

An Assessment of Perceptions of Educational Interpreter Training Program

Competencies in Northeast Wisconsin

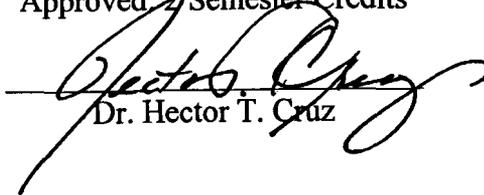
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ABSTRACT

Educational interpreters are the communication link between deaf students and hearing instructors and staff. They are an important part of the educational team. They work with the spoken English language, and the visual language of American Sign Language. Interpreting is a very complex process; one must be able to adjust for consumer language needs.

Northeast Wisconsin has two technical colleges that offer training programs for educational interpreters. Educational interpreter training curriculum should prepare students for the work or certification, but how does one know if it actually does? By conducting an analysis of the educational interpreter training program (EITP) curriculum in Northeast Wisconsin, survey respondents answered that question.

Literature including current EITP competencies in the state of Wisconsin, interpreting credentials, and upcoming legislation was reviewed. National Interpreter Education standards

include sign language skills, knowledge and decision making skills; as well professionalism.

Recent research found that most interpreter training programs follow these guidelines.

Overall, participants were satisfied with the training they received in the educational interpreter training program they attended in Wisconsin. Participants had a few suggestions for improving education as such as modifying program requirements and lab teaching methods.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Background

Educational interpreters are the communication link between deaf students and hearing instructors and staff. They are an important part of the educational team. Other team members can include the teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing, the regular education teacher, parents, support staff, and administration (NTC, 2005a). Educational interpreters work with the spoken English language, and the visual language of American Sign Language (NTC, 2005a).

To become an educational interpreter, one must attend an educational interpreter training program (EITP). In an EITP, interpreters learn about deaf culture, the psychological and social effects of hearing loss, along with sign language. Language and reading development, tutoring, note taking skills, and interpreting techniques are also taught.

Once working in a school, interpreters participate in such things as instructional activities, field trips, assemblies, extra-curricular activities, counseling sessions, and individualized educational plan (IEP) meetings. Other responsibilities include preparing for classes, presenting in-services regarding interpreting or sign language and tutoring deaf or hard of hearing students (RID, 2000).

Interpreting is a very complex process; one must be able to adjust for consumer language needs ranging from American Sign Language (ASL) – a visual language with a different syntax and grammar compared to spoken English – to Signed English, which follows spoken English grammar and syntax (RID, 2007).

In certain situations two interpreters are needed. For example: an extended period of time or different language needs of consumers would necessitate the use of more than one interpreter. Interpreters learn how to work in a team with each other as well as part of the educational team (RID, 2007).

General education is incorporated in the educational interpreter program plan, but there is a stronger emphasis on core interpreting and sign classes. Students take general education courses to help in their interpreting abilities such as: psychology, child development, math, sociology, and communications (FVTC, 2007-2008).

Graduates of a Wisconsin EITP meet the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requirements for K-12 entry-level positions in educational settings. Upon graduation, students are granted an educational interpreter license (NTC, 2005a).

The first EIT programs began in the early 1970's: St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute, California State University at Northridge, National Technical College for the Deaf and Gallaudet University. In 1972 North Central Technical College (NTC) in Wausau, Wisconsin began a deaf education program and noticed the need for an EITP. The interpreter program was set up in 1975. In 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed which helped define the role of interpreters and increased the need for educational interpreters (NTC, 2005b).

Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) in Appleton, Wisconsin partnered with NTC on a shared educational interpreter program. Students took one year at FVTC, and then commuted to NTC for the second year. In 1999, FVTC separated from NTC and began to run its own educational interpreter program (D. Sisco, email interview, January 25, 2008).

