leap ahead, then fall back, back**

On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,  
*I must jump over or else fall down*

**Because that blocks me. Stars! (cl) There around, Finish!**

For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;  
*Because he blocks my way.*

**Me want no light see my black desires**

Let not light see my black and deep desires.  
*Stars..go out, I want no light to see my black desires.*

**My eyes must not see hands, let everything happen**

The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,  
*My eyes must not see my hands, but let everything happen*

**That my eyes fear to see.**

Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.  
*That my eyes are afraid to see.*

**Segment 4: Act 1, Scene 5, Lines 13-18**

LADY MACBETH

**You Lord #Glamis, and Lord #Cawdor and will become**

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be

**What 3 witches promised you, still I fear for your character**

What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;

**I know you are a kind man**

It is too full o' the milk of human kindness

**You want to seek your goal. You want to become famous.**

To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;

**You have ambition but you do not have**  
Art not without ambition, but without

**Bad in your character; you must proceed with ambition**  
**You want to achieve status**  
The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,

**Segment 5: Act 3, Scene 4, Lines 89-92**

MACBETH

**I drink—general—joy for all of you.**  
*Fill full*, I drink to the general joy o' the whole table, [Voice is up, unsure]

**And to him I drink <sup>(ns)</sup> Banquo, I truly miss**  
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;

**I wish <sup>(ns)</sup> Banquo here. To all Drink!**  
Would he were here! To all, and him, we thirst, and all to all.  
Would he were here. [*Voice ends without exclamation*]

**A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1981**

Directed by Tim McCarthy & Eric Malzkuhn

**Segment 1: Act 1, Scene 1, Athens, Lines 226-251**

HELENA

**How happy some people are!**

How happy some o'er other some can be!

**All (ns) Athens thinks beautiful she**

Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.

**So (ns) Demetrius thinks truly not**

But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;

**All know, wonderful**

He will not know what all but he do know:

And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,

**Good action things**

So I, admiring of his qualities.

**Bad sinful, hard to keep limited**

Things base and vile, holding no quantity,

Love can transpose to form and dignity:

**Love look with (neg) eyes but with mind**

Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,

**That's why Cupid's arrow-picture always choose blind love**

And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind:

**Because no judgement**

Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;

**Wings, no eyes mean careless hurry**

Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste.

**So love often compared with a child**

And therefore is Love said to be a child,



**Because choices often fascinate, lead off the point**  
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.

**Like a boy while games playing—talk, make up things**  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
**So boy lover lies, lies, lies**  
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere.

**Come before (ns) Demetrius look (ns) Hermia's eyes**  
For ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyne,

**Self promise +++ self really mine**  
He hailed down oaths that he was only mine;

**When that promise warm from (ns) Hermia feeling**  
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,

**He weakens, promises melt away**  
So he dissolved, and show'rs of oaths did melt.

**Lovely (ns) Hermia's escape**  
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.

**To forest go, tonight**  
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night

**Choose handsome (ns) Hermia, myself feel lucky**  
Pursue her; and for this intelligence

**If (ns) Demetrius inform me "thanks"**  
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense.

**But my heart increases craving**  
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,

**I hope look+ and then look++ me again.**  
To have his sight thither and back again.

**Segment 2: Act 3, Scene 1 Lines 35-39**

BOTTOM

**Ladies or Beautiful ladies**

'Ladies,'--or 'Fair-ladies—

**I wish you,**

**I ask you**

I would wish You,'--or 'I would request you,

'--or 'I would entreat you,

**not fear      not tremble**

--not to fear, not to tremble.

**My life exchange for yours**

My life for yours.

**If you think I come here as a lion**

If you think I come hither as a lion,

**To pity my life, No!**

It were pity of my life: no

**I'm no animal**

I am no such thing.

**I am a man same other men.**

I am a man as other men are.

**Segment 3: Act 3, Scene 1, Lines 93-106**

BOTTOM

**I am beautiful** *(ns)* **T (Thisby), I will become hers'**  
If I were fair, Thisby, I were only thine.

QUINCE

**Always revenge, we always spirits**  
O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted.

**Pray friends, here, Pray friends, Help!**  
Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!

*Exeunt QUINCE, SNUG, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING*

BOTTOM

**Why run away?**  
Why do they run away?

**They try to make me afraid**  
This is a knavery of them to make me afeard.

*Re-enter SNOUT*

SNOUT

*(ns)* **B (Bottom) You look changed, what I see!**  
O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

*Exit SNOUT*

BOTTOM

**What you see? See dumb (point to head) yourself, #ass.**  
What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you?

**Segment 4: Act 4, Scene 1, Lines 199-216**

BOTTOM

**When my time comes, call me I answer**

When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer.

**My next “most beautiful (ns) P (Pyramus)”**

My next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.'

**----- (ns) P (Peter Quince)? (ns) F (Flute the bellows mender)?**

Hey-ho! Peter Quince? Flute the bellows-mender?

**(ns) S (Snout the tinker)? --- My God! All left me here sound asleep.**

Snout, the tinker? Starveling? God's my life! Stol'n hence, and left me asleep?

