

ADVOCACY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROFESSIONALISM: A COMPARATIVE CASE
STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETER SUPERVISOR PRACTICE AND
POLICY ENGAGEMENT

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to my family without whom I would be nothing.

To all my relations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES 9

LIST OF FIGURES..... 10

ABSTRACT..... 11

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION..... 12

American Sign Language Interpreters in Schools..... 12

The Supervision Policy Vacuum..... 15

Statement of the Problem..... 19

Theoretical Framework..... 20

Purpose and Research Questions..... 20

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW..... 24

Definitions of Key Terms..... 25

Educational Interpreters and Community Interpreters..... 29

Educational Interpreting Policy..... 32

Approaches to Interpreter Supervision 39

Clinical Supervision 38

School Leadership..... 43

Teacher Coaching and the Mentor Model..... 46

Educational Interpreter Supervision..... 48

CHAPTER 3: METHODS..... 54

Research Design..... 55

Positionality Statement..... 56

Comparative Case Study..... 57

<i>Horizontal Comparison: Supervisor Practice</i>	58
<i>Vertical Comparison: Policy Engagement</i>	59
<i>Transversal Comparison: Supervision Over Time</i>	60
Participants and Setting	60
<i>Inclusion Criteria</i>	60
Primary Inclusion Criteria	61
Secondary Inclusion Criteria	61
Exclusion Criteria	61
<i>Recruitment and Sampling</i>	61
<i>Pre-screening and Participant Selection</i>	62
<i>Participants</i>	65
Data Collection	64
<i>Interviews</i>	65
Interview Protocols	66
<i>Policy Documents</i>	67
Data Analysis	67
<i>Interview Transcription</i>	68
<i>First Cycle Coding</i>	68
<i>Transitional Analyses</i>	71
<i>Practice Profiles and Policy Profiles</i>	71
<i>Second Cycle Coding</i>	72
<i>Comparison and Synthesis</i>	73
Social Validity	73

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS.....	75
Job Characteristics	77
Supervisor Practice	80
<i>Supervisors</i>	80
<i>Major Themes</i>	80
Consistent Interpreting Services	81
Supporting Staff	88
Collaboration and Advocacy	92
<i>The IEP Team</i>	92
<i>The Interpreter Team</i>	93
<i>Liaison, Mediator and Resource</i>	94
Interpreters Supervising Interpreters	96
<i>Attending to Student Needs</i>	96
<i>Attending to Staff Needs</i>	97
<i>Hiring Educational Interpreters</i>	98
<i>Educational Interpreter Job Evaluations</i>	99
Policy Engagement	100
<i>Policies Submitted by Supervisors</i>	100
<i>Major Themes</i>	103
Accountability	104
<i>Special Education Law</i>	104
<i>State Laws and Regulations</i>	105
<i>Organizational Policy</i>	106

<i>Individual Accountability</i>	108
Professionalism	109
<i>Special Education Law</i>	109
<i>State Laws and Regulations</i>	110
<i>Organizational Policy</i>	111
<i>Individual Accountability</i>	112
Supervision Over Time.....	114
<i>Major Themes</i>	114
Policy Has Not Kept Pace	114
Hiring Practices in the Balance	115
Evolution of Interpreter Supervisor Positions	116
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....	118
Supervisor Practice	118
Policy Engagement	121
Implications for Supervisor Practice	123
Limitations of the Study	126
<i>Study Design and Sampling</i>	127
<i>Policy Analyses</i>	127
<i>Researcher Bias</i>	128
<i>Lack of Generalizability</i>	128
Directions for Future Research	129
Conclusion	131
APPENDIX A: Additional Information About ASL-English Interpreters in the U.S.....	136

APPENDIX B: Pre-Screening Questionnaire.....	139
APPENDIX C: Interview Protocols	141
APPENDIX D: Interview Questions	144
APPENDIX E: Codebook.....	147
REFERENCES.....	151

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1	Examples of Job Supports Provided by Educational Interpreter Supervisors.....	133
2	Examples of Policies Discussed by Educational Interpreter Supervisors.....	135

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE

1	Model of Educational Interpreter Supervision Foundations and Imperatives.....	125
2	Two Types of American Sign Language (ASL) – English Interpreters in the U.S.....	137

ABSTRACT

The primary goal of this study was to explore how educational interpreter supervisors defined, experienced and approached their work in K-12 schools in the United States of America. A secondary goal was to examine how they interpreted, navigated and enacted educational and interpreting policy in their jobs as supervisors. A comparative case study research design was used to collect data on the practices of four interpreter supervisors in alignment with three study axes: 1) supervisor practice, 2) policy engagement, and 3) change over time in educational interpreter supervision. A critical policy analysis lens was used to examine the policies supervisors thought were most salient to them and how they dealt with these policies practically and ideologically. Supervisor and policy profiles were created to compare data within and across participant cases. Data collected on supervisors' job characteristics and the three axes were analyzed using qualitative and non-statistical quantitative methods. Results showed that supervisors conducted their work collaboratively while centering the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students so students received interpreting services that were consistent and high quality. Accountability and professionalism were major themes across supervisor practice and policy. Supervisors engaged extensively with policy at micro and macro scales. The policies that most affected their work were those related to federal special education law, state law for educational interpreters, and codes of conduct, guidelines and professional credentials in the broader field of American Sign Language interpreting in the U.S.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

American Sign Language Interpreters in Schools

Interpreters of American Sign Language (ASL) and English have supported communication access for deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students in general education classrooms for approximately forty years in the United States. Despite this, little to no empirical research documents how educational interpreters are supervised, coordinated or evaluated in the districts where they work. This means little is known about those who provide supervision, what that supervision entails, or how interpreters' core professional competency (ASL-English interpreting) is evaluated. For those DHH students who use ASL (or another sign language system) and utilize interpreters to access curriculum and daily communication, their access to free appropriate public education (FAPE) depends to some extent on these services. Because of the important work educational interpreters do in supporting DHH students, the dearth of data addressing how they are supervised, supported and evaluated is concerning.

Supervision and accountability systems are a part of any large organizations including public schools, making this gap for interpreters highly problematic (Johnson, et al., 2018). In the present study, *supervision* is viewed through the lens of school leadership and administration, which differs from *clinical supervision* in counseling. The clinical supervision model is relevant to the broader field of ASL-English interpreting as a practice profession (Curtis, 2017; Dean & Pollard, 2001, 2005, 2011). One of the goals of this study, however, was to address school policies related to interpreter supervision which necessarily span multi-scalar public education systems and numerous actors, what Ball (1997) calls "policy trajectory." In this way, school leadership was seen as the appropriate frame of reference from which to examine the experiences

of those tasked with supervising interpreters in schools. Note: The terms “ASL-English interpreter,” “educational interpreter,” and “k-12 interpreter” will be further defined in Chapter 2.

Although DHH children are routinely placed in mainstream general education classrooms with their non-deaf (hearing) peers, there have been calls to examine this practice more critically considering this is now the default practice and interpreter efficacy has not been well established in the literature (De Meulder & Hualand, 2019). There are wide variations in the professional profiles of individuals employed as ASL-English interpreters in schools. While interpreting is classified as related service under Section 300.34 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), interpreters may not be categorized as related service personnel (RSP) by many state or local education agencies (LEAs).

The IDEA does not define what constitutes a “qualified” educational interpreter; states are entitled to administer their own educational systems in accordance with ‘states’ rights’ (U.S. Const. amend. X). The disconnect between federal special education legislation and state-level application has been recognized in the field of special education for decades. But for interpreters, this has resulted in highly variable and minimal state standards. Low standards, a lack of professionalization and accountability gaps have resulted in many DHH students being served by underqualified or unqualified interpreters.

Simultaneous interpretation between any two languages is a complex and cognitively demanding task, but interpretation between spoken and signed languages comes with its own set of demands (Cokely, 1992). Interpreters who are underqualified have higher rates of errors and omissions and produce less accurate interpretations (Russell & Winston, 2014; Schick, 2006). More accurate interpretations improve DHH students’ access to spoken instruction and

curriculum at school, which may affect their academic success (Schick, Williams, & Bolster, 1999). If DHH students' access to visual communication is suppressed because interpreters are not qualified [thus more prone to errors], then students are effectively denied full access to their classrooms and school communities. Many DHH students report feeling isolated or lonely at school due to the lack of meaningful social interactions with their peers (Antia & Stinson, 1999; Kurz & Langer, 2004; Stinson, et al., 1996). Precise data are difficult to locate, but it is widely known in the American Deaf Community that many parents of DHH children do not communicate with their children in sign language, even when it is the child's primary language.

When DHH children are routinely denied full access to communication month after month, year after year—perhaps both at school *and* at home—the cumulative effect is that they are not just denied language, they are functionally denied the most basic and essential of human interactions. For DHH students, this cannot be called any semblance of inclusion. This sentiment is so pervasive that it has a name anyone in the fields of interpreting or deaf education would recognize: the “illusion of inclusion” (Russel, 2008; Williamson, 2020; Winston, 1994).

There are numerous complex and over-lapping factors affecting DHH students' academic achievement and social competence: age of diagnosis, family language, and use of assistive technology among others (Antia, et al., 2009; Marschark, 2007). And although DHH students in general education classrooms outperform their peers academically when compared to those in self-contained settings (e.g., schools for the deaf), if they cannot understand what is being said all day at school, how could they possibly be truly included?

Low standards for k-12 interpreters have long been a concern among interpreters and post-secondary interpreter educators in addition to many members of the American Deaf Community. Many professional ASL-English interpreters (those who work in k-12 settings as

well as those who do not), interpreter educators and parents of DHH children have long recognized gaps in how districts provide interpreting services. Educational interpreters are on the ‘front lines’ providing direct services to DHH students; they see firsthand when students are lost in the shuffle of a classroom and school where no one else uses sign language, where no one else is deaf or uses hearing aids, and where no one else uses an interpreter all day. Interpreters see how DHH students struggle to engage in typical social interactions with their hearing peers, and how despite the best intentions of educators, DHH students are often excluded due to their language and communication differences.

This is the precise opposite of what the inclusion movement purports to do, which is to *include* DHH students in general education classrooms. Any discussion of inclusion for DHH students must therefore include deaf-centered perspectives of least restrictive environment (LRE), in addition to critical examinations of how interpreting services are delivered in schools as a central aspect of how we define FAPE for this population. One useful entry point for more critical examinations of how interpreting services are delivered in schools is to address the education policies related to interpreter oversight and accountability. There is a clear need for researchers to critically examine the policies surrounding how interpreters are supervised and evaluated in the districts where they work and implications for DHH students.

The Supervision Policy Vacuum

While concerns among stakeholders both in the American Deaf Community and the interpreting profession have led to many book chapters, professional articles, workshops and presentations, researchers have just begun to systematically address the underlying education policy issues at play in k-12 interpreting, particularly those around supervision and job evaluation. Education policy and “policy play,” the complex, non-linear ways that educators

interpret and adopt policy in public schools (Koyama, 2012), have until recently been neglected in empirical examinations of educational interpreting. In this way, interpreter practice has been emphasized while failing to fully consider how education policy necessarily influences those practices.

Interpreters who serve DHH adults in community settings (hospitals, courts, the workplace, etc.) are employed in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and typically hold one of several certifications offered or recognized by the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and/or the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and may hold a state interpreter license as well. Those holding one of several interpreter certifications from NAD and/or RID (the industry standard) are considered “nationally certified.” Nationally certified interpreters are required to maintain certification through continuing education activities and adherence to the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct (NAD-RID CPC) (<https://rid.org/ethics/code-of-professional-conduct/>).

Consumers of interpreting services (both deaf and hearing) are encouraged to dialogue directly with any interpreter perceived as having deviated from the NAD-RID CPC, but they are also entitled to file a formal complaint with RID ensuring that nationally certified interpreters uphold professional norms and service standards. The NAD-RID CPC is an important [if imperfect] policy designed to protect the rights of deaf and hard of hearing Americans who utilize interpreters in many aspects of their daily lives. Some of these interactions are routine and mundane— think a basic refresher training at work. But others are highly sensitive such as medical appointments and legal disputes which can have serious and life-altering ramifications. While RID does not supervise interpreters per se, the NAD-RID CPC does provide a formal

accountability system for certified interpreters, regardless of their employers or the setting(s) in which interpretation takes place.

There is no comparable professional oversight system for interpreters who work exclusively in k-12 classrooms with DHH children. Approximately forty-four states have established minimum (or preferred) qualifications for interpreters based on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) (Johnson, et al., 2014). The EIPA is the most widely recognized tool used to assess interpreters' ability to support DHH students. While the EIPA is generally accepted nationwide, it is not a certification; there is no such thing as an "EIPA certified interpreter." Exam raters score test-takers' skills on a scale between one and five, with one being characterized as "beginner" and five "advanced" (<https://www.classroominterpreting.org/EIPA/performance/rating.asp>).

This score is the 'credential,' that is, the primary qualification for those working in schools as sign language interpreters. The authors of the EIPA recommend a score of 3.5 (out of 5.0) as the minimum for an interpreter to support DHH students (Schick & Williams, 1999). Based on the EIPA scale, an individual with a score of 3.5 would be described as having an "intermediate" skill level interpreting in educational settings. Many districts still hire individuals with scores less than 3.5, meaning they are considered "beginner" or "advanced beginner" at best. It is also common for interpreters to work on an emergency or provisional basis, sometimes indefinitely without any formal professional development plan to address skill deficits (Johnson, et al., 2018).

These interpreters may or may not have any post-secondary training in interpreting ASL and English. There are no prerequisites for taking the EIPA— anyone can pay the fee and take the test. Test takers do not need to demonstrate ASL fluency prior to registration, do not need to

hold a college degree, need no experience in k-12 education. The parent organization of the EIPA, Boys Town National Research Hospital, has no requirements or continuing education components for test-takers to maintain the EIPA credential. It is a “one and done” credential that never expires regardless of the professional or educational activities in which an individual working as an interpreter does (or does not) engage. The authors of the EIPA have published useful guidelines for educational interpreter professional conduct, but there is no reporting system for violations and therefore no mechanism for enforcement (Schick, 2007). (<https://www.classroominterpreting.org/EIPA/guidelines/index.asp>).

Stated another way, there are no accountability systems in place for educational interpreters who deviate from best practices or professional guidelines as outlined by the authors of the EIPA. Interpreters are rarely if ever required to hold national certification to be employed by schools (Washington, D.C. is an exception), and interpreters who are not nationally certified are not beholden to the RID-NAD CPC. This leaves thousands of educational interpreters with limited professional guidance or support, including both those who are highly qualified *and* those who are not qualified. The result is that educational interpreters— and the DHH students they are tasked with supporting— are left in what could be described as a supervision policy vacuum.

Further, in their k-12 interpreting “patterns of practice” investigation, Johnson, et al. (2018) were unable to identify even one state department of education that had established supervision or accountability systems for sign language interpreters. The authors found that inadequate or total lack of supervision were recurrent themes throughout their work. They asserted that the Office of Special Education Programs (US Department of Education) needs to do more to “encourage appropriate accountability systems within state education agencies” (p. 160). Weirick (2021) surveyed 230 educational interpreters and asked about their supervision

experiences. Results indicated that inadequate or “generic” supervision (not tailored to the work of interpreters or the needs of DHH students) was a pervasive concern amongst interpreters in that sample.

Statement of the Problem

Interpreter supervision policy is not the problem— it is the *absence of policy* that is at issue. Weaknesses in IDEA (2004) for students with sensory disabilities¹ combined with a lack of accountability systems in states results in many interpreters going unsupervised and unsupported. When compared to other related service personnel— the majority of whom are required by states to be certified and/or licensed— interpreters are basically unregulated. The demand for greater accountability in the post No Child Left Behind (2001) era has often failed to center students with disabilities, and the interpreter supervision policy vacuum is a prime example.

Of course, legislation often leads to new problems not just solutions. My use of terms like oversight and accountability should not be interpreted as a call for rigid, traditional policy approaches to interpreter supervision. On the contrary, in the present study I am seeking transformative solutions to how signing DHH students are supported by interpreters at school while centering their civil and linguistic rights, not least of which is the human right to language (World Federation of the Deaf, 2019). Considering students’ complex academic and socio-emotional needs, as well as the increased risk of language deprivation for students who lack first language fluency (Caselli, et al., 2020), largely unregulated interpreters working autonomously (Fitzmaurice, 2017) is clearly problematic. More research must focus on interpreter supervision

¹ Refer to HR 4822, S 2681, The Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act for a full discussion of the need to amend IDEA (2004) to benefit of students with hearing or vision loss, deafblindness and multiple disabilities.

practice and policy to establish safeguards for the students who are entitled to language, communication, and the pursuit of a free and appropriate public education.

Theoretical Framework

I employed a Comparative Case Study (CCS) framework (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017) and Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) lens and to compare educational interpreter supervisors. Central questions were how supervisors approached their work, and how policy informed their practice. Comparative Case Study incorporates intersecting aspects of context and culture here to include American Deaf Culture in addition to supervisors' personal and professional values, priorities and positionality. The CPA lens (Ball, 1993b; Honig, 2006; Koyama 2010, 2011; Levinson, Sutton & Winstead, 2009; Sutton & Levinson, 2001; Winton, 2011; Winton & Brewer, 2014) will be used to examine how supervisors function as leaders and administrators, including how they interact with and implement special education and interpreting-specific policy at various scales. Aspects of context such as the macro- and micropolitics of school systems will also be considered (Blasé & Bjork, 2010).

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this comparative case study (CCS) is to examine how public school employees function in their roles as interpreter supervisors to better understand what they do on a day-to-day basis, how they approach their work, and how policy informs their practice. A CCS research design will be used to compare how supervisors function in an administrative or supervisory capacity, as well as how they interpret and enact policy in that role. The case is broadly defined as educational interpreter supervision and will be approached from a multidimensional, sociocultural perspective by comparing a homologous group of supervisors.

Critical Policy Analysis offers researchers useful tools for examining not only how actors interpret and implement policy, but it implores us to examine the “practice of power” in education policy (Levinson, Sutton & Winstead, 2009; Sutton & Levinson, 2001). In this way, CPA does not approach policy as an abstraction or neutral set of rules or guidance. Rather, CPA views policy as a complex network of people and organizations, with their varied attitudes, perspectives and priorities, all vying for influence in whatever policy matters beset them (Ball, 1993b, 1997; Sutton & Levinson, 2001; Winton, 2011). Critical policy analysis also implores us to confront issues of oppression, equity and democracy in education policy: in the interpretation, implementation and selective enforcement of policy. A critical policy approach in education encourages researchers to address power imbalances in policy appropriation and implementation, wherein those who are on the receiving end of policy decisions may often have no input into the development of said policies (Levinson & Sutton, 2001).

Though *case study* is often used as an umbrella term, in-depth case study is distinct from single case research design or case study examples used for teaching and can be a valuable tool for research in deaf education (Hallenbeck, et al., 2019). In this study, the researcher conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with education professionals who supervise sign language interpreters (homologous horizontal comparison) with an embedded vertical element of critical education policy analysis (vertical comparison) to address the following questions:

- In what ways do interpreter supervisors variably define, experience and approach their work supervising ASL-English interpreters in k-12 public schools?
- In what ways do interpreter supervisors interpret, navigate and enact policy in their work supervising ASL-English interpreters in k-12 public schools?

This study is an important first step in documenting supervision, evaluation and support activities as described by the individuals responsible for carrying them out: interpreter supervisors. In this case study, I sought to describe what supervision looks like at scales from micro to macro, and by including relevant policy document data, while offer insights into the ramification of these practices on DHH students in the mainstream. While case study generalizability is limited, these data reveal patterns with important practical implications for a range of stakeholders: interpreters, administrators, legislators, parents of DHH children who use interpreters, and of course supervisors themselves. By shining a light on interpreter supervisors, this study contributes to deeper, more critical examinations of K-12 interpreting in the U.S.

Building on the Educational Interpreter Supervision and Support Survey, Part One (Weirick, 2021), the present study provides one of the first empirical snapshots of interpreter supervision; the activities that are or are not occurring, the policies that do or do not exist, and ultimately why all this matters for DHH students. Documenting supervisor practices allowed them to share their unique perspectives and expertise and helps us understand their concerns and priorities. This study also helps us better understand the needs of interpreters on the front lines supporting DHH students, and how all stakeholders can work collaboratively and creatively to address the supervision policy vacuum.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is little empirical research describing how educational interpreters are supervised in public schools, how their work is coordinated and evaluated, or the policies associated with their supervision. In conducting the literature review for this study, no studies were identified describing how K-12 interpreters are currently supervised in schools, other than the one conducted in preparation for the present study (Weirick, 2021).

Due to this gap, the literature included in this review will be used to frame and build the rationale for the current study on interpreter supervision and supervision policy and how it contributes to the body of research on educational interpreting in the U.S. This framing includes comparisons of different approaches to interpreter supervision including clinical supervision and school leadership and suggests teacher coaching as an alternative to the mentor model typically used in ASL-English interpreting to help situate this study firmly within the K-12 milieu. Educational interpreting occurs within K-12 schools and their respective structures and norms; this must be considered in any investigation of educational interpreter supervision and policy. But educational interpreting is also inseparable from the broader context of ASL-English interpreting and disability law in the U.S., so those aspects must be considered as well.

The structure of the literature review was designed to accomplish three goals: 1) to examine the literature on the broader topic of ASL-English interpreter supervision since the literature on K-12 interpreter supervision is quite limited, 2) to clarify why any critical examination of K-12 interpreter supervision must include policy and supervision considerations for other ASL-English interpreters in the U.S., and 3) to assist researchers and stakeholders in exploring new models of interpreter supervision that will focus on the needs of signing DHH

students in their classrooms and school communities. In utilizing a critical policy analysis lens in this study, it was necessary to approach the literature review holistically and multidimensionally.

Chapter 2 begins with definitions of key terms used in the literature review and in subsequent chapters for clarity and consistency. The specification between two main types of ASL-English interpreters in the U.S.—educational interpreters and community interpreters—is critical to understanding the policies associated with each, the policies relevant to both, and the relationship of policy to interpreter supervision. The relationship of policy to K-12 interpreter supervision was a central concern of the secondary research question in this study. Defining ASL-English interpreters at the outset clarifies some of the major policy differences between them, but more importantly, it highlights how these interpreters are *fundamentally the same*: both are ASL-English interpreters facilitating communication between DHH and hearing persons in accordance with federal disability law.

In designing this study with a critical policy lens, educational interpreter supervision could not be examined in isolation from the supervision and policy considerations for other types of ASL-English interpreters. In terms of practice the distinctions matter: interpreting for DHH children *is* different than interpreting for DHH adults. This has been well-established in the literature presented in this chapter. But the *similarities* between educational interpreters and other ASL-English interpreters matters too. Clarification of key terms serves to contextualize my approach to educational interpreter supervision and policy in this study, but it also serves to strengthen methodological rigor. The field of educational interpreting has historically been plagued by role confusion and ambiguity, by ill-defined job descriptions and terminology that is easily misunderstood or taken for granted (Schick, 2006; Smith, 2013; Winston, 2004).

The review of the literature in this chapter begins with the two types of interpreters discussed in this study, educational interpreters and community interpreters. Next, I address policy similarities and differences between the two and implications for supervision. The next section presents differing approaches to supervision including those based on clinical supervision, as well as relevant perspectives on school leadership, and comparisons of the mentor model (Bandura, 1977) and teacher coaching. I assert that models based on clinical supervision have limited applicability with educational interpreters and suggest school leadership combined with principles of teacher coaching may form the foundation of a practicable K-12 supervision model. In the remainder of the chapter, I describe three works that addressed educational interpreter supervision.

Note: Repeated use of the phrase “ASL-English interpreter” is intentional as explicated in this chapter and should not be read as redundant. ASL interpretation occurs with spoken languages other than English and is more precise than the overly general “sign language interpreter” or “signed language interpreter,” which could refer to interpreters of any of the more than one hundred documented signed languages in use globally (Fenlin & Wilkinson, 2015).

Definitions of Key Terms

ASL-English interpreters are signed language interpreters trained to “seamlessly facilitate communication and interaction between deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing people” (Rochester Institute of Technology, 2021). In the U.S. and Canada, they typically interpret between American Sign Language (ASL) and English, but other languages or sign systems may be used (e.g., signed exact English, cued speech, other).

Community interpreter is a colloquial term used to describe ASL-English interpreters who serve DHH individuals (adults and children) in a variety of professional, social, and

workplace settings (medical, legal, governmental, video relay service, other). In the U.S., community interpreters are typically nationally certified and/or licensed and serve DHH individuals in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1975) or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990).

Deaf and deaf. Deaf with a capital “D” indicates people who identify as culturally Deaf and members of Deaf communities. Capitalization is used to emphasize the shared histories, cultural values and norms, and distinct worldviews of those who communicate visually via signed languages. Deaf culture and Deaf identity contrast with the medical model which defines deafness (small “d” deaf) as “hearing loss” and “hearing impairment,” undesirable pathological conditions in need of repair (Holcomb, 2010; Lane, 1992; 2005; Stokoe, 1989; among others).