Wisconsin has two technical colleges that offer training programs for educational interpreters. The EITP at Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) is currently a three-year associate degree program. It includes classroom, lab, internship, observation, and practicum experiences (FVTC, 2007-2008).

The EITP at North Central Technical College (NTC) is currently a two-year associate degree program. It includes classroom, lab, internship, observation, and practicum experiences (NTC, 2005a).

In order to evaluate the quality of interpreting services, the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf (RID) began testing interpreters in 1970 with full implementation of the national certification system beginning in 1972. In 1987, the test began to involve two components: a written test and a performance test. In 1992, RID began working on a new testing instrument called the National Interpreter Certification (NIC), which is currently being administered (RID, 2006a). EITP curriculum should prepare students for the NIC, but how does one know if it actually does? By conducting an analysis of the EITP curriculum in Northeast Wisconsin, survey respondents answered that question.

Clients demand quality interpreters and NIC helps ensure this demand is met. This study was conducted surveying working interpreters on their perceptions and thoughts about the quality of their education.

Statement of the Problem

Some have questioned if current educational interpreter training program (EITP) curriculum adequately prepare students for the demands of the job. Little

research has been done to determine the effectiveness of current EITP curriculum in the state of Wisconsin.

The EITP at FVTC has been in existence for seven years, but no study has been done to determine if students felt adequately prepared for a career in interpreting.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine perceptions of the effectiveness of current EITP curriculum in Wisconsin. This study was conducted by surveying working interpreters within a 15 mile radius of Appleton, Wisconsin, during May 2008, to determine if there a correlation between classroom curriculum and on-the-job instruction.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the competencies for educational interpreter training programs?
2. What is the perceived importance of the need for rigorous educational interpreter training program competencies by interpreters?
3. What are perceived differences of competencies for educational interpreter training programs based on demographic differences?

Importance of the Study

This study is important for the following reasons:

1. Due to client demand for qualified interpreters, legislation is underway to make all sign language interpreters RID nationally certified (RID, 2006b). Interpreters must adhere to a standard clients need by being proactive in their own professional development. Therefore, it is necessary to perform a task analysis to see if the current EITP curriculum can adequately prepare students for the career of interpreting.
2. Information from this research will assist instructors in educational interpreter programs in determining which competencies to include or revise. Instructors have a duty to provide innovative, evolving curriculum and program updates.
3. This study will assess student learning within Wisconsin EIT Programs and justify the financing for updating curriculum, equipment, and instructional tools needed in order to deliver classes with the highest potential for upgraded learning.

Definition of Terms

This study has the following terms:

American Sign Language (ASL). A visual and gestural language, borrowing elements from spoken English. It has unique grammatical, lexical, and linguistic features of its own (RID, 2006d).

Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH). Any individual with a hearing loss (RID, 2006d).

Educational Interpreter. A communication link between teachers and deaf/hard of hearing students (NTC, 2005a).

Educational Interpreter Training Program (EITP). An accredited educational program that has a dedicated curriculum designed to prepare students for a career in the field of interpreting. It can be offered through a college, university, or technical school (RID, 2006a).

Interpreting. Transmitting spoken English into American Sign Language (ASL), using gestures, for communication between deaf and hearing individuals (RID, 2006b).

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Introduction

To lay the groundwork for the need of rigorous educational interpreter training program (EITP) curriculum, various literature was reviewed, including current EITP competencies in the state of Wisconsin, interpreting credentials, and upcoming legislation.

National Interpreter Education Standards

The Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE) lists standards for interpreter training programs. The standards outline skills and knowledge as well as perspectives students need to learn to become an interpreter. These standards also help faculty, administrators, consumers, and employers to understand what competencies should be attained in postsecondary interpreter education (CCIE, 2007).

Before beginning an EITP, students should have a basic proficiency in American Sign Language and spoken/written English that at least allows them to communicate in a culturally suitable manner (CCIE, 2007).

