

Spring 6-8-2015

# Deaf-hearing interpreter teams: navigating trust in shared space

Laurie Reese Reinhardt

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wou.edu/theses>



Part of the [Accessibility Commons](#), and the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Reinhardt, L. R. (2015). *Deaf-hearing interpreter teams: navigating trust in shared space* (master's thesis). Western Oregon University, Monmouth, Oregon. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.wou.edu/theses/21>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Interpreting Studies at Digital Commons@WOU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's of Arts in Interpreting Studies (MAIS) Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@WOU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@wou.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@wou.edu), [kundas@mail.wou.edu](mailto:kundas@mail.wou.edu), [bakersc@mail.wou.edu](mailto:bakersc@mail.wou.edu).

Deaf-Hearing Interpreter Teams: Navigating Trust in Shared Space

By

Laurie Reese Reinhardt

A thesis submitted to

Western Oregon University

In partial fulfillment of

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies

June 2015

© 2015 by Laurie Reese Reinhardt

---

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

---

☒ Thesis

☐ Professional Project

Titled: Deaf-Hearing Interpreter Teams: Navigating Trust in Shared Space

Graduate Student: Laurie Reese Reinhardt

Candidate for the degree of: Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies

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

Signatures Redacted for Privacy

**Committee Chair:**

Name: Dr. Elisa Maroney

Date: June 1, 2015

**Committee Members:**

Name: Dr. Adele Schepige

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Ellie Savidge

Date: June 1, 2015

Name: Robert G Lee

Date: June 1, 2015

---

**Director of Graduate Programs:**

Name: Dr. Linda Stonecipher

Date: 6-10-15

© 2015 Laurie Reese Reinhardt.

June 2015.

All rights reserved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Dr. Julie White who shared her academic story with me while we worked together at a conference several years ago. Sparks ignited that day, and subsequently kindled a change in my professional pathway. I wish to thank my thesis committee, whose dedication to promoting excellence in signed language interpreting research is paramount. Special thanks to Dr. Elisa Maroney (Chair), for the unwavering encouragement and refreshing, frank writing critiques along the way and to Dr. Adele Schepige for her kind support with methodology techniques. I am grateful to Robert G. Lee for his continued guidance he provided across the airwaves, especially for his support during the evolution of my research. Without his research and writings on role-space, this research study would not have unfolded the way it did. Ellie Savidge's contribution as a seasoned certified Deaf interpreter provided a perspective unique to the Deaf experience. I am humbly appreciative that she was an early sounding board that helped to shape the direction of my research. The MA in Interpreting Studies Cohort of 2013 at Western Oregon University provided buoyancy when the weight of this endeavor began to take on water. Special recognition goes to those who supported my efforts to "get-er-done" - Nicole, Erica, Grace, Amy, Erin, and Sandra thank you for being my lifeline. I am extremely grateful to the focus group participants and survey respondents; truly this would not have happened without their dedication to selflessly serve the Deaf community. Please accept my heartfelt thanks. I had the good fortune to have two talented wordsmiths breathe life into my cluttered thoughts - Joann Olson and Jeff

Williamson. I am in awe. I wish to thank my dear friend and highly respected colleague Daniel B. Veltri - a vessel cannot contain his support. I am deeply honored to have him in my life. Finally, to my “little family” who ground me. Eric, Irina, and Gracie - thank you for tolerating endless hours of absence as I pursued my passion. I love you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
ABSTRACT .....	ix
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	4
The Purpose of the Study .....	5
Theoretical Bases and Organization .....	6
Limitations of the Study .....	7
Situating the Researcher .....	8
Definitions of Terms .....	9
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	11
Historical Perspective .....	11
Positioning the Research .....	17
Theoretical Framework .....	19
Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY .....	22
Phase I: Focus Groups .....	23
Phase II: Survey .....	26
Chapter 4 FINDINGS .....	31
Presentation of Findings: Focus Groups .....	31
Presentation of Findings: Survey .....	31
Demographics .....	32
Interpreter as Practitioner .....	36
Major Themes .....	40
Chapter 5 DISCUSSION .....	58
Demographics .....	58
The Interpreter Practitioner .....	59
Trust Theory .....	60
The Interpreted Interaction Goal .....	60
Trust Starts with a Shared Goal .....	60
Trust Includes Beliefs .....	61
Trust Invokes an Evaluation Process .....	62
Trust as Delegation of Power .....	63
Errors in Delegation .....	65
Mistrust/Distrust .....	68
Preparation and Trust .....	70
Genuine Trust .....	70
Attitude and Trust .....	72

Role, Function, and Trust Theory .....	74
Linguistic Expertise .....	74
Process – Who’s on First .....	76
Summary .....	78
Chapter 6 CONCLUSIONS .....	80
The Need for Comprehensive Training .....	82
Recommendations .....	83
In Closing .....	85
References .....	86
Appendix A Implied Consent and Survey Instrument .....	92
Appendix B Informed Consent—Focus Group .....	103
Appendix C Presentation of Findings: Focus Groups .....	105
Effective Teamwork .....	105
Ineffective Teamwork .....	106
Trust .....	107
Role .....	107
Interaction Management .....	108
Power and Privilege .....	109
One Thing to Share... ..	109



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Characteristics and Corresponding Cultural and Language Orientation .....	29
Table 2	Study Participants' Ethnic Affiliation as it compares with RID 2013 Annual Report.....	34
Table 3	Percentage of Deaf – Hearing Interpreter Team Training .....	39
Table 4	Hearing respondents' Attitudinal sentiments that support as well as impede effective Pre-conferencing .....	43
Table 5	If there was one thing to share... ..	55

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Population distribution by Age.....	33
Figure 2. Combined education profile of Deaf and hearing interpreters .....	35
Figure 3. Target Population Distribution by Region .....	36
Figure 4. Number of Years of Paid Service .....	37
Figure 5. Average interpreted hours per week.....	38
Figure 6. Percentage of practice teamed with hearing/Deaf counterpart.....	39
Figure 7. Pre-conferencing Engagement by team configuration .....	41
Figure 8. Factors that support Case Conferencing.....	42
Figure 9. Factors that impede effective Pre-conferencing .....	42
Figure 10. Hearing Interpreter report on role/function contributions of Deaf Interpreter	46
Figure 11. DI report on Function contribution of HI .....	47
Figure 12. DI/HI and HI/DI report on Functionality Contribution.....	48
Figure 13. Factors that contribute to Trust.....	49
Figure 14. Language proficiency and fostering trust .....	51
Figure 15. Prior relationships contributes to fostering trust .....	52
Figure 16. Response categories framed within a trust context .....	54
Figure 17. Hearing interpreters identified training concerns .....	57

## ABSTRACT

### **Deaf–Hearing Interpreter Teams: Navigating Trust in Shared Space**

By

Laurie Reese Reinhardt

Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies

College of Education

Western Oregon University

June 2015

This mixed-method study was designed to explore whether role function inequalities among Deaf and hearing interpreters contribute to trust issues within Deaf-hearing interpreter teams. The initial hypothesis stated that role functionality, when not clearly delineated, contributes to the formation and perpetuation of mistrust within Deaf-hearing interpreter teams. Llewellyn-Jones & Lee’s (2014) axes of role-space functionality include interaction management, consumer alignment, and the “presentation of self” and address the interpreters’ interface with the consumers in an interpreted event. The data did not support the presence of explicit issues of trust when the team moved outward to interact with consumers. Survey data revealed evidence to support implicit as well as explicit trust issues present within the team dynamic. The data indicated three domain areas in which intra-team trust issues tend to appear: preparation, linguistic mediation, and imbalances in role/function duty distribution.

Castelfranchi and Falcone's (2010) socio-cognitive theory of trust provides a lens through which to make the respondents' experiences better understood. Trust is based upon a series of actions that allows the individual to make informed choices on how to proceed through establishing a shared goal, making a positive evaluation to delegate a task/action to an individual, and exercising their power/competency to carry out the specific task or action. When these series of actions are carried out successfully, Deaf-hearing interpreter teams function in accord to Hoza's (2010) construct of team interdependency utilizing trusting, effective partnerships in which individual roles and functions are equally understood and valued.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

“I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.”

— Brene Brown

#### Background

The signed language interpreting profession in the United States is relatively new, according to Swabey and Mickelson (2008); it evolved from “helping” model origins in the middle of the last century to a cultural linguistic framework today that acknowledges and strives to counteract cumulative effects of language suppression and cultural oppression. Today the profession continues to align with the Deaf community by integrating social justice principles supported by “best practices” standards (Janzen, 2005). According to Cokely (2005) and Swabey and Mickelson (2008), signed language interpreters—unlike spoken language interpreters, whose primary language is their mother tongue—typically acquired American Sign Language (ASL) as adults. They go on to state that these second language learners (L2) dominate the field of signed language interpreting. Both Cokely (2005) and Stratiy (2005) asserted linguistic and cultural competencies among formally trained L2 interpreters who can hear vary significantly and infrequently equate to a near-native or native ASL user.

Boudreault (2005) stated that in the last half of the twentieth century, native Deaf users of ASL held only peripheral roles in the evaluation and education of hearing

interpreters. As the profession and practice evolved, Deaf individuals with near-native or native ASL linguistic proficiency were increasingly called upon to work in tandem with hearing colleagues for “high stakes” interpreted interactions. Mathers (2009) wrote that Deaf-hearing teams primarily work together in legal, medical, and mental health settings where consequences are potentially significant and warrant linguistic intervention.

Research has shown that when Deaf interpreters team with hearing colleagues, Deaf consumers have a richer linguistic experience and a more culturally appropriate interpretation (Stratig, 2005).

According to Cokely (2005), there is a barrier to full engagement for Deaf interpreters, and several factors account for the slowed professional on-ramp experience of interpreters who are Deaf. Deaf and hearing interpreters alike report an ongoing struggle to convince employers to hire two interpreters when their experience or expectation has been that one interpreter is sufficient. The hearing interpreter may erect another barrier to full engagement. Cokely (2005) asserted some interpreters long accustomed to working alone feared their skills would be called into question causing them to create barriers. Finally, Forestal (2005, 2011) points out that inconsistent training curricula for Deaf interpreters, as well as lack of effective team interpreting training opportunities, have discouraged full engagement of the Deaf interpreter in the profession.

Today, the eligibility standards for Deaf and hearing interpreters who prepare for credentialing exams are different, underscoring disparities in professional preparation. Deaf interpreters who prepare for the credentialing examination through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) are required to hold an associates degree in any area of

study as well as documented participation in 40 hours of interpreter preparation and education (CDI Certification, n.d.).

Forestal's (2005) qualitative research proposed core curriculum domains that include linguistic and cultural knowledge of ASL and English, interpreting processing skills, and expansion skills including the effective use of props, gestural skills, and interpersonal skills. Additionally, Boudreault (2005) expressed the necessity for Deaf interpreters to be well versed in International Sign, Deaf/Blind interpreting, and protocols for Deaf-hearing teamwork. The research by Forestal (2005) and Boudreault (2005) suggest that a comprehensive curriculum that far surpasses the 40-hour minimum requirement set forth by RID is needed. The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers has released one such curriculum<sup>1</sup>.

In contrast, a hearing interpreter preparing for a credentialing examination is required to hold a bachelor's degree in any area of study (NIC Certification, n.d.). Hearing interpreters may start acquiring ASL language skills at various ages and continue to develop language proficiency well into adulthood. Rosen (2008) noted that mastering a language later in life poses unique challenges. Countless hours spent socializing and volunteering in the community—in addition to formal study—propel the hearing interpreter student towards professional readiness and induction into the field. According to Winston (2005), most hearing certification candidates have either completed a two-year interpreter preparation program or graduated from four-year institutions with interpreter education degrees. Model Entry-to-Practice competencies for hearing

---

<sup>1</sup> NCIEC released a six module Deaf Interpreter Curriculum in early 2015. Modules include historical overview, ethnic and cultural diversity within the Deaf community, consumer assessment techniques, ethical considerations, interpreting theory, and team interpreting.

interpreters outline domain areas that include interpreting theory, skill development, cognitive processing, interpersonal skills, and decision-making analysis, leaving little to no time to expose students to working with Deaf colleagues (Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005). Consequently, emerging practitioners with little or no experience working with team members who are Deaf may not know when or how to advocate for the inclusion of a Deaf interpreter. Given the disparities outlined above, it seemed clear that further research on how Deaf-hearing teams function was warranted.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Forestal (2005, 2009, 2011) and Mathers (2009) wrote that Deaf Interpreters may have remarkable linguistic and cultural skills and can effectively communicate with deaf consumers, yet they may lack education in interpreting theory, cognitive processing, interpersonal skills, and ethical decision-making theory/application knowledge. In comparison, a hearing interpreter who has acquired ASL later in life most likely possesses less-than-native ASL language competency, but is more likely to have a working knowledge of interpreting theory, cognitive processing, interpersonal, and ethical decision-making theory and application. When a Deaf interpreter and a hearing interpreter are paired to team an interpreted interaction, the team is faced with navigating training, language, and cultural differences. In addition, team members may differ on the use of personal power and privilege. How these issues are acknowledged and negotiated impact the effectiveness of the working team. When training disparities are factored in, possible interpreter role and functionality confusion among team members may exist, placing undue pressure on team effectiveness. This in turn may hinder developing trust among team members.



## **The Purpose of the Study**

The original focus of the research was to explore how Deaf and hearing interpreting teams tend to function. Multiple factors seemed to stress optimum team dynamics, putting downward pressure on developing and nurturing trust between team members. The study was originally designed to explore how the three axes of Llewellyn-Jones and Lee's (2014) role-space model might provide role and function clarity for Deaf-hearing team members. This clarity might help to ease team relationship stressors. Exploring potential underlying stressors that may undermine the effectiveness of Deaf-hearing partnerships strategies to foster alliances and strengthen the effectiveness of teams would go a long way towards enriching the consumer's experience and understanding. I proceeded with my hypothesis that stated role functionality may be perceived differently in interpreting teams with hearing and deaf team practitioners. The questions posed to focus group members as well as in the survey instrument were based upon the role-space construct that Llewellyn-Jones and Lee (2014) developed. I worked through the data with this premise until data analysis from a specific survey question uncovered implicit trust issues that could not be readily contextualized within the role-space framework. Hence, the focus of the study shifted, and the purpose of the study became the exploration of how a socio-cognitive theory of trust may inform our understanding of how Deaf-hearing teams function. When a trust theory framework is contextualized, intra-team interactions form the bases for trusting relationships, where team members are able to freely and safely delegate actions to their partners.

**Research question.** The original research question asked if there was a relationship between role function ambiguity and trust issues within interpreting teams

with hearing and Deaf team members. The data supported that role function ambiguity exists to some extent and can contribute to trust issues, but the issue of trust was so pervasive that role functionality only accounted for a percentage of sentiments expressed by the survey participants. Therefore, the research question became: How does Castelfranchi and Falcone's (2010) socio-cognitive theory of trust inform how Deaf and hearing teams experience trust and subsequently function?

### **Theoretical Bases and Organization**

According to Dean and Pollard (2013), the interpreter has a unique perspective on the world based on a culmination of his or her life experiences, education, and language or what is known as *thought world* (p.6). While the Deaf interpreter can bring rich cultural and ASL linguistic knowledge to an interpreter-mediated interaction, the hearing interpreter can bring knowledge of mainstream American culture and English linguistic expertise to an interpreter-mediated interaction.

Each team member enters an interpreter-mediated encounter from their unique perspective, yet they share a clear goal of a successful outcome for all interpreter-mediated interactions. Authors Dean and Pollard (2013) as well as Lee (1997) wrote that sometimes interpreters' perspectives may be aligned, and sometimes they may diverge from one another simply because as individuals, one's experience of the surrounding world is influenced by the culmination of personal experiences. When wondering if an interpreter's thought world informed their readiness to place trust in their team member, other research and current theories on trust were reviewed to help inform exploration of trust issues within Deaf and hearing interpreter teams.

Castelfranchi and Falcone's (2010) socio-cognitive theory of trust set forth a collection of premises that assist in defining each step in developing trust for another individual. Central to Castelfranchi and Falcone's theory is the concept of a shared goal. If two individuals share a goal, then one may look to the other to contribute an action or function toward the advancement of the shared goal. The theory goes on to describe how an individual appraises, believes in, and then relies upon the other individual to carry out an action they are not able to achieve independently. The theory is described in detail in the findings and discussion section. When interpreters comprehend how trust is formed this may assist Deaf-hearing interpreter teams to more readily establish trusting relationships. Once trust is established within Deaf-hearing teams, the team is better positioned to manage the demands of the interpreting process.

### **Limitations of the Study**

One clear limitation became apparent while filming the focus groups. The focus groups were recorded by three static Go-Pro-Cameras placed strategically in the interview room to capture each participant. Data was captured in the hearing interpreter group without incident. However, during the filming of the Deaf focus group, one camera failed 78 minutes into the recording eliminating the responses from two of the six Deaf interpreters for the last 42 minutes of the session. The data was irretrievable, a disappointing event. Fortunately, no other such incident occurred.

Another limitation of the survey was the number of qualitative open-ended questions within the survey instrument. The survey was comprised of 48 questions for Deaf interpreters and 48 questions for hearing interpreters with prior experience working with Deaf interpreters. An additional 18 questions addressed interpreters without prior

Deaf team member experience. More than half of the questions (54%) were open-ended, requiring respondents to reflect, compose thoughts and respond. The survey asked respondents to respond in one modality—written English. For respondents whose first language is ASL, this may have caused an inequity in language access.

### **Situating the Researcher**

I am a long time community-based practitioner with more than 35 years of field experience. My early practice was squarely framed in the conduit model of interpreting when interpreters worked eight-hour days solo and when decommissioned Western Union Teletype machines rattled house foundations when placing phone calls to Deaf friends and colleagues. Early in my career, I worked alongside Deaf advocates/language brokers. In recent years, I have witnessed first-hand the benefit of the inclusion of the Deaf interpreter in an interpreting practice.

I recognize that my schema is limited to what I experience. As a hearing, White interpreter, I am a member of the dominant American culture. As a female, I also belong to the demographic of interpreters that is overrepresented (87%) within the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID Annual Report, 2013). I have affiliation with the Deaf community as an insider within the interpreting community. As a hearing individual, I am situated outside of Deaf culture space, yet I continually strive towards being an ally as described by Ladd (2003).

Throughout this study, I have been cognizant that my experience is that of a hearing team member. Therefore, I recognize the potential for bias exists and conscious effort has been made to minimize bias wherever possible.

## **Definitions of Terms**

*American Sign Language (ASL):* The natural signed language of the American Deaf community complete with distinct linguistic structure (Klima & Bellugi, 1979; Valli, Lucas, Mulrooney, & Villanueva, 2011).

*Deaf-hearing Team:* A Deaf interpreter and hearing interpreter who work together to provide effective target language interpretations most readily accessible to the consumers involved (Bentley-Sassaman, 2010). The hearing interpreter will sign the English source text to the Deaf interpreter. The Deaf interpreter will reformulate the text into a form of visual means most readily understood by the Deaf consumer, whether that be a signed language or a pictorial or gestural modality.

*Deaf Interpreter:* A Deaf individual who provides interpreting and translation services in American Sign Language as well as other visual and/or tactual communication forms most readily understood by individuals who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing or Deaf/Blind.

*Hearing Interpreter:* A signed language interpreter who, by auditory status, is able to discern and comprehend spoken English and American Sign Language.

*Interdependence:* Collaboration. In the context of signed language interpreting it is the act of working autonomously as well as being dependent on a team member to augment/support/correct an interpretation rendition (Hoza, 2010).

*Interaction Management:* Behaviors that an interpreter uses to manage participant interaction (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2011, 2013, 2014).

*Participant Alignment:* The degree to which an interpreter directs their communication to or seems to identify with a specific interaction participant (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2011, 2013, 2014).

*Privilege:* The normative process of internalizing unearned advantages and benefits as a result of being a member of a dominant group. Often an unconscious sense of entitlement and or superiority permeates social conditioning, which when overvalued stands for what is normal (Nieto, Boyer, Goodwin, Johnson and Smith, 2010).

*Presentation of Self:* Behaviors when the interpreter speaks/acts for him/herself (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2011, 2013, 2014).

*Role Functionality:* The tasks and duties of an interpreter. Interpreters working in teams may divide tasks to meet the needs of a specific interpreted interaction.

*Trust:* Trust is a set of beliefs that motivates one individual (or trustor) to rely on another individual because they are not able or capable to execute an action/goal. By acting upon their belief to depend on that individual to carry out a specific action, they have delegated that task to another individual (Castelfranchi & Falcone, 2010).

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Historical Perspective

As mentioned in the introduction, the emergence of professional Deaf interpreters in the field of signed language interpretation is relatively recent. A historical review of the literature indicates that there are a limited number of primary source studies that are inclusive of team members, the Deaf interpreter as well as the hearing interpreter. Bentley-Sassaman (2010) and Nicodemus and Taylor (2014) are the first to include both the Deaf and the hearing interpreters. Prior to this research, Ressler (1999) conducted research on the interpreting process the hearing interpreter undergoes when teamed with a Deaf interpreter. Subsequently, Forestal (2005) explored the Deaf interpreter's experience.