**I have most beautiful dream.**

I have had a most rare vision.

**Have dream more than any man can say what my dream.**

I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was.

**Man, stupid #a-s-s try to explain that dream**

Man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream.

**I thought become—no man could know what me thought**

Methought I was—there is no man can tell what.

**I really become, really become [Mime action]**

Methought I was,--and methought I had.

**But man is dumb if he tries to explain**

But man is but a patched fool,

**What I think I became**

If he will offer to say what methought I had.

**Mouth can't hear, ear can't see,**

The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen,

**Hands can't taste, understand heart reply**

Man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report,

**What my dream like.**

what my dream was.

**I will ask (ns) P (Peter Quince) to write about my dream.**  
I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream.

**“Bottom’s Dream,” why? Because it has no end.**  
It shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom.

**No bottom, ah! I’ll do that in play before the (ns) D (Duke)**  
and I will sing it in the latter end of our play, before the duke.

**To make it more important, at the Queen’s death!**  
peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

## **Romeo and Juliet, 1979**

Directed by Talley, Adapted by P. Gibson Ralph

### **Segment 1: Prologue, Lines 1-14**

NARRATOR

#### **Two families, alike very polite**

Two households, both alike in dignity

#### **(ns) Verona here, fight before, now fight again.**

In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,

#### **People blood, that people's hands dirty**

Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

#### **Opposing enemies, group++**

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes

From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,

#### **Two lovers.**

A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;

#### **Finish, this morning their awkward pitiful behavior**

Whose misadventured piteous overthrows

#### **Their death ends parents struggle**

Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.

#### **The awful happening of their love**

The fearful passage of their death-marked love,

#### **And continuous #of their "P" [mother/father] rage**

And the continuance of their parents' rage,

#### **That [5-claw] only their death remove.**

Which, but their children's end, nought could remove

*That nought, but their children's end, could remove,*

#### **Now hour play here**

Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;

**All of you carefully watch, (neg) understand**  
The which if you with patient ears attend,

**I try make clear.**  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

**Segment 2: Act 1, Scene 2, (Lines 20-33)**

CAPULET

**Tonight, give old traditional party**

This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,

**Many++ people are invited**

Whereto I have invited many a guest,

Such as I love; and you, among the store,

One more, most welcome, makes my number more.

While here, at my poor house look to behold this night

*Whereto I have invited many a guest, Such as I love*

*While here, at my house look to behold this night*

**You come to house and see beautiful girls**

*Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:*

Such comfort as do lusty young men feel

When well-apparell'd April on the heel

Of limping winter treads, even such delight

**Look, inspect carefully**

Among fresh female buds shall you this night

*While here at my house; hear all, and all see,*

**Choose best compare, Juliet with other girls**

And like her most whose merit most shall be:

**Maybe you will like them better**

Which on more view, of And more of you are many, mine being one

May also stand in number, though in reckoning none,

Come, go with me.

**Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 34-44**

CAPULET

*To Servant, giving a paper*

(ns) **Peter**

*Peter!* Go, sirrah, trudge about

**Go into the town and look for the people on the list**

Through fair Verona; find those persons out



**Tell them are invited to the house**  
Whose names are written there, and to them say,  
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

*Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS*

SERVANT

**Find the people on the list, I read can't!**  
Find them out whose names are written here!  
*I can't read, tis a meager hand,*

**Writing terrible, writing dirty.**  
It is written, that the shoemaker should meddle with his  
yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil,  
*a most peculiar hand, a wise*

**Philosopher's can't! No+++**  
and the painter with his nets;  
*man could not make head or tail of it.*

**Hee, hee maybe that's a donkey's ass**  
but I am sent to find those persons whose names are here  
writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ.  
*See you this mark here, could easily be the tail hanging off an ass's back.*

**No, Capulet's dad typed it. If I don't leave he whip my ass. Hurry must!**  
I must to the learned.--In good time.  
*So there will I hie my tail and hie my tail or lose my tail.*

**Segment 3: Act 1, Scene 3, (Lines 11-99)**

NURSE

**I know exactly how old you are.**

Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

*Faith I know it unto the hour.*

LADY CAPULET

She's not fourteen.

NURSE

I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,--

And yet, to my teeth be it spoken, I have but four--

She is not fourteen. How long is it now

To Lammas-tide?

LADY CAPULET

A fortnight and odd days.

NURSE

Even or odd, of all days in the year,

Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.

Susan and she--God rest all Christian souls!--

Were of an age: well, Susan is with God;

She was too good for me: but, as I said,

**You will be 16 in two weeks. I remember your birthday well.**

On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen

*On Lammas-eve at night shall she be sixteen.*

That shall she, marry; I remember it well.

*That shall she, marry; I knew it well.*

'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;

And she was wean'd,--I never shall forget it,--

Of all the days of the year, upon that day:

For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,

Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall;

My lord and you were then at Mantua:--

Nay, I do bear a brain:--but, as I said,

When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple

Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,

To see it tetchy and fall out with the dug!

Shake quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,

To bid me trudge:

And since that time it is eleven years;  
For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,  
She could have run and waddled all about;  
For even the day before, she broke her brow;  
And then my husband--God be with his soul!  
A' was a merry man--took up the child:  
'Yea,' quoth he, 'dost thou fall upon thy face?  
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit;  
Wilt thou not, Jule?' and, by my holidame,  
The pretty wretch left crying and said 'Ay.'  
To see, now, how a jest shall come about!  
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,  
I never should forget it: 'Wilt thou not, Jule?' quoth he;  
And, pretty fool, it stinted and said 'Ay.'

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

NURSE

Yes, madam: yet I cannot choose but laugh,  
To think it should leave crying and say 'Ay.'  
And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow  
A bump as big as a young cockerel's stone;  
A parlous knock; and it cried bitterly:  
'Yea,' quoth my husband, 'fall'st upon thy face?  
Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age;  
Wilt thou not, Jule?' it stinted and said 'Ay.'

JULIET

And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

NURSE

Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!  
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed:  
An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.

LADY CAPULET

**Marriage is the thing we want to talk about**

Marry, that 'marry' is the very theme I came to talk of.

**How do you feel about getting married?**

Tell me, daughter Juliet, How stands your disposition to be married?

JULIET

**It's the honor I've not yet thought about.**

It is an honour that I dream not of.

NURSE

**Honor? If you want to brag say you got wisdom from me.**

An honour! were not I thine only nurse, I would say thou  
hadst suck'd wisdom from my teat.  
*hadst suck'd wisdom from my teat.*

LADY CAPULET

**Stop, Talk about marriage, important finer girls younger than you**

Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,

**Already married, have children**

Here in Verona, ladies of esteem, are made already mothers.

**When I your #a-g-e, you already born**

By my count, I was your mother much upon these years  
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief:

**(plus) (ns) Paris wants to marry you.**

The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

NURSE

**Wow, handsome man, more perfect than a statue, heart throbs.**

A man, young lady! Lady, such a man as all the world--why, he's a man of wax.

LADY CAPULET

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

NURSE

Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

LADY CAPULET

**What's your answer, Do you love (ns) Paris?**

What say you? Can you love the gentleman?  
*What say you? Can you like of his love?*

**Tonight you see him come to our party**

This night you shall behold him at our feast;  
*This evening you shall behold him at our feast;*

**Read his face like a book**

Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,

And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;  
Examine every married lineament,  
And see how one another lends content

**If you cannot read his face**

And what obscured in this fair volume lies

**Read his eyes**

Find written in the margent of his eyes.  
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,  
To beautify him, only lacks a cover:  
The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride  
For fair without the fair within to hide:  
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,  
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;

**You have everything that's his**

So shall you share all that he doth possess,

**Give him yourself, you lose nothing.**

By having him, making yourself no less.

NURSE

**Less! (Action) Bigger men sleep together, women pregnant (woe!)**

No less! nay, bigger; women grow by men.

LADY CAPULET

**Answer! You love (ns) Paris?**

Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

*Speak briefly, can you like of his love?*

JULIET

**Look+++, limit view, touch nothing!**

I'll look to like, if looking liking move:

But no more deep will I endart mine eye

Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

**Segment 4: Act 1, Scene 5, Lines 103-110**

ROMEO

**Let kiss thy hand**

O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;

**Answer my prayer**

They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

*Pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.*

JULIET

**Innocent prayer should have same innocent answer.**

Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

ROMEO

**Then accept my innocent answer.**

Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.

**Now look without sin.**

Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purged.

*Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged.*

JULIET

**Now my lips are no longer innocent.**

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO

**Receive sin from my lips?**

Sin from thy lips?

*Sin from my lips?*

**Sin encourages innocence. I better take again.**

O trespass sweetly urged! Give me my sin again.

JULIET

**You kiss like you've studied a book on love.**

You kiss by the book.

**Segment 5: Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 33-36**

JULIET

**#Romeo, #Romeo! Why your (ns) Romeo?**

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

**Give up your father, give up your name.**

Deny thy father and refuse thy name.

**If you can't then name yourself my lover.**

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

**And I will give up my name #Capulet (ns) Capulet**

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

**Segment 6: Act 3, Scene 2, Lines 1-31**

JULIET

**Gallop thy Sun, Gallop from your home**

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,  
Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner

**Quick whip west**

As Phaethon would whip you to the west,

**Pull the night, fast-fast!**

And bring in cloudy night immediately.

**Sun say yes, go.**

Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,  
That runaway's eyes may wink and Romeo

**(ns) Romeo come to these arms not yet used or seen.**

Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.

Lovers can see to do their amorous rites  
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,  
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,  
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,  
And learn me how to lose a winning match,  
Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:  
Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,  
With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,  
Think true love acted simple modesty.

**Come tonight, come (ns) Romeo Come day, pull night.**

Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;

**For you (ns) Romeo lie \_\_\_\_\_ night**

For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night

**Whiter than snow on black bird.**

Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.

**Come night, come night love**

Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,

**Give me (ns) Romeo and if (ns) Romeo will die,**

Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,



**Bring, chop (in hand), throw to stars,**  
Take him and cut him out in little stars,

**And (ns) Romeo will make all the sky so beautiful**  
And he will make the face of heaven so fine

**That all the world will fall in love with night**  
That all the world will be in love with night

**Don't care for the sun, done!**  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

**Finish!, I got love not yet touched.**  
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,

**Even though attracted,**  
But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,

**Not yet enjoyed, boring day!**  
Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day

**Before festival**  
As is the night before some festival

**Children restless, finish get new clothes**  
To an impatient child that hath new robes

**But cannot wear them.**  
And may not wear them.

**Segment 7: Act 4, Scene 1, (Lines 68-124)**

FRIAR LAURENCE

Hold, daughter: I do spy a kind of hope,  
Which craves as desperate an execution.  
As that is desperate which we would prevent.

**Can act what I show,**

If, rather than to marry County Paris,  
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,

**Can copy look like death**

Then is it likely thou wilt undertake  
A thing like death to chide away this shame,

**Escape death**

That copest with death himself to scape from it.

**I show you how.**

And, if thou darest, I'll give thee remedy.

JULIET

**If you tell me #about death,**

**I will die in exchange of marry (ns) Paris.**

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris, *I'll do it.*

From off the battlements of yonder tower;  
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk  
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;  
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,  
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,  
With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;  
Or bid me go into a new-made grave  
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;  
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble;  
And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

FRIAR LAURENCE

**Go home, act happy, announce you will marry (ns) Paris.**

Hold, then; go home, be merry, give consent to marry Paris.

**Tomorrow Wednesday, in your room alone**

Wednesday is to-morrow.

**Tomorrow night**

To-morrow night look that thou lie alone;  
*Tomorrow night see that thou lie alone;*  
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber.

**[Action of drinking the vial]**

Take thou this vial, being then in bed,  
And this distilled liquor drink thou off;  
When presently through all thy veins shall run

**Cold, wet.**

A cold and drowsy humour, for no pulse  
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease.

**No breathing.**

No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest;

**Lips white, Pale, look dead.**

The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall,  
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;  
Each part, deprived of supple government,  
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:  
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death

**For 42 hours,**

Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,

**While you sleep I will send a letter to <sup>(ns)</sup> Romeo**

Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift, and hither shall he come.

**Tell him what 2-of-us do.**

Order him to come, and

**2-of-us watch you wake up.**

*And* He and I Will watch thy waking,

**then take you out of town, <sup>(ns)</sup> Mantua.**

and that very night shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.

## **Segment 1: My Third Eye**

**[Female Voice]**

**Attention! Welcome to our most, best, strangest travel show in the universe!**  
Welcome! Step right up! Welcome to the strangest traveling show in the universe!

**For the first time in this city, for your pleasure, amazement and fascination!**  
Here for the first time in this city, bringing for your enjoyment, interest and astonishment.

**Many frustrating things have happened here.**  
In spite of many difficult and frustrating adventures.

**Here tonight many strange and special people from the world called ABABA.**  
Here, here tonight the strange and special people from the world of ABABA.

[Sound}

**You will see strange behavior.**  
You will see these strange people perform.

**Also, we will show you other strange things we see in the world.**  
Also, also to show you the strange many other things we saw in that world.

**We have here the most skilled actors in the whole country.**  
We have here the most skilled actors in the entire country.

**Here is an example.**  
Here is the exhibit.

**See yourself.**  
See for yourself.

**Body and figures are the same.**  
Body shapes are the same.

**Arms, legs, face are the same.**  
Limbs are the same.

**Their behavior, Ah! Different.**  
Their behavior, Ah!, different.

**You and I use our eyes.**  
You and I use our eyes.

[Eyes Action]

**Their eyes are blank and weak.**

Hers are blank, weak.

**You and I use our facial expressions.**

You and I use our faces.

[Facial actions]

**Their faces are frozen except for their mouths.**

Hers is frozen except around the mouth.

**That moves constantly through their actions.**

You will notice the mouths will continue to move throughout this performance.

**Their hands are soft and useless, why, they are not [foot stomps] used for communication.**

Hands are limp, soft and not used much. Why? They are not used for communication!

**Their mouths moves, moves.**

Their mouths moves.

**Their throats bob up and down.**

Throats trembles.

**Their tongues dart out.**

Tongues wags.

**Their breath blows out.**

Air is emitted.

**Their heads move from side to side.**

Heads cock.

**We see, see. Find out these people.**

We saw and found that these people

**Make signs with their mouths.**

Make signs with their mouths!

**Sign [hands] (neg) Mouth-sign (nod)**

Let our actors show you.

[Demonstration]

**[Male Voices takes over]**

**That's not all, it seems that they see, see, see, without strings, no electric lines.**  
And that's not all, it seems they see with their ears. Watch! No electric wires.

[Clap,clap]

**We see many times, but for a watch? Look-at-watch.**  
We saw that many times, they look at their watches.

**See, No!, See with their ears.**  
With their ears!

[Show]

**They see ear to ear.**  
They don't have to face each other to sign.

[Show]

**For secrets they get very close.**  
They sign their secrets very close.

[Show]

**Sometimes their mouth signs are very big when they stand far apart.**  
And they sign bigger when they're far apart.

[Show]

**It's true, it seems that their ears are very sensitive and catch, catch, catch sounds.**  
Truly it seems their ears are very sensitive and quick!

**When they do not want to see they will cover up their ears.**  
And when they don't want to see they put their hands over their ears! Watch!

[Show]

**It is possible for them to learn simple phrases in sign language.**  
But they are capable of learning simple language.

[Show]

**And now we bring here to show you many strange things from the world of ABABA.**  
And now we show strange machines brought back from the world of ABABA.

[Show sight gags]

**You and me know this one.**

[Not voiced]

[Alarm]

## Segment 1: Ophelia

OPHELIA

**Shakespeare, his line said** (quote) **#Weeping Brook**

The poet said, “weeping brook”.

**not mean girl, herself, crying, no! Water-river, it cries.**

The maiden wasn't weeping; the brook weeps.

**Girl fell, (into water) water splashes, down (on her face) like tears.**

The water splashes up and streams down like tears.

FIRST PLAYER

**That sad, me think**

Tis sad, methinks

PLAYER

**Sad, why?**

Why sad?

FIRST PLAYER

**You dumb, girl drown there.**

Dolt! The maid drowned there.

PLAYER KING

**Here have** (quote) **#willow: that means crying tree.** (action)

There is a willow: a weeping tree, mirrored in the brook.

FIRST PLAYER

**Me sign different, me would say** (cl) **[girl float down stream feet first]**

I'd have done it differently. She drifts downstream...feet first

**No: Head first then spin,** (action-pulled--directional) **under water**

NO: head first. She spins a little, then she's pulled under...

PLAYER

**(cl) [dead upside down]**

And croaks

PLAYER-KING

**Next time drown girl your way. Agree speak—sign match**

Then next time drown her your way. Suit the action to the word,

**Sign-speak match mirror-mirror** ( action-reverse them).

The word to the action; hold the mirror up to nature.



## Segment 2: Ophelia

POLONIUS

**Her affection grows passionately (action) become crazy must reduce-restrain.**

This dance of her affections doth jig on too madly; 'twere best retard it.

**Body Me trust her not, something about her eyes, cheeks, lips,**

**-spirit, hot...young...breaths deep**

I trust her not; there's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip; her wanton spirits look out at every joint and motion of her body.

**My daughter will become queen**

This daughter of mine may yet be queen; but

**Not only if she hurrys, open chaste treasure (action)**

not if she o'erhastily open her chaste treasure.

**Know what happens next? She (action) born, born, # hamle[ts]-**(Holds "ts" and places it into arms to signify a baby's head and sighs)

Next thing you know the court will swarm with little Hamlets.

**My daughter becomes queen, she will do anything she wants but now she follows my orders.**

Once she's queen, let Ophelia do as she likes. Until then, she'll do as I tell her.

### **Segment 3: Ophelia**

PLAYER-KING

**Now the world cracks opens**

Now o'er the one half world, nature seems dead

**People die, die, die, bad dreams fade**

**Sun sets, curtains close, people sleep**

And wicked dreams abuse the curtained sleep

(cl) [nose] **Witch (cackles) (wrings hands), disappears, murderers appear, {cloak up skeleton}**

Witchcraft celebrates, and withered murder,

**Look, the wolf howls (ACTION)**

Alarmed by his sentinel the wolf, loose, howls his watch.

**Approaches us a ghost.**

With stealthy pace towards his design moves like a ghost.

#### Segment 4: Ophelia

PLAYER-KING

**Terrible. Here how how you smell poison...**

Awful. Here's how you smell poison....

FIRST PLAYER

**Or yourself become poison bottle [Action]**

Why not become the poison bottle...

PLAYER-KING

**Poison itself [Action]**

Or become the poison itself

PLAYERS

**[Action]**

And croak the gentleman

**The Tempest, 1993**

Scene Directed by Peter Novak for MA thesis  
Loyola University-Chicago

**Segment 1: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 319-320**

PROSPERO

**True you slave, who?... that?... what? That your mother-** (cl-shape) **witch** (lips lick-lusty leer) **spread her legs wide to the devil** (action)

Thou poisonous slave,

**The devil-father saw, lusted, rushed to her, two-together fornicated** (lustily) (till exhausted-shoulder shift)

got by the devil himself

(leg shape shift) **Pregnant,** (action) **hard birth, born, a baby, baby? That you!**

Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!

*Enter CALIBAN*

**Segment 2: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 321-324**

CALIBAN

**My mother, witch spied a black bird, grasped it**

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd

**Plucked a feather, (action) dipped it in water [ NM-Unwholesome]**

With raven's feather from unwholesome fen

**(Action) Sling on your body! (Action) Whistle-me, call the wind to surround me,**

**(directional) blow back on you**

Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye

**(Action) Sores (cl) (appear) all over your face and body.**

And blister you all o'er!

**Segment 3: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 332-340**

CALIBAN

**Here island mine! My mother-witch ruled—then gave-to-me. You stole from me!**  
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, Which thou takest from me.

