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Dissertation Abstracts

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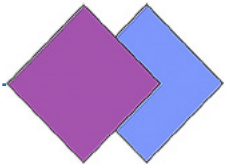
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Dissertation Abstracts

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Stories of Leaving: A Multiple Case Study of the Attrition of Novice American Sign Language-English Interpreters

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Abstract

Communication access is a legislated right for deaf people in many settings in the United States; however, the number of professional signed language interpreters does not meet the demand for services (NCIEC, 2009b; NIEC, 2015). One factor of the demand-supply imbalance may be attributed to the number of individuals who exit the interpreting profession at an early stage in their career while still novice interpreters. Using the theoretical framework of attraction, selection, and attrition (ASA) from applied and organizational psychology (Schneider, 1987), along with person-organization fit (PO Fit), as described by Caplan (2011), I examine attrition of individuals from early professional interpreting practice. I surmise that throughout the cycle of ASA, individuals and the profession are continuously examining dimensions of PO Fit, and, for some, disruptions arise in the conceptualization of fit. The results of this multiple case study will increase understanding of attrition in the signed language interpreting profession and may lead to a set of strategies to help individuals assess their fit with the profession. Further, the findings may assist members of the interpreting profession to develop ways to address issues of fit when barriers arise. Critically, retention of signed language interpreters may result in a greater number of available practitioners to provide communication access for the deaf community.

Keywords: attrition, signed language interpreters, attraction-selection-attrition (ASA), person-organization fit

Swift Trust Formation: Experiences of Deaf Consumers and ASL-English Interpreters

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Abstract

Deaf individuals and nondeaf signed language interpreters have experienced a complex symbiotic relationship complicated by the initial move toward professionalization in the 1970s. As a result of this shift from an ad hoc endeavor to a professional one, the need to develop trusting relationships among the members of both communities has increased importance. Using the framework of swift trust formation (Meyerson et al., 1996), this study examines six communication dyads made up of deaf consumers and nondeaf ASL-English interpreters unfamiliar to one another ahead of an authentic interpreter-mediated setting. Findings suggest that when interpreters initiated a two-phase preparation process that included independent preparation before the dyad's initial meeting, the likelihood increased that the deaf consumer would make a positive trustworthiness determination of the interpreter. Recommendations for interpreter educators and practitioners provide tangible means to implement effective swift trust-building strategies in rapidly developing settings, thereby enhancing the deaf consumer's experience.

Keywords: deaf individuals, nondeaf signed language interpreters, communication dyads, swift trust formation, deaf consumer's experience

Interpreting While Black: A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Reality of African American ASL-English Interpreters

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Abstract

This study illuminates the lived reality of African American ASL-English interpreters through the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology. Five participants engaged in a three-part interview protocol, and data were analyzed by using a thematic approach. Results reveal the resiliency that African American interpreters exhibit when confronting the pernicious effects of racism in their personal and professional lives by drawing upon their cultural heritage and community connections. For African American interpreters, the phenomenon of interpreting while Black suggests that when on an interpreting assignment, race can be an asset and a liability. The data further illustrate that spaces of, by, and for people of color are essential in individual and collective liberation. This study adds to an emerging literature about the lived experience of African American signed language interpreters.

Keywords: African American signed language interpreters, racism, resilience, phenomenological study, lived experience

Exploring the Exploitation of the Ally Model in Spoken-Language Interpreting From a Service-User Perspective

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Abstract

Community interpreting—performed to assist immigrants who are not native speakers of a language and facilitate their access to statutory services (Collard-Abbas, 1989)—involves members of the dominant culture who can speak the dominant language and immigrants or refugees who cannot. Because of this, power differences are always at play in interpreting, and a critical analysis of the role of the interpreter makes society's marginalization and oppression dynamics visible. Unlike the conduit model, the ally model of interpreting, which arose together with the deaf civil-rights movement in the United States, acknowledges the power differentials at play during any interpreted event, focusing on the consumers of interpreting services. Interpreters working within this model consciously choose to act in ways that will actively help empower the party who cannot speak the majority language, offering greater equality of access.

The majority of the research on allyship in relation to interpreting exists within the field of signed languages, where power imbalances are more readily identified, given that deafness is often understood as a disability (Baker-Shenk, 1986; Doe, 2004). In the field of spoken-language interpreting, allyship has been overlooked and often condemned by researchers as problematic (Hsieh et al., 2013). Moreover, there is limited research into “users’ experiences of interpreters, both professional and informal, from their own point of view” (Edwards et al., 2005, p. 78). Because interpreting is a social service, the voices of the oppressed immigrant and refugee communities in need of these services must become key drivers of change in interpreting theory and practice so that interpreting can meet the expectations of those who need this service the most. Informed by a horizontal methodology, my research employs one-on-one dialogues with interpreting service users and a group dialogue involving users, interpreters, and community representatives to study whether there is room for the application of ally theory to spoken-language interpreting.

Keywords: community interpreting, ally model, ally theory, oppressed migrant and refugee communities, horizontal methodology, interpreting service users, spoken-language interpreters

La interpretación sanitaria en los hospitales públicos de la isla de Gran Canaria: situación actual y protocolo de actuación / Health Care Interpreting in Public Hospitals of Gran Canaria: Current Situation and Action Protocol

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to find out how the health care staff from the two public hospitals in Gran Canaria communicate with foreign patients and which solutions are carried out to solve communication problems when they appear. With this study, I would like to help raise awareness about the need to have an interpreting service in the public hospitals in Gran Canaria. This thesis is divided into three main sections. First, I present the theoretical framework that consists of seven chapters going from general to specific content, explaining what interpreting is and framing health care interpreting. The second large section is devoted to the empirical study. Before presenting the data of the final study, I focus on the preliminary study that was part of my MA dissertation, carried out during the academic year 2016–2017. The information gathered then

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gave me an insight into what I would later develop in 2018–2019 as the core chapter of this thesis. By interviewing health care professionals, I aimed to find out how health care staff in Gran Canaria communicate with those foreign patients who do not speak Spanish. This study finds that health care professionals are sure to have communication problems and try to solve them by devising solutions to communicate with the foreign patient due to the absence of an interpreting service. Some of the participants use nonverbal communication with the patients, others call a colleague who knows the foreign language, and some even call an external person (usually relatives of the patients) to be able to communicate appropriately with these users who do not speak the local language. The last section of my thesis focuses on designing and explaining an action protocol. This protocol includes the development of different proposals, including a face-to-face interpreting service, a telephone and videoconference interpreting service, or a combination of both. One of the proposals that I suggest follows the interpreting model that is currently working in Auckland, New Zealand.

Keywords: public service interpreting, navigation and interpreting services, health care interpreter, communication with patient