Boudreault's "Deaf Interpreters" chapter in Janzen's (2005) *Topics in Signed Language Interpreting* thoroughly contextualizes the Deaf interpreter experience by providing an historical overview and chronicling varying capacities where Deaf interpreters effectively facilitate communication. Bilingual Deaf individuals historically have "brokered" communication for monolingual or semi-lingual classmates, relatives, and friends. Brokering is defined as "individuals generally with less authority and no formal training - who linguistically and culturally mediate for two or more parties" (Kam, 2011, p. 455). Boudreault refers to the process of brokering as a function whereby

“balanced-bilinguals” were called upon to carry out within their communities through the 1970s in the United States.

According to Boudreault (2005), interpreters who are Deaf work in varying environments fulfilling various functions:

1. Mirroring – verbatim rendition in one signed language
2. Text translation – written form of spoken language to signed language
3. Deaf/Blind – capacity to capture and reformulate visual/spatial information into tactile form, including pro-tactile techniques
4. Facilitator – interpreting to semi-lingual or monolingual individuals with linguistic and or cultural gaps
5. International Sign – working within one language and a system of signs to meet needs of inter-country communication.

Typically, hearing interpreters partner with Deaf interpreters when Deaf interpreters function as facilitators.

Boudreault (2005) has demonstrated that Deaf interpreters function in a myriad of settings where hearing interpreters typically do not involve themselves; he concluded that the Deaf interpreter, as a native speaker, is more versatile in capacity and function than a hearing counterpart. The addition of a linguistically versatile team member is critical to the success of many interpreted events.

Ressler (1999) recognized that a hearing interpreter makes adjustments to target rendition delivery when teamed with a Deaf interpreter. Her qualitative study compared a direct interpretation to when a hearing interpreter acts as an *intermediary* interpreter, one who acts as a “middleman” to an interaction, in order for the Deaf interpreter to



formulate the interpretation. Historically, hearing practitioners worked alone and produced the direct interpretation. They monitored their own output and decision-making. The “mechanics” of working with Deaf partners differed from producing a direct interpretation. Ressler documented notable differences including the number of pauses taken, eye gaze, head nodding, the number of signs produced in a minute, a shift in the use of fingerspelling, and how clarifications were formulated. Ressler’s study effectively established a practice baseline, distinguishing intermediary interpretation from direct interpretation.

Forestal (2005) conducted an exploratory qualitative study on professional preparation of interpreters who are Deaf. Forestal interviewed and videotaped 10 Deaf interpreters’ responses to a set of identical questions capturing their experiences and thoughts about formal training. Interpreters who are Deaf enhance the interpreter team by providing a “double check” on the quality of the end product. Even though the process may extend active processing time, Deaf interpreters contribute to increased accuracy, provide an additional monitor for fact and neutrality, and uphold the deaf consumer’s “right to know.” Deaf consumers expressed that a Deaf interpreter’s presence increased their comfort level. This is especially noted in the legal environment, where the Deaf consumer can benefit from having both Deaf and hearing interpreters. Due to the sophisticated cognitive processing skills required in legal settings, a bilingual-bicultural competent interpreter team increases “comfort” as well as provides access to complex processes and procedures inherent in legal settings.

Findings from Forestal’s (2005) study indicated that training for Deaf interpreters lagged behind training standards of hearing interpreters. When Deaf individuals enrolled

in hearing-centric interpreter preparation programs, their experience was not equitable to that of hearing colleagues. When Deaf interpreters sought out advanced legal training, they found a lack of qualified trainers. Inconsistent training materials were available to the aspiring interpreter in general. Deaf interpreters noted lack of mentoring opportunities with seasoned Deaf interpreter colleagues. Also, the interviewees expressed a desire to learn how to “manage dynamics” with hearing partners, expressing a need to balance power within the team dynamic. Finally, the interviewees encouraged increased recruitment and incorporation of ethnically diverse colleagues. Forestal recommended training specifically for Deaf interpreter cohorts after identifying the need to minimize isolation experienced by previous Deaf interpreting students.

Forestal’s (2005) work helped to inform Bentley-Sassaman’s (2010) qualitative research study. Bentley-Sassaman’s study was the first to include both hearing and Deaf interpreters. She was interested in exploring how practitioners viewed teamwork and the effect that training (or lack of training) may have on enhancing teaming skills. Research conclusions upheld the emerging best practice technique of incorporating pre-conferencing/case conferencing as a method to strengthen a team. More than 80% of the participants confirmed that when interpreters conference, confidence and trust in their team member increases, the assignment runs more efficiently, and the quality of the interpretation improves. Also, participants were in general agreement that the more often a team worked together the more trust they held for each other.

In terms of training, Bentley-Sassaman’s (2010) research indicated that both hearing and Deaf interpreters alike commented on the need for more training on how to work effectively in the interpreter role then teamed with an interpreter who is Deaf or

hearing. They cited the lack of training led to confusion and absence of trust within the team. Bentley-Sassaman (2010) concluded her study with a recommendation to develop a Deaf interpreter curriculum; such a curriculum was actualized earlier this year and accessible through Deaf Interpreting Institute (2015). Bentley-Sassaman's (2010) pivotal study spotlighted the need for Deaf-hearing interpreter team preparation, bringing it to the foreground as an element warranted of best practices.

Nicodemus and Taylor (2014) published a study on team preparation, applying the framework of Conversational Analysis (CA) to the concept of assignment preparation. CA provides a means of structuring case preparation interaction when historically there has been none. The five foundational constructs of CA bring underlying social interactions people tend to use naturally tend to light. Conversations tend to have *openings* including greeting norms, along with the act of bringing a conversation to a *close*. In-between, individuals design communication to be readily understood by the specific recipient of the communication. In tailoring conversations, individuals tend to contextualize communications to meet the goal of the interaction. Context shapes the dialogue, building on concepts laid forth in a preceding utterance while at the same time setting the context for the next utterance. At the center of building context utterances are *turn taking* norms. Typical interactions have predetermined rules for determining who "has the floor." There are many factors that determine turn taking; interpreters may or may not be conscious of factors that influence turn taking, whether they are linguistic or cultural in nature. Turn taking serves to create shared meaning of the content being discussed. When one interpreter is perceived to be dominating the

communication space, the communication partner may feel his or her opinions are not valued.

Nicodemus and Taylor (2014) recognized interpreters are often pressured to conference in a short period of time, noting that turning-taking norms may be interrupted. They propose the use of a conversation convention called *adjacency pairs* that may aid in moving through a lot of logistical information in short period of time. Many utterances come in pairs, for example, question answers, greetings, invitations, and replies.

Nicodemus and Taylor's premise is that if interpreters understood the function of adjacency pairs and could utilize this technique for working through logistical processes, one interpreter would present a proposal and the other team member would either accept it or present an alternative. However, the risk of misunderstanding is still exists, which is a challenge to all who engage in conversation. *Repair* techniques are the fifth element in the Conversation Analysis framework. Repairs are delicate and need to be executed with care. Results from the study indicate that interpreters who have a shared history were able to utilize Conversational Analysis framework to facilitate preparation in an efficient manner.

Interpreter preparation has been identified as a means to strengthen teams, evidenced by recommendations brought forward by Bentley-Sassaman (2010). In addition, Nicodemus and Taylor (2014) have subsequently provided a framework to help interpreters organize these discussions. Both studies have made implicit references to trust issues within Deaf and hearing interpreter teams. Bolstering preparation processes and expanding training opportunities stand to improve intra-team dynamics, but the essential element of trust has not been sufficiently addressed.

## Positioning the Research

In this section, a review of relevant research and emerging practice standards for professional hearing and Deaf interpreters who work from ASL to English and English to ASL will be outlined. Also, it is relevant to look at a study on optimum team interpreting components (Hoza, 2010), a study on client/interpreter trust (Brooks, 2011), as well as outline basic components of a socio-cognitive theory of trust (Castelfranchi & Falcone, 2011). There is still much to be learned about the intricacies of roles and functions among Deaf and hearing teams. Absent from current research is clarity on how each team member understands how “the self presents” (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014), while engaged in the management of interactions, and how the interpreter aligns *vis-a-vis* the consumer. Before the interpreter team can move “outward” to attend to presenting the self to the consumers, intra-team interactions and agreements should be established (NCIEC Deaf Interpreter Training, 2014). The individual interpreters’ ability to delegate trust to a team member is key for success in establishing intra-team agreements.

Llewellyn-Jones and Lee’s (2014) work details how the presence of a community interpreter impacts an interpreted-mediated event. Their work reached back to sociolinguistic interaction and conversation theories of Grice (1975), Goffman (1959), and Garrod and Pickering (2007), to explore possible connection between conversational interactions and the roles and functions of interpreters. Llewellyn-Jones and Lee’s (2014) analysis suggested interpreters are not governed by rules-based roles. Rather, interpreters are active participants in interpreted-mediated events and have a responsibility to understand how interpreters’ “personhood” intersects with interlocutors’ interactions. This place of intersection is termed “role-space,” the space in which the

interpreter presents their “self,” converges or aligns with interlocutors, and participates in the management of interpreted interactions (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2103, p. 56). The degree of intersection with the interlocutors can be illustrated as a continuum along a three-dimensional axis. The settings, as well as the role of interlocutors, influence the degree to which interpreters may converge with parties, present the self, or manage the interaction process. By way of illustration, in a courtroom, the interpreters’ presentation of self is reserved as if the interpreter’s personality is moved behind a veneer of a professional role persona. The same interpreter may exchange pleasantries with the court clerk while handling paperwork at the beginning/end of the assignment exposing more of their personhood. An interpreter would not be a party to an interaction if the interlocutors shared a common language. Therefore, it is incumbent on the interpreter to not only possess expertise in a language pair but also to be self-aware of their worldview, as well as how they present to others. Interpreters are not invisible.

Throughout the literature, reference is made to implicit trust issues among Deaf and hearing interpreter teams (Bentley-Sassaman, 2010; Forestal, 2005; Nicodemus & Taylor, 2014). Research has pointed to preparation as one means to mitigate trust (Nicodemus & Taylor, 2014), as well as relationship building as another to foster trust (Bentley-Sassaman, 2010). Brooks (2011) was among the first to conduct qualitative research utilizing a theoretical framework of trust as it applies to postsecondary Deaf students and their interpreters. Trust development between the student and the interpreter was not predicated on national certification but instead personal connection and interpreter attitude. Brooks noted: “When students utilized the services of an interpreter to bridge the communication barrier between themselves and the hearing constituents at

their university, then trust between the deaf student and the interpreter was crucial to their success” (p. 226). Trust is a common factor that carries throughout an interpreter’s experience and relationships. It is logical, given the prevalence and depth of the impact of trust, that trust theory be explored as it applies to Deaf and hearing teams.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Castelfranchi and Falcone’s (2010) *Trust Theory: A Socio-Cognitive and Computational Model* presents an accessible, systematic, socio-cognitive model of trust that offers a lens to view and comprehend possible underlying motivation behind implicit trust issues that appeared throughout this study’s survey responses. Trust is a set of beliefs that motivates one individual (or trustor) to rely on another individual because they are not able or capable to execute an action or goal. By acting upon their belief, to depend on that individual to carry out a specific action, they have *delegated* the task to another individual. Trust does not only pertain to reliability but also is related to the competence of the other individual to carry out the action with benevolence by not exposing the person who extended the reliance any harm.

One critical component of delegating trust is the notion of *exercising power*. Power in the context of trust, simply put, is when a person has the capability, knowledge or skill set to execute a shared goal. The individual who moves to rely on another is in essence making a request to delegate a specific action to another individual. The recipient of the delegation exercises their power to carry out the specific task that aids in accomplishing a shared goal. Whether this is someone running to catch a bus who calls the attention of a man at the bus stop to flag down an approaching bus or a hearing interpreter rendering an English-ASL rendition to a Deaf interpreter, both parties opt to

delegate an action to another individual believing them to be capable and knowledgeable to carry out the delegated action.

Both the person standing waiting for the bus and the Deaf interpreter choose to exercise their capability/power to carry out the delegation. The man whistles, flags down the bus, and tells the bus driver to wait momentarily for the winded passenger to arrive. The Deaf interpreter converts the hearing interpreter's ASL rendition into a linguistically and culturally appropriate interpretation readily understood by the Deaf consumer. When two or more individuals share a goal and work together (i.e., delegate power to another), to execute the shared goal, this may be considered collaboration.

Hoza's (2010) book, *Team Interpreting as Collaboration and Interdependence*, described collaboration similarly. Collaboration occurs when two or more individuals "buy into the concept of having a shared goal and making sure it is accomplished together" (p. 12). The degrees to which individuals collaborate vary, depending on their ability to connect or commit. In the case of the man running for the bus, the degree of delegation, as Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010) stated, was a *weak delegation* because there was an assumption the man standing at the bus stop was actually waiting for the bus to arrive. The passenger has no assurance the man at the bus stop will follow through and actually flag down the bus. This relates in part to Hoza's notion of commitment. Without engaging in a dialogue about committing to a shared goal, team members may make assumptions about what they may or may envision as a shared goal. This may lead to making assumptions about what to or what not to delegate to the team member. When the opportunity exists to dialogue and work through a delegation process, a shared goal



can be formulated and supported by the team. It is logical, therefore, to put forth preparation conferencing as a best practice.

The central theme in Hoza's (2010) research on team interpreting is the concept of interdependence. The construct he presents does, in essence, encompass the basic principles of trust outlined above. To understand the concept of interdependence and how it applies to trust theory, Hoza compares two concepts: dependence and independence. Dependence is relying on someone or something who can aid in the accomplishment of a task or in the fulfillment of a function. Independence is the ability an individual has to accomplish a task or fulfill a function separate from another individual's involvement. Effective team interpreting is achieved when team members recognize they are effectively working independently as well as believing they may delegate or depend on their team member to carry out a function that supports their shared goal. This is the definition of interdependence, and, remarkably, it is also how Casetelfranchi and Falcone (2010) describe the basic construct of trust.

Effective team interpreting as described by Hoza (2010) is interplay between acting independently as well as relying on or being dependent on the team member to achieve a shared desired outcome. Interpreters who are engaged in this subtle dance of interdependence create trusting, effective partnerships where roles and functions are equally valued. In turn, they are better positioned to provide readily equivalent interpretations. After all, as a Deaf participant in this study stated: "It's all about the Deaf consumer."

### **Chapter 3**

## **METHODOLOGY**

The primary purpose of this mixed methods study is to identify means for Deaf and hearing interpreters to frame a discussion on how to increase mutual trust when working together. Each team member contributes a unique skill set congruent to his or her individual cultural and linguistic orientation. The Deaf consumer's cultural and linguistic profile draws the team together to effectively provide a successful interpreted interaction. The study aims to highlight underlying differing cultural paradigms that may cast shadow on the interpreters' intentions to function effectively as a team. The issue is multilayered. The complex nature of the issue involved herein is limited in scope and aims to spotlight specific facets of trust reserving other findings for future exploration and research.

Timing of data collection in this mixed-methods study may have been a limitation of the study. Originally, I had planned to distribute a high-level overarching online survey, followed by two focus groups (one for interpreters who are Deaf and one for interpreters who hear). Survey responses were to inform the questions asked in the focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to flesh out concepts that emerged from the survey. Scheduling the video technician (who flew in from out of state) and coordinating focus group participants took precedence over distributing the survey. As it turned out the focus groups informed the formation of survey questions. In retrospect, it is difficult

to discern whether the order of the focus groups and survey had significant impact on the outcome; it was just how it unfolded.

### **Phase I: Focus Groups**

**Design.** The initial phase of the study was comprised of two focus groups: one for Deaf interpreters and one for hearing interpreters. Focus group participants were selected by convenience sampling based on availability, previous deaf/hearing interpreting experience, and willingness to volunteer their time. All participants reside in a large metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest. The focus groups were conducted in person at the local Deaf services agency, and each ran two hours in duration. Qualitative data collection transpired over two consecutive evenings in late October 2014. The primary investigator developed a set of seven interview questions. Prior to the sessions, the group facilitators met to formulate translation equivalents for both ASL and English versions to ensure participants responded to identical set of questions (see Appendix A).

**Population.** A Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) who identifies as female facilitated the Deaf interpreter focus group on the first evening. Five Deaf interpreters, all of whom identified as male, participated. The participants ranged in age from mid-30s to early 60s.

Three of the participants held CDI certification from Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). One of the three CDIs had just been awarded his RID certification and as was employed within education. Three interpreters worked extensively as community interpreters. The fifth interpreter was employed full time in the specialty field of Deaf/Blind interpreting.

The subsequent evening, six credentialed hearing interpreters (two identified as male and four identified as female) participated in the second focus group facilitated by the primary researcher, a RID certified interpreter. One participant excused herself after the first hour due to childcare. The remaining five participants were engaged for the duration. The hearing participants ranged in age from late 30s to mid-50s.

Four interpreters held Special Certificate: Legal (SC:L) from the RID. The other two interpreters were RID certified. Four participants work as full-time community interpreters. One participant works part-time as a community interpreter. One interpreter was employed full-time in the specialty field of Deaf/Blind interpreting.

**Treatment of the data.** The focus groups were held after normal business hours in a small conference room at a local Deaf services agency. The services of a video technician were secured to manage filming and editing each session. The video technician, who is also a RID certified interpreter, signed a confidentiality agreement before filming began. Three Go-Pro cameras were strategically placed to capture participants and facilitators. In the case of the Deaf interpreter focus group, the cameras were set and turned on, and then the video technician left the room to ensure privacy. Upon the conclusion of capturing the data, the video technician, with the researcher present, reviewed random film snippets assuring complete data collection. It was discovered that one camera had failed 78 minutes into recording. The remaining 42 minutes were irretrievable from one of the three cameras. The next evening, the night of the hearing interpreter focus group, the technician remained in the room to monitor camera functionality. The participants did not exhibit any concerns about his presence.

The collected data was edited into two continuous films, one from the Deaf interpreter group and one from the hearing group. A CART writer professionally bound to adhere professional code of conduct produced a transcript from the hearing interpreter focus group (National Court Reporter Association, n.d.). The videos as well as the English transcripts are stored in a password-protected computer that only the researcher has access to.

**Data analysis procedures.** Data from the Deaf focus group was initially charted by general categories and recorded in a Microsoft Word document. Once an open coding system for identifying categories or emerging themes was complete, axial coding techniques were employed to confirm the categories were accurate and complete. Next, key related concepts were identified and charted, congruent with axial coding protocol. Additionally, the speaker, the thematic comments, and the video time stamp were coded for easy reference and retrieval. General categories were further analyzed to reveal themes that either triangulated with survey responses or diverged from survey response trends. At a later date, salient quote translations from ASL to English were co-constructed by the researcher and a Deaf focus group participant.

The first step in preparing the hearing focus group data was securing the services of a competent CART provider who transcribed the data into written English. The researcher proofread the transcript against the raw data while simultaneously assigning a code structure for individual speakers (Speaker A, B, C, etc.). Subsequently, general categories were established and recorded in a Microsoft Word document. Identical opening and axial coding techniques were duplicated and applied to the hearing focus

group data. General categories were analyzed further to reveal themes that either triangulated with survey responses or diverged from survey response trends.

## **Phase II: Survey**

**Design.** The second phase of the study involved the development and distribution of a lengthy online survey targeted to working interpreters who are Deaf as well as hearing interpreters *with* prior experience working with Deaf interpreters. The survey instrument was made up of 48 questions and comprised of open-ended questions and Likert scale questions. A majority of the questions (52%) posed to participants were open-ended. An initial data review of the focus groups informed the survey design structure. The instrument went through further design revision after consultation with Robert Lee, who has previously conducted extensive research on interpreter role-space (Personal communication, January 2015).

Survey questions included quantitative Likert scale items as well as qualitative open-ended questions. The survey was organized by the following categories: (1) demographics, (2) interpreter functionality, (3) the significance of pre-conferencing, (4) interaction management, (5) fostering trust in team member(s), and (6) perspectives to share with the Deaf or hearing team counterparts.

The first category, demographics, elicited information on gender, age, ethnic affiliation, deaf parentage, geographic location, education, credential status, and the number of years as a professional interpreter when professional status is defined in part by compensation. At the conclusion of the demographic section, hearing interpreters were asked if they had previous experience working with interpreters who were Deaf. If they replied affirmatively, they were directed to survey questions similar to those

completed by Deaf interpreter counterparts. If the interpreter had no previous experience working with Deaf interpreters, they were directed to another section of the survey related to training and current practice profiles.

The second category of questions directed to Deaf and hearing interpreters with experience working together explored roles and function(s) they offer a team member as well as what function(s) they expect from team members. A short series of questions initially addressed team functionality when teamed with an interpreter with the same hearing status, and then questions focused on team functionality when working with a hearing status counterpart.