Educational interpreters are ASL-English interpreters federally classified as special education related service personnel (RSP) and referred to as “interpreters” in the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). These school staff interpret between spoken English and sign language (ASL or another sign system) to “effectively communicate classroom information between the teacher, the deaf student and other hearing students according to the language level of the student and the goals of the Individualized Education Plan.” Also called “classroom interpreters” and “K-12 interpreters.”

(<https://www.classroominterpreting.org/Interpreters/role/index.asp>).

Freelance interpreter is a colloquial term used to describe an ASL-English interpreter working as an independent contractor or sub-contractor rather than or in addition to being an employee. These interpreters could also be considered community interpreters, educational interpreters, or another type of staff interpreter depending on how they define their primary employment. (“*He was a full-time educational interpreter for the district but worked as a*

freelance interpreter on weekends.”) Also called “agency interpreters” and “contract interpreters.”

Job supports are job-related training, guidance, or resources offered to employees to enable them to do their jobs more effectively (Weirick, 2021).

Licensed interpreter refers to ASL-English interpreters who hold a professional sign language interpreting license issued by a state or state sanctioned entity.

Nationally certified interpreters are defined here as ASL-English interpreters holding active certification(s) awarded or recognized by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) or the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), past or present. These include NAD (III-IV), Certificate of Interpretation (CI), Certificate of Transliteration (CT), National Interpreter Certification (NIC, NIC Advanced, NIC Master), Education: K-12 certificate, and Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) certificate among others. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are required as a condition of certification maintenance, and interpreters must adhere to the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct (NAD-RID CPC).

Policy was defined broadly in this study to include both text and discourse (Ball, 1993b;), including actors’ varied interpretations of and engagement with policy (Honig, 2006; Sutton & Levinson, 2001; Winton, 2011; Winton & Brewer, 2014). For participants, policy was cast as a wide net that captured laws, statutes and regulations, district and educational agency policies, job titles and job descriptions, forms, guidelines, handbooks, standards and codes defined by organizations or individuals (e.g., *The teacher had a no food policy.*)

Professional development (PD) is the enhancement of “specialized knowledge sets and interpreting skills” obtained through various activities such as “academic credit or continuing education opportunities approved through the discipline’s professional organization” (Johnson, et

al., 2018). In this study, PD includes activities conducted by individuals (independent studies) or school-based groups (state, district or supervisor organized training and workshops). Also referred to as “continuing education activities” or “continuing education units” (CEUs).

Related services according to IDEA (2004) “means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.” (§300.320 (a)(4)).

Related service personnel (RSP) include but are not limited to those who provide related services to students as defined above.

State credentialed interpreter is an ASL-English interpreter who holds a credential issued by a state entity based on a “Quality Assurance Screening” (e.g., Oklahoma, Virginia), or other assessments such as the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters Certificate Program (BEI). The BEI awards certification for “individuals seeking to become certified interpreters in Texas,” and is administered under the Texas Department of Health and Human Services (Texas Health and Human Services, 2021). Although the BEI certification is increasingly accepted in many states, BEI certified interpreters are not nationally certified interpreters as defined in this study.

Supervision means accountability systems and structures “that support qualified individuals, ensuring remediation to address areas of weakness as well as recognition for their

strengths in performance” (Johnson et al., 2018). In this study, supervision refers specifically to practices within K-12 educational organizations (e.g., school districts, educational agencies).

Team interpreting is “the practice of using two interpreters who rotate to provide simultaneous or consecutive interpretation for one or more [non-English speaking] individuals.” (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, 2021). Team interpreters share duties on the same interpreting assignment to ensure accuracy, minimize errors, reduce fatigue (mental and physical), and provide seamless service to consumers of interpreting services (National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, 2010). Referred to colloquially as “teaming.”

Educational Interpreters and Community Interpreters

Educational interpreters and community interpreters are two types of ASL-English interpreters in the U.S.; both facilitate communication between deaf and hearing individuals. Educational interpreters are often framed in contrast to community interpreters due to differences in credentials (e.g., EIPA or national certification), differing policies that govern their work (e.g., IDEA or ADA), and differences in the populations they serve (DHH children or adults). Educational interpreters do have different and added responsibilities supporting DHH children when compared to community interpreters working primarily with DHH adults. Still, educational interpreters in essence ASL-English interpreters which has important policy ramifications. For additional information on these two types of interpreters, see APPENDIX A.

Educational interpreters emerged in response to the passage of U.S. Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975) as DHH students were educated in their neighborhood schools rather than central state schools for the deaf (Jones, 2004). This was the most significant change in over a century of educating American DHH students (Seal, 1998).

Although educational interpreters clearly also work in their local communities (in public schools), the term “educational interpreter” was recommended by the National Task Force on Educational Interpreting in the late 1990’s and was “intended to imply that a person holding this title is a professional with specialized preparation in deafness, whose primary role is interpreting, but who is also qualified to provide certain other educational services” (Jones, 2004).

Precisely what it means to be an educational interpreter— the necessary qualifications, essential functions, roles and responsibilities— has been source of discussion and debate for at least 25 years across a range of stakeholders. In 2002, Colorado defined educational interpreter as “a person who uses sign language in the public school setting for purposes of facilitating communication between users and nonusers of sign language” (Jones, 2004). Twenty years later there is still no singular, widely agreed upon definition, beyond interpreting for DHH students in K-12 settings.

Numerous studies have shown that educational interpreters must be able to do much more than effectively interpret between two languages. They must have substantial knowledge of Deaf cultural norms, child development (deaf and hearing), grade level content and curricular goals, and be capable of supporting diverse DHH students with varied age ranges, hearing and cognitive levels, as well as language competencies (Antia & Kreimeyer, 2001; Johnson, et al, 2018; Jones, Clark & Soltz, 1997; Schick, 2006; Schick, Williams & Bolster, 1999; Schick, Williams and Kupermintz, 2006; Seal, 1998; Smith, 2013; Taylor, 2004; Winston, 1994).

As related service personnel, educational interpreters also participate in IEP team meetings to discuss students use of services. Interpreters monitor their work by conducting self-evaluations (Seal, 1998); scaffold information for students during instruction as part of the interpretation process (Cazden, 2001; Winston, 1994;), and support DHH students’ social

interaction with peers and clarify teacher directions (Antia & Kreimeyer, 2001). While these activities might be generally be recommended, other activities such as tutoring or disciplining DHH students might be counter-productive to students' inclusion (Metzger & Fleetwood, 2004). Interpreters interact with DHH students extensively, often spending more time with them than any other adults at school and are well-positioned to help identify students' educational needs (Marschark, 2007).

Community interpreters who are nationally certified are obliged to adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct jointly established by NAD and RID (NAD RID CPC) (RID, 2005). Interpreters who violate this code may have formal complaints lodged against them. There is no comparable system for educational interpreters. As special education RSP supporting students with disabilities— children still developing language, literacy, academic and social competence— it would stand to reason that educational interpreters would need to be *more highly qualified* than their community counterparts. While many have made this case (Jones, 2004; Schick, 2001, 2004; Schick, et al., 1999; Seal, 1998, 2004; Smith, 2012; Winston, 1994) this is not reflected in the literature nor in state standards for interpreters in K-12 settings.

As Smith (2013) has pointed out, a growing body of literature demonstrates that many educational interpreters are underqualified and unprepared to work with DHH children in the classroom (Cates, 2021; Johnson, et al. 2018; Jones, 2004; Metzger & Fleetwood, 2004; Russell, 2008; Russell & Winston, 2014, Schick, et al., 1999; Schick, et al., 2006; Smith, 2013; Williamson, 2020; Yarger, 2001; among others). There is little indication that the situation has improved significantly in the past decade (Johnson, et al, 2018).

Nationally, there is no clear picture of the qualifications of educational interpreters. As discussed, the literature continues to show that many are unprepared to properly support DHH

students and that they are less qualified than other RSP. This is particularly concerning since placing DHH students in general education classrooms with interpreting services is now the “normative practice,” though its efficacy has not been well established (De Meulder & Hualand, 2019). There are growing concerns about the scarcity of research examining the effects of interpreting practices on K-12 students considering the potential harm to DHH students at risk of language deprivation. Caselli, et al., (2020) explain that when DHH students are from a young age repeatedly denied language inputs (spoken or signed), long-term negative consequences can result. They emphasize that it is not the degree of deafness itself that leads to language deficits, but that “deafness affects the way that language is transmitted, while language deprivation affects the entire linguistic system” (p. 1324).

Caselli, et al., (2020) and De Meulder & Hualand (2019) rightly problematize the dearth of research exploring the relationship between interpreter efficacy and the linguistic development of DHH children, including issues of language deprivation. The reality that educational interpreters function as language conduits and de facto language models for DHH students further amplifies these concerns. Over three decades of research on educational interpreting have unearthed many insights and recommended practices. Social media has allowed practitioners to share information and resources, and a now substantial body of scholarship across a range of topics has helped stakeholders better define the central challenges in supporting signing deaf students in the mainstream. Whether this body of research has moved the field closer to evidence-based practices is a matter of debate. Still, many questions have only recently been asked by researchers including those around educational interpreter supervision and supervision policy.

Educational Interpreting Policy

According to the 42nd Annual Report to Congress (ARC) on IDEA (2020), in the fall of 2017 there were 6,479 “interpreters” (referring exclusively to ASL-English educational interpreters rather than interpreters of other languages) supporting DHH students (US Department of Education, 2020). The 2020 ARC states interpreters were 90.2% “fully certified,” the lowest of all RSP for the tenth year running in my review of ARC publications. States report whether educational interpreters are qualified in that state based on their own requirements, usually an EIPA score. Several states (Florida, Maryland, New York and Vermont) still have no minimum standards (Johnson, et al., 2014). The ARC does not distinguish between “qualified” or “certified” RSP; the reports only include the number and percentage of RSP who are “full time equivalent fully certified.” Considering that state requirements are highly variable (Johnson, et al 2018), some states have no requirements, and most states only require EIPA scores (not certification or licensing like many RSP), the ARC figures are rather misleading.

Further complicating the ARC data, Johnson, et al., (2018) suggest there may be 8,000 to upwards of 20,000 school staff working as educational interpreters. That interpreters work under numerous, sometimes ambiguous job titles in K-12 schools (detailed in the last section of this chapter) likely accounts for these higher estimates. This approach to job titles could be a way for states and district to thwart or circumnavigate special education policy; instead of hiring “interpreters,” other job titles are used. (Interpreters also sometimes work under the paraprofessional designation.) I would argue that although in wide usage, the term “educational interpreter” is itself somewhat vague, especially those to unfamiliar with the field. It does not appear in the text of IDEA just as “community interpreter” does not appear in the ADA. From both practice and policy perspectives, nomenclature matters.

The IDEA is clear however in what is required of related service personnel and paraprofessionals. Section (§300.156 (b)(1)) states that this section must outline qualifications for related service personnel so that they:

Are consistent with any State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services;

This section goes on to specify that RSP who “deliver services in their discipline or profession” must meet the requirements in (b)(1) (above) and should not have received waivers for certification or licensure requirements “on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis” (§300.156 (2)(i)(ii)). If we look at “interpreting” as described in IDEA (§300.34(c)(4)), we see that these services are in line with those delivered in the “discipline or profession” of ASL-English interpreting:

Interpreting services includes—

- (i) The following, when used with respect to children who are deaf or hard of hearing: Oral transliteration services, cued language transliteration services, sign language transliteration and interpreting services, and transcription services, such as communication access real-time translation (CART), C-Print, and TypeWell;
- (ii) Special interpreting services for children who are deaf-blind.

Based on this definition, educational interpreters are clearly interpreting between ASL-English for deaf and hearing individuals who happen to be K-12 students. I stress this because based on my experience, there are many in public education and the field of interpreting who tacitly accept the status quo that educational interpreters are [and should be permitted to be] less

qualified than community interpreters because the former work with children at school. This is one of the central policy contradictions in educational interpreting.

Results from the National Summit on Educational Interpreting, a three-day event held in Denver, Colorado in 2014 showed that educational interpreter representatives from fifty states expressed concerns about state standards (Johnson, et al., 2018). Participants in focus groups suggested that “states needed more rigorous standards, with fewer loopholes, more oversight, and stricter enforcement” (p. 108). Johnson, et al., (2018) also asserted that some educational interpreters work on provisional or emergency bases indefinitely. Some states have even codified loopholes to educational interpreters’ alignment with state standards for interpreters through legal exemptions. For example, in 2000 Arizona passed A.R.S §36-1946, requiring all ASL-English interpreters working in a paid capacity to be licensed by the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Arizona Judicial Branch, 2021).

However, this is not the case for ASL-English interpreters working in K-12 schools. In conversations with a nationally certified, licensed Arizona interpreter and interpreting scholar familiar with the history of licensure, the Arizona Department of Education lobbied for and won an exemption to the interpreter licensure rule (personal communication, 2010). This exemption states that interpreters serving DHH students pursuant to an IEP are exempt from licensure (§36 - 1971(c)(5)). As it currently stands, educational interpreters serving DHH children in Arizona schools are *legally permitted to be less qualified than their community interpreter colleagues*.

The Johnson, et al., (2018) patterns of practice investigation was underwritten by the U.S. Department of Special Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and involved four stages of research, each focused on different goals, activities, and types of data collection. Multiple sources were used to collect data on a comprehensive range of topics in educational

interpreting. Data were gathered from literature reviews, reviews of state standards, surveys, focus groups, and The National Summit on Educational Interpreting. The authors devoted significant attention to state employment standards, state and federal policy, and legislative issues around educational interpreter supervision. They also examined states that had published educational interpreter handbooks or similar guidance on the work of K-12 interpreters. In a search of all 50 states, they found only 13 that had published “statewide standardized guidelines” for K-12 interpreters (p. 32). About half had PD or CEU requirements.

Notably, they could not identify a single State Department of Education that had supervision and accountability systems for ASL-English interpreters working in schools. The authors assert that state education agencies have either failed to establish interpreter supervision systems or those policies have not been clearly documented in the literature. They published a four-point list of recommendations for educational interpreter supervision which are the blueprint for concerned stakeholders and future research. They suggested that 1) OSEP needs to “encourage” accountability within state education agencies, 2) the NAIE needs to address the topic in position papers, 3) state education agencies need to establish systems and ensure that LEAs adhere to them, and 4) practitioners need to advocate for these systems, be “players at the table,” and “be accountable for the changes they want to see occur” (p. 160). In my review of the full recommendations, they point directly to policy.

As the results of the Johnson, et al., (2018) patterns of practice studies so clearly demonstrate, states have been reluctant to establish standards for k-12 interpreters and continue to “play” with interpreter policy, interpreting and implementing it in ways that do not center the needs of DHH students. Disputes over k-12 interpreting began in 1982 with the *Rowley* Supreme Court case, in which a deaf child was denied an interpreter because she was already “succeeding

academically” (Board of Education of the Hendrick Hudson Central School District v. Rowley, 1982). Though the “minimum” special education standard established by *Rowley* was overturned by the *Endrew F.* (2017) case, improvements in special education remain bogged down.

Interpreters in K-12 settings demonstrate competency via the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) or other interpreting assessments. The EIPA is a valid and reliable instrument recognized by at least 42 states (Johnson, et al., 2014). Test takers are scored on a five-point scale ranging from beginner (1.0) to advanced (5.0) (Schick & Williams, 1999). Some states like Alaska and California have relatively high standards (require higher EIPA scores), while Florida and New York have no published standards at all (Johnson, et al., 2014).

State standards have improved but are still highly variable. In 2010, twelve states required a minimum 3.5 EIPA score (EIPA Diagnostic Center, 2010). By 2014, at least 24 states required a 3.5 EIPA (Johnson, et al., 2014). (A score of 3.5 indicates intermediate proficiency interpreting in K-12 settings.) Other states require a 3.0 and some require a 4.0; the exact scores required by different states is not relevant to the current study. In line with Johnson, et al., (2018), my assumption is that over-all, standards are too low and variable standards coupled with policy ambiguity significantly limit stakeholders’ ability to assess the efficacy of k-12 interpreting. Combined with unreliable, conflicting, or missing data it is nearly impossible to hold states and districts accountable for the interpreting services delivered in schools.

Deaf and hard of hearing students are highly heterogeneous (Hermans, et al., 2010), and are “more different than they are alike” (Catalano, 2018). Like the general population of K-12 students in the U.S., DHH students similarly represent every race and ethnicity, coming from homes with a rich array of languages, cultures and backgrounds. As people of color, some DHH students may experience discrimination and oppression due to the combination or intersection of

disability, ethnicity and/or gender (Annamma, et al., 2013; Crenshaw, 1989). Disproportionality in special education continues to be problematic for students with disabilities or learning differences (real or presumed), especially those who are Black and Indigenous (Tefera, 2019). Students of color with disabilities also experience higher rates of discipline, suspension, and expulsion sometimes resulting in arrest, criminal charges and incarceration (Office for Civil Rights, 2015-2016, U.S. Department of Education.).

When policy is enacted unequally in schools, marginalized students are often disproportionately affected which can have life-long negative consequences. And when IDEA functions more as a suggestion than legislation, it gives only the impression of protection, what Tefera (2019) calls “the illusion of equity in educational policy” (p. 458.). When states selectively interpret or ignore key provisions, IDEA then functions to further marginalize intersectional DHH students already disadvantaged by race, ethnicity, disability, or any combination thereof (Beratan, 2008; Brady, et al., 2014).

Approaches to Interpreter Supervision

There is a small but growing body of research exploring the rationale for ASL-English interpreter supervision and the need to develop models of supervision for interpreters as practice professionals (Curtis, 2017; Dean & Pollard, 2005; 2011; 2013; Heatherington, 2012). The supervision models described in these studies are based on professional interpreter codes of conduct and ethical decision-making (Fritsch Rudser, 1986; Heatherington, 2012), and clinical models of supervision and reflective practice (Curtis, 2017; Dean and Pollard, 2013) and tend to focus on the practices of community interpreters. There is no comparable body of literature exploring supervision models tailored to the work of educational interpreters as special education professionals serving DHH children.

My framing in this study assumes that ASL-English interpreting is fundamentally the same across consumers and settings: facilitating communication between deaf and hard of hearing individuals who sign and hearing individuals who do not. But as discussed, there are additional practice and policy considerations for educational interpreters critical to the development of supervision models tailored to their professional realities. Unlike many community interpreters, educational interpreters and their supervisors deal with the IDEA *and* ADA, EIPA *and* national certification, EIPA conduct guidelines *and* the NAD-RID CPC. Educational interpreter supervisors live in the middle of the Venn diagram where these two types of ASL-English interpreters over-lap (see Figure 1). It is for these reasons that K-12 interpreter supervision must be examined considering both types of interpreters, and K-12 supervision models must account for more than what is described in clinical supervision models. In the present investigation of K-12- interpreter supervision policy and practice, school leadership and teacher coaching frameworks are explored as viable alternatives to clinical models of interpreter supervision.

Clinical Supervision

Dean and Pollard (2005) describe sign language interpreters as practice professionals like counselors and medical personnel, rather than technicians. Interpreters are not mere technicians who mechanically interpret between two languages. There are multiple complex human needs central to facilitating effective communication between deaf and hearing individuals, regardless of setting or the age of consumers (Dean & Pollard, 2005; 2013). The case for interpreters as practice professionals is central to Dean and Pollard's approach to supervision as modeled on clinical supervision in other practice professions like counseling and medicine. Broadly, clinical supervision generally involves teaching and mentoring in an on-going, professional relationship

over a specified duration of time. It is a process of observation and evaluation provided by an experienced professional who is “competent in the unique body of knowledge required” for the on-going professional development of supervisees or mentees (Corey, et al., 2014).

Dean and Pollard’s work on interpreter supervision combines the principles of reflective practice, case conferencing and demand-control schema (DC-S) as practitioner tools (Dean & Pollard, 2001, 2005, 2013). The DC-S framework was designed to assist interpreters with professional and ethical decision-making and self-reflection and is an important component of their supervision model. The framework suggests that the work of communication facilitation involves a series of demands (environmental, interpersonal, paralinguistic, and intrapersonal) occurring before, during and after interpreting assignments. To address these myriad job demands, “controls” are exercised; controls are the options from which an interpreter might choose to respond. Controls can be considered any of the many ways interpreters can deal with a given work situation and range from conservative (taking less action or no action) to liberal (taking more action) (Dean & Pollard, 2013).

Curtis (2017), building on the work of Dean and Pollard, conducted an online survey with a sample of $N = 113$ interpreters from five countries who had engaged in supervision using DC-S. Twenty-nine open and closed items were used to ask participants about their supervision experiences and to examine current practices in supervision. Most participants agreed that scheduled supervision sessions using DC-S (as defined by Dean and Pollard) benefitted them in the categories of relationships, perspectives, and support. Participants reported that supervision helped them think more critically about situations (98.1%) and made them more aware their own decision-making process (96.12%). Dean and Pollard’s model therefore seems to offer an effective framework for interpreters to use in systematically addressing work-related situations.

While Dean and Pollard's supervision model is certainly relevant to all sign language interpreters, its application to educational interpreting is somewhat limited. The basic tenets of supervision including reflective practice and the use of DC-S would be useful and beneficial for K-12 interpreters for the reasons described by Curtis (2017). But the Dean and Pollard approach is voluntary; interpreters may choose to engage in these practices, can determine the resources devoted to it (time, energy, money), and may be able to choose their supervisors or mentors. For community interpreters who work as independent contractors the flexibility in this model is ideal. The NAD-RID CPC and CEU requirements also create a shared framework for community interpreters which provides formalized accountability systems within which they must work.

Educational interpreting by contrast happens within the context of K-12 public education and all that it entails. As discussed, special education is often a minefield of contradictions and competing priorities, particularly in the education of DHH students (debates regarding the best ways to educate deaf children go back at least one hundred and fifty years and continue to be contentious today). Educational interpreters live these complexities every day. No teacher, educator, or related service personnel can insulate themselves from the many complexities and historic battles over schooling in the U.S., which have taken on new and urgent dimensions in the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on my professional experience and innumerable conversations with K-12 interpreters, many experience the cognitive dissonance of perceiving themselves as committed, related service professionals while being seen by school colleagues as technicians and aides. Their jobs are at once highly specialized and strangely nebulous. The previously discussed role confusion and policy ambiguity combine with earnest concerns about educational equity for DHH students to leave many K-12 interpreters in a state of constant conflict. Gina Oliva (2012)

describes this not uncommon phenomenon in her essay, “Sign Language Interpreters in Mainstream Classrooms: Heartbroken and Gagged.”

Dean and Pollard’s supervision model certainly accounts for the many complexities in the work of interpreters, whether straight-forward linguistic challenges, or the more profound power, privilege and oppression issues between hearing interpreters and deaf people in a hearing world. But the community interpreter model cannot fully account for the many tangled layers of educational policy with which educational interpreters must contend, nor the “heartbreak” that Oliva (2012) describes. Interpreters in K-12 settings must understand special education and IDEA, IEPs, students’ language use and goals as described in IEPs, and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), in addition to a host of other state and district policies. Further, educational interpreters do not have the luxury of initiating voluntary supervisory relationships in the workplace. Whether the building supervisor (principal) or the district head of special education, the standard structures of schools dictate that employees exists somewhere on the organizational chart.

To be clear, in alignment with the CCS framework, critical policy analysis and my positionality as a researcher, I neither advocate for nor condone traditional antiquated top-down school structures. I am trying to establish that, for better or worse, educational interpreters (unlike community interpreters) are employees of K-12 educational organizations with their own supervisory and administrative realities. Every educational interpreter lives in a unique policy ecosystem: in their state, their district and school, even individual teachers’ classrooms. These are the “houses” interpreters live in. And who better to understand where you live than someone on your block? For those of us who have worked in public schools, we know that schools are

worlds unto themselves. Doing the job well is one thing, but even in the best of circumstances surviving the power-struggles, politics and bureaucracy can be another matter entirely.

Special educational policy and the interplay of educational policy with ASL-English interpreter policy are among the most critical and most under-researched issues in K-12 interpreting. Educational interpreters need specialized guidance and support that can help them navigate policy so they better understand where they ‘live,’ and so they can realize their full professional potential for the benefit of DHH students. By using frameworks that account for school structures, we can begin to imagine supervision models for K-12 interpreters while creating systems for holding educational organizations and individual service providers accountable for the quality of interpreting services delivered to DHH students.

School Leadership

School leaders (administrators, supervisors, coordinators, etc.) provide guidance, support and assessment to faculty and staff and have more direct impact on staff than students (Griffith, 2004). School leadership has been shown to affect educators’ work performance, job satisfaction, membership on the educational team, and attrition and retention (Scott & Dinham, 2003). Just as Good et al. (1975) confirmed that teacher practices do indeed make a difference for a range of student and school outcomes, research shows that school leadership matters too.

School leadership models necessarily account for the specific environs, concerns and priorities of schools and educators. The transformational leadership model suggests that effective school leaders acknowledge stakeholders’ contributions, use interpersonal relationships to address human needs and unify staff around shared goals (Griffith, 2004; Gumus, et al., 2018). Effective collaboration among educators is based on trust, effective interpersonal communication

and flexibility (Cook & Friend, 1992), and has been identified as a facilitator for DHH students' academic success (Reed, et al., 2008).