According to the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (2007), curriculum content requirements include: theories of interpretation and translation, professional historical foundations, interpreter role and responsibilities, professional ethics, knowledge of intercultural communication, stress management, certification and licensure, and information regarding state and federal legislation.

EIT programs should model themselves after the benchmarks set forth by the CCIE (2007), including: entrance requirements, faculty hiring, teaching methods, and curriculum goals. Competencies for student learning include: language – the ability to

understand source languages and express clearly in the target language; message transfer – the ability to understand the meaning of the source language, render the meaning faithfully and transfer the message to a target language; methodology – the ability to use and choose appropriate modes of interpreting according to audience preference; subject matter – a range of knowledge allowing interpretation among various fields; and finally techniques and logistics – the ability to manage the physical environment and select appropriate equipment.

As part of their education, interpreter students must take part in a practicum experience that provides application of objectives learned. Practicum experiences should be observed by educators and designed to enrich the classroom experience. It should be formally evaluated and documented by a program supervisor (CCIE, 2007).

Interpreter Education Trends

The Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT, 1999-2007) outlines suggestions for educational interpreter programs. It explains that because American Sign Language (ASL) is not a spoken language, but rather a visual language, it is imperative that classrooms be set up so all students can clearly see the instructor and each other. A semi-circle is recommended instead of traditional seating in rows.

Because ASL is not a spoken language, traditional written language drills and compositions are not possible. Language practice must be done in person or via videotape with feedback, modification, and evaluation. An example of 15 students with ten minutes of one-on-one instruction would take up three hours a week. Because of this, the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) recommends ASL classes be smaller in size, not more than 8-12 students (CIT, 1999-2007).

While ASL is not a written language, much interpreting curriculum has been transferred from theories of spoken language curricula. This means educational interpreter courses end up portraying an interpreter as merely a “producer of a text – a bounded entity of words or signs,” when in reality, interpreters are message transmitters of other’s thoughts and words (Roy, 2000, p. 1).

In a perfect world, students would have a fluent grasp on ASL before entering a training program. However, that is rarely the case, not to mention the fact that public postsecondary schools have open admission policies (Roy, 2000). As a result, EIT programs are many times structured for ASL instruction concurrent with interpreting instruction. Students learn sign vocabulary and grammatical syntax of ASL at the same time as learning interpreting skills like visual/auditory closure and prediction (CIT, 1999-2007). All of this is generally done in two years at community colleges (Roy, 2000).

Maximum hands-on experiences are recommended to allow students opportunities to practice, analyze, and improve their skills. In interpreting classes, even smaller class sizes are suggested, 6-10 students (CIT, 1999-2007).

Interpreter trainers have long dealt with the issue of trying to help students understand the language fluently, professionalism, and decision making skills. Therefore, EIT programs many times, are set up to simply graduate entry-level interpreters. Students encounter language drills and objectives that are focused on conceptually accurate sign vocabulary choices rather than learning techniques in correctly reflecting the meaning of the source message (Roy, 2000).

Anna Witter Merithew and Leilani Johnson conducted a study of trends in interpreter education (2007b). They surveyed seven EITP in the areas of: program focus, language and culture focus, interpreting skill foundation and development, professionalism and ethics, specialized interpreting, and practicum or internship.

The study found each program had a different focus. Some centered on communication disorders and linguistic discourse, while others concentrated on educational, medical, or community interpreting (Merithew & Johnson, 2007b).

The research did find common themes among all seven EIT programs such as: terminology, cognitive skills processing, roles and responsibilities, and professional association discussion. Other topics covered by the majority of the programs included: the history of the profession, employment settings, aptitudes required, ethics, and certifications available, as well as actual interpretation skills. Overall, the programs followed CIT Interpreter Education Standards, included interpreting theory courses, and had a liberal arts requirement (Merithew & Johnson, 2007b).

Most importantly, Merithew and Johnson (2007b) outlined what a graduate of an EITP should be capable of: work and/or certification, critical thinking, collaboration, analyzing and self adjustment, and be service orientated.