The third category looked at the significance of pre-conferencing in Deaf and hearing interpreters' practice. First, the survey respondents commented about the utilization and importance of pre-conferencing when teamed with an interpreter of same hearing status. Subsequently, interpreters were queried about the significance and practice of pre-conferencing with interpreter team members of opposite hearing status.

The fourth category of survey questions explored trends interpreters employed to manage interaction among interpreted interaction interlocutors. Deaf and hearing interpreters were asked to reflect on situations when an interlocutor directed an utterance directly to the interpreter. A series of inquiries elicited an open-ended response about possible controls an interpreter could utilize if a direct utterance came from the Deaf consumer or a hearing consumer. Follow-up questions asked survey respondents to reflect if their response would possibly vary depending on whether the respondent was an interpreter who was Deaf or if the respondent was the hearing interpreter.

The fifth and critical section of the survey posed a series of questions regarding trust and factors that contribute to fostering trust in a team member. First, the respondents were asked to reflect on trust and how to foster trust among teams with identical hearing status. Secondly, respondents were asked to reflect on trust and fostering trust when working with a team member of opposite hearing status. Finally, respondents were asked to reflect on factors they contributed towards fostering trust with their team member.

The last section of the survey was comprised of one question. Survey respondents were given an opportunity to share a thought with their team counterpart. If the respondent was Deaf they were invited to address hearing interpreters with a closing comment. Hearing interpreters were invited to express a closing comment to Deaf interpreters.

**Population.** The survey was widely distributed utilizing a combination of snowball and personal networking techniques. Distribution via social media sites enabled the survey to reach a wide sample population. Emphasis was made on eliciting interpreters who had experience working with Deaf interpreters. The survey was open for approximately four weeks during February and March 2015. Using the save and retrieve feature of Google Forms, survey respondents could work through the survey at their convenience.

**Treatment of the data.** Data from the survey was downloaded to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data was housed on a password-protected computer with a corresponding external hard drive to assure data safety. The survey was anonymous; therefore no identifying information was captured or kept.



**Data analysis procedures.** Survey data quantitative questions were compiled and counted according to response options. The demographics section was entirely comprised of quantitative questions. The counts were compiled, charted, and converted into pivot tables and graphs to ease comprehension. Deaf interpreter demographic information was indicated in blue/turquoise, while the hearing interpreter demographic information was coded in light green.

The remaining five sections (interpreter functionality, the significance of pre-conferencing, interaction management, fostering trust in team member(s), and perspectives to share with Deaf or hearing team counterparts) were primarily explored through open-ended questions. The qualitative responses were bucketed into six to eight major categories following the same open coding technique as the focus groups. Associated concepts were identified utilizing axial coding protocols. Overlap in the major categories appeared in both the Deaf interpreters' and hearing interpreters' responses. The table below represents categories generated from an open-ended question about characteristics present when the interpreter is working with an interpreter with a corresponding cultural and language orientation. Deaf Interpreter is abbreviated as DI and hearing interpreters are abbreviated to HI.

Table 1

*Characteristics and Corresponding Cultural and Language Orientation*

<u>Major Categories DI w/ DI</u> <u>Team member</u>	<u>Major Categories HI w/ HI</u> <u>Team member</u>
Attitude Skill Set Familiarity Professionalism Power and Privilege	Attitude Skill Set Familiarity Professionalism ---

Communication Team/Role Community	Communication Team/Role Community
<u>Major Categories DI w/ HI</u> <u>Team member</u>	<u>Major Categories HI w/ DI</u> <u>Team member</u>
Attitude Skill Set Familiarity Professionalism Power and Privilege Communication Team/Role Community	Attitude Skill Set Familiarity Professionalism Power and Privilege Communication Team/Role Community

The focus group data helped to inform the structure of the survey instrument. The qualitative data generated by the survey far exceeded expectations. As a result the scope of the findings and discussion primarily comes from the survey data.

## **Chapter 4**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Presentation of Findings: Focus Groups**

Data collected from the two focus groups were informative and enriching. Participants chosen by convenience sampling were interviewed for two hours during one of two sessions. Participation in the first group was limited to practicing Deaf interpreters; the group was led by a CDI. The second group was comprised of hearing interpreters with extensive experience working in Deaf-hearing interpreter teams. The groups were presented with seven identical questions to reflect upon and discuss. The data collected from these sessions informed the structure and focus of the survey instrument. This study is limited in scope by only exploring the data generated by the survey instrument. Hence, the focus group data will corroborate, refute, and highlight points of interest as it pertains to the survey data results. Implied consent documents and focus group questions are found in Appendix A and Appendix B; findings from the focus groups are found in Appendix C.

#### **Presentation of Findings: Survey**

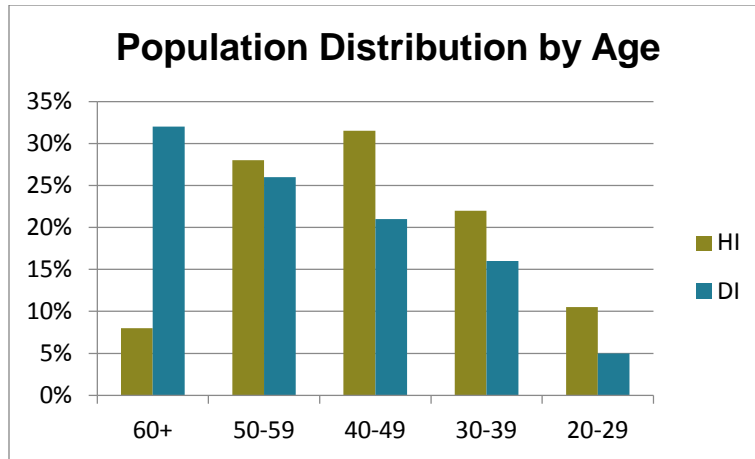
There were 160 responses to the online survey, representing hearing interpreters with previous Deaf-hearing team experience, Deaf interpreters, and hearing interpreters without previous experience with Deaf-hearing interpreter teams. This third group, hearing interpreters without previous experience, numbered 65, a number larger than anticipated. Demographic data and a limited number of training questions were asked of this group. (This third group fell outside of the scope of this project and the findings are

not included in this section. The findings and results are reported later in this study under training recommendations.) Ninety-four respondents out of the 160 qualified as the targeted population. Among the 94 participants, 75 were hearing interpreters (79.8%) with prior Deaf interpreter team experience and 19 were interpreters who are Deaf (20.2%). This chapter presents findings from those qualified 94 respondents.

## **Demographics**

Ninety-four survey respondents qualified as eligible participants. Hearing interpreters comprised 79.8% of the sample population. Interpreters who were Deaf comprised 20.2% of the sample. According to RID's most recent Annual Report (RID Annual Report, 2013), of all the RID certified interpreters (both generalists and legal-certified) only 2.3% of them are CDI credentialed. The proportion of Deaf to hearing interpreter responses for this study is much higher than the ratio within RID's certified membership body. Demographic data collected includes age, gender identity, ethnic/race affiliation, Deaf parentage, years of education, credentialing, and geographic distribution.

**Age.** The Deaf interpreters in the sample reported to be slightly older than their hearing counterparts. Thirty-two percent of the Deaf interpreters were 60 years of age or older, while 32% of the hearing interpreters were between 40-49 years of age. Figure 1 illustrates that the median age of the Deaf interpreters is about 10 years older than the hearing interpreters.



*Figure 1. Population distribution by Age*

**Gender Identification.** Among the hearing interpreter population, 85.5% identified as female and 14.5% identified as male. These percentages closely reflect RID’s findings that 87.3% of their members are female and 12.6% (of those reporting) are male (RID Annual Report, 2013). The Deaf interpreter respondents’ gender reflected greater diversity, with 63% identifying as female, 32% as male, and one individual identifying as transgender.

**Ethnic/racial affiliation.** Study participants appear to consistently correspond well with national RID demographics. Ethnic affiliation preferences is no exception: 84% of the hearing interpreters identify as Euro-American/White, 13% as a person of color, and 3% who preferred not to disclose. Deaf interpreters report similar ethnic identification, although more preferred to not comment. Table 2 indicates study participants’ ethnic affiliation as it compares with RID’s 2013 Annual Report.

Table 2

*Study Participants' Ethnic Affiliation as it compares with RID 2013 Annual Report*

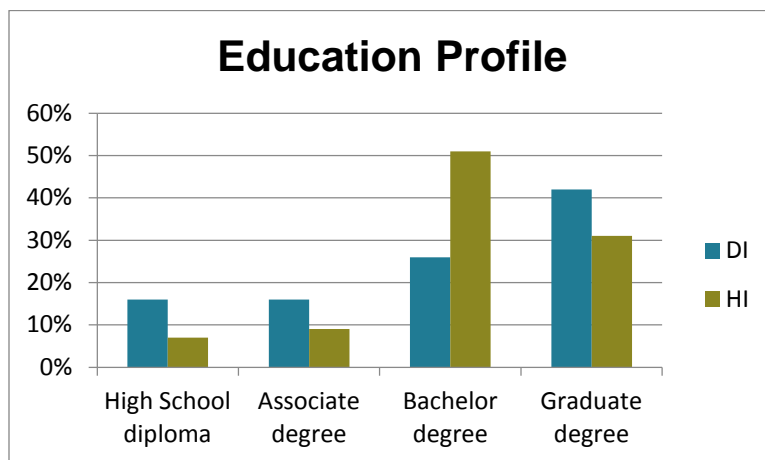
<u>Sample Population</u>	<u>Person of Color</u>	<u>Euro- American/White</u>	<u>No Disclosure</u>
Deaf Survey Respondents	11%	78%	11%
Hearing Survey Respondents	13%	88%	3%
RID Members	12%	88%	---

**Parentage.** Data collection about the interpreter's family of origin was limited to one demographic question about Deaf parentage. The percentage of Deaf interpreters with at least one Deaf parent was nearly twice that of hearing interpreters with Deaf parentage. The 2007 study of Deaf interpreters conducted by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC, 2007) looked at the prevalence of Deaf family members among deaf interpreter practitioners. Their findings indicated that 23% of respondents had Deaf parentage. In this study, 21% of respondents reported having at least one Deaf parent.

The 2014 National Consortium Interpreter Education Center Interpreting Practitioner Needs Assessment administered by Ms. Cogen (Personal communication, April 16, 2015) parallels with the Deaf parentage statistics found in this study. Approximately 1,890 individuals participated in NCIEC's 2014 study. Of those respondents who identified as Deaf or hard of hearing, 5% indicated they had one parent who was Deaf, and 16% indicated that both of their parents were Deaf for a total of 21% with d/Deaf parentage.

**Education.** Survey participants were asked to identify their highest level of completed education (See Figure 2). Respondents selected from six options: high school diploma, certificate of completion, associate degree, bachelor degree, and graduate

degree, or a write-in response. One participant opted to write in a response that, when evaluated, fit within one of the other five options. For efficient coding purposes, the certificate of completion category was grouped with high school diploma category, as the response percentage was statistically insignificant (under 2%). Bachelor degrees held by hearing interpreters ranked highest, at 51% of all responses. In contrast, graduate degrees held by Deaf interpreters ranked highest with 42% of all responses, exceeding their hearing colleagues by 12%. Data indicate that Deaf interpreters who successfully achieved a high school diploma or an associate degree combined total 32%. When high school diploma and associate degree categories were combined they account for 16% of hearing interpreters' education profile. The reason high school and associate degree categories were combined was to compare and contrast with the NCIEC survey of 2007. NCIEC's Deaf Interpreter survey from 2007 report similar findings: 28% of respondents reported earning either a high school diploma or an associate degree. An additional 2% were working on completing an associate degree (NCIEC, 2007) at the time of their survey. The graph below helps to compare the education of the two groups from this study.



*Figure 2.* Combined education profile of Deaf and hearing interpreters

**Geographic Distribution.** The survey successfully reached a geographically diverse population (Figure 3). The geographic distribution of survey respondents closely resembles the heat maps published in RID’s 2013 Annual Report with the exception of hearing interpreters from the Midwest who were underrepresented by approximately by 10–12%.

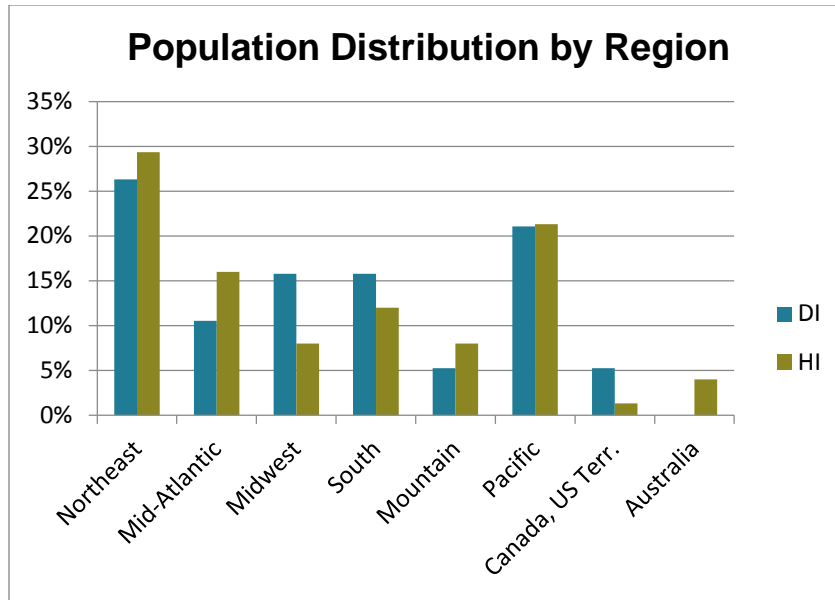


Figure 3. Target Population Distribution by Region

### Interpreter as Practitioner

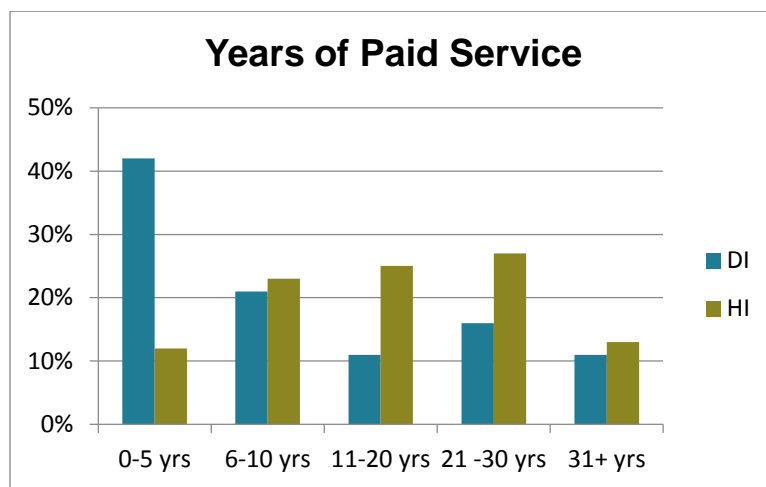
Eight survey questions explored the interpreters’ individual practices. Interpreters addressed certification status and years of service, the percentage of each work week spent interpreting, any specific training on effective Deaf/hearing interpreter teaming, and, finally, the percentage of their interpreting time spent working with either a hearing or Deaf interpreter team member.

**Professional Service.** Survey respondents were asked to report on certification status and years of professional interpreting experience if defined in part by remuneration. Participants had the option to opt out of responding by selecting “Does not



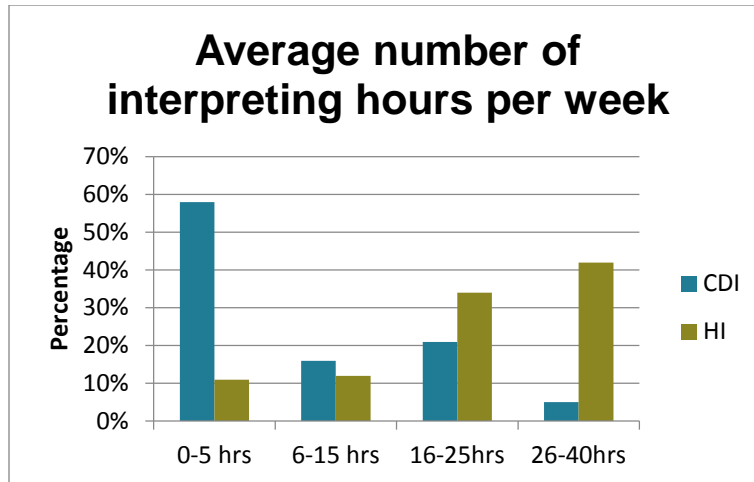
apply to my practice.” A majority of survey respondents (87%; see Figure 4) held certification through RID, while 11% reported that they were not credentialed, and 3% elected not to answer.

A total of 63% of Deaf respondents reported 0-10 years of experience. Hearing respondents with 0-10 years of experience totaled 35%. Deaf respondents with 11 or more years of experience totaled 37%. Hearing respondents with 11 or more years of experience totaled 65%.



*Figure 4.* Number of Years of Paid Service

**Interpreted Time.** Participants were asked to reflect over the past 12-month period year and specify, on average, how many hours a week they dedicated to interpreting. The findings show 76% of hearing interpreters (HI) work on average between 16-40 hours a week, and those who work between 26–40 hours a week accounted for the highest percentage at 42%. In comparison, 26% of Deaf interpreters (DI) work on average between 16-40 hours a week. Deaf respondents working occasionally (between 0-5 hours a week) comprise the largest percentage at 58% (Figure 5). No further data about working conditions were gathered.



*Figure 5.* Average interpreted hours per week

**Teamed interpreting.** Participants were then asked to comment on the frequency with which they partnered with Deaf or non-deaf interpreter counterparts. Fifty-eight percent of Deaf respondents teamed with hearing interpreters 91-100% of the time. In contrast, 1% of the hearing respondents work in tandem with Deaf interpreters 91-100% of the time. The majority of hearing practitioners (80%) reported working alongside a Deaf interpreter less than 10% of their practice.

The NCIEC 2007 Deaf Interpreter survey (2007) posed a question to determine how often DIs worked independently as opposed to in tandem with hearing ASL-English interpreter. Sixty-one percent of respondents selected “with a team.” The NCIEC question, though phrased slightly differently, essentially sought the same information. Their findings correspond closely with the data, as indicated in Figure 6.

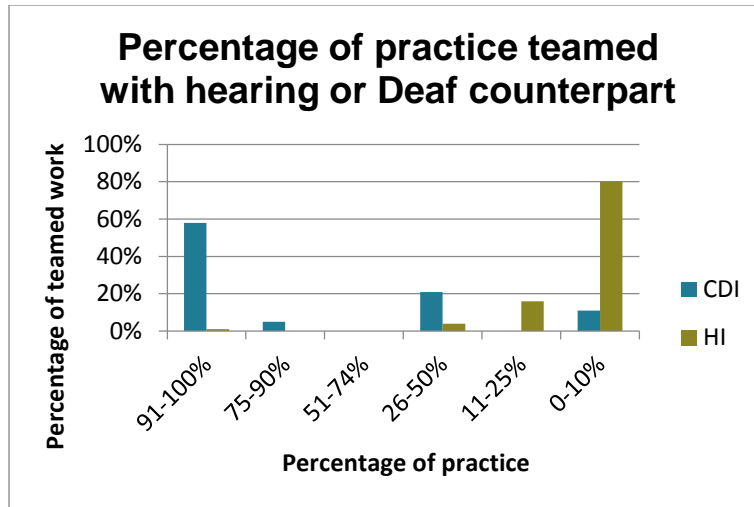


Figure 6. Percentage of practice teamed with hearing/Deaf counterpart

**Training.** Both groups were asked if they had received training to increase effectiveness when working in Deaf and hearing interpreter teams. The responses were statistically similar to one another though Deaf interpreters had experienced slightly more training than their hearing interpreter counterparts (see Table 3). Deaf interpreters reported an extensive range of training engagement, informal mentoring, workshops, and Interpreter Training Program attendance. One respondent conducted research and developed a Deaf/hearing interpreter team curriculum.

Hearing interpreters also engaged in specialized training. Those respondents reported a wide range of training activities similar to the Deaf interpreters with an increased attendance in formal post secondary education training.