Scott and Dinham (2003) explored statistical models for assessing teacher career satisfaction, motivation and mental health by surveying an international sample of $N = 3000$ teachers asking about their work stressors. The authors also wanted to know why teachers entered the field, whether they thought their pre-service and in-service training was adequate, and how they thought they were perceived by their employers and society. The self-report questionnaire included sections addressing satisfaction/dissatisfaction with teaching as well as motivation and commitment, among other factors. Data were analyzed statistically and reported by country. Confirmatory factor analysis and exploratory factor analysis were used to understand the data. Results from the U.S. study found that the ten-factor satisfaction model used to analyze data from other countries in the study did not produce a fit in the American sample. Sixteen factors were named; the three highest loading items were, 1) student welfare ("satisfaction with support structures for students with special needs," 0.99), 2) teacher welfare ("support structures for teachers," 0.96), and 3) teachers' associations ("the way teacher unions work for the betterment of education," 0.95) (page 83).

Across all countries from which data were gathered, Scott and Dinham (2003) found that school leadership was a factor in teachers' job performance, their job satisfaction, and their feelings of belonging on the educational team. Results also showed that school leadership was a factor in whether teachers chose to stay in their positions. Results of this study informed my design of the Educational Interpreter Supervision and Support survey questionnaire: several items asked participants how their supervision experiences and job support affected their job

performance, job satisfaction, membership on the educational team, and their decisions to continue in the field of educational interpreting.

School leaders also play an important role in implementing policy. Koyama & Varenne (2012) conducted an ethnographic study in New York City as principals implemented data-tracking software mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001). They found that principals often “played” with mandates in an attempt to make them work within local contexts—they had to figure out how to be in compliance *and* make policies fit their schools. It is within these contexts that principals had to find (or create) the wiggle room, the *play* in their local systems to maneuver in the “...negotiation, interpretation, and selective appropriation” of policy (p 158). This study is an example of how policy is not abstract, freestanding or static: policy is people.

This type of policy engagement is of course not limited to principals; all educators are actors that directly or indirectly adapt and appropriate policy based on a host of factors including their values, priorities and goals (Koyama, 2014). Spillane, et al (2011) explored how school leaders responded to change in the shifting policy environments of four Chicago elementary schools. Interview protocols were developed (for school leaders and teachers) to ensure data were collected uniformly, and data were used to generate in-depth case studies and to conduct analyses in three phases.

Spillane, et al. (2011) found that school leaders transformed formal school structures through the generation of novel organizational routines. Leaders did this to bring administrative practices in line with federal policy (governmental regulations) while staying close to “the technical core” of teaching and learning. Conversely, those external pressures (regulations) and the technical core were fundamental aspects of how organizational routines were established. Stated another way, the organizational routines of school leaders showed how they paired

external and internal pressures— regulations and instruction— to both enact policy as required and stay true to the core of their mission as educators.

The findings of Spillane, et al. (2011) may have implications for interpreter supervision research and supervisors as educational leaders. The examination of administrative practice patterns and exploration of the functions of organizational routines indicated practices contributed to “enabling efficient coordinated action,” and “reducing conflict” (p. 593). Moreover, interpreter supervision research might benefit from the authors’ framing of school leaders as juggling external and internal pressures.

In more concrete terms, for interpreter supervisors that could indicate the coupling of special education policy or state interpreter regulations while staying true to the goal of supporting DHH students’ communication needs with respect to Deaf culture values. By viewing interpreter supervision as a balance of external and internal pressures, practices might evolve to improve organizational routines for the benefit of students, interpreters and supervisors.

Teacher Coaching and the Mentor Model

Teacher coaching, also called instructional coaching, is distinct from the expert-novice mentor model promulgated by Bandura (1977). Both mentoring and coaching are used to provide PD, support and guidance to individuals in a variety of jobs, trades and professions. The Bandura-based mentoring model has historically been used in ASL-English interpreter education, student practicum supervision and induction, and for in-service community and educational interpreters seeking job support. Mentors help students, mentees, proteges or apprentices develop their skills and improve performance (Parsloe & Leedham, 2009).

Mentoring is so ubiquitous in the field of ASL-English interpreting in the U.S. that it has become standard practice (RID, 2007; Schick & Williams, 2004; Winston & Lee, 2013), but the

body of research exploring its efficacy for interpreters is somewhat limited (see Delk, 2013; Boeh, 2016; National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, 2009). This is not an argument against mentoring. It is especially important for interpreting students to have Deaf mentors who can guide their ASL learning and encourage the development of deeper understandings of interpreting from Deaf culture and “Deaf-heart” perspectives (Decker, 2015). Rather, I seek to question mentoring as the default and *only* possible approach to supporting professional skill development for interpreters, and therefore propose an alternative that may be useful in K-12 interpreters supervision models.

Teacher coaching differs from mentoring in a few important ways. Instructional coaching is a cyclical process of a) engagement (a functional relationship) between educator and coach, b) coach observation of educator, c) coaching activities and instructing the educator, and d) educator self-reflection activities (Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010). A feedback loop is created when the coach and educator re-engage based on data (observations and self-reflections, other); adjustments are made, and observation occurs again; coaching activities resume; the educator reflects again; and so on.

The instructional coaching model requires coaches to be experienced educators, but they should also be similarly categorized as teachers. That is, instructional coaches should not simultaneously serve as administrators or supervisors with authority to evaluate or discipline the teacher (Knight, 2007). This allows the coaching relationship to develop more equally between colleagues, rather than along an expert-novice binary as with mentoring. Coaching sessions are mutually agreed upon and guided by the teacher’s needs and goals. Teacher coaching happens at the classroom level, embedded in the school day (Ippolito, 2010). Coaches take into consideration the unique realities of a given school, district, and/or region, and meet educators

‘where they live,’ rather than imposing idealized versions of instructional practices (Lowenhaupt, et al, 2014). Mentoring is often divorced from the environment in which the work naturally occurs; teacher coaching happens where teaching happens.

Neither clinical supervision nor mentoring happen where the work happens. This disconnect is problematic for educational interpreters. As discussed at length, K-12 interpreting is highly specialized and context dependent. Coaching accounts for and embraces the many realities in schools. Educational interpreters (as defined in this study) are first and foremost ASL-English interpreters. But as RSP they are also education professionals and school employees. Their work centers on students and occurs in classrooms. Schools are where they live and coaching is job embedded in schools. Teacher coaching is a systematic, practical approach that can be extrapolated to the work of K-12 interpreters as viable alternative to the mentor model.

Knight (2007) warned against supervisors simultaneously functioning as coaches. Coaching is built on relationships between professional equals in contrast to the Bandura model. Supervisors could encourage educational interpreters to nominate coaches or volunteer as part of individual and group PD activities, and supervisors without disciplinary authority could easily adopt a coaching stance. Classrooms are natural laboratories to engage team interpreting and to systematically explore the coaching model in situ while strengthening professional relationships and improving practice. Supervisors could provide the structure and guidance for interpreter coaching; there are many creative ways coaching could be explored. The mentoring model has been entrenched so long that the introduction of interpreter coaching requires more than a name change. Coaching is not mentoring by another name. But in seeking a new, student-centered models of interpreter supervision, stakeholders must be bold enough to envision new paradigms.

Educational Interpreter Supervision

Several authors have discussed the need for educational interpreter supervision and evaluation (Schick, Williams & Bolster, 1999; Seal, 1998; Taylor, 2004; Smith, 2013; Williams & Kupermintz, 2006; Winston, 1994), but to date, few have described it empirically. In this section, I describe two studies and one article that explored the topic of educational interpreter supervision. The first two articles, Taylor (2004) and Kurz & Langer (2004), are foundational in addressing the issue of K-12 interpreter supervision. In the third article, Weirick (2021) conducted a descriptive survey study documenting the supervision and support experiences of a sample of $N = 230$ educational interpreters. The methods and results for the two research studies are reported, and implications for the present study are discussed for all three.

Taylor (2004) established the over-all rationale for educational interpreter supervision and the need for on-going assessment. In this theoretical article, the author explained that many interpreters often work alone in their schools— that is, without the support of other interpreters. This is very different from teachers who have daily opportunities to seek support from colleagues. These interpreters may not join professional interpreting organizations and/or are usually not supervised by other interpreters the way teachers are typically supervised by administrators with a teaching background. This lack of expertise on deafness and the needs of DHH students on the part of schools and districts means that a knowledgeable person is needed to oversee the daily work of interpreters to ensure that students are properly supported.

Taylor (2004) also detailed considerations for assessment and the creation of individual educational interpreter PD plans as a formal component of the evaluative process. She emphasizes that assessments should be on-going and not limited to annual reviews especially with novice interpreters. The author makes a case for using “external evaluators” because most schools would not have someone with the requisite expertise to evaluate interpreters. She

suggests these evaluators should observe and assess interpreters' decision-making processes in addition to their competencies interpreting from English to ASL and from ASL to English.

Taylor (2004) suggests that all aspects of interpreting services in schools, from recruitment and hiring to supervision and assessment, should be overseen by experts in ASL-English interpreting.

Kurz and Langer (2004) interviewed 20 DHH students (elementary to graduate level), all of whom had utilized interpreting services in school. Participants were from all over the U.S., varied in age, hearing and sign language abilities, and one-third had parents who were deaf. As the authors note, this type of heterogeneity is common among DHH individuals. Semi-structured interviews were video recorded and consisted of open-ended questions, with interview length and language (ASL or English) depending on the age and communication preferences of participants. Kurz discussed her positionality as a Deaf person fluent in ASL who herself had used educational interpreters for much of her schooling.

Researchers asked participants questions about their experiences using interpreters at school. Participant interview responses were used to generate "wish lists," ideas that participants could share with educational interpreters, teachers, their hearing peers and others. The wish list for interpreter coordinators included the following suggestions: "Try to keep the interpreters consistent," "educate teachers about using an interpreter," "educate hearing students about ASL, interpreters, and Deaf culture," "educate deaf students about using interpreters," "try to assign interpreters to positions for which they have appropriate background," and "at times, you may need to schedule more than one interpreter" (pp. 33-36).

These suggestions show that participants were aware of some of the 'behind the scenes' factors involved in using interpreters at school. Certainly, participants' responses varied greatly depending on age, maturity, social competence and other factors; it's unlikely that an elementary

student would have discussed hiring or assigning interpreters. But this study was important for several reasons. First, it centered DHH students as autonomous actors with agency and insight into their own school experiences rather than passive receivers of educational services. Second, the primary investigator was herself Deaf and both authors were familiar with K-12 interpreting. Authors' emic positionality allowed them to ask questions that mattered from a deaf perspective which would matter to other DHH users of interpreting services. And finally, the coordinator wish list not only offered practical, actionable suggestions for educators (which are still useful nearly 20 years later), it also established a beginning framework for further investigations of interpreter coordination and supervision.

The third study, Weirick (2021), was the initial investigation and precursor to the present study. Data gathered from this survey study created the foundation for the present study by describing several key characteristics of educational interpreter supervision missing from the literature. No other studies were identified that described who supervised K-12 interpreters, how often supervisors were credentialed interpreters, or interpreters' concerns regarding supervision.

Using an online questionnaire, I asked a sample of $N = 230$ educational interpreters from 34 states about their supervision and support experiences. Using a critical policy analysis framework and transformational leadership lens, I conducted a Qualtrics online survey consisting of 42 open- and closed-ended items organized into four sections: employment, supervision, evaluation, and demographics. All data were analyzed but descriptive and statistical results were published, and a second article to report qualitative results is in progress. Weirick (2021) reported on several important aspects of supervision documented from interpreters' perspectives, with implications for both policy and practice.

Results showed that three major categories of school staff supervised interpreters. The largest group was “general administrators,” including principals and assistant principals, special education directors and deaf education program directors (37.8%). The second group was “interpreter supervisors,” those whose primary job duty was interpreter supervision and coordination. This group included interpreter coordinators, supervisors and lead interpreters (23%). The third group was “faculty members,” teaching faculty including special education teachers and teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing (21.3%) (p. 302). The remainder of the sample reported other supervisors, had no supervisor or did not know who it was (missing 3.5%).

Participants reported working under 22 different formal job titles; about half (52.2%) were employed as “educational interpreters.” Other job titles included variations of “ASL Interpreter” (13.4%), “Sign Language Interpreter” (12.6%), “Interpreter-Tutor” (5.7%), with the rest being called “Interpreter,” “ASL-English Interpreter,” “Interpreter-Aide,” “Paraprofessional Interpreter,” “Communication Assistant,” “Signing Support Staff,” “Language Facilitator,” or “Teacher Aide,” among many others (p. 301).

Participants were asked if their supervisor was a credentialed interpreter, and 23.5% of the sample said yes. Chi-square tests showed a significant relationship between supervisory activities and whether the supervisor was an interpreter. Supervisors who were interpreters conducted more job evaluations, $X^2(2, n=180) = 16.1, p < .001$, assessed interpreting skills more frequently, $X^2(2, n=170) = 38.9, p < .001$, and were more likely to organize PD than non-interpreters, $X^2(2, n=196) = 54.2, p < .001$. Supervisors who were interpreters were seen as more likely than non-interpreters to communicate with DHH students about students’ interpreting-related preferences, needs, and concerns $X^2(4, n = 169) = 20.67, p < .001$.

Participants who said their supervisors were not interpreters were asked if they would objectively describe their supervisor as “fluent in ASL” ($n = 160$); the majority said no (72.5%).

Data gathered in this descriptive study established social validity for future investigations of interpreter supervision, illuminated some of the central factors in supervision from the perspective of educational interpreters (ASL fluency, professional knowledge of interpreting), and is among few studies that have asked K-12 interpreters directly about their supervision experiences. Only half of participants reported having annual job evaluations, and these evaluations frequently did not include assessments of interpreting skills. According to responses in open-ended items, when supervisors did not provide “meaningful evaluations” that included skills assessments [because supervisors were unfamiliar with ASL, the work of interpreting, or the needs of DHH students], many participants were left feeling frustrated and undervalued as professionals. They also expressed concern about the quality of DHH students’ educational access when interpreters’ skills were rarely assessed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

A comparative case study (CCS) research design and critical policy analysis (CPA) lens were used to compare how different ASL-English interpreter supervisors approached their work in public schools and how policy informed their practices. In accordance with the CCS approach (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2017), I addressed three dimensions or “axes” (horizontal, vertical, and transversal) of the phenomenon of interest (K-12 interpreter supervision) to compare four cases (four interpreter supervisors), examining how they conducted their work and interpreted policy based on interview and policy data. The CCS design was chosen as an alternative to traditional case study methods and allowed for a multidimensional examination of interpreter supervision.

Because so little literature exists describing how interpreters are supervised in K-12 schools, the comparative approach was seen as a useful framework to examine and compare individual supervisor cases and how each conceived of and conducted their work: similarities and differences, priorities and values, and the factors that drove their decision-making. These comparative data could then be used to not only describe interpreter supervision based on these four unique cases, but also begin the work of unpacking how policy bears upon K-12 interpreter supervisors in similar or different ways. Policy is a reality in public schools and in the broader field of ASL-English interpreting. Comparing both practice *and* policy across the four cases was seen as an effective way to elicit rich, multidimensional data on contemporary educational interpreter supervision while addressing a significant gap in the literature.

To manage data collection, emphasis was placed on the horizontal axis (supervision) and vertical axis (policy), while the transversal (how the phenomenon of interest has changed over time) was addressed to a lesser extent. The goals of this comparative case study were, 1) to

examine how interpreter supervisors defined, approached, and experienced their work, and 2) to better understand how policy informed supervisor practice and how they engaged with and enacted policy. The over-arching rationale for examining supervision was to “challenge inequalities” (Winton, 2013) in the provision of ASL-English interpreting services as an education equity issue for K-12 deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students who use those services.

Using semi-structured interviews and policy documents (interpreting, supervision, administration), I used a critical policy analysis (CPA) lens (Ball, 1994; Honig, 2006; Koyama 2010, 2011; Sutton & Levinson, 2001; Winton, 2013; Winton & Brewer, 2014) to generate detailed descriptions of how interpreter supervisors made sense of their work, including who and what they prioritized and why. This included examinations of how they navigated and interpreted educational and interpreting policy in the United States of America at various scales (local, district, state, national). Traditional approaches to policy have tended to view both the policy process and eventual product as logical, linear, and neutral (Winton, 2013). A critical perspective of policy considers policy as both text and discourse, which necessarily includes the myriad perspectives, priorities and power struggles of stakeholders (Ball, 1993b; Sutton & Levinson, 2001).

Research Design

I utilized a CCS qualitative research design (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017) to conduct a multiple case study of educational interpreter supervisors in K-12 schools. The case (K-12 interpreter supervision) was approached from a multidimensional, sociocultural perspective by comparing how supervisors approached their work using a critical policy analysis lens. This CCS will focus on the case of K-12 interpreter supervision by examining the experiences of practicing, professional ASL-English interpreters who supervise interpreters in schools.

Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) argue that traditional case studies rely on variance-oriented approaches that advocate for tightly bounding cases spatially and/or temporally (see Yin, 2011) or by definition and context (see Miles and Huberman, 1994). The authors of the CCS framework suggest a process-oriented approach in acknowledgment that no case— whether policy, person, place or thing— exists in a vacuum, and therefore need not necessarily be strictly bound. Bartlett & Vavrus argue that social and education policy cannot be separated from place or time, and certainly not from the many people (actors) involved in the creation, dissemination and implementation of policy. Thus, CCS is proposed as an alternative to more traditional case study, one that is particularly useful for looking at education “policy as practice,” where various actors interact with policy, both intentionally and incidentally (Levinson & Sutton, 2001).

In this study, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with interpreter supervisors (homologous horizontal comparison) and examined relevant policies (vertical comparison) to address the following questions:

- In what ways do interpreter supervisors variably define, experience and approach their work supervising ASL-English interpreters in K-12 public schools?
- In what ways do interpreter supervisors interpret, navigate and enact policy in their work supervising ASL-English interpreters in K-12 public schools?

Positionality Statement

As a practitioner-researcher my approach is rooted in the recognition of deaf and hard of hearing individuals around the world as members of marginalized cultural and sociolinguistic groups with full acknowledgement of their linguistic, civil, and human rights. As a member of the dominant hearing majority, my work as an ASL-English interpreter and researcher

presupposes that deaf people are capable actors in all aspects of their lives and that their participation is central to discourse on all matters affecting them. This includes issues surrounding the education of deaf children and policies regarding the provision of sign language interpreting services in schools.

As a nationally certified interpreter who follows the National Association of the Deaf-Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Code of Professional Conduct (NAD-RID CPC), consumer confidentiality is critical to my work. Just as I value the confidentiality of those for whom I interpret, I also respect the confidentiality of the four individuals who volunteered to participate in this study. Participants are therefore described in several ways in Chapters 4 and 5: they are sometimes referred to by their assigned pseudonyms, sometimes by second person pronouns, and in some instances only by the singular “they.” This decision was made to balance respect for participants’ individual contributions to the study while prioritizing their confidentiality.

Comparative Case Study

The Comparative Case Study (CCS) design (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017) is a heuristic that describes three distinct “axes” to conceptualize and approach a given case. Briefly, the horizontal axis is used to compare related phenomena, whether homologous (entities that have a “corresponding position or structure”), or heterologous (“categorically distinct” entities) (p. 52). The vertical axis was used to trace case connections across levels, networks, and processes and includes the actors who influence and respond to the phenomenon of interest. Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) claim vertical comparisons are especially useful in examining policy (p.75), and it was used for that purpose in this study. The third axis is the transversal, which connects and intersects the other two axes creating an additional dimension allowing researchers to explore how the phenomenon has changed over time (p. 92).

While no case study allows for generalizing findings to the population, the three axes of CCS offer a compelling heuristic for tackling the complex topic of interpreter supervision over time, in different states, spaces and scales, and within and across different supervisors. With this study, I sought to contribute to the literature on K-12 interpreter supervision as a significant part of the inclusion movement for DHH students in the U.S. Comparative case study offered a logical and practical approach to examining K-12 interpreter supervision.

Horizontal Comparison: Supervisor Practice

The horizontal axis in CCS offers a way to compare similar phenomena, examining how they evolve in “socially-produced locations... connected in multiple and complex ways” (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; p. 51). In this study, the horizontal axis was used to compare interpreter supervisor practice to better understand how they perceive and conduct their work. Supervisors bring with them varied experiences in terms of their personal, cultural and educational backgrounds, experience with interpreting, deaf education and Deaf culture, in addition to other factors. These factors were considered when examining how they approached their work. Using these data, practice profiles were created for each participant.

Two types of interpreter supervisors were initially chosen a priori (*Interpreter Supervisors* and *Teaching Faculty*) based on findings from Weirick (2021), a survey of educational interpreters’ supervision experiences ($N = 230$). In that study, three main groups of school staff were described who supervised interpreters: *General Administrators*, *Interpreter Supervisors*, and *Teaching Faculty* (mostly teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing). In designing the present study, I determined the latter two groups were well-matched for horizontal comparison due to their homologous nature as deaf education professionals who directly supported K-12 DHH students. However, due to sampling limitations and/or other factors, there

were not enough consenting participants to retain the *Teaching Faculty* group, so it was eliminated. This was unfortunate as the results of Weirick (2021) showed that the *Teaching Faculty* group was comparable in size to the *Interpreter Supervisors* group.

Vertical Comparison: Policy Engagement

The vertical axis in CCS offers researchers a useful tool to examine how complex networks of individuals and artifacts are linked through education policy (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). Rather than examining policy in a linear fashion at discrete scales as in traditional policy approaches, vertical comparison allows scholars to look at how education policy is interpreted by actors within and across scales. Policies, defined as both text *and* discourse, may be assumed to be mere objects or things, but they should also be considered “processes and outcomes” (Ball, 1993b). Examination of “policy networks” therefore becomes a necessary part of deconstructing and interrogating education policy more meaningfully (Ball, 1994). Researchers must also attend to “policy appropriation” when conducting critical education policy studies with a sociocultural lens and an eye on civics and democracy (Levinson, et al., 2009). In this study, DHH students’ access to language and communication via interpreters was seen as central to addressing educational equity for this population.

In this study, various policies related to K-12 educational interpreter supervision were examined to better understand the interaction between supervisors and policy. Rather than conducting isolated textual or discourse analyses of policy documents, I used data from semi-structured interviews and policies to describe how supervisors understood and applied policy in their work. The policies deemed most salient by participants were identified to help ‘paint a picture’ of the unique policy ecosystem in which each participant worked, and to identify

similarities and differences within and across groups. Using these data, policy profiles were created for each participant.

Transversal Comparison: Supervision Over Time

The transversal axis in CCS offers a way to examine the chosen phenomenon multidimensionally by overtly attending to the connections between the horizontal and vertical axes (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). In this way, the transversal connects the other axes so researchers can “trace the transversal” over time and place while attending to the inexorable historical aspects of policy change (p. 92).

The transversal was addressed by examining how participants came to their positions and how their practices have (or have not) been influenced by the presence, absence, and evolution of educational interpreter policy. This added important historic context to participants’ policy profiles which were triangulated with state-level policy trajectory, such as when their state adopted EIPA requirements, or when (if ever) interpreters were required to be licensed as related service personnel under IDEA (2004). Here I asked not only how interpreting policy informed supervision, but how supervisors engaged with and changed policy as well.

Participants and Setting

The four participants in this study were public education employees whose primary job involved supervision, coordination and evaluation of ASL-English interpreters working in K-12 schools in the U.S. I obtained approval to conduct the study from the University’s Institutional Review Board and attempted to purposefully recruit a variety of supervisors from diverse backgrounds and geographic locations.

Inclusion Criteria

Primary inclusion criteria. Potential participants were considered if they: 1) were an adult age 18 and over, 2) were employed by a public education entity in the U.S. and, 3) had a public education job that required supervising and/or coordinating ASL-English interpreters in K-12 settings. Those who met primary inclusion criteria were evaluated for secondary criteria.

Secondary inclusion criteria. Potential participants were defined as meeting secondary criteria if their *primary job duty* was supervising interpreters, irrespective of other responsibilities such as teaching or administrative duties. This was determined by asking potential participants in the pre-screener if supervising interpreters was their primary job duty. Note: The original secondary inclusion criteria did not require potential participants to primarily supervise interpreters which would have allowed for teachers who supervised interpreters to be included. When I determined the teaching faculty group was no longer viable, secondary criteria were revised to include only those whose primary job was supervision to create one homologous group.

Exclusion criteria. Potential participants were excluded if they: 1) were not age 18 or over, 2) were not employed by a K-12 public education entity, 3) did not supervise sign language interpreters in K-12 public school settings.

Recruitment and Sampling

I disseminated the call for participants flyer online via email, and on social media using public Facebook and Twitter pages related to ASL-English interpreting, Deaf Studies, and deaf education in the U.S. The flyer included my university email address and a URL to access a pre-screening questionnaire administered via Qualtrics (described in the following sub-section). I emailed the flyer to known personal and professional contacts in the fields of ASL-English interpreting, interpreter education and deaf education in K-12 and post-secondary schools. I also

disseminated the flyer to known contacts in interpreting organizations such as the National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE). Participants were also recruited using participant email addresses from Weirick, 2021 (in press) which were retained with participants' consent and stored securely in Box@UA cloud storage.