Interpreter Credentials

Many professions have appropriate credentials to indicate levels of qualification. Interpreting is no different. The Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf (RID) awards certification to those who pass an exam. The exam tests for language, interpretation, and ethical decision making skills. Individuals who pass the exam are

given a certification, depending on which exam is taken and the level achieved (RID, 2007)

Educational interpreters working in a public K-12 setting in Wisconsin may take an exam called the Educational Interpreter Proficiency Assessment (EIPA). The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf recognizes the EIPA as a level of qualification. The EIPA has levels of qualifications 1 through 4, with 3 and 4 being qualified (DPI, 2008). The EIPA is not however, a qualification for community interpreting as RID certification is (Merithew & Johnson, 2007a).

Perceptions of Interpreter Qualifications

Clients demand, and have a right to qualified interpreters. A dissertation by Stuard (2008) outlined perceptions of these qualifications by clients. Stuard explains good interpreters can be hard to find and that simply because one graduated from an interpreter training program, does not mean they are capable, that in fact many are "...unable to demonstrate entry-level job-readiness within secondary, post-secondary, and specialized interpreting venues." (p.1)

Educational interpreter training programs should include not only curriculum necessary to train interpreter students, but also should incorporate principles of adult learning to be considered effective. Appropriate teaching methods with sound learning objectives and periodic assessments in order to measure the effectiveness of such programs (Stuard, 2008).

Another suggestion is to incorporate clients into interpreter training programs. Deaf consumers provide mentoring and interaction that provide substantial benefits to interpreting students (Stuard, 2008).

In a survey to clients, Stuard (2008) asked what qualities interpreters should have. Responses included competency in signing and cultural awareness, interpersonal skills, professionalism, and education.

Specifically some of the signing competencies requests include fluency in ASL, voicing skills and lip reading ability. Interpersonal skills are listed as being friendly, ethical, respectful, flexible and confident. Professionalism was explained as having a desire for excellence and good presentation skills when voicing. Educational minimums include interpreter training program attendance, a good grasp on the English language and continuing education workshops. Cultural awareness is expressed as wanting interpreters to understand the “deaf way” of signing (Stuard, 2008).

Summary

National Interpreter Education standards include skills such as language fluency; knowledge; decision making skills; professionalism; perspective; and attainment of credentials as critical competencies quality interpreters need to possess. Recent research found that most interpreter training programs follow these guidelines. Deaf mentors and pedagogy should also be included in curriculum, after all the clients offer valuable input to these adults learning a new language.

Chapter III: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will include information about the sample selection and instrument used. It will also include data collection and data analysis procedures, as well as limitations of the study.

Description of Research Method

This study was an assessment of the perceptions of educational interpreter programs in Northeast Wisconsin. It is a descriptive study based on program opinion surveys and research.

An outline of existing competency requirements and interpreting standards for educational interpreter programs was established through research. Surveys were completed by participants who graduated from an educational interpreter program.

Subject Selection

The Institutional Review Board's approval was given before the survey was conducted. An online survey was sent to twenty interpreters working within a 15 mile radius of Appleton, Wisconsin during the second week in May, 2008. Interpreters included those working in an educational setting as well as a freelance environment.

Instrumentation

The survey used in this study was written by the author because no other instrument was found satisfactory to the needs of this study. The survey contained nominal and ordinal data collection questions. Specifically five questions regarding demographics of the participants, seven general questions relating to the EITP they attended and job they currently have, and three questions inquiring as to the

perceptions of interpreters and EITP curriculum. Participants were asked to rate their opinions regarding the questions on a Likert scale. Lastly, it also had a comments section where participants could list suggestions or comments.

Because the survey was written especially for this research, there was no documented measure of validity or reliability. A copy of the survey is in the Appendix.