Table 3

*Percentage of Deaf – Hearing Interpreter Team Training*

<u>Training</u>	<u>Deaf Interpreters</u>	<u>Hearing Interpreters</u>
Yes	58%	54%
No	42%	46%

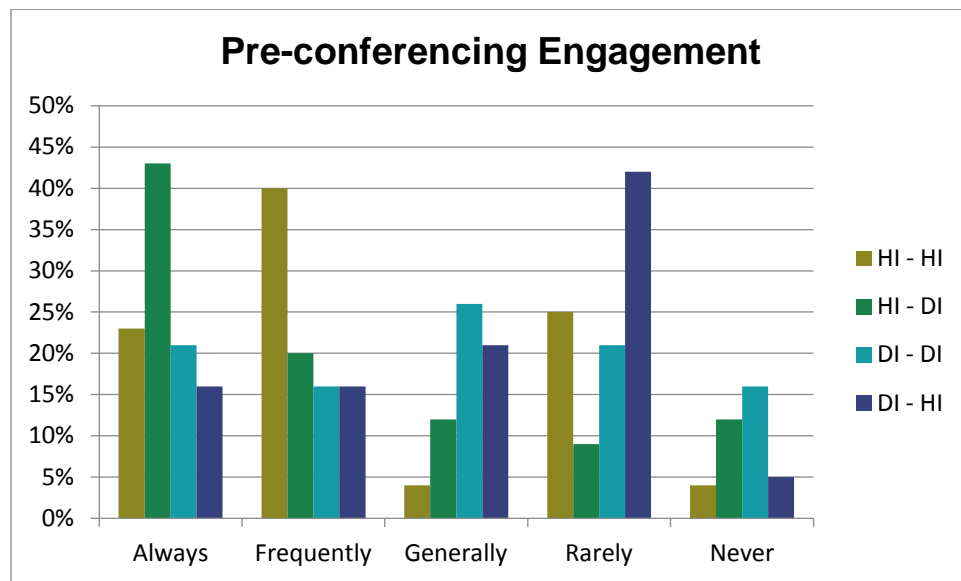
## Major Themes

Specific questions about assignment preparation, team member roles, and developing trust within the team were posited to the survey respondents. Questions included Likert-type and open-ended questions. Each set of open-ended questions was coded within the parameters of the responses.

**Preparation.** Six questions about preparation practices and preferences asked respondents to reflect on the use and effectiveness of pre-conferencing. An initial question explored how the respondent typically engages in pre-conferencing with an interpreter with similar hearing status, which set a baseline for subsequent queries. Responses were coded according to emerging themes of time, trust, attitude, communication, efficacy training, preparation, and communication specific to the interpreting process. Further exploration elicited reflections on the benefits of preparation, in general, as well as specifically when teamed with an interpreter of opposite hearing status. This line of exploration concluded by asking respondents to offer factors that support effective pre-conferencing as well as to speculate on factors that may pose barriers to effective pre-conferencing.

Figure 7 indicates how each group reported the frequency in which preparation was utilized. Hearing respondents reported pre-conferencing engagement as a regular part of their practice when working in a team regardless of team composition (HI-HI 66%; HI-DI 72%). Deaf respondents reported similar pre-conferencing engagement with Deaf interpreter colleagues (DI-DI 63%) and moderate levels pre-conferencing engagement when working with hearing interpreters (DI-HI 53%). Forty-two percent of

Deaf respondents reported they rarely participate in pre-conferencing activities with team members who are hearing.



*Figure 7.* Pre-conferencing Engagement by team configuration

Respondents reported that barriers to effective use of case conferencing included issues of time, lack of preparation materials, wavering self-efficacy, and lack of training. Figure 8 depicts the most frequently reported barrier (55%) expressed by hearing respondents centered on attitudinal issues. Figure 8 points out attitudinal outlook (56%) among hearing respondents as the most significant factor that supports pre-conferencing.

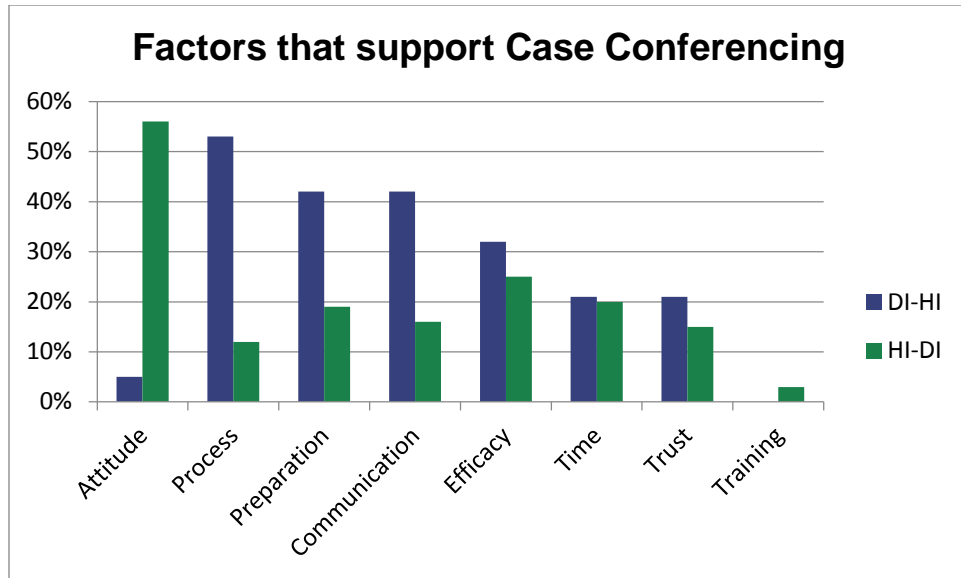


Figure 8. Factors that support Case Conferencing

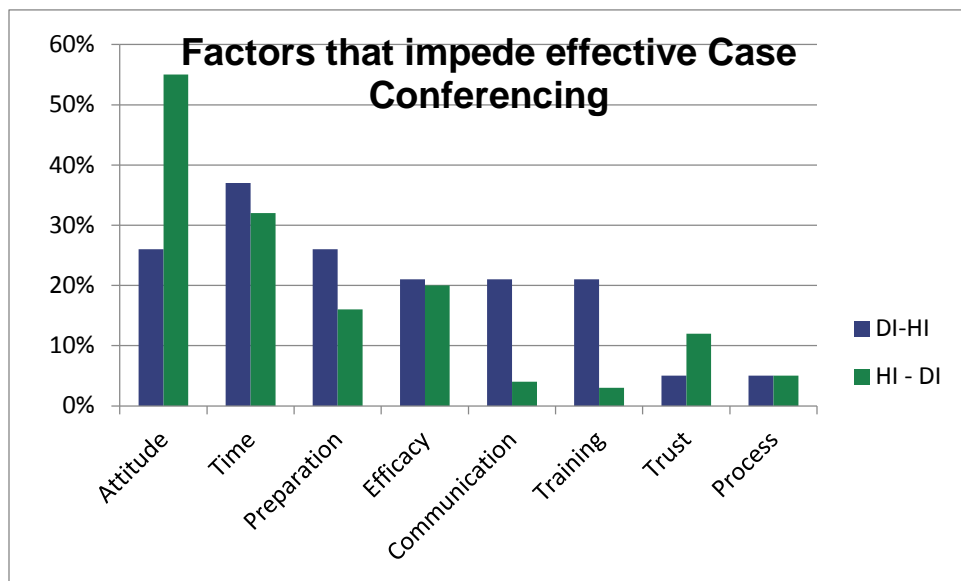


Figure 9. Factors that impede effective Pre-conferencing

Table 4 reflects sentiments among hearing respondents that depict two sides of the “attitudinal” coin.

Table 4

*Hearing respondents' Attitudinal sentiments that support as well as impede effective Pre-conferencing*

<u>Hearing respondents Attitudinal factors that support effective Pre-conferencing</u>	<u>Hearing respondents Attitudinal factors that impede effective Pre-conferencing</u>
“Open mindedness self awareness of one's own strengths and weaknesses, listening skills, having a common professional vocabulary.”	“Interpreters that have a ‘This is what I do, period’ approach.”
“Seeing both team members as equal contributors to the process.”	“Ego, attitude, territoriality, control, superiority, rigidity, close-mindedness.”
“A TEAM perspective, which includes often the deaf person in the interaction. Mutual understanding of our roles and contributions to the team.”	“Being closed off. Not listening to each other.”
“A willingness to collaborate and be flexible.”	“Lecturing, dictating terms, power plays.”
“If power dynamics are not a concern – everyone’s comments are respected.”	“When a team feels they don’t need to prep or already know it all. Either ego or ignorance are the main barriers.”
“People being honest about their limitations.”	“Poor attitude concerning the skill or experience equality within the team.”
“Intention. Valuing this interaction as an essential part of the job.”	“Power – dynamics, lack of trust, lack of skill. With Deaf teams how can I as a hearing interpreter question and interpretation without seeming like an oppressive hearing person?”

Deaf respondents emphasized communication regarding the interpreting process as a leading factor that supports effective pre-conferencing. One survey participant made an all-inclusive statement that echoes respondent themes:

Demonstrating to both parties how we work and flow together as a team which allows the parties (consumers) to put trust in our work so they can focus on the objective of the meeting. Use of techniques that were discussed guide the process and allow checking in. If new interpreter teaming with me, preconference allows me to discuss expectations and process of teaming, etc. (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

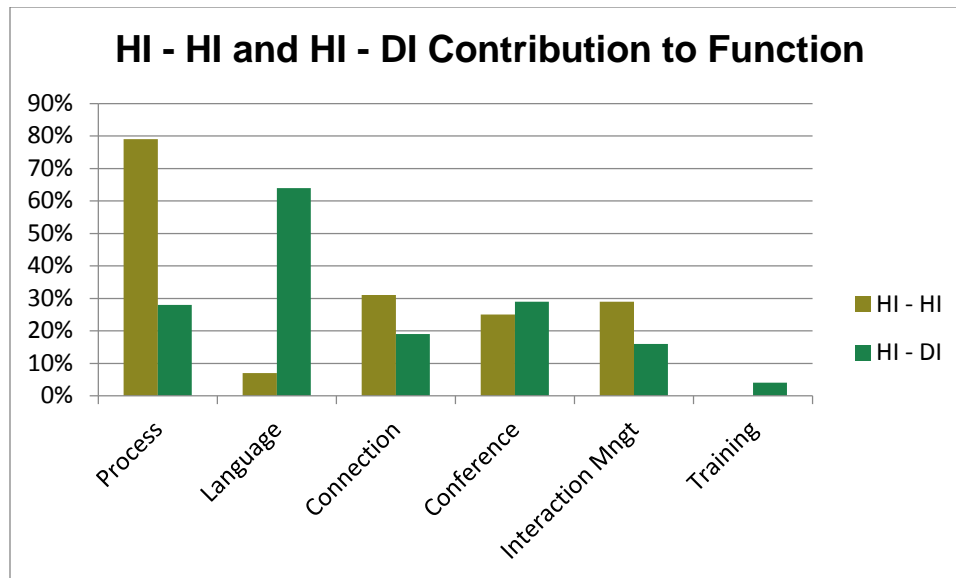
**Interpreting Function.** This section of the survey was comprised of five open-ended questions pertaining to team roles and functions. Respondents were asked to reflect on questions related to how varied team configurations contribute to the effectiveness of the interpreted interaction. Effectiveness in this context refers to how an interpreter team dynamically co-constructs an equivalent target language interpretation. Responses were coded according to emerging themes of time, preparation, attitude, general communication, efficacy, training, communication specific to the interpreting process, and trust.

The first two questions pertained to working with a team member of similar audiological status. The majority of hearing respondents (79%) discussed the mechanics and dynamics of working with another hearing interpreter. A little over 20% of Deaf respondents, however, reported having no experience working with other Deaf interpreters (21%). Among those with experience working with other Deaf interpreters, 47% of comments focused on the team members' contribution to the interpreting process. The following quote illustrates how one Deaf respondent viewed team effectiveness. This participant stated, "The functions of effectiveness was respecting the time-relief turn-taking as well as supporting one another by keeping an eye on the other person should he/she struggled during the interpreting process" (Deaf survey respondent, 2015). Deaf and hearing respondents alike commented in similar numbers (between 16-25%) about the use of conferencing before, during, or after an assignment as a means of bolstering effectiveness. Between 26-29% of comments from both groups expressed strategies to manage the conferencing process (See Appendix C). A hearing survey respondent described this: "Feeding, monitoring my interpretation, asking



questions/clarifying concepts, keeping track of time, serving as a liaison between both parties, sharing the interpreting work, and more” (Hearing survey respondent, 2015).

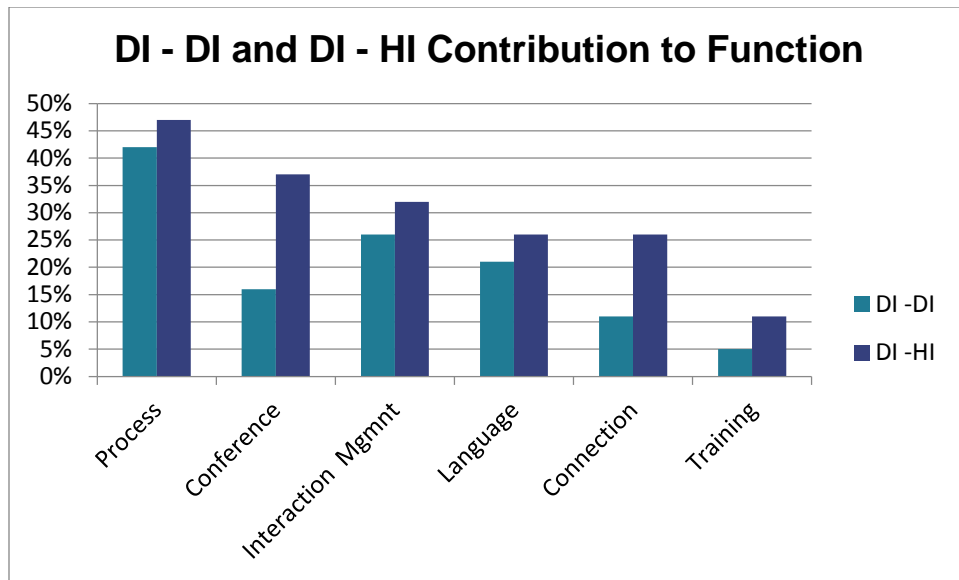
Figures 10 and 11 detail how the respondents replied when asked to reflect on (1) how/what a Deaf interpreter contributes to effective functioning of the team from a hearing interpreter’s perspective and (2) how/what a hearing interpreter contributes to the functional effectiveness of the team from a Deaf interpreter’s perspective. Figure 10 marks a departure from how hearing respondents reported about fellow HI’s contributions to functional effectiveness. Hearing respondents looked to fellow hearing interpreters to contribute to managing the demands of the interpretation process, as stated by 79% of the respondents. In contrast, 64% of hearing respondents, when teamed with a Deaf interpreter, shifted functional contribution from the interpreting process (as with hearing colleagues) to ASL language competency as a main means of enhancing team functional efficacy. Hearing respondents ranked conferencing, processing, interaction management, and sense of connection similarly but not nearly as significant a contribution as Deaf interpreters’ ASL language competency. Additionally, comments regarding conferencing, interaction, and team sense of connection were consistent with how hearing interpreters described other hearing interpreters’ contribution to functional efficacy.



*Figure 10.* Hearing Interpreter report on role/function contributions of Deaf Interpreter

Deaf respondents considered hearing team members' contribution to functional effectiveness as similar (within five to seven percentage points) to fellow Deaf team members in the categories of language, interaction management, and training. A noteworthy difference appears in the number of times Deaf respondents mentioned conferencing and connection as factors that enhance effective team experience with hearing interpreters. Figure 11 demonstrates that Deaf respondents mentioned conferencing and a sense of connection twice as often as their hearing counterparts did. One Deaf respondent addressed a sense of connectedness in the following sentiment:

When I am teamed with a good HI, I feel like I am getting support as well as being a supportive team member. I noticed that when we work together, we would become more effective and more united in our messages. As well as double-checking on each other that we are understanding the same message/same concept as well as relating the same concept. (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)



*Figure 11.* DI report on Function contribution of HI

Figure 12 synthesizes what and how Deaf and hearing interpreters perceive their partner's contribution toward effective team dynamics. Hearing respondents (64%) consider Deaf interpreters' ASL language competency to be the major contributing factor to the functional effectiveness of the team. Deaf respondents mentioned more often than hearing respondents that various facets of the interpreting process contribute to team effectiveness. More notably, Deaf respondents commented twice as often as hearing respondents that those facets of an interpreted event involving interaction management contributed to the effectiveness of the team.

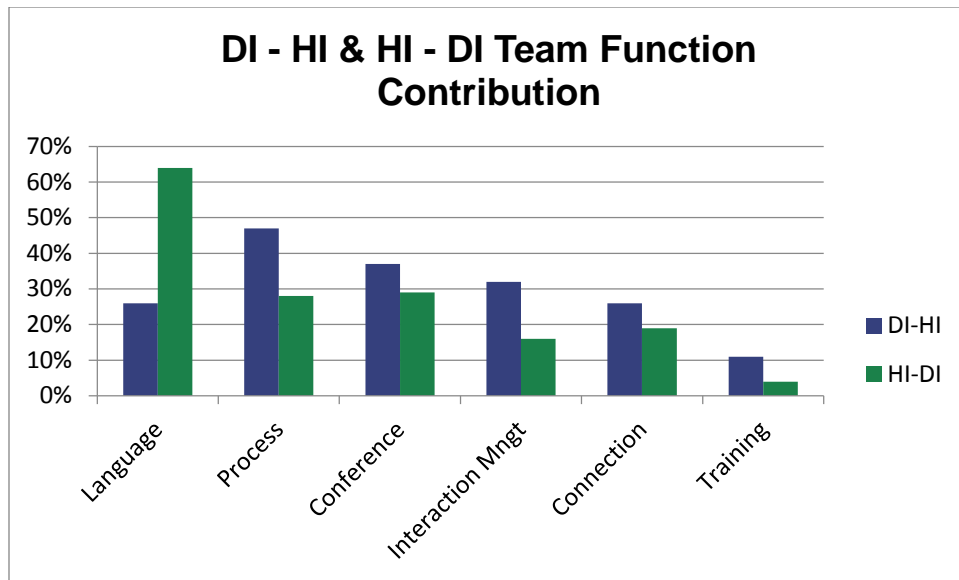


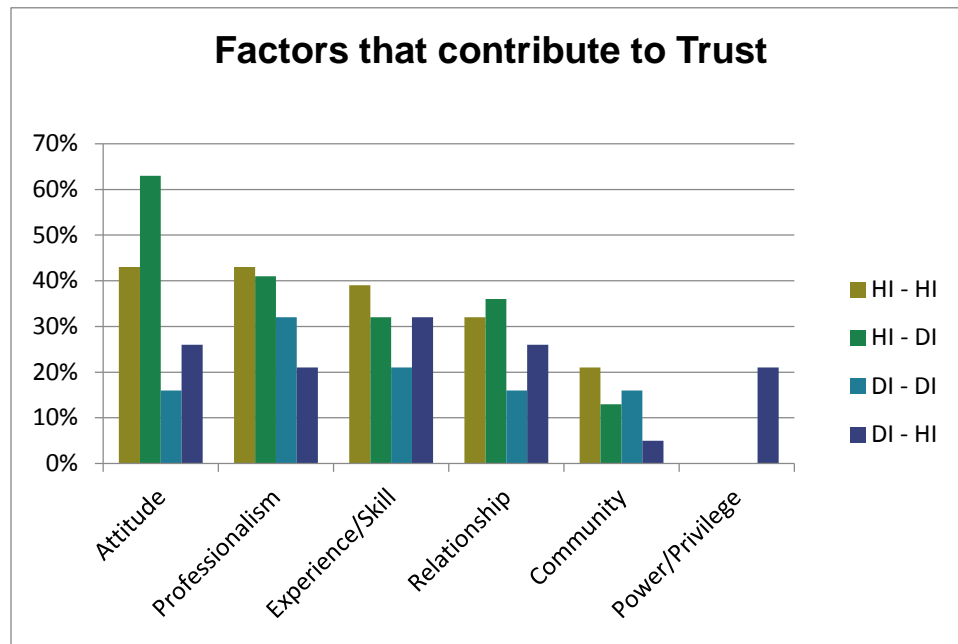
Figure 12. DI/HI and HI/DI report on Functionality Contribution

**Trust factors.** Initial interest in trust came from the hypothesis that Deaf and hearing interpreters approach role functionality differently, and as a result possible role function disparity may cause subsequent trust issues. Trust may be framed as the belief one individual has in another individual to contribute toward the manifestation of a shared goal.

The survey continued with a series of nine questions that asked respondents to reflect on times when trust was ascribed to colleagues with similar hearing status. Then participants were asked to reflect on trust in connection to working with colleagues with differing hearing status. Finally, questions related to fostering trust between teammates were posed. Figure 13 indicates respondents' comments when asked to reflect about four possible dyad combinations. Responses revealed five themes: attitude, professionalism/respect, experience/knowledge, relationship, and community. A sixth theme emerged when Deaf participants reflected on factors that encourage trust with hearing team members: power and privilege. One Deaf respondent described factors that

support trust among hearing colleagues as “Allyship, their attitudes, their behaviors, their self-disclosure of hearing privileges and/or recognition of power dynamics/disparity”

(Deaf survey respondent, 2015).