I engaged snow-ball sampling through recruitment on public social media websites and email. All recruitment activities began after the approved IRB for the Educational Interpreter Supervision and Support survey (Weirick, 2021) was amended and approved, and continued for about six weeks until four participants had consented to participate and scheduled interviews.

Pre-screening & Participant Selection

Potential participants clicked on the URL in the flyer or email (or responded to via email) and were redirected to the pre-screening questionnaire administered via Qualtrics survey software under license from the university (see APPENDIX B). The questionnaire consisted of 17 closed-ended items in yes/no and multiple-choice (drop-down) formats to determine whether respondents met criteria and to gather demographic information such as gender, race/ethnicity, and hearing identity (child of deaf adults, hearing, deaf, hard of hearing) to maximize variation. Participants were asked to enter their names and email address to be contacted if they were chosen to participate, and if they consented for their names and emails to be saved for future research [regardless of whether they were chosen for the present study]. Participation was voluntary and all responses were optional (could be skipped). Incomplete surveys were rejected.

All sampling decisions were made as part of the recruitment and pre-screening process. Twenty-four individuals completed the pre-screening questionnaire. The participant selection process was as follows. I created a matrix with pre-screener item numbers on the x-axis (excluding item 16, name and email), and deidentified respondents by assigning them a number

1-24 on the y-axis. All pre-screening data was condensed into simple codes so only numbers and codes appeared in the matrix: Y for yes, N for no, state abbreviation (e.g., AZ), hearing identity (e.g., H for hearing, D for deaf) and demographics (e.g., W for white, H for Hispanic), and so on. The key for respondents' numerical identifiers was stored separately and securely in line with IRB requirements.

I first screened for primary inclusion criteria. Those who did not meet all three were eliminated. I then screened for secondary criteria; respondents who identified as neither supervisors nor TODHHs, or who were not willing to be interviewed were eliminated. At this point 19 remained. Using response data, I populated each of the intended comparison groups (*Teaching Faculty* and *Interpreter Supervisors*) with six individuals (five primary and one alternate) to be invited to participate. Priority was given to those identifying as DHH or CODA/SODA, those who did not identify as white, and those who were not (or had never been) credentialed interpreters. Consideration was also given to state of residence and experience (in years); all these factors were intended to maximize variation within and across the two initially chosen comparison groups.

These twelve potential participants were then informed individually via email that they had been chosen to participate and were sent a Qualtrics link to the consent form. Five individuals from the *Interpreter Supervisors* group and one from *Teaching Faculty* consented. I contacted participants to schedule interviews and followed up several times over three weeks to make final arrangements. Ultimately, interviews were scheduled with four individuals, all from the *Interpreter Supervisors* group. At this point, I determined that my secondary criteria would necessarily only include those who identified primarily as supervisors, so the *Teaching Faculty* group was eliminated.

After the sample was confirmed, links to the pre-screener and consent form were deactivated. The electronically signed consent forms and pre-screener responses of the four scheduled participants were downloaded from Qualtrics and uploaded to Box@UA. The list of individuals who had consented for their names and emails to be retained for future research were also downloaded and saved in box.

Participants

The final sample included four participants: three female, one male, two from the western U.S. and two from the east. Despite attempts to obtain a diverse sample, limitations in recruitment and/or other factors resulted in a sample that included only participants identifying as white, hearing interpreters from urban or suburban areas. One voluntarily identified as a member of the LGBTQ community.

Several individuals who identified as deaf, hard of hearing, or as children or siblings of deaf adults (CODA or SODA) responded to and completed the pre-screener, but none were included in the final sample. There were several reasons for this: 1) they did not meet inclusion criteria, or 2) they met inclusion criteria but were eliminated by default when the *Teaching Faculty* group was eliminated, or 3) they consented to participate but repeated attempts to schedule an interview were unsuccessful. Pseudonyms were used to de-identify participants.

Data Collection

Data were collected from: 1) *Pre-Screening questionnaires*, 2) *Interviews*, and 3) *Policy documents* related to interpreter supervision. Pre-screening data were only retained for the final sample of participants, all other responses were deleted (only names and emails saved for future research were retained with consent). All research activities were conducted remotely through online video software (Zoom, other), email, telephone, videophone and/or text message. I

maintained analytic memos throughout data collection and analyses to maintain a record of observations, concerns, or insights on the study (Maxwell, 2013; Saldaña, 2016).

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four participants and consisted of a recorded Zoom interview using 16 open-ended questions, designed to be about one hour long. Participants were sent an email reminder about three days prior to interviews with the interview protocols with a reminder to send policy documents of their choosing. This allowed participants to ask clarifying questions or reschedule if necessary. The choice of semi-structured interviews has both strengths and weaknesses (Yin, 2018). I chose this format because as Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) explain, it is well-aligned with CCS due to the “processual nature of conversation” and considers that knowledge is socially produced (p. 55). Follow-up questions were individually customized based on participant responses (to interview questions and the pre-screener), and the policies that supervisors thought were important.

Interview Protocols. Open-ended interview questions were organized into two broad and interdependent parts, 1) Supervision and 2) Policy, designed to support the inductive nature of qualitative research (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). In accordance with Turner (2010), interviews began with reading a script clarifying protocols, reaffirming consent (signed consents submitted prior to interviews), and to allow participants to ask clarifying questions (see APPENDIX C). Interviews ended with a brief script reiterating confidentiality, explaining to participants that they would be sent transcripts for review, and that I might contact by them should further clarification be needed. The first part of the interview addressed supervisors’ beliefs, practices and priorities, while the second part addressed supervisors’ engagement with policy within and

beyond their positions in public education. Questions also addressed their broader values, concerns and recommendations regarding K-12 interpreter policy.

Policy Documents

Participants were asked to discuss policy documents or job-related forms or artifacts that they saw as germane to their work as supervisors. When scheduling interviews, I asked participants to describe and/or provide policy documents (or weblinks) prior to their interview dates, but most documents were submitted after interviews were completed. Documents could have been any of the following: a) job descriptions (supervisors and/or interpreters), b) departmental classifications, c) EIPA requirements, d) licensure requirements, e) district organizational charts, f) interpreting handbooks, or g) interpreter request forms, or any other policies deemed relevant. I also independently verified publicly available information such as state minimum EIPA scores. In this way, I triangulated interview data (Maxwell, 2013) and asked participants targeted questions about their interpretation and implementation of relevant policy.

The policies included for each participant were based on consensus between researcher and participant. I also made document inclusion decisions based on emergent patterns across cases. The absence of certain policies was considered in analyses because a lack of policy had salience to some participants tasked with supervision under those conditions. In this way, a lack of policy was treated with the significance of extant policy.

Data Analysis

Different types of data require different analytic methods and CCS is no exception. While not a mixed methods study, my design employed of mix of data collection and analyses methods. Data analysis began after all four interviews had been completed. Qualitative data analyses

emphasized the comparative nature of the case study design and data were coded and analyzed using NVIVO (Version 12). I utilized a process-oriented, iterative approach while guided by Maxwell (2016), Miles and Huberman (1994), Saldaña (2017), and Yin (2018) among others. Quantitative analyses (frequencies) were focused on pre-screening questionnaires and policy documents. Member checks were completed with participants to request clarification as necessary. Six stages of data analyses are described in this section: 1) Interview Transcription, 2) First Cycle Coding, 3) Transitional Analyses, 4) Supervisor Practice Profiles and Policy Profiles, 5) Second Cycle Coding, and 4) Comparison and Synthesis.

Interview Transcription

Interviews included 16 main questions (APPENDIX C) and ranged in duration from an hour and a half to just over two hours long. Due to the inductive nature of qualitative research and the processual nature of dialogue, specific follow-up questions were customized for individual participants based on their responses to interview questions and their responses in the pre-screening questionnaire. I viewed completed interviews in their entirety in the order they were conducted, focusing on one case at a time. I downloaded the transcript for the first interview as a web Video Text Track (VTT) file. Using the Mac TextEdit program, I deidentified the participant by using the “find and replace” function to find their name and replace it with “Participant 1.” I viewed the entire interview again while editing for accuracy in TextEdit. I renamed the file to indicate that it was deidentified and added the interview number. This process was repeated for all four interviews over the course of several days.

All participants used spoken English in interviews and often signed short phrases or words in ASL while speaking or gestured in ways that added to the meaning of their spoken utterances. Because all participants were bilingual or perhaps multilingual (I did not ask about

languages other than ASL and English), I wanted to honor their choice to communicate in the way that was natural for them. These data were added to VTT files parenthetically, noting whether something was signed or gestured, and what was said in ASL.

Notes on gestures were straightforward descriptions of the physical action; I did not editorialize on gestures. For example, a participant throwing their hands up while expressing frustration was annotated as “Gestured hands in air” in that section of text. I interpreted ASL utterances and added them where they appeared in the spoken transcript. One participant was discussing hiring and how applicants’ interpreting skills were assessed while using the ASL sign for screening or filtering. This was annotated as “signed screening” in that block of text. During interviews, if participants signed something that was unclear or I was concerned about misinterpreting, I requested clarification. These clarifications are reflected in transcripts.

I annotated participant affect and emphasis using punctuation, capital letters and asterisks in transcripts to retain the vocal inflection and emotion of participants’ audio and video so those could be considered in data analyses. After all transcripts were edited, the VTT files were uploaded to Box@UA. Files were shared individually with participants to conduct member checks and suggest changes (Maxwell, 2013). Two participants were unable to access files in Box so I resent them individually as email attachments and asked them to delete it after they had reviewed it. I also asked participants clarifying questions via email. After VTT files were approved, I imported them to the NVivo (Version 12) desktop application on my password protected computer. In NVivo, each file was categorized as a case (int_1, int_2, etc.). A key was unnecessary as it was easy to remember the order in which participants were interviewed.

First Cycle Coding

First cycle coding was thematic and focused on identifying broad themes in the data guided by research questions and a critical policy lens. Each interview was coded individually starting with int_1. All codes were single words or short phrases. Sections of transcripts that were coded ranged from short phrases to full sentences. Interviews were not coded in their entirety; coding was focused on addressing the study axes and research questions while being open to new discoveries, perspectives and patterns in the data. Notable in vivo quotes were recorded in analytic memos.

Supervisor job characteristics were coded first and included job title, job classification and description, pay, years in job, type of sites, organizational structure, the number of DHH students served by supervisors, the number of staff interpreters they supervised, and (if applicable) whether supervisors coordinated interpreting services for DHH adults. These job basics helped me situate supervisors in their organizations and offered structure for analyzing interview and policy data. Data on participants' department heads and colleagues were initially coded as "chain of command," reflecting my narrow conception of supervision in schools. Anything coded under chain of command was later subsumed under the code organizational structure.

Results of Weirick (2021) showed that supervisor practices such as scheduling and staffing, evaluations, PD, and supervisors' knowledge and experience as interpreters were important aspects of the work. These data were used to develop interview questions and to establish provisional codes in alignment with the three CCS axes. Other codes emerged from the data as part of the iterative process of coding and analysis.

For example, the first axis was supervisor practice. Participants' discussions of embedded aspects of practice were coded: evaluation, staffing coverage, most time spent, leadership,

priorities, decision-making, ethics, PD, and “doing the job” among others. “Doing the job” was a broad code that captured participants’ descriptions of their schedules, administrative tasks, and overall routines in a typical week (see APPENDIX E). The second axis was policy engagement. Some codes aligned with this axis included: IEP, EIPA score, hiring, evaluations, job description, job title, organizational structure, policy issues, and accountability. The third axis, change over time, included codes such as: policy issues, professionalism, how got job (how the supervisor got their job), how long job existed, organizational structure, and EI field addressed supervision (whether the field of educational interpreting had addressed the issue of supervision).

A variety of codes aligned with the third axis because participants had experienced many changes in their supervisory careers, and because CCS studies incorporating policy and practice are multidimensional. Interview data also aligned with more than one axis, so no set of codes was exclusive to any axis. For example, hiring was coded under both supervisor practice and policy engagement since district policy typically dictates hiring practices. Discussions of EIPA scores were coded under accountability, professionalism, hiring and policy issues because the EIPA is the foundational assessment and credential upon which educational interpreting is built. Hiring practices and the EIPA both also appear in change over time as these are two aspects of K-12 interpreting that have changed substantially in the past two decades and have direct significance to supervisors. Codes appearing under more than one axis helped me follow various aspects of supervisors’ work across cases and topics in the ways that were relevant to supervisors based on their interviews.

After all interviews had been coded, I reviewed the list of codes; there were approximately 45 codes across job characteristics and the three axes. In reviewing the coded data, rereading transcript passages, writing analytic memos, and thinking about the data, I

noticed a glaring omission in the codes. I had no code that addressed the needs of DHH students. Students' needs appeared all throughout the data: in coordinating interpreters; in evaluation, assessment and PD and impacts of interpreters' skills on DHH students; in IEP goals; in supervisors' priorities and interpretation of special education policy. It was clear I needed to add this code. It was also becoming clear that supervisors met student needs indirectly by addressing staff needs, interpreters and students being in a symbiotic relationship of sorts. I determined a new code for staff needs was the logical companion to student needs. I took another pass through the interviews and populated the new codes. This marked the completion of first cycle coding.

Transitional Analyses

Saldana (2016) recommends reviewing your first cycle codes and memos and exploring your data in novel ways to help you transition into subsequent phases of coding, a sort of bridge to avoid diving back into the data stream haphazardly. I considered several NVivo tools (e.g., matrix query) to review first cycle codes but found them incompatible with my data and/or research goals. In the Explore function, I found charts and hierarchy charts to be the most useful for visualizing codes based on frequency of coding references (these data are reported in Chapter 5). This bridging process was useful for helping link the two coding cycles, but it also allowed me to step back and reflect on my research goals which guided my subsequent analyses and synthesis.

Practice Profiles and Policy Profiles

I used graphical data visualizations, initial codes and insights from first cycle coding to begin generating the Supervisor Practice Profiles and Policy Profiles. The Supervisor Profiles included all four participants' backgrounds, job characteristics and organizational data in one matrix for easy comparison. I had planned to detail practices like hiring and evaluation in

Supervisor Practice Profiles, but because these types of practices tend to be heavily influenced by policy, I decided it would be more efficient to compare them alongside other policy topics. The Policy Profiles matrix included a vast amount of data coded under the topics of: EIPA, hiring policy and procedures (including EIPA scores), licensure, various aspects of PD policy (state, organizational, individual, activities [individual and group]), pay and reimbursement, substitute policy, policy engagement (supervisors' interpretation of and engagement with policy) and policy issues (supervisors' policy concerns). Policy documents were examined throughout the process of coding policy data and populating profiles. The total policy data create a snapshot of the unique policy ecosystem that each supervisor inhabited.

Second Cycle Coding

Second cycle values coding used to review first cycle codes and the Supervisor Profile and Policy Profile matrices. Affective methods such as values coding are especially useful for qualitative studies that explore “intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies” (Saldaña, 2016). Initial codes were reviewed to identify participants' priorities, attitudes, beliefs and values across practice and policy. Many of participants' values, priorities and frustrations had been identified in first round coding, so these were noted and relevant portions of interviews we reviewed for clarification and context. Only a few new codes such as accountability were added in the second round. Because the second cycle did not generate many new codes, I was able to focus analyses on identifying and review existing codes that addressed values while reviewing transcripts and recording memos in preparation to report results. Insights were documented in written in notes and analytic memos, and I revisited codes and interviews recursively to review and clarify data.

The policy engagement data in the Policy Profiles matrix were used to identify supervisors' concerns and priorities regarding policy. Codes and interview excerpts in Policy Profiles were reviewed to identify frequently appearing policies, terms and themes while reviewing interview transcripts for additional context. This resulted in a new column titled Policy Issues. The policy concerns of each participant were identified and listed in this column. Items in this column were then color coded to identify major themes from which the major policy themes of accountability and professionalism were identified. They were organized by scale.

Comparison and Synthesis

In the final stage of analyses, all three axes of investigation were integrated and data synthesized to answer the research questions and to generate detailed descriptions of supervisors' practices and policy engagement. The Supervisor and Policy Profiles constructed for each participant were reviewed to identify dominant themes and patterns within and across participant cases, and to paint a picture of each supervisor. All data were used to compare supervisor practice, priorities, and values along with major policy concerns, and to integrate the added dimension of change over time (transversal axis). Themes that aligned with the transversal axis were identified across practice and policy (many were first identified during interviews and in first cycle coding then documented in analytic memos). The profile matrices and interviews were examined recursively throughout the process of reporting results.

Social Validity

Social validity for the examination of educational interpreter supervision was established by Weirick (2020) and by piloting interview questions for the present study with a former educational interpreter supervisor and teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing (TODHH). Participants in that study expressed concerns about both the quality and quantity of supervision

they received, as well as potential negative impacts to themselves and to DHH students when supervision was inadequate or lacking entirely. This topic is also important in consideration of the significant academic, linguistic and social challenges that DHH students experience, notably ‘language deprivation syndrome’ in which DHH students’ linguistic development is significantly impacted by a lack of language inputs (Caselli, et al., 2020).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, I present multidimensional comparisons of interpreter supervisors generated by careful application of the CCS framework to the four chosen participant cases using a critical policy lens in analyses. Using this approach, I present thick descriptions of how participants approached supervision including how policy shaped their practices and how they in turn engaged with and shaped policy. Data presented in this chapter include supervisors' job characteristics, major and minor themes, and descriptions of how supervisors experienced and conducted their work. I also share additional factors, connections and contradictions in the interaction of policy and practice as evident in case data.

Results are organized into four main sections: Job Characteristics, Supervisor Practice, Policy Engagement, and Supervision Over Time. In the first section, I describe supervisors' primary job characteristics including type of employer, job title, salary, number of staff interpreters and students served, and related data. In the remaining three sections, I present data aligned with the three axes of comparison case study described in chapter three (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). These sections are Supervisor Practice (horizontal axis), Policy Engagement (vertical axis), and Supervision Over Time (transversal axis).

In the first section, Job Characteristics, I describe participants' employment basics in aggregate rather than attributing characteristics to individual participant cases. This decision was made as part of a concerted effort to maintain participant confidentiality. Deafness is a low-incidence disability; consequently, interpreters and interpreter supervisors comprise extremely small populations of related service personnel and administrators in public schools. Thus, I thought it necessary to take additional steps to protect participants' identities—beyond just

assigning pseudonyms and obscuring some descriptions such as participants' exact job titles. I sought to strike a balance between reporting out the rich data collected for each case while protecting participant identities to the greatest extent possible. To that end, throughout Chapters 4 and 5 some data is reported by using participant pseudonyms, some by using second person pronouns, and some only by use of the singular "they." While this does impose some limits on how the individual case data are presented, it was seen as a necessary compromise to respect participant confidentiality.

In the second section, Supervisor Practice, I profile each of the four participants and report four main themes: 1. *Consistent Interpreting Services*, 2. *Supporting Staff*, 3. *Collaboration and Advocacy*, and 4. *Interpreters Supervising Interpreters*. These themes emerged from interview data in which participants described their responsibilities, leadership perspectives, challenges and priorities. These data are presented to answer the primary research question, *in what ways do interpreter supervisors variably define, experience and approach their work supervising ASL-English interpreters in k-12 public schools?* In this section, I report data from supervisors' professional practice profiles, compiled for each case and presented as case comparisons.

In the third section, Policy Engagement, I present data answering the secondary research question, *in what ways do interpreter supervisors interpret, navigate and enact policy in their work supervising ASL-English interpreters in k-12 public schools?* Here I report participant profile data focused on policy: the education and interpreting policies participants said were salient to their work. Although this section focuses on how supervisors engaged with and enacted policy, policy issues were integral to how supervisors conducted their work; the policy section should be understood within the context of supervisor practice rather than apart from it. This

section also segues into the policy changes experienced by participants in the course of their work as supervisors and interpreters.

In the final section, I report data collected in alignment with the transversal axis, which examines changes in educational interpreter supervision over time. These data describe historic events and changes participants saw as significant, including how they came to their supervisory positions, differing approaches to supervision, and policy evolution/stagnation in the field of educational interpreting. The data I present in this section indicate that changes in the field of educational interpreting, as well as those in post-secondary interpreter education, were factors in how participants approached supervision. The transversal axis is a heuristic used to “trace” the phenomenon by integrating and illuminating the other axes, elucidating relevant temporal aspects evident in the data. Using the CCS framework, I was able to ‘make sense’ of interpreter supervision by comparing cases multidimensionally, generating data and analyses that contribute to the body of knowledge on educational interpreter supervision in schools.

Job Characteristics

All four cases are of interpreter supervisors working in urban or suburban areas. Participants were employed by organizations serving between 2,000 to over 100,000 total students (not only special education). For simplicity and consistency, participants’ employers will be referred to broadly as their organization, unless greater specificity is necessary. Two supervisors were employed by public school districts, and two by K-12 educational service agencies that serve students by deploying teachers and/or related service personnel (including interpreters) to public schools within specified geographic regions.

Two participants exclusively supervised and coordinated educational interpreters serving DHH students. The other two also supervised others in addition to interpreters: one supervised

other special education professionals and one also coordinated interpreting services for DHH adults within their organization (e.g., DHH parents, DHH faculty/staff, DHH community members). Three participants were employed under their organization's special education department.

Supervisors' job titles included variations of interpreter supervisor, lead interpreter, interpreting program head and communication services supervisor. (Exact job titles are not reported to protect participant anonymity.) All supervisors were full-time, benefitted, classified employees working 11 or 12 months per year, with a median annual salary of \$62,500 (range = 40,000 – 100,000). Two participants described their compensation as hourly, and two as salary. The supervisor with the smallest group of staff interpreters coordinated 12 educational interpreters; the two supervisors with the largest numbers of interpreters each coordinated nearly 30. These figures represent only full-time equivalent (FTE) staff interpreters supervised by participants and do not include part-time, substitute, or contract interpreters (also referred to as "freelance" interpreters), whether employed by the supervisor's organization or contracted externally from staffing or interpreter agencies. Differences between staff, substitute, and contract interpreters will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

Participants collectively coordinated and supervised interpreting services for an average of 31 DHH students (range = 12 – 50), across an average of 13 discrete educational sites (range = 6 – 20) during the academic year (AY) for which data was obtained. Supervisors coordinated services for DHH students at every grade level kindergarten to high school, including secondary vocational training programs. Higher educational attainment (e.g., holding an advanced degree) was not associated with higher pay for supervisors in this case study. The two participants

responsible for supervising and coordinating the largest groups of interpreters [serving the largest numbers of DHH students] had the lowest annual salaries.

Supervisor Practice

Supervisors

Participants were assigned pseudonyms and are presented here in alphabetical order as *Kathy, Linda, Michael* and *Rebecca*. I will describe some background characteristics for each before presenting major themes that emerged from their practice data. If one theme was more salient for a given participant, I emphasized their experiences in that section more than those of other participants. In this way, not all participants were given the same attention in every section because not all themes were equally relevant to them. I attempted to give equal weight to the rich and varied experiences, perspectives and insights of all participants throughout this chapter. All participants “talked with their hands” during interviews, whether through gestures, by signing ASL while speaking, or some combination. In vivo quotes in this chapter will include participants’ gestures or signs in parenthesis where applicable. Capitalized words and phrase denote comments signed in ASL.

Kathy has been a practicing interpreter and educational interpreter supervisor for approximately 20 years. She is the most experienced interpreter supervisor and has been in her current position the longest. She is a nationally certified interpreter and holds an ASL-English interpreting “certificate of completion” from a post-secondary institution.

Linda has been a practicing interpreter for nearly 25 years. She is nationally certified, holds the EIPA credential (written test), and has an ASL interpreting license issued by her state. Linda has a bachelor’s degree in ASL-English interpreting and a master’s in an education-related

field. She has been in her current supervisory position less than five years and has prior leadership experience in the interpreting field.

Michael has been a practicing interpreter nearly 15 years. He holds the BEI certification, the EIPA credential (performance test), and an ASL interpreting license issued by the state where he works. He has an associate degree in ASL-English interpreting and a bachelor's degree in a related field. He has been in his current supervisory position for less than five years.

Rebecca has been a practicing interpreter for nearly 20 years and an interpreter supervisor for about 15 years. She is nationally certified, holds the EIPA credential (performance test), and has held interpreting credentials in a state where she previously worked. She has a bachelor's degree in ASL-English interpreting, has completed post-secondary activities in interpreter leadership, and has a teaching certificate.

All participants attended post-secondary ASL-English interpreter training programs, hold active ASL-English interpreting credentials, and are experienced working with a range of DHH consumers (children, adolescents and adults) in a variety of settings not limited to K-12 education. All supervisors' education and interpreting credentials exceed the minimum requirements for educational interpreters in their states.

Major Themes

Four major themes emerged in how supervisors defined, approached and conducted their work: I will briefly introduce each then expand in the following subsections.

The first theme and most important priority as expressed by all supervisors was that DHH students needed *Consistent Interpreting Services*. All supervisors described their primary obligation as ensuring DHH students received the daily ASL-English interpreting services they were entitled to by law as documented in their IEP or 504 Plan. The second theme, *Supporting*

Staff, addressed the many ways supervisors described supporting, mentoring and guiding interpreters so they were better prepared to serve students. The third major theme was *Collaboration and Advocacy*. This refers to supervisors' work with a variety of colleagues to educate colleagues about DHH students' needs and to advocate for interpreting services for so the students had meaningful access to communication in all aspects of school life. The fourth and final major theme was *Interpreters Supervising Interpreters*, where participants emphasized the importance of educational interpreter supervisors being practicing, professional ASL-English interpreters.

Consistent Interpreting Services. Any type of supervisor is, *prima facie*, responsible for supervising and managing staff. Based on these cases, the core of interpreter supervisors' work was supporting DHH students. Supervisors' priorities and primary challenges revolved around making sure students had access to interpreting services at school: for every assembly, pep rally, field trip or trip to the nurse, in every class, all day every day. Supervisors saw consistent access to interpreting services as a vital support for the inclusion of DHH students— so students understood what was said to them by others [spoken in English], and so others understood what they said [in ASL or another sign system]. This was the essence of what interpreter supervisors did: they made sure DHH students consistently had access to communication and information via interpreters. Supervisors prioritized student services above all else. As Kathy said: “Interpreting needs override everything. If there’s a need for an interpreter, we’re there. I mean it seriously; it’s drop everything and go.”

The *Consistent Interpreting Services* theme encompassed various interwoven aspects of supervisors' work in maintaining adequate staffing levels through the careful coordination of interpreting services, while prioritizing students' access to academic content and communication.

Adequate staffing meant that supervisors had enough interpreters to go around, that all students were “covered,” not left “uncovered” without services, as described by supervisors. For some supervisors, this typically meant requesting and assigning substitute interpreters to cover staff absences which was often difficult or impossible depending on whether supervisors had access to a substitute pool or contract interpreters, and if so whether substitute interpreters were available to accept assignments. All supervisors except Linda were regularly able to formally request and assign substitute interpreters.

Michael had several substitute interpreters on staff available to fill-in at any one of the many schools where his regular staff interpreters were assigned, so staffing and sub coverage was typically not a problem. It was also not a pressing daily concern for Kathy who had an assistant who was a full-time staff interpreter able to sub or “float” anywhere that interpreting needs arose over the course of the week. But for Rebecca and Linda, the daily coordination of student interpreting services was often an intricately orchestrated balance of multiple factors: staff availability, DHH students’ individual characteristics and needs, and the logistics of time and location (schools/sites), in addition to other practical and policy considerations.

The daily juggling of many considerations was one of the most consistent features of supervisor practice across cases but to varying degrees for each supervisor. Although Michael and Kathy had the benefit of consistent access to subs, they still had to balance interpreter assignments with individual student factors to meet students’ needs and preferences. Rebecca described a small pool of three “daily subs” whom she could request that were employed by her organization similarly to how a pool of substitute teachers was maintained. Her organization also contracted with independent interpreter agencies to meet staffing needs. Even with both options available, she sometimes struggled to obtain substitute interpreters.

Staffing and scheduling was never as simple as just assigning an interpreter to a DHH student in the beginning of the year. Supervisors handled daily scheduling needs and conflicts in the coordination and placement of multiple FTE staff interpreters across schools and sites and two supervisors coordinated interpreters across districts, districts depending on the organization. When possible, supervisors secured substitute interpreters when staff interpreters were absent or temporarily reassigned elsewhere. They sometimes “shuffled” staff interpreters to fill in for absent or reassigned interpreters to “provide coverage” when the organization did not employ substitutes or contract with agencies, as in Linda’s case:

Hahahaha! Subs?! What are those? [My organization] does not have a sub pool... We do our best to cover within, which sometimes means I must go into classroom. We will break up teams and pull prep periods as necessary. We do not have an open [purchase order] for an [interpreter staffing] agency, so we do not use contractors. Depending on availability and feasibility, I may pull [interpreters] from another site to cover. There is a lot that goes into the decisions around what to do when there are a lot of interpreters absent... This has been a huge challenge this year.

All supervisors mentioned the importance of maintaining staffing levels, primarily to ensure students’ daily communication needs were supported. But they also acknowledged this as part of their responsibility to keep their organizations legally in compliance with IEPs and 504 plans by ensuring students had services. Another part of supervisors’ coordination calculus was grappling with determining which interpreters were best matched to specific DHH students or assignments depending on a host of student and interpreter factors. Student factors included grade level, linguistic preferences and needs, experience or comfort level using interpreting services, and the specific class subject(s) or activities (academic, extra-curricular, on site or

online, other) where services were rendered. Supervisors had to consider student factors in relationship to interpreter which included their qualifications, individual competencies (interpreting from English to ASL, and from ASL to English), professionalism, education and experience (e.g., length of time interpreting), as well as availability, preferences (e.g., working with elementary students or high school students) and/or limitations (e.g., inability to stand for long periods of time or work after school hours).

Supervisors recognized that not all interpreters were equally skilled or suited to support every DHH student—they were ever cognizant of the fact that students are individuals with varying preferences and needs at any given time in their academic lives. Supervisors understood that to *appropriately* support DHH students, educational interpreters were not a one size fits all and per the IEP, services had to be individualized to meet student needs. This understanding guided much of their decision-making regarding interpreter scheduling, placements and assignments.

In addition to coordinating student services, all participants sometimes provided direct interpreting services, whether pre-planned (e.g., interpreting for a student or parent in an IEP meeting) or last-minute (stepping in to sub for staff interpreter when there were no subs as in Linda's situation above). As highly qualified, nationally certified and/or licensed interpreters, all supervisors were able to interpret for DHH students or adults served under ADA (e.g., parents or community members), making them versatile and valuable assets to their organizations.

Such versatility also introduced challenges. Linda was so often engaged in the daily coordination of staff—while simultaneously interpreting in various locations—that over the course of the AY she had less time to accomplish other important supervisory tasks such as conducting staff observations and annual evaluations. In a typical week, most of her time was

spent dealing with schedule changes, finding or providing sub coverage, and generally shuffling people around to meet student needs and comply with IEPs. Indeed, this game of interpreter musical chairs often occupied so much of her workday that it prevented her from tending to higher level administrative tasks. The consequence of her organization's failure to provide substitute interpreters was that she had to function in dual roles (supervisor and substitute interpreter) which, as she said, hindered her ability to do her job as a supervisor.

Even though all supervisors except Linda had access to subs to some extent, substitute interpreters were often in short supply making it necessary for supervisors to sometimes function in dual roles. Michael discussed an occasion, which he described as very rare, in which he attended an IEP meeting as both the interpreter supervisor and the interpreter for the meeting because no other interpreter was available. He had to toggle between interpreting for the DHH student so the student could understand what was happening in the meeting and participating directly in the meeting as the supervisor. While not ideal, this was preferable to leaving the student without any access to what was being said about them in their own IEP meeting since no one else could sign (or sign fluently enough for the student to understand).

Rebecca talked about a situation in which she chose to substitute interpret for a deaf student during state standardized testing so she could provide specialized support rather than requesting an interpreter from an agency. Because Rebecca had rapport with the student and understood their linguistic needs, she could provide targeted interpretation with those needs in mind. This meant she had to defer her supervisory responsibilities until the following day or tend to them on a laptop in between interpreting. However, this was preferable to sending a substitute interpreter from an agency who had never met the student nor had any idea about their needs.

While this meant more work for Rebecca, she was matter of fact in expressing that she was just doing what needed to be done to best support that student in that circumstance.

It is useful to compare Linda's and Michael's situations regarding daily staffing. They each supervised more than two dozen interpreters working at different schools and educational sites spread over a designated service area. In any educational organization large or small, teacher and staff absences are to be expected. Michael's organization prepared for this by hiring several substitute interpreters able to fill in at any site where staff interpreters were assigned. Because Michael had substitutes available who were familiar with K-12 educational settings and the students served by the organization, he could assign interpreters with intention—considering student and interpreter factors—rather than just finding the first person to fill the position. Unlike Linda, he did not have to frequently shuffle interpreters around or reassign staff already working their regular assigned placements.

Having subs ready and available helped solve the practical problem of meeting daily staffing needs, but it also showed that the organization placed a premium on providing students with consistent interpreting services. Because Michael had substitutes to assign, only the students whose regular interpreters were absent were directly affected. This is important. When Linda had to “break up teams” of interpreters working together so that she could send one of them to another site, or “pulled” interpreters out of their planning (“prep”) periods, several students and interpreters were impacted causing interruptions for students, interpreters, and teachers.

Kathy spoke gratefully of being supported by a full-time staffer responsible for handling daily schedule changes and the coordination of substitutes from an available pool of interpreters. Kathy lauded this staffer as a dependable and collaborative colleague, a certified interpreter in a dedicated support position who supported Kathy and made knowledgeable decisions regarding

sub placements, all with the shared goal of supporting students. The scheduler's knowledge and experience as an interpreter enabled them to account for the many factors previously described when assigning interpreters. And being a nationally certified interpreter positioned them as a versatile member of the interpreting team, qualified to provide services to any DHH student or adult in the organization, whether assigned to pre-scheduled requests (IEPs or school events), or as a substitute to fill in for staff. In terms of interpreting, Kathy said this person could "do everything."

Having the staffer freed up Kathy to focus on supervisory responsibilities including collaborating with administrators (regular and special education), teachers and members of the IEP team; attending IEP meetings; observing DHH students to assess language proficiency and make recommendations; observing and providing feedback and direct support to staff interpreters; managing budgetary tasks; and completing required documentation (e.g., payroll paperwork). Because Kathy's week was not consumed with daily interpreter scheduling and coordination, she was able to focus on her other supervisory obligations. Kathy's situation was different from the other supervisors in that she also coordinated interpreting services for deaf adults in her organization. But most interpreting hours were utilized by students, so Kathy's organization had established the necessary protocols for when staff interpreters were absent so students had services.

Even when organizations formally planned for substitutes (whether as part time employees, "daily subs," or freelance interpreters contracted through independent agencies), substitutes were often in short supply while student needs remained high. Rebecca mentioned that in her tenure as supervisor she has seen her sub pool steadily dwindle because interpreters in

her area now typically sought stable employment (full time or part time) rather than accepting substitute or contract/freelance type work which was sporadic and unreliable.

Supervisors were unequivocal in what they saw as their mandate to support the inclusion of DHH students in their schools to the greatest extent possible every day through the provision of interpreting services. They saw DHH students' consistent access to qualified interpreters as synonymous with students' ability to effectively communicate at school, to comprehend both academic content and social interaction, and to meaningfully participate as members of their school communities.

Supporting Staff. The second major theme that emerged from the supervisor practice data was *supporting staff*. All supervisors talked about supporting, mentoring and guiding staff interpreters as an important part of their daily work. They saw providing interpreter job support as directly aligned with supporting DHH student. They thus made sure interpreters “got what they need[ed]” to do their jobs and had the information and resources to best support students. Some broad topics in the support category included on-going communication and problem-solving, promoting safe working conditions (e.g., making sure staff had breaks or team interpreter support), providing specialized skills support and professional development opportunities, and offering policy and protocol guidance.

Specific ways supervisors described supporting interpreters (see Table 1):

- Providing a second team interpreter to support the assigned interpreter for the duration of a difficult and/or extended assignment, or to give them a “bio break” (to attend to their biological needs, go to the bathroom, get food or water, etc.)
- Subbing for the assigned interpreter (short-term) to give them a break

- Mentoring and modeling interpreting skills by “teaming” with assigned interpreters during classes or in one-to-one meetings
- Mentoring and modeling effective communication with colleagues (teachers, administrators, other interpreters) on-site or in one-to-one meetings
- Providing evaluations that included assessments of interpreters’ skills based on observations of their work, and following up with resources aligned to the evaluation
- Providing interpreting-specific professional development activities (group and individual)
- Assisting with technology: navigating “new virtual territory” during COVID-19 shutdowns (e.g., acquiring and setting up laptop computers or tablets, software training for remote interpreting, navigating the organization’s learning management system, etc.)
- Referring interpreters to other interpreters for specialized support or mentorship
- Referring interpreters to other departments within their organization for questions or resources (e.g., human resources, information technology, etc.)
- Guiding interpreters in how to contribute as a professional Related Service Provider and member of the IEP team (e.g., accurately describing students’ use of services, sharing relevant observations or insights, diplomatically addressing issues with colleagues)
- Guiding interpreters in ethical decision-making informed by ASL-English interpreter codes of conduct and/or guidelines (Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment, National Association of Interpreters in Education, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf)
- Guiding interpreters in understanding various organizational policies and procedures
- Engaging in discussions about the work: fielding questions, listening to interpreters’ concerns, and being a “sounding board”

All supervisors emphasized the importance of providing “day to day support” for interpreters, as Michael phrased it. Whether addressing “general questions,” discussing challenging interpreting assignments, guiding interpreters through professional decision-making or mediating conflicts, supervisors devoted much of their work week to directly supporting staff in a multitude of ways. Two supervisors said this direct staff engagement took up the bulk of a typical week, whether in conversation on phone calls, via email, in person or Zoom meetings, or through on-site visits to interpreters’ assigned placements. As Rebecca described it: “[Providing] help and support, that is the majority of my time. Versus me sitting in a cube [cubicle] doing like administrative tasks.”

Supervisors talked about the need for empathy and understanding as critical skills in their jobs, informed by their experience as interpreters which enabled them to connect with their staff from a place of mutual understanding. Michael talked about his work supporting his staff interpreters and cited the works of Robert Greenleaf (“servant leadership”) and Steven Covey. He talked about “emotional intelligence” being a “guiding force” in how he leads, while putting his needs “in the backseat,” and serves others first to help meet their needs. He spoke eloquently of his approach to leadership, invoking the importance of introspection and taking inventory of one’s own beliefs and guiding principles as instrumental in informing his work as a leader. He talked about being a “liaison” not only for his interpreters working in different schools and districts, but also of being a “resource” for those same schools and districts. He succinctly shared his approach to supporting interpreters this way: “I feel like that mentor modeling sort of responsibility is going to be the most of my time going forward, which is why I got into the position. I love doing that kind of stuff.”

Linda talked about the “special implications” of interpreting for deaf children, emphasizing significant issues like language deprivation and language dysfluency, poor academic achievement and social isolation due to students not sharing a language with their same age peers. She knew it was hard for interpreters to see students isolated or unhappy in mainstream settings, in situations in which neither the interpreter nor student had any control. She described it like this: “Let’s face it, being an educational interpreter can be very difficult. You see a lot of injustice in public education and it’s hard to keep that... (gestures toward chest). What do you do with that?”

This is an apt illustration of why supervisors thought empathy and understanding were integral parts of their work. They knew first-hand that interpreters were affected by the many complex challenges embedded in their work, and that they took their obligation to support DHH students’ education seriously, that they did not just show up every day, interpret and leave. Supervisors understood that interpreters, by and large, were deeply invested in supporting DHH students, so those students might achieve success in school and beyond. Rebecca summed up her conversations with her interpreters this way: “When we’re working through problems, it’s easy for me to hear the frustration and know when you feel like you can’t do anything about it. It’s about honoring and recognizing that experience.”

Supervisors tried to communicate with interpreters in ways that demonstrated that they cared about their needs, professionally and personally. For example, one supervisor mentioned staff childcare concerns as a scheduling consideration. Supervisors knew from experience that the job was often difficult and frustrating as well as rewarding, and all interpreters sometimes needed support— whether the “newer ones who were always afraid” as Michael describe them,

or the seasoned veterans dealing with difficult assignments, school bureaucracy or novel situations with colleagues.

Supervisors also talked about their leadership styles in terms of being good listeners willing to have “hard conversations,” leading with “transparency,” and as Kathy put it, demonstrating mutual respect while being willing to “sit down and figure it out.” Three supervisors said they sought to avoid staff “micromanagement,” or being perceived by interpreters as micromanaging. Supervisors offered the following as examples of practices that some interpreters might consider micromanagement: strict expectations of punctuality (not arriving to work late and/or leaving early), requiring new or additional documentation that interpreters were unaccustomed to, and adherence to organizational policies and procedures. One supervisor shared that even when there were valid reasons behind documentation or policy changes, some interpreters still expressed resistance or viewed these changes as micromanaging.

Collaboration and Advocacy. The third theme in supervisor practice was collaboration and advocacy. In all aspects of their work, supervisors talked about frequent and sustained collaboration and communication with a variety of colleagues, including their staff interpreters. Collaboration typically manifested in advocating for or arranging interpreting services for DHH students while simultaneously educating about students’ needs. Three main categories (conditions) emerged in which supervisors engaged in regular collaboration: a) when communicating, contributing, or participating as a member of the IEP team, b) when engaging with their team of interpreters, and c) when acting as a liaison, mediator, or resource for individuals, departments, or schools and districts.

The IEP Team. Supervisors frequently collaborated with other professionals as active members of the IEP team and when participating in multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET)

team meetings. Their participation typically included discussions, recommendations, or documentation regarding students' use of interpreting services. They also engaged in on-going communication with team members (e.g., TODHH and/or the case carrier, classroom teachers, other related service personnel) about students' communication-related or other needs.

Communication with IEP team members involved discussions of current or future interpreting services for academic classes, extra-curricular activities, summer classes, extended school year or other school sanctioned events. Supervisors also provided explanations of interpreters' specific roles and responsibilities; Michael described this as "provid[ing] insight for the IEP team, a little more deeper (sic) on what it is that educational interpreters do." Rebecca spoke of assisting TODHHs regarding students' use of interpreting services, interpreter needs, and helping TODHHs develop IEP goals specific to students' sign language development and communication needs. Kathy talked about working closely with other RSPs and educators in her department (audiologists, speech language professionals, TODHHs) to make sure that everyone on the team was involved, aware of upcoming meetings, and up to speed on the students they served.

The Interpreter Team. Supervisors collaborated closely with staff their interpreters and other members of the interpreter team. Here *the interpreter team* is defined as including staff interpreters, substitute interpreters (staff subs, daily subs, or contracted interpreter subs), temporary or provisional interpreters, and interpreter schedulers who also worked as interpreters. (This inclusive reference to the larger group of interpreters as *the interpreter team* should not be confused with references to interpreters working in 'teams' of two as defined in Chapter 2. Team interpreting and teaming are long-standing jargon in the field of ASL-English interpreting and refer to two interpreters working together during the same interpreting assignment.)

Supervisors communicated regularly with members of the interpreter team, not only to accommodate schedule changes and arrange subs as described in previous sections, and to stay abreast of the many other changes and surprises that might occur in a school day. One supervisor talked about needing to “trust” her interpreters to let her know what was going on with students because it was impossible for her to know what was happening for dozens of DHH students in their many classrooms every day. Supervisors collaborated with the interpreter team to make sure students were covered in their classes, in their sessions with TODHHs or RSPs, and to provide each other needed breaks (e.g., lunch, bathroom) when work demands did not allow for regularly scheduled breaks. Supervisors also collaborated with their interpreter teams to plan for challenging one-off interpreting events such as school plays (Rebecca mentioned Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*), athletic games or matches, and graduations to name a few.

Supervisors also talked about working with the interpreter team to elicit feedback on any number of issues relevant to the group, such as interpreter placements and assignments to planning activities for professional development and teacher “in-service” days. Supervisors also discussed interpreter observations and evaluations as collaborative processes that were not strictly determined by supervisors. Supervisors tried to be flexible in evaluations when possible so the process would be useful to interpreters allowing them to use the evaluative feedback to improve their practice. (More on evaluations in the Policy Engagement section.) Rebecca mentioned relying on her “administrative support team,” and as discussed, Kathy worked closely with her interpreter scheduler to ensure her team addressed daily interpreting needs efficiently.

Liaison, Mediator and Resource. All supervisors discussed the importance of collaboration with their interpreter team, others in their departments (e.g., TODHHs, audiology, speech), as well as across other departments in their organizations such as Human Resources and

Technology Services. They also often dealt with other schools or educational sites within their districts where interpreters were assigned, and in the cases of two supervisors across several school districts. This type of technical assistance and consultation were integral parts of their work.

Supervisors acted as liaisons between their interpreters and the schools where they were assigned to establish and clarify why interpreters were placed there and their roles. In the liaison role, supervisors often educated school and district personnel (e.g., administrators, office staff, teachers) about the communication needs of DHH students and why interpreting was a legally required related service. They clarified why and how the student was being accommodated by having an interpreter.

Two supervisors discussed scenarios in which administrators wanted the assigned educational interpreter to interpret for DHH parents who came into the school. In these cases, supervisors clarified that educational interpreters were employed specifically to support DHH students as specified in their IEPs, and the school needed to provide other interpreters for the parents as required by the ADA. In this way, supervisors acted as a resource for schools, educating them about meeting the interpreting needs of students AND families. One supervisor mentioned referring schools to interpreting agencies so they could acquire properly credentialed interpreters for DHH parents.

Supervisors also sometimes acted as mediators. Some examples were mediating conflicts between staff interpreters, either due to miscommunication or challenges in “teaming” situations, mediating misunderstandings between interpreters and teachers [in whose classrooms interpreters were assigned], and mediating personnel issues between interpreters and administrators in the schools where interpreters were assigned. Supervisory roles and boundaries

were sometimes muddled depending on whether the interpreter was considered the direct report of the interpreter supervisor or the school administrator (principal).

Interpreters Supervising Interpreters. The fourth and final major theme that emerged from supervisor practice data was participants' discussions of how their experience as interpreters informed their work as interpreter supervisors. Interestingly, many touched on this topic prior to being asked about it directly. Whether assessing DHH students' communication needs, assigning interpreters and addressing staff job needs, hiring interpreters or conducting evaluations, few aspects of supervisors' work was not informed by their experience as interpreters.

Attending to Student Needs. Supervisors' professional experience as interpreters and deep knowledge of educational interpreting were among the primary reasons they prioritized student access to services. Supervisors' education and training as interpreters, requisite fluency in ASL, and years of experience interpreting for a variety of DHH individuals allowed them to understand the importance of interpreting for DHH students ability to communicate at school. They knew what effective communication *looked like* for DHH students because they understood students' signed ASL and visual communication. Besides understanding what students were communicating (which is significant), supervisors' experience as interpreters allowed them to observe students' language use, communication style and to interpret for them when necessary.

Supervisors were among the few adults who could communicate with DHH students and comprehend their communication with their interpreters, teachers and classmates. This allowed them to assess student language use (informally through observations or formally via forms created for this purpose), and to discuss the appropriateness of using interpreting services and make recommendations to the IEP team. Supervisors drew on their expertise as interpreters in

collaborating with TODHHs and case carriers or case managers to make informed decisions regarding services. They planned for students' interpreting needs from year to year and predicted and anticipated needs based on school special events, the rhythms of the academic calendar, and features of their organizations (e.g., standardized testing days). One supervisor mentioned interpreter gender as a consideration in best supporting student needs based on student preference, comfort level, or history of abuse.

Attending to Staff Needs. Supervisors' experience as highly qualified ASL-English interpreters with K-12 interpreting experience equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to address the needs of their staff interpreters. As described in Table 1 *Supporting Staff*, supervisors prioritized targeted, relevant job supports for interpreters. Whether mentoring and modeling, conversations about work demands (linguistic, environmental, interpersonal, other), decision-making or PD, supervisors customized those supports based on their knowledge of DHH students, educational interpreting, and interpreter characteristics. Supervisors knew the demands of the job intimately and understood not only how to help interpreters improve their practice, but more importantly how those supports would translate into improving services for students.

As interpreters, supervisors knew that more accurate interpreting (demonstrated by higher EIPA scores) meant improved access to spoken communication for students. They didn't just know this from the literature (Schick, 2006), they knew from experience that skilled educational interpreters were better prepared to support DHH students. These supervisors knew interpreters needed to demonstrate competency via assessments like the EIPA, but they also knew those were baseline skills: educational interpreters also needed to understand their roles as related service

personnel, members of the IEP team, and as special education professionals. Supervisors' experience as interpreters positioned them to support interpreters in these aspects of their work.

Hiring Educational Interpreters. Supervisors relied on their experience as interpreters to engage in interpreting-informed hiring practices. All supervisors hired interpreters and most requested video recorded interpreting samples ("work samples") from applicants as part of the application process. Supervisors' knowledge of the EIPA, both process and product (specific scores in various domains, for example) allowed supervisors to evaluate applicants based on their main professional competency: ASL-English interpreting. They did not rely solely on what applicants included in their applications or resumes. Supervisors required applicants to demonstrate the ability to interpret for DHH children in K-12 settings by submitting video samples of their work. As interpreters, supervisors had the ability to visually assess samples of applicants' interpreting work and thus verify that the skills or credentials claimed on applications were evident in those samples.

Supervisors' interpreting experience allowed them to choose applicants based on their skills and educational background and to understand the implications of applicants' credentials (e.g., having a 2.5 EIPA score versus 4.2). But they also considered applicants' professional potential. Two supervisors mentioned sometimes hiring individuals who had not yet met state minimum EIPA scores. In so doing however, they carefully considered factors such as an applicant's ability to critically analyze their own work (e.g., strengths and weaknesses), and how applicants explained their decision-making process when presented with difficult hypothetical interpreting scenarios. Supervisors' experience in educational interpreting allowed them to consider all the above factors when making hiring decisions.