Data Collection and Analysis

An online survey was emailed to interpreters listed on school district websites and interpreting agencies within a 15 mile radius of Appleton, Wisconsin. A deadline of one week was given. The data was analyzed using descriptive and t-test methods.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations to this study:

1. This study was limited by the lack of/very little research on the field of sign language interpreting in general. There was no research at the time of this study on the effectiveness of EITP curriculum in Wisconsin.
2. This study was restricted by the number of responses from the surveys sent to working interpreters. Demographics such as age, school attended, place of employment and other factors could have influenced answers on the surveys.
3. This study was limited by the fact it is only being conducted within a 15 mile radius of Appleton, Wisconsin. Educational interpreters outside the local area were not surveyed as part of this research. The investigator can not guarantee other EIT Programs will use this information.

4. The survey conducted has been developed by the author and therefore human error must be taken into account as a limitation. Misinterpretations, misstatements, or accidental omissions are not intended, but could occur. This also means no documented measures of validity or reliability were available.

Chapter VI: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine interpreters' perceptions of EITP curriculum in Northeast Wisconsin.

In this chapter, demographic information of survey participants and item analysis of the survey will be discussed. Data addressing each of the research questions will also be included.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the competencies for Educational Interpreter Training Programs by experts in the field?

This question was addressed by review of literature in Chapter Two. The results outlined the standards and competencies required for quality interpreters to be produced by educational interpreter training programs.

2. What is the importance of the need for rigorous Educational Interpreter Training Program competencies?

This question was addressed by survey questions one through ten in the research instrument developed for this study. In looking at participants answers and comments there was a clear trend towards the majority of educational interpreter graduates being somewhat satisfied with preparation for an interpreting career. A t-test was run on the data looking at differences in age as well as differences in years of experience. No statistically significant differences were found in how participants answered questions based on these two categories. Details are discussed in the Results of Survey section.

3. What are the demographics differences in perception of competencies for Educational Interpreter Training Programs?

This question was addressed by survey demographic questions. A descriptive method was run on the data and according to the results there was a clear trend towards participants being female between the ages of 26-35. The majority held an associates degree from a Wisconsin educational interpreter training program and had 6-15 years of educational interpreting experience. Details will be discussed in the next section.

Demographic Information

Twenty interpreters were initially contacted to participate in the study. Fifteen actually participated, which accounts for 75.0% of the total possible participants.

Of the participants, twelve were educational interpreters and three were freelance interpreters. All fifteen indicated they attended an interpreter training program in Wisconsin. When given the option to disclose the name of the school they

attended, four chose to respond. Three attended Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and one attended Fox Valley Technical College.

All fifteen of the participants were female. They ranged in age from eighteen to fifty or over. Specifically: one was age 18-25, seven were 26-35, six were 36-49 and one was 50 or over. Meaning 86.7% were between the ages of 26-49.

When asked about the number of years of job experience, five had been on the job less than five years, six had 6-15 years experience, three had 16-25 years, and one had 25 or more years. The majority of the participants, 40.0% had 6-15 years experience working as an interpreter.

Ten participants responded to having an education level of an associate's degree, at 66.7%. Of the participants 33.3% reported having a bachelor's degree (n=5), and none had a master's degree or higher.

Results of Survey

The majority, fourteen participants responded that the interpreter training program they attended was two years in length, one indicated their program was three years long. While all participants responded that their training program had an educational interpreter emphasis, 20.0% indicated they are working in a freelance environment rather than an educational one.

When asked if their program included a portfolio or filing system of information requirement (as outlined in national curriculum competencies), 86.7% (n=13) indicated yes. Of these participants 53.8% (n=7) indicated it was not helpful in finding employment. 46.2% (n=6) indicated the portfolio/filing system was helpful in finding employment, and one participant chose not to respond to the question.

Thirteen participants said they did not have curriculum regarding stress relief. That means 86.7% of the graduates that participated did not receive a required competency outlined by national standards. Two participants indicated they did have curriculum on stress relief. Of those two, one indicated it was helpful for their current employment and the other indicated it was not helpful.