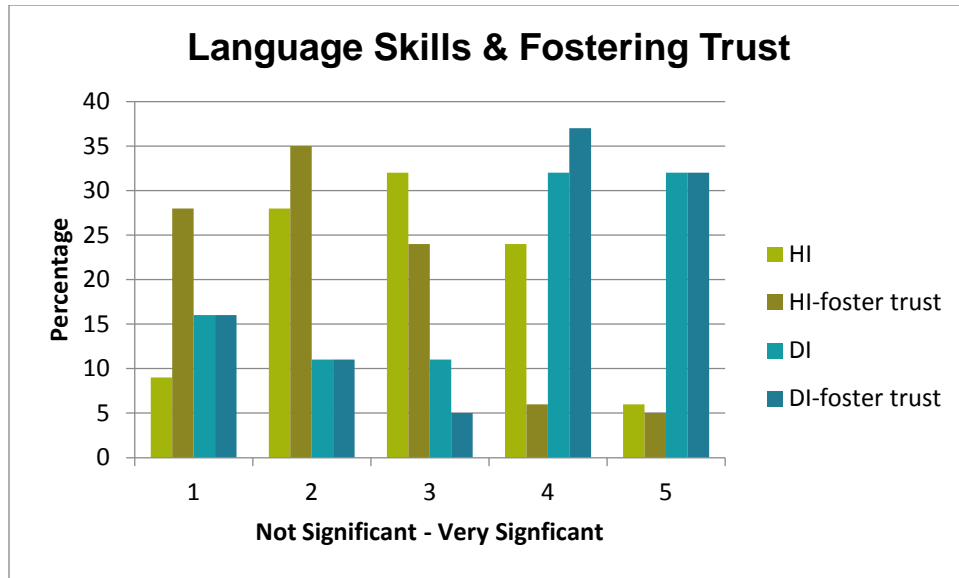
*Figure 13.* Factors that contribute to Trust

The last series of open-ended survey questions focused on factors that individual respondents believed they personally practiced to foster trust with their team member. Deaf respondents underscored honesty, language competency, knowledge, transparency, clear communication, and respect as factors they felt they personally contributed towards trust. Offering support to the team was the highest-ranking category (37%) reported by the Deaf respondents. Attitude and professional knowledge ranked as the second highest personal contribution to fostering trust within team reflected 32% of responses. As an example, a Deaf survey participant responded: “Exhibiting competency, respect for them, willingness to work with them for the best possible teamwork. Listening to their

suggestions and opinions. Answering questions to the best of my ability, and being honest when I don't know the answers" (Deaf survey respondent, 2015).

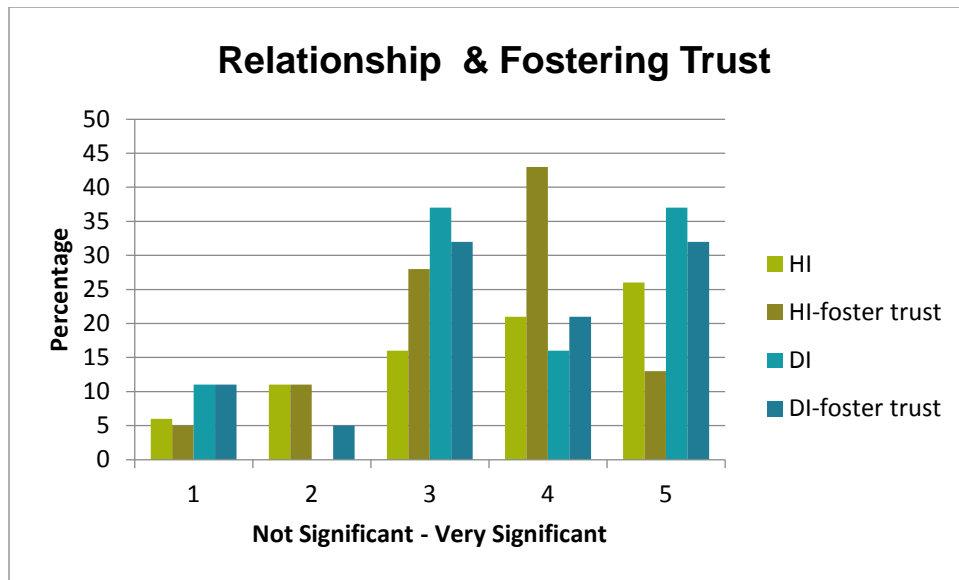
Hearing respondents' individual contribution to fostering trust highlighted ASL-to-English skills, reputation, receptiveness, deference, dedication to the relationship, and respect. Sixty-one percent of responses reflect some weight given to receptiveness and collegiality. Skill and knowledge rank second (45%) as personal attributes that hearing respondents contribute towards fostering trust. Professionalism, including decision-making practices, accounted for 40% of responses and ranks third in what hearing interpreters attributed to fostering trust with Deaf colleagues. For example, a Hearing survey respondent stated: "Level of previous and continuous involvement in the Deaf community, attitude of equal importance of DI and myself the hearing interpreter; it takes both of us working together to get the job done 😊" (Hearing survey respondent, 2015).

The last few questions asked respondents to measure how significant pre-conferencing, personal relationship, and language competency were towards fostering trust within a Deaf/hearing dyad. Figure 14 indicates a combined 68% of Deaf participants valued hearing interpreters with competent ASL skills and was more readily able to establish trust as a result. Hearing colleagues, however, did not make a significant connection between Deaf interpreters possessing strong English skills with factors that foster trust. Only 30% ranked English skills as either significant or very significant.



*Figure 14.* Language proficiency and fostering trust

One survey question was designed to collect data related to how a prior relationship with a team member contributed toward granting or fostering trust. Note that 43% of hearing respondents (Figure 15) noted potential for trust existed among teams with prior relationships. Responses from Deaf interpreters reveal divergent perspectives. Thirty-seven percent of respondents reported prior relationships significantly contributed to establishing trust with team member, and 32% of respondents stated prior relationships account for the potential of fostering trust. However, respondents reported that prior relationships were moderately significant factors in establishing and fostering trust. Prior relationships among Deaf participants seem to have some influence on establishing trust, but the data is unclear as to what extent prior relationships is significant.



*Figure 15. Prior relationships contributes to fostering trust*

An in-depth exploration of pre-conferencing was conducted under a separate section of this survey. However, a question correlating pre-conferencing and fostering trust appeared in this section on trust. All the respondents ranked pre-conferencing high as a means of fostering trust. Ninety-one percent of hearing and 85% of Deaf respondents overwhelmingly pointed to pre-conferencing as a definitive indicator for building trust.

**One thought to share...** The culminating survey question invited participants to speak directly to their team counterpart by asking “If there was one thing you could share with your team what would it be?” Hearing interpreters generated 2% higher word count than any other survey question; the question series on interpreter function ranked second. Deaf respondents generated the same word count as the questions about functionality. The nature of the responses varied in tone and style from previous replies.

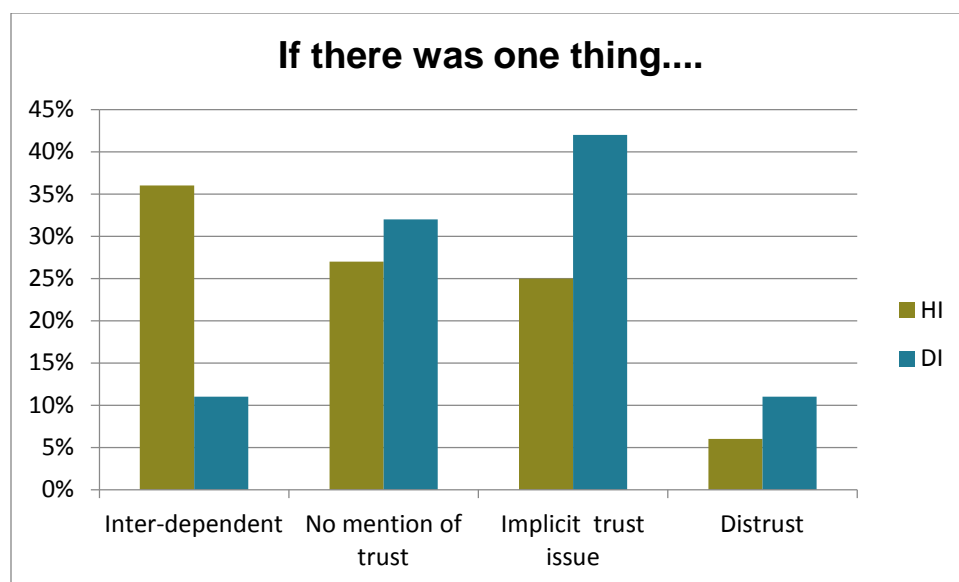
An attempt to apply previously established coding themes such as professionalism, processing, language, and knowledge was ineffective. It became



apparent an implicit reference to mistrust or tension emerged that had not been as clearly present up to this point. The responses were recoded to identify and quantify the nature of an inferred tension.

The hearing interpreter responses primarily fell into three categories. Thirty-six percent of the responses support the notion of gratitude, optimism, or a sense of interdependent symbolic working relationship with interpreters who are Deaf. Almost one third of the comments (27%) made no reference to trust; these findings will be discussed later. One quarter (25%) suggested historical or current dissatisfaction with the team dynamics, or implicit references to trust issues. Finally, 6% of the comments contained open distrust of Deaf team members.

Note Figure 16 shows the Deaf interpreter response profile differs from the hearing interpreters. A small number of comments (11%) supported an interdependent supportive team experience. The same number (11%) of respondents admitted distrust of hearing team members. About a third of responses (32%) made no mention of trust. The highest percentage of Deaf respondents (42%) implied to an underlying dissatisfaction or disconnect with hearing teammates that impacted their sense of trust.



*Figure 16. Response categories framed within a trust context*

It was interesting to note that the percentage of hearing interpreters who made no reference to trust came within a few percentage points of their Deaf colleagues who also did not mention trust (32%). However, 86% of those who made “no reference to trust” identified inadequate, incomplete, or complete lack of training as problematic. All (100%) of the training issues were directed at the hearing team members. Of the 86% comments from Deaf respondents that referenced training, most comments were multifaceted in nature. Embedded in 83% of the comments were concepts of functionality, and 66% of the multi-faceted responses referred to issues with the process of interpreting. Table 5 provides examples of participant comments as they emerged as themes evident throughout the data.

Table 5

*If there was one thing to share...*

<u>Interpreters who are Deaf</u>	<u>Interpreters who are hearing</u>
<i>On Interdependence</i>	
Knowing that having a DI/CDI does not take away anything from the HI. The HI is empowered to contribute towards the team process and to the dynamics of the meeting while the DI/CDI contributes towards the communicative power of all parties.	We are both skilled in the process of interpretation, and each an expert on one of the cultures involved in the interaction. Lets each work to our strengths, and allow the other to do the same.
<i>Implicit reference to a trust issue</i>	
I *really* want us to work together. I don't care what goes on *outside* of this. This is about the deaf consumer.	Let's both get over ourselves and just work as a team. Also – it's a high privilege for me to work with you to serve our customers.
<i>Trust issue at Intersectionality</i>	
Trust me and trust the fact that there are many things I pick up that you don't even know exist.	Deaf people don't know everything about Deaf. Sometimes, especially educated interpreters know more than you. Calm down and don't think because you are Deaf that you know more, just us because we are hearing we don't know more.
<i>Training</i>	
I realize it is challenging for a hearing interpreter to look at a consumer, who happens to be a CDI, whom they have interpreted for in the past, and now I working side-by-side as a team. It is something we haven't discussed much, and probably should!	Realize that for some hearing interpreters this is “new” and not all of us have had the benefit of training or exposure be patient and thank you so much!
Become educated on the use and benefits of a Deaf interpreter.	We need more training not only how to work with Deaf interpreters but how to advocate for working with them.
<i>Training and the Process of Interpreting</i>	
STOP thinking you can just spew English at us and expect us to do all the lifting!	Before the assignment, discuss how you want personal conversations between the interpreters to go that are during the assignment. How to do “asides” are most important to me because it something I struggle with catching.
If voicing was awkward, speak up! Don't cover up as I do catch mistakes!	
<i>Training and Function/Role</i>	
Do everything COLLABORATIVELY when teaming up with a DI/HI team. Whether it is a logistics/communication/ ethical decision made PRIOR, DURING, or POST job.	I also see a lot of DIs who try to explain the role as a replacement for the lack on the part of the HI. This makes HI feel hostile and uncooperative. The DI is not there because the HI sucks. They are there because the
If you decide to contact the consumers for prep,	

INCLUDE the Deaf interpreter.

client/setting has an additional need...

If you need clarification during a job, CHECK IN with the DI too.

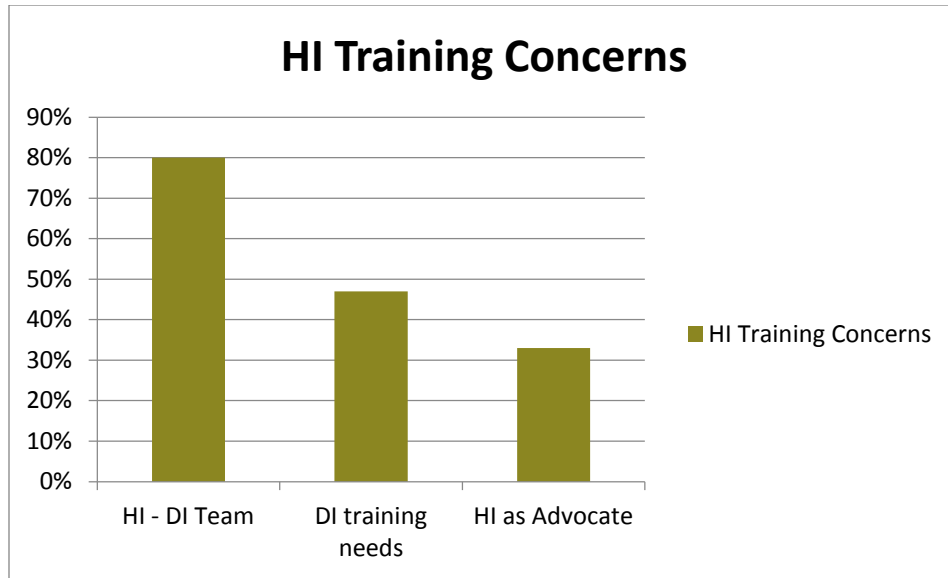
If you want a debriefing with your HI team... INCLUDE the deaf interpreter(s).

We CDIs have proven time over again we do the job very well and wish you would call us more often. I started interpreting when I was in grade school when my deaf classmates did not understand the teacher. So it has been a lifelong experience for me and I am sure for others. The non-certified have trouble getting CDI is for reason whatever that might be.

Be mindful of the boundary between DI and Deaf Advocate.... When you see subtle oppression happening because be careful jumping into Deaf advocate role. Empower the Deaf consumer. Don't answer for the Deaf consumer or over explain things; let them ask the questions. Just as you wouldn't want the HI to talk for you and answer for you, so we must allow the Deaf consumer to ask the hearing professional.

---

Hearing respondents also identified the need for training as a priority, yet their perception of the topics where training needed to focus differed from those of most Deaf respondents. Comments tended to encompass more than one training concern. Figure 17 spotlights three prominent training themes hearing respondents brought forward on the topic of training. An overwhelming 79% of the hearing respondents believed they could benefit from comprehensive training on working with Deaf team members. Almost 50% of the comments identified additional training needs for Deaf colleagues while 21% targeted issues of functionality, and 26% identified specific training needs on the process of interpreting. Additionally, 33% recognized their role as field “gatekeepers” and expressed desire for advocacy training on how to open systematic doors for Deaf interpreters. One hearing respondent wrote, “We need more training on not only how to work with Deaf interpreters but how to advocate for working with them.”



*Figure 17.* Hearing interpreters identified training concerns

There are several themes of interest that came out of the data. Through analysis it became apparent trust is a salient issue. The process of identifying trust led me to explore the concept of trust further. In the next chapter, the discussion of the findings will include the significance of preparation, role clarity, and exploration of trust theory as it applies to Deaf-hearing interpreting teams.

## **Chapter 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Demographics**

The presentation of findings drew a picture of who the survey respondents were. The Deaf interpreter demographic profile was consistent with RID's most current published Annual Report (2013), suggesting the sample population is representative of the working DI/CDI population. The hearing interpreter sampling was also a consistent representation of RID membership demographics. The median age of Deaf interpreters in this sample was about 10 years older than the hearing interpreters. The Deaf interpreter was typically between 50-59 years old with 5-10 years of experience as a working interpreter. Among the Deaf respondents, approximately two-thirds of the sample population identified as female, roughly one-third as male, and one participant identified as transgender. Close to 80% identified as Euro-American, and 11% identified as being a person of color. About 21% of the Deaf interpreters have one or more Deaf parents, while 13% of hearing interpreters indicated deaf parentage. The Deaf interpreters held more advanced degrees than the hearing interpreters, and they also held more high school diplomas than the hearing interpreters. The highest percentage of interpreters, Deaf and hearing alike, lived on either coast with a larger concentration residing in the Northeast than in the Pacific region. The Midwest region was underrepresented in this sample, when compared to RID's Annual Report (2013).

Comparing the hearing population demographics to the Deaf interpreters, the hearing respondents' median age was 40-49 years, yet they tended to have 10-15 years more experience than Deaf respondents. They predominantly identified as female; about 15% identified as male. Nearly 85% of the hearing respondents identified as Euro-American and 13% as a person of color. Thirteen percent of hearing respondents identified as having Deaf parentage. The majority of hearing interpreters (51%) held bachelors' degrees. A modest 4% of hearing respondents lived internationally; respondents reported living in Canada and Australia.

### **The Interpreter Practitioner**

The data included the composition of the interpreters' practice. Deaf survey respondents have, on average, practiced professionally between six to 10 years. More than half have undergone specialized training in working with hearing interpreters, and almost 80% of the respondents interpret less than 15 hours per week. More than 58% of their work is done in tandem with hearing interpreters.

Hearing respondents have practiced professionally on average 11-20 years. More than half have received specialized training in partnering with Deaf interpreters, and more than 75% of the respondents interpret between 16-40 hours a week. However, 80% reported that less than 10% of their practice involves teaming with a Deaf interpreter.

A brief summary of the data suggests Deaf interpreters have practiced for a shorter period of time, have less contact hours in the field, and conduct a significant portion of their work in tandem with hearing interpreters. Hearing interpreters have been in practice longer than Deaf colleagues, and on average they work twice as many hours each week as Deaf interpreters, yet seldom work alongside Deaf practitioners.

## **Trust Theory**

Several interesting themes emerged from the data. Through the analysis, it became apparent trust was a salient issue, which was somewhat unexpected. The breadth and depth of the comments touching on the topic of trust piqued interest. In this section, the intent is to explore essential elements of a socio-cognitive trust theory and apply its basic principles to a teamed interpreted event. It is possible trust theory analysis may inform next steps in training Deaf and hearing interpreters as well as possibly point to future research questions.

### **The Interpreted Interaction Goal**

Effective team interpreting as described by Hoza (2010) is a balance between autonomy and dependence in a team that shares a desired outcome. When this delicate balance among team members is achieved, they become interdependent in relation to one another. This allows each team member to flow between acting as a single agent and being reliant on a team member to co-construct an interpreted event (Hoza, 2010).

Throughout this study, respondents remarked upon an interdependent relationship with their partner. The product of an effective interplay of this nature creates something that is larger than the sum of its parts—a gestalt. Respondents' sentiments such as this speak to interdependence: "Deaf/hearing teams are special in that both individuals must be equal members of the team. Each brings unique skills to bear. That needs to be identified nurtured and embraced" (Hearing survey respondent, 2015).

### **Trust Starts with a Shared Goal**

Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010) have posited a comprehensive socio-cognitive and computational model of trust that has been applied to the findings from this study.



The model provides a lens from which to view and comprehend possible underlying motivation for specific respondent commentary. Trust, when broken down to its most basic elements, can be described as the mental attitude of one agent towards another individual. Agent A has made a decision to rely on an individual in an intentional act of trust. According to Castelfranchi and Falcone, trust is a relational construct. First, one trusts another only relative to a goal Agent A desires to exercise. The concept of trust as defined by Castelfranchi and Falcone requires both a goal of maintenance or achievement as well as an interaction. In the absence of a goal, be it one of maintenance or one of achievement, an agent cannot assign concern to an outcome. Trust is not a factor in the absence of a goal. Therefore, having a goal is a critical element in the trust equation. An interpreting team shares the goal of co-constructing an effective target interpretation. Each party assumes the role of Agent A at different intervals of an interpreting interaction. The hearing interpreter becomes Agent A when the hearing consumer initiates an utterance. Likewise, the Deaf interpreter assumes the role of Agent A when the Deaf consumer initiates an utterance.

### **Trust Includes Beliefs**

Castelfranchi and Falcone go on to assert that trust is about beliefs, a mental attitude one assigns to an individual (trustee) in the context of a behavior/action associated with the desired result (i.e., accomplishing the goal Agent A has in mind). The next step in Castelfranchi and Falcone's socio-cognitive theoretical framework is to further examine the concept of beliefs. The main trust beliefs are:

- A. Agent A believes that Agent B is able and willing to perform the needed action.
- B. Agent A believes the Agent B will perform the action as desired.

C. Agent A believes Agent B is not dangerous and therefore will be safe in relation to Agent B relaxing an instinct to defend while becoming more vulnerable.

As outlined above, the Deaf-hearing team acknowledges they share the goal of producing an equivalent rendered target interpretation readily understood by the parties involved. The hearing interpreter (Agent A) believes the Deaf interpreter (Agent B) is well positioned and willing to conduct an action that Agent A is unable to carry out proficiently and recognizes this action is required in order to produce the target message readily understood by the Deaf consumer. The hearing interpreter believes the Deaf interpreter will conduct the desired action and proceed to produce an ASL interpreted rendition. The hearing interpreter also believes the Deaf interpreter is not dangerous, will exercise care when carrying out the task, and will follow through with producing an ASL target rendition readily understood by the Deaf consumer.

### **Trust Invokes an Evaluation Process**

Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010) point out that beliefs (A) and (C) involve a positive evaluation before assigning trust to Agent B, suggesting that trust implies an element of appraisal. A positive evaluation of Agent B is a judgment by Agent A, as Castelfranchi and Falcone term it, about the “goodness” of Agent B to achieve the prescribed goal. Beliefs (B) and (C) involve a set of beliefs/ideas about expectations. When Agent A wishes for and predicts Agent B will perform a specific action, Agent A has conducted an appraisal of Agent B’s capability to carry out the desired task. Furthermore, Agent A has evaluated Agent B and predicts the specific action Agent B will carry out excludes any negative actions potentially harmful to Agent A. This enables A to feel “safe.”

## Trust as Delegation of Power

According to Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010), when Agent A has appraised the trustee's capabilities/actions would be of use towards achieving Agent A's goal, then A may move to rely or *delegate* the specific action to Agent B. Deaf and hearing interpreters intersect at the point of delegation. The action, to review, is something the Agent A is not able to carry out themselves. Therefore, when Agent A delegates to B they are also requesting B to *exercise their power* to assist in achieving the shared goal. In the words of Castelfranchi and Falcone, "Trust is the mental counter-part of reliance and delegation" (p. 39).

Let's build on the Deaf-hearing team example. The hearing interpreter envisioned an interpreted interaction shared goal and believes the Deaf consumer will readily understand the hearing consumers' message. To actualize the goal, the hearing interpreter produces the interpretation to the Deaf interpreter and then *delegates* to the Deaf interpreter the formation of an interpretation that is readily understood by the Deaf consumer. The Deaf interpreter envisions a similar interaction shared goal and believes the hearing consumer will readily understand the Deaf consumer's message. The Deaf interpreter, now acting as Agent A, actualizes this goal by producing an interpreted rendition for the hearing interpreter and then *delegates* to the hearing interpreter the formation of an interpretation that is readily understood by the hearing consumer. This illustration grants Agent B the *power* to actualize end result. To clarify, power in the context of trust theory refers to the agent's capacity to carry out the goal. In its purest form, power in this context does not suggest abuse of power. Rather, the agent is

believed to have the skill or ability to perform the action necessary to achieve the desired shared outcome.

To reiterate, the Deaf interpreter is able and has the capacity, competence, and willingness (i.e., the power) to realize the hearing interpreter's goal. The Deaf interpreter carries out the action and formulates an interpretation readily understood by the Deaf consumer that, in turn, meets the hearing interpreter's belief and expectation. When trust is established, synergies of independent and dependent actions wrap interpreters in an envelope of interdependence.

The sentiment below provides evidence that (1) the agents granted positive evaluation to one another, (2) symbiotic delegation of unattainable tasks was issued to one another, and (3) each agent has remained safe while engaged in the process. A hearing survey respondent outlined this:

(1) I have been fortunate to work with different Deaf interpreters who are honest about our process. (2) If either of us has needed an adjustment we have asked for it but really that has never been an issue. (3) I feel confident that we have had trust worthy interactions and neither has felt the need for something not given.  
(Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

The following survey respondents' comments illustrate agents who share goals/desired outcomes for the interaction participants. Delegation status is the result of a positive evaluation appraisal. The agent has predetermined that the trustee warrants the risk. The following survey comments illustrate Agent A's anticipation to delegate based on the shared goal of serving the Deaf consumer by providing an accurate linguistic and cultural appropriate interpretation.

*Readiness to Delegate:* I really want us to work together. I don't care what goes on outside of this. This is about the Deaf consumer. (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

*Willingness to Delegate:* Negotiating the situation, removing any stigma regarding hearing/deaf as interpreters, because we are a professional team with the same goal in the forefront of the intended outcome for participants. (Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

*Invitation to Delegate to one another:* We are both skilled in the process of interpretation, and each experts on one of the cultures involved in the interaction. Lets each work to our strengths and allow the other to do the same. (Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

This section explored how delegation of tasks may manifest when agents align to work toward a shared outcome. Interpreters, regardless of hearing status, willingly align around a shared goal to provide effective communication in a form most readily understood by the consumers. The next section examines how cultural lenses begin to play out in the delegation process and Agent B's ability to execute delegated power.

### **Errors in Delegation**

Trust is multi-layered. There are many factors to consider when thinking about the complex nature of the trust construct. However, the scope of this exploration is limited to the basic elements of positive delegation of a task when the agents *are* aligned around a shared goal as well as when agents are *not* aligned. The next section explores team dynamics when agents proceed to positively evaluate and delegate tasks to trusted

agents who have differing contexts and/or worldviews that can result in struggles to align with their team members.

Agent A has a mental representation of a goal, which is built on his or her perception and worldview. Agent A conducts an evaluation and has determined a positive expectation that Agent B can carry out a specific goal. Agent B is willing and able to do so. However, Agent B will carry out the desired action in accordance to his or her context or worldview which may or may not match Agent A's perception (Castelfranchi & Falcone, 2010, p. 83). Agent A may assume delegation of trust based on personal perceptions without verifying Agent B's ability to act in accordance with Agent A's worldview. According to Robert Lee (1997), role is a manifestation of a mental model, which is a reflection of one's worldview. It is possible an interpreter may be deeply entrenched in their cultural orientation and unable to relate to the other interpreter's cultural experience without bias.

Additionally, an interpreter may be "unknowing" and therefore "blind" to inherent privilege such as privileged hearing status, intelligence status, sighted status, nationality status, gender, ethnicity status, and so on. Deaf and hearing interpreters intersect at the point of delegation. It is incumbent upon interpreters to know ourselves well and to understand how our thought-worlds and worldviews outwardly manifest. The next sentiment implies a hearing interpreter may not be attuned to visual cues that inform the Deaf interpreter's perception of a setting.

*Hesitation to delegate:* "Trust me and trust the fact that there are many things I pick up on that you don't even know exist." (Deaf survey respondent – Agent B)

*Hesitation or refusal to delegate:* “This isn’t the time to try to make up for discrimination and oppression in your personal life by replicating it in your professional lives and doing to others what was done to you.” (Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

*Perceived barrier towards accepting delegation:* “The time for ‘I can do this myself alone’ needs to stop and start encouraging more DI and CDI to work with you.” (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

These sentiments express Agent A’s disappointment (feeling unsafe) when Agent B is not able to carry out a delegated task, because their worldview diverge exposing unknown layers of perception blinders.

The concept of divergent worldviews and an agent’s attempt at delegation was further illustrated by one third of respondents who expressed value in case conferencing. One respondent believed the opportunity to exchange strategies or approaches in a pre-session conference enhances the team relationship. This respondent remarked:

Demonstrating to both parties how we work and flow together as a team, which allows the parties (consumers) to put trust in our work so they can focus on the objectives of the meeting. Use of techniques that were discussed guide the process and allow checking in. If new interpreter is teaming with me, pre-conference allows me to discuss expectations and process of teaming, etc. (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

Team members who value and allot sufficient time to conduct a preparation session are hesitant to delegate a positive evaluation when the other interpreter arrives at

the designated start time leaving no time to conference. When asked about factors that negatively impact pre-conferencing sessions one participant responded:

*Possible Negative Evaluation:* “Lack of communication, no time for a preconference meeting, one interpreter arriving late (by late I mean less than 15 minutes before an appointment), no collegiality.” (Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

As this illustrates, divergent worldviews may be as subtle as arriving to an assignment “on time” and yet too late to make productive use of case conferencing techniques. Unfortunately, when Agent A is adversely impacted, motivation to evaluate positive future delegations may diminish. This may cause one agent to hold in reserve delegation of the other agent.

### **Mistrust/Distrust**

Brooks’s (2011) study looked at the benevolent relationship between interpreters and postsecondary education Deaf students. She noted students tended to withdraw from classroom engagement when a substitute interpreter filled in or when the assigned interpreter was not preferred. Distrust had set in. Distrust, according to Brooks, occurred when a person “with some degree of confidence, believes the other person does not have the ability or power to do for one what one needs to be done” (p. 159). This forms the basis for Castelfranchi and Falcone’s (2010) theory on lack of trust, which may take on several forms.

Castelfranchi and Falcone stated that lack of trust may manifest in several ways including what is commonly known as mistrust. Mistrust is the result of Agent A assigning a negative evaluation of Agent B who is therefore deemed to be not reliable.



There are two types of negative evaluations: (1) Agent B is not able or apt to achieve Agent A's goal, or (2) Agent B is capable and therefore powerful, yet utilizes the power for actions counter to Agent A's intention and delegation.

In the first type of mistrust, Agent B is inadequate or unable to perform Agent A's goal or assumption. This is evident in the following sentiment expressed by a Deaf respondent who stated, "If voicing is awkward, speak up! Don't cover up as I do catch mistakes!" The Deaf interpreter has an expectation that the hearing interpreter is able to perform the delegated function—to proficiently translate from ASL to English. However, the Deaf interpreter's experience is that the hearing interpreter is not able to consistently deliver. The hearing interpreter chooses an ineffective option/control and attempts to "cover it up." Agent A, the Deaf interpreter, no longer "feels safe," or confident in the HI's skills and is left wondering if the interpretation has been executed in vain.

The second category of mistrust/misuse of delegated authority is illustrated with this quote from a hearing respondent: "Deaf people don't know everything about Deaf. Sometimes, especially educated interpreters know more than you. Calm down and don't think because you are Deaf that you know more, just as because we are hearing we don't know more" (Hearing survey respondent, 2015). It appears the author, Agent A, has delegated to his or her team member and in doing so over time Agent B (which could be more than one agent) has not met expectations while carrying out the task. It appears Agent B commandeered the delegation to meet his or her own goal resulting in Agent A experiencing harm. The comment implies either repeated harm or that he or she experienced a level of harm that has caused the agent to "shut down." Speculation

beyond this point, as to why the goal was commandeered, is beyond the scope of this work.

It is worthy to note evaluation and delegation are not phenomena that occur exclusively in one direction. Both interpreters undergo an evaluative appraisal of one another perhaps simultaneously. The first quote below demonstrates Agent B as the recipient of negative evaluation and resulting feeling, which generates reluctance to delegate in return.<sup>2</sup>

*Negative Evaluation results in B's subsequent reluctance to delegate to A: Don't prejudge me. I find many tend to assume I don't have the skills, and need to be let around and shown how to do things, even if it's their first time working with the DI! Remember that I have met competency expectations and take continuing education and pass certification just like you. (Deaf Survey Respondent – Agent B)*

*Negative Evaluation results in B's subsequent reluctance to delegate to A: Become educated on the use and benefits of a Deaf interpreter. Know we aren't there to steal your job. (Deaf Survey Respondent – Agent A)*

## **Preparation and Trust**

### **Genuine Trust**

NCIEC's Master Deaf Interpreter Training materials (2014) put forward preparation/conferencing as well as establishing intra-team agreements as two best practices techniques. Intra-team agreements may include sharing interpreter philosophies, physical logistics, and intra-team management strategies. When teams are

---

<sup>2</sup> Other factors may influence the interaction as well; it is not my intention to minimize the complexity of trust dynamics.

able to negotiate these aspects of role and function ahead of time, the likelihood of effective target interpretations increases. Approximately one-third of the hearing participants referenced the value of conferencing, 26% spoke to the necessity of managing interactions, and 22% mentioned the ability to foster connection as contributing pieces of functionality effectiveness. The percentages are not significantly high but do suggest awareness of the importance these contributing factors have.

When asked to share a thought with hearing interpreters one Deaf respondent replied,

Do everything COLLABORATIVELY when teaming up with DI/HI team.

Whether it is a logistic/communication/ethical decision made PRIOR, DURING or POST job. If you decide to contact the customers for prep, INCLUDE the Deaf interpreter. If you need a clarification during a job, CHECK IN with the DI too. If you want a debriefing with your HI team... INCLUDE the Deaf interpreter(s). (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

The above sentiment implies that the Deaf respondent had encountered situation(s) when hearing interpreter(s) did not consider this Deaf interpreter for inclusion. According to Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010), Agent A, the Deaf respondent, may feel betrayed by Agent B's (the hearing interpreter) violation of a committed set of social prescriptions or expectations when Agent B excluded the Deaf respondent from interactions with consumers. A social prescription or expectation refers to a set of shared social behaviors, which are common knowledge within a group. Castelfranchi and Falcone term this as *genuine* trust (p. 88). In order to achieve the shared goal of providing an accurate, culturally relevant interpretation, there may be prescribed sets of

behaviors for the agents to follow to “set the stage” for later delegation. In this example, the Deaf respondent contextualizes the comment in preparation, yet the hearing interpreter(s) referred to in the comment missed a critical *function* of hearing team members’ role: to interpret for the Deaf interpreter when necessary during preparation.

### **Attitude and Trust**

Bentley-Sassaman’s (2010) research upheld the emerging best practice technique of incorporating pre-conferencing activities as a method to strengthen the team. More than 80% of Bentley-Sassaman research participants confirmed that when interpreters pre-conference, confidence and trust in their team members increase. Pre-conferencing is significant enough that Nicodemus and Taylor (2014) endorsed the Conversational Analysis technique as a structure for interpreters to utilize while engaged in preparation activities.

The data indicated a divergent theme among hearing respondents in relation to their attitude towards preparation and pre-session conferencing with Deaf team members. When asked what factors support pre-conference activities, 56% of hearing respondents reported favorable attitudinal commentary incorporating notions of open-mindedness, willingness to collaborate, shared goals, honesty, and respect. Interestingly, when hearing respondents were asked what factors posed barriers to pre-conferencing, 55% of hearing respondents reported unfavorable attitudinal commentary citing they were met with defensiveness, differing interpreting approaches among team members, ego or arrogance issues expressed from team member, or unwillingness to work towards a common goal.

Another interesting finding emerged when participants were asked how effective pre-conferencing could be towards fostering trust: 53% of Deaf respondents and 56% of hearing respondents ranked pre-conferencing as very significant. However, 42% of Deaf respondents reported they rarely engage in preparation or conferencing activities with hearing interpreters. In comparison, 9% of hearing respondents replied they rarely engage in preparation or conferencing activities with Deaf interpreters. The data does not clearly indicate what may cause the discrepancy between hearing and Deaf respondents' engagement in preparation activities other than 37% of Deaf respondents and 32% of hearing respondents indicated lack of time as an issue.

Respondents were asked what factors impede interpreters from engaging in pre-conferencing. Issues of trust delegation, specifically negative evaluation to delegate, appeared in sentiments like this, "Resistance, having a negative attitude or a low opinion on DI/ HI team, unwillingness to cooperate, lack of acculturation (for either DI or HI), lack of receptiveness, lack of listening and 'chewing on it' skill" (Deaf survey respondent, 2015). A hearing survey respondent indicated:

Attitude is the primary factor. I've worked with DIs who are arrogant and simply inexperience[d], but they buy into this notion that DI's are meant to save the world from terrible HI interpretation work. Those that treat the work as a collaborative partnership create much better teaming processes and, ultimately, higher-quality final product. I've also worked with HI co-interpreters who are openly hostile to the process and are unwilling to work with the DI in an effective fashion. (Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

The pre-session meeting is the opportunity for teams to align their interpreting philosophies and intra-team communication techniques, as well as familiarize themselves with the material about to be interpreted (Bentley-Sassaman, 2010; NCIEC, 2014; Nicodemus & Taylor, 2014). If interpreters do not make use of this opportunity they jeopardize alignment around a shared goal that is a critical component of the trust delegation process as one Deaf respondent eloquently stated:

Making the time for preconference sessions. Important that the parties understand the importance of the sessions. I used an analogy how lawyers required pre-conferencing with their clients or doctors needed the time to review the charts or files before meeting the patient. (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

### **Role, Function, and Trust Theory**

The original intent of this study was to look at whether the Deaf-hearing teams function effectively. Effectiveness refers to how an interpreter team dynamically co-constructs an equivalent target language interpretation. I hypothesized that the intersection of role and function is a critical juncture in assuring effectiveness. What I discovered was that interpreters place differing emphasis on aspects of an interpreted interaction experience, in terms of how they perceive their role and function, leaving team members sometimes at a loss on how to proceed when their role and function is not explicitly set forth.

### **Linguistic Expertise**

Figure 12 indicated that 64% hearing interpreters look to Deaf interpreters to contribute linguistic expertise to an interpreted interaction filling the role of language expert. Also, 57 % of hearing interpreters believe they contribute English expertise to the

equation. When asked about the value of hearing interpreter's English skills, 26% of Deaf respondents mentioned their team member's English expertise as a contributing factor toward effective functionality within the team. A key element of trust theory is to delegate a task that one is not capable of executing directly. Team members contribute their specific linguistic expertise as a fundamental component to forming the team. Team members rely upon one another for individual expertise, which is a key element to working interdependently as outlined by Hoza (2010). Seventy-four percent of Deaf respondents did not mention English as a factor toward an expertise that hearing interpreters offer towards accomplishing a shared goal. This suggests a void in acknowledging the hearing interpreter's contribution. One hearing respondent offered the following sentiment:

Being a good interpreter has little to do with ones hearing status and everything to do with their language and interpersonal skills. Further, remember that when interpreting between ASL and English there are two (2) languages involved...we tend to lose sight of English and focus only on ASL as the essential skill. Being able to read people and get behind why they say what they say, how they say it is essential. Again, this is essentially what I tell people who can hear as well.

(Hearing survey respondent, 2015)

Interestingly, Deaf respondents value hearing interpreters' ASL proficiency, as evidenced by 68% who indicated ASL proficiency as a factor for fostering trust. Hearing respondents did not value a Deaf interpreters' English proficiency at the same level (30%) as a factor toward fostering trust. To conclude, Deaf respondents factor a hearing interpreter's ASL skills as a contributor to developing trust but do not seem to

acknowledge a hearing interpreter's English proficiency as an expertise element that contributes to the accuracy of an effective interpretation. Conversely, hearing respondents do acknowledge a Deaf interpreters' ASL skills as an expertise that does directly contribute to the accuracy of an effective interpretation but do not factor a Deaf interpreters' English proficiency as a contributing factor towards developing trust.

### **Process – Who's on First**

Authors Cokely (2005) and Mathers (2009) wrote that Deaf-hearing teamwork, when executed effectively, provides a richer linguistic and more culturally appropriate interpretation. Deaf interpreters employ “linguistic and communicative strategies” that distinctly differ from most hearing colleagues (Cokely, 2005, p. 20). Deaf consumers directly benefit from the inclusion of a Deaf interpreter (Bentley-Sassaman, 2010; Cokely, 2005; Forestal, 2005; Mathers, 2009).

Demographic data from this study indicate that for 80% of hearing respondents working with a Deaf interpreter accounts for less than 10% of their practice (with only 5% of hearing respondents team with Deaf interpreters more than 50% of the time). Given the profound limited experience among hearing respondents, the data exhibited some evidence that hearing respondents make effective functionality contributions to the workings of the team (Figure 10). The data represented in Figure 13 indicated that 21% Deaf respondents valued—and therefore were more likely to move to delegate—assigning trust to hearing interpreters who exhibited balance in hearing power associated with hearing privilege. The data, ironically, brought out a dichotomy worthy of further mention.



The data seemed to indicate that sometimes, although a Deaf respondent delegated a task to the hearing interpreter to execute toward achieving a shared goal of providing an accurate linguistic and cultural appropriate interpretation, the hearing interpreter “hesitates” or is unknowing on how to *step into their power* and carry out the task. The sentiment below illustrates an invitation to the hearing interpreter to utilize hearing privilege when appropriate.

Knowing that having a DI/CDI does not take away anything from the HI. The HI is empowered to contribute towards the team process and to the dynamics of the meeting while the DI CDI contributes towards the communicative power of all parties. (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

The following comment demonstrates the Deaf interpreter’s delegation to the hearing interpreter to use their power/competency for the benefit of the interaction. The sentiment goes on to outline subsequent consequences when a hearing interpreter—though evaluated positively as capable to execute—chose not to do so.

The hearing interpreter sometimes forgot to let me know that they are frustrated of the hearing person overlapping on deaf person – because I didn’t “hear” the hearing person talking... we have to take on the load of the hearing interpreters because they are afraid of abusing their hearing privileges - where as I want them to embrace their hearing privileges by using it for the good and support of the team.... recognize themselves as full members instead of lumping all of the responsibilities and shoving them over to the DI side And then say “I was waiting for you to say something...” (Deaf survey respondent, 2015)

The data indicate that 16% of Deaf respondents share sentiments suggesting that a percentage of hearing interpreters experience confusion or hesitation regarding when or how to move forward with executing their power/competency. The result of this type of confusion is that the Deaf interpreter is not easily and readily able to contribute toward achieving their part of the shared goal. Castelfranchi and Falcone's trust theory analysis states Agent B's inability to execute their competency causes harm to A, as evidenced in first comment directly above. I suspect hearing interpreters are unknowing how and when to actualize their power, which speaks to a complex training issue that addresses trust, the role of power within trust theory *vis-a-vis* power and privilege dynamics.

Finally, participants were asked to respond to the following question, "What do you think your team member wished you contributed towards increasing team effectiveness?" Forty-nine percent of the hearing respondents were uncertain how their Deaf colleague might wish them to improve. This may be due to the low incidence rate for hearing interpreters to team with Deaf interpreters as mentioned above, or it may be a result of inadequate training opportunities for hearing as well as Deaf interpreters as indicated in Figure 17. Additionally, 24% of the hearing respondents comments indicated the need to improve some facet of the interpreting process and an additional 10% of hearing respondents specified training as a barrier to effective functionality. It is my conclusion, therefore, that the hearing respondents have an emerging awareness of how they function within Deaf-hearing team.

### **Summary**

Interpreting is hard work. When the work setting requires expertise of professionals from two linguistic and cultural orientations, the complexity of the work

multiplies exponentially. Comprehensive role and function training, as well as placing value in preparation and pre-conferencing will assist to increase team effectiveness. Additionally, interpreters continually rely and delegate goals to their partners. When interpreters become aware of the process of establishing a shared goal, making an appraisal to determine relative safety in delegating a task to a team member and then delegating to the team member, he or she is engaging in exercising a socio-cognitive approach to trust. Team members simultaneously engage in the delegation process with one another. It is incumbent upon agents to be willing to exercise their expertise in a manner that supports the goal. When interpreters believe and value their individual contributions to the linguistic task at hand communication outcomes for consumers increase.

## Chapter 6

### CONCLUSIONS

The original study began as an exploration of the role and function of Deaf-hearing interpreters as seen through the lens of Llewellyn-Jones and Lee's (2014) role-space framework. The three role-space axes—presentation of self, interaction management, and interpreter alignment—provided a foundation upon which the research question was framed, “Does role functionality ambiguity contribute to trust issues in interpreting teams with hearing and Deaf team members?” The intent was to explore whether Deaf and hearing interpreters present, align, and manage interactions with consumers differently or similarly. If the data suggested Deaf and hearing interpreters handle these interactions differently, the question of whether these differences would impact the team members' ability to trust one another arose. This premise focused on the team's *outward* interactions with consumers. This outward focus informed the nature of the questions designed for this mixed methods study. Two focus groups were conducted, and the data from those two sessions further informed the question design for a primarily qualitative survey instrument. The questions generated 2,350 qualitative responses from 94 qualified respondents. The responses were coded utilizing an open coding method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) that allowed themes to emerge organically from the data. As a result, the data led to a look *inward* at interpreters' intra-team interactions and dynamics. Therefore, the focus shifted from an exploration of outward team interactions with interlocutors/consumers to an inward look at explicit and implicit exchanges between

Deaf and hearing survey respondents. The survey respondents' sentiments revealed implicit trust issues, and some comments alluded to a generalized level of distrust between the two groups.

Castelfranchi and Falcone's (2010) socio-cognitive theory of trust provided a means to start to understand the respondents' experiences. Trust is based upon a series of actions that, when made conscious, allows the individual to make informed choices on how to proceed through establishing a shared goal, making a positive evaluation to delegate a task/action to an individual who in turn exercises their power/competency to carry out the specific task or action. When these series of actions are carried out successfully, Hoza's (2010) construct of interdependency is upheld.

The findings suggest that about one-third of hearing respondents and about 10% of Deaf respondents are eager to delegate tasks and strive for interdependent working relationships with one another. Approximately 50% of all respondents mentioned the need for training or other factors not related to trust. However, more than 50% of Deaf respondents and 35% of hearing respondents expressed sentiments that either implicitly or explicitly involved trust issues. The data analysis showed trust issues emerging in primarily three domains of the interpreter's work. The first domain is when interpreters interface at the preparation phase of an assignment. The expectation among interpreters is to meet beforehand; when this expectation is not met, *genuine* trust is violated. The second domain where trust issues occurred most often was when Deaf respondents experienced an inequity in linguistic mediation, as well as when they experienced an imbalance in role/function duties. The third domain emerged from the hearing respondents' observations of working Deaf interpreters. They reported "transgressions"

in traditionally trained hearing interpreter role boundaries. These transgressions gave hearing respondents pause, causing them to question whether a positive delegation of power to their Deaf team member was warranted.

### **The Need for Comprehensive Training**

Deaf-hearing team interpreting continues to evolve as an emerging specialty within the field of signed language interpreting. I make this statement based on the survey respondents' demographic profile. The demographic profile of this study corresponds to RID's 2013 Annual Report, the most current published demographic report, providing credibility to this sample population. A sample population of 94 respondents met the criteria for inclusion in this study. Among the 94 participants, 75 were hearing interpreters with prior experience as team members (80%) and 19 (20%) were Deaf interpreters. The hearing respondents were markedly younger, were predominantly White<sup>3</sup> and female<sup>4</sup>, and tended to hold bachelor-level degrees. Hearing survey respondents have been in practice on average 10 years longer than Deaf colleagues. On average they work twice as many hours per week as Deaf interpreters, however; the majority of hearing respondents spend less than 10% of their time teamed with Deaf practitioners.

The Deaf respondents, on average, were 10 years older than their hearing counterparts, were primarily White,<sup>5</sup> predominantly female<sup>6</sup>, and held more advanced degrees than their hearing counterparts. In comparison, Deaf respondents, in general, have professionally practiced interpreting less than 10 years, a markedly shorter period of

---

<sup>3</sup> Hearing Respondents – 84% White; 13% person of color, 3% no disclosure

<sup>4</sup> Hearing Respondents – 85.5% female, 14.5% male

<sup>5</sup> Deaf Respondents – 78% White, 11% person of color, 11% no disclosure

<sup>6</sup> Deaf Respondents – 63% female, 32% male, 5% transgender

time than their hearing counterparts (this statistic does not include possible language brokering experience the Deaf respondent may have). They average less than 10 hours per week engaged as an interpreter, and the majority of their work is done in tandem with hearing interpreters. This data led to the conclusion that working Deaf-hearing teams, currently, are not that common within the signed language interpreting field. It is apparent that further training is called for to assist interpreters to grow into their newly prescribed roles and functions.

Interpreter process models help to inform interpreters how to approach their work. In one such model, Llewellyn-Jones and Lee (2014) developed a lexicon around role functionality. Role functionality for hearing interpreters has prescribed protocols for hearing interpreters to follow with hearing colleagues. The introduction of a Deaf interpreter onto the team, coupled with intersection of dual linguistic and cultural modalities, presents multiple challenges for the Deaf-hearing team. When team members address these inherent challenges together, they create trusting effective partnerships where individual roles and functions are equally understood and valued.

Personal experience leads me to believe Deaf interpreter practitioners are rapidly gaining entrance into the field with growing emphasis in training and standardization to ensure the development of best practices for all practitioners. Comprehensive training is central importance to both members of the Deaf-hearing interpreter dyad.

## **Recommendations**

While this study was successful in uncovering trust issues at the intersection of functionality between the Deaf and hearing interpreters, it only begins to identify the interpersonal and intra-team dynamics at play. When the team is cognizant that intra-

team interactions flow from a position of mutual trust, they are more likely to produce accurate linguistic and culturally appropriate interpretations. Based on the discussion of the findings and the conclusions specified above, the following recommendations for further research and training are offered:

1. Conduct further research on the application of a socio-cognitive trust theory to interpreting teams. Trust theory is a complex and multilayered construct; the industry has an opportunity to expand its comprehension of the intricacies of the trust affect in intra-team dynamics. In addition, research on how trust theory impacts the team's interactions with interlocutors may inform interpreters how they may modulate their "presentation of self" to better assimilate into varied settings.
2. Conduct further research on how trust theory analysis and differing team pairings (i.e., differing gender teams, differing age teams, differing ethnic teams) may impact the effectiveness of an interpreted interaction.
3. Conduct a study on privilege, to explore possible corresponding boundaries, barriers, or relationship to the interpreter role and functioning within a trust theory context.
4. Provide comprehensive training on trust theory for interpreters. The effectiveness of a working team may increase when interpreters are able to understand how they undergo a process of establishing a shared goal, evaluation, and delegation of power to a team member. Additionally, it is critical to the success of the team for a team member to exercise their power.



When interpreters step into their power, the potential to strengthen the functionality of deaf-hearing interpreting teams exists.

5. Increase the provision of comprehensive Deaf-hearing team training.

Components of training should include, but not be limited to, the benefit of preparation/pre-conferencing, establishing intra-team agreements, role and function assignments, and the interpretation process.

6. Promulgate preparation/pre-conferencing best practice standards nationwide.

All teams, regardless of how they are comprised, can benefit from preparation engagement. Industry standards need to shift to assure the inclusion of preparation. Early arrival to an assignment is a cornerstone of preparation.

### **In Closing**

As more Deaf interpreters enter the field, conversations that shape best practices will evolve. The future of the signed language interpreting landscape includes the Deaf interpreter as routine practice in community interpreting practices. The inaugural Deaf Interpreter Conference will be held during the summer of 2015; this provides evidence that this sub-set of the interpreting profession is on the rise. Hearing interpreters, who currently have limited experience working with Deaf interpreters, will be better prepared to meet this forecasted need if they receive quality training. Like tectonic plates that grind and shift into position, a paradigm shift within the signed language interpreting profession is underway.

## References

- Bentley-Sassaman, J. (2010). *Experiences and training needs of Deaf and Hearing interpreter teams* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from: [http://www.diinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Bentley-Sassaman\\_DoctoralStudy.pdf](http://www.diinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Bentley-Sassaman_DoctoralStudy.pdf).
- Boudreault, P. (2005). Deaf interpreters. In T. Janzen (Ed.), *Topics in signed language interpreting* (pp. 323- 355). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Brooks, B. (2011). *It is still a hearing world: A phenomenological case study of Deaf college students' experiences of academia*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/>
- Castelfranchi, C., & Falcone, R. (2010). *Trust theory: A socio-cognitive and computational model*. West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreter) Certification. (n.d.). Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Retrieved from <http://www.rid.org/education/testing/index.cfm/AID/89>.
- Cokely, D. (2005). Shifting positionality: A critical examination of the turning point in the relationship of interpreters and the deaf community. In M. Marschark, R. Peterson, & E. Winston (Eds.), *Sign language interpreting and interpreter education* (pp. 3-28). England: Oxford University Press.
- Deaf interpreting. (n.d.). National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. Retrieved from <http://nciec.org/projects/di.html>

- Deaf Interpreting Institute. (2010). *Nine-month program*. Retrieved from <http://diinstitute.org/2010/07/nine-month-program-on-training-deaf-interpreters-in-colorado/>
- Dean, R. K., & Pollard Jr., R. Q. (2013). *The demand control schema: Interpreting as a practice profession*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Forestal, E. (2005). The emerging professionals: Deaf interpreters and their views and experiences on training. In M. Marschark, R. Peterson, & E. Winston (Eds.) *Sign language interpreting and interpreter education* (pp. 235-258). England: Oxford University Press.
- Forestal, E. (2011). *Deaf interpreters: Exploring their processes of interpreting*. Retrieved from [http://www.diinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Forestal\\_Dissertation.pdf](http://www.diinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Forestal_Dissertation.pdf)
- Forestal, E., & Darragh-MacLean, M. (2009, August). *Teaming and partnership: Deaf and hearing interpreters*. Paper presented at the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf National Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- Garrod, S., & Pickering, M. J. (2007). Alignment in dialogue. In M. G. Gaskell (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of psycholinguistics* (pp. 443–451). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics* (pp. 41-58). New York, NY: Academic Press.

- Hoza, J. (2010). *Team interpreting: As collaboration and interdependency*. Alexandria, VA: RID Press.
- Janzen, T. (2005). Interpretation and language use: ASL and English. In T. Janzen (Ed.), *Topics in signed language interpreting* (pp. 231-250). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Kam, J. A. (2011, June). The effects of language brokering frequency and feelings on Mexican-heritage youth's mental health and risky behaviors. *Journal of Communication*, 61(3), 455–475.
- Klima, E., & Bellugi, U. (1979). *The signs of language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ladd, P. (2003). *Understanding Deaf culture: In search of Deafhood*. Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Lee, R. G. (1997). Roles, models, and worldviews: A view from the States. *Deaf Worlds*, 13(3), 1-5.
- Lee, R. G., & Llewellyn-Jones, P. (2011). *Re-visiting role: Arguing for a multi-dimensional analysis of interpreter behaviour*. Supporting Deaf People Online Conference.
- Llewellyn-Jones, P., & Lee, R. G. (2013). Getting to core of role: Defining interpreters' role-space. *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, 5(2), 54-72.
- Llewellyn-Jones P., & Lee, R. G., (2014). *Redefining the role of the community interpreter: The concept of role-space*. Lincoln, United Kingdom: SLI Press.
- Mathers, C. M. (2009). *Deaf interpreters in court: An accommodation that is more than reasonable*. Boston, MA: NCIEC. Retrieved from:

- [http://www.interpretereducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Deaf-Interpreter-in-Court\\_NCIEC2009.pdf](http://www.interpretereducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Deaf-Interpreter-in-Court_NCIEC2009.pdf)
- National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC). (2014). Legal interpreter training curriculum toolkit for trainers, *Deaf Interpreters: Teaming*. University of Northern Colorado-Mid-America Regional Interpreter Education Program.
- National Court Reporters Association. (n.d.) *Code of Professional Ethics*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncra.org/CodeofProfessionalEthics>
- National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) Deaf Interpreter Work team. (2009). *Analysis of Deaf Interpreter focus group discussions conducted April - July 2007*. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers Retrieved from [http://www.interpretereducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/NCIEC\\_Deaf\\_Interpreter\\_Survey.pdf](http://www.interpretereducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/NCIEC_Deaf_Interpreter_Survey.pdf)
- National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) Deaf Interpreter Curriculum, (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.diinstitute.org/learning-center/deaf-interpreter-curriculum/>
- NIC Certification. (n.d.). Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. Retrieved from <http://www.rid.org/education/testing/index.cfm/AID/86>.
- Nicodemus, B., & Taylor, M. (2014). Deaf and hearing interpreter team preparation: A study using conversational analysis. In R. Adam, C. Stone, S. D. Collins, & M. Metzger (Eds.). *Deaf interpreters at work: International insights*, (pp. 90-116) Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

- Nieto, L., Boyer, M. F., Goodwin, L., Johnson, G. R. & Smith, L. C. (2010). *Beyond inclusion, beyond empowerment: A developmental strategy to liberate everyone*. Olympia, WA: Cuetzpalin Publishing.
- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Standard Practice Paper (1997). Use of Certified Deaf Interpreter. Retrieved from [http://www.rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Standard\\_Practice\\_Papers/CDISPP.pdf](http://www.rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Standard_Practice_Papers/CDISPP.pdf)
- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Annual Report 2013. (2013). Retrieved from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3DKvZMflFLdajJtRXlCdmduM3c/view>
- Ressler, C. (1999). A comparative analysis of a direct interpretation and an intermediary interpretation in American Sign Language. *Journal of Interpretation*, 1999, 71-102.
- Rosen, R. (2008). American Sign Language as a foreign language in U.S. high schools: State of the art. *Modern Language Journal*, 92(1), 10-38.
- Stratiy, A. (2005). Best practices in interpreting a Deaf community perspective. In T. Janzen (Ed.), *Topics in signed language interpreting* (pp. 231-250). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Swabey, L., & Mickelson, P.G. (2008). Role Definition: A perspective on forty years of professionalism in sign language interpreting. In C. Valero-Garces & A. Martin (Eds.) *Cross borders in community interpreting* (pp. 51-80). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

- Valli, C., Lucas, C., Mulrooney, K. J., & Villanueva, M. (2011). *Linguistics of American sign language, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.: An introduction*. Washington DC: Gallaudet University.
- Winston, E. (2005). Designing a curriculum for American Sign Language/English interpreting educators. In M. Marschark, R. Peterson, & E. Winston (Eds.), *Sign language interpreting and interpreter education* (pp. 208-235). England: Oxford University Press.
- Witter-Merithew, A., & Johnson, L. J. (2005). *Toward competent practice: Conversations with stakeholders*. Alexandria, VA: The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

## Appendix A

### Implied Consent and Survey Instrument

Deaf and Hearing Interpreter Role  
Form Title

-

Dear Colleague,

Thank you in advance for your participation in this academic survey. The purpose of the survey is to explore what, if any, correlation there may be between interpreter role and function and its possible impact on fostering trust among Deaf and hearing interpreter teams.

I am graduate student in the Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies program conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Elisa Maroney at Western Oregon University. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and will take 15 - 25 minutes to complete. You are free to exit the survey at any time without penalty or risk. All participants will be anonymous and there is no foreseeable risk or discomfort to your participation. You must be a minimum of 18 years of age to participate. Participation in the survey will serve as your consent. Results of the study will inform my graduate thesis findings and may be used in presentations and publications. The final thesis will be published on <http://digitalcommons.wou.edu>.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, or wish to learn more about the study please contact principal investigator, Laurie Reinhardt at: [lreinhardt13@wou.edu](mailto:lreinhardt13@wou.edu) or my graduate advisor Dr. Elisa Maroney at: [maronee@wou.edu](mailto:maronee@wou.edu).

Thank you for your consideration and valuable time,

Laurie Reinhardt, CSC, NIC-A  
Master's of Arts in Interpreting Studies, College of Education  
Western Oregon University

Survey Consent Form - ASL Version





1. Do you typically work as an: (Required)

- ☐ Interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ Interpreter who is Hearing

### Demographic Information - Deaf Interpreter

2. Please indicate your age (Required)

- ☐ 18-20
- ☐ 21-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60 or older

3. Please indicate your gender (Required)

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Questioning
- ☐ Other:

4. What is your ethnicity (Please select all that apply) (Required)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian, Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Chicano, Latino or Hispanic
- ☐ White or Caucasian
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other:

5. In which region do you live? (Required)

- ☐ Northeast: ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI, NJ, NY, PA
- ☐ Mid-Atlantic: DE, DC, MD, VA, WV, NC, SC, TN, KY
- ☐ Midwest: IN, IL, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, NE, ND, SD
- ☐ South: AR, MS, AL, LA, GA, FL, OK, TX
- ☐ Mountain: MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, NM, AZ
- ☐ Pacific: AK, WA, OR, CA, HI,
- ☐ North America - i.e. Canada, US Territories
- ☐ Other:

6. Do you have one or more Deaf parents?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other:

7. Please list the highest degree you have received? (Required)

- ☐ High School diploma
- ☐ Certificate of Completion
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor degree
- ☐ Graduate degree
- ☐ Other:

8. If professional sign language interpreting is defined in part by compensation, how long have you been a professional interpreter?

- ☐ 0 - 5 years
- ☐ 6 - 10 years
- ☐ 11 - 20 years
- ☐ 21 - 30 years
- ☐ 31+ years

9. Are you a credentialed (i.e. certified) sign language interpreter? (Required)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Does not apply to my practice

10. If yes, how long have you been a credentialed (i.e. certified) sign language interpreter?
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 4 years   | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 29 years  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 9 years   | <input type="checkbox"/> 30+ years      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 19 years | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |
11. Have you received formal training on how to work with an interpreter who is hearing?  
(Required)
- ☐ Yes  
☐ No
- 11a. If yes, please describe the training you received.
12. Over the past twelve months, on average, how many hours a week did you interpret?  
(Required)
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 5 hours   | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 hours or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 15 hours  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 25 hours |   |
13. Over the past twelve months, what percentage of your interpreting practice did you team with an interpreter who is hearing? (Required)
- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 10%  | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 - 90%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 25% | <input type="checkbox"/> 91 - 100% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 50% | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 51 - 75% |                                    |
14. Which statement is most accurate: During the past twelve months when engaged in interpreting interactions with an interpreter who is hearing I have... (Required)
- ☐ worked with the same couple of interpreters  
☐ worked with a few or more interpreters  
☐ worked with a large number of interpreters
15. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was ALSO Deaf, in general, what function(s) did the Deaf team member contribute towards the effectiveness of the team?
16. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was ALSO Deaf, in general, what function(s) did you contribute towards the effectiveness of the team?
17. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was hearing, in general, what function(s) did your hearing team member contribute towards the effectiveness of the team?  
(Required)
18. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was hearing, in general, what function(s) did you contribute towards the effectiveness of the team? (Required)
19. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was hearing, in general, what function(s) do you think your hearing team member wished you contributed towards increasing the effectiveness of the team? (Required)
20. A pre-session conference is an opportunity for the interpreter team to prepare for an upcoming assignment. When working with an interpreter who is also Deaf, how often do you engage in a

pre-session conference? (Required)

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never     | <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely    | <input type="checkbox"/> Always     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generally |                                     |

21. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when the team member was ALSO Deaf, describe the type of benefit pre-session conferences have been: (Required)

22. A pre-session conference is an opportunity for an interpreter team to prepare for an upcoming assignment. When teamed with an interpreter who is hearing how often do you engage in a pre-session conference? (Required)

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never     | <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely    | <input type="checkbox"/> Always     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generally |                                     |

23. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when the team member was hearing, describe the type of benefit pre-session conferences have been: (Required)

24. In general, what factors support effective pre-conferencing sessions? (Required)

25. In general, what factors may negatively impact pre-conferencing sessions? (Required)

26. When a consumer inquires about the necessity of having both a Deaf and hearing interpreter present, does this question tend to come more often from Deaf consumer(s) or hearing consumer(s)? (Required)

- ☐ Deaf consumer(s)
- ☐ Hearing consumer(s)
- ☐ Equal number of inquiries from both hearing and Deaf consumers
- ☐ Other:

27. Who tends to offer an explanation to the inquiring party about the necessity of having both Deaf and hearing interpreters present? (Required)

- ☐ Primarily the interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ Primarily the interpreter who is hearing
- ☐ Both interpreters contribute to an explanation
- ☐ Other:

28. If a question about having two interpreters comes from hearing consumer(s), who do you prefer responds to the question? (Required)

- ☐ Yourself
- ☐ The interpreter who is hearing
- ☐ Both interpreters contribute to the answer
- ☐ Other:

29. If a question about having two interpreters comes from Deaf consumer(s), who do you prefer responds to the question? (Required)

- ☐ Yourself
- ☐ The interpreter who is hearing
- ☐ Both interpreters contribute to the answer
- ☐ Other:

30. You are working in an 'interview' setting (the goal is to collect information) with an interpreter who is ALSO Deaf. A Deaf consumer makes a side comment to you. When you reflect on similar past experiences what options do you have? (Required)

31. What factors contributed to the options outlined in the answer above?

32. You are working in an 'interview' setting (the goal is to collect information) with a hearing team member. A Deaf consumer makes a side comment to you. When you reflect on similar past experiences what options do you have? (Required)

33. What factors contributed to the options outlined in the answer above?

34. You are working in an 'interview' setting (the goal is to collect information) with a hearing team member. A hearing consumer makes a side comment to the interpreter who is hearing. When you reflect on similar past experiences what have you observed the hearing interpreter do? (Required)

35. What options do you have at this moment? (Required)

36. What factors may contribute to your answers above (34, 35)?

37. Trust can be defined as belief in the reliability or strength in something or someone. When working with an interpreter who is ALSO Deaf, what factors contribute to trusting a Deaf team member?

38. When working with an interpreter who is ALSO Deaf, what factors foster a Deaf team member to trust you?

39. When working with an interpreter who is hearing, what factors contribute to trusting a hearing team member? (Required)

40. When working with an interpreter who is hearing, what factors foster a hearing team member to trust you? (Required)

41. How effective can pre-session conferences be towards fostering trust in a hearing team member? (Required)

Please indicate importance by selecting a number from 1 to 5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not effective at all				Most effective

42. How important is it to have a personal relationship with a hearing team member? (Required)

Please indicate importance by selecting a number from 1 to 5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not important at all				Most important

43. When fostering trust, how significant is to have a personal relationship with a hearing team member? (Required)

1	2	3	4	5
Not significant				Very significant

44. How important is it for a hearing team member to have excellent ASL skills? (Required)

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Not important at all

Most important

45. When fostering trust, how significant is it for a hearing team member to have excellent ASL skills? (Required)

1      2      3      4      5  
Not significant      Very significant

46. How important is it for a hearing team member to understand Deaf culture?

1      2      3      4      5  
Not important at all      Most important

47. When fostering trust, how significant is it for a hearing team member to understand Deaf culture?

1      2      3      4      5  
Not significant      Very significant

48. If there is one thing you'd like to share with interpreters who are hearing, what would it be?

### Demographic Information - Hearing Interpreter

2. Please indicate your age (Required)

- |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21-29 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 or older |

3. Please indicate your gender (Required)

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female      | <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender |                                      |

4. What is your ethnicity (Please select all that apply) (Required)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native          | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicano, Latino or Hispanic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian, Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> White or Caucasian          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer        |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:                      |

5. In which region do you live? (Required)

- ☐ Northeast: ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI, NJ, NY, PA
- ☐ Mid-Atlantic: DE, DC, MD, VA, WV, NC, SC, TN, KY
- ☐ Midwest: IN, IL, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, NE, ND, SD
- ☐ South: AR, MS, AL, LA, GA, FL, OK, TX
- ☐ Mountain: MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, NM, AZ
- ☐ Pacific: AK, WA, OR, CA, HI,
- ☐ North America - i.e. Canada, US Territories
- ☐ Other:

6. Do you have one or more Deaf parents?

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No  |                                 |

7. Please list the highest degree you have received. (Required)

- ☐ High School diploma
- ☐ Certificate of Completion
- ☐ Associate degree

- ☐ Bachelor degree
- ☐ Graduate degree
- ☐ Other:

8. If professional sign language interpreting is defined in part by compensation, how long have you been a professional interpreter?

- ☐ 0 - 5 years
- ☐ 6 - 10 years
- ☐ 11 - 20 years
- ☐ 21 - 30 years
- ☐ 31+ years

9. Are you a credentialed (i.e. certified) sign language interpreter? (Required)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Does not apply to my practice

10. If yes, how long have you been a credentialed (i.e. certified) sign language interpreter?

- ☐ 1 - 4 years
- ☐ 5 - 9 years
- ☐ 10 - 19 years
- ☐ 20 - 29 years
- ☐ 30+ years
- ☐ Not applicable

11. In your interpreting practice have you ever teamed with an interpreter who is Deaf? (Required)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### **Hearing Interpreter who has worked with Interpreters who are Deaf**

12. Have you received formal training on how to work with an interpreter who is Deaf? (Required)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13. If yes, please describe the training you received.

14. In the past twelve months, on average, how many hours a week did you interpret? (Required)

- ☐ 0 - 5 hours
- ☐ 6 - 15 hours
- ☐ 16 - 25 hours
- ☐ 26 hours or more
- ☐ Other:

15. Over the past twelve months, what percentage of your interpreting practice did you team with an interpreter who is Deaf? (Required)

- ☐ 0 - 10%
- ☐ 11 - 25%
- ☐ 26 - 50%
- ☐ 51 - 75%
- ☐ 76 - 90%
- ☐ 91 - 100%
- ☐ Other:

16. Which statement is most accurate: During the past twelve months when engaged in interpreting interactions with an interpreter who is Deaf I have...

- ☐ worked with the same couple of interpreters
- ☐ worked with a few or more interpreters
- ☐ worked with a large number of different interpreters

17. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was ALSO hearing, in general, what function(s) did your team member contribute to the effectiveness of the team?
18. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was ALSO hearing, in general, what function(s) did you contribute to the effectiveness of the team?
19. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was Deaf, in general, what functions did your Deaf team member contribute towards the effectiveness of the team? (Required)
20. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was Deaf, in general, what function(s) did you contribute towards the effectiveness of the team? (Required)
21. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when your team member was Deaf, in general, what additional function(s) do you think a Deaf team member wished you contributed towards increasing the effectiveness of the team? (Required)
22. A pre-session conference is an opportunity for an interpreter team to prepare for an upcoming assignment. When teamed with an interpreter who is ALSO hearing, how often do you engage in a pre-session conference? (Required)
- |                                     |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never      | <input type="checkbox"/> Always |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently |                                 |
23. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when the team member was ALSO hearing, describe the type of benefit pre-session conferences have been: (Required)
24. A pre-session conference is an opportunity for an interpreter team to prepare for an upcoming assignment. When you are teamed with an interpreter who is Deaf, how often do you engage in a pre-session conference? (Required)
- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never     | <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely    | <input type="checkbox"/> Always     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generally | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:     |
25. Reflect on past interpreting interactions when the team member was Deaf, describe the type of benefit pre-session conferences have been: (Required)
26. In general, what factors support effective pre-conferencing sessions? (Required)
27. In general, what factors may negatively impact pre-conferencing sessions? (Required)
28. When a consumer inquires about the necessity of having both a Deaf and hearing interpreter present, does this question tend to come more often from Deaf consumer(s) or hearing consumer(s)? (Required)
- |  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Consumer(s)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing consumer(s)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equal number of inquiries from both hearing and Deaf consumer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |

29. Who tends to offer an explanation to the party inquiring about the necessity of having both Deaf and hearing interpreters present? (Required)

- ☐ Primarily the interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ Primarily the interpreter who is hearing
- ☐ Both interpreters contribute to an explanation
- ☐ Other:

30. If a question about having two interpreters comes from hearing consumer(s), who do you prefer to respond to the question? (Required)

- ☐ Yourself
- ☐ The interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ Both interpreters contribute to the answer
- ☐ Other:

31. If a question about having two interpreters comes from Deaf consumer(s), who do you prefer to respond to the question? (Required)

- ☐ Yourself
- ☐ The interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ Both interpreters contribute to the answer
- ☐ Other:

32. You are working in an 'interview' setting (the goal is to collect information) with an interpreter who is ALSO hearing. The Deaf consumer makes a side comment to you. When you reflect on similar past experiences what options do you have?

33. What factors contributed to the options outlined in the answer above?

34. You are working in an 'interview' setting (the goal is to collect information) with a team member who is Deaf. A Deaf consumer makes a side comment to the interpreter who is Deaf. When you reflect on similar past experiences what have you observed the Deaf interpreter do? (Required)

35. What options would you have at that moment? (Required)

36. What factors contributed to your answers above (34, 35)?

37. You are working in an 'interview' setting (the goal is to collection information) with an interpreter who is Deaf. A hearing consumer makes a side comment to you. When you reflect on similar past experiences what options do you have? (Required)

38. What factors contributed to the options outlined in the answer above? (Required)

39. Trust can be defined as belief in the reliability or strength in something or someone. When working with an interpreter who is ALSO hearing, what factors contribute to trusting your hearing team member?

40. When working with an interpreter who is ALSO hearing, what factors fosters your hearing team member to have trust in you?

41. When working with an interpreter who is Deaf, what factors contribute to trusting your Deaf



team member? (Required)

42. When working with a team member who is Deaf, what factors fosters a Deaf team member to have trust in you? (Required)

43. How effective can pre-sessions conferences be towards fostering trust with a team member who is Deaf? (Required)

Please indicate importance by selecting a number from 1 to 5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not effective at all				Most effective

44. How important is it to have a personal relationship with a Deaf team member? (Required)

Please indicate importance by selecting a number from 1 to 5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not important at all				Most important

45. When fostering trust, how significant is it to have a personal relationship with a Deaf team member? (Required)

1	2	3	4	5
Not significant				Very significant

46. How important is it for a Deaf team member to have excellent English skills? (Required)

1	2	3	4	5
Not important at all				Most important

47. When fostering trust, how significant is it for a Deaf team member to have excellent English skills? (Required)

1	2	3	4	5
Not significant				Very significant

48. How important is it for a Deaf team member to understand "hearing culture"?

1	2	3	4	5
Not important at all				Most important

49. When fostering trust, how significant is it for a Deaf team member to understand "hearing culture"?

1	2	3	4	5
Not significant				Very significant

50. If there is one thing you'd like to share with interpreters who are Deaf, what would it be?

### **Hearing Interpreter - No experience working with Deaf Interpreter**

13. You have determined you haven't had experience working with interpreters who are Deaf. What statement(s) best describes why. (Required)

- ☐ The opportunity hasn't presented itself
- ☐ I have not felt qualified to team with an interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ I have not encountered the need to work with an interpreter who is Deaf
- ☐ There are no interpreters who are Deaf available in my area to team with.
- ☐ I am unclear when the use of a Deaf teammate would be beneficial.
- ☐ Other:

14. If the opportunity presented itself to team with an interpreter who is Deaf would you:  
(Required)

- ☐ Accept
- ☐ Decline
- ☐ Seek supervision/advice on how to proceed
- ☐ I don't know what I would do
- ☐ Other:

15. The space below is available to elaborate on your response above:

16. Have you received formal training on how to work effectively with an interpreter who is Deaf? (Required)

- ☐ Yes, I received sufficient training during my interpreter preparation program.
- ☐ Yes, I received training during my interpreter preparation program but training was not sufficient.
- ☐ Yes, I've attended workshops on working effectively with interpreters who are Deaf.
- ☐ No, I haven't received any training
- ☐ Other:

17. Would you like to learn more about working effectively with an interpreter who is Deaf?  
(Required)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ It doesn't apply to my practice
- ☐ Other:

18. The space below is available for you to add any comments:

## **Appendix B**

### **Informed Consent—Focus Group**

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in a guided discussion that further informs research on the experiences of trust and role function within Deaf and hearing interpreter teams. I am graduate student in the Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies program conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Elisa Maroney at Western Oregon University. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The focus group will not exceed two hours in length. You are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence. There is no physical risk associated with participating in this study. Additionally, only those over 18 years of age can participate in the focus group.

Your participation is confidential with the exception of the researcher and the other participants of the focus group will know who participated. The focus group session will be recorded and the video recording will be used for analysis purposes only. Research records/recordings will be stored securely on a password-protected computer and only the principle investigator will access to the records. No identifying information will be shared in any publication of results, including quotes or transcribed examples of comments that may be used when sharing the research findings from this study. Findings will potentially be shared through presentations, publications, and the Master's thesis will be available to participants at Western Oregon University Digital Commons.

Participation in the focus group will serve as your consent. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact principle investigator, Laurie Reinhardt at: [ltreinhardt13@wou.edu](mailto:ltreinhardt13@wou.edu) or my graduate advisor Dr. Elisa Maroney at: [maronee@wou.edu](mailto:maronee@wou.edu). The Western Oregon University Institutional Review Board has approved the ethical aspects of this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board at (503) 838-9200 or [irb@wou.edu](mailto:irb@wou.edu).

Thank you in advance for your participation,

Laurie Reinhardt, CSC, NIC-A

Master's of Arts in Interpreting Studies, College of Education

Western Oregon University

I understand and agree to the terms for participation in this focus group on Deaf and hearing interpreter teams.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

WOU Representative Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix C**

### **Presentation of Findings: Focus Groups**

Data collected from the focus groups was rich and insightful. Individuals chosen by convenience sampling dialogued for two hours in one of two sessions. Participation in the group led by a CDI was limited to practicing Deaf interpreters. The second group was comprised of hearing interpreters with extensive Deaf interpreter team experience. The groups were presented with seven identical questions to reflect upon and discuss. The discussion facilitators did not participate in the discussion; their role was to monitor time and introduce the question sequence. Topics of discussion included: effective teamwork, ineffective teamwork, trust, interpreter roles, interaction management strategies, power and privilege within Deaf/hearing teams, and sharing one thought with team counterpart. The following is a summary of each topic discussed in the focus groups. (See Appendix A for complete focus group questions.)

#### **Effective Teamwork**

Hearing participants talked about qualities of effective team interpreting in terms of the interpreting process. They elaborated on having clearly delineated roles, adequate pre- and post-conferencing time, building a rapport over time with a DI, and the importance of all parties to the interpretation process understanding their responsibility that in turn promotes confidence among team members. Deaf participants couched effective partnerships in terms of clear delineation in function—the hearing interpreter understands linguistic and cultural boundaries and is able to attend to “all things hearing.”

Additionally, they mentioned when a rapid connection and rapport can be established that it goes a long way in bolstering trust in their team partners.

### **Ineffective Teamwork**

The Deaf focus group assembled an extensive list of “threats” that cause disruption in the interpreted interaction: inadequate ASL skills including ASL-English skills, inequities of power (preference for hearing-dominant culture to take precedence over Deaf-culture values), transgressing role boundaries, ego dominance, and the DI’s inability to thoroughly monitor the hearing interpreter’s output (ASL–English rendition) cause breakdowns in the effectiveness of the team.

Hearing interpreters recalled legal settings where the DI had not had adequate training to perform the task effectively. In another lengthy case, consistency of interpreters became an issue; too many substitutes caused less than ideal results. Issues with processing source language were reoccurring challenges, sometimes complicated by subsequent power struggles as the team struggled to resolve breakdowns. One interpreter, who works primarily with Deaf-Blind individuals, commented that when she sees an interpreter in direct communication with someone other than the Deaf-Blind client they are working with she loses trust in that interpreter. She commented that “not knowing your role skews communication or disempowers people.” The discussion continued by identifying situations when a hearing interpreter witnessed the Deaf interpreter being dismissive to their client and not showing respect. This led to an uncomfortable feeling associated with witnessing oppression, yet they felt stuck and unable to share for fear of being perceived as exercising hearing privilege.

## **Trust**

The question on trust led the Deaf participants to reflect on hearing interpreters' involvement in the Deaf community. Participants compared and contrasted how 30 years ago hearing interpreters "grew up" and stayed in the Deaf community. One participant sadly commented that this generation is reaching retirement age. In contrast, participants observed that today's hearing interpreter enters the field with a different sense of affiliation and connection. Possible reasons for this shift were noted. Discussion pointed to Internet and technology influences and strict adherence to RID's Code of Professional Conduct, which have created professional distance between the community and hearing interpreters. The discussion evolved into a conversation about volunteerism and a potential correlation between volunteerism and trust.

The hearing interpreter group acknowledged trust as something developed over time, which is built on relationships. One group member stated one starts with no trust but not negative trust, and trust is earned through shared encounters. Another disagreed and made an analogy that trust in a Deaf interpreter is similar the purchase of a car: One trusts the engine will work and that it will run, turn and stop as expected. When asked about fostering trust, one respondent replied, "Consistent meeting of my expectations." Another added, "They meet my expectation and there's a negotiation about me meeting theirs."

## **Role**

"It shifts all the time, I think," remarked a Deaf interpreter who went on to share a preference for the hearing interpreter to manage interaction management pieces while the Deaf interpreter establishes communication with the Deaf consumer. This led to a

discussion about attire in legal settings. One DI aligns with the court by dressing in a suit, showing his connection with those who retained his services. At the same time builds rapport with the deaf consumer through inquiring about various cultural affiliations they may have in common. Another DI challenged this practice by bringing focus back to the Deaf consumer, wondering how they truly feel about the visual distinction that attire may suggest. The CDI reiterated they were able to establish a connection through language and cultural identity, and that his attire may alert the deaf consumer that the setting warrants formality and professional distance.

Role function among the hearing interpreters centered initially around the context of process—who handled logistics, monitored target language renditions, and so on. One interpreter spoke about being emotionally and physically tired, because they were excluded from developing rapport with any party because they were always interpreting.

### **Interaction Management**

A salient point emerged from a legal Deaf interpreter. His preference is to have all communication privately directed to the attorney in order to avoid inadvertent capture of statements on the record. A discussion ensued about how to manage subtle and or discreet communication between interpreter and client, the use of back channeling and when/how to determine whether signed communication is intended for others.

The consensus among hearing interpreters was to defer as much direct communication to the Deaf interpreter as possible. In contrast, interpreters acknowledged they could not “step out of their personhood” and look to strike a balance in their communication with clients.



## **Power and Privilege<sup>7</sup>**

There are several strategies Deaf interpreters employ to balance power and privilege dynamics with hearing team members. The first strategy mentioned was the notion of pre-conferencing, assuring early arrival to an assignment. Pre-conferencing, being familiar with the interpreter, and doing “due diligence” (i.e., observe the interpreter’s work prior to an assignment) were examples of strategies Deaf interpreters mentioned using to balance power.

A hearing interpreter retold a story of an individual who claimed he didn’t hold any privilege: “Well, that’s because you have it and when you have it, you don’t know you have it.” A discussion about time as element of privilege ensued. Dominant culture is efficient and time oriented. Effective communication with Deaf-Blind individuals as well as Deaf and hearing interpreter teams take more time than the dominant hearing culture is accustomed to. Privilege is time.

## **One Thing to Share...**

Focus group members were given the opportunity to select one thing they wished to share with members from the other group. Deaf interpreter colleagues wished to tell hearing interpreters that “it’s about the Deaf perspective and that can’t be taught in a classroom.” They also wished hearing interpreters embraced reciprocity and gave directly back to the community. Additionally, DIs appreciate it when HIs are honest about their limits and to feel empowered to advocate for Deaf interpreters with the requesting parties.

---

<sup>7</sup> At this point in the session, one of the cameras in the Deaf focus group failed, leaving three of five participants visible.

Interpreters who hear shared the sentiment that Deaf colleagues were well appreciated, and they felt grateful for all they have learned expressed by one participant: “I’m really grateful for the give and take experience and the learning that I’ve been able to do by teaming with awesome people.” The mood of appreciation was captured well in this comment: “How much better the end product is when we work together on this and that we each bring our separate skills and experiences. And it’s so much better for our customers when we do that.”