

Interpreter Mentoring: A Theory-Based Approach to Program Design and Evaluation

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Abstract

Interpreter mentorship programs have been created to address the increased demand for high quality interpretation services and the need for ongoing support for new and experienced interpreters. Program logic models and theories of change are tools that can support mentorship goal clarification, project design, implementation, evaluation, and communication to key stakeholders and funders. The “logic” or “theory” of a well-designed project includes the set of assumptions about how an approach to interpreter mentoring is intended to work and why this approach is expected to achieve the project’s outcomes.

To demonstrate the use of logic models and theories of change, several mentorship projects supported by the RID/NCIEC Challenge Fund were used as examples for graphically representing variations in mentorship structure, resources, activities, and expected outcomes. The logic models and theories of change for these projects also provide a way of systematically comparing mentorship projects to discover commonalities and differences in goals, assumptions, target population, environmental context, major activities, and intended outcomes. Some projects focused on different aspects of the interpretation process. In other projects, similar outcomes were accomplished using different approaches in settings with different local resources. The use of logic models or theories of change can assist in the development of well-planned and implemented projects that have clear outcomes and a rational approach for reaching them.

A project with clearly stated goals, rationale, and procedures can be meaningfully evaluated to support ongoing development and determine project effectiveness. Guidelines are suggested for how logic models and theories of change can be used to guide development of performance monitoring systems that document project progress, identify problem areas that need to be addressed, and plan meaningful, useful evaluations for interpreter mentorship projects. Additional resources for developing logic models and designing performance monitoring and evaluations are provided in an appendix to this paper.

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the characteristics, commonalities, and diversity of mentorship programs that may be used by prospective planners of new interpreter mentor programs. Mentorship projects have been guided by different objectives, some broad in scope and others that target specific populations or aspects of interpretation. Projects have used different approaches, often shaped by unique combinations of local opportunities and challenges. Yet underlying this diversity of focus and experience, the long-term goals of interpreter mentorship are the same – to address the gap between initial interpreter preparation and job readiness, to improve the quality of interpreting services, to improve availability of interpreting services to underserved populations and areas, and to build an internal network of support within the interpreting community.

It is hoped that this paper will help advance the understanding of the nature and diversity of mentorship programs and how the field may use logic models and theories of change to assist program design and the conduct of program evaluations that provide more answers about the effectiveness and efficiency of mentoring to further the ASL/English interpreting profession and improve services to the Deaf and hard of hearing community.

The mentoring projects used as examples in this paper were selected because there was sufficient information available in the documentation to draft logic models or theories of change. Any omissions or misinterpretations are unintentional and not meant to reflect on the quality, intent, or implementation of the actual programs. This process of this paper is not an evaluation of the effectiveness of these projects. While guidelines for monitoring and evaluating interpreter mentoring projects are discussed at the end, evaluation of these projects is beyond the scope of this paper.

Consumer interpretation needs

With national rehabilitation, telecommunications, and education legislation¹ guaranteeing Deaf and hard of hearing individuals equal access to public services and facilities, the demand for ASL/English interpretation has grown as a vital component for providing access. Demand for interpretation services nationwide has grown faster than the availability of qualified ASL/English interpreters. In a consumer needs survey, Deaf and hard of hearing consumers reported having difficulties obtaining interpreter services, especially in health, workplace, legal, and school settings. While more than 80 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the interpretation

¹ Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Telecommunications Act of 1996, and Individual with Disabilities Education Act of 2004.

services they received, fewer felt their interpreters “knew what they were doing” (70%) or felt comfortable with their interpreter (66%).²

Observed interpretation needs within the field are multifaceted, including:

- Lack of sufficient interpreting services in sparsely populated communities
- Need to provide culturally competent and sensitive interpretation for diverse segments of the population
- Need for more qualified interpreters in medical, legal, business, education and other specialized settings

Challenges to the interpreting community

ASL/English interpretation is a complex social-linguistic task. The NCIEC states that “interpreting takes a high level of fluency in each language, keen ability to focus on what is being said, vast world knowledge, and professional, ethical conduct.”³ The Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE) standards cite an array of professional competencies needed by ASL/English interpreters, including proficiencies in use of American Sign Language and English; broad liberal arts knowledge; critical thinking and problem solving skills; appreciation of diversity and cross-cultural competence; knowledge in social and behavioral science, linguistics and communication; understanding of theories of interpretation and translation, human resources, professional ethics, and certification; and stress and health management.⁴

Increased demand for qualified ASL/English interpretation led to growth of professional training opportunities for aspiring as well as working interpreters. However, the interpreting community’s efforts to increase the numbers and availability of qualified ASL/English interpreters met with several challenges:⁵

- Time lag between new interpreters’ graduation from an interpreter preparation program and their attaining national certification
- A skills gap, including the level of ASL proficiency, among new and working interpreters
- Need for more professional development opportunities and networking support for interpreters

² Cokely, D., & Winston, E. (September 2009). Phase II Deaf consumer needs assessment: Final report. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from http://www.tiemcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Deaf_Consumer_Phase2.pdf

³ Retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.interpretereducation.org/discover-interpreting/>

⁴ Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education. (April 2010). Accreditation standards. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from http://www.ccie-accreditation.org/PDF/CCIE_Standards_2010.pdf

⁵ Resnick, S. The skill gap: Is mentoring the answer? (1990). Conference of Interpreter Trainers, p. 1.

- Alternative entry pathways into professional interpreting, often by members of diverse racial/ethnic groups
- Lack of awareness of the role and acceptance of Deaf interpreters
- Lack of persistence in or dropping out of the interpreting profession

What is interpreter mentoring?

One way of addressing these challenges is through the design and implementation of interpreter mentoring programs to support new interpreters, interpreters from diverse populations, Deaf interpreters, and working interpreters seeking professional growth.

A mentorship is a supportive relationship established between two or more individuals where knowledge, skills, and experience are shared. The mentee is someone seeking guidance in developing specific competencies, self-awareness, and skills... The mentor is a person who has expertise in the areas of need identified by the mentee and is able to share their wisdom in a nurturing way. The mentorship established between two or more individuals is unique to their needs, personality, learning styles, expectations, and experiences.

In this relationship, the mentee has the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and observe a more experienced professional within a safe, protected environment. Through reflection and collaboration between the mentor-mentee pair or group, the mentee can become more self-confident and competent in their integration and application of the knowledge and skills gained in the mentorship demonstrating best practice.⁶

Beyond formal postsecondary interpreter preparation programs, interpreter mentoring programs are particularly suited to fostering refined skills and deeper understanding and sensitivities that come only through guided practice, feedback from other interpreters, and self-assessment in increasingly challenging situations.

Mentoring has a long tradition in service-oriented professions, such as nursing, medicine, and teaching, as well as in business. A recent cross-discipline meta-analysis of research on outcomes for individuals receiving mentoring compared with individuals receiving no mentoring found small but significant positive effects, especially related to attitudes, for academic and workplace mentoring.⁷ Another review of research using comparison groups found significant relationships

⁶ National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. What is mentoring? Retrieved February 28, 2012, from <http://www.interpretereducation.org/aspiring-interpreter/mentorship/what-is-mentoring/>

⁷ Eby, L.T., Allen, T.D., Evans, S.C., Ng, T., & DuBois, D.L. (June 2008). Does mentoring matter? A multidisciplinary meta-analysis comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 72:3, pp. 254-267.

between workplace mentoring and career attitudes, work attitudes, and some career outcomes.⁸ An experimental study comparing high-level and low-level facilitated mentoring with new employees found increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance by participants in both mentoring programs with larger gains made by the high-level facilitated group.⁹

What is mentoring? While there are various definitions of mentoring, there is little research examining the nature of mentoring relationships. A recent review of qualitative research about the meaning and characteristics of mentoring in academic medical institutions identified five key aspects of mentor-mentee relationships:

1. Characteristics and actions of mentor and mentee,
2. How the mentoring relationship is initiated,
3. How the mentoring relationship is structured,
4. The nature of the mentoring relationship itself, and
5. Barriers to effective mentoring.¹⁰

This review found that mentoring is a complex relationship based on mutual interests that are both personal and professional. Barriers to mentoring could be related to personal factors, relationship difficulties, or structural/program/institutional barriers. The NCIEC white paper states several assumptions about the nature of the interpreter mentoring process:¹¹

- Mentoring implies a relationship between two or more people.
- Mentoring involves sharing experiences.
- Mentoring utilizes principles of adult learning.
- The mentor functions as a facilitator of learning.
- Mentees are active participants and decision makers in their own learning processes.

Pre- and post- surveys of interpreter mentors and mentees provided glimpses into the benefits and barriers to mentorships in different RID/NCIEC supported projects,¹² but there is still much to learn about mentoring relationships in different professions, including interpreter mentoring.

⁸ Underhill, C.M. (April 2006). The effectiveness of mentoring programs in corporate settings: A meta-analytic review of the literature. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68:2, 292-307.

⁹ Egan, T.D. & Song, Z. (June 2008). Are facilitated mentoring programs beneficial? A randomized experimental field study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 72:3, pp. 351-362.

¹⁰ Sambunjak, D., Straus, S.E., & Marusic, A. (November 2009). A systematic review of qualitative research on the meaning and characteristics of mentoring in academic medicine. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 25:1, pp. 72-78. Retrieved February 28, 2012, from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2811592/>

¹¹ Mentoring Work Group. (January 13, 2009). *Towards effective practices in mentoring of ASL-English interpreters*. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC).

¹² RID/NCIEC mentoring program: Post-participation survey analysis (January 2009). National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. Retrieved February 28, 2012, from <http://www.northeastern.edu/bostonmodernism/wp-content/uploads/RID-NCIECevalrpt-ALL.pdf>

Between 2005 and 2010, RID and NCIEC supported interpreter mentor programs with funding for Mentoring Challenge Grants to 15 state and local mentoring projects and provided programs with resources and guidance for mentorship design and implementation. A major assumption underlying RID/NCIEC's nationwide interpreter mentoring initiative was that mentorship can play an important role in the transition of novice interpreters and new graduates from interpreter preparation programs to becoming certified, professional ASL/English interpreters.¹³

Mentorship program design – national need and local response

Just as ASL/English interpretation is a complex social-linguistic task, mentorship programs designed to improve interpretation outcomes are complex undertakings, both collectively and individually. Each program must decide what aspect or aspects of the interpreting process to address. Each program is also guided by local consumer interpretation and interpreter needs. The Challenge Fund projects all shared the collective long-range goals of closing the skills gap, improving availability of qualified interpreters to all Deaf and hard of hearing persons, and strengthening the professional development supports within the interpreting community. Yet individual projects demonstrated considerable variability in how they addressed those goals within the context of local needs and resources.

For example, South Carolina and Kansas are two rural states with underserved non-urban areas and interpreters working in isolation in many areas of these states. The RID chapters in both states wanted to provide mentorship experiences that would meet the diverse needs of new and working interpreters working in a wide range of settings. South Carolina designed a program to facilitate in-place peer mentoring, relying on distance communication resources, to address this broad-based need. Kansas Association of Interpreters-RID took a different approach. KAI-RID employed a participatory approach to determining the needs of interpreters across the state, involving interpreters in the design of the mentorship's curriculum. These examples show that mentorship projects can address similar needs in similar environments while differing in their approaches.

Other projects, such as the ASL mentoring program at Mt. Sinai Health System's Deaf Access Program in Chicago and The Mentorship Program in Massachusetts began with narrower goals. Deaf Access aimed to increase the availability of interpreters in the specialized area of medical interpreting, while The Mentorship Program focused its efforts on attracting more interpreters of color into the profession. These two projects had different objectives – one targeting a

¹³ Mickelson, P.G. (April 2008). Addressing the gap: An update on the work of the NCIEC Mentoring Workgroup. RID *VIEWS*, pp. 13-14. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from http://www.tiemcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/RID_article_from_Legal_Workgroup_May2008finalized.pdf

specialized area of interpretation and the other focusing on better serving a diverse consumer population, however both used a traditional expert/protégé approach to mentoring.¹⁴

These examples, two projects in states with similar needs, addressing those needs with different approaches, and two other projects with different objectives, using similar mentoring approaches, illustrate the complexity and diversity of interpreter mentorship programs. All of these projects grew out of a common national need that is refined and shaped by local populations, conditions, and resources. The complexity of the interpreter mentorship initiative is manifest in the complexity of ASL/English interpretation, the national and local levels of the needs being addressed, the diversity of approaches possible for addressing similar goals, and the unique configuration of local resources, constraints, and opportunities. What tools can assist in designing mentorship programs and evaluating their effectiveness and efficiency under these conditions?

Logic models for program planning, evaluation, and communication

Logic models have been used for several decades to support program development, guide program evaluations, and communicate the intent and progress of many types of educational and social interventions. A logic model provides a graphic representation of the flow of development, implementation, and expected outcomes for the target population. Most grant makers now require that grant applications include a logic model of a proposed program.¹⁵ Logic models typically include the following components:

- Problem or need statement
- Target population
- Program goal
- Environmental context in which the program will operate
- Assumptions about how and why the program will work
- Inputs or resources needed for program development and implementation
- Program activities or processes involved in development and delivery of the intervention
- Outputs of the program – opportunities for the target population to receive program materials or participate in program offerings

¹⁴ Mt. Sinai Health System's Deaf Access Program had one Challenge Grant in 2007-2008 that focused on new interpreters from local interpreter education program. This is the traditional mentor/mentee project referred to above. The Deaf Access Program received a second grant in 2009, a peer mentor grant targeting Certified Deaf Interpreters.

¹⁵ Taylor-Powel, E. & Henert, E. (2008). Developing a logic model: Teaching and training guide. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin In-Extension Cooperative Extension, Program Development and Evaluation, p. 1. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

- Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes—the positive changes in attitudes, knowledge, and/or behaviors among program participants or improvements expected to accrue to direct and indirect beneficiaries of the program.

The NCIEC Working Group’s publication, “Toward Effective Practices in Mentoring of ASL-English Interpreters,” identified many of these components in its two best practices approaches to program development.¹⁶

An important feature of the logic model is that key assumptions about how and why the program is expected to work are made explicit as the program is conceptualized – this is the “logic” of the program. The logic of a mentorship program, which is often not explicitly stated, can be based on experience, evidence from research and evaluations of similar programs, environmental opportunities and constraints, and beliefs and values about what is important and beneficial for the target population.

Examples of logic models based on RID/NCIEC Challenge Fund projects serve to illustrate use of this tool. As a condition of funding, the interpreter mentoring projects authored descriptions of their programs, which appeared in RID *VIEWS*. The NCIEC also conducted program evaluations to determine how the Challenge Fund interpreter mentoring programs were organized, learn about the nature of participants’ mentoring experiences, and investigate program outcomes and lessons learned.¹⁷ In addition to the NCIEC evaluations, some individual projects also carried out their own evaluations, the results of which were reported in their *VIEWS* articles. These documents provide valuable information and insights about the RID/NCIEC Challenge Fund projects that can be helpful to other organizations planning to develop and implement their own interpreter mentoring programs.

It is challenging, however, to create a useful synthesis of the available evaluation information. The varying project objectives, approaches, and evaluation methods of mentorship projects present an “apples-and-oranges” obstacle to making generalizations at this point. Nevertheless, important questions about what works with whom under what conditions persist. Use of logic models and similar tools can provide a common format for describing and comparing mentorship programs and help make the theoretical and working assumptions about how mentorship programs should work more explicit. Logic models can help in highlighting the similarities and differences among mentorship programs. This, in turn, can guide future evaluation efforts to deliver the knowledge needed to answer questions about interpreter mentoring effectiveness and efficiency.

¹⁶ Mentoring Work Group. Towards effective practices in mentoring of ASL-English interpreters. (January 2009). National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC). Retrieved February 28, 2013, from http://www.northeastern.edu/bostonmodernism/wp-content/uploads/mentor_white_paper.pdf

¹⁷ RID/NCIEC Mentoring Program: Post-participation survey analysis. (January 2009). National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers.

Seven RID *VIEWS* project descriptions and survey evaluation results from 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 were reviewed for this paper to identify the logic model components of each project. That review was used to develop examples of mentorship logic models. The statements of need, target audience, goals, environmental context, inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes were drawn directly from project descriptions and comments in the project survey evaluations. Statements about assumptions are drawn from project documents, where those are made explicit. Where assumptions were not explicated in the documents available, I included those that might reasonably be discerned from project activities, outputs, and outcomes. The emphasis in the examples is on the what, how, and why of projects with contrasting purposes and approaches. Project finances and structures, though important, are not emphasized here. The logic models that follow are intended to be illustrative, based on information about actual projects.

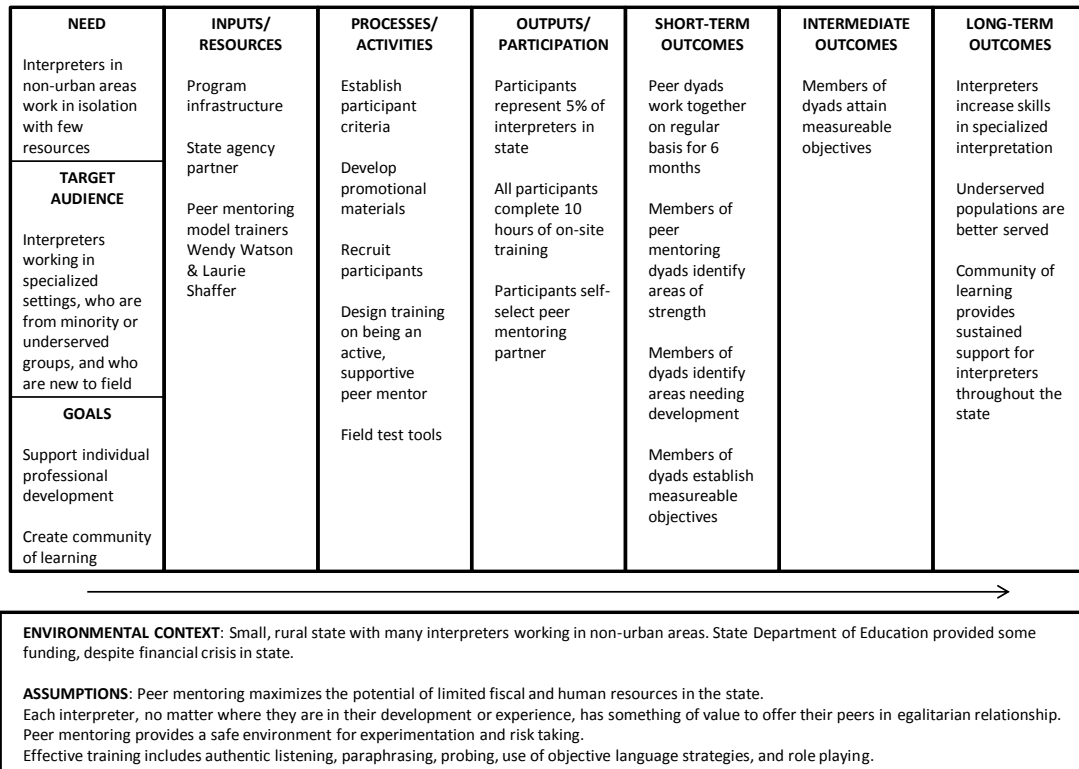
Logic model 1: Peer mentoring in a rural state

The South Carolina RID developed a peer-mentoring program targeting new and working interpreter working in a variety of settings. In this case, the emphasis was on mutual learning and support within peer mentor pairs across the state.

In this example, the program emphasis is on interpreter development and building a supportive, statewide community of interpreters. A key assumption underlying this program is clearly stated – that every interpreter, regardless of experience, has something to offer other interpreters.¹⁸ This project is also an example of how environmental context can influence program design choice. The state was experiencing budget limitations. However, the state RID chapter had developed a relationship with the state’s department of education, resulting in the department supporting SCRID’s plan to improve interpretation services. Peer mentorship was seen as a cost effective way to provide interpreters across the state with needed support.

¹⁸ Watson, W. & Shaffer, L. Peer Mentoring: What is THAT? (2004). In E.M. Maroney (Ed.), *Proceedings of the National Conference of Interpreter Trainers Convention*, Washington, DC, pp. 77-91. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.northeastern.edu/riec/wp-content/uploads/Shaffer-CIT-2004.pdf>

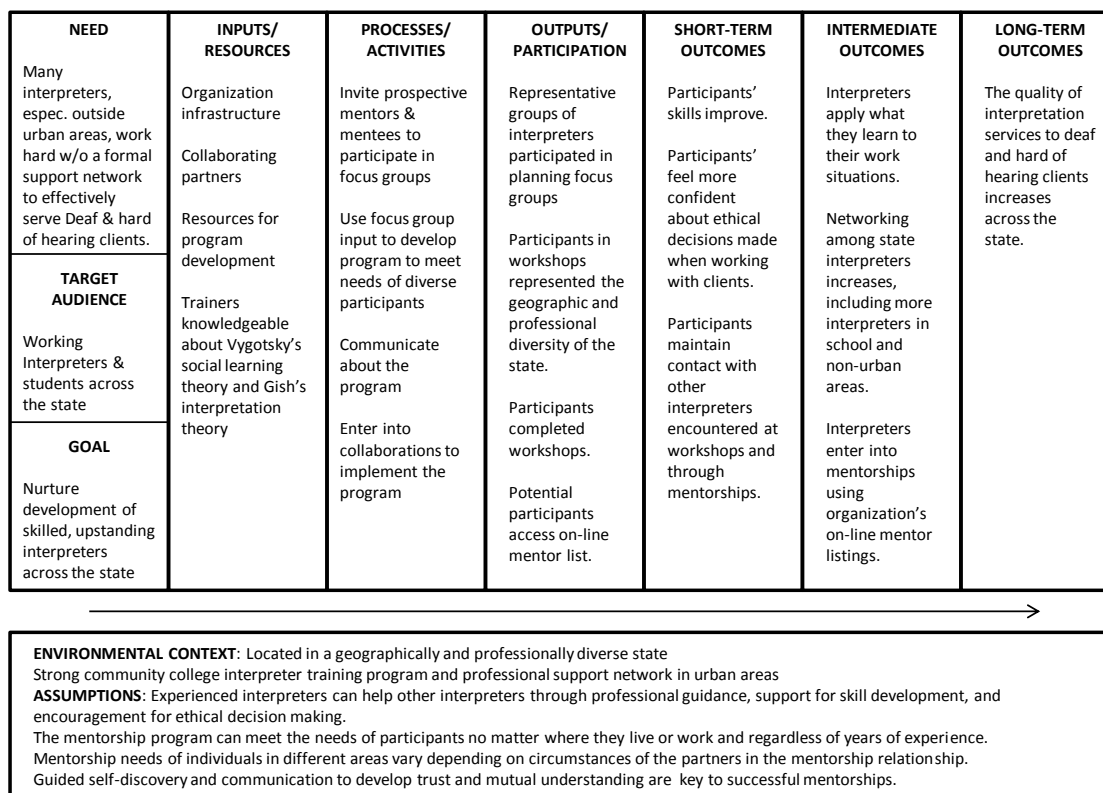
Figure 1. Logic model—peer mentoring in a rural state



Logic model 2: Traditional mentorship with participatory design

The Kansas Association of Interpreters-Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (KAI-RID) set out to design a program that would meet the needs of interpreters in a state that has an environmental context they describe as professionally and geographically diverse. KAI-RID serves the entire state, including rural, small town, and urban areas. Interpreters are new as well as experienced and work in a variety of settings. The project began with an invitation to prospective mentors and mentees to participate in focus groups to support curriculum development for the mentorship program. This participatory approach was intended to gather suggestions and input for what interpreters needed around the state. As the program developed, multiday workshops were offered on lifelong learning through mentoring. The organization also listed available mentors with information about their areas of expertise on its website.

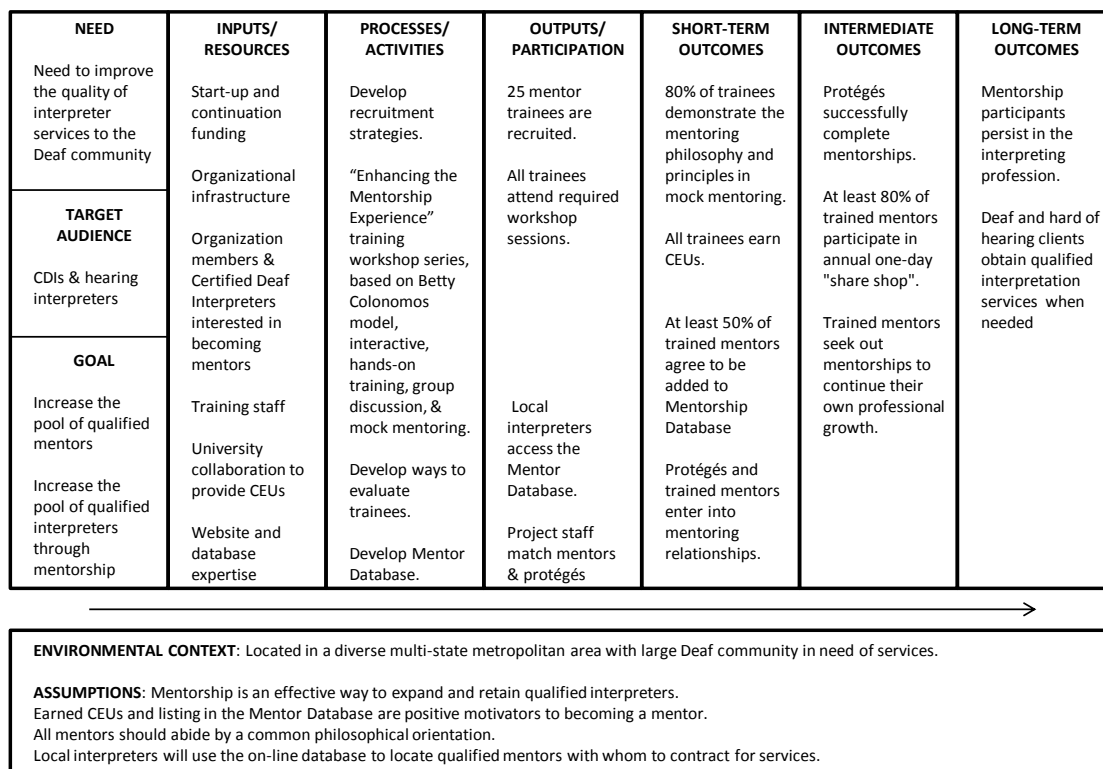
Figure 2. Logic model—traditional mentorship with participatory design



Logic model 3: Focus on mentor training

Another Challenge Fund project took a different approach to mentorship. The Potomac Chapter RID (PCRID) Mentorship Program, which served the national capitol metropolitan area was funded in 2008-2009. The project's overarching goal was to improve the quality of interpreting services to consumers by increasing the pool of qualified Deaf and hearing interpreters. The project aimed to accomplish this by taking a front-end approach – recruiting and training interpreter mentors who could enter into one-to-one mentorships with new and experiences interpreters. The key mechanism for matching trained mentors and protégé interpreters was an on-line database on the PCRID web site. The expected result of the project was expansion of the number of qualified interpreters who could continue to use mentorships to develop at any phase in their careers. The logic model for the PCRID Mentorship is presented in the following illustration.

Figure3. Logic model—focus on mentor training



The PCRID Mentorship Program focused its efforts for developing and delivering a training program that would result in an initial group of highly qualified mentors, able to negotiate effective mentorships with interested protégé interpreters. The PCRID facilitated this process by recruiting interpreters interested in mentoring; providing them with interactive, hand-on training in a common philosophical orientation; ensuring that trainees were able to apply appropriate mentoring skills; and providing a mechanism – an on-line database – by which mentors and protégés could enter into formal, paid mentoring relationships. Follow-up workshops and focus groups were scheduled to provide periodic support to trained mentors. The emphasis of the PCRID Mentorship Program was on mentor development, with formation of later mentorships depending largely upon the initiative of individual interpreters seeking arrangements through the organization’s database.

Commonalities and differences

These three examples demonstrate several commonalities and differences. All three projects aimed to improve service delivery within a geographic area and all three targeted interpreters with varying experience and who worked in a range of settings. While two of the projects were based in states with urban and large non-urban areas, they took different approaches to mentorship to provide for individual needs and circumstances. One focused on facilitated peer mentoring, while the other used a traditional mentorship approach, but tailored to specific needs within the state. The third example focused on the development of highly trained

mentors and a central database to aid in matching these mentors with interpreters seeking mentorships. One of the state programs also used a database of available mentors to meet mentorship needs.

Each of the example programs made use of externally developed models of interpretation and learning to inform their training – one used Betty Colonomos’ pedagogical model of interpretation, another used Sandra Gish’s model of interpretation based on Vygotsky’s theory of social cognitive learning,¹⁹ and the third also drew on Vygotsky’s learning theory. The theories and models on which mentorship programs are based are important to note, because they carry with them assumptions that guide program development and appropriate outcomes that can be tested by program evaluation.

It is important to note that the logic models and theories illustrated in this paper were developed after the fact from program documentation. While this can be helpful with established programs, developers of new programs would begin conceptualizing their program by working backward from general program goals to long-term and intermediate outcomes. At that point, they would begin asking, what are the different ways we could achieve those outcomes? Which ways would work best with our target population and our program resources? Through this questioning process, the beliefs and assumptions underlying program activities are made explicit. Program evaluation can then be designed that provides meaningful and useful information about the program’s progress on implementation and on the effectiveness of the program (i.e., achieving program outcomes).

“Theories of change” for modeling program complexity and assumptions

While logic models can be very useful for planning and implementing many types of programs, these linear models do have limitations when applied to programs where multiple sequences of activities lead to a range of outcomes or when programs have goals leading to activities and outcomes that are carried out at multiple sites or at more than one organizational level. For projects that may be better portrayed by more than one logic model, a “theory of change” approach can help illustrate the flow among multiple approaches, processes, and outcomes.

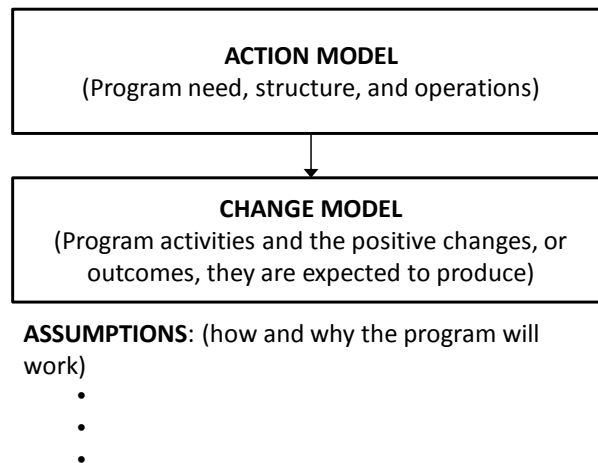
Just as the rationale for a program is the “logic” embodied in a logic model, the “theory” in a theory of change makes explicit the assumptions about how program activities will result in expected changes for participants and other beneficiaries. The theory of change states the developers’ beliefs and assertions about how and why a program is supposed work. When assumptions are discussed and explicitly stated during the process of program development, they help to identify where problems with implementation may occur or whether or not desired

¹⁹ Gish, A. A Vygotskian approach to interpreter assessment. (No date). Retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.interpretereducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/A-Vygotskian-Perspective-on-Interpreter-Assessment.pdf>

outcomes can be achieved using particular strategies. This not only supports the development process, but also provides a tool for reporting progress and enables more systematic project monitoring and evaluation.²⁰ Over the past decade, fields as diverse as welfare reform, improving mental health services, anti-drug abuse programs, and education reform have used the theory of change approach to facilitate program development, monitoring, and evaluation.²¹

Theories of change may take many forms. Several resources for developing theories of change are included in Appendix A. For this paper, a format based on Chen's model has been used.²² This theory of change includes an overall action model, a change model, and a set of key assumptions tied to the change model. Stated assumptions are a common characteristic of any theory of change.

Figure 4. Theory of change



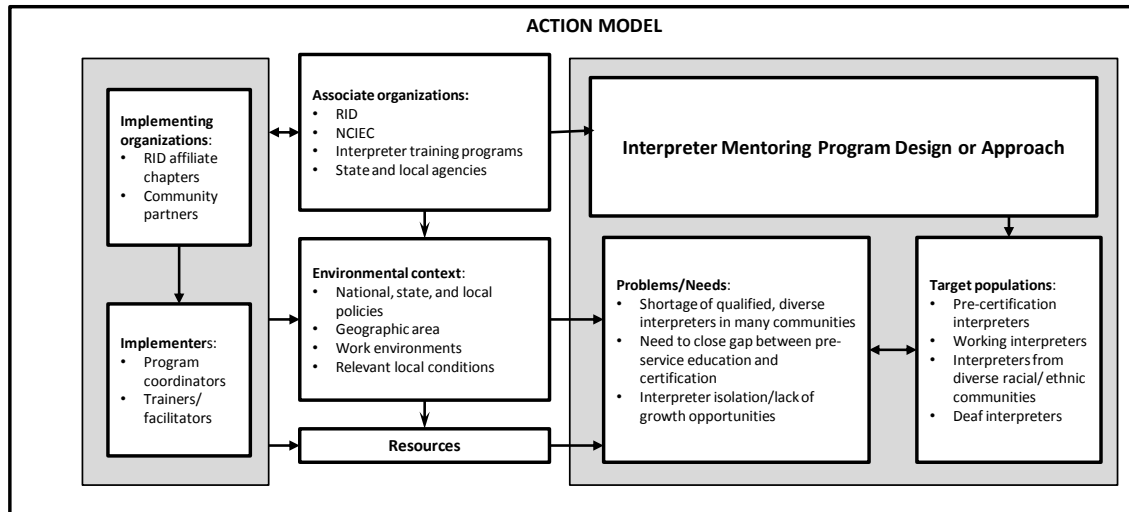
The action model describes the program purpose, structure, and operations. The target population and their need are identified, as are the implementing organization, their project staff and partner organizations. All of this takes place within the national and local environmental context, which shapes the need but can also provide opportunities to address the need. The need, the context, the participating organizations, and available resources all contribute to decisions about the program design or approach that will address the target population's need. A generalized action model for an interpreter mentoring program's theory of change is illustrated below:

²⁰ Weiss, C.H. Nothing as practical as good theory: Exploring theory-based evaluation for comprehensive community initiatives for children and families. (1995). In J.P. Connell, A.C. Kubisch, L.B. Schorr, & C.H. Weiss (Eds). *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives*, vol. 1, Concepts, Methods and Contexts. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, pp. 65-92.

²¹ Chen, H. (2005). *Practical program evaluation: Assessing and improving planning, implementation, and effectiveness*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

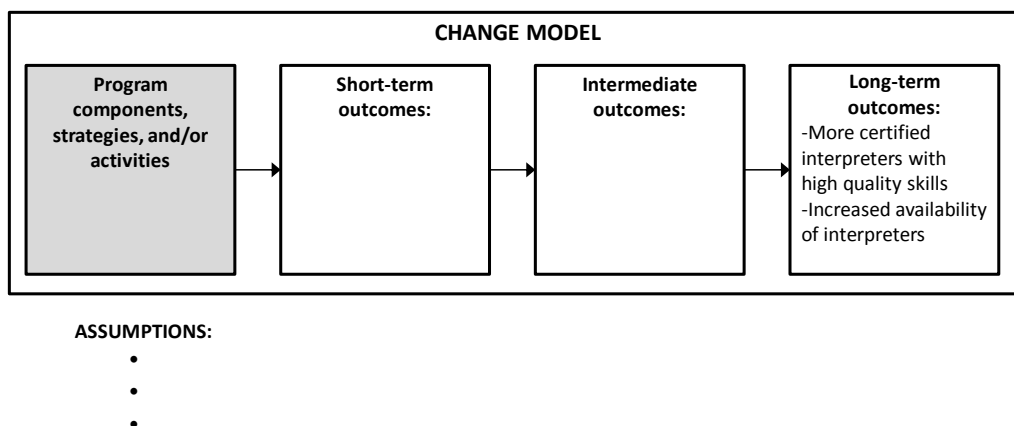
²² Ibid.

Figure 5. Interpreter mentoring: Theory of change action model



The change model for the theory of change includes the strategies and/or activities that will be used to implement the program's mentorship approach. The change model also specifies the chain of outcomes that are expected to result from these activities. Finally, key assumptions are stated about how and why these activities will result in the stated outcomes – why is this approach expected to work? Why is this approach better than alternative approaches? These clarifications are useful, not only for explaining the rationale of the program to funders and key stakeholders, but for focusing an evaluation to test the effectiveness of the program.

Figure 6. Interpreter mentoring: Theory of change change model



The change model illustrates a sequence of assertions or claims about the program – “If we implement these activities, then they will result in these short-term outcomes for the target audience. These short-term outcomes will in turn contribute to achieving these intermediate

and long-term outcomes, which will meet the needs of our target population and community. We are confident that it will happen this way, because we are making these assumptions about how and why it will work.” This is the program’s “theory.” These assumptions may be based on experience, research, and/or logical considerations.

For some programs, more than one chain of activities and the outcomes expected to result from those activities appear in the change model. Each chain of strategies and outcomes in the program design could be illustrated as a separate logic model. The theory of change approach allows us to separate out key components of the program and encourages us to examine how we think all of these components will work together to achieve desired outcomes. This is the advantage of using a relational theory of change approach rather than separate logic models.²³

A theory of change provides a visual framework for communicating what a program is about to stakeholders and the public, identifying performance indicators to monitor progress towards outcomes, and evaluating program effectiveness and efficiency.

Because they can be complex, theories of change are intended to be developed collaboratively, with direct involvement of key stakeholder groups. This makes the development of a theory of change both a process and a product.²⁴ The theories of change presented in this paper are based on a retrospective analysis of existing project documentation and evaluation findings about three interpreter mentor programs funded by the RID/NCIED Challenge Grants between 2005 and 2010. The documents include mentorship project descriptions appearing in the RID *VEWS* newsletter and reports of program evaluation surveys and focus groups conducted by NCIEC.²⁵ It is intended to provide a starting point for further discussion and development about mentorship programs—what they are, how they function, and how effective and efficient they are as a part of the interpreting community’s tool kit.

Two mentorship projects are represented below using the theory of change framework.

Theory of change 1: Multiple efforts to improve medical interpretation service delivery

The Deaf Access Program, part of the Sinai Health System in Chicago, provides interpretation and health care services to a large number of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind patients. While they have interpreters on staff as well as medical and mental health care providers fluent

²³ Ibid.

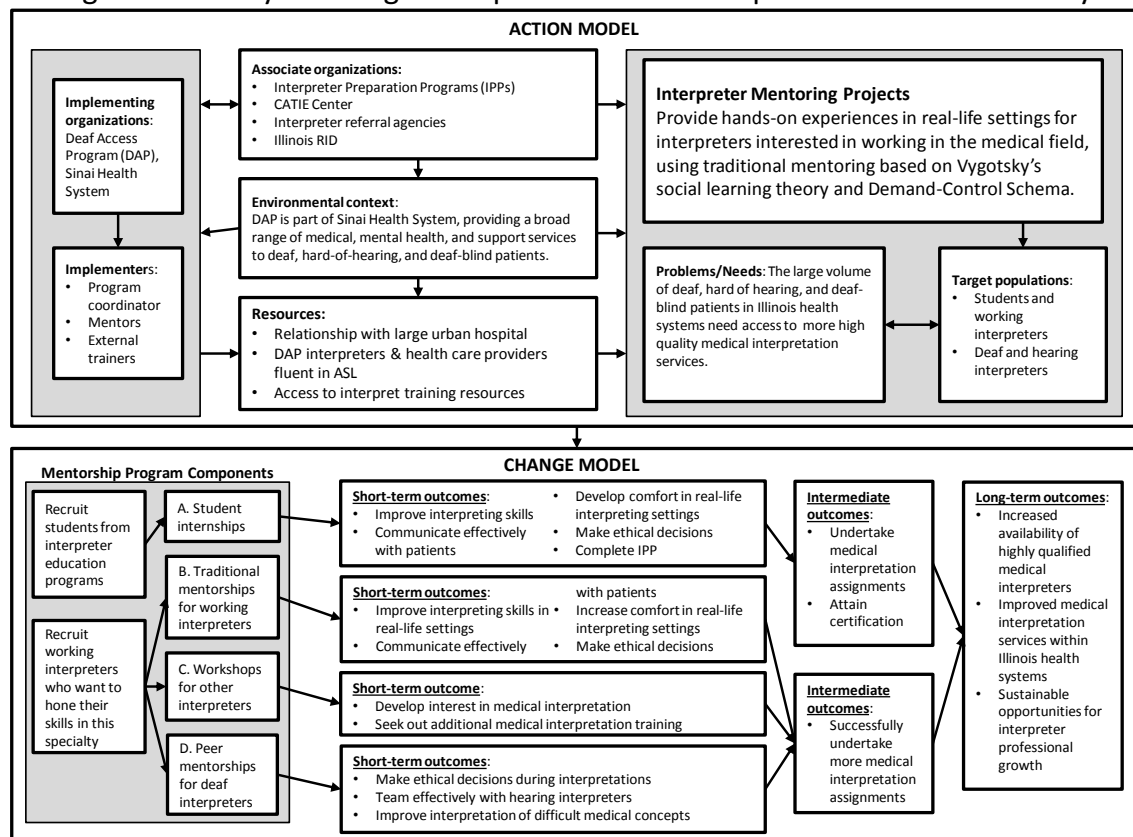
²⁴ Clark, Hélène. (November 2004). Theories of change and logic models: Telling them apart. Power Point presentation at American Education Research Association, Atlanta, GA.

²⁵ Beverly Hollrah, Director of the Gallaudet University Interpreter Education Center, provided documents describing and evaluating the RID/NCIEC interpreter mentor programs, including background on the NCIEC Mentoring Workgroup, the Challenge Grant application packet, pre- and post-participation surveys of grantees and participants, RID *VEWS* articles by grantees that described their programs, a report on focus group discussions on current practices in mentoring, and the white paper on effective practices for mentoring interpreters.

in ASL on staff, more skilled interpreters are needed to meet the demand for medical interpretation.

The mentorship program at Deaf Access had four components, a multiday workshop component to develop interpreter interest in working in medical interpretation and three types of hands-on, reflective mentorships in real-life settings. Each component targeted a different segment of the local interpreter population: students in interpreting programs, working hearing interpreters, and working deaf interpreters. Each component was tailored to meet the needs of each interpreter group. The design of mentorship activities was guided by Vygotsky's social learning theory and by Robin Dean's Demand-Control Schema.

Figure 7. Theory of change to improve medical interpretation service delivery



Assumptions underlying medical mentorship program components:

Observation and hands-on experiences and discussion with experienced medical interpreters will prepare mentees to successfully undertake medical interpreting assignments.

A. Possible assumptions about student internships

- Internships undertaken while student interpreters are still in training will generate interest in working in this specialty and in attaining timely certification.

- b. Students may vary in their readiness to undertake medical interpreting due to individual background differences and/or differences in interpreter education programs.
 - c. Students will make connections within Deaf Access and the health system that can lead to future job opportunities.
 - d. Relationships among Deaf Access and local interpreter education programs can lead to closer working relationships and mutual benefits.
- B. Possible assumptions about traditional mentorships for working interpreters
 - a. Working interpreters have an interest in working in the medical interpreting specialty area.
 - b. Working interpreters come into the mentorship with well-developed interpreting skills.
 - c. Hands-on experience and discussion with an experienced medical interpreter will prepare mentees to successfully undertake medical interpreting assignments.
- C. Possible assumption about workshops for other interpreters
 - a. Other working interpreters would use the workshops to experience medical interpreting, increasing their interest in learning more about this specialty area and engage in future mentorship opportunities.
- D. Possible assumptions about peer mentorships for deaf interpreters
 - a. Deaf interpreters have an interest in working in the medical interpreting specialty area.
 - b. Deaf interpreters are skilled in communicating with a range of deaf and deaf-blind patients.
 - c. Peer mentoring will help deaf interpreters learn how to team effectively with hearing interpreters in medical settings.

This choice of Vygotsky's social learning theory and Demand-Control Schema for interpreting shaped the approach to mentorship and evaluation at the participant and program levels. Each program component could be expanded into its own change model to show more detail about mentorship activities. For example:

- Student internships (A.) and traditional mentorships (B.) took place in many settings within the hospital, emphasizing teamwork, flexibility, and respect for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf blind patients' communication needs. Discussion about interpreter techniques, ethics, demands of the setting, and clarity and vocabulary in English and ASL followed mentee observations. Mentees' skills were evaluated using assessment forms from the Charting the Way curriculum.²⁶

²⁶ Harbour, W. S. and Van Nostrand, C. (Authors), and Bilotta, E. (DVD Producer). (2003). Charting the way: A handbook for postsecondary educational interpreters. Minneapolis, MN: Disability Services, University of Minnesota.

- Workshops (C.) for other interested interpreters used lecture, role play, and experiential learning activities. Demand-Control Schema was presented at one of these workshops.
- Peer mentoring for working deaf interpreters (D.) included individualized feedback to improve medical interpretation, teaming with hearing interpreters, and professional growth.

Theory of change 2: ASL and cultural mentoring through theatre

The StoryBlend mentoring program at the CATIE Center in Minnesota targeted students in interpreter education programs and new interpreters. This program addressed the needs to continue to build ASL fluency, increase new interpreters' cultural competence about Deaf culture, and decrease the time between graduation from an interpreter education program and attaining certification. The program provided two weeks of immersion training with Deaf mentors at a central location. The theory and practice of Augusto Boal and Viola Spolin provide the rationale for this approach and for the development of StoryBlend activities.²⁷ Through the medium of theatre games and improvisation, the Deaf mentors and hearing mentees explored and shared personal life experiences, leading to deeper understanding and appreciation of Deaf and hearing culture. They also worked in groups and one-on-one on translation skills and ASL usage. The program culminated with a play about selected personal experiences, presented in English and ASL to an invited audience of family and friends.

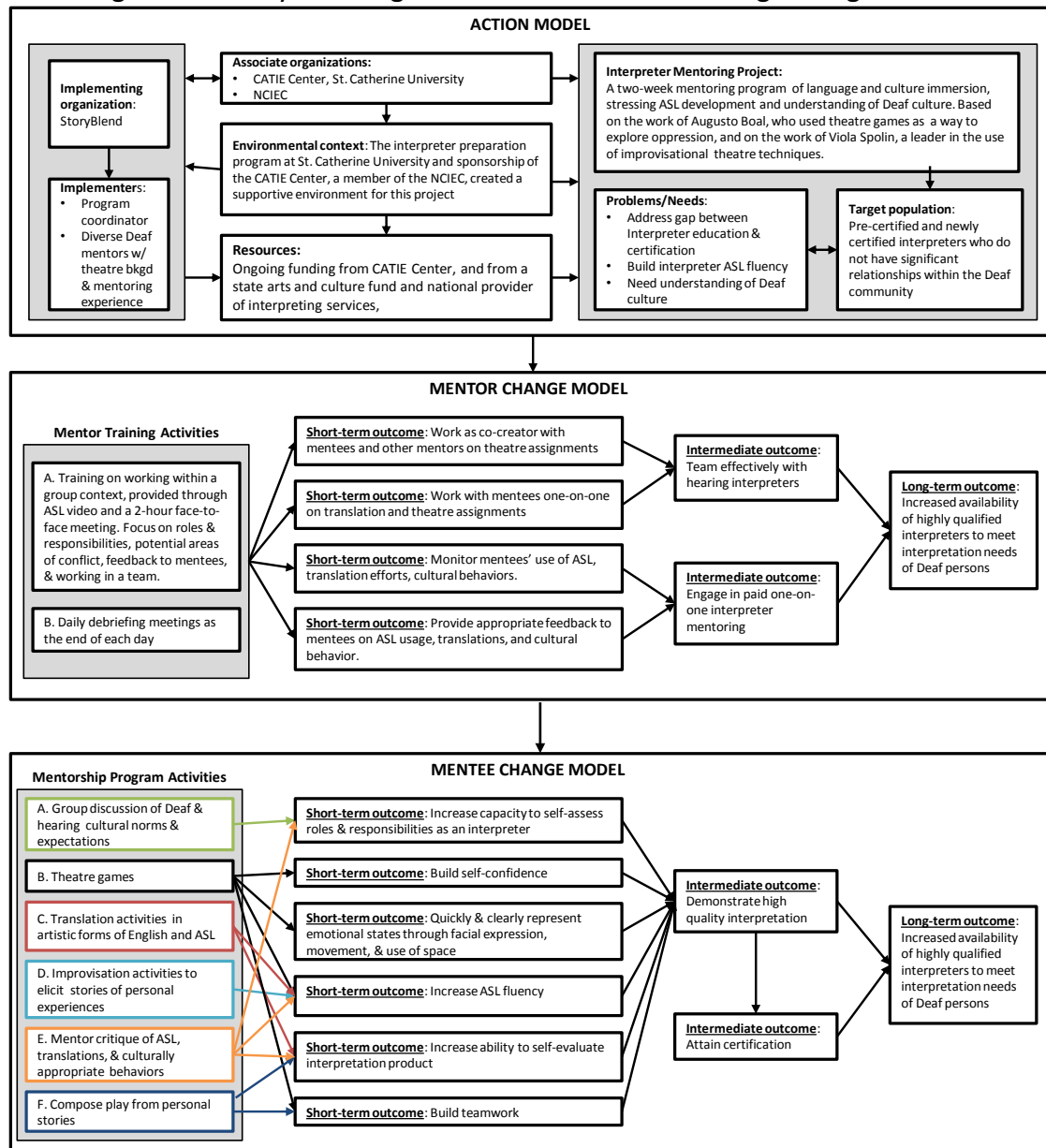
The documentation about this program helps to clarify the assumptions underlying these design choices. An important aspect of the environment of StoryBlend was its sponsorship by the CATIE Center at St. Catherine University, which also had an interpreter education program. The CATIE Center is also a member of the NCIEC, so the needs of new interpreters were well known through the education program and consortium work.

The concentration of resources at the university and in the metropolitan area could also support an immersion program, rather than a program that met at intervals over a longer period of time. The theoretical foundation of the program, based on theatre of the oppressed and theatre games as a medium for learning, also lent itself to an immersion model, where personal experiences are shared and explored culturally through cooperative learning and team building.

²⁷ Paterson, D. A brief biography of Augusto Boal. Omaha, NE: Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed, Inc. Retrieved February 28, 2012, from <http://ptoweb.org/aboutpto/a-brief-biography-of-augusto-boal/>.

Sweet, J. The innovators: Viola Spolin (January 2011). Dramatics Magazine, Retrieved February 28, 2012, from <http://schooltheatre.org/publications/dramatics/2011/01/innovators-viola-spolin>

Figure 8. Theory of change—ASL and cultural mentoring through theatre



Key assumptions underlying ASL and cultural mentoring through theatre:

- Playing theatre games enables participants to use their imagination to work on solutions to problems and collaborate to create joint productions.
- Acting out personal experiences and using theatre games to engage in storytelling and explore oppression develops understandings to make new interpreters more sensitive to the community and people they serve.

Comparison of mentorship programs using theories of change

The Deaf Access and StoryBlend programs included key mentoring components, but differed considerably on the nature and implementation of those components. Both StoryBlend and the Deaf Access medical mentorship program stated the theoretical underpinnings for their programs, though these theories were quite different. The theory for Deaf Access related to how people learn and to the demands of interpreting settings and what controls may be used. StoryBlend took its guidance from theories about experiential learning about oppression and through the medium of theatre.

The two programs had some overlap in their target audiences and translation skill development, but focused on different content—cultural understanding and medical interpreting. StoryBlend's target audience was new interpreters, most of whom were hearing and had little previous interaction with the Deaf community. Their aim was to increase understanding of the culture of the Deaf community early on in their career and to improve translation skills. One component of Deaf Access's program also targeted new interpreters. But Deaf Access also offered separate program components tailored to the needs of experienced, working interpreters, with the goal of honing interpreting skills and encouraging them to engage in medical interpreting.

The two programs differed in their program structure. The timeframe for the medical interpreting consisted of engagements that lasted several hours, spaced out over several months. The StoryBlend program was a daily, two-week long immersion experience.

Mentors in both programs actively engaged participants, but in different types of settings. Deaf Access conducted its mentorships in the real-life environment of a medical facility with experienced medical interpreters serving as mentors. StoryBlend's Deaf mentors had arts backgrounds, actively engaged the mentees in theatre activities that explored their own cultural experiences. The program was conducted in a university setting.

Both programs included evaluation of participants, Deaf Access using formal assessments of knowledge and skills. StoryBlend used individual and group performance assessments through theatre activities. Both encouraged the development of self-awareness and self-assessment of skills and learning needs.

This comparison shows that mentoring programs may include similar components – guiding philosophy, program structure, content relevant to interpreting needs, well-developed activities, and participant evaluation, but the purpose of those components and how they are structured and implemented may be very different. One mentoring model does not fit every situation. Needs and target populations vary. Implementing organizations and their partners vary. The focus and design of local mentoring programs also vary. When a mentoring program is developed, it is important that key stakeholders contribute to the discussion so that expected outcomes are clear, decisions about how best to accomplish those outcomes, and why the selected approach should work can be explicated. In this way, the best use can be made of available resources, a clear plan of operation can be laid out, and a logic model or theory of

change that clearly communicates program intent will be available as a guide for implementers and a tool for funders to understand the program.

Monitoring and evaluating mentorship programs

How do we know if we are making progress toward our mentorship program goals? How do we know our programs are having the intended results with participants? How do we know what's working and what's not? These are some of the questions that can be addressed through systematic program monitoring and evaluation. Program logic models and theories of change can guide the development of relevant, useful performance monitoring and program evaluation.

Some issues related to interpreter mentoring programs

The 2008 report of the focus group on interpreter mentoring²⁸ identified several questions about evaluation needs and challenges for interpreter mentorship programs, including questions about what would be considered appropriate outcomes for interpreter mentoring programs. These questions are bulleted below with discussion that may provide some guidance to program in how to address them.

- *Should the focus be on outcomes attained during the mentorship or those related to application in real interpreting assignments?*

We see from logic models and theories of change that programs begin by focusing on short-term outcomes that can be attained during the mentorship and that those outcomes are expected to lead to application during work assignments, attaining certification, and ultimately benefiting the Deaf community members who use interpretation services. Chains of outcomes begin with short-term program outcomes, which support intermediate outcomes where knowledge and skills learned are applied in real-life situations, and which ultimately contribute to long-term outcomes where changes among many individuals and/or organizations contribute to societal and community benefits. In the case of interpreter mentoring, local mentorship programs can evaluate the knowledge and skill growth of participants. Intermediate outcomes, such as attaining certification and successfully taking on more demanding jobs, may be done by the mentorship program and/or by universities, national or state organizations (RID, state education or rehab departments), or consortia (NCIEC). The evaluation of long-term outcomes, such as sustained networks of interpreters for professional growth and Deaf consumer satisfaction with interpretation services, are usually beyond the capacities of individual mentorship programs and can be better carried out by universities and national organizations with foundation, state, or federal funding.

²⁸ Gordon, P. (March 2008). Current practices in mentoring: Synthesis of 2007 focus group discussions. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, pp. 20-27. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.northeastern.edu/bostonmodernism/wp-content/uploads/CurrentPrctcMentor.pdf>

- *Do outcomes vary, depending on whether the mentoring program is focused on general or specialized interpreting?*

Interpretation is a complex social-linguistic task. The standards for interpreter education programs outline just how many different types of competencies and understandings are needed for skilled interpretation. Many new interpreters continue to develop these skills and knowledge after graduation. Mentorship programs were developed to support this continuing need, so the outcomes of different programs may vary, depending upon their target population and local needs.

From the diversity of mentorship programs funded by the RID/NCIEC Challenge Grants, we see how mentorship programs have been designed to meet the interpretation needs in different locales. Because they are relatively short-term programs, their focus is necessarily more limited than that of interpreter education programs. While the focus and approaches of mentorship programs vary, they are guided by the overarching goals articulated by RID/NCIEC – closing the skills gap, supporting ongoing interpreter development, and better serving the interpretation needs of the Deaf community. While all programs have outcomes related to improving interpreting skills, some programs focus on particular aspects of interpreting skills, such learning specialized interpreting vocabulary, developing cultural sensitivity, or enhancing ASL fluency. All, however, fit within the same big picture. Comparison of logic models or theories of change for mentorship programs can help to answer this question, framing larger evaluation questions about what works for whom under what conditions. For example, given mentorship programs with similar short-term outcomes, what approaches and conditions are most effective in achieving those outcomes? These mentorship programs can then become evidence-based models for developing other programs.

- *Do outcomes vary, depending upon the experience of mentees?*

Mentorship programs target different interpreter populations. Some focus on student or new interpreters. Others seek to mentor experienced interpreters who want to work in specialized areas or enhance their skills. Others attempt to address the varied needs of interpreters with different levels of experience who all work within a particular geographic area. Some programs have similar expectations for all mentees. Other programs, such as those serving mentees with different levels of experience, encourage mentees to establish their own goals for what they want to accomplish during the mentorship. In this case, it would be informative to document the goals selected by the mentees and assess the extent to which individuals accomplish different types of goals by the end of the program. Again, consideration of what works for whom under what conditions is a useful approach to evaluation.

Other issues from the focus group report had to do with how mentorship programs should be evaluated:

- *How can growth and development of mentees be measured? How can important, but hard-to-measure outcomes be evaluated?*

There are many ways an outcome may be measured. We look for approaches that are valid and reliable and that will provide convincing evidence that change due to engagement in mentorship had occurred. A measure is valid when it is meaningfully related to key aspects of the desired outcome. A measure is reliable when a result is internally consistent or replicable when measured more than once, either over time or by different observers.

The 2008 focus group report observed that little information was available about how different programs evaluated their results or what they used to measure different outcomes. Programs could learn much by sharing the evaluation instruments that they have used and found to be helpful. It is also necessary to share information about what has been difficult to measure. When that is known, the resources of universities, RID/NCIEC, and other organizations may be brought to bear to help address those gaps. Development of evaluation tools can require resources and expertise that are often beyond the capacities of individual mentorship programs. Well-developed instruments and strategies for assessing hard-to-measure outcomes can benefit many mentorship programs as well as the profession. They could provide data to help programs measure their successes as well as assist larger evaluation efforts in determining the effectiveness of mentorship as a national strategy for improving interpretation services.

Given appropriate data collection instruments and procedures, individual programs should be able to obtain and allocate resources to monitor program performance and evaluate short-term outcomes and some intermediate outcomes. Evaluation of intermediate and long-term outcomes often require more research capacity than local programs have and may best be conducted by universities and national organizations.

While it is important to be able to quantify mentee change when possible, when assessment instruments for certain knowledge and skills do not yet exist, qualitative data can be very helpful in describing what was learned, what worked well, and what needs improvement. Qualitative data in the form of self-reports, documented observations, and interviews are valuable sources of information from which themes or patterns may be identified. Mentoring programs may include these data collection strategies in their evaluations. Patterns of learning that emerge from qualitative data are very useful for developing questionnaires, rating forms, checklists, or other quantitative assessment tools. Interpreter mentoring is a relatively new type of professional development that can benefit from additional research. Such research often begins with qualitative studies that discover what is taking place and how. Quantitative research and the development of assessment tools can be built upon that base of understanding. Individual mentoring programs as well as universities and

national organizations can contribute to this process of building understanding of mentorship and developing instruments for evaluating its effectiveness.

- *Should mentors or mentees evaluate the attainment of outcomes? Or should other objective measures or external benchmarks be used?*

These questions ask what counts as credible evidence for outcomes? Data to support the achievement of outcomes may come from self-reports; for observations by others, such as mentors; or from other measures, such as criterion-referenced or standardized assessments of knowledge and skills. Each brings a valuable perspective. Evaluations often strive to obtain data about outcomes from more than one source, so programs need not think in either/or terms, but about what perspectives can contribute evidence about the extent to which outcomes are achieved. For example, if mentees set their own goals for what they want to accomplish during a mentorship, having the judgments of mentees about what they feel they have achieved as well as judgments by their mentors gives program coordinators richer data for evaluating program effectiveness. If judgments of mentees and mentors tend to agree, that provides stronger evidence that changes did occur. If there are disagreements, that is also valuable information that is worth asking questions about and exploring in more depth to gain a better understanding of the mentoring process and the criteria mentees and mentors use to judge success.

Program monitoring and evaluation

Performance monitoring and evaluation are two processes that go hand in hand with program implementation, improvement, demonstrating results, and communicating to stakeholders. Program logic models and theories of change can guide the development of relevant, useful monitoring systems and program evaluations.

Performance monitoring may also be called performance measurement. The U.S. Government Accountability Office defines performance measurement as:

...the ongoing monitoring and reporting of program accomplishments, particularly progress toward preestablished goals. It is typically conducted by program or agency management. Performance measures may address the type or level of program activities conducted (process), the direct products and services delivered by a program (outputs), or the results of those products and services (outcomes).²⁹

Program evaluations, on the other hand are:

... individual systematic studies conducted periodically or on an ad hoc basis to assess how well a program is working. They are often conducted by experts external to the

²⁹ Performance Measurement and Evaluation: Definitions and Relationships. GAO-11-646SP, May 2, 2011. Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.gao.gov/assets/80/77277.pdf>

program, either inside or outside the agency, as well as by program managers. A program evaluation typically examines achievement of program objectives in the context of other aspects of program performance or in the context in which it occurs. [Program evaluations may investigate program implementation, outcomes, impact, or cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit.]³⁰

Performance monitoring and program evaluation are complementary processes, but monitoring and evaluation answer two different types of questions. Performance monitoring activities are ongoing throughout the life of the project and focus on inputs, process, outputs, and especially short-term outcomes. Monitoring measurements are made at least once annually, but could be done weekly or quarterly during program implementation. Repeated performance measurements can indicate whether a program is making progress toward its goals. Are planned activities happening on schedule? Did we recruit the projected number of participants? Do the participants adequately represent our target population? Are mentors and mentees meeting and communicating with the expected frequency? Did all of the participants complete the program? Were participants satisfied with their mentoring experience?

Performance monitoring focuses on activities and outcomes over which the program has control. It is helpful to think of performance monitoring as an early warning system. A “yes” to questions like those above is a “green flag” – program activities are taking place, members of the target audience are applying and participating, short-term outcomes are being achieved. If a performance target is not being met, then a yellow or red flag is hoisted. This is an indication that something is not happening as expected and that some adjustment or modification is needed.

The green, yellow, and red flags, however, do not tell us how an activity is working or why an outcome is not being achieved. That is where evaluation comes in. Evaluation is used to answer how and why questions about program development, implementation, outcomes, and effectiveness. The answers from evaluation can provide valuable information for program improvement or information about why a program strategy has been effective with some participants, but not others. How can we improve recruitment results? What goals do mentees set for themselves and how well are they attained? How effective are mentorship activities in building participants’ skills? What is the nature of mentors’ and mentees’ experiences in the program? Evaluations consider activities and outcomes over which programs have control as well as relevant conditions and events that are beyond program control, but which may influence the program’s results.

Evaluation is also used to investigate longer term outcomes and community impact. How did mentorship or other factors contribute to participants’ persistence in the interpreting field? Did mentees go on to accept and succeed in more demanding interpreting jobs after completing their mentorships? Did participants attain certification in less time than non-participants and, if

³⁰ Ibid.

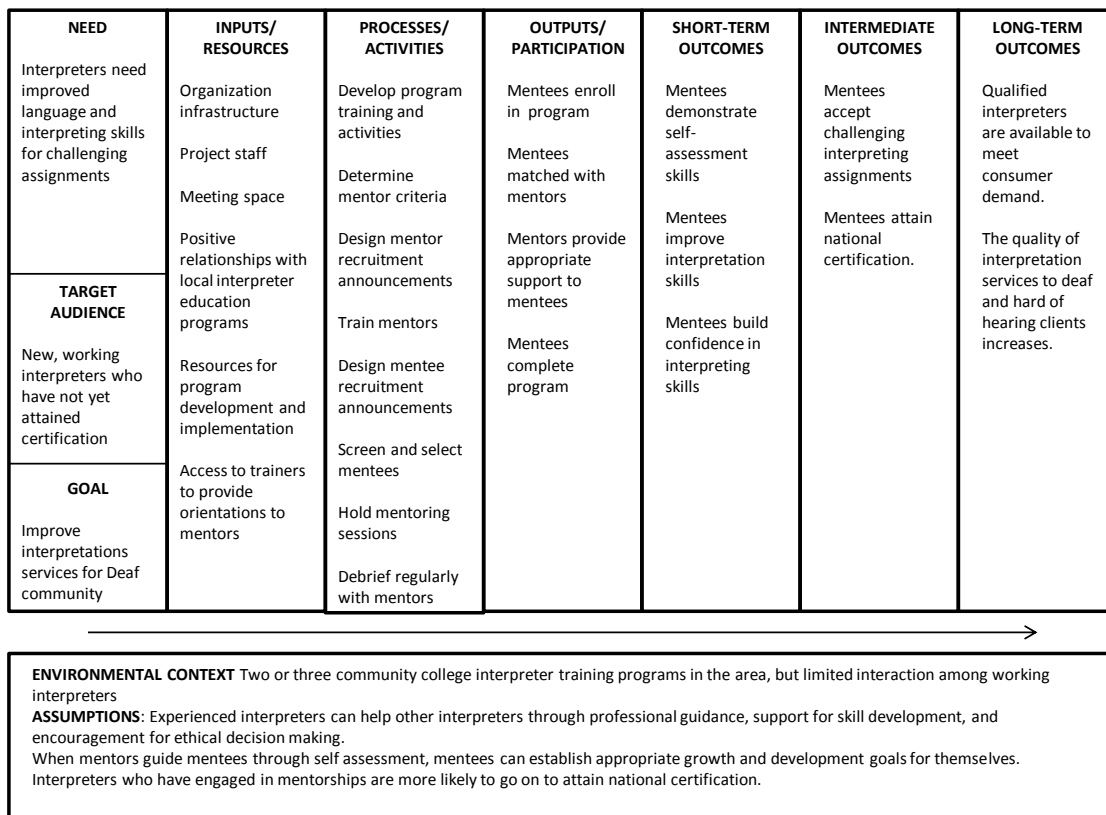
so, what factors contributed to that result? Do Deaf consumers feel their interpreting needs are better met in areas served by mentorship programs?

Using logic models and theories of change to guide monitoring and evaluation

Logic models and theories of change are designed to show the rationale and design for a program – how it is supposed to work and what it is to be accomplished. Mentorship programs can use logic models and theory of change frameworks to guide the development of relevant, useful performance monitoring systems and program evaluations.

Below is a logic model for a hypothetical mentorship program which, for the purpose of illustration, includes features from several actual mentorship programs. This example is intended to be illustrative, not prescriptive of what a mentorship program should look like.

Figure 9. Logic model for a hypothetical mentorship program



To develop performance measures for monitoring this hypothetical program, we can start with the Input and Processes/ Activities columns and work right toward the Outcomes columns. Performance measures for project development and implementation processes could look like this:

Figure 10. Performance measures for project development and implementation processes

Inputs and Processes/ Activities	Performance Measure	Documentation and Data Needed	Calculation/ Analysis	Reporting Frequency
Input: Resources for program development and implementation	All project development and implementation activities are completed within budget.	-Project plan with list of project activities, assignments, timelines, and budget allocation for each -Criteria for successful completion of each activity (e.g., sign-off by coordinator, signed contracts) -Reports, activity logs, etc. (data providing evidence of completion)	Percentage of project activities due within reporting time period that were completed within planned budget allocation.	Weekly or Monthly for internal monitoring. Quarterly or annually for external reporting.
Development Processes/ Activities: -Develop program training and activities -Determine mentor criteria -Design mentor recruitment announcements -Train mentors -Design mentee recruitment announcements -Screen and select mentees	All project development and implementation activities are completed on time.		Percentage of project activities due within reporting time period that were documented as completed on time.	

With appropriate project and activity documentation, resource use and progress on development and implementation can be quantified and assessed against established criteria. In this case, the criteria are the components of the project plan. Project planning typically includes tasks to be performed, who is responsible for completing each task, criteria for completion, timeline for completion, and projected budget for each task. If tasks are assigned to different staff, the project coordinator can track completion of tasks, especially when completion of some tasks is dependent upon completion of other tasks. For example, mentors cannot be recruited until the desired criteria for mentors are decided upon. The project plan with input and process performance measures is a useful planning and internal monitoring tool for program staff as well as a means of communicating progress to key stakeholders.

Figure 11. Performance measures for implementation activities

Implementation Processes/ Activities	Performance Measure	Documentation and Data Needed	Calculation/ Analysis	Reporting Frequency
-Hold mentoring sessions	All mentors meet with mentees for the number of times and duration as specified in the project plan. Mentors implement recommended mentoring practices as outlines during orientation.	-Mentor self-report activity logs, using format provided by program coordinator	Record number of mentor/mentee sessions that take place. Compare to number of sessions specified in project plan. Program coordinator or trainers also review log content weekly to monitor the types of mentoring activities used and identify problems or concerns that may need to be addressed.	Weekly, for internal monitoring. Summarized for annual reporting.
-Debrief regularly with mentors	Mentors attend all scheduled debriefing meetings with project coordinator.	-Logs of mentors' attendance at regularly scheduled debriefings with project coordinator	Compute percentage of mentors who attend all scheduled debriefing meetings. Identify problem areas or concerns that need to be addressed.	Weekly, for internal monitoring. Summarized for annual reporting.

Performance data about program delivery is used by program coordinators to monitor implementation processes. This performance data is also useful when doing program evaluations. Information about what happens during mentoring can be used as evidence of fidelity – how closely do actual mentoring activities and strategies agree with the mentoring

principles presented during this hypothetical program’s mentor orientation? If evidence of how mentoring was implemented is available, that can be used in effectiveness evaluations in conjunction with mentees’ outcome data to see how any differences in mentoring activities affect mentees’ outcome achievements. Fidelity, like participation (discussed below), is an important link in the outcomes evidence chain. Fidelity (process) data and participation (output) data can be collected, analyzed, and used at the program level for monitoring internal processes. These data can also be used to strengthen evaluations that ask questions about program effectiveness.

The “Outputs/Participation” column in the logic model lists expectations for what the mentorship program will offer and the engagement of mentors and mentees. Outputs are things that the program does, what it offers to mentees. Participation includes mentees’ decisions to take part, but does not indicate what they learned. Participation is an important output to measure, because we assume that mentees must be present at scheduled events in order to benefit from the program. This makes participation is an important piece of evidence in establishing that the program makes a difference for those who attend them. Participation is necessary, though not sufficient, for providing evidence of program impact. Evidence of participation plus evidence that outcomes are achieved go together to show that mentorship programs produce positive benefits.

The program outputs and participation expectations in the hypothetical logic model suggest performance measures like those in the following table.

Figure 12. Performance measures for outputs and participation

Outputs/ Participation	Performance Measure	Documentation and Data Needed	Calculation/ Analysis	Reporting Frequency
Mentee participation: The expected number of mentees from the target population enrolled in the program.	All available mentee slots are filled. All enrolled mentees are members of the target population.	-Planned number of mentees -Criteria for mentee selection -Number of applicants -Background data on applicants -Number of applicants accepted -Number of accepted applicants paying participation fee	Enrolled mentee count, compared to projected number of mentees. Number of applicants from target population who have paid participation fee, divided by the total number of expected mentees	Annually

Figure 12. Performance measures for outputs and participation

Outputs/ Participation	Performance Measure	Documentation and Data Needed	Calculation/ Analysis	Reporting Frequency
Mentor output: All mentors provided appropriate support to mentees.	All mentors receive satisfaction ratings of at least 70%.	Ratings from a 10- item survey of mentee satisfaction with mentor guidance, feedback, and interaction, using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Very satisfied” to “Very unsatisfied.” The survey is administered twice, once half way through the mentorship and again at the end.	Mentee ratings for the mentors with whom they are working will be computed, with “Very satisfied” and “Satisfied” being counted at positive ratings. Each mentor must receive at least 7 positive ratings out of the 10 items to be counted as providing appropriate support to mentees. The criteria will not be met if any mentor has a satisfaction rating of less than 7 positive ratings out of 10.	Twice during mentorship program for internal monitoring. Annual for external reporting.
Mentee participation: All mentees completed the program.	All mentees attend at least 90% of group meetings and individual mentoring sessions.	-List of all mentees -Schedule of all required meetings and events -Attendance logs for all group meetings -Mentor activity logs	Number of mentees attending all group meetings and individual mentoring sessions, divided by the number of mentees.	Monthly and Annually

While the output performance measures for mentee participation are fairly straightforward, the output performance measure for “All mentors provided appropriate support to mentees” is the open to multiple interpretations. What does “appropriate support” mean? What does it mean to mentees, who are on the receiving end? What does it mean to mentors who are applying their expertise in this new relationship? What does it mean to the program staff who developed

the vision for the mentorship program? In the previous table on Implementation Processes/Activities, two types of data were described that relate to the mentor and program developer perspectives – mentor logs and debriefing records, which are also measures of implementation fidelity. In the Output/Participation table above, the mentees’ perspectives on the quality of implementation are represented by their responses to a satisfaction survey.

The use of satisfaction surveys, activity logs, and attendance logs are but some ways in which information about “appropriate support” could be collected. Inclusion of different perspectives on difficult-to-measure performance can be important pieces of the puzzle. For internal monitoring, different perspectives can help to identify what is working and what is not so that program improvements can be made in a timely manner. For external reporting, different perspectives, represented by quantitative data, such as survey results or attendance summaries, or qualitative descriptions of mentoring processes and program problem solving can enrich reports about program progress and accomplishments to funders and other stakeholders.

Figure 13. Performance measures for short-term outcomes

Short-term Outcomes	Performance Measures	Documentation and Data Needed	Reporting Frequency
Mentees demonstrate self-assessment skills	Within the first month of mentoring, all mentees will submit three written or videotaped goals for self-improvement within specified aspects of interpretation, which have been approved as relevant and appropriately challenging by their mentors.	-Mentor activity logs of self-assessment activities -Documentation of goals set by each mentee -Mentor ratings of relevance and appropriateness of mentees’ goals.	Monthly for internal monitoring Annually for external reporting

Figure 13. Performance measures for short-term outcomes

Short-term Outcomes	Performance Measures	Documentation and Data Needed	Reporting Frequency
Mentees improve interpretation skills	<p>90% of mentees will demonstrate at least 10 percentage points of growth in at least three specified aspects of interpretation, as measured by mentor pre- and post-ratings.</p> <p>90% of mentees will rate their growth in at least three specified aspects of interpretation as “improved” or “very improved” at the end of their mentorship.</p>	<p>-Pre/post videotapes of interpretation of comparable situations</p> <p>-Mentor logs</p> <p>-Mentor ratings of mentee skill growth, on a rating form which specifies key aspects of interpretation identified during the program development process. After reviewing videotapes and logs, mentors will complete the rating form at the beginning and at the end of the mentorship</p> <p>-Mentees will use a rating form developed by the program to self-assess specified interpretation skills at the end of the mentorship</p>	Annually
Mentees build confidence in interpreting skills	All mentees will demonstrate increased confidence in their interpretation capabilities as measured by at least a 20 point increase in an interpretation self-efficacy scale.	An interpretation self-efficacy scale, which includes at least 10 descriptions of critical interpretation events which interpreters frequently encounter, is administered at begin and end of mentorship program. For each critical event, mentees will rate the certainty with which they can succeed in the situation on a 100 point scale.	Annually

The first outcome is a status outcome. When mentees establish goals that meet certain criterion, then the outcome has been achieved.

The second and third outcomes assess improvement. Improvement or growth involves change. Change outcomes require at least two measurements of the same thing, one before the treatment (engagement in mentoring) and one after treatment, which are compared. Individual mentorship programs can effectively measure short-term change outcomes. But to have two measurements, quantitative assessment tools are needed to calculate the amount of change

that occurred. If such an instrument is not already available, specification of what successful accomplishment of the outcome looks like and development of an instrument to measure that success should be part of the program development process.

Related to improvement in interpretation skills, several mentorship programs have asked mentees to state goals they wanted to accomplish during their mentorship. If this is entirely mentee-directed, a wide range of goals will likely result that will be difficult to assess in any consistent way, making pre-post comparison difficult. If this approach is used, however, the mentoring program staff should collect mentees' goals. A content analysis of the goals can provide qualitative data about perceived needs. At the conclusion of the mentorship, mentees and mentors could be interviewed to determine the extent to which mentees accomplished their goals. If videotapes of interpreting situations are available, then these can provide additional information about areas in which mentees tend to need improvement. These qualitative data might inform the program about what aspects of interpretation might become a strong focus in subsequent offerings of the program and could be used for future instrument development.

If, however, the program is based on a particular approach or philosophy about interpretation, or has already gone through the process described in the preceding paragraph, then the program could specify key aspects of interpretation beforehand that could be the focus of mentee goals. If this is done, then it is easier to develop observation or rating sheets and use consistent data collection procedures that can be more easily aggregated and reported as quantitative results. Numeric results can always be supplemented with illustrative qualitative narratives of growth about which a mentee could make self-judgments.

The third short-term outcome, increased mentee confidence in interpretation situations, suggests using a self-efficacy rating scale as a measure of confidence. This is an example of where assessment tools specifically focused on interpretation could be useful to individual programs and to cross-program evaluations. Most of the funded mentorship program as well as the 2008 focus group report identified increased self-confidence as an important outcome. Self-confidence, however, is difficult to define and to quantify. The psychological construct of self-efficacy, however, is backed by a considerable body of research. Self-efficacy combined the capability to perform a task with the certainty that one will succeed in that task. Measures of self-efficacy are domain specific. They must include critical incidents or tasks specific to a profession. Construction of a self-efficacy scale could be done by individual programs that are based on a particular philosophy or approach to interpretation, such as Demand-Control Schema. Or a scale might be constructed based on feedback from mentees and experienced interpreters about critical incidents in challenging interpretation situations. Research and

guidelines for developing self-efficacy scales are described by Bandura and may be a useful reference for programs and researchers in interpretation.³¹

Evidence that outcomes are due to engagement in mentoring is strengthened when programs are able to demonstrate that positive change occurred for program participants, but not for comparable interpreters who did not participate. If during the application process, there are more applicants from the target population than can be accommodated by the mentorship program, applicants may be randomly assigned to participate or not participate during the current session. If some of the same assessments can be administered to both groups before and after the mentorship, and greater change is detected in the mentored group, then the claim that the mentorship program made the difference is strengthened.

The intermediate outcomes for the hypothetical mentoring program assess application of learned knowledge and skills, including confidence (i.e., self-efficacy). Because intermediate outcomes are expected of be attained after the completion of the mentorship program, then follow-up with mentees will be required. This means that contact information will most likely be needed and should be obtained during the mentorship period.

Figure 14. Performance measures for intermediate outcomes

Intermediate Outcomes	Sample Performance Measurement	Documentation and Data Needed	Reporting Frequency
Mentees attain national certification	90% of new interpreter mentees will attain national certification within 2 years of completing the mentorship program	-Contact information for mentees who participated in mentorship program -Annual follow-up surveys of former mentees -State and/or RID records of certified interpreters	Annually, for continuing programs

³¹ Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for creating self-efficacy scales. In T. Urdan & F. Pajares (eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing

Figure 14. Performance measures for intermediate outcomes

Intermediate Outcomes	Sample Performance Measurement	Documentation and Data Needed	Reporting Frequency
Mentees accept challenging interpreting assignments	Within one year of completing the mentorship program, 70% if mentees report seeking, accepting, and succeeding in challenging interpretation assignments.	-Contact information for mentees -Follow-up survey of type of interpreting assignments sought and accepted. -Re-administration of the self-efficacy scale.	Annually, for continuing programs

Attaining national certification within two years after completing the mentorship program may require considerable follow-up effort. However, if the mentorship program has a collaborative relationship with interpreter education program that regular do follow-up on their graduates, this information might be obtained by working with these training programs. Information about certification may also be available from certifying agencies.

It is important to recognize that programs can be expected to have more direct impact on short-term outcomes than they do on longer term outcomes. As we look further down the chain of outcomes, factors beyond the control of mentorship programs may have an influence on whether or not intermediate and long-term outcomes are attained.³² For example, when looking at how long new interpreters who have participated in mentorship programs take to attain national certification, other factors such as family circumstances, job opportunities, or career goals may contribute to the amount of time that passes before certification is achieved. For these reasons, it is important to think of mentorship programs as contributing to longer term outcomes, rather than being the sole determinant. The most useful evaluations will help to determine what works for whom under what conditions.³³ When a logic model or theory of change is developed for a mentorship program, specification of need, the target audience, the environmental context and structure of the program, and the nature and rationale for program activities make the what, the who, and the conditions more explicit so they can be properly observed, described, and evaluated.

Determining if mentees go on to seek out and accept challenging interpretation assignments also required delayed follow-up and contact information. This outcome is also challenging to

³² Shadish, W.R, Cook, T.D., & Campbell, D.T. (2002). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, p. 5.

³³ Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997). Realistic evaluation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Summary retrieved February 28, 2013, from <http://www.communitymatters.com.au/gpage1.html>

quantify. What constitutes a challenging interpretation assignment? Also, many other factors may influence whether mentees can find or are offered more challenging assignments. In addition to information about opportunities and self-initiative, mentees may once again be asked to complete the self-efficacy scale, which asks them how certain they are that they could succeed in interpreting situations.

When intermediate outcomes and certainly long-term outcomes are assessed, performance measurement is more limited. Individual programs may not have the capacity to conduct follow-up data collection and at this point, outcome attainment may be affected by conditions over which the mentorship program has no control. For example, the long-term goal of improving access to quality interpreting services is influenced by many factors beyond the control of an interpreter mentorship program, though the program may contribute to positive change in this community goal. This is the point at which performance measurement is not sufficient; outcome and impact evaluations are needed. These are best conducted by persons with expertise in research and evaluation methods. Such studies, which may also want to look at the effectiveness of more than one mentoring program, would need to be carried out by a university or state or national organization with funding support.

Performance monitoring uses data to track the progress of project activities and the attainment of shorter term project outcomes. Much of the needed data is often generated by program operations. Mentorship projects that establish, carry out, and use a system for performance monitoring also increase the future evaluability of the program. A program is evaluable, i.e., ready for formal evaluation, when it has clear goals, when its program objectives have been well- conceptualized and has been appropriately implemented, and when key stakeholders issued and information needs are understood.³⁴ Having basic, systematic program data in place is one prerequisite for doing a meaningful evaluation of a program. A performance monitoring system can be used to verify whether activities are being carried out, mentoring is taking place, and mentors and mentees are doing what is expected. A monitoring system enables the project staff to identify early on those areas that are not going as expected, as well as what is going well. Good performance monitoring information is also helpful for communicating program progress and accomplishments to funders and stakeholders. We can use our project logic models and theories of change to identify performance measures for different parts of the program, operationalize what change looks like, and guide evaluations that help us understand how mentorships work and what models can be most effective under different conditions.

Appendix A provides a list of resources that may be helpful in planning, carrying out, and using performance monitoring and evaluation.

³⁴ Patton, M.Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation: The new century text*, Edition 3. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, p. 104.

Appendix A – Resources for Logic Models, Theories of Change, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation

Web resources:

Logic models and theory of change

From the University of Wisconsin – Cooperative Extension Program, “Enhancing Program Performance with Logic Models,” a PDF version of an on-line course for off-line use.

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/pdf/lmcourseall.pdf>

“W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide” includes guidance for developing logic models to fit different kinds of projects, with examples.

<http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide.aspx>

The University of South Florida has a large library of logic models and theories of change.

<http://logicmodel.fmhi.usf.edu/>

From the University of Kansas, guidelines for developing logic models, with diverse examples.

http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/section_1877.aspx

“Guidance on Developing a Theory of Change,” from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, with templates and examples.

<http://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/CC2977K440.pdf>

Monitoring and evaluation

“Performance Measurement and Evaluation: Definitions and Relationships,” from the U.S. Government Accountability Office

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/80/77277.pdf>

“W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook” discusses the uses of evaluation for program improvement as well as program effectiveness.

<http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook.aspx>

This website provides on-line guidance and information sharing for better evaluations.

<http://betterevaluation.org/>

Template for evaluability assessment – a series of questions to ask to determine if a program is ready to evaluate.

http://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/IEUwebsite/Evaluability_Assessment_Template.pdf

Would it work here? Questions to consider when adapting a program that has been effectively used in one setting to a different setting.

<http://www.communitymatters.com.au/gpage1.html>

Innovation Network (Innonet) is a free on-line resource for non-profit organizations and grant writers. Innonet's Point K Learning Center has resources and interactive tools to assist non-profits for social change with program planning, logic model development, and evaluation planning. Registration is free.

http://www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=4&content_id=16

Print publications

Logic models and theory of change

Funnell, S.C. & Rogers, P.J. (2011). *Useful program theory: Effective use of theories of change and logic models*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Monitoring and evaluation

Chen, H. (2005). *Practical program evaluation: Assessing and improving planning, implementation, and effectiveness*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Patton, M.Q. *Utilization-focused evaluation*, 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Poister, T.H. (2003). *Measuring performance in public and non-profit organizations*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Shadish, W.R., Cook, T.D., & Campbell, D.T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., & Newcomer, K.E. (2010). *Handbook of practical program evaluation*, Edition 3. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.