Fourteen of the fifteen participants had a practicum experience of one quarter and one had a semester long practicum. 100% felt their practicum experience was helpful for their current employment.

When asked about the kind of disabilities encountered in their employment, fourteen had encountered deaf/hard of hearing and deafness with other disabilities. Three had also experienced deaf/blind disabilities. Meaning, the majority of interpreters encounter deaf/hard of hearing students that have other physical/emotional disabilities in the course of their job. The current National Interpreting standards do not outline curriculum on how to handle deafness accompanied with another disability.

Of the participants 80.0% (n=12) felt the educational interpreter training program they attended prepared them enough for their job. One each responded in the categories of: neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. One participant chose to comment on this question stating that “You can never be fully prepared since every place of employment will have different and sometimes difficult situations that arise.”

The last question asked if any of the following would have, in their opinion, improved their education: pre-requisite/co-requisite classes, longer practicum experience or a longer overall program. They were also given the choice to enter an additional option. 20.0% (n=3) indicated a longer practicum experience would have been optimal, 26.7% (n=4) said a longer program would have helped. 20.0% chose not to enter an answer and 33.3% (n=5) chose to enter another suggestion.

Of those five, suggestions included more American Sign Language basics, adding stress relief content as well as practicing such techniques, educational subject specific sign vocabulary such as sex education or computer terminology, exam preparation and processes, licensure application procedures, more experiential examples, and more contact with deaf consumers. One indicated she entered the program with interpreting knowledge and felt the two year program was enough.

There was a section participants could list any additional comments. These included things such as interpreting curriculum being upgraded over the years to now include math and algebra.

Suggestions for current interpreting competencies include: the changing role of the interpreter, cochlear implants changing the need for voicing skills, job market/availability and an increase in freelance interpreting emphasis.

Other suggestions included extending the program length to allow a less hectic feeling, workshop attendance requirement, test/licensure preparation and reforming of lab class structure from a group rotation method to a use of current multiple technology approach.

One participant suggested reverting away from the trend of flexible schedules to an everyday class schedule. This person indicated this helped with skill development and retention of material in her case. “Many of the programs now cater to the three times per week or even two times per week – I feel this causes loss of retention/skill building.” She also suggested smaller class sizes to allow for more one-on-one attention.

A t-test was run comparing age and question number eight on the survey, “In your opinion: your EITP prepared you enough for the job.” Participants were asked to rate their opinion on a five part Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A t-statistic value of -1.414 was found and the significance level was calculated to be .183. To be statistically significant, the significance level results must be smaller than 0.05. Therefore, no statistically significant differences were found in how participants answered the question in correlation to their age.

Age and question nine, “In your opinion: the skills needed for your job were clearly outlined in your EITP” were run on a t-test as well. The same Likert scale was used. A t-statistic value of -0.296 was found and the significance level was calculated to be .772. Again, no statistically significant differences were found in how participants answered the question in correlation to their age.

The same process was run to compare years of experience and question eight. A t-statistic value of -0.000 was found and the significance level was calculated to be 1.000. Again, no statistically significant differences were found in how participants answered the question in correlation to their years of experience interpreting.

One last t-test was run to compare years of experience and question nine. A t-statistic value of -0.000 was found and the significance level was calculated to be 1.000. The same results were found, no statistically significant differences were found in how participants answered the question in correlation to their years of experience interpreting.

Summary

Overall, participants were satisfied with the preparation received in the educational interpreter training program they attended. There were a few suggestions for improving education, as could be with any curriculum. Suggestions ranged from course content and program requirements to lab teaching methods.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This section will include a summary and conclusions regarding the outcomes of this research. A conclusion with some possible recommendations for further study and interpreting curriculum will also be included.

Summary

Educational interpreters are an important part of the educational team, serving as the communication link between deaf students and hearing instructors and staff. The purpose of this study was to determine perceptions of the effectiveness of current EITP curriculum in Wisconsin.

Various literature was reviewed, including current EITP competencies in the state of Wisconsin, interpreting credentials, and upcoming legislation. National Interpreter Education standards include language skills, knowledge and decision making skills; as well professionalism. Attainment of credentials proves a quality interpreter. Recent research found that most interpreter training programs follow these guidelines.

An online survey was emailed to interpreters working within a 15 mile radius of Appleton, Wisconsin. The data was analyzed using descriptive and t-test methods.

According to the results of this study there were overall positive perceptions of educational interpreter training curriculum in Northeast Wisconsin. No items on the survey results showed statistical significance.

Conclusions

Many consumers of interpreters are beginning to recognize the need for qualified interpreters in today's society. As in all curriculums, best practices include reviewing and keeping things up to date regularly. Educational Interpreting curriculum is no different, especially with current legislation underway to require higher certification of interpreters.

Recommendations for Educational Interpreter Education

Suggestions from survey participants could warrant taking action. After all, they are past consumers of the interpreter training programs and offer valuable feedback. Overall, they were satisfied with their education, but would have liked to see some improvements. Specifically, an extended period of time to the two year programs and quarter long practicum experiences. Many also wanted to see stress relief curriculum added - a nationally outlined standard that should be included in all interpreting curriculum.

Participants also asked for more "real-life" experiences to be incorporated into programs. Education is often just the surface when it comes to a career; new graduates encounter many situations, disabilities and decision-making opportunities never encountered within their educational program. Also, incorporating deaf mentors into educational interpreter training programs could add to this request.

Recommendations for Future Research

Collecting a larger subject sample would probably produce more meaningful results. The fact this study was limited to a 15 mile radius restricts the results. A statewide or nationwide study would offer a larger sampling of perceptions.

More research could be done on educational interpreter training programs across the state or even across the nation. Applying this study to a larger population would yield more conclusive results.

While surveying other interpreter training programs, coursework and curriculum could be analyzed along with perceptions of former students of those programs to see if the curriculum matches with national interpreting training standards and overall satisfaction of students.

A survey of educational interpreter instructors could be helpful in determining average education and experience levels of those training students. An analysis of instructor education and skill could give insight into interpreter program success rates as well as student satisfaction.

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Appendix: Educational Interpreter Perceptions of Curriculum

Please check the item that best describes you.

Gender: Male Female
 Age: 18-25 26-35 36-49 50 or over

Education Level:
 Associate Degree Bachelor Degree Master Degree or higher

Years Interpreting: 5 or less 6-15 16-25 26 or more

Employment: Educational Interpreter Freelance Interpreter

1. Did you attend an Educational Interpreter Training Program (EITP) in Wisconsin?
 Yes No If yes, where? _____
2. How long was your EITP?
 less than 1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years
3. Within your EITP were you required to complete final project (portfolio/filing system of information):
 Yes No
 If yes, was it helpful in finding employment? Yes No
4. How long was your practicum/internship experience?
 a quarter a semester a school year
 Was it helpful for your current employment? Yes No
5. Did your EITP include curriculum on stress relief?
 Yes No
 If yes, was it helpful for your current employment? Yes No
6. What was the emphasis of your EITP?
 Educational Interpreting Freelance Interpreting
7. What disabilities have you encountered in your employment?
 Deaf/Hard of Hearing Deaf/Blind
 Deaf with other disabilities (physical or emotional)
8. In your opinion: your EITP prepared you enough for your job.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 Why? _____

9. In your opinion: the skills needed for your job were clearly outlined in your EITP.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

If not, what was missing? _____

10. In your opinion: would any of the following have improved your educational experience?

Pre-requisite/Co-requisite Classes Longer Practicum Experience

Longer program Other: _____

Please provide any comments you would like:
