

Dr. Debra Russell: Good evening welcome. I would like everyone to take their seat, please, so we can get started for our special presentation.

Thank you for joining us this evening to mark this special event, the 25th year of the Western Canadian Centre of studies in deafness, 25th year of the Peikoff lecture reception. I am glad you could be here to celebrate with us today.

Looking around the room, we have a great mix of people: teachers, university professors, sign language students, interpreting students, interpreters, and members from the deaf and hard of hearing communities.

It's wonderful to see you all here today.

As we begin, we will have an interpreter interpreting throughout the event. If you are unable to hear or something is not clear, please let us know. We can get the volume adjusted.

We also have captioning available too. If you depend on captioning, please make yourself comfortable so you can see it.

We'll start at 7. We will finish at 9. And after we finish, we will have some refreshments available, so please plan to stay for that.

Now we would like to ask dr. Robin Everall to come forward and bring greetings from the faculty.

Dr. Robin Everall: Thank you very much. I am bringing greetings from the department of Educational Psychology, and then I will bring you greetings from the faculty of education.

It's with great pleasure that I extend my greetings on behalf of all members of the Department of Educational Psychology to the staff and supporters of the WCCSD and David Peikoff Chair of Deafness Studies as we mark 25 years of teaching excellence, collaborative research, and community involvement.

With two and a half decades of leadership and research, development, and education for Albertans and western Canadians with hearing loss, the department is proud to recognize the importance of the achievements of this Centre and the chair. We support the valuable partnership and the initiatives and the vision of these two institutions.

The challenges and opportunities have no doubt changed in the past 25 years and will change again probably even more so in the next 25. But I know no boundaries will limit this valuable partnership with the university of Alberta.

On behalf of the Department of Educational Psychology, please accept my best

wishes for many years of continued success, and i trust that we will all enjoy this lecture.

Now, from the Dean, Dean Fern Snart, who sends her regrets for not being able to join us tonight. As we speak, she's on her way to France.

I am delighted to congratulate the western Canadian Centre of Studies in Deafness as I acknowledge 25 years of outstanding work.

A leading Centre for research and development in the area of hearing loss, WCCSD has been a positive force in the growing numbers of students with hearing losses that pursue post-secondary education in Canada and beyond.

The Centre has drawn more researchers to the field of Deaf Studies, scholars who are engaging in research and program development that will continue to be catalysts for the growth of deaf studies.

Talented specialists from a variety of disciplines in the field of deaf studies teach and conduct research within the Centre, and their efforts are increasingly social, vocational, and educational opportunities for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Through the scholarship and visionary leadership of Dr. Debra Russell, current holder of the endowed David Peikoff Chair of Deafness Studies, the mandate and vision of WCCSD continues to evolve as the field of deafness studies continues to expand, impacting many people around the world.

The first research chair in the world to be named in honour of a person who is deaf and the only one that focuses on deaf studies, the David Peikoff chair represents a wonderful legacy for our faculty.

I thank you on behalf of the faculty of education and the University of Alberta for creating a rich place within which the field of deaf studies will continue to grow.

On a personal note, I thank you for bringing to the faculty the animated, joyous, humorous, and often beautifully quiet rhythm of sign language. You teach us how to communicate in new and wondrous ways. For a quarter of a century, WCCSD makes us proud, and I am proud to welcome you to this important event tonight.

(applause) dr. Debra Russell: I think what I will do next is thank Robin for bringing those greetings on behalf of the faculty. I appreciate that. And it seems appropriate that I also thank a number who have made this evening possible. Sometimes I do my at the end of the lecture and we're all rushing out the let me begin with thank yous for this evening.

Obviously I have to thank our Dean, Fern Snart, and Robin Overall, for their ongoing

support of our Centre.

I also want to thank our speaker this evening, Patti. Thank you for traveling all the way to Edmonton. I appreciate that.

Thank you to Linda Cundy who will respond to the presentation this evening.

Thank you to our interpreters, Denise Sedran and Michael Pidwebeski. And thank you to our technical resource group. I appreciate their work. To our captioner, Janice Plomp, for your work this evening.

And I don't know if robin is in the room. There she is. Thank you to Robin Demko, who does everything to make these events possible. Thank you very much indeed.

And last but not least, amber miller, our student volunteer this evening, making the lecture available to those who are not able to be present. That will go up on the website later.

Thank you to each of you for your contributions.

And also looking around the audience, i would like you to join me in welcoming Dr. Enid Wolf-Schein.

Give us a wave, Enid. Yes, please stand up.

For many of you, you will remember Enid. She has a close connection to the David Peikoff chair. Her husband, Dr. Jerome Schein, was the first David Peikoff chair holder. We are thrilled that you are back with us this evening and able to celebrate that anniversary with us. Thank you, Enid, and thank you for being available to teach a workshop tomorrow as well. We appreciate that.

Okay. Michael Rodda, are you in the room?

All right. Then let me move to the introduction of Patti Shores-Hermann.

I asked Norma Jean to do the introduction for Patti because they have known each other for forever. Unfortunately Norma Jean is in Calgary and couldn't join us this evening. She will, however, join us on Saturday. Through the magic of technology, our problem is solved.

Norma jean Taylor: Hello. My name Norma Jean Taylor. I am assistant principal deaf program, Alberta board of education, Calgary.

I was asked to introduce Patti Shores-Hermann. I was invited to do so because Patti is a dear friend, regardless of the fact that we are apart. We still maintain contact, and that's definitely nice with Facebook, a wonderful social medium and a key to

bringing us closer together.

Anyway, who is Patti Shores-Hermann? Now, you may know her from her numerous successes, her degrees, her groundbreaking work, but there is a lot more to tell. I have a few thoughts that I could share with you about just who is the real Patti Shores-Hermann.

Patti grew up in South Africa until her family decided to relocate to Canada in her teen years. She graduated from the Alberta School for the Deaf in Edmonton and then decided to continue her studies at Gallaudet University. Actually, I was at Gallaudet at the same time and knew Patti through her school years. I can tell you she was a hard-working student. She was studious and considered one of the scholars of her time that had a lot of potential.

One of the highlights of Patti's time during her years at Gallaudet was when she took on the presidency of the student body. During that time -- it was a one-year term, and at that time it was in the 80s when deaf gay and lesbian rights were not recognized and they met with a lot of oppression and struggled in trying to set up a rainbow club, which they hoped would be an organization they could establish to recognize them as a distinct group. Patti as leader of the student government body decided that she must get involved to support the inception of this group.

As we have seen since that time, Patti's courage, bravery, and certainly thinking far beyond her time, a real forward thinker.

And also when she was in the honours program for international studies she went to Europe, and during that trip she met a man who would later become her husband. So after she came back to her studies, and then at the last minute took a quick detour to do a little island hopping in the Caribbean. And I remember -- I'm not going to mention what happened because, as you know, what happens on the island stays on the island.

So after Patti graduated she returned to Canada. She began her adult life. She was one of the first members of WCCSD and joined shortly after her return to Canada. And at the same time she was one of the first students to -- excuse me, teachers to do a practicum teaching assignment teaching children who are not deaf using a sign language interpreter, which was quite an accomplishment. And that was how she was able to attain her official certification to work in the province of Alberta.

Eventually Patti relocated to Ontario to work with the Canadian Hearing Society as coordinator of sign language services. And that was a really important time in Ontario because she was able to secure millions of dollars through the Trillium Foundation in order to establish sign language training programs that were designed for sign language instructors.

Sign language classes, the number of them exploded throughout the Toronto area,

and this continued for several years. It was a really wonderful time.

It wasn't only that endeavour, but another that Patti was involved in, and that was the Deaf Ontario Now movement. I was one of the members of that too because I had moved to Toronto at that time to pursue a job opportunity. Patti, myself, and a few other people, like Judy Reddick (phonetic), amongst others, Gary Malkowski, formed a committee to make a strategic plan to try and involve the provincial government, to put pressure on them to confront issues of deaf education. And the results were astounding in that we were able to increase hiring of deaf teachers in the province, establish instructor training program at the university, among other things. And it was because of Patti, really, she was the key to the success. Without her we kind of floundered along, but with her involvement she pulled us forward. It was a great experience being a part of that.

And then later she and her husband, they decided to relocate to Switzerland. And that was in 1990. Really it was a time that we lost one of our leaders, and it was Switzerland's gain, for sure.

In Switzerland again she got to work. She worked at Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Special Education as the -- as the program director of teacher training programs specifically for sign language. She also was involved in interpreting program development and so forth. And those areas developed under her watchful eye.

There were challenges, though, because within the country there were three languages that were used. German Swiss sign language, French Swiss sign language, and Italian Swiss sign language.

So you can see that there's a really complicated set of social dynamics within that country, and that is what Patti is going to be talking to you about tonight.

While she was working as a program director, Patti made the decision to go back to university, this time in England, and she received another degree, which she just graduated from and I think she should be congratulated for.

Really, I'm proud to be her friend and her colleague. So I hope you enjoy your evening, and I'll see you on Saturday. (applause)

Patricia Shores-Hermann: I'm not speechless, but I'm certainly signless. Thank you to Norma Jean. I don't know what to say about those. Words and signs escape me at this moment.

Okay. Well, good evening, ladies and gentlemen. It's an honour to be invited to speak to you this evening on behalf of the department, and especially to mark the 25th anniversary of the Peikoff Chair.

So I have to tell you before I start that my signing in ASL is a little rusty. If the interpreters aren't clear, it's my fault. If they ask me to -- if you have any questions throughout, please interrupt me. If the English seems a little strange, please forgive me.

I'll try and work closely with the interpreters tonight, so I hope you will understand what I'm saying through them. And we are a new team, so we will work together.

So when Debra first approached me about this and what I was to talk about, I thought I would talk a little bit about deafness in Switzerland. But I thought I would talk more about the deaf community and the movements within the community and focus my topic to the deaf community in Switzerland.

Before I proceed, I would like to show you -- this is the sign I use for Switzerland. And in our country -- as you can see, it's not a very big country. So the sign is not quite as big as we use here. It is land-locked. To the north is Germany, France to the west, Italy to the south.

So people do confuse us with Sweden, which is far north. We are Switzerland. Is that clear now?

Just a small country with a complicated history. It goes back a very long time. It actually dates back to the Roman Era. And rarely a warring country and work closely with other languages and cultures in the area. That's how our signing community came to be the way it is. Really it's part of this tradition of shared history.

Also in Norma Jean's introduction she mentioned that I had moved, and she mentioned there were different languages used. So I thought I would go through them with you.

There is German, which is the majority of the population, Swiss-German. There's a French-speaking area, an Italian part. And then the part in pink is the mountain people, the Rumantsch. So there are four languages within the country.

So I talked about the languages, but I will talk about them again. German Swiss sign language is referred to as DSGS. French sign language is LSF. Italian is LIS.

Those are the three sign languages that are used. The German community is the largest. It constitutes 60% of the signing population. French, 22%. Italian, a smaller number, 11. But in the country all are treated equally. Regardless of their language and size of community, they all share the same rights.

Now, I live in the south area. If I cross over into the northern area -- if I cross over into the Italian-speaking area, from the Italian to the German part, they recognize my rights of the area that I'm in and the part that I'm from.

I would like to now provide you with some background information. Three different perspectives: political, civil, and academic. This evening I'm going to speak about three different, the civil perspective, political perspective, and academic perspective.

I would like to provide you a little bit of background information that will then apply to the sign language community. It is not an easy situation with sign language users, and I want to provide you with that information so you have an understanding of what is happening in Switzerland.

And now with the civil perspective. As I mentioned, Switzerland has a long history, and it is a direct democracy where the people are involved in the government.

You are familiar with the democracy where the people elect the government and the government makes the decisions for the people. However, in Switzerland the people make the decisions. There are elections on a number of different issues on a regular basis. And so people make those decisions themselves, to then enact change within the government.

So that's the difference between a direct democracy and a democracy.

So we have a long history of active participation. It is a civil society, whereas Canada is a common law society, where the laws come from the ground up, go to the governing level, and then decisions are made there. Whereas in Switzerland -- where in Switzerland there's more of mediation amongst the people, and people are not in agreement, and they have to find a way to come to agreement or revert to the court. Because it is a civil society, people make those decisions amongst themselves.

So it's understood that we have a long tradition of this type of active participation.

And with regard to the international issues, Switzerland is obviously a world leader, as I'm sure you know.

I'm sure you have heard of the Nestle food company. Even today I was reading in the Alberta newspaper when I was here that the Nestle company wants to come to Alberta to sell water. Now, when I think of something like that, it's -- you think of a company that has too much power in one particular area. And so when you think of a country that has multi languages, multiple languages, and the people that are making decisions and they are having to negotiate that with such an international power.

Now, moving on to the ideology and the philosophy. Once again, Switzerland is different than what you have experienced. When you think of access, often people don't have the type of access that they want, and they are barred from everyday participation.

As the example that I gave with Nestle, a multinational corporation, it's a huge

network, and it operates globally.

And so for us, for Switzerland, we need to focus more on accessibility issues rather than on rehabilitation practices that have happened in the past.

Switzerland is not a member of the European union, however it is closely aligned with the members of European union, and we have a contract which is -- it's referred to as the European Social Charta, and that was in 1996 when we signed on to that. And that focuses on the right of persons with disabilities to independence, social integration, and participation in the life of the community.

And it is also to promote their full social integration and participation in that community. And they only signed the integration part of that Social Charta.

So having an understanding of how the legal system works and then how that applies and is realized within the community is what I want to convey this evening.

Sign language communities are considered a minority, and so under Europe's framework, convention, which Switzerland ratified in 1998, and secondly there is a monitoring process, and that -- the second report was implemented in 2007. And that is looking at how the legal system will then enact or monitor the convention.

Switzerland, as other countries in the world, have referred to deafness as a disability and have focused more on a rehab, rehabilitation perspective. And in Switzerland we have disability insurance, which is referred to as invalidity insurance, and that's a rehabilitation measure.

That has been in place up until 2004. And then as -- in 2004 the people launched to enact something that you would be familiar with. Americans with Disabilities Act, very similar, and that was an act in 2004 which led to the -- also the federal department of home affairs for people with disabilities.

And this has led to a change in movement or a change in the legal system, and then how that then affects the sign language and action within the community.

We moved to Switzerland in 1990, and with regard to this rehabilitation perspective, it's almost like a bonsai tree, if you think of that, a tree that has to be sculpted and can't grow anymore. It's made into a particular shape. And it's almost like people were unwanted, shaped into this -- these people who were sculpted to be who others thought that they should be.

So having moved there in 1990, sign language wasn't -- it wasn't really recognized as, you know, here in Canada in the 1960s when sign language started to become recognized. And as you know with other languages. But in Switzerland, sign language was actually considered shameful.

So as a newcomer to that community, I thought it was best to take my time, to sit back and see what was happening in the community.

You can see this part on the power point slide that's bold here that speaks to help the disabled becoming mobile, communicate with others or increase their personal independence.

And that's where the discussion of policy toward action began.

A few years later there was an amendment. So this, as I mentioned, led to movement and enacting the second law, which led toward independence and allowed for payment for interpretation and access to communication.

This is specific for education, training, and retraining. It was a step; however, it wasn't enough. We knew that there was still more work that needed to be done.

Building networks and partners led to the foundation of PROCOM, which is a service that provides communication for members of the deaf community, and this was founded in 2007.

This was established by both professional and self-help organizations and with the federation of the deaf and provides interpretation services for the entire country.

We are not responsible for providing the payment. They are responsible for providing the access of interpreters and making sure -- whether somebody needs an interpreter in Swiss-Italian sign language or Swiss-German sign language, they are responsible for doing it.

So that allows us to then focus on the next issue.

I emphasize that these are professional interpreters. They are not volunteers. They are paid for their services.

Now, I have provided you with this civil perspective, and I'm now going to look at the next perspective, which is the political one.

In 1981 was the U.N. Year of the Disabled, and I'm sure you are familiar with that being here in Canada, because it was an international celebration, International Year of the Disabled.

And this is where people had to take a look at the rights of deaf people. And this is where the movement first started. Now, keep in mind I moved in 1990, and in 1991 working at the university, my first project was I recognized that I needed to hire a linguist to do some research because there was so much that was unknown. The need was to provide the academic research that would then lead to supporting this movement.

The researcher that I hired was Dr. Penny Boyes Braem. Some of you may be familiar with her. She's Swiss-American. I'm Swiss-Canadian. I hired her. We received money for the national science foundation for her to do the research that she did. At the same time the Deaf Association was starting to mobilize as well.

They were looking at what they needed as a deaf community. In 1994 the Swiss Association of the Deaf had -- went to Parliament. A deaf person attended parliament, said I'm deaf, I use sign language. They had no experience with having a deaf person in parliament. Same as Gary Malkowski, who is an MP in Ontario, and that was a new situation for the political realm in Ontario. What he did, he showed up in parliament. He said that he required sign language. He used sign language to communicate. Similar to the Deaf Ontario Now movement.

The parliament then asked the university to establish this project, and it ran from 1996 to 1999. This was a descriptive project.

And then in 1994 there was then the handicap law, which was brought forward to the Parliament. This was working with other groups of disabled people. It was the first time that they had the opportunity to learn from each other and provide sign language interpreting in the Parliament. Prior to this time people with disabilities were not allowed to vote within Parliament, and after 2004 a change was made, and so it was a huge breakthrough.

I'm trying to recall what the acronym here in Canada is. I believe it is the Canadian Cultural Society. No, that's not correct.

Drawing on the similar experience that an interpreter would be paid once it's -- once it is dictated by the government, then an interpreter would be paid to provide the services and access to people who are deaf.

And later on I'll show you an example of interpreters on TV.

Now going on to the third perspective, the academic perspective.

It is hard to find laws that apply to education and sign language as a language of instruction.

Now, similar to Canada, we have cantons, which are similar to provinces, and the provinces in Canada make decisions about education. The cantons in Switzerland make the decisions about education, and there are 26 of them. Imagine that in such a small country. And so they are their own governance system. There is an inter-cantonal agreement between all of the different cantons about what languages are going to be used in that geographical area.

In 2004 there was another breakthrough, which had to do with the European union in establishing a policy which would provide a new opportunity for sign language to

be incorporated, a new opportunity with regard to sign language. This was in regard to mother languages.

For example, I learned in a German-speaking area. I had my children. Their first language would be German. Their second would be French, and their third would be English, and perhaps their fourth would be sign language.

Now, for example, if I had a child who grew up as a coda, with the HSK agreement, which is similar to the heritage agreement in recognition of heritage languages that you may be familiar with. So children who have migrated to Switzerland from other countries or parents who travel and may be moving in and out of the country, their mother languages are recognized. And in this case, if a child's mother language is sign language, it is recognized under the HSK.

There's also the European language portfolio, which is throughout Europe. It's signed by partners throughout Europe. And that was signed on March 1st, 2001, and then another obligatory education plan in march of 2004.

And we're trying to use these policies as foreign language or mother language to then allow sign language to be included in this as well.

Now giving you a perspective of the country, but now more specifically sign language.

This is for both children and adults. So geographically Swiss-German sign language is used in a German speaking area, Swiss-French sign language in the French area, and Swiss-Italian language in the Italian area. They don't incorporate an international language and respect the language rights amongst each individual area.

French Swiss sign language is in the public school, whereas German Swiss sign language is not yet. There are interpreters in the classroom, and they are in the mainstream program. So they have sign language instructors within those regions. So which is the reason for the portfolio program.

For adults, the role is to establish -- the Swiss Federation of the Deaf organizes Swiss-wide adult education in their regional offices in French, Italian, German throughout the country.

Now they are beginning to provide opportunities for hard of hearing people that they have not had in the past. With that they are able to provide people who are interested in learning sign language with government funding.

There are a lot of people who migrate from other countries where women are not allowed in education. When they come to our country they are allowed to. So we have had to establish a normal -- a new organization called DIMA, which is under the federal department of immigration. Under the 2004 law responsibility does come

from the government to provide funds for these foreign people who have migrated to the country. They are obligated to provide both sign language services, training, speech therapy and the like.

Foreign people, even those who have not had an education and are illiterate, are provided the opportunity in Switzerland and are encouraged to be integrated.

It is moving forward to recognize minority groups.

This group and in the society that's required for these people to be part of them, part of the society, must be integrated, and therefore they must have training. And in order to do so, people are required to have a B.A. for Swiss-German sign language.

For Swiss-French cantons, they require an M.A. from the University of Geneva, which is in conference interpreting. And Italy does not have one yet but is under the German university now.

The Italian sign language, they are incorporated under the Swiss German training program currently.

Moving to the Swiss-German area, we have established a B.A. level training program, similar to Canada, and we recommend that level for interpreters. For conference interpreting, they require a Masters. But we're starting B.A. first and starting the process from there.

Last September we had our first cohort come through and graduate.

There were 14 different cantons included in this and worked as a collective -- those interpreters worked for 14 cantons as interpreters throughout those areas.

We are working in cooperation with the applied linguistics institute of translation and interpreting. We are not doing this all on our own. These focus on spoken language, foreign language interpretation, and there is a lot to be gleaned from their work and we're working in cooperation with them.

Now for sign language instructors, I'm going to take a moment to focus on them.

The Swiss Federation of the Deaf is working in cooperation with us. It is a partnership of three different organizations to train sign language instructors, and those instructors work all over Switzerland.

And there is a one-year prep course prior to entering into that program, which is the same as many of you may have experienced, a prep program prior to going into college or university. It focuses on, you know, what -- it's a two-year training program for sign language instructors. And when I moved into 1990, this was just getting off the ground, and there are now 9 different groups that have graduated and are working throughout the country.

We're now for the first time teaching Italian sign language instructors, and we're working in cooperation with the Italian spoken language instructors. And it was certainly a challenge in the classroom.

Students graduate with a Swiss federal diploma that is recognized by the federal government. Interpreters get a B.A. from the university, whereas the deaf instructors thought that they wanted to also have credentials similar to those of interpreters, and it's recognized by the government.

And now going on to the academic perspective, I'm going to focus in a little bit more on the research that has been done and is currently being done, and that's the area that I work in.

And I am going to tip my German hat to the University of Alberta and 25 years of work that has been done here, because I believe that I am also being a pioneer, much the same as WCCSD was 25 years ago. And I am providing you with this information this evening, and I'm now narrowing the focus to research.

I mentioned Penny Braem, also working with Dr. Caramore and Dr. Haug.

First we gathered 10,000 signs in Swiss-German sign language, developed a linguistic database. And then we developed a project which is called sign writing, which is a way of documenting sign language. Looking at the movement, shape, articulation of the sign.

We also had another small project that looked specifically at vocabulary in sports and leisure, and I am going to show you a video clip of that a bit later.

And in 2006, the European science foundation received some funding, and one of the things that we want to make sure is that the transfer of knowledge is shared amongst communities. So whatever we are learning is also shared with others. Our most recent research project is from the technical school for the deaf. And our next project is going to be link sign language with the common European framework, and that's what we're hoping to be working on in September. We do have funding for that.

We're going to first have a network meeting with the -- with the European science -- pardon me. That was an interpreter error. That network meeting will be with all the university instructors.

I want to give you a taste of what the research we have been working on looks like. I mentioned the databank. You may think that it's easy to document what a sign looks like; however, it's not. It's very complex, and it has a number of different levels. This will just give you an idea.

It's very important that the university community network works together, and it's

really nice to have that level of cooperation.

Now, I wish I had a pointer. But I think you can see up there in the circle, that's the sign writing system. And then farther over it's a way of documenting -- and this is at the University of Homburg. So, for example, if you look at this particular handshape that moves from the shoulder downwards in towards the body, how you then transcribe that or make a notation of what that sign looks like.

And this is a research approach for making notation of signs. After ten years in research, we tried to take this information and provide it to people in a useful way.

And just like signers are developed in Canada and the United States, we have been able to CDs and different training programs to the different communities on different topics, whether that be sports or Christmas, different projects that could be -- different deliverables that could be given in a CD form.

People in sign language courses need vocabulary training, and so we can provide that using a CD. There are five dialects with interpreter sign language, and so -- much the same as there are spoken language dialects, there are signed language dialects, too. And those are all included.

For example, in German sign language this is the sign for bread. It looks like this.
(see Patti)

This is the sign. Another example is this, and another example is this. And this, for example.

And all of those are included. All of those dialects are included in one package shown with the sign. And they are given equal recognition.

So a learner can click on whichever dialect he or she chooses and get the appropriate instruction in vocabulary.

The last research project I want to show you -- I will show it on the Internet now. Okay. So on the Internet, and you can plug in the websites so you can look at it too later. But the Swiss National Science Foundation research project at the University of Zurich, I will show you a sample of sign language. This is German. Or English. But here is a sample.

(see display)

This is the word sugar. So there is the sign. So there is the sign. And then in the lower box it's used in a sentence, and I can show it to you in context.

(see display)

And it talks about sugar being made from two molecules. Two particles, excuse me. So it has a nutritional part. It has financial aspect so you can see it used in different contexts.

So here is an example in use of the word payment.
(see display)

or rate of pay. So agreement on rates of pay. You will notice It's -- there are three different signs for one idea. And then in the contractual agreement between the buyer and the seller and how they negotiate the payment of the contract.

Was that clear?

So if you're interested at home, you can take a look at it. There is the website address.

And from the research it's given and disseminated to -- through the deaf organizations, providing a dictionary in three different sign languages, and I will show this to you on the next slide.

There is the web link. Sorry, technology doesn't agree with me. This organization is like the National Association of the Deaf.

It is in three languages, German, French, and Italian. House.
And it has the example of opera house, so it's used as a compound word.

(see display) (laughter)

any other word you want to know? You can check it out on line later.

The sign for a country.
(see display)

Martinique. Interpreter error this time, Martinique. So that's just an example of some of the research work that's been done, and it's been disseminated for use.

In order to disseminate the information, we work with partner organizations called VUGS which support the work. And through them we are able to get the material published. Excuse me, take our publications and get the information out.

Unfortunately the publications are in German right now.

But if you look at this, it has a publication list, and I think it numbers around 100 for different projects and work to be done with sign language instructors, sign language interpreters. Needless to say these publications have not been available there. After students graduate from the program, there were five -- there is focus five TV.

So here is the news captioned in German. I can do a sample of this.

I will interpret what it says afterward.

(see display)

This is Focus News, DIMA Organization Project. You have to look up here to understand it.

It's talking about department of migration ...

The sign language interpreters when they graduate, they had a strong connection to the music community ... (correction) when they graduate, they had a strong connection to the music community. And as you know, very much a part of the community culture. So they established interpreted music. This began on a volunteer basis but now is beginning to receive funding.

This is a Swiss musician, rock musician, and he is hard of hearing. Unfortunately he has passed away.

I'm not going to provide the interpretation for this. Just take a moment to have a look.

(see display) (singing)

That gives you a sense of what that looks like.

I have now provided you with three different perspectives that I spoke of originally: civil, political, and academic. Now we have a pool of sign language interpreters, 54 working in Swiss-German, 30 working in Swiss-French, and 10 in Swiss-Italian. So almost 100 interpreters who are trained and now working.

We have just established video relay interpreting. I'm trying to get the right sign for it. Here it is. And that was as of April 30th, and that's for the Swiss-German speaking cantons. And Swiss-Italian will be next year, and Swiss-French will be in two years as you can see up here on the slide.

And I showed you an example of the interpreting on TV.

Now moving on to the challenges. Now that we have news programming interpreted, it is a challenge to provide that in all of the different language areas of the country.

Hang on before I move on to this.

All right. Just going back to that last slide that I showed you, when I spoke of the rehabilitation perspective and now more looking at the access to communication

and the number of interpreting assignments, we're up to over 1000 and still growing. So this is due to the influence of professional interpreters who are working out in the community.

Now the community is more respectful of the language, and because of that deaf people have an increased sense of pride and are able to access and be more active in their daily lives because of access to interpretation.

When I go back to Switzerland in two weeks' time, there is going to be a conference on sign language in Switzerland, reflection and prospects in research, interpreting, teaching and learning. And this is the first of its kind conference. And it will be provided in spoken German, French, and Italian.

Now in summary, I want to just take you back to what I spoke of about deaf people being identified as a disabled group and the shame that went with that. And that because of that and because of not having access to communication, they were far behind the rest of the community. And then with the laws, the invalidity law and the rehabilitation measures, we're now looking more towards access and minority.

When we look at a country with such a long history of tradition, change is slow, but we are making those changes.

It's important that as a society we look at the more humanistic perspective and approach, and that goes with the changes that we have been working towards. So from the traditional humanitarian view, but now moving towards including sign language users. And we have to do -- to do so, we have to ensure that governments and the active participation of people who use sign language in a civil society.

And lastly I would like to thank the interpreters. It was a difficult job for them. And to the cart reporter.

And I think before I ask for any questions from the audience, I believe that Linda Cundy is going to respond to my talk.

Linda Cundy: You can take a seat or you can stand. You will be back up here shortly, I'm sure.

Thank you. From all of us, I would like to say thank you to WCCSD, the Centre for deafness -- deaf studies, for bringing Patti back home, to watch her share her ideas, work, sharing the same passion that I remember from 19 something when she moved here from South Africa. Bright blue-eyed teenager that she was, with her brother John, entering into the School for the Deaf with such worldly knowledge and intelligence. And she was every teacher's dream. Everyone's dream to teach someone like her.

I have followed her career and her work and her learning and incorporation of

Canadian culture into a career that just seemed to be designed for her skills and her passions.

When Norma Jean talked about different aspects, different breakthroughs that Patti has made, and really it is a breakthrough, I believe. Isn't that correct? Yes. And so she moved from Ontario. Breakthrough after breakthrough. Moved to Switzerland, once again breakthrough after breakthrough.

And through her work and listening to her presentation and her discussion about the sign language in Switzerland, I have certainly learned that. And Canada has two official languages, English and French. Are people really bilingual in this country? I think not. We have spoken English people and French-speaking people. Some are fluent in English, but not all. English speakers and French speakers, really they don't share much of the same country in many ways. Very different than the situation in Switzerland.

The same is true for ASL users. How many are fluent in LSQ? I would say zero. And LSQ users fluent in ASL. There are some, there are some, but are they really a bilingual group? I think not.

So when you think about the numbers of languages that Patti knows, obviously she's a multilingual user, and she's able to say -- she must have six or eight languages that she knows already and she uses fluently.

So when I was speaking with her tonight we started counting them. I think we counted to 12. British sign language, Afrikaner, South African Language that she can sign and so forth.

In closing, I have two questions actually for Patti.

The first question, she's talked a lot about the common European framework. Edmonton public schools is familiar with this work because they have adopted that idea. Based on your multilingual, we developed a passport, a language passport, and we rank fluency.

It was published in 2000, and it was called IISLE, Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education. We adopted that passport language idea and incorporated our own. And sign language is included in that, which the European passport does not yet have. It does not include sign language yet. It's an example.

If i give a passport to Patti...

The Europeans developed a passport to show language fluency, to get people to identify their language fluencies and different skills and where they needed to still continue to develop.

I would like to ask Patti to talk a little bit about the political climate among Swiss-German, Swiss-French, and Swiss-Italian groups. I'm wondering if the least of the numbers will be assimilated into the groups or not.

And secondly with regard to language. Is the acceptance of sign language able to help with the development of literacy? So those are my questions.

Patricia Shores-Hermann: Thank you for your questions, Linda. I'm going to answer them both.

Give me a moment to think about that. I'm going to respond to your second question first, actually. As you mentioned, the language passport is similar to the portfolio that I spoke of earlier. So now I'm going to ask you a question, Linda.

Looking at that, competencies, reading, writing, speaking, and listening, those are the four competencies. And now if you were to look at a parallel of that in sign language, it would be sign, the production of the sign language, the ability to listen to sign language. Expression is the same as actually signing it. So the sign language production would be similar to spoken language.

So when you look at those four competencies we would have to eliminate two of them because the written component isn't there. We don't want that parallel.

We think that it is more adaptable.

If we eliminate the written part, people will view it as a mono language. So the signed writing system supports that. It's a way of notating the signing system.

With the money that we got from the National Science Foundation, this is a way to support the recognition of sign language. Because it has the ability to document sign language.

A sign is just not one-dimensional. You have to look at the handshape, palm orientation, the movement, where it is in space.

So it's difficult to learn a signed notation system. And so that's a secondary purpose for later on.

And then once we get further funding, then we will be able to actually see where that takes us. I don't believe that Switzerland will ever be a one-language Country just because of it's long tradition of being multilingual.

In Britain ...

Pardon me, the interpreter needed to clarify.

Switzerland has four official languages. Now, when we think of parallel of lingua franca -- English, pardon me. The language is English. But when you think of the sign language community, what will it be? We certainly see China taking over as a dominant language. And we see their way of writing systems as well. We think people in Shanghai, they're required to obviously know that language rather than English even though English is the language of business.

So now it may be that the language -- Chinese may be the language of business. It's becoming a lot stronger.

We certainly see the United States having the same power as China. So when you think of the power the states has with regard to language, you're going to see issues come up here, a destabilization.

For Swiss people, our heart belongs in language. And when i showed this example of the interpretation of music, it shows the humanness of people. And without that, they're less -- they're not as human, not being able to express themselves in a creative way.

And so having an interpretation of that -- you may have thought it was strange, but it shows the people. And deaf people have an equivalent access, or there is a way to express that heart of language.

I'm sure you are familiar with yodeling language in particular to Switzerland. And there is another way of doing that or a parallel way of doing that in sign language. So I think that that -- in response to your first question, Linda, that I don't think one language will ever supersede another or that one will make way because we are a community or a country of multi languages.