

Title: Report on Participation in the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters Conference in Jeju, Korea (6-9 July 2023)

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Introduction: The World Association for Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) Conference held in Jeju, Korea from 6th to 9th July 2023 was a significant event for me as a first-time participant. This conference provided an invaluable platform for learning, networking, and gaining insights into the challenges faced by sign language interpreters (SLIs) worldwide. This report summarizes my experience, key takeaways, and future aspirations based on my participation in the event.

Key Learnings:

1. **Shared Challenges:** The conference highlighted that SLIs from various countries face similar challenges, with the most common being the lack of professional training and recognition. Many SLIs are perceived as volunteer-based interpreters, which impacts the quality and accessibility of interpretation services for the Deaf community.
2. **Crucial Need for Deaf Interpreters:** A significant emphasis was placed on the necessity of Deaf Interpreters in bridging communication gaps between Deaf individuals and hearing individuals. The conference underscored the importance of collaboration between Deaf and Hearing interpreter teams to enhance the overall interpreting process.
3. **Understanding the Role and Ethics of SLIs:** The conference provided a comprehensive insight into the multifaceted role of SLIs. Discussions emphasized the importance of upholding ethical standards in interpreting, including confidentiality, impartiality, and cultural competence.

Networking and Inspiration: One of the most enriching aspects of the conference was the opportunity to meet and connect with like-minded interpreters from around the world. Interacting with fellow SLIs allowed me to share experiences, exchange ideas, and gather inspiration for my professional journey. The sense of camaraderie and motivation gained from this event has invigorated my commitment to the path I have chosen.

Pre-Workshop: Due to financial constraints, I regretfully could not attend the pre-workshop. However, feedback from other SLIs who participated in the pre-workshop indicated that it

was a highly valuable session. The pre-workshop offered additional learning opportunities and allowed participants to establish meaningful connections with peers. I am keen to attend the pre-workshop at the next WASLI conference to further enhance my skills and experiences.

Future Aspirations: The knowledge and insights gained from the conference have encouraged me to take a more proactive approach to my professional development. Inspired by the importance of collaboration and the role of Deaf Interpreters, I am eager to implement these best practices in my future work as an interpreter. I am determined to uphold the highest ethical standards in my practice and be a proactive advocate for the recognition and professionalization of sign language interpreting in my home country, Vietnam.

In conclusion, my participation in the World Association for Sign Language Interpreters Conference in Jeju, Korea was a transformative experience that has left a lasting impact on my professional journey. The valuable knowledge I acquired from esteemed speakers and fellow SLIs has not only enriched my understanding of the challenges faced by interpreters worldwide but has also deepened my commitment to the Deaf community. I am grateful to National Research Association for Sign Language Interpretation (NRASLI) for your support in enabling my participation in this conference. As an expression of gratitude and commitment to the field, I plan to share the knowledge and insights gained with fellow SLIs in Vietnam. By disseminating the lessons learned, I hope to contribute to the advancement of sign language interpretation in Vietnam and foster a supportive community of like-minded interpreters. Moving forward, I am excited to take on new challenges and continue learning and growing as an interpreter. The connections I made during the conference have inspired me to embrace continuous improvement and stay connected with the global community of SLIs. I look forward to future opportunities to attend WASLI conferences and engage in further professional development activities that will ultimately benefit the Deaf community and enhance the quality of interpreting services in Vietnam. Together, we can work towards a more inclusive and accessible world for all.