Educational Interpreter Job Evaluations. Evaluation practices varied across cases and were more different than they were alike, but all evaluative activities were directly informed by supervisors' expertise as interpreters. Supervisors acknowledged the importance of observing interpreters' work when conducting evaluations. Evaluating staff work product (interpretations) was a priority, and basing evaluations exclusively on general attributes like attendance, attitude, and attire was considered inadequate. Interpreting competencies had the most direct impact on DHH students so observations of interpreters' work was seen as a critical component of evaluations. For educational interpreters, evaluations that "had nothing to do with interpreting" were incomplete and inappropriate.

Kathy was not able to conduct formal evaluations due to organizational requirements and policy limitations. As an interpreter however, she was able to give the designated evaluator specific feedback based on observations of interpreters' work to be considered in evaluations. She also informally conducted observations and mentored interpreters to help them improve their practice as an on-going part of her supervisory work. Linda followed her organization's standard evaluation protocols and rated interpreters in numerous domains. She also encouraged them to take ownership of their work via self-evaluation and the creation of what are commonly called "S.M.A.R.T. goals," referring to goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based. For on-site observations, she encouraged interpreters to choose a skill as the focus of her observations (e.g., fingerspelling, use of space, role-shifting) so she could provide targeted feedback.

Michael also talked about helping interpreters choose "specific, measurable goals" in their interpreting practices to focus on year to year, to be reviewed during twice annual (spring and fall) on-site evaluations. His organization was addressing "redundancies" in evaluation

forms and discussing ways to include teacher and DHH student feedback as part of interpreter evaluations. Rebecca cited her knowledge of the EIPA as essential in informing evaluations. She gave interpreters specific, critical feedback about their work product and customized interpreter evaluation forms to make them less general and more applicable to their specific work (e.g., “dressed appropriately *for best visibility of interpretation*.”). After evaluations, she offered interpreters feedback and targeted PD resources based on her observations of their work.

Policy Engagement

Data collected in alignment with the policy axis included participants’ descriptions of how they interpreted and enacted policy in their organizations, as well as the policy documents and issues they thought were most relevant or concerning to them as supervisors. Policy engagement analyses included not only the policies submitted by participants, but those that were discussed or cited in interviews, including federal policy like IDEA (2004) and state minimum EIPA scores. Supervisors discussed EIPA minimums in interviews but were not asked to submit any documentation. I independently verified state minimums through internet searches and documented scores in policy profiles but did not conduct analyses of the specific state statutes describing EIPA minimums as detailed textual analyses of state statutes were beyond the scope of this study. Comparing supervisors’ engagement with and enactment of state EIPA minimums (in hiring, PD, etc.) was most pertinent in analyses and in answering the secondary research question.

Policies Submitted by Supervisors

Supervisors were asked to submit any policies they felt were relevant to their work. The four supervisors submitted a total of 14 documents, all of which were specific to their respective organizations (none submitted state or federal policies though many such as IDEA and EIPA

state minimum scores appeared extensively in interview data). All submitted their organization's educational interpreter job descriptions and three submitted their own supervisor job descriptions, one of which was their organization's educational interpreter job description outlining the additional duties of the lead interpreter supervisory position.

Comparisons of educational interpreter job descriptions indicated many similarities. All included descriptions of the primary job duty as interpreting or transliterating for DHH students in accordance with the IEP while acknowledging their unique communication and/or cultural needs. All indicated both minimum and preferred qualifications. Minimums for three included a high school diploma or equivalent, and 3.5 EIPA score (the fourth came from a state with no minimum EIPA). Preferred qualifications for all included a two- or four-year college degree and national interpreter certification. All outlined specific job skills such as interpreting from ASL to English and from English to ASL, and other abilities such as ASL proficiency and verbal or written communication skills. The differences were in the details: in formatting, wording and other tasks, responsibilities, or duties. Notably, one description used phrases like "evidence of" and "demonstrations of" to indicate that ASL proficiency and interpreting skills required verification (e.g., proof of attendance in a post-secondary interpreting program). One job description included language suggesting that if no one was identified who met minimum requirements, individuals with lesser qualifications would be considered.

The three supervisor job descriptions were more different than they were alike. All were formatted differently each with various headings, tasks and responsibilities. Two were highly detailed and listed specific duties such as coordinating interpreters, interviewing and hiring, organizing interpreter PD, evaluations, collecting data and compiling reports, developing goals and policies, or providing technical assistance for interpreting services. The third job description

indicated the position was for supervising interpreters but was much more general compared to the other two. Terms like “leadership” and “management” were used, with fewer mentions of specific supervisory tasks or responsibilities. All job descriptions required supervisors to be experienced, credentialed ASL-English interpreters.

One supervisor submitted their organization’s educational interpreter handbook, a comprehensive document over 30 pages long that included a range of topics from special education legislation to specific educational interpreter protocols and procedures in the organization. All supervisors mentioned having interpreter handbooks; one also had an additional handbook for substitute interpreters. Michael and Rebecca both submitted forms detailing interpreter evaluation criteria, including matrices designed for interpreter performance self-evaluations and/or professional reflection (e.g., goals, challenges and achievements). Although supervisors only submitted between two to six policies each, numerous other policies were the subject of discussions during interviews and in follow-up conversations (see Table 2).

The number, complexity, and/or availability of the policies discussed made it impractical or impossible to analyze every policy individually. I was not able to access every organizational policy that participants mentioned. It was also seen as unnecessary since all policies were not equally salient to supervisors as shown in Table 2. Using coded policy data from interviews and policies submitted by participants, I identified which policies were discussed by all supervisors, while comparing other policies with relevance only to certain supervisors (e.g., two discussed labor unions which were important to these supervisors in areas like hiring and benefits). In answering the secondary research question, my analyses focused on how supervisors interpreted the policies they discussed as well as the actions they took regarding certain policies. It was

therefore not just the policy that mattered, but what supervisors did (and did not do) with those policies that mattered most in analyses.

This approach was used in line with the critical policy analysis lens which emphasizes the interaction of actors and policy rather than solely examining static policy documents in isolation. I used data from the policy profiles combined with first- and second-round coding to create Table 2 and interpret supervisors' attitudes and priorities as it related to policy engagement and decision-making. This allowed me to synthesize policy data and compare how supervisors enacted policy in similar and dissimilar ways.

For example, one supervisor enacted new PD policies for interpreters based on the supervisor's goal of best supporting DHH students. The policy was designed to improve services for students through improving interpreters' skills. It was policy with purpose—the supervisor knew interpreters' skills had real ramifications for the accuracy and completeness of the information relayed to DHH students. The new PD requirements supported better services for students and professionalism by holding interpreters accountable for their work. Another supervisor encouraged interpreters to develop PD activities to be shared with their interpreter team. In this way, the supervisor also held interpreters accountable for PD by creative interpretation of the PD requirements in their organization rather than by enacting new policies.

Major Themes

Two major policy themes emerged from participant policy profile data: *Accountability* and *Professionalism*. In this context, *Professionalism* indicates K-12 interpreters conducting themselves as RSP by exhibiting the behaviors, attitudes and qualities that reflect best practices in the fields of ASL-English interpreting and special education. For ease of comparison and consistency, both themes were organized into the same four categories (scales) that emerged

from policy data and are presented from broad to specific: 1) Special Education Law, 2) State Laws and Regulations, 3) Organizational Policy, and 4) Individual Accountability.

Although *Accountability* and *Professionalism* are presented as separate sections (each addressing the four policy categories above) they are deeply intertwined and circular. Most of the subthemes appearing in both sections have been discussed in previous sections in this chapter. The same subthemes appeared repeatedly across the data because in all four cases, professionalism in educational interpreting was critical to and inexorable from ensuring accountability for the quality of services rendered to DHH students. Accountability (individual and organizational) was therefore seen by supervisors as both a cause and consequence of K-12 interpreter professionalism.

Accountability. Accountability was the dominant theme in supervisors' discussions of policy. All supervisors talked extensively about the shared responsibility of organizations (LEAs, districts, etc.) and individuals (interpreters and supervisors) in providing ASL-English interpreting services to DHH students. Participants expressed no ambiguity about their roles and responsibilities as interpreter supervisors, or how their positions were situated within their respective public education systems. They were clear about their mission to support DHH students in accessing FAPE, and about working within the context of special education and the inclusion movement in the U.S.

Special Education Law. All supervisors firmly grounded their work in federal special education law, namely IDEA (2004). They defined and conducted their daily work in adherence to the IDEA. They were each adamant that IDEA defines "interpreters" (the text refers specifically to sign language interpreters, not spoken language interpreters) as professional related service personnel (Section 300.34). In accordance with IDEA, supervisors necessarily

viewed K-12 interpreters as professional RSPs irrespective of job titles, credentials or organizational classifications. All supervisors expressed the concern that even though interpreters have been in K-12 classrooms for decades, many state departments of education, LEAs and school administrators still do not properly classify interpreters as professional RSP in line with federal special education law.

Second, supervisors were guided by the fact that interpreting was a related service documented on students' IEPs or 504 plans per their determination of eligibility under IDEA. The IEP or 504 plan was the bedrock policy document of their work: it was where interpreting was documented, and the reason why interpreters were placed with students. As discussed extensively throughout the section on *Consistent Interpreting Services*, compliance with students' IEP or 504 was achieved by providing students with daily interpreting services. Rebecca noted that when students did not have interpreters—thus did not have services—there was “no compensatory ed for that.” It was impossible for LEAs to go back and make up those lost interpreting minutes.

Linda talked about the need to distinguish between “ASL services versus interpreting services” on an IEP. She explained that ASL services for DHH students might include language instruction in ASL or about ASL, which would be valuable for students. But ASL services were not *interpreting services*, the latter being a federally defined related service under IDEA, provided by interpreters who are related service personnel. She clarified it this way: “To provide interpreting services to a child, you have to have interpreting services on their IEP, and that means as a related service, not as an accommodation.”

State Laws and Regulations. The most frequently mentioned policy issues at the state level were the EIPA, followed by licensure and professional development. Two supervisors

interpreted licensure policy by clarifying for school colleagues the differences between educational interpreters and licensed interpreters in their respective states: the requirements for each differed significantly. According to state statutes, ASL-English interpreters working in a paid capacity were required to be licensed through the state unless they served K-12 DHH children. Those educational interpreters were exempt from licensure laws. Three supervisors worked in states that required a minimum 3.5 score on the EIPA, but only one of those states legally required educational interpreters to complete any type of annual PD or continuing education activities as a condition of employment in schools.

For the three supervisors in states with an EIPA requirement, maintaining fidelity to that requirement in hiring was a priority. One supervisor worked in a state with no minimum EIPA, so establishing a requirement was the most pressing policy issue for that supervisor. That supervisor was concerned about professionalism and accountability for interpreting services and described proposed legislation in their state requiring K-12 interpreters to have an EIPA score of 4.0 to be a licensed provider in schools. The bill had already failed in one legislative session, and upon reintroduction it passed the state House but was stopped at the Senate. While the supervisor knew that passing legislation could sometimes take many years, they said it was “so frustrating” because “right now we have nothing,” despite being in a large urban area with many DHH professionals and a sizable Deaf community, thus above average awareness of deafness and interpreting. The supervisor was clearly frustrated when they threw their hands up and said, “Our interpreters are not responsible for the quality of work they put out! Ahh!”

Organizational Policy. Supervisors had many different, sometimes competing, policy priorities and concerns related to accountability at the organizational level. While some supervisors felt allied with their organization in supporting DHH students’ communication

needs, other supervisors sometimes felt at odds with their organizations. The organizational level was where LEAs either upheld state standards or deviated from them (e.g., minimum EIPA scores), so this was where supervisors frequently observed misalignments between policy implementation and practice (e.g., hiring) which compromised professionalism and accountability.

Many of supervisors' most salient organizational policy issues have been described in previous sections: the need to maintain proper staffing levels (substitutes, compliance with IEPs/504s, compensatory education); appropriate hiring practices (fidelity to EIPA requirements, hiring qualified interpreters not "signers"); interpreters' need to engage in PD and continuing education; and policies and procedures around evaluations, particularly the importance of observation-based skills assessments (ASL to English and English to ASL interpreting).

All supervisors mentioned that they had suggested and/or implemented changes or improvements to organizational policies or procedures to ensure LEAs, districts and educational agencies were accountable for hiring and employing qualified interpreters. These policies included a) those related to evaluations (adding skills assessments), b) hiring practices (revising interview questions to make them more useful in assessing interpreters' skills and qualifications), and c) PD (establishing annual requirements for interpreters).

Other organizational policy issues were mentioned as well. Two supervisors discussed how worker's unions were instrumental in helping educational interpreters negotiate contracts and secure benefits like health insurance and paid time off. Interestingly, all four supervisors mentioned issues with their formal job descriptions. Three of the four supervisors were involved with helping revise the interpreter supervisor job description to better reflect their work by providing feedback in a position description questionnaire or acting as the primary author of the

job description. Three were extensively involved and consequently felt the description accurately reflected their job. One who was not involved in the creation or revision of their job description thought their job description did not match their work. This supervisor expressed frustration that the job they were supposed to do was often not the job they were able to do due to organizational expectations that conflicted with daily demands.

Individual Accountability. Individual accountability refers to the responsibilities of supervisors and interpreters. When supervisors talked about their staff, individual accountability was perceived in a variety of ways. Here again, interpreter qualifications, EIPA scores and credentials were common subthemes. Supervisors saw interpreters as responsible for the maintenance of their own professional credentials. At the same time, supervisors also accepted responsibility for helping interpreters improve their skills whenever possible. In general, as interpreters themselves with a passion for the work, they seemed to embrace this responsibility.

Despite this, or perhaps because of it, several supervisors expressed frustration with interpreters who chose to not engage in PD, especially when those activities were offered as paid work time, or if arranged independently by interpreters outside the workday, any payments or fees would be fully reimbursed by the organization. One supervisor felt fortunate to have access to a statewide training network which offered an array of programming free of charge to K-12 interpreters. Two supervisors talked about improving internal practices and policies to ensure interpreters were held accountable for the PD in which they did (or did not) engage by requiring formal documentation and establishing PD tracking systems.

As hiring managers, supervisors accepted responsibility for their hiring decisions (hiring someone with a score below their state EIPA minimum, for example), and worked to bring less qualified interpreters up to speed. Supervisors tended to view evaluations as a shared

responsibility: they were responsible for planning and conducting evaluations and providing resources to address skills needs evident in those evaluations. But interpreters were also seen as responsible for being active participants in the evaluative process, for knowing how to engage in professional discussions about the linguistic aspects interpreting, being able to constructively critique their own work, and for using evaluative feedback and resources to improve their practice for the benefit of DHH students.

Supervisors also discussed accountability in terms of individual interpreter conduct, professionalism, and best practices in the broader field of ASL-English interpreting. Professionalism issues that were mentioned included interpreters' lack of participation in PD activities, ability/inability to work unsupervised, decision-making, punctuality, excessive absenteeism, conduct and disciplinary problems.

Professionalism. Professionalism was the second major theme that emerged from the policy data. Based on interview data, this term was used primarily to refer to individual educational interpreter practices, attitudes and conduct in the workplace. But supervisors also talked about how professionalism and best practices in the broader field of ASL-English interpreting have informed their engagement with and enactment of policy in schools, especially interpreter Codes of Conduct (see Table 2). In this section, I also present supervisor practices, attitudes and policy interactions that were [directly or indirectly] intended to support the professionalization of K-12 interpreting.

Special Education Law. Just as supervisors were clear about their work within the context of IDEA and interpreters as RSP, supervisors also approached their work with the expectation that interpreters viewed and conducted themselves as special education professionals and RSP. This was sometimes challenging for several reasons.

Participants in this study supervised interpreters with a range of professional experience, educational backgrounds and qualifications. One supervisor talked about hiring recent graduates from post-secondary interpreting programs and how they were sometimes not aware of what it meant to be special education RSP nor how to effectively participate as members of the IEP or instructional teams. The supervisor suggested that this type of information was often not included or emphasized in interpreter education programs which left the supervisor in the position of having to fill these critical knowledge gaps for entry-level interpreters. The implication was that some post-secondary interpreter education programs were failing to include foundational curriculum for interpreters such as essential functions as special education RSP. Another supervisor pointed out that because her organization neither categorized nor recognized interpreters as special education RSP, “people don’t take our word as much as they would a speech language pathologist or an occupational therapist.”

Additionally, one supervisor said because interpreters are often interpreting for DHH students during IEP meetings, they may not be invited to participate in those meetings directly as special education professionals. If interpreters are active members of the IEP team, this results in few opportunities for them to offer the team their professional insights on students’ use of services.

State Laws and Regulations. All supervisors sought to raise the level of professional practice within their interpreter teams, but these attempts were sometimes stifled by the minimum [or lack of] requirements for K-12 interpreters in their states. Themes that emerged in *Accountability* are again prevalent in *Professionalism*: the EIPA, interpreter licensure and PD requirements. The supervisor whose state lacked any requirements for educational interpreters believed that to uphold their obligation to serve DHH students under IDEA, their only recourse

was to collaboratively advocate for statewide legislation requiring interpreters to become licensed via demonstrations of professional competence (minimum EIPA scores). The supervisor saw this long over-due push toward professionalization as synonymous with greater accountability, saying it was “embarrassing” that their state “required nothing” of interpreters working with DHH children in schools.

Organizational Policy. Establishing and improving policy at the organizational level was one primary way supervisors attempted to professionalize educational interpreting and conduct their work in alignment with their Deaf culture and professional values. As described in the *Accountability* section, improvements to organizational policies related to evaluations, hiring, and PD were seen by supervisors as critical to ensuring that their organizations attracted and retained educational interpreters professionally capable of adequately supporting DHH students.

One supervisor explained that stakeholders within their organization had been dissatisfied that their State Department of Education did not require educational interpreters to complete PD or continuing education activities as a condition of employment. Based on interpreter credentials (EIPA scores) and observations of their work, the supervisor and stakeholders determined that interpreters not only needed focused professional skill development. They also determined that interpreters needed to be accountable for pursuing that skill development. The issue was addressed collaboratively within the supervisors’ department and their team proposed to organizational leadership that PD requirements should be established; the organization agreed.

A two-tiered approach was implemented: for interpreters who had met the state minimum 3.5 EIPA score, 12 clock hours of PD or continuing education activities were required annually, and for those who had not met the 3.5 minimum, 24 hours were required annually. In this way, skill development hours were directly tied to interpreters’ demonstrated competency. The

supervisor organized some in-house PD activities during their paid time that interpreters could count towards their annual requirements. Accountability was addressed by requiring interpreters to submit documentation of their PD activities. The supervisor also noted that requiring PD hours brought their organization's educational interpreters in line with the broader field of community interpreting in which CEUs were commonly required to maintain certification and/or licensure.

Another supervisor developed a comprehensive educational interpreter handbook for their organization to standardize policies, practices and expectations for their interpreter team. The document was also useful guidance for administrators, educators, and families. Such guidelines had not previously existed in their organization.

Individual Accountability. Individual accountability was a subtheme that came up repeatedly in supervisor discussion of policy, interpreter qualifications, evaluations and professional development. Two organizations required interpreters to formally document their PD activities, and two did not. As previously mentioned, some supervisors were disappointed when interpreters failed to engage in PD activities, whether internal (sponsored by the organization) or external (workshops or presentations outside the organizations). It was apparent to supervisors that many educational interpreters would not choose to pursue PD or continuing education if it was not required. And although no supervisor made a direct statement, they implied that interpreters' lack of willing engagement in PD reflected poorly on their over-all professionalism.

The variability of PD requirements must be considered within the context of the body of literature showing interpreter qualifications are highly variable within and across all 50 states. Even if state requirements were not variable— if for example, they all required a minimum 4.0/5 on the EIPA, the current highest minimum in any state— educational interpreters would not be

absolved of their professional obligation to maintain and improve their skills. As discussed, most practice professionals, including community interpreters and other RSP, are typically required to engage in PD and earn CEUs.

As one supervisor said, “sometimes interpreters don’t necessarily understand the ramifications of covering something they may not be qualified for,” referring to the wide variety of interpreting assignments and consumers served (DHH students and DHH adults) in their district. As an experienced interpreter, this supervisor had the expertise and perspective to know when interpreters were or were not qualified for assignments, and how that might adversely affect DHH consumers. Their comment suggests that this type of professional self-evaluation was not a skill demonstrated by all staff.

Several supervisors discussed ASL-English interpreter codes of conduct such as the NAD-RID CPC, the EIPA Guidelines for Professional Conduct, and the NAIE Educational Interpreter Code of Ethics as important policy documents in their work. Again, because interpreter qualifications are so variable across states, participants supervised interpreters who had a wide range of perspectives on what constitutes “best practice” or “professional conduct” in K-12 interpreting. There are no widely accepted standards of K-12 interpreting best practices uniformly observed by educational organizations or interpreters.

On the topic of policy, three supervisors mentioned concerns regarding staff conduct such as chronic absenteeism and disciplinary issues. The latter included minor infractions like staff insubordination in addition to serious accusations of staff “grooming” type behavior with a DHH student causing school staff to suspect that abuse had or might occur. While absenteeism and discipline were minor themes, they were nevertheless relevant to policy discussions around interpreter conduct, professionalism and individual accountability. It is also worth reiterating that

interpreters are sometimes the only adult at school with which DHH students can communicate fluently, which can have real implications for student safety.

Supervision Over Time

Three major themes emerged from data collected on the transversal axis: 1) *Policy Has Not Kept Pace*, 2) *Hiring Practices in the Balance*, and 3) *Evolution of Supervisor Positions*. In this section, I present data regarding dimensions of interpreter supervision based on changes participants experienced over the course of their supervisory careers. I also trace policy trajectory and offer historic context when possible to present a fuller picture of what contemporary educational interpreter supervision looks like in schools based on these four cases.

Major Themes

Policy Has Not Kept Pace. Based on supervisors' experiences, policy around educational interpreter supervision has not kept pace with the needs of DHH students, interpreters, or supervisors. One supervisor described the new NAIE Code of Ethics as important guidance for schools and stakeholders, but it is as yet unknown if it will be widely adopted. There have never been any national standards for ASL-English interpreters working in K-12 schools, and there is no federal special education policy guidance beyond interpreters' classification as RSP under IDEA.

As described in Chapter 2, no state department of education has published policy or guidelines on the supervision of ASL-English interpreters in schools. This supervision policy vacuum has contributed to supervisors in this study often finding themselves in the position of having had to figure it out on their own and make it up as they went along. Several participants wished they could collaborate, converse, and share resources with other supervisors, perhaps in regional or national conferences to help establish best practices in K-12 supervision.

Supervisors in this study simultaneously navigated policies at multiple levels and at every level, educational interpreter policy failed to keep pace with or reflect the demands that supervisors and interpreters faced in supporting DHH students. Organizational policy rarely accounted for the thousands of RSP interpreters working in schools. Supervisors often worked within the outdated or ambiguous policy frameworks of their organizations while earnestly trying to meet the needs of DHH students and interpreters. Supervisors added new policies to address emergent needs (PD requirements where there were none), tweaked extant policy to make it applicable to the work of interpreters (interpreting skills observations in evaluations), and incorporated contemporary policy guidance from the broader field of ASL-English interpreting to both guide staff and staff management practices (professional codes of conduct).

Hiring Practices in the Balance. Two supervisors used the phrase “warm body” to lament the way districts have often hired K-12 interpreters. This was based on their experiences and observations over the past two decades. They were referring to situations in which rather than securing qualified interpreters, districts have often hired the first available person claiming to know sign language regardless of credentials to satisfy the requirements of the IEP or 504 plan. The term “warm body” is used in various fields but is especially cringe-worthy in K-12 interpreting. Rather than describing someone who is generally not invested in their work, in this context a “warm body” indicates a person who is gainfully employed as an interpreter though objectively unqualified to support DHH children with documented disabilities and complex communication needs. They may have no post-secondary education in ASL-English interpreting, interpreting credentials or professional experience.

Supervisors in this study knew very well that while all interpreters were “signers,” not all signers were interpreters. This undergirded and guided their hiring practices. They knew the

phenomenon of placing a “warm body” with DHH students has been so pervasive for so long that interpreters have their own shorthand for it. Their hiring practices directly reflected the intention to screen for and hire qualified interpreters, but also indicate that they were indirectly pushing back against the indiscriminate hiring of unqualified signers. Whether consciously or not, these supervisors contributed to the professionalization of K-12 interpreting through their hiring practices. Ultimately, it was supervisors’ experience as interpreters and knowledge of DHH students— more than policy— that compelled them to eschew the warm body status quo.

One supervisor also mentioned that “interpreters are now coming into the field differently than they used to.” This supervisor was referring to the proliferation of post-secondary ASL-English interpreter education programs since the passage of PL 94-142, in contrast to interpreters historically being “homegrown” from within local Deaf communities (Lane, 1992). The supervisor shared that in her experience hiring interpreters and seeking subs, she has seen steadily fewer interpreters willing to take substitute or temporary contract/freelance work. She explained that many applicants who were recent graduates expressed concerns with paying off student loans and were therefore seeking “regular gigs,” steady interpreting jobs (whether part time or full time) that offered stability and benefits. This illustrates how historic changes in interpreter education (and higher education) may impact K-12 hiring practices and employment trends.

Evolution of Supervisor Positions. Kathy, Michael, and Rebecca all described working as educational interpreters in their organizations prior to transitioning into their supervisory positions; Linda was the only one who submitted an external application in response to a post for an interpreter supervisor. Three supervisor positions changed significantly over the past decade or so before evolving into their current iterations. At the time of data collection, one supervisor

was experiencing minor adjustments to their position including a reduction in the number of interpreters they oversaw.

To protect participant confidentiality, individual case data for supervisor's historical job changes are not described in detail. Several participants described significant changes in scope (job duties and primary responsibilities), revisions to job descriptions and job titles (or the creation of a new position), and changes in pay rate to reflect new responsibilities. Two supervisors described their prior jobs as interpreter scheduler or coordinator positions. One said that their prior coordinator job was functionally more like a supervisory position (e.g., included staff evaluations, etc.) though the position was not formally classified as supervisory or administrative. This led to subsequent changes in the position description and pay. One organization implemented changes to the interpreter supervisor job description because of concerns expressed by educational interpreters regarding how they were being supervised.

In all cases, changes were initiated by supervisors and interpreters not by the organization. In the four cases described in this study, policy change did not precipitate refinements in supervisor positions or the establishment of new positions or practices. Stated another way, it was not the policies that changed the people, it was *the people who changed the policies*. This reflects the body of critical policy literature that considers people at the heart of policy and seeks to empower individuals and groups to proactively pursue the policy change they want to see. Whether by advocating for updates to job descriptions or the creation of entirely new positions and policies, in all four cases supervisors engaged in interpreter leadership designed to reflect the current realities of DHH students and interpreters in regular public schools.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine how educational interpreter supervisors approached, defined and experienced their work in public schools, and to understand how they engaged with and enacted policy. A comparative case study (CCS) research design and critical policy analysis lens were used to answer the research questions in alignment with the three axes of CCS and examine similarities and differences between the four chosen cases. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four participants who identified as hearing and as practicing, professional interpreters and supervisors of educational interpreters in K-12 public schools.

Data were collected in three ways: an online pre-screening survey, recorded Zoom interviews, and policy data submitted by participants. Data were analyzed using a critical policy analysis lens and by utilizing NVivo software in combination with qualitative methods described by Saldaña (2016) including thematic and affective coding. Interview and policy data were used to describe the job characteristics of participants in aggregate and create practice and policy profiles for each case which were organized into matrices and used to identify and compare major and minor themes.

Supervisor Practice

Four major themes emerged from supervisor practice data. Based on analyses across themes, supervisors' top two priorities were 1) ensuring DHH students had uninterrupted (or rarely interrupted) interpreting services and, 2) providing staff interpreters frequent, interpreting-specific job supports. Both priorities were aimed at supporting DHH students so they received the interpreting services they were entitled to consistent with their IEP or 504 plan. Consistent services directly provided students access to instruction, curriculum, communication, and peer

interaction via interpretation between spoken English and ASL at school. Ensuring interpreters had targeted, professional job supports indirectly served the goal of providing services that were not only consistent, but high quality as well. All supervisors' job descriptions included language requiring supervisors to support interpreter professional development and/or best practices in the field of interpreting. But it was supervisors' expertise and experience as interpreters, combined with their knowledge of DHH students' and commitment to supporting their communication that allowed them to satisfy that requirement. All four supervisors approached their work in ways that prioritized the inclusion of DHH students in their school communities while offering relevant job supports to interpreters.

Empathy, compassion and open communication were themes in supervisors' approaches to leadership and collaboration with colleagues. In all four cases, deep professional skill sets in ASL-English interpreting and specialized expertise in educational interpreting positioned supervisors to understand interpreters' job needs as related service personnel. Supervisors understood the struggles experienced by many DHH individuals in spaces where few others sign or understand Deaf culture, and how interpreters may feel powerless under those circumstances. Though never stated directly, in conversations with supervisors they suggested that interpreters vicariously experienced students' struggles to some degree.

Supervisors also intimated awareness of interpreters as outliers among RSP. Interpreters are the ultimate "push in" service.² This means that interpreters serve students in their classes all week unlike other RSP who might pull them out of class for services. Some providers like speech professionals or audiologists might observe or work with students in class occasionally; TODHHs might do this as well. But interpreters work side by side with teachers every day,

² Based on my researcher positionality, I would like to acknowledge that there is some controversy with this term in special education. I use it here for only for expedience.

sometimes seen as valued colleagues, sometimes as unwelcome guests. This reality is well known in the field of educational interpreting. Either way, classrooms are the teachers' domain; interpreters do not have their own classrooms and as discussed by supervisors, frequently do not have their own offices. This puts many educational interpreters in the precarious situation of being full-time visitors in their own workspaces.

Supervisors instinctively understood these complex interpersonal workplace dynamics and their potential to affect an interpreters' ability to do their jobs effectively. They understood differences in service delivery models (push in/pull out for lack of better terms) were one of the reasons K-12 interpreters had job needs that required specific supports distinct from other RSP (see Table 1). Many interpreters also required additional training and support because they had not demonstrated minimum competencies at the time of hire. This is another reason K-12 interpreters often function as outliers among RSP. Supervisors' experience as interpreters provided them the knowledge, specialized skill sets and perspective to support interpreters' needs whether "hard skills" (ASL-English interpreting), "soft skills" (e.g., interpersonal communication and decision-making) and everything in between (Klaus, et al., 2007).

Supervisors in this study demonstrated collaborative behavior and included their interpreter teams in decisions around staff coordination to ensure students were served. They valued openness and clear communication and saw the need to educate colleagues about DHH students' use of interpreting services as part of their work. Supervisors' evaluation practices varied in frequency and approach but when evaluations were conducted, all supervisors included live or remote observations of staff interpreting in classrooms, followed by targeted feedback addressing ASL and English linguistic features and/or other aspects of the work. All supervisors agreed that for evaluations to be "meaningful," they must include assessments of interpreters'

work product. This confirms results of Weirick (2021) in finding that many K-12 interpreters in that sample ($N = 230$) said that when their interpreting skills were not considered as part of evaluations, they were not “meaningful” because their work was not really evaluated.

Interpreters in that sample also said that evaluations that did not include skills assessments offered no useful feedback with which to improve their work. Participants in the survey and the present study both used the word “meaningful.” (I did not use the term in any survey items or interview questions.) Survey respondents also expressed concerns about the quality of DHH students’ education when interpreters’ skills were rarely assessed.

Policy Engagement

Based on the balance of policy analyses, supervisors sought to interpret and enact policy in ways that would improve and enhance professionalism and accountability both within their interpreter teams and by proxy in the broader field of K-12 interpreting. Professionalism was the functional link between interpreters’ work and policy: EIPA scores, designation as RSP under IDEA, meaningful evaluation and job supports, and best practices and interpreting codes of conduct. Professionalism was compromised when interpreters a) were not fully qualified, b) were not properly classified as special education RSP, and c) when interpreters were not afforded useful skills-based evaluations.

Supervisors engaged extensively with a range of policies at various scales. Organizational level policies were typically the most salient in enhancing or limiting their work because that was where alignment or misalignment with federal and state policy often occurred. Three supervisors helped revise their job descriptions to better reflect the work they did. The supervisor whose job description did not align with their day-to-day work struggled with what was expected versus what circumstance allowed. Two supervisors engaged extensively with

policy at the state level, including advocating for legislation to establish state standards for interpreters and being involved in K-12 interpreter steering committees and working groups. One supervisor was also involved with their statewide PD program that included educational interpreters and was working to bring issues of supervision, evaluation, and accountability to the forefront in their state. This supervisor saw the intersection of supervision, evaluation, PD, and accountability as among the most significant issues in both their home state and the field overall.

In all four cases, supervisors saw accountability in terms of supporting DHH students: not only providing interpreting services as required by the IEP but supporting the whole child: their linguistic, socioemotional and communication-related needs. This was seen as a shared responsibility between individuals (interpreters, supervisors) and organizations (districts, educational agencies, State departments of Education). Supervisors knew, based on their experience as interpreters that K-12 interpreters' work was not just interpreting: there were profound consequences for DHH students when they were underserved, when their communication needs at school were not met. As practicing interpreters with deep respect for ASL and Deaf culture, they understood the gravity of their responsibility as supervisors.

These supervisors committed their careers to improving equity and educational access for deaf and hard of hearing students, not as saviors—benevolent hearing people helping the deaf—but as workaday interpreters who have seen the very real oppression that deaf people experience. That is why policy mattered to them: because it had direct implications for the quality and consistency of DHH students' interpreting services, their educational access and their potential success in life. Policy was not about rules and mandates, governance or management. For these four supervisors, policy was about people.

Implications for Supervisor Practice

The ability to communicate with students—talk to them, ask questions, interpret their responses and ask follow-up questions to scaffold and guide them is so foundational to teaching and learning that it’s easy to take for granted. This is what educational interpreting is all about: being the communication bridge for DHH students with everyone they encounter at school. This was central to supervisors’ work. They of course knew full well that it takes the entire educational team to support DHH students. But as interpreters, they also knew it takes capable, professional interpreters to support communication. This study shows that supervisors who are experienced, credentialed interpreters can offer a range of benefits to K-12 interpreters and to DHH students. Educational organizations should consider credentialed ASL-English interpreters as preferred candidates for any position supervising educational interpreters.

According to coding results across all four participant cases, the following eight aspects of supervisors’ work were coded most frequently. This is a useful way to look at implications for supervisor practice as it may give supervisors and stakeholders a baseline frame of reference with which to compare their own practices. It may also be useful for supervisors to frame the following in terms of internal and external pressures in weighing how to balance challenges and priorities, and to leverage organizational routines for incremental change (Spillane et al., 2011).

The highest number of coding references was for ‘Doing the Job,’ a broad code encapsulating the basic ‘nuts and bolts’ of a typical work week for supervisors: scheduling and coordination; finding subs and filling assignments; supervisors providing direct interpreting services; engagement with interpreters; attending meetings, completing paperwork and so-called “administrivia” (see APPENDIX E). The eight codes with the highest number of references (in descending order) were:

- 1) Doing the Job (434)
- 2) Evaluations (252)
- 3) Policy Issues (240)
- 4) Hiring Interpreters (238)
- 5) Professional Development (212)
- 6) Policy Engagement (207)
- 7) Student Needs (190)
- 8) Collaboration (190)

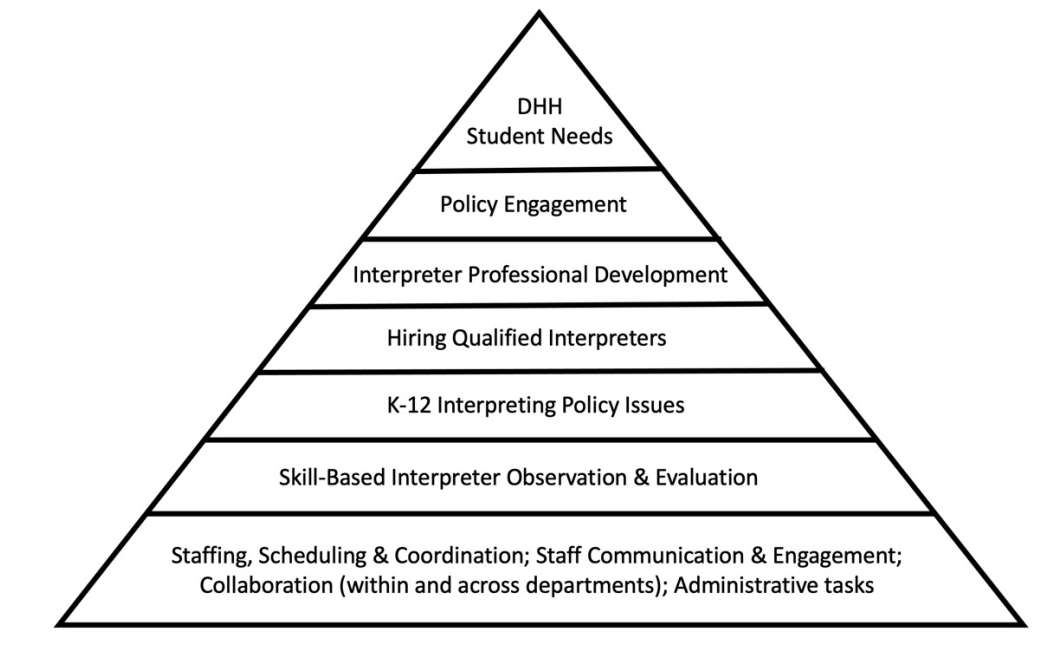
It's important to note that this list does not necessarily reflect participants' priorities or what they thought was most important in their work as supervisors. These data reflect topics that appeared often in participant interviews and were therefore coded with high frequency. It is also possible that these counts reflect researcher bias toward certain topics in the coding process. It is interesting to compare this list with the results of Weirick (2021) in finding that according to interpreters in that sample, supervisors who were interpreters conducted more evaluations (#2 above) and assessed interpreting skills more frequently [as part of evaluations], organized PD more frequently (#5 above), and were more likely to include interpreters as members of the IEP team (#8 above). Data from both studies suggest that these topics are of concern to many K-12 interpreters, including those who are supervisors.

These data might also be useful for supervisor practice in that they conceptualize interpreter supervisors' work in a novel way. The first item, Doing the Job, includes the things supervisors know well: the "tried and true" as one participant said, of coordinating, scheduling and making sure DHH students were covered, along with the standard educational administrative tasks. None of these responsibilities will come as a surprise to anyone who has worked as an

interpreter supervisor, coordinator or lead interpreter. In developing models of K-12 interpreter supervision, it might also be useful to think about these topics as a model of K-12 supervisory foundations and imperatives with DHH students' needs at the top (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Model of Educational Interpreter Supervision Foundations and Imperatives



Note. Based on participant interview topics with the highest number of coding references.

In Figure 1, I inverted the eight topics with highest number of coding references into a pyramid with the highest coded topic, Doing the Job, at the bottom. Some of the tasks in that code are detailed in the bottom layer of the pyramid. Notice that collaboration (#8) has been subsumed into the bottom layer, Doing the Job (#1). I made this decision when creating the model because data coding occurred early in analysis when I had not yet realized how significantly collaboration factored into multiple aspects of supervisors' work. After data analyses were completed it was clear that collaboration was an integral part of how supervisors conceived of and conducted much of their work. Collaboration was so essential I deemed it

appropriate to collapse it into Doing the Job as the foundational layer of the model. I also expanded on codes in each layer to reflect supervisors' perspectives more fully and accurately.

Figure 1 may offer supervisors and stakeholders a way to approach educational interpreter supervision and develop new models or frameworks while incorporating educational leadership and teacher coaching into PD and evaluative practices. It may also offer State Departments of Education, educational organizations and districts a way to conceptualize the work of interpreter supervisors while taking care to center and prioritize the needs of DHH students in any discussion or implementation of supervisory policy. These data also help address the gap identified 20 years ago by Antia & Kreimeyer (2001) by providing interpreter supervisors' perspectives as school administrators. Other administrators and stakeholders must understand that to appropriately serve DHH in accordance with IDEA, proper supervision and evaluation of educational interpreters is critical.

In considering the totality of the literature reviewed in combination with the results of the present study, evaluation continues to be a defining issue in contemporary K-12 interpreting. Meaningful, on-going, formal observations and assessments of interpreters' skills are the missing links to: a) addressing efficacy, b) examining potential impacts to DHH students (language development and deprivation, literacy, academic outcomes, etc.), c) establishing supervision and accountability systems within states and educational organizations, and d) establishing best practices in K-12 interpreter supervision. As participants in this study emphasized, the only way evaluations are "meaningful" is when they include skill-based assessments by those knowledgeable about interpreting and DHH students' communication needs. Thus, the most meaningful evaluations would be conducted by professional ASL-English interpreters.

Limitations of the Study

The findings from this study describe some of the ways educational interpreter supervisors approached their work and how they navigated policy in schools. This study is one of the first to document and examine what interpreter supervisors do in schools and how their work might impact educational interpreters and DHH students and so makes an important contribution to the literature. This study does however have several limitations including, 1) study design and sampling, 2) policy analyses, 3) potential researcher bias, and 3) lack of generalizability.

Study Design and Sampling

This qualitative study was designed using the Comparative Case Study framework (Bartlett & Vavrus). The original research design focused on two groups of school staffers who supervised interpreters identified in Weirick (2021), interpreter supervisors and teaching faculty, mostly teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing (TODHHs). Due to sampling limitations and other factors, I was unable to include any TODHHs in final sample. This necessitated changing the design from a comparison of two different types of supervisors to a comparison of similar types of supervisors within one group. The resultant sample was homogenous in race, hearing status, and identity as interpreters. Supervision perspectives represented in this study are therefore narrower and more limited than if the sample had included TODHHs, d/Deaf and hard of hearing individuals, or children or siblings of deaf families in supervisory positions. Future research on this topic should include the perspectives of TODHHs who supervise interpreters, DHH individuals and/or their family members in supervisory positions, and DHH students who utilize interpreting services as in Kurz & Langer (2004). There also may have been more effective, nuanced or interesting ways to integrate the three axes of CCS than what was used in this study.

Policy Analyses

The results of this study are limited due to methodological weaknesses in policy analysis. Policy was analyzed throughout all phases of analysis, and by using a matrix for that purpose while centering supervisors' priorities, values and concerns in how they engaged with and enacted policy. Selected policies (those submitted by participants) were analyzed and compared side by side, holistically and tangentially to supervisors' practices. In some instances, policy text was a central focus of analyses (IDEA §Section 300.34), while in other instances supervisor engagement with policy was prioritized (PD). I also had a professional foundation of policy knowledge that I mined in the process of policy analyses. Additional insights may have been revealed through closer textual analyses, document comparison or other methods.

Researcher Bias

The research design, data coding and/or analyses may have been skewed by researcher bias. I approached this study with certain underlying beliefs about interpreter supervision and policy such as state standards being too low, and assumptions about supervisor support being important based on my experiences as an educational interpreter. I used my survey data to inform interview questions, so some biases may have been carried over to the present study. The Weirick (2021) descriptive study did not include items asking participants about policy or hiring practices, so there were limited data with which to develop those interviews questions. Data coding may have been influenced by my focus on policy. Finally, I did not fully account for how my emic perspective and positionality as an interpreter might have affected the interview process, data collection or analyses. Future studies should seek to limit researcher bias in design, topics covered and in analytical methods.

Lack of Generalizability

Case studies are designed to produce thick descriptions of the phenomenon of interest are not intended to be generalized to the population (Maxwell, 2013). While this study offers important and insightful descriptions of supervisors' work from their perspectives, it does not tell us about the work of other interpreter supervisors. The supervisors who volunteered for this study were all credentialed interpreters; some were licensed and all participated in professional development and continuing education. As highly qualified professionals, these individuals may have been more interested in K-12 interpreter policy and/or more engaged actors in those of issues than other supervisors.

Directions for Future Research

Future research should include large-scale descriptive studies and surveys to better capture the experiences, insights, and concerns of a variety of interpreter supervisors to better understand how interpreters are supervised in schools and why it matters for DHH students. More research must document how interpreters are and *are not* supervised and evaluated in schools. Studies should not just focus on the supervision that is occurring, they must also document where it is not occurring to begin to explore relevant factors. Empirical studies are needed to begin the process of unpacking how supervisor practices influence interpreters in areas like evaluation, qualifications, professionalism, professional development, job satisfaction, membership on the educational team, in addition to attrition and retention. Using data from these types of studies, stakeholders can begin to develop models for K-12 interpreter supervision that emphasize formal, skills-based observations and evaluations as a matter of policy. School leadership and teacher coaching frameworks combined with reflective practice and Demand Control Schema (Dean & Pollard, 2013) have the potential to build the foundation for practicable models of educational interpreter supervision by formalizing in situ PD and job supports.

Empirical studies are also important in beginning the process of understanding how interpreter supervision may affect the quality and consistency of services that DHH students receive, and how educational organizations are (or are not) held accountable for those services. Due to the multiple and complex confounding variables that affect DHH students' academic achievement (as well as limitations in research methods) researchers are currently unable to show if more accurate interpreting correlates with DHH students' academic outcomes. But more accurate interpreting does improve DHH students' access to spoken information, which may affect their success at school and beyond (Schick, et al., 1999). Research needs to move beyond recommendations that K-12 interpreters need supervision and support. Those valid suggestions have been well established in the literature for the past thirty years. We need empirical studies that can do the work of getting into schools (literally and metaphorically) to document K-12 interpreter supervision.

Future research should also center the perspectives of DHH individuals (including K-12 and college students), CODA/SODAs and TODHHs in supervisory positions. Studies should be designed to systematically address critical policy aspects of ASL-English interpreting in K-12 settings while considering the unique policy ecosystems in which supervisors and interpreters work. The field of K-12 interpreting would benefit from policy research that emphasizes textual analyses by incorporating disability law perspectives and methodologies. Critical disability law scholars and intersectional researchers could contribute greatly to the research on ASL-English interpreting in K-12 settings as it relates to special education policy, FAPE, educational equity, and the linguistic, civil, and human rights of DHH children.

The field of K-12 interpreting has just begun to grapple with the many legal and policy issues in how DHH students are served by interpreters. More research should focus on ASL-

interpreters in K-12 settings as outliers among RSP and educators, inhabitants of a supervision policy vacuum where the needs of signing DHH students are an afterthought. The disconnect between interpreters' categorization under federal law (IDEA, 2004) and implementation at the state and local levels deserves more attention. Researchers need to ask difficult policy questions like whether states are out of compliance with IDEA when they provide unqualified, unregulated interpreters who are unable to meet DHH students' linguistic and communication needs. Constitutional questions such whether students receive "equal protection of the laws" under such circumstances could be considered as well (U.S. Const. amend. XIV).

The fact remains that educational interpreters and community interpreters are both ASL-English interpreters working in accordance with federal disability law, yet those serving DHH children are routinely permitted to be less qualified than those serving DHH adults. In this way, DHH children become "separate and unequal"³ from both their hearing peers *and* from DHH adults, resulting in further marginalization perpetuated by states and schools. This is one of the central policy contradictions in K-12 interpreting. To propose an analogy, most parents and educators would never accept the premise that RSP like school psychologists need be only minimally qualified to work with vulnerable populations of children. Yet this is the basic policy premise upon which educational interpreting has operated for the past 40 years.

Conclusion

Interpreter supervisors and educational interpreters must work collaboratively with a range of vested stakeholders (school administrators, parents, Deaf educators, Deaf community members, community interpreters, scholars, and allies) to envision and establish interpreter supervision and evaluation policies and procedures that protect DHH students and move the field

³ For more on "separate and unequal" in education, refer to *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

toward best practices. The proposed Cogswell-Macy Act is an important step toward addressing K-12 interpreter standards and accountability (Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act, 2019). Supervisors in this study are already doing the work. But a sea change in supervision—skills-based evaluations, hiring aligned with policy, relevant PD, professionalism and accountability—cannot happen without the active participation of educational interpreters.

Unfortunately, many maintain the low standards status quo by thinking more about the minimum EIPA score they need to get hired or stay employed than how their skills affect DHH students.

It is human nature to seek to meet one's basic needs (Maslow, 1934). But it is not enough for educational interpreters to meet minimum employment standards. The 2017 *Andrew F.* Supreme Court case made it clear that the *de minimis* standard in special education does not help students achieve their full potential, does not reflect the true intent of special education legislation, and is harmful to students with disabilities. As individuals, all educational interpreters must accept responsibility for the quality of interpreting services they provide to students and should be held accountable. As results of this study show, interpreter supervisors can and do take actionable steps toward the professionalization of K-12 interpreting and are pushing for policy advancement and greater accountability in the field. But they can't do it alone.

Table 1*Examples of Job Supports Provided by Educational Interpreter Supervisors*

Activity	Examples
Assisting	<p>With technology and navigating “new virtual territory” during COVID-19 shutdowns.</p> <p>With computer hardware and software (e.g., laptops, tablets, web cameras, internet).</p> <p>With hardware and software installation and training for remote interpreting work.</p> <p>With Learning Management Systems (e.g., Google Classrooms).</p>
Engaging	<p>Conversations about the work (questions, concerns, being a “sounding board”).</p> <p>Mediation and conflict resolution between interpreters or between interpreters and others.</p>
Guiding	<p>Interpreters in contributing as Related Service Personnel and members of the IEP team (e.g., describing students’ use of interpreting services, sharing observations and insights, professional communication with colleagues).</p> <p>Interpreters in ethical decision-making informed by interpreter codes of conduct and/or guidelines (EIPA Guidelines of Professional Conduct for Educational Interpreters, NAIE Interpreter Code of Ethics, NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct).</p> <p>Interpreters in organizational policy and procedure.</p> <p>Interpreters in special education policy and procedure.</p> <p>Interpreters in best practices (educational interpreting and special education).</p> <p>Interpreters in ethical and professional decision-making.</p>
Modeling	<p>Interpreting skills by teaming with interpreters during classes or in one-to-one meetings.</p> <p>Effective communication with colleagues (e.g., teachers, administrators) in situ or in one-to-one meetings.</p>
Observing	<p>Interpreters working in classrooms to offer support or help problem solve.</p> <p>Interpreters working to assess interpreting skills (ASL to English and English to ASL).</p> <p>Deaf students in class to assess signing skills and use of interpreting services.</p>

Providing	Evaluations including assessments of interpreters' skills based on observations. Post-evaluation follow-up (discussion, clarification, resources, referrals). Interpreting-specific professional development activities (group and individual). Team interpreters for support during difficult and/or extended assignments, or to give them a "bio break" to attend to biological needs (bathroom, food/water, etc.). Safe working conditions (e.g., providing team interpreters and breaks).
Referring	Interpreters to other interpreters for specialized support or mentorship. Interpreters to other departments for support (human resources, information technology).
Substituting	For assigned interpreters (short-term) to give them breaks. For absent interpreters by scheduling substitutes (pre-planned or same day absences).

Note. Highlighting is used to distinguish between activities. EIPA is the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment; NAD is the National Association of the Deaf; RID is the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf; and NAIE is the National Association of Interpreters in Education.

Table 2*Examples of Policies Discussed by Educational Interpreter Supervisors*

Policy	Participant			
	<i>Kathy</i>	<i>Linda</i>	<i>Michael</i>	<i>Rebecca</i>
Americans with Disabilities Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Code of Professional Conduct (EIPA Guidelines)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Code of Professional Conduct (NAD-RID)		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Code of Professional Conduct (NAIE Code of Ethics)		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Code of Professional Conduct (NAIE Professional Guidelines)		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hiring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individualized Education Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter Handbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter Licensure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter Observation and Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter Placement Limit (Two years with same student)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Job Description (Educational Interpreter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Description (Educational Interpreter Supervisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor Unions (e.g., Contracts, hiring, furloughs)	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandatory Reporting (e.g., child abuse)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Professional Development Requirements (Organization)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Development Requirements (RID)			<input type="checkbox"/>	
Professional Development Requirements (State)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requests for Interpreting (e.g., online submission forms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Board Policy (e.g., staff conduct, discipline)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State laws, statutes or legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note. EIPA is the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment; NAD is the National Association of the Deaf; RID is the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf; and NAIE is the National Association of Interpreters in Education.

APPENDIX A

Additional Information About ASL-English Interpreters in the U.S.

In her germinal text, *Interpreting: An Introduction*, Nancy Frishberg (1990) discusses what is widely regarded as the genesis of ASL-English interpreting as a profession in the U.S. She explains how an event hosted at Ball State University Teacher's College in 1964 to discuss the formalization of ASL-English interpreter education to better meet the needs of DHH Americans led to the formation of the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID).

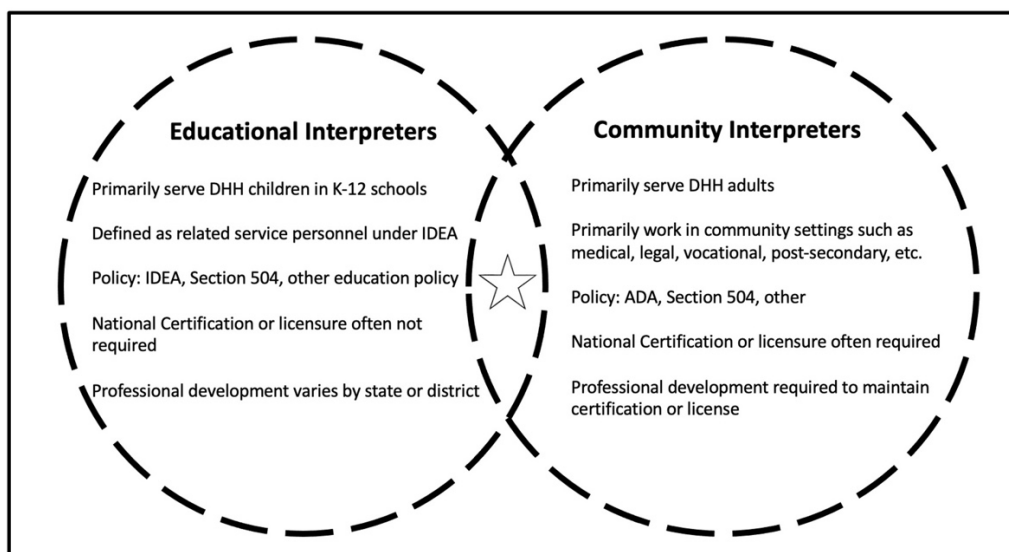
Since then, the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and RID have certified ASL-English interpreters in the U.S. While interpreter certification continues to change and evolve, many nationally certified interpreters are considered "community interpreters," as they serve DHH people in their local communities, usually adults. This phrase is in wide usage and is typically used to refer to situations where DHH individuals are served under the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1975 or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1994). The term is colloquial and has no specific legal definition in American disability legislation.

Data shows that community interpreters also serve DHH students in K-12 settings as freelance or contract interpreters, and many educational interpreters also work as freelance community interpreters (Johnson, et al., 2018; Weirick, 2021). In reviewing the literature for the present study, I was unable to locate a national dataset of all ASL-English interpreters in the U.S. If such data existed, researchers could calculate the degree of overlap between community and educational interpreters. A survey of $N = 230$ educational interpreters asking about their supervision experiences (Weirick, 2021), showed that 16.5% of the sample were nationally certified. While not representative, these data show that community interpreters and educational interpreters are not mutually exclusive. This is notable for two reasons: 1) it challenges the faulty

assumption that these two types of ASL-English interpreters are fundamentally different and, 2) it highlights several important additional policy issues embedded in the work of educational interpreters. In Figure 2, the star in the center represents the position of educational interpreter supervisors as described in this study. They work in a professional space where educational interpreting and community interpreting over-lap, in between and a part of both.

Figure 2

Two Types of American Sign Language (ASL) – English Interpreters in the U.S.



Note. The star in the center of the figure represents educational interpreter supervisors.

While educational interpreters do have many distinct practice and policy and considerations when compared to community interpreters, they are very much ASL-English interpreters regardless of specific job title or additional job duties. Educational interpreters are not fundamentally different than their community counterparts because they work under special education legislation or because they primarily support DHH children in K-12 schools. For both types of interpreters, their most essential job function and primary responsibility is to facilitate

communication between deaf and hearing individuals, and both must be properly qualified to do so regardless of the settings in which they work or the ages of consumers served.

APPENDIX B

Pre-Screening Questionnaire

Hello! I am conducting a research study focused on educational interpreter supervision. The goal of this study is to understand how different types of supervisors approach their work and engage with policies related to interpreting in k-12 settings.

Please complete this pre-screening questionnaire to determine if you meet study criteria. It will only take a few minutes. Participants will be chosen to represent a variety of interpreter supervisors: Interpreter Coordinators, “lead interpreters,” special education teachers, teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, and those who identify as deaf or hard of hearing. You will be notified via email if you have been chosen to participate. Incomplete surveys will be rejected. Thank you for your interest!

1. Are you aged 18 or over?

Yes/No

2. Are you currently an employee of a public education entity that serves k-12 students? (*Examples: public school or district, state school for the deaf and blind, regional educational cooperative, county education district, state department of education, other public education agency.*)

Yes/No

3. Do you currently lead, supervise, manage or coordinate ASL-English interpreters in k-12 settings as part of your job in public education?

Yes/No

4. Would you describe your primary job as supervising or coordinating interpreters? (*Even if you have multiple job titles, roles, or duties in your department, school or district.*)

Yes/No

5. Are you currently a credentialed interpreter? (*You hold active certification such as NIC, CI/CT, NAD, CDI, state interpreting credentials, or other credentials like BEI or EIPA.*)

Yes/No (if no route to 5.1)

- 5.1 Have you ever worked as an ASL-English interpreter? (For any persons or entities, paid or volunteer, with or without interpreting credentials.)

Yes/No

6. Are you currently a special education teacher or teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing?

Yes/No

7. Would you describe your primary job as teaching? (*Even if you have multiple job titles, roles, or duties in your department, school or district.*)

Yes/No

8. How many years total have you worked in public education? (In any position, under any job title.)

(drop down)

9. In what US state or territory do you currently work?

(State drop-down menu)

10. Which best describes the area where you usually work?

11. What is your gender identity? - Selected Choice

12. What is your race or ethnicity? - Selected Choice

13. How do you identify in relation to the Deaf Community?

Deaf

Hard of Hearing

Hearing

Hearing Impaired

CODA

SODA

14. If you are chosen to participate, are you willing to be interviewed by the researcher in a recorded Zoom meeting (audio and video) to discuss your work supervising interpreters?

Yes/No

15. If you are chosen to participate, are you willing to provide publicly available school or district policy documents (or web-links) related to your work supervising interpreters?

Yes/No

16. Please enter your name and email address to be contacted if you are chosen to participate:

(Text entry box)

17. I give the researcher permission to keep only my name and email address on file to be contacted for future research on this topic. You can ask the researcher to remove your information at any time. (Your response will not affect whether you are chosen to participate in this study. If you are chosen you will be assigned a pseudonym.)

(Text entry box)

APPENDIX C**Interview Protocols**
(Pre- and Post-Interview)**Pre-Interview Script**

Introduction: I will go ahead and start recording now. Hello, it's nice to see you! My name is Whitney Weirick. As you know I am a doctoral candidate in the Special Education- Deaf and Hearing program at the University of Arizona. This project is a part of my dissertation research on educational interpreting. I worked as an educational interpreter for almost six years, and in that time became interested in how interpreters are supervised and supported in the districts where they work. Thank you so much for joining me on this Zoom call and for your willingness to participate in this study!

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to compare and contrast how two groups of interpreter supervisors approach their work including how policy informs their practice. The two groups are *Interpreter Supervisors* (by formal job title) and *Teaching Faculty* (special education teachers and Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing). You have been assigned to the (*IS* or *TF*) group. I will ask you to tell me about your work supervising interpreters as an (*IS* or *TF*), and about the (x, y, z) policies you told me were important to you before we scheduled this interview.

Confidentiality: All of the responses you give in this interview will be kept strictly confidential. No information will be shared outside of this interview about your identity, your name, where you work, your email or anything you share in the course of the interview. The researcher (me) will be the only one who knows your identity. You will be assigned a pseudonym which is how you will be referred to in any publications.

Consent: You have already signed the informed consent form previously provided to you. Can you confirm that you have voluntarily consented to participate in this research? (yes/no)

Interview Format: Over the course of the next hour or so, I will ask you approximately 16 main questions about your experiences supervising educational interpreters. I may ask you follow up questions as well. The interview will be recorded using Zoom software and will include video and audio. When we're done, the Zoom software will create a transcript of the interview which I will edit for accuracy to make sure it matches what was said during the interview. About a week after your interview, I will share a secure link to Box@UA cloud storage where the edited transcript will be stored. I'll ask you to review it and you can request any changes or corrections. The interview video will be deleted after final transcripts have been corrected and approved by you. The transcript will be stored in secure cloud storage at the University of Arizona (Box@UA) for subsequent data analyses by the researcher (me). No one outside the research team (me and university academic advisors) will have access to the transcripts. All data will be stored in accordance with timelines and requirements for research data established by the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP).

Contact: At the conclusion of the interview and any time thereafter, you can contact me with any questions or concerns at my official university email address: weirick@email.arizona.edu. From there, we can schedule a Zoom call or phone call if you would prefer that to email correspondence. You can also contact the university HSSP with questions at 520-621-7507.

Questions: Do you have any questions for me right now about the interview process, about the confidentiality of your information and answers, or anything else I've discussed so far? Okay let's get started!

Post-Interview Script

Thank you so much for your time today. Do you have any questions for me about the interview process, about the confidentiality of your information and answers, or anything else we've discussed?

In about a week, I will send you a link to your interview transcript for you to look over. I may contact you if I have questions or need to request clarification on anything we discussed.

Feel free to contact me via phone or email, and you can always contact the university HSSP with questions at 520-621-7507 if you want to discuss the study with someone outside the research team.

Thanks again and I will stop the recording now.

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

Part One: Supervision

1. What is your **job title, department, and classification** within your organization? How long have you been in this position? (*Is your position hourly or salary [hours per week or calendar days]? Do you have a formal job description? What is your annual income? How did you come to this position? How long has this position been active?*)
2. Tell me about your **work supervising interpreters**. What does a typical week look like (pre COVID-19/post COVID-19)? (*How many interpreters do you supervise? How many districts and/or schools? Do you interpret for DHH students or adults? If you were to break down your week by task category— administration, direct staff engagement, engagement with administrators, PD, observation, evaluation, IEP meetings, etc. — what takes up most of your time?*)
3. Tell me about the **process for hiring interpreters**. (*How you make interpreter placement decisions? Do you make recommendations for disciplinary actions?*)
4. Tell me about **how interpreters are evaluated** in your (district, co-op).
5. Tell me about **interpreter professional development** in your district. (*Do interpreters have paid PD time? Do they have planning or “prep” time? Do they have dedicated office space and/or a place to store their belongings?*)
6. **How does your experience as an [interpreter/non-interpreter, TODHH]** inform your work as a supervisor? (*How does your experience with ASL and Deaf Community factor in? Do you work directly with DHH students to address their preferences and concerns, etc.?*)

7. As an interpreter supervisor, **what are your priorities?** (*How do you balance priorities? What are the necessary attributes of an effective supervisor? What is the hardest part of your job? What is the best part of your job? How do you support interpreters?*)
8. Tell me about your **prior experience with supervision, leadership, or management.** (*Do you have any formal training in supervision or administration? How would you describe your leadership style?*)

Part Two: Policy

9. What is **your supervisor's job title, department, and classification?** To whom does your supervisor report? (*Is your position represented in the organizational chart? Do you have professional autonomy as a decision-maker? How do your superiors support you in doing your job? Are the systems that have been established effective? Why or why not?*)
10. You submitted (x, y, and z) **policies** as those you thought were most salient to your work. Tell me why you thought that. (*How do these policies help or hinder your work? Have you updated any old policies or created new policies in your district? Do you ever ignore any policies that you thought were ineffective or outdated?*)
11. Are there interpreter **supervision policies in your district?** (*Are they useful? Why or why not? Is there policy guidance that you don't have that you would like to see? What?*)
12. Tell me about your involvement with **IEPs and student placement** decisions. How much do you engage with DHH students? With their families? What do you discuss with them? (*What factors play into your engagement with students or families? What role do interpreter supervisors play in educating families about the needs of their child?*)

13. What do **administrators** need to understand about k-12 interpreter supervision and policy? *(Does it matter if those who supervisors are familiar with ASL or the needs of signing DHH students? Why or why not?)*
14. How has the **field of educational interpreting** addressed the issue of in-service interpreter supervision and evaluation? *(Do post-secondary interpreter training programs have any role? Why or why not? What about organizations involved with interpreter preparation like the Conference of Interpreter Trainers—do they have any role?)*
15. What are the **most critical policy issues** in the field of k-12 interpreting today? *(If you could magically implement, eliminate, or change one policy, what would it be and why?)*
16. **Does interpreter supervision matter?** Does it matter for interpreters? For DHH students? Why or why not? What recommendations would you make? Is there anything else you'd like to add?

APPENDIX E

Codebook
(Listed by alpha)

ACCOUNTABILITY: Participant direct or implied comments related to the responsibilities of supervisors, interpreters and organizations being held accountable for the quality of interpreting services delivered to students. Might refer to their staff interpreters' qualifications, credentials, or professional development (PD) activities (individual or group). Example: Interpreters not being held accountable for maintaining/improving their skills via required PD or continuing education units (CEUs).

ADMIN NEED TO KNOW: Aspects of educational interpreting generally and supervising interpreters that participants think are important for school administrators to understand. Examples: That interpreters are trained professionals; what the job of educational interpreting entails.

ADULT SERVICES: Participant discussion of how their organization (school, district, agency) provides ASL-English interpreting services for deaf/HH (DHH) adults under the ADA. Example: If the participant handles interpreter requests for DHH parents (in addition to student requests), or if they are handled by another individual or department within or outside the organization.

ALIGN W INTERPRETING FIELD: Participant discussion of how they approach interpreter supervision, interpreter qualifications and/or interpreter PD in ways that align with the broader field of ASL-English interpreting outside k-12 settings. Example: Basing educational interpreter PD/CEU requirements on those established by the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), the primary certifying body for ASL-English interpreters in the U.S.

BEST PART: Participants favorite parts of their jobs; what they enjoyed most as supervisors. Example: Seeing DHH students grow and succeed; supporting and mentoring interpreters.

CHAIN OF COMMAND (SEE: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE)

CHANGE OVER TIME: How participants' jobs supervising interpreters evolved or changed over time. Examples: Starting in one job that was changed to a similar but different job; Getting or creating a new job description as a supervisor; changes in organizational structure, support staff and/or responsibilities related to supervising interpreters.

COLLABORATION: Participant descriptions of how they actively engage in cooperation with colleagues in conducting their work. "Colleagues" include (but are not limited to): direct reports (staff interpreters, subs and freelancers), administrators (school and district level), members of the IEP team, teachers, and various school staffers and related service personnel. Examples: Attending IEP meetings for the students they serve; explaining to a school principal why the educational interpreter at their school is either not qualified or not able to interpret for DHH parents.

COMM WITH FAMILIES: Participants' direct communication with the parents/families of DHH students who receive interpreting services. Examples: Talking with parents in IEP meetings; informing families of events or activities for which students are eligible for interpreting services.

DEAF ENGAGEMENT: Comments that address educational interpreters' engagement with Deaf community or with DHH individuals outside their work in schools. Example: Frequency of engagement with deaf adults may affect interpreters' ASL fluency.

DECISION-MAKING: Comments about the factors that influence some of the many decisions they make as supervisors. Often dovetails with other factors such as participant priorities or school policy. Examples: An organization's policy guidance on documentation may drive some of a supervisor's decisions, or the immediate need to secure a substitute interpreter for a student in class without one may be a priority driving supervisors' decisions.

DOES SPVSN MATTER: Participants' responses to a double-barreled question asking if interpreter supervision matters to interpreters or to DHH students. This was intended to mean "is supervision important?" (No participants requested clarification of the question.) Examples: Participants suggesting that groups of staff need leadership, or that interpreters need someone overseeing their work who understands what they do.

DOING THE JOB: This broad code encompassed many of the daily tasks and responsibilities of supervising interpreters. Participants were asked what a "typical week" looked like for them as supervisors. Many of those responses were labeled with this code. Often over-lapped with DECISION-MAKING, PRIORITIES, POLICY ENGAGEMENT, STUDENT NEEDS and STAFF NEEDS. Examples: Scheduling (staff coverage/compliance): substitute interpreters for regular classroom assignments, matching interpreters to assignments, other; communication with interpreters and other team members; providing direct services (stepping in to interpret when necessary); attending IEP or MET meetings; administrative tasks (timesheets, etc.).

DUAL ROLES: This code was used when participants described circumstances where they functioned in dual roles. Example: Functioned as both interpreter for a meeting and participant as interpreter supervisor. (NOTE: This code also relates to Section 3.3 of the RID Code of Professional Conduct which advises interpreters to avoid dual or conflicting roles on educational teams.)

EI FIELD ADDRESSED SPVSN: Participants responses regarding whether they thought the field of educational interpreting has addressed the issue of in-service interpreter supervision and evaluation. Examples: There's no research, training, or professional community for supervisors.

EIPA SCORE: This code was used for any comments that addressed the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment, staff EIPA scores or EIPA state requirements. Overlap with HIRING INTERPRETERS, EVALUATIONS, POLICY ISSUES and PD. Examples: Supervisors using interpreters' EIPA scores as baseline data to help formulate feedback for interpreters during evaluations and/or to customize PD recommendations.

ETHICS: This broad code includes issues related to ASL-English interpreter codes of professional conduct (such as the RID CPC and new guidance from the National Association of Interpreters in Education). Examples: Professional boundaries, expectations of professionalism (e.g., policy adherence, skill advancement, other), hiring practices (lack of fidelity to state minimums).

EVALUATIONS: Participant comments related to how they conduct evaluations of staff interpreters. Typically involve direct observations of interpreters. Overlaps with EIPA SCORES, POLICY ENGAGEMENT, and PD. Examples: Instrumentation (forms and tools used to guide or score observations); whether evaluations include skills assessments; providing feedback.

EXP AS INTERPRETER: Participants comments about how their experience as practicing interpreters has influenced their work as supervisors. Examples: Understanding of challenges in k-12 interpreting; how shared experience affects the professional relationship; shared language ("shorthand") between colleagues.

HARDEST PART: What participants thought was the most challenging parts of their work. Examples: Paperwork, policy compliance, inter-personal aspects.

HIRING INTERPRETERS: Participant descriptions of the process for hiring interpreters in their organization. Overlaps with EIPA SCORES, POLICY ENGAGEMENT and ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE. Examples: How their organization advertises/recruits, how interviews are conducted and how candidates are chosen.

HOW GOT JOB: Explanations of how participants came to occupy their present supervisory position. Overlaps with CHANGE OVER TIME, JOB DESCRIPTION and LEADERSHIP. Examples: Applying cold from out of state or being hired internally.

HOW LONG JOB EXISTED: Participants' knowledge of how long their supervisor position existed in its present iteration and if there was a comparable position prior to that. Example: Staff interpreter who coordinated interpreters which then evolved into a supervisory position.

IEP: Comments about the individualized education plan (IEP) and how these documents factor into the work of supervisors. Examples: Attending IEP meetings to offer input on interpreting services.

INTERP ED ADDRESSED SPVSN: Responses to an interview item asking if participants thought post-secondary ASL-English interpreter education programs typically addressed the issue of supervision in their programs. Example: Their experience hiring new graduates; knowledge of information programs might include for graduates applying for k-12 interpreting positions.

JOB CLASSIFICATION: Information about how participants' jobs were categorized within their organizations. Examples: Teaching faculty may be considered "certified," while other school staffers may be considered "classified" employees or be classified in other ways.

JOB DESCRIPT MATCH: Responses to an interview item asking whether participants thought their job description matched or aligned with the work they do. Example: If participants found themselves needing to substitute for staff interpreters who were out, but the job description does not address this requirement.

JOB DESCRIPTION: General comments about participants' job descriptions and duties.

Example: Participant is required to supervise special education staff other than interpreters.

JOB PAY: Information about compensation, salary, frequency, benefits, etc. Example: Hourly or salary; if their position is based on the academic year or set number of months.

JOB TITLE: Participants formal job titles within their organization. Examples: Supervisor, coordinator, lead interpreter, other.

LEADERSHIP: Comments that relate to or illuminate participants' leadership style or philosophy. Examples: Discussions of management style or approach; comments about communicating with their staff or other colleagues.

MOST TIME SPENT: The tasks that take up the bulk of supervisors' time in a typical week and related comments. Examples: scheduling, paperwork, meetings, other.

NONCLASSROOM INTERPRETING: Discussions of the interpreting activities coordinated or provided by participants in addition to ongoing classroom assignments for students.

Examples: interpreting for deaf parents in IEP meetings; coordinating ADA interpreting services district-wide.

NUMBER OF DHH STUDENTS: Total number of students for whom participants' staff provide interpreting services.

NUMBER OF INTERPRETERS: Total number of staff interpreters for whom participants' staff provide interpreting services.

NUMBER OF SITES: Total number of educational sites/schools where participants' staff provide interpreting services.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: Descriptions of participants departments, organizations, supervisors and colleagues. Examples: To whom participant reports directly, how interpreting requests are tracked, other.

PD: Descriptions of professional development and continuing education activities, policies and procedures for participants' staff, individual and group. Examples: Activities organized by participants on teacher in-service days; individual professional development plans interpreters.

PLACEMENT_REFERRAL: Comments about how DHH students receive interpreting services or how their placed with specific interpreters. Example: Participants making recommendations in IEP meetings regarding student use of interpreting services.

PLANNING PERIOD: Comments about whether participants' staff have a designated planning period and relevant details such as location, frequency and/or authorized activities. Example:

POLICY ENGAGEMENT: How supervisors interpreted, implemented, modified and enacted policy. Engagement was seen broadly and included any number of policy topics as defined in the study.

POLICY ISSUES: Policy issues were those of most concern to supervisors or those they thought were more pressing in the field of educational interpreting.

PRIORITIES: What supervisors thought were the central or most important aspects of their work.

PROFESSIONALISM: Beliefs, attitudes and behaviors aligned with best practices in the fields of ASL-English interpreting and special education in the work of educational interpreters.

SPVSR INTERP CEDENTIALS: Supervisors professional credentials related to their work.

STAFF ATTRIBUTES: Comments about the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors or qualifications of staff interpreters.

STAFF NEEDS: Comments about the work-related needs of staff interpreters.

STAFFING COVERAGE: Comments about assigning, substituting and coordinating interpreters.

STUDENT NEEDS: Comments about the communication-related needs of DHH students at school. Includes academic and social communication, interpreting, visual access, etc.

STUDENT SERVICES: Interpreting services coordinated for and delivered to DHH students.

TYPE OF SITES: Types of schools, educational sites and other intra- and extra- organizational locations where interpreting services are provided.

YEARS IN JOB: How long the supervisor has been in their present position.

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