**Happen what? Your boat arrive,** (directional) **we see each other face to face**  
When thou camest first,

(Action) **You pet me, paid attention to me**  
Thou strokedst me and madest much of me,

(directional) (You) **Gave water,** (Action) (I) **taste fruit**  
Wouldst give me Water with berries in't,

**Next, next, next** (directional) (You) **teaches me.**  
and teach me how

**Sunrise, name what,** (directional) (You) **fingerspell...**  
(I) **“oic”** (oh I see, understand)  
To name the bigger light,

(Simultaneous action) **Sunset dark, moon rises,** (directional) (I) **ask what? (You) #**  
**m-o-o-n**  
and now the less, That burn by day and night.

**Inspired, me loved you, I admit.**  
And then I loved thee.

**Lousy salt-water, Blah! Me know better water** (directional) **over there.**  
And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,

**Green, grow—rocks lousy—I know best! –grow** (directional) **there! Show, show, show.**  
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile.

**Realize me stupid that I did show you!**  
Cursed be I that did so!

(Reference set-up) **Me, mother-witch**  
**Wish she collect frogs, bugs, bats,**  
All the charms Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats,

**Swill-mix,** (directional) **Throw on you!**  
light on you!

**Segment 4: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 363-365**

CALIBAN

**Your language, give, learn, for-for**

You taught me language; and my profit on't

**Can sign dirty curses**

Is, I know how to curse.

**I wish you (c) drop dead**

The red plague rid you

**For giving me your language!**

For learning me your language!

## **The Digestible Comedy of Errors, 1997**

Directed by Aaron B. Weir and Neil Thackaberry, based on Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*

### **Segment 1: Act 1, SCENE II. The Mart. (Lines 1-32) [Lines 17-28 deleted]**

*Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse, DROMIO of Syracuse, and First Merchant*

FIRST MERCHANT [Changed to Antipholus of Syracuse]  
Therefore give out you are of Epidamnum,

**...from home #SY (Syracuse) government**  
Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate.

**Will take my things (baggage) because seller himself same home**  
This very day a Syracusian merchant

**Arrested here**  
Is apprehended for arrival here;

**Had not paid funds for the tax so**  
And not being able to buy out his life

**Following the laws here**  
According to the statute of the town,

**He will die at sunset.**  
Dies ere the weary sun set in the west.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE [Changed to Dromio from Merchant]  
**All of this time, here is money I held for you.**  
There is your money that I had to keep.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE  
**You go hotel** (ns) **“Centaur”** (Bulls Horns),  
Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host,

**Wait till I arrive here**  
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.

**½ hour is dinner time**  
Within this hour it will be dinner-time:



**I will go++ look at the town,**  
Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,

**Different stores**  
Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,

**After dinner I will sleep because I (am) tired,**  
And then return and sleep within mine inn,

**Stiff from travel.**  
For with long travel I am stiff and weary.

**Goodbye.**  
Get thee away.

**Till later I look about.** (Action)  
Farewell till then: I will go lose myself  
And wander up and down to view the city.

FIRST MERCHANT [Changed to Dromio of Syracuse]  
**Enjoy yourself.**  
Sir, I commend you to your own content.

**Segment 2: Act 2, Scene 2, (Lines 7-23) A public place.**

*Enter Dromio of Syracuse*

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**What's up? You finished mocking people?**

How now sir? Is your merry humour alter'd?

**You still love pain more? (Action)**

As you love strokes, so jest with me again.

**You don't know (ns) hotel? You deny receiving gold?**

You know no Centaur? You received no gold?

**You tell me this woman invite me to her home for dinner?**

Your mistress sent to have me home to dinner?

**You're mad!**

My house was at the Phoenix? Wast thou mad,

**Your answers...off the point!**

That thus so madly thou didst answer me?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**What answer? When did I speak?**

What answer, sir? When spake I such a word?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Recently here, less ½ hour**

Even now, even here, not half an hour since.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I haven't seen you since you gave me gold and I left**

I did not see you since you sent me hence,

**(pointing) to Centaur**

Home to the Centaur, with the gold you gave me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Liar! You deny receiving the gold,**

Villain, thou didst deny the gold's receipt,

**(You) (directional) Inform me about the woman and dinner,**

And told'st me of a mistress and a dinner;

**You make it up; I hope you feel my non-pleasure.**  
For which, I hope, thou felt'st I was displeased.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I glad see you are happy, tease+++**  
I am glad to see you in this merry vein:

**Tease means what? You inform me.**  
What means this jest? I pray you, master, tell me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**You nod, smile, mock my face**  
Yea, dost thou jeer and flout me in the teeth?

**Think me tease? Look...** [Action]  
Think'st thou I jest? Hold, take thou that, and that.

*Beating him*

**Segment 3: Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 197-205**

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**You look, "That"**  
Thou hast thine own form.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Now after, I am monkey.**  
No, I am an ape.

ADRIANA

**Monkey? Doubt it, you become donkey.** [Action]  
If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**True, true, you ride me. Me eat...eat.** [Action]  
'Tis true; she rides me and I long for grass.

**I no choice, I am donkey.**  
'Tis so, I am an ass; else it could never be

**Me must know you, you know me, and do I know you?**  
But I should know her as well as she knows me.

ADRIANA

**Finish++ I, not a fool,**  
Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,

**I not weep**  
To put the finger in the eye and weep,

**While (directional) you-two mock me**  
Whilst man and master laugh my woes to scorn.

**Come, [Action]**  
Come, sir, to dinner.

**Segment 4: Act 3, Scene 1, (Lines 84-123)**

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

**Go; get me a bar, [action of prying]**  
Go get thee gone; fetch me an iron crow.

BALTHAZAR

**Have patience, not now enter**  
Have patience, sir; O, let it not be so!

**If that happen you ruin your good name**  
Herein you war against your reputation  
And draw within the compass of suspect  
The unviolated honour of your wife.

**All along you already know her experience, her wisdom,**  
Once this, --your long experience of her wisdom,

**Honesty and humble nature**  
Her sober virtue, years and modesty,

**And believe she must have good reason for doing**  
Plead on her part some cause to you unknown:

**That later will explain**  
And doubt not, sir, but she will well excuse

**Why doors, blocked, right now**  
Why at this time the doors are made against you.

**Take my advice, quietly** (directional) **we-two**  
Be ruled by me: depart in patience,

**To (Tiger+hotel) for dinner**  
And let us to the Tiger all to dinner,

**Tonight alone you come**  
And about evening come yourself alone  
**Find why door blocked**  
To know the reason of this strange restraint.

**Now people gather, you try** (action) **enter-there.**  
If by strong hand you offer to break in

**People will look**  
Now in the stirring passage of the day,

**Your honor, good name will decline**  
A vulgar comment will be made of it,

**Finish!**  
And that supposed by the common rout

**Worse++++**  
Against your yet ungalled estimation  
That may with foul intrusion enter in

**You die, continuously**  
and dwell upon your grave when you are dead;

**Gossip hides**  
For slander lives upon succession,

**And gossip++++**  
Forever housed where it gets possession.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS  
**Accept me, Will leave even though I “Steam”**  
You have prevailed: I will depart in quiet,

**I go, enjoy++**  
And, in despite of mirth, mean to be merry.

**Woman**  
I know a wench of excellent discourse,

**Pretty, smart, wild and kind**

Pretty and witty; wild, and yet, too, gentle:

**There I eat, that woman**

There will we dine. This woman that I mean,

**My wife (not-like) that woman**

My wife--but, I protest, without desert—

**My wife pick+++ again.**

Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal:

**(directional) Two-of-us eat**

To her will we to dinner.

[Angelo character deleted from this scene]

**Go,**

Get you home

**You bring necklace**

And fetch the chain; by this I know 'tis made:

**Bring, (directional) (to Porpentine)**

Bring it, I pray you, to the Porpentine;

**(directional) Give-it-to, that woman**

For there's the house: that chain will I bestow—

**Spite, my wife**

Be it for nothing but to spite my wife—

**Finish!**

Upon mine hostess there: good sir, make haste.

**Decide, go, hurry.**

Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,  
I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me.

**BALTHZAR**

**1 hour-- will meet you there.**

I'll meet you at that place some hour hence.

**ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS**

**Decided, spite expensive. Block-(directional) there, fine! I go enjoy++++**

Do so. This jest shall cost me some expense.

*Exeunt*

**Segment 5: Act 3, Scene 2, Lines 71-153**

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Stay! Why run about?** [action]

Why, how now, Dromio! where runn'st thou so fast?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[action] **You know me? Me? Your servant?** (ns) **Dromio, me?**

Do you know me, sir? am I Dromio? am I your man? am I myself?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**You** (ns) **Dromio, my servant.**

Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, thou art thyself.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I am an ass, I am a woman's man and besides myself.

ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse

What woman's man? and how besides thyself? besides thyself?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Finish! That woman control me, me upset. Why me upset inside, She will take me!**

Marry, sir, besides myself, I am due to a woman; one that claims me, one that haunts me, one that will have me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Woman takes you?**

What claim lays she to thee?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Looks** (directional) (at me) **me like a horse, go find** [Pantomime] **See me, (like) animal, me not animal, she is animal who will have me!**

Marry sir, such claim as you would lay to your horse; and she would have me as a beast: not that, I being a beast, she would have me; but that she, being a very beastly creature, lays claim to me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Who...woman?**

What is she?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Understand she** (point) **honorable, nice body, People won't call her honorable, why me luck none, fat marriage** (nods).

A very reverent body; ay, such a one as a man may not speak of without he say 'Sir-reverence.' I have but lean luck in the match, and yet is she a wondrous fat marriage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Fat marriage?**

How dost thou mean a fat marriage?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Understand she cooks, grease** (cl-descriptive) (all over her body). **Finish! Me do, ah! Idea,** (action) **set match to her, she burns, see bright, winter-months 1,2,3—warm. The world continues round to finish and end, she burns++++** (on).

Marry, sir, she's the kitchen wench and all grease; and I know not what use to put her to but to make a lamp of her and run from her by her own light. I warrant, her rags and the tallow in them will burn a Poland winter: if she lives till doomsday, she'll burn a week longer than the whole world.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Face looks like?**

What complexion is she of?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Face like** (point) **shoe, but** (point) **shoe cleaner than** (directional) **she. Her face, why! sweat+++** (continuously) , **till water rises high** (to eye level).

Swart, like my shoe, but her face nothing half so clean kept: for why, she sweats; a man may go over shoes in the grime of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**That's nothing! That, water can clean.**

That's a fault that water will mend.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**No, grease fully ingrained, water can't dissolve.**

No, sir, 'tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**What's** (directional) (her) **name?**

What's her name?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE



**#Nell but really #Yard. Feet, 1,2,3—Wide.** [Action]  
Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters, that's  
an ell and three quarters, will not measure her from  
hip to hip.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**3+++?** [Action]

Then she bears some breadth?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**No, tall, round as (cl) globe.** [Action] **I look can find countries** [Action]

No longer from head to foot than from hip to hip:  
she is spherical, like a globe; I could find out  
countries in her.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Ireland, where?**

In what part of her body stands Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look, find** [Action] **Point** [Action] **Phew!**

Marry, in her buttocks: I found it out by the bogs.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Scotland, where?**

Where Scotland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look, [Action] hand, White, hard there,** [Action] **Ow!**

I found it by the barrenness; hard in the palm of the hand.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**France, where?**

Where France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look, find** [Action] **Bumps** (on head), (point) **hair, Both at WAR!**

In her forehead; armed and reverted, making war  
against her heir.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**England, where?**

Where England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look, can't find white cliffs, but I think [Point] chin. Why [Action] [Action] War!**

I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no  
whiteness in them; but I guess it stood in her chin,  
by the salt rheum that ran between France and it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Spain, where?**

Where Spain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look, can't find, but feel air pass [Action] (my nose) (hand gesture) Phew!**

Faith, I saw it not; but I felt it hot in her breath.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**America, in all the world?**

Where America, the Indies?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look find, [Action] [Point] nose. Why? It's shiny. Near [Point mouth] Spain. Boats come,  
[pump the nose] fill boats, boats float away.**

Oh, sir, upon her nose all o'er embellished with  
rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich  
aspect to the hot breath of Spain; who sent whole  
armadoes of caracks to be ballast at her nose.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Netherlands, where?**

Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**I look low, (directional-towards lower extremities) nevermind, I finish talking.**

Oh, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude, this

**That cook, or witch? Claims me**

drudge, or diviner, laid claim to me, call'd me

**Knows my name, told me we marry**

Dromio; swore I was assured to her; told me what

**Knows my secret marks [Action on body]**

privy marks I had about me, as, the mark of my  
shoulder, the mole in my neck, the great wart on my  
left arm,

**I shocked, afraid, run from witch**

that I amazed ran from her as a witch:

**Became weak hearted**

And, I think, if my breast had not been made of  
faith and my heart of steel,

**Became dog, she throw me in the kitchen to work++++ (continuously)**

She had transform'd me to a curtal dog and made  
me turn i' the wheel.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

**Go! (directional) To the ship**

Go hie thee presently, post to the road:

**If the wind [Action-index finger] is right**

An if the wind blow any way from shore,

**We don't want to stay the afternoon this town**

I will not harbour in this town to-night:

**You go check if any boats leaving, go to market**

If any bark put forth, come to the mart,

**Inform me**

Where I will walk till thou return to me.

**If people know two-of-us, but we don't want them to know**

If every one knows us and we know none,

**We decided to pack bags and go.**

'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack and be gone.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

**Bear come, [Action] I scare**

As from a bear a man would run for life,

**Same fat woman come, [Action] I scare, run away!**

So fly I from her that would be my wife.

Exit

APPENDIX C

CLEVELAND SIGNSTAGE THEATRE PROMPT BOOK EXAMPLES























APPENDIX D  
GEORGE DETMOLD MEMOS















APPENDIX E

GALLAUDET COLLEGE DRAMATIC CLUB MEMO



APPENDIX F

COMPARISON OF GLOSS TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR *THE TEMPEST*  
BY PETER NOVAK AND AARON WEIR



*The Tempest*

**Segment 4: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 363-365**

Aaron Weir's gloss transcription:

CALIBAN

**Your language, give, learn, for-for**

You taught me language; and my profit on't

**Can sign dirty curses**

Is, I know how to curse.

**I wish you (cl) drop dead**

The red plague rid you

**For giving me your language!**

For learning me your language!

Peter Novak's gloss transcription:

**Segment 1: Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 319-320**

Aaron Weir's gloss transcription:

PROSPERO

**True you slave, who?... that?... what? That your mother- (cl-shape) witch (lips lick-lusty leer) spread her legs wide to the devil (action)**

Thou poisonous slave,

**The devil-father saw, lusted, rushed to her, two-together fornicated (lustily) (till exhausted-shoulder shift)**

got by the devil himself

**(leg shape shift) Pregnant, (action) hard birth, born, a baby, baby? That you!**

Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!

Peter Novak's gloss transcription: