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Improving Professional Relationships in the Classroom: Teachers and Interpreters Working Together

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Improving Professional Relationships in the Classroom:

Teachers and Interpreters Working Together

By

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WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY HAVE EXAMINED THE ENCLOSED

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and hereby certify that in our opinion it is worthy of acceptance as partial fulfillment of the requirements of this master's degree.

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ABSTRACT

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Interpreters placed in mainstream settings are not just there to provide access to communication between the hearing counterparts and the deaf students. They are there as "integral members of the team" (Ohtake, Milagros, & Fowler, 2000, p. 16) and should be recognized as equals with the teacher in the classroom (Boys Town, n.d.). This research investigates professional relationships and how they can be established and maintained, the types of relationships mainstream teachers and educational interpreters have within Clark County, and how working together can result in educational benefits for everyone in the classroom. Interpreters are a member of the educational team and should be utilized to help support education (Ministry of Education, 1994). They have first-hand interactions with the client which enables them to know and understand the client(s)

thoroughly. According to Siple (1994), interpreters listen to the lesson at hand and breakdown the message's meaning to match the student's language level and learning style so that they may comprehend the lesson. Interpreters are there to pass the teacher's message to the deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students. They are the first to recognize whether that message was understood, if interpreter expansion is needed, or if teacher clarification is needed to ensure comprehension. Responses from teachers and interpreters gathered from the online survey, as well as previous findings, will be examined to see how they work together as an effective team and how their united efforts could impact students' education. The techniques that teachers and interpreters indicated enabled them to successfully establish and maintain professional relationships with each other, how they clearly defined their roles, and the educational impact their teamwork had will be explored.

Keywords: teamwork, professional relationship, role, educational goals, mainstream, relational theory, IEP team, collaboration

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

Throughout America, deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students are placed in mainstream classrooms where they use interpreters to bridge the communication gap with their classmates and teachers. The common consensus is that interpreters are there to provide DHH students access to the teacher's lessons and class interactions by listening to the teacher's message, analyzing it for key vocabulary, themes, and the overall point of message then pass that message along to the deaf client, all while continuing to listen and analyze as the lecture moves on without interjecting their own biases into the translation (Gile, 1985; Humphrey and Alcorn, 2007; Pochhacker, 2016; and RID, 2005 and 2010).

This process with a DHH student in a hearing classroom is called mainstreaming and it has been commonly used since the Education for all Handicapped Children Law (Public Law 94-142, 1975) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997) were passed. The goal of mainstreaming is to integrate the DHH student into the regular education classroom (Hummel, 1982). Research about successfully mainstreaming DHH students appears to be new still, but both the interpreter and teachers' roles and their interactions with one another seem to be crucial factors in providing students with equal access to educational opportunities and for success in a mainstream classroom (Marschark et al. 2015).

Teachers have numerous roles and responsibilities they must adhere to which include following their district and school's policies all while planning lessons, teaching, and implementing different strategies to meet each student's needs (which could include students with different learning disabilities) all while maintaining control of behavior in the classroom (Arends, 2015). Moreover, class size impacts a teacher's ability to make sure they are providing the one-on-one attention that some students need to succeed (Delaney, 2018). While this issue is a nationwide problem, this study takes place in the Clark County School District (CCSD) which is at the top of the list when it comes to most students per teacher ratio. (Delaney, 2018). According to a research study conducted by the National Education Association (2018), Nevada has the largest average class size in the nation and has for 2018 and 2017. Depending upon the grade taught, the ratio between students and teachers at the elementary level can be 20:1 and up to 36:1 in the secondary level of education (CCEA, 2018). Successfully running a classroom while teaching all the various students is a lot for one teacher to manage without the addition of a DHH student being in the class. Once teachers have a DHH student placed into their classroom, they now have another student's needs to consider when planning lessons and activities, implementing them, and depending upon the grade level, making sure all 20 to 36+ students are included.

Along with high student to teacher ratios, CCSD's *Fast Facts* (2018) states that CCSD is the nation's fifth-largest school district spanning 7,910 square miles. The district runs with a seven-member Board of School Trustees and a superintendent who serves as chief executive officer. They have 360 schools, educate 320,000 students, and employ 18,778 teachers and 23,524 other staff members such as support staff,

administration, school police, and substitute teachers (CCSD, 2018). CCSD offers Total

Communication (TC) DHH programs at 11 different schools in Las Vegas and

Henderson. There are 4 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 3 high schools that

house these programs. According to the Legislative Committee on Persons with

Disabilities (LCPD), Exhibit C (2006), a TC program:

> incorporates the use of residual hearing (enhanced by consistent amplification),
>
> and sign language that can be used simultaneously or independently to help
>
> develop speech and language. Techniques used include speech, speech reading,
>
> finger spelling and sign language. Sign language systems include American Sign
>
> Language (ASL), Conceptually Accurate Signed English (CASE), and Signed
>
> English (SEE). (p.2)

CCSD also offers aural/oral Deaf education programs at other schools that do not utilize

sign language and focus on developing spoken speech and language (LCPD, 2006). In

2006, CCSD had a total of 384 DHH students from all programs on their roster. These

children ranged from age three in pre-K to 22 in post programs (LCPD). At this time 37

interpreters were working for the school district in mainstream classrooms (LCPD).

Currently, there are approximately 250 DHH students in TC programs who utilize

interpreter services, but only 12 CCSD employed interpreters (D. Glab, personal

communication, December 5, 2019). The rest of the interpreting needs are fulfilled by

third party interpreting agencies who have contracts with CCSD. CCSD uses three

interpreting agencies to fill about 53 other interpreting jobs every school day.

Purpose of the Study

Fortunately, teachers do not have to take on the DHH students' needs by themselves because each student has an entire team assigned to their needs thanks to a bill called AB210. This team is part of the Individual Education Plan and is referred to as the IEP team. Together they create and implement the student's IEP to meet their learning needs (Nevada Department of Education, 2014). According to the Nevada Department of Education (2014), DHH students in CCSD have been included in special education IEPs since the passing of Assembly Bill 210, "commonly referred to as the DHH 'Bill of Rights' in Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 388.440(1), 388.477, and 388.520 (05)" under Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) Chapter 388 (p. 1). These laws establish that the pupils who qualify for IEPs receive special education and related services to address their learning needs (Nevada Department of Education, 2014). According to the Boy's Town website section *Classroom Interpreting* (n.d.), the IEP team is made up of a "community of professionals whose collaborative efforts and expertise foster the cognitive and social development of students." The IEP team includes the student's parents/guardian, the teacher of record (in this case the Teacher of the Deaf (TOD)), the special education facilitator, a mainstream teacher, and any related service provider on the "support team, which may include interpreters and assistants" (Ministry of Education, 1994, p. 1). This team is anyone that "is providing services" for the IEP student and since interpreters provide signing services, they are a member of the team (Lytle, 2003, p. 40). Interpreters are practice professionals who have state educational requirements and certifications, as well as codes of professional conduct that they follow to ensure their decisions are professional (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2013). A practice profession, like working in law enforcement, medicine, and teaching, is different

from a technical profession such as an accountant or architect. According to Dean and Pollard (2013), practice professions are careers that take place in "social situations and these professionals' direct impact on people is their primary work product" (p. 72). They must be ready to "contend with the unpredictable nature of people and the dynamic forces of human interaction" whereas technical professionals use tools and formulas which are "consistent predictable, and reliable" (Dean and Pollard, 2013, p.72). Interpreters are a member of the DHH student's IEP team because they provide interpreting services (Ministry of Education, 1994). Membership on the IEP team grants members access to privileged information regarding the student; such as cognitive levels, accommodations allotted, educational meetings, goals, and lesson plans from the teacher. Although a member of a team, interpreters are not always granted access to this information, but according to the Ministry of Education (1994), they should also be given this information so they may provide their DHH students with the best access to their education.

The Ministry of Education (1994) wrote that the student's success depends on the teacher understanding their needs and "working with others in the support team, which may include interpreters" (p.1). The IEP team works together to meet and enhance the student's educational needs. This team is then "mandated to work closely together" and "each person on the team plays a specific clearly defined role" (Lytle, 2003, p.40). These roles are there so the team can help the student meet their educational goals. If roles are ambiguous then it is harder for the team to agree on how to accomplish said goals. These roles should be clearly defined and understood by all team members (Lytle. 2003). Teachers and interpreters should get together and share information and lesson plans as a team.

Teachers already have a hectic load and the arrival of a DHH student may feel a bit overwhelming at first. If, however, the teacher and interpreter learn to collaborate then there are ways they can help each other lessen the stress of their workload. The teacher and interpreter are both academic professionals, who as a team, can help each other meet their goals and potentially improve everyone's access to education. "Ideally the two come together as one, creating a strong bond of people committed to working together toward goals and purposes that they share" (Sergiovanni, 2004, p. 51). This research hopes to explore and explain the idea of teaming to see how teachers and interpreters currently interact, what they can improve upon, and how they can help each other achieve goals.

A teaming relationship may feel foreign for teachers and interpreters. Human nature causes uneasy emotions any time we experience change, so when teachers have a new adult enter their classroom they may feel threatened or unsure if they do not understand what this new person's role entails. Interpreters may also feel strange walking into a new classroom if they do not know the teacher's teaching style or the DHH student. These feelings come any time humans experience change, but by forming an equal relationship with clearly defined roles and open communication, teachers and interpreters can help each other provide access to education for all students.

The inspiration for my thesis topic was sparked by my experience working with teachers in CCSD and seeing how many of them, even with no previous experience with DHH, still had no access to information regarding what an interpreter's role includes or how they can utilize them within their classroom (King, 2018; Ministry of Education in Canada, 1994). Teachers' lack of access to information regarding who an interpreter is and what their job entails is not a new issue and was noted in most articles throughout my

research efforts. Beaver (1995) cited Hayes (1991) over 25 years ago stating that teachers receive "little if any" information about their educational interpreter and it seems to still be the case (p. 38). Even though many years have passed, there still seems to be a lack of access to information about teachers and interpreters working together at schools with DHH programs.

I have experienced these issues first hand while working as an educational interpreter for the last nine years. I work for an interpreting agency that has an educational contract with CCSD to ensure that all DHH students work with the same interpreters in the classroom every day I have a regular schedule, just like the students, so I may provide them a consistent interpreter with ongoing knowledge about their education. The interpreting community commonly refers to this as being an ongoing interpreter. Working with the same students daily ensures that I will already know what is going on in the classrooms, am aware of the teacher and their style, the unit's goals, and the DHH student's needs.

I have been working as a third party contracted interpreter for the CCSD for eight years and have been working in secondary education at the same school for six years. I have worked with many of the same teachers every year as well as several new ones. Meeting each teacher gives me an idea of how we will work together. Some teachers already know the system, some are excited to jump into the new experience, and some directly express that they were terrified and unsure of how to teach a DHH student. My experiences at trying to establish a professional teaming relationship with each teacher that I have met for the last eight years inspired my thesis topic. Some of these teaming

relationships were successful and some failed, but in all situations, I felt that both the teachers and I were able to figure out our boundaries through trial and error. From my observations, the classrooms where I was able to successfully work as part of a team seemed more enjoyable for the DHH students, teachers, other hearing counterparts, and for myself.

Each interpreter probably has a different method for establishing professional relationships with teachers, but I continue to follow the advice I was given by my agency when I first began working for them. I was taught to walk into every class professionally and friendly, greet teachers immediately, shake their hand, introduce myself, and ask where they would like me to sit. I have found that this establishes a great first impression. After the first class, I try to find time to chat with the teacher about our relationship. I explain that if they have any lesson plans, books, or worksheets that they can give me access to ahead of time then I would greatly appreciate it. I tend to use this opportunity to gauge whether they have worked with any interpreters before, briefly explain my role, expectations, and inquire about their expectations. All of this sets the tone for our relationship. While some teachers respond positively, others are more hesitant or resistant. With my research, I hoped to examine how other interpreters and teachers address their introductions and whether they establish a teaming relationship.

I hope that my research will help ease professional hierarchies in the classroom, open communication within the IEP team and each members' roles, and help teachers and interpreters establish and maintain team-like relationships with each other. By working together and truly understanding each other's goals we can create a professional

relationship where we can support each other and provide students more access to education.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of my research is based on relational theory (RT) (Fletcher, 2004). RT looks at how individuals interact with one another and their surroundings. It "acknowledges that people experience aspects of the world – including the learning process – in different ways, and at different degrees of complexity, and that this influences how they approach learning tasks" (McGuinness, 2011, p. 69). This theory's ideas stem from behavioral theories of human language and how individuals respond to their interactions with others (Hayes, 1991). By acknowledging how others experience the world, we can understand their perspective and work with them more efficiently. I want to apply this idea directly to how teachers and interpreters interact, collaborate, and work towards the goal of providing a student's access to education.

Applying this to my research means taking a look at how teachers and interpreters use relational theories (RT). Fletcher (2004) uses RT to focus on growth and development in the workplace. Through her analysis, she determined that growth and development can be identified under four different types of relational practice: preserving, mutual empowering, achieving, and creating teams. To analyze how teachers and interpreters establish and maintain a teaming relationship, I will look for examples of Fletcher's relational practice theories of preserving, mutual empowering, achieving, and creating teams in the data I collect from previous studies and the survey responses in this study.

Fletcher's (2004) practice of preserving is specific to the tasks that individuals undergo to "preserve the life and well-being of the project" (p. 272). For this research, the project is the teaming relationship between teachers and interpreters. Preserving includes "taking responsibility for the whole and doing whatever is needed to be done to keep the project connected to the people and resources it need[s] to survive" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 272). This means doing activities outside of what is required like when an interpreter stays after to meet with a teacher, even though their contracted time does not include prep time, or when a teacher is grading at home when they are not paid to do so. By going the extra mile, they are ensuring they are giving their all to the project. Teachers and interpreters, although on the same team, do not have an authority figure forcing them to work together as a team. Their ability to create a teaming relationship with each other and take action to then preserve this bond embodies Fletcher's (2004) idea that everyone should prioritize the project over their individual needs. Focusing on the task at hand over their own needs is also a way in which teammates show that they will "do whatever it takes" to accomplish their goals (p. 275).

Mutual empowering encompasses encouraging others to strive for success. It "includes behavior intended to enable other's achievement and contribution to the project" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 275). Teachers and interpreters are not competing, but instead working towards a common goal so they must strive for helping the team succeed if they want to have their own personal successes. We must "enable others to produce, achieve, and accomplish work-related goals and objectives" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 276). This kind of enabling is based on the idea that we have power and expertise, but that we all depend on one another to thrive (Fletcher, 2004). Teachers and interpreters have the ability to

empower their teams and to feel inspired by their teammates. This feeling can spark motivation to achieve goals and enables them to engage in conversations with ease.

Another type of relational practice is achieving. This "uses relational skills to enhance one's own professional growth and achievement" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 278). This type of practice is rooted in connecting with others, maintaining a connection with them, and establishing "good, solid working relationships" with them (p. 278). This is the type of relationship I hope to encourage teachers and interpreters to create. It encompasses saving face, understanding each other's perspectives, respecting one another's roles, and "relational asking" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 278). According to Fletcher (2004), relational asking is a technique one can use to ask for assistance in a way that will make it more likely that they would get the feedback or help they need to be successful. This way of asking for assistance keeps them equal with the recipient showing that they think highly of them and believing they can learn from them. Interpreters and teachers should make sure that when they are having discussions, they do not try to hierarchize their position. They are equals who can each learn from the other's input.

Fletcher's (2004) relational practice of "creating team" (quoted in original text) establishes an environment for the group to flourish in. Teachers and interpreters have the same end goal of providing DHH students access to an education, so ideally, they would be more successful in doing so if they work together. "Creating team" practice results in "cooperation, collaboration, trust, respect, and collective achievement" (Fletcher, 2004, pp.280). This type of practice also includes showing backchanneling signals to each other such as smiling, nodding, and verbal comments confirming the information was heard. "Such responses could mean asking questions that encourage the sharer to provide more

details, or verbal or nonverbal expressions that show genuine interest in what the sharer is relating" (T&D, 2014, p. 17). These teams involve both parties participating in the discussion and interacting fully to show that "people deserve to be acknowledged and have their experience[s] validated in some way and that they, as coworkers, have a responsibility to do this type of acknowledging for others" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 281). This belief that everyone has the right to be "noticed" is a major characteristic of group life. The team's spirit and achievement depend on paying attention to each other as well as their feelings and preferences. If teachers and interpreters can create a relationship that emulates Fletcher's (2004) concepts of achieving, mutual empowering, and "creating team", then together they will be able to effectively provide DHH students access to education.

Other research and literature regarding applying relational theory appears to be scarce. Fletcher's (2004) original paper applies relational practice theories to engineers in the workplace. Upon checking for other works that have cited her research, the majority applied her theory to managerial relationships, therapeutic self-help readings, leadership development, females in the workplace, and cultural therapy. There is a gap regarding interpreters and teachers' specific use of RT. Literature regarding teacher and interpreter roles and relationships will be further examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this literature review, the focus will be on scholarship surrounding interpreters and their role, teachers and their role, collaboration in the workplace and its benefits, and how forming teaming relationships and working together can be used to benefit students in mainstream education. Interpreter and teacher roles may seem like common sense but having a true understanding of each other's roles can make a difference in the classroom. Firstly, what is a role? According to Pochhacker (2016), a role is a "set of more or less normative behavioral expectations associated with a 'social position'" (p. 168). A social position is the job or career that one takes on such as that of an interpreter or a teacher. Although there may be standard practices that every interpreter and teacher abide by, there are also other roles which they may take on depending on the situation at hand. The goal is to get teachers and interpreters working as a team. This team should understand each other's roles, motives, abilities, and result in building trust. Knowing and understanding these qualities is the foundation of collaborative work (Donaldson, 1996).

Interpreter Roles

When researching educational interpreters in mainstream classrooms, the consensus was that not all teachers have had interpreters in their classrooms. According to King (2018) and the Ministry of Education in Canada (1994), a lot of staff members are often not informed of the interpreters' role, abilities, or how to utilize them in their classrooms (King, 2018). Since the passing of the IDEA (1997) and the Education for all Handicapped Children Law (Public Law 94-142, 1975), mainstreaming DHH students is now a common practice (Marschark, et al. 2015). As stated previously, mainstreaming is

when DHH students are sent to the closest hearing school with a DHH program and sent into regular education classes with their hearing counterparts. DHH students then receive their education through an interpreter. DHH students who are placed in mainstream classes are sent there as a result of the academic level documented in their IEP. This plan is required for all students who are in special education departments, like the DHH program (Lytle, 2003, and Bordin, 2003). It is written to provide students with the accommodations they need to be successful, like a sign language interpreter.

Accommodations that apply to this research revolve around DHH students who have a sign language interpreter in regular education classrooms to provide them access to the classroom. "The primary role of the interpreters is to facilitate communication between deaf students and their teachers and peers" (Antia & Kreimeyer. 2001). Interpreters and their roles can vary depending on the students for whom they are interpreting, but they are there to provide the student access to activities, experiences, and what is happening in the classroom (King, 2018). According to King (2018), just because an interpreter is there does not mean that the student now suddenly understands everything that is stated. Sign language is a visual language that requires strong cognitive levels especially for those who are working to acquire education through it (King, 2018). "They must be developmentally, cognitively, and socially accustomed to navigating the educational experience" (King, 2018, p 42). Even if the teacher is lecturing and the interpreter is signing, the student may still not be understanding the lesson's goals. DHH students' cognitive levels can vary depending upon their upbringing, use of sign or spoken language at home, and the method of DHH education they were exposed too. This suggests that there are multiple factors that both teachers and interpreters must take into

consideration when working with DHH students. "Often, the interpreter is [the DHH student's] only sign language model" so they may still be acquiring a foundational language while simultaneously learning English and the teacher's lesson (King, 2018, p.42). If this is the case, then the interpreter's job is even more challenging because they must break down the lesson's objectives to the student's cognitive level all while still meeting the goals of the lecture. The interpreter cannot just "take care of the deaf student" for the teacher because that would exclude and isolate the DHH student from access to the class, opportunities to participate, learning experiences, and would prevent them from becoming a true member of the class (Siple, 1994, p.139). In order to grant the DHH student equal access to their classmates, teacher, and education, the teacher and interpreter must work together as a team.

Working with DHH students requires that the educational team, including the interpreter and teacher, must get together to consider alternative or additional roles/positions which will benefit the student's learning needs (Ministry of Education, 1994). This does not mean that the interpreter will be required to perform other roles such as teaching or tutoring, but they can serve as an "expanded role" if formally decided in an IEP meeting (King, 2018, p 43). IEP teams are required to meet once a year to update the student's goals and progress, so working together on a daily basis may be a foreign concept to team members. In fact, according to Hayes (1991) (as cited in Beaver, 1995) "although the number of schools employing interpreters continues to rise," one thing is for sure is that "general education teachers receive little if any orientation concerning the educational interpreter" or their role (p.38). The fact that teachers have not received any training on who and what an interpreter is can be found in numerous educational

interpreter readings within this review (Beaver, 1995; King, 2018; Hurwitz, 1995).

Hurwitz (1995) stated that "most schools have little or no experience with educational interpreting" (p.6) and this lack of knowledge leaves interpreters with little support making their job more difficult, which then could hinder the DHH student's educational experience (Mertens, 1991). This lack of access to information about interpreters leaves hearing teachers "express[ing] concern about working with educational interpreters" and unsure what the interpreters' roles entails (Beaver, 1995, p.38).

Teachers should know that the interpreter's role in their classroom depends upon the job at hand. Similar to the way in how a teacher may teach topics different ways to students who learn differently, the interpreter may have to adjust their interpretation and potentially their role to be able to provide the student access to their education. According to Hwa-Froelich and Westby (2003), "the interpreter may assume many roles, including listener, speaker, gatekeeper, interviewer, social agent, and conversationalist" (p. 82). The interpreter has two tasks to focus on: how to interpret and how to listen. However, the role they take on depends on the IEP team's service providers communicating together and determining which role would benefit the student the best (Hwa-Froelich and Westby, 2003). These service providers are the IEP team members responsible for ensuring the student is on track to meet their educational goals (Ministry of Education, 1994). Meeting the DHH student's goals means that the teacher and interpreter are working together, understand each other, and have a clear understanding of each other's roles and abilities.

Teacher Roles

According to Arends (2015), the "ultimate goal" of teaching is to help students work to become "independent and self-regulated learners", but this idea encompasses much more than just teaching (p. 19). After researching teachers and their roles, it seems like the word 'teach' is more of an umbrella term which encompasses multiple overlapping tasks such as having to align their instructions with the school district's curriculum standards, providing instruction of their lessons as well as an assessment of student's understanding of them, and making sure to include different learning styles within each lesson to accommodate any IEP students' needs (Arends, 2015). Teachers' lessons even include "aspects that cannot be codified or guided by scientific knowledge" because they have to know the lesson well enough to alter it as they teach it depending on how their students' respond to the lesson (Arends, 2015, p. 4). They must be ready to differentiate their plans on the spot. "In their daily practice, teachers face the task to think about the best way to differentiate among students with various educational needs" (Vermeulen, Denessen, & Knoors, 2012, p. 174). This ability to accommodate their lessons to the students' needs is another responsibility teachers take on so that all students can feel included in the classroom (Antia & Kreimeyer. 2001). Darling-Hammond & Bransford (2005) expanded on what a teacher's role includes in the National Academy of Education, (as cited in Arends 2015, p.18):

> in addition to strong subject matter knowledge, all new teachers (should) have a basic understanding of how people learn and develop, as well as how children acquire and use language, which is the currency of education. In addition . . . teaching professionals must be able to apply that knowledge in developing curriculum that attends to students' needs, the demands of the content, and the

social purposes of education: in specific subject matter to diverse students, in

managing the classroom, assessing student performance, and using terminology in

the classroom. (inside cover)

Teachers' roles include all of that and more, but even this broad explanation of their roles

and responsibilities, plus factoring in the 36:1 ratio explained in the introduction, clearly

shows that teachers already have a great deal on their plate. The core of a teacher's work

centers around alignment, integration, and differentiation (Arends, 2015). When a DHH

student and their interpreter come into a classroom the teacher and interpreter should

work together as a team making sure to communicate and collaborate so all the students

may have easier access to their education.

Collaboration

Collaborative work involves participants who share a respective relationship with

one another and establish a system that supports them both accomplishing their goals.

Working this way requires that members commit to working together; understand each

other's skills and areas for improvement; and respect and trust one another (Donaldson,

1996). Donaldson (1996) discusses that different forms of collaboration can occur in

schools, but the most common, which can be applied to teachers and interpreters, is

'paired team' collaboration. This is when "people work together around a shared

purpose", honestly express their goals and concerns, and stay flexible and open to

everyone else's' input (Donaldson, 1996, p. 21). The idea here is that adage that two

heads are better than one. Paired teams also "reduce isolation" since staff members tend

to stay in their offices, "build collegial relationships, and make schoolwork more creative

and satisfying" (Donaldson, 1996, p. 21). For example, a lesson that could be taught to a

class of hearing students may have aspects that need expansion or adjustments for the DHH students. By working together teachers and interpreters are able to make sure the lesson will be accessible for everyone. This can also provide the teacher and interpreter with new perspectives to include within their lesson giving everyone exposure to more learning opportunities. By coming together to discuss the aspects of the lesson, both the teacher and interpreter will be able to make the adjustments necessary to provide everyone with the same lesson. They will also be more prepared to address issues that may arise during the lesson and because they have prepped themselves, they will be better at adjusting to unforeseen circumstances (Donaldson, 1996). These paired teams then are supporting each other, teaching each other, and exemplifying the goal of purposeful learning (Donaldson, 1996). This goal is to teach students to be prepared for the real world. Educational systems use purposeful learning to get lessons across in a manner that helps everyone understand the reason behind why they are learning something (Crimmin, 2012). For teachers and educators, this is "the 'why' behind learning goals and ensures that students understand how [lessons] relate" to the goal (Crimmin, 2012, p.1). According to Crimmin (2012), this type of learning allows the students to learn something that is focused on their general interests so that it can motivate them to contribute on their own accord. Being able to create lessons that students' can both understand as well as apply to their daily life, takes collaboration.

Collaboration within a school system is not a new concept and according to Arends (2015), schools create communities naturally by coming together "to promote purposeful learning" (p. 502). Communities, even in schools, have their own cultures and synergy about how they are run. This culture "provides the organizational arrangements

that hold it together and give it power as a social entity" (Arends, 2015, p. 502). Culture also influences the roles everyone plays within it, like the teachers, aides, administrators, etc. The interpreter's role directly intermingles with the teacher's as they share a classroom and common goals. They should work together so efficiently that they become bonded from sharing their ideas (Arends, 2015). Arends (2015, p. 505) cited Sergiovanni (1996), stating that school communities are based on their shared goals and respect:

> Communities are collections of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who are together bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals. This bonding and binding is tight enough to transform them from a collections of "I's" into a collective we. As a "we," members are part of a tightly knit web of meaningful relationships. (p.48)

This "we" relationship would provide interpreters the same support teachers receive from each other and enable them to provide DHH students equivalent access to the teacher's lessons. Working as a collectivist society and supporting each other accomplishing our tasks is what a school community thrives on. America's culture is primarily individualistic, but according to Arends (2015), schools show more success when the staff exhibits a collective responsibility for the students' learning through mutual support and trust among staff members (p. 511). Because the goal is to help teachers and interpreters work as a team, they should be integrated into the school's community. Being a member of a paired team will include the interpreter in the school's community. "These learning communities create and maintain an environment that fosters collaboration, honest talk, and a commitment to the growth and development of individual members and to the group as a whole" (Lieberman & Miller, 2011, p. 16). By working as part of a team

the interpreter will have a better understanding of the lesson and be able to interpret each lesson more accurately.

Teachers and interpreters who work as a paired team are supporting the IEP needs of the DHH student. Doing this shows that they are both committed to working together, willing to communicate with each other, and set time aside for one another (Donaldson, 1996). Teachers already collaborate with fellow teachers in and out of their department for feedback regarding creating and implementing their lessons. This collaboration also occurs with the IEP team members to ensure the specialized needs of students are being met. Teachers and interpreters are on this team so they should also collaborate about upcoming lessons and goals. The teacher can share the course's upcoming plans with the interpreter and a dialogue can begin about what each of them expects or needs from the other. In the end, teachers and interpreters share the same goal; to provide students access to their education, and by working together they will be more prepared to carry out a plan of action (Donaldson, 1996). Boys Town (n.d.) states no one professional has all the skills to meet the educational needs of the special education student, so the IEP team must come together and use each other as resources for learning how to meet the student's goals. The interpreter and teacher have different educational backgrounds, which make them each an expert in their field. According to Donaldson (1996), bringing our skills together will not only improve lessons for students, but the teachers and interpreters will also learn from one another and grow as professionals:

> Respecting and caring for your colleague brings openness and a heightened sense of learning and mutual discovery. By learning together, clarifying your purposes,

and negotiating your differences, you solidify the relationship and create a strong foundation for your work together (p. 22).

Teachers and interpreters should get together to discuss what skills, knowledge, experience, etc. each of them can bring to their new partnership. By merging their skills, they can create a superpower team which can have "impressive benefits" (Donaldson, 1996, p. 42). To be a successful team, Liberman (2011) emphasizes that teachers must meet regularly and build a trusting and open relationship; develop clear purposes, routines, and rituals with one another; and have honest dialogues that include advice, peer teaching and learning, and questions for one another. According to Lieberman and Miller (1991), as cited in Donaldson (1996, p. 4), collaboration is linked to enriched teaching, learner-centered planning, and better learning. Therefore, by bringing their skills together, sharing their perspectives, and collaborating on lessons the "working relationship between these professionals improves" (Beaver, 1995, p.42). This improvement will help interpreters interpret the teacher's lessons and help teachers connect with their DHH students. According to Leana (2011), as cited in Arends (2015), when teachers felt the trust and closeness with other staff members, students also showed "significantly higher gains than students in classrooms where teachers did not trust or collaborate with each other" (p.512).

Impact of Collaboration

Teacher and interpreter relationships start with learning how to interact and work together to improve education for the students whether DHH or hearing. According to Siple (1994), some educational interpreters have expressed that they felt teachers tended to just carry on with their classes as if the DHH student and interpreter were not present

(Siple, 1994). This lack of communication then leaves the DHH students going unnoticed, under-rewarded, and undisciplined for actions for which hearing students would get recognized (Mertens, 1991). Not intermingling the students is a disservice to both the DHH and hearing students in the classroom. They should be exposed to each other, learn how to interact together, and how to work with one another because it is a great learning opportunity that will show other perspectives to them and broadens their minds. According to Antia & Kreimeyer (2001), "Each child is a member of the classroom rather than a visitor, and every attempt is made to integrate the child, both socially and academically, with his or her public school peers (Schnorr, 1990, and Stinson & Antia, 1999)" (p. 355).

Other ways in which the impact of collaboration can be measured is through the growth and education in which the interpreter and teacher undergo as a result of their relationship. They can "encourage and support members to examine their practice, to try out new ideas, and to reflect together on what works and why; and . . . provide opportunities for the collective construction and sharing of new knowledge" (Lieberman & Miller, 2011, p. 16). The interpreter's ability to accurately interpret the teacher's meaning will become easier through their relationship. By working together as a team, the interpreter will be able to know and understand the teacher's message in its entirety including their main objectives, main points, takeaways, style, vocal intonation, and how to apply it (Boys Town, n.d.). By working with the teacher ahead of time, the interpreter will be more prepared and have a better chance at accurately matching the speaker's true intent. (Ministry of Education, 1994). This does not mean that an interpreter is unable to walk in, without prep materials, and still interpret successfully, but even their best work

will not be able to capture the teacher's underlying intent, nuances, and personality compared to an ongoing interpreter who collaborates with the teacher ahead of time. The general point of the message will still be interpreted, but the "interpreter must be prepared in order to be effective in the classroom" (Boys Town, n.d.). If the interpreter is ongoing, meaning will be working in the same classroom long-term, then the teacher and interpreter should communicate their roles clearly to one another so they can better understand how to work together. This will also "reduce misinterpretation because both parties may become more familiar and comfortable with each other's communication styles over time" (Ohtake, Milagros, & Fowler, 2000, p. 14). This will enable them to discuss what their expectations and hopes are for each other as well as be able to come to a common ground about a plan for working with the DHH student. This will also encourage the team to have open communication with each other so they can discuss lessons and tactics to ensure they will accomplish the objective of the lesson. Educational success relies on teachers and interpreters collaborating (Ministry of Education, 1994).

Through their teamwork, interpreters and teachers can utilize each other as checkpoints stopping to make sure that lessons, goals, and even the interpreter's perspective of the message's meaning are clear. Teachers can utilize the fact that interpreters "have been trained to decipher all levels of communication" to ensure that their lessons are clear for students (Siple, 1994, p. 141). This is a special skill that can be used to check for gaps in student comprehension. For example, if the interpreter interrupts the lecture and asks for clarification then that is a "good indication that most students are [also] not comprehending the information being presented" (Siple, 1994, p.141). Similarly, the teacher should be glancing at the interpreter as they lecture so they

can see when they catch up during a lecture. Just like hearing students, if a plethora of information is thrown at the DHH student, they may become overwhelmed. The teacher can watch the interpreter to see when they catch up and stop signing. This gives not only the hearing students time to comprehend what was stated but allows time for the DHH student to catch up before the lesson continues. Teachers can glance at the interpreter to check their facial expressions for possible instances when either they were unclear or when the interpreter may have gotten confused. By noticing the interpreter's backchanneling signals, like a furrowed brow or a head tilt, the teacher can use the interpreter as a checkpoint to gauge whether they should explain again or perhaps express the content in a different manner (Siple, 1994). The teacher can utilize the interpreter, their need for clarifications, and their pacing to help all students understand. According to Siple (1994), this use of the interpreter and teacher team is beneficial to everyone's learning.

Watching the interpreter is an interesting idea for teachers. They may feel silly since they do not know sign language, but it is also important for making sure that the DHH student gets to actively participate with their hearing counterparts (Siple, 1994). For example, if the interpreter is still signing, then it means they are still interpreting the previous statement, but sometimes teachers continues and starts asking students comprehension questions before the DHH student has caught up. According to Siple (1994), the DHH student should be involved in these discussions with their hearing counterparts. Siple suggests that the class understands to wait until the teacher has finished asking the question and the interpreter has finished signing it before raising hands, speaking out, or discussion begins (1994). This is because the interpreter is

generally a couple of sentences behind the speaker so if everyone starts discussing right away or answering, the DHH student has missed out on a learning opportunity and the hearing students have missed out on being exposed to a DHH perspective. Looking at the interpreter can help the teacher monitor their pacing so that everyone has time to process what is being asked while the DHH student catches up (Siple, 1994 and Ministry of Education, 1994). Once the interpreter has put their hands down the teacher will know that everyone is ready to actively participate in the discussion. I have experienced DHH students wanting to comment on a topic or answer a question, but because there was no pause for interpretation, the moment to participate passed and the DHH student was left behind unable to express themselves. If they commented late then they were left embarrassed and the hearing counterparts were confused as to why the DHH students were off-topic. The teacher and interpreter should understand how to work as a team to provide everyone access to the lesson, time to comprehend it, and time to participate in class discussions together.

In order to collaborate successfully, teachers and interpreters must understand each other's professional role. Interpreters require training to be interpreters and teachers also undergo training to learn how to teach. They each should also be "educated to gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities" of their teammates (Hurwitz, 1995, p.9). Once everyone understands each other, then they can work together to provide the DHH student with full access to their education. Ronfeldt stated, as cited in Learning Forward (2016), that "student achievement gains are greater in schools with stronger collaborative environments" (p. 8). This relationship is key for interpreters to be able to translate the class materials effectively, for teachers to be able to include the DHH

student within the class' community, and provides all students an example of effective teamwork to model their future career relationships on. According to Killion (2015), schools that encouraged collaborative relationships amongst staff experienced positive effects for both staff and students. "84% indicated they were part of a team….90% [of them] report[ed] that their collaboration was helpful" (p. 63). If collaborating with other teachers about their lesson plans, improves teacher's lecture skills and enhances student learning, then interpreters and teachers should collaborate to help the DHH students' learning to prosper.

Conclusion

Although educational interpreters and teachers have been working in the same vicinity for many years and studies have been done which favor them working together as an official team, there still seems to be some disconnect between the two team members and implementing their skills together in the classroom. This disconnect could be as simple as a lack of access to information about the interpreter and their role, how to utilize their interpreter, or even just the fact that some classes do not have the same interpreter assigned every day, therefore, a consistent team is not possible. Whatever the reasoning, this paper aims to "promote effective communication among…services providers, and interpreters" by building mutual trust, educating each other about their role, listening to one another, and providing DHH students full access to education (Ohtake, Milagros, & Fowler, 2000, p. 12-13). Teachers and interpreters should support each other because if they feel they have a team backing them then successfully mainstreaming DHH students is more viable (Hummel, 1982).

Literature in this review ranges from 1982 to 2018 and discusses roles, teaming, and the impact of collaboration. The evidence supporting what teachers and interpreters' roles entail as well as the benefits of staff collaborating was vast, but data specifically focusing on interpreters and teachers collaborating, although available, was much scarcer. This seems to support King's (2018) idea that teachers may not have access to information regarding how to work with an interpreter, collaborating with them, and utilizing them in the classroom. In this research insights into both teacher and interpreter's perspectives regarding working as a team will be explored. Instances where they felt collaboration was successful and unsuccessful, will be addressed as well as how they felt students (both hearing and DHH) were impacted by their interactions.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Design

      My research question was: By understanding each other as practicing professionals, can teachers and interpreters establish and maintain a teaming relationship where they can utilize each other in a way that will help benefit everyone's education? This data will not set a standard, but it will provide a scope into the findings within CCSD. It may help teacher and interpreter teams to gauge their current relationships with each other, and it may provide them with techniques that can be applied to their teams. Data from previous studies in the literature review combined with the survey's data will be compared in hopes of determining ways in which teachers and interpreters may approach establishing and maintaining a teaming relationship with each other.

      This study uses both qualitative and quantitative methodologies for data collection. This research study employed a survey created in the Forms application provided by Google. Survey participants were either teachers who have current, or past, experience as a mainstream teacher with DHH students and interpreters in their classroom or the participants had to be someone who works, or has worked, as an educational interpreter in a mainstream setting. I used the survey to assess what participants' experiences with each other were, what they perceived "working as a team" meant to them, what kind of expectations they had from their previous team members, and what they then learned to expect from future teams. The survey also inquired about

whether they have experienced the feeling of working with a great team and asked them to elaborate on these experiences throughout the survey.

Data was collected through an online survey (See Appendix A) and my interpreter journals. The survey consisted of six sections: (1) informed consent, (2) demographic distinction of whether the survey participant was a teacher or an interpreter, then the survey split off into general open- field questions specific to their demographic selection: (3) teachers and (4) interpreters, (5) considering it all thus far, and (6) the end of survey with an open space where they were able to share anything additional about the topic and were thanked for participating.

Within the teacher and interpreter demographics, there were also subsections to help narrow down their previous experience of working with each other. For teachers, these subsections were (3.A) having worked with ongoing interpreters, (3.B) having no ongoing interpreters, (3.C) working as a team with the interpreter, and (3.D) not working with the interpreter as a team. For interpreters, the subsections were similar in concept to ones just mentioned but with the focus of working with teachers: (4.A) having worked with a teacher ongoing, (4.B) having not worked with a teacher ongoing, (4.C) working as a team with the teacher, and (4.D.) not working with the teacher as a team. Sections 3.C and 4.C were essential for the design of this study since it offered participants a chance to share how they were able to achieve working as a team and how it influenced their students' education. In the survey ongoing is defined as a long time, months, or whole school year. The topics that the questions focused on, concerned the interpreters' and the teachers' perspective regarding the interpreter's role, collaborating with the interpreter, and the impact that they see occurring on students' education. The

information gathered focuses on the experiences they have had with each other, how teaming did or did not work, understanding of each other's roles, and how communication plays into these components. The questions where participants could type in their responses were designed so that they could leave a response that was as long or as short as they felt necessary.

Once the survey was completed, teacher and interpreter responses were compared to my personal experiences from my interpreter journal. Interpreter journals are a common method for self-reflection and professional improvement within the interpreter setting. I have been utilizing mine since the start of my interpreting career, as advised by my first mentor. My journals consist of keywords or concepts that I struggled interpreting. Then from my journal, I was able to do some more research and discuss it with an interpreting team so I could interpret that concept better the next time it came up. Comparing survey responses to my journals allowed me to analyze their experiences and strategies to that of my own in hopes of gaining further understanding of their insights and methods.

Population

The participants of this study consisted of adults, age 24 and above, who work within Nevada's Clark County School District (CCSD) as either a teacher or interpreter. The research primarily took place at schools that facilitate Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) programs because teachers who work at DHH schools received a direct email regarding the study. The survey results were viewed in bulk summary review, meaning there is no name or distinguishing way to separate the participants from one another besides the title of the section to which they responded. I chose to view the survey results

in this manner so that I would not see any participants' emails and avoid any bias if I recognized an individual's name. As a result of viewing responses in this manner, any survey participants who are quoted will only be identified as either a teacher or interpreter. No further distinguishing or naming will be made when quoting participants' remarks.

Data Collection

Before accessing the survey, participants had to read and agree to the study's consent letter (See Appendix A). Clicking 'accept' under the consent letter would take them into the survey and clicking 'decline' would take them to an exit page thanking them for their consideration. The survey was formatted in Google Forms and accessible online via a link provided (see Appendix B). The survey opened on May 10, 2019, and closed on June 25, 2019.

The survey was sent out to every core class teacher at each DHH school within the Las Vegas region, posted to social media, sent to the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) email list for Southern Nevada, and emailed to the local branch of Sorenson interpreters. I sent direct emails to each DHH programs' Teacher for the Deaf and the school district's interpreter scheduler asking for them to forward the survey to those whom they knew qualified to participate. All emails and social media posts linked the survey and encouraged people to pass it on to recruit more participants.

Data collected from the Google survey form was kept on a password-protected Google account on the Forms and Sheets application programs. The computer used to access the data is also password protected. Confidentially was maintained using Google's Survey 'summary view' formatting which removes all participant's emails and contact

information. The master survey with emails is kept on the same password-protected Google Forms and Sheets application program.

Data Analysis Procedures

Preparing the data collected for analysis was an extensive process. Originally, I was concerned I would not be able to collect enough data to gain a true insight into the region's teacher and interpreter teams, but I was fortunate enough to receive numerous responses. The challenge of assessing 64 surveys was quite daunting especially since all the data was on an online survey. I prefer to analyze tangible things, but printing did not seem like a feasible option. Printing 64 surveys was going to take a great amount of paper, ink, and money. I also feared that seeing everyone's individual survey responses would create a bias. I decided to only print the responses in Google's 'summary form' view. This feature on Google Forms shows each question and each response but not who stated them. This allowed me to print the whole survey and everyone's responses without seeing who they were, and I was able to begin analyzing the data collected.

I used a color and letter coding system to analyze the results as I read through them. I began by reading through each question and response ready with pens and highlighters. I prefer color coding systems and found that I was able to label responses so I could distinguish participants' responses from one another. Many participants had numerous thoughts and ideas which they shared repeatedly. Some of my labels consisted of stars for quotes which could line up with data in my literature review, C's for ideas regarding keeping communication open with, R's when issues were occurring due to role confusion, and I highlighted instances of teamwork in yellow. Google Forms takes multiple-choice questions and forms them into circle graphs which helped me

hypothesize how each sections' expansion questions would turn out. After reading and annotating all the survey's answers, I read through my interpreter journals from the 2018-2019 school year and looked for instances where my communication with the teacher expressed characteristics of good teamwork, when my communication with teachers could have been improved, and when I felt others misunderstood my role. Comparing the survey results to my journals allowed me to look for parallels between my experiences and the experiences of those surveyed.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is that this research does not aim to set any standards nationwide, statewide, or even within my district. It merely presents a scope of findings at 8 different DHH schools within my area. This, to my knowledge, excludes any teachers who may have a DHH student at their zoned school with a one on one interpreter unless the survey was forwarded on to them. This study does not represent all teachers or interpreters working with DHH students, just those who chose to participate in it. Some quantitative data will be explored in the results section, but those quantities did not undergo statistical testing and only represent the population surveyed. The population surveyed will also be addressed using percentages formulated by the Google Form survey application and can only be attributed to the scope that was involved in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Sixty-four surveys were collected in a little over one month; one response was taken out of the results because they contacted me afterward realizing they did not match the demographic requirements. A total of sixty-three participants were included in the study. The following will break down the survey into two main sections: teachers and interpreters. Each main section was then broken into subsections that the survey would send them to depending on how they answered questions in previous sections. The subsections for teachers included having an ongoing interpreter that was a team member, ongoing but was not a team member, and no ongoing interpreter. The subsections for the interpreters included having worked as an ongoing interpreter, being a part of the educational team ongoing, ongoing but not a part of the team, and no ongoing assignments. Each section was analyzed using a color and letter coding system described in Chapter 3, subsection "Data Analysis Procedures".

Demographics

Of those surveyed, 26 were interpreters and 37 were teachers. The teachers had the choice to include which setting they work in; primary, secondary, or they could just skip the question. Twenty-one chose not to answer and 17 disclosed their teaching setting; 8 selected primary, and 9 selected secondary.

Are you a teacher or interpreter?

64 responses

- Teacher
- Interpreter

40.6%

59.4%
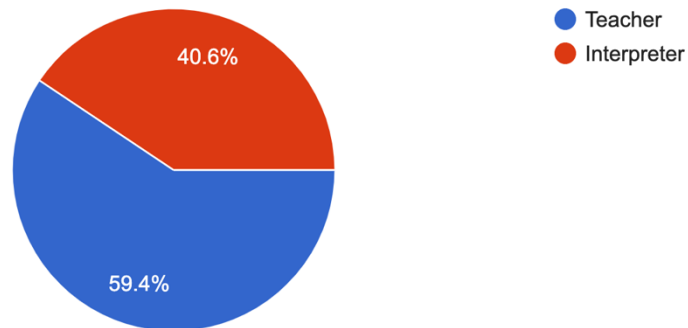
Figure 1: *Demographics of research participants*

Teachers

The teacher's sections of the survey were separated from that of the interpreters and next required them to estimate how many interpreters they have worked with as a teacher. The range included 0-5 interpreters, 6-10 interpreters, or more than they could recall. Of the teachers surveyed, 63% (24) appeared to be new to working with interpreters having chosen 0-5 as the number of interpreters they have had the experience of working with before. When asked if they had worked with these interpreters in an on-going setting, meaning the same interpreter for a long time, 95% (36 teachers), said yes and only two said no.

No ongoing interpreter - (teachers).

The two who had not had experience with the same interpreter for an ongoing period were then taken to a subsection where it appears only one chose to participate. The big question in this section was whether this teacher felt that having different interpreters every class would negatively impact the teacher's ability to teach the DHH student. The one response was a "no" stating that it did not negatively affect them, and they chose not to answer any other questions in this section which would have expanded upon the

reasons behind their initial response. I was hoping to analyze their expansions for evidence of whether they work with the interpreter as a team member but was unable to do so.

Ongoing interpreter - (teachers).

Thirty-six teachers who answered having had interpreters for ongoing periods were then directed to a different subsection, Ongoing Interpreter Experience (T). Here 86% were new with working with an ongoing interpreter stating they had worked with 0-5, 11% had worked with 5-10 interpreters, and 2.8% had worked with 11 or more. When asked about these experiences and whether they felt these interpreters were a part of their educational team, 28 or 77.8% said yes and eight or 22.2% said no.

Did you consider any of these ongoing interpreters a part of your educational team?
36 responses
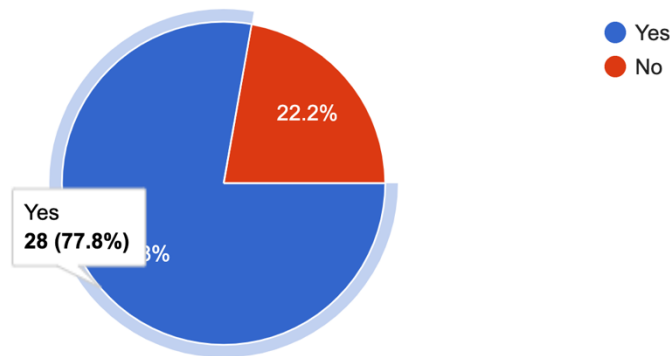
Figure 2: Did you consider the ongoing interpreters a part of the educational team?
This teacher's responses led them to another subsection called Educational Team – Ongoing (Teachers) (ETO-T) or No Educational Team – Ongoing (Teachers) (NETO-T) depending upon how they answered.

Twenty-seven teachers who felt they had an educational team with their ongoing interpreters were taken to the ETO-T section and asked questions regarding their experience with these teams. When asked if new interpreters had to explain their role to them, 37% stated yes to both questions, 48 % said no, and 14% had other extraneous comments. The second part of this question asked if teachers felt they knew how to utilize the interpreter and to explain their thoughts. This question was intentionally vague to gauge teachers' first idea of what "utilizing" the interpreter meant to them. Although interpreters do provide DHH student's access to communication between other students and the teacher, I wanted to see how many teachers also included teaming aspects into their answer. Only 10 responses out of 27 clearly showed characteristics having worked as an educational team. These aspects were noted with phrases that included ideas like open communication, mentions of meetings or debriefings, and comments that showed teachers felt supported and or learned from the experience. Five participants chose not to expand upon their response just stating they knew how to utilize them or that the interpreter was just there to interpret. There were also two comments which demonstrated that the interpreter's role was not explained, and they were left confusing an aide position with the interpreters.

This idea that some experienced role confusion proved to be accurate when asked straightforward if the interpreter's role was clear or not? Twenty-two responded to the question, 15 stated that yes it was clear, 5 stated it was not, and 2 expanded on their thoughts expressing that initially they were unsure, but through teamwork, they learned what the interpreter's role entailed. Yet again, 3 participants' comments expressed issues understanding the interpreter's role with that of an aide's stating that they were unsure

why some helped students and others did not and that they didn't see the difference between them

Next teachers were asked to reflect upon their teaming relationship with interpreters and how they became a team. Twenty-six teachers responded to this question. More than half (14 or 53%) stated that the relationship spontaneously formed naturally, 2 teachers stated they initiated it, 2 others stated that the interpreter initiated the relationship, and 6 others added thoughts without definitive answers as to how the teaming began. Then, the survey asked more specific questions regarding how the teacher and interpreter work together. When asked if the interpreter asked for prep materials ahead of time, 25% said yes, 25% said no, and 50% selected sometimes.

Teachers were then questioned about how they maintain an ongoing teaming relationship with interpreters. Twenty-two teachers answered this question. Again, this question was left vague to see how many would include aspects that my literature review stated as teaming characteristics. Twenty-one teachers directly mentioned some form of open communication such as directly, mentioning routine meetings, information sharing, daily/weekly check-ins, frequent contact, debriefing, explanations of lessons, and adjusting said lessons per their meetings.

The last question posed to teachers who have had ongoing educational teams with interpreters was "Do you feel as though having this team in your classroom benefits the DHH student's education, your ability to teach, and the class environment as a whole?" This 3-part question was intentionally placed together to see if teachers could find ways in which the three ideas overlapped each other. Twenty-five teachers chose to answer. Seven answered with yes and no further comments to support their opinion. Fifteen

responded "yes" with exclamation marks and supported their thoughts ranging from communication about lessons, DHH understanding, and easing the teacher's workload. This idea of easing the teacher's workload responsibilities was stated numerous times throughout the data collected. Many teachers were referring to the idea that teachers already have 35+ students to pay attention to, so by having the interpreter focused on the DHH students' understanding of the topic, that is one thing they can check off their to-do list. They also emphasized that through open communication with their interpreter they can use the interpreter to then check the DHH student's understanding without having to call them out in front of the class. One even stated that "the interpreter may see issues that the teacher doesn't see right away because their focus is on that DHH [student] rather than a room full of 35 kids". Seven teachers also specifically stated something regarding how having an interpreter in the classroom exposes everyone to new experiences from which they can learn. Their comments ranged from ideas like helping encourage hearing students to learn sign language, exposure to different disabilities, expanding their perspective as to how others see the world, and how adults collaborate in the workplace.

The teachers who have had interpreters in ongoing settings but did not feel as though the interpreter was a part of the educational team (NETO-T) were taken to a different subsection after stating they were not a team. Here I chose to analyze how they viewed their relationship with the interpreter. Only eight teachers were taken to this subsection. Looking through the results there seemed to be a need for more communication to occur for their relationship to start the process of becoming a team. When asked how they and the interpreter interacted with each other, 3 stated that very little interaction occurred, 1 stated confusion with the interpreters role, 4 showed that

they have had successful interactions which exhibited teaming characteristics, but that they may have not been able to form the same kind of relationship with the next interpreter that they met.

Teachers were then asked if interpreters had requested prep materials from them ahead of time. Educator's results showed 75% said no, 25% said sometimes, and zero stated that it was a common occurrence.

Does the interpreter ever ask for prep materials for the next lesson?
8 responses
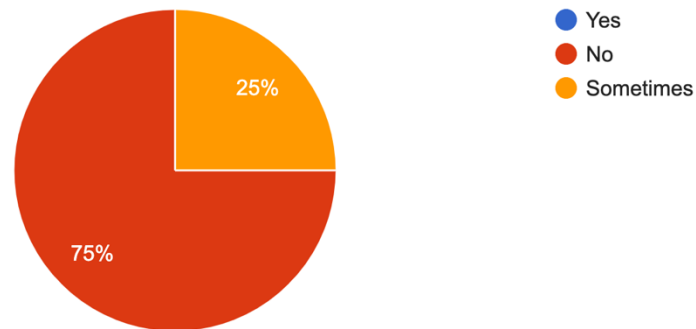
Figure 3: Does the interpreter request prep materials?

As an ongoing or regular interpreter, I found this interesting to compare to my experiences. The next question was set up just in case teachers had said interpreters do not ask for prep materials, because without prep materials interpreters may have questions regarding the teacher's goal of the lesson and may ask. When asked if interpreters expressed confusion about or asked questions to help clarify their understanding of the lesson, 6 teachers stated yes, and 2 teachers said no. When asked how the teacher's replied to the interpreter's request for more information, all 6 who replied yes answered the interpreter's questions with more information regarding the

lesson and exhibited teaming characteristics so that the interpreter could match their intent to the best of their ability.

The last question this group answered was if they felt they, the teacher, and the interpreter could work better as a team, if they thought it would be beneficial to them as a teacher, and to explain their opinion. All 8 participants expressed that the interpreter and teacher could work better as a team. Two stated that there is always room for improvement, but if the interpreter is not ongoing then collaboration is impossible. Two expressed that they wish interpreters had contracted hours after school like they do so they could have more time for collaboration. Three stated ideas that correlated to giving interpreters prep materials ahead of time stating that the class would run more smoothly if interpreters could understand the class information beforehand. One teacher stated that "students benefit from strong collaboration!"

Interpreters

The 30 interpreters who participated in the survey were asked to distinguish themselves by setting (either primary or secondary) and if they worked as an ongoing interpreter. Out of those surveyed, 14 (56%) interpreters selected primary, and 16 (64%) chose secondary. Twenty-one interpreters, 81%, had worked in ongoing settings and 5, (19%) had not.

Working in educational interpreting, have you had ongoing assignments with the same teacher (ongoing being ...ple months to the entire school year)?

26 responses
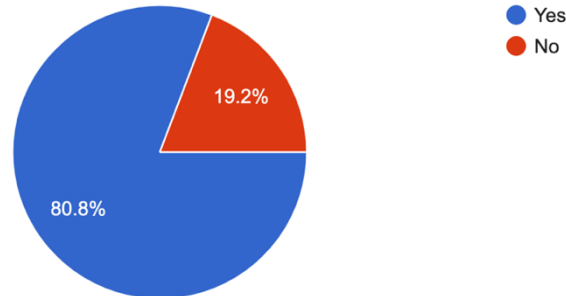
Figure 4: Have you had ongoing assignments?

Ongoing assignment- (interpreters).

The twenty-one interpreters who responded that they have worked as an ongoing interpreter were taken to the ongoing interpreter subsection to inquire about their experience working with the educational team. The first question was if they felt they were considered a part of the educational team at their ongoing assignment(s). Sixteen (76%) responded that they were a part of the educational team and only 5 (23%) said they were not. Their answers would determine which subsection they would go to next, either Educational Team – Ongoing (Interpreters) (ETO-I) or No Educational Team – Ongoing

(Interpreters) (NETO-I)

Having worked with a teacher in an ongoing setting, were you considered a part of the educational team?

21 responses
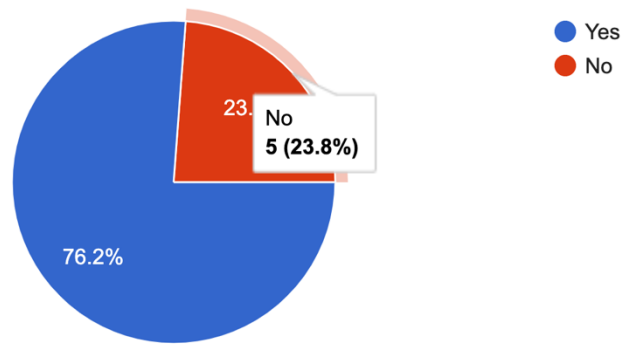
Figure 5: Were you considered part of the educational team?

The interpreters who have been a part of an educational team were taken to the ETO-I subsection and asked about their experience forming a team with the teacher. First, interpreters were asked how they introduced themselves and explained their role to teachers. When analyzing the 16 responses, I noticed that everyone covered who they were and why they were coming into the teacher's classroom. All 16 stated their name and job title, 7 explained their role to the teacher, 5 brought up communicating and working with the teacher like a team, and 1 specifically stated to the teacher that they were there as a part of the team.

Next, interpreters were asked to think back on their time with that teacher and determine if they felt the teacher was confused by their role and, if so, how did they clarify their role with them. These answers could be as long as the respondents felt they needed to be. Four responses emphasized teachers not understanding the role differences between an interpreter and an aide. Eleven had to reexplain their roles with specific examples of what their roles and responsibilities do and do not entail. Three specifically

mentioned activities which embodied the start of teamwork like meeting with the teachers, in-service workshops, collaborating, and teaching the teacher about DHH.

Then interpreters were asked about how they believe they start working as a team with a teacher and what kind of things they do to establish a team-like relationship with them. Again, I left the response length open to their discretion. All sixteen responses involved keeping open communication with the teacher, educating them on DHH by answering their questions about it, respecting each other and each other's space, and collaborating on lectures, lessons, and listening to each other's ideas. One participant expressed that collaborating was a two-way street where both the teacher and interpreter must respect and listen to one another:

> For me, the best way to work well as a teaching team is to respect the teacher's authority. That is, I must remember that while I am an integral part of the teaching process, I am NOT LEADING the team. All ideas, thoughts, comments, problems, or solutions that I might have related to the student and his/her academics must always be discussed with the teacher. Conversely, any decisions, lectures, presentations, or interactions that affect the interpreting dynamics should always be discussed with me, the interpreter. This professional consideration establishes a certain level of respect for each other. After all, s/he is doing something I cannot, and I am doing something s/he cannot. Teamwork seems to follow mutual respect.

Because we are talking about working together, the next question asked interpreters if they asked their teacher team counterparts for prep materials ahead of time. One participant said no, 7 said yes, and 8 said sometimes. In the comment section of this

question, many expanded stating that it depended upon the topic and their comfort level with the information.

Do you ask the teacher for prep materials ahead of time?
16 responses
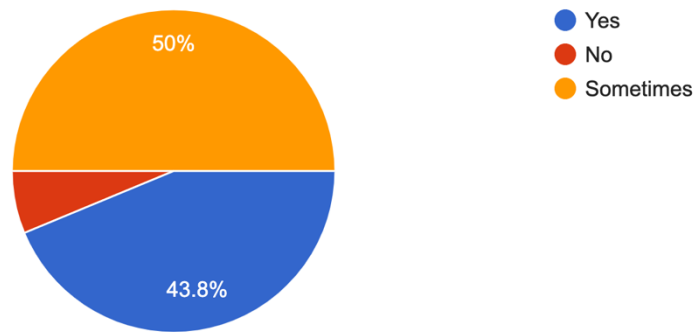
Figure 6: Do you ask the teacher for prep materials?

Next, I asked if teachers were open to giving interpreters prep materials in advance, if they understood why an interpreter would want the information ahead of time, and how they would approach this kind of situation. Interpreter responses varied in length. Seven interpreters expressed frustration stating that whether they could get prep materials in advance depended upon if the teacher was prepared beforehand or not. One stated: "I've never had a teacher have a problem with it unless they are unprepared themselves." All 16 participants expressed that they would have a conversation with the teacher either in person or via email expressing that having the materials ahead of time will benefit their ability to interpret them accurately, but 5 did mention that due to teachers' workloads they had to remind them periodically. Five interpreters' explanations of how they explain the need for prep materials all expressed teaming features like open communications, meetings, collaboration, and being able to express the lesson's objectives as the teacher intended.

These features popped up again in the interpreter's responses to how they maintain this new ongoing teaming relationship. Fifteen interpreters responded: 11 discussed team communication being a constant requirement. Each answer was worded differently but open communication was a theme clearly outline in each responses' comments using phrases such as working together in the classroom, appreciating each other's efforts and patience, having regular meetings, and keeping an open dialogue for lesson adjustments. With this in mind, interpreters with ongoing educational teams finally reached this section's last question: "Do you feel as though having this team benefits the DHH student's education, your ability to interpret, and the class environment as a whole? How so? Explain your perspective?" All participants agreed stating that having the team benefits their interpretation, the student's education, and the classroom environment. Interpreters had numerous positive comments regarding how the team impacts all three of these parts stating things such as "the student and I are always more successful when their teachers are on board with working as a team", eases the mood, extra pair of eyes to gauge content comprehension, friendlier environment, both members feel supported, increases access to knowledge, invites DHH to truly feel like a member of the classroom, shows an example to all student of model teamwork, and so on. For one particular participant, teamwork helps them provide a better interpretation of the teacher's lesson and "increases the student's overall experience" in the classroom. Another commented stating that "working together, we expand the teacher's instructional/educational capabilities – and therefore the student's success – exponentially."

No ongoing assignments – (interpreters).

The 5 interpreters who answered that they do not do ongoing assignments were taken to a subsection where they were asked how they introduce themselves to a teacher when they first meet them. Three replied that they state their name and that they are the interpreter, but if a teacher has never worked with an interpreter before then they may not know what their job entails. One respondent indicated that they introduced themselves and immediately attempts to open up a dialogue about class norms and what they would be doing today, and one respondent offered a generic introduction by stating they would be "working with the students" which may lead to more confusion for teachers.

Next, the non-ongoing interpreters were asked if they ask the teacher what the class will be covering. One stated that teachers generally fill them in as soon as they open a dialogue with their introduction, two stated yes, one stated no, and one said only if they are unfamiliar with the class subject. Then, they were asked to think back to how teachers responded to their inquiry about what the class would be doing that day. The responses were mixed: two stated the teachers were generally open to sharing their lesson and materials, one stated it depended on whether the teacher had experience with DHH before, one stated that teachers did not want to be bothered, and one said that teachers would fill them in with a quick vague response.

Interpreter consistency was the next topic interpreters were asked about: "Do you think having a different interpreter each class impacts DHH student's access to education? How?" I knew that interpreters would reply with yes and no's with such reasonings regarding how consistency helps them understand each other and the topic, but that it is also great to have exposure to different interpreters everyday like the real

adult world, but I was also hoping to see if they might mention anything about collaborating with the teacher. Out of the five responses, two interpreters stated that it was the same experience as a hearing student having a different teacher every day and that consistency was preferable. Every time they have a new interpreter, the teacher or student must redefine the classroom norms and terms again "instead of being allowed to concentrate on synthesizing the information being taught." Three responses emphasized consistency is better for DHH students and their interpreters because they will be used to each other's signing style, the classroom, and have better access to education.

Next, interpreters were asked how they think their interpretation is impacted when they do not have ongoing assignments and are then jumping in and out of classes, various topics, and grade levels every day. Five interpreters responded to this question: one stated they felt no impact, but the other four's responses emphasized in one way or another that being able to interpret to the best of their ability needed consistency, forming relationships with teachers so they can use the same scaffolding teacher's lessons use, and/or communication with the student and teacher. One of the comments was that jumping in and out of topics and grade levels impacts their interpretation because each topic's goals vary depending upon the teacher and students. One respondent stated, "my interpretation is best when I have the same set of students consistently throughout the day and school year." Another added, "Without being a consistent interpreter in the classroom, I am not able to interpret as well as I could because I don't have any classroom back history, teacher/student relationship, past course content, IEP accommodations, etc." Although one interpreter said it does not affect their interpretation, the other four interpreters all seem to agree that their interpretation could

be better if they were there every day to know the teacher, their classroom, and the students.

Considering it all (both teachers and interpreters)

After everyone completed their subsections, they were taken to the last section of the survey. Here they were asked if they thought there could be benefits to forming a relationship between teachers and interpreters in ongoing educational settings. This question was meant to focus on the interpreter and teacher using each other as team members to support each other's goals. Sixty-two participants responded to the question; 54 (87%) stated yes, 6 (9.5%) said maybe, and no one selected no. There was one participant who said they were unsure what was meant by the question and another who chose to expand on the idea of teaming:

> "if by 'teaming,' you mean working together to focus on the individual student
> who needs interpretation, then most definitely. If by 'teaming,' you mean sharing
> the instructional duties of the whole class, then that would be more difficult to
> answer-much of it depends on the interpreter's background, training, and
> familiarity with the subject matter at hand. The focus from my previous
> experience with an interpreter was solely on the individual DHH student, and
> rarely did the interpreter interact with/instruct/assist other students."

Do you think there could be benefits to forming a teaming relationship between teachers and interpreters in ongoing educational settings?
63 responses

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- I'm not sure what this means.
- If by "teaming," you mean working together to focus on the individual student who needs interpretation, then most definitely. If by "teaming," you mean sharing the instructional duties of the whole class, then that…

87.3%
9.5%
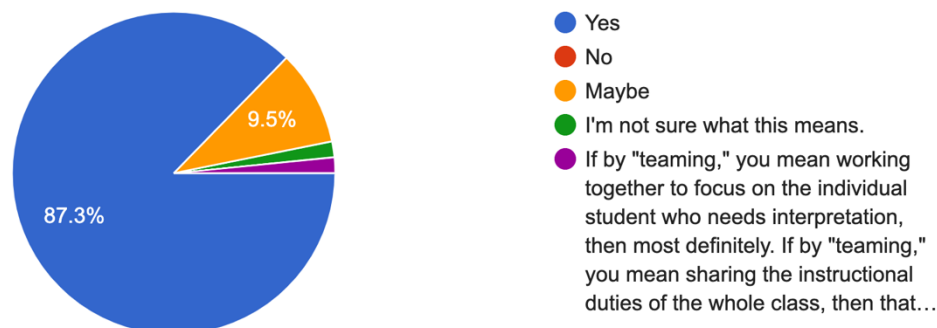
Figure 7: Benefits of forming a team

Next, participants were asked how a teaming relationship would benefit them. Answers provided if participants needed to explain their opinion. Fifty-nine participants responded, 55 expanded stating that teaming relationships benefit everything from the interpretation, the lesson being taught, and the students involved. These fifty-five responses all exhibited examples of teaming relationships such as open communication, meetings, sharing information, collaborating on lessons, interacting in class like role models, and using each other for support. One interpreter stated:

If you form a relationship with teachers you work with, communication comes naturally. What is working, what isn't working; what things does the interpreter need to expand on, what things is the student not understanding. With a good relationship, teachers are more welcoming to accept advice (like use more visuals) and an interpreter can better know what the teacher needs the students to learn.

One teacher stated that "Building relationships [with interpreters] results in stronger instruction, which leads to better student understanding". When asked if they would be interested in forming a teaming relationship with the next teacher/interpreter they meet,

thirty-three (85%) said yes, 3 (4.8%) said no, and 6 (9.5%) said maybe when responding to whether they might try implementing a teaming relationship with their next ongoing assignment.

Do you think you might try establishing a teaming relationship with the next interpreter/teacher you work with?

63 responses
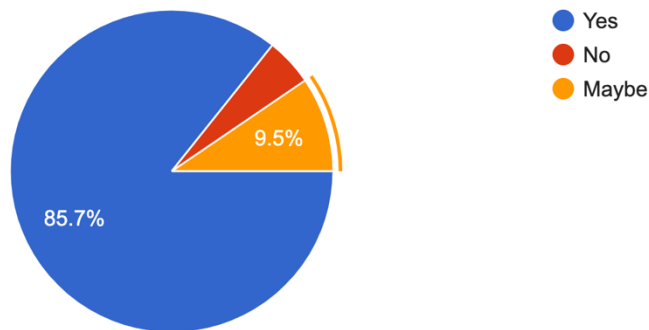
Figure 8: Will you try forming a teaming relationship?

Next, if they said yes to the previous question, they were asked how they might go about establishing and maintaining a teaming relationship with a future colleague. Even though only 33 said yes to the previous question, 56 participants responded. Participants' were able to leave as detailed an answer as they needed to express their opinion. One teacher pointed out that interpreters and teachers are there for the same goal, which is the student, and that they should work together with such a goal in mind:

> What's most important is our student. I will always welcome an interpreter into my room and let them know whatever I can do for them, I am here!! In the past, we always met before class begins to discuss what I can do or what I'd appreciate from her. Communication is the key with a good positive attitude, most of all respect for each other's field.

Fort-two participants responded stating that they would implement some form of collaboration, open communication, and teach each other about their profession. They included ideas such as having regular meetings, sharing emails, discussing things before and after classes, and respecting each other. These are all characteristics of what a teaming relationship entails and would be a great start for their new relationships.

My Interpreting Journals

After analyzing all of the survey data I looked through some of my interpreting journals from my experiences during the 2018-2019 school year. I noticed parallels between when I had a teaming relationship with teachers, when I did not, and how communication affected them. One of the biggest similarities I noticed was my frustration with my interpretation when I did not have a teaming relationship with the teacher. There were a few instances in the school year when I interpreted in classes where I did not have a teaming relationship with the teacher. In these classes, I noted that my interpretation seemed to convey the subject at a basic level but did not contain any influence from the teacher's perspective of the lesson's objective because I did not know them. There were two instances after a class where I tried to ask the teacher for clarification in a conversational manner and realized that what I had perceived as the teacher's point was not the way they intended it. By not having a teaming relationship with the teacher, I was not able to fully interpret their meaning's intent to the best of my ability. Not being a part of a team directly and negatively impacts my ability to successfully interpret.

In classes where I had an established teaming relationship with teachers, I was able to prepare my interpretations based on the teacher's style and lesson's objectives.

This enabled me to have multiple interpretations prepared depending on how my DHH student responded to them. This helps my interpretation skills grow and it enables me to be able to provide different interpretations of the same message to different academic levels. One relationship which stood out in last year's journals was one that embodied Fletcher's (2004) RT practices. The teacher and I were able to meet early on in the school year, established a teaming relationship, meet almost every class briefly for a quick overview, and once a week for an in-depth look at the lessons coming up. This relationship was very unique because for the first time I was a part of a team where I not only felt the teacher understood *why* I needed the prep materials but they also really wanted to include the DHH students in the classroom. They asked me questions about their lessons, and we were able to integrate new elements into their lesson which were more Deaf friendly. This teacher even had some activities that were designed to not be hearing friendly so to expose the hearing students to new experiences. My journals from this class show how interpreter and teacher teams positively impact my interpretations and provide many examples that show how we utilized each other to enhance education for everyone in the classroom.

In all relationships communication is key. Reviewing how I introduced myself to teachers and how they responded to me, I realized when I formed a bias with teachers depending on how they originally responded to my introduction and their ability to provide prep materials. This was hard for me to overcome throughout the school year. I still tried to maintain a teaming relationship with all my teachers, but overcoming the initial impression seemed to be a challenge if I was unable to get them to understand my need for prep material. I do see that I need to work on not letting my initial impressions

set a standard for my work relationships, but it was evident that my interpretation was more successful with teachers who were willing to work with me as a team member. I also noted that teachers who appeared to be prepared for their classes were able to provide prep materials ahead of time. It appears I melded better with teachers who were as equally ready to teach because they were ready to help me prepare for their lessons by providing materials ahead of time.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

In the process of this research, it has become apparent that teachers and interpreters not only should work as a team but that they also want to because they know that together they will help each other achieve their occupational goals while simultaneously enhancing all students' access to education. This type of teamwork uses Fletcher's (2004) relational theory (RT) in the workplace. RT examines how individuals and their surroundings interplay with one another and that all individuals have unique perspectives and experiences which influence how they approach tasks (like at work) (McGuinness, 2011). Fletcher (2004) emphasized that success in the workplace relied on preserving, mutual empowering, achieving, and creating teams. Survey results and comments from participants who felt they had experienced successful teacher and interpreter teams featured descriptive jargon which matched Fletcher's ideas of RT in the workplace.

From my research, "creating teams" is the first step where teachers and interpreters must begin to build collaboration. "Creating teams" must happen in collaborative supportive environments where they work together, inspire each other to achieve their goals. Throughout the survey teachers and interpreters demonstrated that they are all well aware of the relational benefits teamwork can bring to their work. They each have experienced teaming in regards to their professional community, but not all have experienced a teaming relationship specific to that of a teacher and interpreter team. This lack of experience with teaming with each other does not come from a lack of

opportunity, but perhaps a lack of access to information at their respective workplaces regarding *how* they can utilize each other as a team member. King (2018), Beaver (1995), and Hayes (1991) all emphasized the point that there is a lack of access to resources that can help guide teachers and interpreters on how they can work towards their goals together. Many teachers stated that they had no idea that they were going to have a DHH student in their classroom let alone an interpreter as well. Most stated that they had no idea what to do or how to respond to the situation. Most added that they just went about their normal procedure and learned from trial and error as the year progressed. Teachers expressed that having an interpreter in their classroom did give them access to someone who could help explain and clarify educating a DHH student in their classroom.

Part of the point of having this interpreter in the classroom is to have a team member to rely on for support and guidance. Interpreters are there to support the DHH students' education and that involves working with the teacher as part of the IEP team. In fact, both teachers and interpreters share the same goal of helping students succeed so that their working together will result in "cooperation, collaboration, trust, respect, and collective achievement" (Fletcher, 2004, pp.280). When teachers and interpreters are "creating teams" they are taking action emulating Fletcher's RT of preserving. Boys Town (n.d.) states on their website that no one professional has all the skills to meet the educational needs of special education students, so we must come together and use each other as resources for learning how to meet the student's goals. Teachers and interpreters are great examples of this because each has different expertise and training. When they collaborate they make each other aware of new perspectives and techniques to add to their toolkits which they will then be able to use to enhance learning for all students.

The idea of awareness is Fletcher's (2004) RT practice of achieving. Teachers and interpreters already work with different individuals every day and know how to interact with them. By focusing their people skills or "relational skills" on working with their team, both interpreters and teachers can "enhance [their] own professional growth and achievement" (p. 278). This will allow them to truly connect with one other, maintain a connection, and ultimately establish "good, solid working relationships" with each other (Fletcher, 2004, p. 278). Working together in this manner requires that each member put in equal effort to achieve their goals. Survey participants also emphasized that their team meetings were crucial for lesson implementation and those successful meetings required that team members actively listened to each other, gave feedback and backchanneling signals to each other. These head nods and clarification questions demonstrate that they are not only hearing what the other has to say but taking it into account before lessons are implemented. Numerous teachers and interpreters who participated in the survey discussed how meeting with their team members provided them with a deeper insight into each other and the DHH student's perspective and needs. This new awareness then allowed interpreters to enhance their interpretations and teachers to enhance how they taught their lessons. Their meetings enabled them to have a thorough understanding of how future lessons would be implemented, how each other's roles would play out in the classroom, and enable them to share their individual skills with the team (Lytle, 2003 and Ministry of Education, 1994).

Working together in this manner also demonstrated signs of Fletcher's (2004) RT practice of mutual empowering. Teachers who had experienced *successful* teams also noted that the interpreters contributed information or skills to their projects that not only

helped them achieve providing the DHH student access to education, but it also helped them achieve goals for the entire class of students. This idea of mutual empowering is a powerful mindset which interpreters and teachers can use to even the playing field. They are not competing with each other, but instead working towards a common goal. Fletcher (2004) stated that in order to achieve individual success teachers and interpreters must first strive for their team to succeed.

Nevertheless, the data collected still showed a remarkable number of participants who still expressed confusion regarding interpreters' roles. Thirty-seven percent of teachers expressed confusion in regard to working with an interpreter, what their roles included, and many seemed to be confusing them with aides. Teachers who commented on this also wrote as though the interpreter's inability to aide prevented them from working together as a team. This demonstrates that more resources regarding what an interpreter is and what their duties entail should be more easily accessible at schools with DHH programs. It also suggests that interpreters and teachers need to have more open discussions with each other to resolve any misunderstandings. Schools with DHH programs should have pamphlets available for staff to access if they need more information regarding having DHH students, other IEP students, or interpreters in their classrooms. Similarly, interpreters expressed the same frustration stating that they had to explain their role multiple times to teachers who wanted them to aid students. It is evident that although interpreter roles and their responsibilities seem to still have some gray areas for teachers, one thing is clear, communication between teachers and interpreters is crucial if they wish to collaborate, resolve any misunderstandings, improve their relationship, and enhance education (Marschark et al. 2015).

Of the original 37% of participants who were confused regarding interpreter's roles, half of them added comments that supported the idea of opening up the floor for more discussions with each other. They stated that through communication they were able to learn how to utilize the interpreter as the school year went on. The extent of time which teachers and interpreters spent communicating in meetings varied amongst participants depending on the topic intensity and teacher lecture style. However, everyone emphasized that the relationships they formed with each other expanded their minds by bringing new perspectives to their attention which influenced how they formed their lessons. Teachers who expressed this type of communication with their interpreters worked as a team collaborating on lessons, objectives, and even noted that they felt the class as a whole gained new perspectives and understandings from their experience with a more DHH friendly lesson.

Looking back through the literature review, survey responses and my interpreter journals I have concluded that teachers and interpreters have a better chance at forming a true teaming relationship if they can meet regularly, maintain open discussions about upcoming lessons, and lay their expectations out to each other in a trusting respectful manner. By applying Fletcher's (2004) RT theories to these relationships, teachers and interpreters can utilize each other and their skills to enhance education. I have devised a chart to summarize some of the tips and ideas which came up in the literature review, in the survey results, and my journals as a potential guide to helping teachers and interpreters begin to build a teaming relationship with each other. See Appendix C for a summary of the team tips. I hope that teachers and interpreters can use this chart and the research from my study to build their teams.

Further Research

This study was an introduction to how teachers and interpreters work together. A recommendation for further study regarding these team members and their interactions over an ongoing period would give researchers more insight into how maintaining a teaming relationship impacts their goals and whether enhances education for all students. Each interpreter and teacher surveyed shared their own experiences about how they work together. Everyone's answers embodied features of teamwork like communication and collaboration, but there appeared to be no set standard that everyone followed. From this information, further research could explore different teams, how they work successfully, and if there are behaviors or tasks that should become a standard to abide by.

Teachers and interpreters are both members of the educational team and therefore should work as such. Establishing open communication, collaboration, and a set plan so that both the teacher and interpreter can provide students the best access to their education is a must. These teams should not only be encouraged, but interpreters should be granted contracted time so they may meet with teachers outside of class time to be better prepared. This research project offers insights into interpreters' roles, responsibilities, and how teachers can utilize them through collaboration and communication as an essential tool to help enhance their lessons. Teachers and interpreters must maintain open, respectful communication with each other so they may collaborate to fulfill their ultimate goal of providing the students access to education. Interpreters and teachers who work together as an effective IEP team can set a new standard and model for others which will ultimately lead to improvements in interpreting, deaf education, and academia as a whole.

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**Improving Professional Relationships in the Classroom:
Teachers and Interpreters Working Together**

Principal Investigator: Brittany LeGal   **Email**:
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The following survey is part of a graduate thesis project at Western Oregon University in
the Interpreting Studies program.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gather data on teacher and interpreter teams to
share with K-12 teachers and educational interpreting communities to help improve Deaf
education.

Participation: Voluntary and anonymous survey.

Eligibility: In order to be eligible for this study, subjects must be either:
    (1) A teacher who is or has had experienced a Deaf or Hard of Hearing student
and their interpreter in their classroom
      OR
    (2) An educational interpreter who has or is currently working in a mainstream
teacher's classroom in K-12
Survey: (20 minutes) https://forms.gle/h5Jowcgf9ADLpxzT6
If this survey link is not accessible to you, please contact the principle researcher listed
above for alternative formats.
**By clicking the above link you are giving your consent to participate in this survey.
You can stop participating in this survey at any time without penalty before submitted. If
you change your mind and do not wish to participate while filling out the survey, simply
click the "X" button if you would like to quit.**

Confidentiality: Participants will be volunteering their experiences in a google form
survey. Names will be kept confidential. Participants may also withdraw at any time from
the survey by closing the browser. If closed, their data will not be used. All data will be
kept anonymous and confidential on a password protected laptop
Data collected will be used to published in a thesis, but all names and other identifying
information will be kept confidential.

Regulations: You must be 18 years or older to participate in this study.

Risks: There are no foreseeable physical risks, but if participants experience any
emotional, social, stress related or other risks, they may contact us with their questions or
concerns. Although there are no foreseeable risks to their participation, if participants

experience any, we would like to encourage them to express their concerns before withdrawing.

Benefits: Participants in this study are helping increase the amount of research the interpreting community has on teacher and interpreter teams in the classroom. Participants experiences will be used to help educate teachers and interpreters about how to create and maintain a teaming relationship.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Western Oregon University Institutional Review Board (IRB).
Please contact Brittany LeGal at blegal18@mail.wou.edu and/or my thesis committee chair, Amanda R. Smith at smithar@mail.wou.edu with any questions or concerns throughout the course of this study.
For questions regarding human subject treatment, you may contact the Chair of the WOU IRB at 503-838-9200 or at their email at irb@wou.edu.com Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Section 1 - Improving Professional Relationships in the Classroom: Teachers and Interpreters Working Together

The **purpose** of this project is to aid educational interpreters and mainstream teachers in learning how to establish and maintain a teaming relationship with each other. The researcher hopes to use your input from experiences to help future interpreter and teachers form teams.

Statement of Consent

Western Oregon University

Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies

Informed consent for Research Involving Human Subjects

Survey Consent form

Title of Study: Improving Professional Relationships in the Classroom: Teachers and Interpreters Working Together

Principal Investigator: Brittany C. LeGal

You are invited to participate in a research study. Your participation is voluntary. No compensation will be given.

Eligibility: In order to be eligible for this study, subjects must be either:

> **(1)** A teacher who is or has had experienced a Deaf or Hard of Hearing student and their interpreter in their classroom
>
> OR
>
> **(2)** An educational interpreter who has or is currently working in a mainstream teacher's classroom in K-12

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gather data on teacher and interpreter teams to share with K-12 teachers and educational interpreting communities to help improve Deaf education.

Survey Duration: 20 minutes

Confidentiality: Participants will be volunteering their experiences in a google form survey. Names will be kept confidential. Participants may also withdraw at any time from the survey by closing the browser. If closed, their data will not be used. All data will be kept anonymous and confidential on a password protected laptop

Data collected will be used to published in a thesis, but all names and other identifying information will be kept confidential.

Risks: There are no foreseeable physical risks, but if participants experience any emotional, social, stress related or other risks, they may contact us with their questions or concerns. Although there are no foreseeable risks to their participation, if participants experience any, we would like to encourage them to express their concerns before withdrawing.

Benefits: Participants in this study are helping increase the amount of research the interpreting community has on teacher and interpreter teams in the classroom.

Participants experiences will be used to help educate teachers and interpreters about how to create and maintain a teaming relationship.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Western Oregon University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Please contact Brittany LeGal at blegal18@mail.wou.edu and/or my thesis committee chair, Amanda R. Smith at smithar@mail.wou.edu with any questions or concerns throughout the course of this study.

For questions regarding human subject treatment, you may contact the Chair of the WOU IRB at 503-838-9200 or at their email at irb@wou.edu.

By clicking "accept" below I hereby give my consent to participate in the research study survey entitled "Improving Professional Relationships in the Classroom: Teachers and Interpreters Working Together". This study's anticipated benefits and risks have been provided above. I fully understand that I may withdraw from this research project at any time without consequences. I also understand that I may contact the principal researcher with any concerns or questions. I understand that in the unlikely event of physical or emotional discomfort resulting from this research the investigators will suggest assistance or accommodation. Finally, I understand that the information about me obtained during the course of this study will be kept confidential. *

☐ Accept (Heads to Section 3- Demographics)
☐ Decline (Heads to Section 2- Thank you for your consideration page)

Section 3 - Demographics
Here we will determine which type of participant you are
Are you a teacher or interpreter?

☐ Teacher (Heads to Section 4- Teachers)
☐ Interpreter (Heads to Section 9- Interpreters)

Section 4 - Teachers
Hello teachers!
The goal of your participation is to find out ways in which you feel an interpreter can establish and maintain a teaming relationship with you.
Roughly, how many different interpreters have you worked with?
0-5, 6-10- More than you know
Were any of those interpreters on-going, meaning you had them for a long period of time? (months, school year)

☐ Yes (Heads to Section 6- Ongoing)
☐ No (Heads to Section 5- No Ongoing)

Section 5 - No Ongoing Interpreter Experience (Teacher)
When a new interpreter comes in, how have they explained their role to you before?
Does having different interpreters all the time negatively impact your ability to teach the DHH student?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, do you think having an ongoing interpreter would benefit your teaching and the DHH student's education? Why?
Have you had interpreters come in and inquire about the class, prep materials, or hints for what may be coming up? (copy of notes, inquiry what you will be cover, goals..etc)
If yes, what were your thoughts? Were you able to provide prep materials?

Section 6- Ongoing Interpreter Experience (Teacher)
How many ongoing interpreters do you think you have worked with? 0-5 6-10 11+
Did you consider any of these ongoing interpreters a part of your educational team?

☐ Yes (Heads to Section 7- Edu Team Ongoing)

☐ No (Heads to Section 8 - No Edu Team)

Section 7 - Edu Team - Ongoing

Lets take a look at how your team worked together

How did the interpreter introduce themselves and their role?

Did the interpreter or you instigate a teaming relationship? How?

How do/did you two work together as a team?

Does the interpreter ask for prep materials ahead of time

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

How do you two maintain a teaming relationship?

Do you feel as though having this team in your classroom benefits the DHH student's education, your ability to teach/interpret, and/or the class environment as a whole?

Section 8 - No Edu Team - Ongoing

Let's take a look the teacher and the interpreters' relationship

How do you and your interpreter/teacher interact on a class by class basis?

Does the interpreter ever ask for prep materials for the next lesson?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

Has the interpreter expressed confusion about or asked questions to clarify lessons' objectives? Interpreter: How did you inquire? Teacher: How did you reply?

Do you think you two could work better as a team? Explain your opinion

Section 9 - Interpreters

Hello Interpreter!

The goal of your participation is to find out ways in which you can establish and maintain a teaming relationship with teachers.

Working in educational interpreting, have you had ongoing assignments with the same teacher (ongoing being multiple months to the entire school year)?

☐ Yes (Heads to Section 11-Ongoing Interpreters)

☐ No (Heads to Section 10 - No Ongoing Interpreters)

Section 10 - No Ongoing (Interpreters)

Due to the variety of teachers you have seen, what has your experience been with them…

How do you introduce yourself to each new teacher you meet?

When meeting a new teacher, do you inquire about what the class will be covering?

Have you found teachers to be open about the lesson (fill you in, give you notes to help out) or vague?

Do you think having a different interpreter each class impacts a DHH students' access to education? How?

How do you think your interpretation is impacted by jumping in and out of classes, various topics, and grade levels day to day?

Section 11 - Ongoing (Interpreters)

Let's take a look at you and the Teacher's' relationship

Having worked with a teacher in an ongoing setting, were you considered a part of the educational team?

☐ Yes (Heads to Section 7- Edu Team Ongoing)

☐ No (Heads to Section 8 - No Edu Team)

Section 12 - Considering it all

Thinking back over the questions you answered…

Do you think there could be benefits to forming a teaming relationship between teachers and interpreters in ongoing educational settings?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Maybe

Do you think you will approach the next teaming opportunity open to test it out?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Maybe
☐ Other

How might you go about establishing and maintaining a teaming relationship in the future?

Section 13 - End of Survey

You have reached the end of the survey.

Thank you for sharing your unique and valuable perspective!

APPENDIX C: TIPS FOR WORKING AS A TEAM

Tips for Working as a Team Built from Fletcher's (2004) RT theory and the data collected in this study			
Relational Theory	**Teachers**	**Interpreters**	**Together**
Preserving	Taking action outside of job requirements to form and maintain a teaming relationship ."Taking responsibility for the whole and doing whatever is needed to be done to keep the project connected to the people and resources it need[s] to survive" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 272). This means doing activities outside of what one's job already requires to preserve and prioritize the project over one's own individual needs.		
"Creating Teams"	Welcome interpreter into your classroom Catch the interpreter up as much as you can in the time allotted	Introduce yourself and ask were the DHH students generally sit Inquire about the lesson at hand in the time allotted	Establish a collaborative & supportive environment Establish time to meet
Achieving	Explain personal goals, roles, expectations		Listen to each other's goals, roles, ask questions, and discuss how your goals align together
Mutual Empowering	Utilize the interpreter: - As a **checkpoint**. If the interpreter asks for clarification or is showing confused facial expressions this may be a sign to reiterate the meaning in a different way. If the interpreter is not following, the student - To gauge your **pacing**. If the interpreter is still signing, pause before	Utilize the teacher: - To **prepare interpretations.** By meeting with teachers ahead of time and discussing lessons, goals, and the teacher's intent, the interpreter can better prepare to interpret that meaning to it's true equivalence. - Ask for **clarification.** If the interpreter is not sure of the meaning then the students could be lost as well, ask the teacher for clarification.	Utilize the DHH teacher to help support each other Support each other's goals, boundaries, and education Maintain open communication with questions, feedback, and work together to include everyone. - Meet regularly o Before/After class or once a week

	continuing on. This will give everyone time to take in the last remark's meaning. - To **include everyone** in discussion. Once the interpreter catches up, then continue on. This also allows the DHH student to have a chance to be involved in-the-moment to answer questions like the hearing students. - To **create all-inclusive lessons.** By meeting and discussing lessons with interpreters, teachers are able to see if there are any cultural limitations which may not enable the DHH to perceive the lesson the same way.	- To **debrief.** After an interpretation which may or may not be successful, discuss it with the teacher. Let them know how the client perceived it. Work together to determine success.	o Debrief on student's comprehension o Emails Prepare ahead of time. Discuss lessons, themes, objectives, challenges/concerns and make adjustments as needed. Make a plan for continual communication and meetings.