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How can I better live personal and professional values in my interpreting work with colleagues?

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How can I better live personal and professional
values in my interpreting work with colleagues?

Peter Norland

An action research project submitted to
Western Oregon University

In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of:
Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies

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

Action Research Project Title:

How can I better live my personal and professional values in my interpreting work with colleagues?

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

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

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ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to improve my practice through inviting the insights of my colleagues into my work with them. Eleven hearing interpreters participated. Through interviews, I found that conferencing before the assignment and debriefing afterward elevated my colleagues' beliefs about my embodiment of collegiality and respect for their professional autonomy, despite times my efforts fell short during assignments. Colleagues told me they thought the pre-conferencing practices I adopted as part of the research were helpful to our decision-making during assignments. My finding that pre-conferencing is helpful for teaming supports Hoza's (2010b) claim that this standard practice is effective, but other aspects of my inquiry point to ambiguities and tough decisions in teaming. The methodology employs "multiple perspectives of knowing" to give an embodied account of teaming (Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007, p. 417).

Keywords: team interpreting, action research, pre-conferencing, values, collegiality, sign language interpreting, narrative inquiry

FORWARD

I would like to refer to the Forward in the recently published *Deaf Eyes on Interpreting*, an anthology gathering perspectives from Deaf people who use interpreting services, many in an academic or other professional context (Lawrence, Lessard, Mindess, Monkiowski, & Swaney, 2018). The book's contributors show, one by one, how the told stories of Deaf experiences with interpreting are invaluable for making interpreters' work more effective and more empowering. Their voices vary in tone from the intellectual to the personal. The authors in the forward tell of one reviewer of an early edition who put the book down after reading a passage. They say she saw herself in other interpreters' actions, and she cringed. The experience caused significant discomfort, but instead of disregarding the feeling and reading on, she listened to what it was telling her. She took the passage to her friends and began a conversation about how to be better.

This paper is an attempt to follow the same path of learning into my own practice, paying attention to those moments of discomfort as I ask myself how well I am living up to my personal and professional values. The other voices in this conversation are the perspectives of colleagues who took assignments with me. When possible, we spoke directly after the assignment so memories and emotions would be fresh. In seeking their comments on my interactions with them, I trusted they would trust me to truly listen. The words printed here are a frozen moment in a conversation begun before they were written and still unfinished after they have been read.

What I have written is about the personal and the professional. I describe the actions I took, the decisions I made, my colleagues' views on them, and my own assessments. Happily, much of it is positive. For parts that are not, I hope the reader will see them as an opportunity to ask questions about their own practice.

Action research did not come naturally to me. I researched, read, wrote, and inquired until it took the form it has now. Over time, I began to appreciate the ethical and moral positions that action research can embody and the hope its practitioners often have for positive social change. Looking back, the journey I took crossed over a landscape of significant personal struggle. The assignment from our graduate department was for me and my classmates to do action research to improve our practice. I was unfamiliar with how action researchers explain why their methodology can be so different, and I resisted it for a long time. Familiarizing myself with those writings helped me tremendously to see its value. The journey required me to change some things, my closely held opinions first, and to adopt a new writing style in places, one that I hope is more warm, considerate, and thoughtful.

I have done my best to report faithfully what I did in my action research process and to show evidence for my claims. The risk I take is that you may accept what I have written as true for interpreters everywhere. I hope instead you will consider it an account of my own experience that may or may not relate to your own contexts, and I will continue to try to watch, listen, and act when I need to change course.

INTRODUCTION

I remember a time I was working with a team. The situation was serious. I was in the hot seat. It was going hard and fast, and I felt good. My team beside me was a peer I admire, so smart and quick. I was glad I had her there. Who better to see me at my best? Then it came. There was a signed word—OPPRESSED. I thought I had his style down, and I paused for that sign. A word-for-word translation might not be equivalent. Was he thinking about systems? Or was he thinking of the personal experience? Did it make a difference? I omitted it for the moment, waiting for these questions to sort themselves out, when I heard her say it out loud. “Oppressed.” I felt my face get hot. I have long figured it is best to trust my team’s judgment, so I backed up, added “oppressed,” and I kept going. Outside, I kept my cool. Inside, I felt like I had biked right into a pothole. I was still moving, but I could still feel the jolt, the shock, and an existential “why did that just happen?”

She had done what I had hoped she would—help me with the message—so why did I feel so defensive? Afterward, I had to talk. I said I wanted a thoughtful discussion about the merits of that word choice. *Was that true, or did I just want her to know I hadn’t missed it?* I could not explain why “oppressed” was not an acceptable choice. Simultaneous interpreting does not offer a lot of time to consider deep layers of nuance.

I came out of debriefing with her having made a resolution. I did not want to turn down the thermostat on our teaming. If I question the feeds she gives, they might stop coming, and I want her to tell me what I might be unable to see. Every feed is a gift to be graciously received, I decided. I would accept and say thank you, even if I never planned to make it fit with my décor.

I was embarrassed, like I had taken a “me” problem and made it her problem while pretending like it was not a problem. I wondered if she had believed me when I walked it back,

reassuring her I wanted all her support. I also thought about the intensity of the emotions I had felt. My internal reaction was not a common occurrence for me, but it was not the first time I had felt something like it. Did I ever make my colleagues feel defensive? Could I learn how to follow through on my professional commitments while swerving around potholes of personal pride and defensiveness?

Inquiring into this matter of personal growth might have another side, how to enable my colleagues feel welcomed, valued, and at ease while embracing the hard decisions together. I realized it mattered deeply to me. I once took a class on listening that, I believe, changed my relationships for years. The transformative idea for me was that I could show someone that their feelings, words, and experiences mattered, and when I pursued this value, they often expressed gratitude for having felt seen. I stopped practicing it, though. Lately, I have started becoming more aware of my rougher edges. I am a white male in his late 20's. I had three years of work experience, one year of certification. This could be a site for personal and professional growth.

I wanted my project to be useful to others. I remembered from conversations that colleagues sometimes had uncomfortable experiences when they worked with others. Some of the feelings signed language interpreters have toward each other had already been documented (Hewlett, 2013; Ott, 2012; Olopade, 2017; West Oyedele, 2015). A positive working relationship between interpreters along with our commitment to a faithful interpretation might be conducive to more effective services. Other interpreters might want to see where my inquiry took me or see an example of how they might inquire into their own practice. I noted that in the experience I told above, I reacted emotionally when my colleague was adhering to standard practices. Maybe there was something about our expectations for each other in the field that makes teaming emotionally raw and vulnerable.

How had others inquired into their practice before me? How could such inquiry be considered science, that is, a systematic process that creates knowledge? I had found examples of action researchers who explained how their values actively shaped and motivated their research. Laidlaw (1994) reports on her experience inhabiting the dialectical space between her values and her practice while guiding a student to develop an action research question. She found herself navigating two desires that seemed to point in opposite directions, to help her student understand what was possible within the parameters of the project and to facilitate the student's freedom to "find her own solutions" (p. 226). Wood (2009) reported a value-driven, self-reflective action research project to facilitate teachers' development of emancipatory pedagogies to transform attitudes about HIV/AIDS in their classrooms, with a guiding value of respect for others. Adler-Collins (2003) wrote about compassion, love, and tenderness as motivating values for action research into nursing practice, in the hope that "the telling of our collective educative healing journeys and stories" would "transform our profession where we can once again re-connect to our art" and serve as a balance against the domination of other voices and forms of knowledge within medicine (p. 53).

A common denominator to their writings was Whitehead's living educational theory. Writing to educators, Whitehead (1989) proposed that a "living" educational theory would rely on dialectical logics, not conventional, static, propositional forms of theories. A living theory would be the knowledge about one's own teaching developed by asking, "How can I improve my practice;" searching for answers; testing them; and beginning the process again. The teacher may find they are a "living contradiction," that is, a person whose actions negate (do not align with) their values and beliefs. Whether accounts of one's practice so developed are reliable depends on a few criteria, such as having been conducted systematically, and whether the people involved

agree with its conclusions (McNiff, 2013; Whitehead, 1989). I came to understand that adopting a dialectical approach to telling the story of parts of my inquiry can reveal the contingent, unfolding nature of my research and my practice, and to invite you to ask your own questions about whether my claims are justified (Choi, 2006; McNiff, 2013).

Whitehead's living theory provided the language I needed to start an inquiry into my practice, first by defining my values, and then defining a question that would examine the alignment of my values and my practice. Other works in the same tradition of value-driven, self-improvement research gave me the words I needed to give it systematic validity and analytic depth (Øgland, 2017). McNiff (2013) shows how values can become criteria as one measures their practice, for instance, by choosing participation as a value, and defining the acceptable standard as being participation by everyone. Permission to write using the first-person, second-person and third-person came from reading Chandler and Torbert (2003) who show how three axes of voice, time, and practice can combine to give a more complete account of the wide "empirical variance in human action settings" (p. 148). I continue to critically question the validity and reliability of knowledge created with this methodology and, paradoxically, demonstrate a living theory of my own learning by revealing that critical questioning to you (Wood, McAteer, & Whitehead, 2018).

The question I declared at the start of the study was, "How can I better live personal and professional values while working with colleagues?," where my values were collegiality and respect for professional autonomy, although I was open to the possibility that my understanding of those values might shift and change as a result of my inquiry. Collegiality as a personal value emerged from my own reflections and, as a professional value, from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf's Code of Professional Conduct (2005). Tenet V is Respect for Colleagues. The

associated illustrative behaviors helped me define how I understood collegiality (maintaining civility, sharing information, resolving conflicts privately when possible, and working cooperatively with each other during assignments), but ultimately the study was designed to encourage my colleagues to define it for themselves in reference to my actions (Chandler & Torbert, 2003). The second controlling value, respect for my colleagues' professional autonomy, came from my personal experience as a practitioner. My tacit, experiential knowledge of working with colleagues told me I had be sensitive to know when to lead and when to follow, and that my initial impulse might not be the right one for the situation (Levinthal & Rerup, 2006; Zuber-Skerritt, 2005). I hoped that declaring this as a controlling value would help me pay closer attention to these dynamics.

I tried to integrate the study into my existing teaming procedures. Structured pre- and post-conferencing interviews became the texts that I used in private reflections, recalling the event, the circumstances, my behavior, and asking myself how I was living up to collegiality and respect for autonomy (Marshall, 2016). Consistent with recommendations for participatory action research and reflexive learning, I sought their comments on how to change the research to better reflect its guiding values (Argyris, 1997; Bradbury-Huang, 2010; Dick & Dalmau, 1999).

Eleven hearing interpreters participated before and after assignments where we worked together. From their responses to the pre-assignment conferencing questions, I was able to outline what was important to my colleagues in the approach that we would take to working together. Colleagues' responses in post-assignment conferencing interviews told me that my conduct before the assignment set the tone to cooperatively manage the interpreting task. Many colleagues spoke of the contribution that pre-conferencing made in their judgments of the intentions behind my actions. I will use narrative as a method of inquiry to give an embodied,

contextualized account of their responses to my actions, relating their responses to this broad theme and, along the way, to some themes that came out in the thematic analysis. Next, I will give narrative accounts of two teaming experiences that led me to reflect on the ethical responsibilities I have to my consumers while seeking to support my colleagues in doing their best work. I conclude with an appeal to interpreter practitioners' timely action in their own contexts to pursue the best implementations of their values in their own circumstances and with their own colleagues (Chandler & Torbert, 2003).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaming practices

To date, the single most comprehensive attempt to construct a narrative about how hearing interpreters expect each other to team, and what these practices are supposed to accomplish, was conducted by Hoza (2010b). Hoza analyzed responses from an online survey (46 responses) and video-recorded samples of hearing interpreters teaming together (3 teams) to create a detailed, idealized “model” of collaborative, interdependent teaming. Interpreters in this model proactively engage with each other before an assignment to plan how they will meet the challenge of equally contributing, in turns, to an effective, shared rendition. During the assignment, interpreters assume roles so that one interpreter is the “lead,” and the other, the “monitor” interpreter. The lead signals requests for information when her self-monitoring of her comprehension, message processing, or production indicates a need for support, and the monitor interpreter stays ready to supply the requested information through continuous monitoring, or volunteers information she determines necessary for the interpretation. (I will refer to team interpreters’ requesting or volunteering information as *co-creating a shared rendition*.) In Hoza’s survey of hearing interpreters’ expectations, the bulk of expected practices during the assignment concerns “feeding,” but does include decisions about other aspects of the assignment, such as logistics and roles to take (2010b). After the assignment, the interpreters meet to discuss what was effective and what they would do differently next time. Relational formation and maintenance (“rapport/connection”) is conducted by both parties from beginning to end (p. 177). The hope of defining a granular typology of collaborative and interdependent teaming practices is to enable interpreters to work together more “successfully” (p. 2). When adapted to the

situation and the parties present, a collaborative approach is said to “result in something magnificent” (p. 13).

That a version of these expectations are held by many, though not all, hearing signed language interpreters is well supported. Interpreters in studies on teaming and other interpersonal aspects of working together often assume as accepted fact that interpreters both make decisions within an assignment and coordinate requested and unrequested feeds to enhance the quality of the simultaneous interpreted rendition (Gajewski Mickelson & Gordon, 2015; Rainey, 2013; Russell, 2008; Shaw, 2003). Interpreters may meet in advance to plan their approach to the needs of the assignment and each other (Bentle-Sassman & Dawson, 2012; Cokely & Hawkins, 2003; Russell, 2008). Deaf-hearing teams assume different tasks than teams with two hearing interpreters, but there remains a belief in the effectiveness of planning beforehand to increase the effectiveness of services rendered (Bentle-Sassman & Dawson, 2012).

A version of this model of collaborative teaming is the *Open Process Model*. Most published works refer to it only briefly (Bar-Tzur, 2004; Holcomb, 2018; Hoza, 2010a; Hoza, 2010b). Galasso and Kermisch’s (2013) account is the most comprehensive, in which they tell their experience adapting the Open Process Model to their work at a 2012 conference in Oregon. They explain how decision-making power was shared among interpreters and participants by encouraging self-identification of communication needs and determining jointly how to meet those needs. Special signals were agreed upon to use among the Deaf, hearing, and trilingual interpreters for conveying information about the process and requesting information while working. The approach to sharing the interpreting process equally was thought to contrast with viewing the interpreted message as belonging to any one interpreter or participant.

Fidelity, accuracy, and completeness are the widely accepted view in interpretation and translation fields of the proper relationship between source and target texts, according to Pöchhacker (2003). “Effective” teaming is supposed to result in this end. Thirty of Hoza’s 46 survey responses defined the purpose of teaming as achieving greater “accuracy and quality of the interpretation” (p. 15). The two interpreter teams in Russell’s study of court interpreting (2008) introduced themselves to the participants with a similar expectation, that the conferencing and mutual support rendered to each other would result in a more accurate and complete interpretation. This belief about teaming’s effects may be held outside signed language interpreting. The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (2007) refers to the purpose of teamed interpreters as increasing the efficacy of the interpreting services overall.

When teaming does not work, there may be an emphasis on more planning, or better implementation of the collaborative and interdependent model. One participant in Rainey’s (2013) study of teamed interpreters in video relay services noted how he wished he could have something to point to when calling a team, in order to efficiently convey what the team interpreter should do to support him. Cokely and Hawkins (2003) report being “puzzled” that most (8 of 10, hearing) interpreters in their study of feeding did not prepare their team for what “linguistic and interpretation process limitations” the interpreter might face, believing that doing so might prepare the monitor interpreter to attend more closely to those aspects of the rendition. Hoza acknowledges that practical implementation of his model requires effort, commitment, and introspection to account for variations among persons and interpreting assignments (Hoza, 2010b).

There is self-reported evidence that a collaborative approach to interpreting can do what it is asked to do. Roberson, Russell, & Shaw (2011) collected 1,995 survey responses from

certified interpreters working in legal settings in the U.S. and Canada. All kinds of preparation were rated highly in ability to “increase their confidence and reduce their nervousness prior to assignments . . . produce interpretations that are processed at the contextual level . . . [and enhance] their understanding of the event, allowing them to perform with a greater degree of accuracy” (pp. 72-73). Gajewski Mickelson & Gordon (2015) retell the experiences of the members of a large interpreting team for a 2012 symposium who were able to foster a collaborative, dynamic, and supportive teaming environment. (Data was collected through contemporaneous notes and communications afterward with the team.) Their reported collective experience was that the intentional steps taken to form bonds, establish norms, and maintain rapport was instrumental in achieving a sense that they had achieved their goal to provide “the best ASL and English interpreting services possible” (p. 6).

“Troubling” work together

Choi (2016) explains the “created” nature of the “data” that she uses to conduct her self-reflexive, autoethnographic journey into her multivocality as a bilingual, bicultural person. She brings attention to how she, as researcher and subject, actively selects and interprets the journals, photos, and other data from her past:

Troubling data is about the importance of leaning into spaces of discomfort, and of questioning and struggling with pre-given constructions to understand the limitations of certain structures. . . . It is also to learn about what we can do with those limitations, or how we can make them work for further knowledge production. (pp. 84-85)

Drawing attention to the constructed nature of narratives and their limitations is closely aligned with the interests of action research, especially in the emancipatory tradition (Toledano & Anderson, 2017; Wood, 2012). In teaming research, the single most prominent narrative about

what teaming is and what it is supposed to achieve is Hoza's (2010b). In his "model," collaborative planning and sharing responsibility for the interpretation are a reliable strategy to achieve more effective interpretations. With the right circumstances, collaboration can be like a "dance, in which the interpreters create synergy" (Hoza, 2010b, p. 13). He compares teaming to mountain climbing in another analogy, an experience that takes the right equipment, the right people, and the right determination, but mutual success is rewarding for all. Failed attempts are an indication that there needs to be more training, more planning, and more introspection to address one's own negative experiences with teaming (Hoza, 2010b).

Where are the "spaces of discomfort" in this narrative, and what are its limitations (Choi, 2016, p. 84)? Witter-Merithew (2010) observes that Hoza sometimes stretches the data to support his predetermined framework and does not fully demonstrate how his data supports his claim. More seriously, Hoza never substantiates the relationship between his evidence and his presumption (in constructing a "model") that standard or expected practices are best practices. Without empirical evidence to substantiate it, the belief in the supposed greater efficacy of teams may be a myth (Russell, 2008). Adherence to standard practice may be no more than a "less-mindful" implementation of routinized behavior, adopted even in situations when it is less effective (Levinthal & Rerup, 2006). Interdependence in Hoza's model requires vulnerability and trust (2010b). Teaming practices can be made standard, even ones requiring interpreters to become vulnerable to one another, but someone else's trustworthiness is a matter of their internal motivation (Marijn Poortvliet, Janssen, Van Yperen, Van de Vliert, 2007). Current research on interpreters' comments, thoughts, and feelings toward each other will illuminate some of the spaces of discomfort in Hoza's account of the interdependence that interpreters may adopt and

will explore the limitations in the narrative that portrays teaming as a tool to accomplish more effective interpretations.

Requesting and providing feeds

Cokely & Hawkins (2003) remark on the ineffectiveness of many of the feed requests made in their study of stated and actual teaming practices between hearing interpreters. A lean, a head nod, or a touch do not provide any indication of what kind of support is needed by the active interpreter, leaving it up to the monitor interpreter to make their best judgment about what is needed. Many of the feed requests they recorded were ambiguous. If the monitor interpreter is to supply the necessary information, she must make her own best judgment of what is needed. In a socio-linguistic model of interpreting, the quality of the interpretation is not a matter of equivalence between individual linguistic units, but of metalinguistic awareness and broad considerations of the interlocutors' likely communication goals, contextual norms, and other factors (Dean & Pollard, 2013; Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014; Napier & Barker, 2004). This greater complexity could mean that predicting what is needed may sometimes be straightforward, or other times not at all.

An even greater ambiguity in the monitor interpreter's responsibility lies in when to jump in uninvited. Gajewski Mickelson & Gordon (2015) describe the extent that the interpreting team went to in order to establish a dynamic, collaborative, and interdependent teaming environment. Most interpreters on this team were highly experienced and skilled, personally selected by the coordinator. Planning, reviewing, and readjusting was a constant, in the mornings, at breaks, and at dinner. The effort they describe to form relationships and establish norms were extensive, and yet ambiguities remained:

All the members discussed the awkwardness of knowing when, how and even if to correct or add information to an interpretation that was working but could be enhanced by information the team could share. How can an interpretation that is “good enough” be weighed against potential disruption caused by the team interpreter adding information? How can members of a team (of any number) manage to provide a consistent level of product when each interpreter has strengths and weaknesses in any given content area? What are effective and comfortable boundaries when interpreting for a colleague or interpreting as an escort for a single individual? (p. 14)

Planning in advance how to provide support did not allow the monitor interpreter simply to follow instructions like procedural commands, but only set the stage for their own decision-making. Perhaps desiring greater procedural specificity, one interpreter wanted “criteria for taking over” and asked a number of questions that have no ready answer, for example, “How does one determine when the message is in-equivalent enough to rightly take the mic?” (Gajewski Mickelson & Gordon, 2015, p. 14). Any one individual’s answers to these questions may vary. A participant, “Rhoda,” in Ott’s study (2012) provides such an example of a difference in judgment between herself and her team. She said, “I’m somebody who’s like, ‘Is the goal being conveyed, are we doing all of this’ . . . and these people will make you feel small about missing, like a minor detail that even correcting it and adding it in would throw and skew the message” (p. 61).

Treating teaming as a tool for greater fidelity, accuracy, and completeness shifts attention off how elimination of all “errors” in an interpretation may not be a guaranteed outcome of teaming. The interpreters in Russell’s study of four legal interpreters (2008) all had more than 15 years of experience community interpreting and over five years of experience interpreting in

legal settings. Despite co-creating the interpreted rendition through adopting lead/monitoring roles, actual performance did not correspond to how they explained their purpose as a team.

Russell (2008) found that the interpreters presented the team “as one vehicle to increasing the accuracy of the work, and yet there were significant errors that did occur and were not corrected by the team” (p. 143). The “errors” remained despite heightened awareness assumed to accompany being observed in the study (Russell, 2008).

Lived experiences of teaming

Co-creating a shared rendition through adopting and alternating lead/monitor roles is a component of standard teaming practices among hearing interpreters that appears to have ambiguities in its implementation and effectiveness. Other spaces of discomfort in Hoza’s account of teaming are in the discomfort, aggression, and oppression that interpreters may experience when in an interdependent working relationship with a colleague. Hill (2018) conducted qualitative interviews with six interpreters, Deaf and hearing, to investigate feelings of being psychologically “safe” or “unsafe” among colleagues. Participants’ responses related to psychological safety while teaming, intersectional microaggressions, and limited decision-making latitude. Their stories help to illustrate the difficult, uncomfortable experiences that interpreters may have with teaming.

From Hill (2018), a participant, "Eric," showed up to an assignment and was surprised to learn the job required working with DeafBlind consumers who had Ushers Syndrome. He professed having no training in this area but decided to try. Over the next 15 to 20 minutes, colleagues' increasing directions turned into "a really hostile environment" (p. 53). He said that finally another interpreter walked over, "basically tells me to 'get out' and takes over" (p. 53). At a break, "none of the interpreters would talk to me" (p. 53). The experience was deeply upsetting

to Eric. "The interpreters, they were so wrong. They were not professional at all. They were not considerate. They were quite hostile" (p. 54). The colleagues' course of action may have been efficient, perhaps even necessary, but compounded the tensions within the communication environment. In another situation, "Brian" recalled being told to take an assignment he did not feel comfortable taking. "They said, 'Do it.' And I said, 'I don't feel comfortable.' And their response was, 'That's kind of the sign that you should go do it.'" (p. 54) The interpreters in these examples gave apparently conflicting advice. Finding consensus by determining the "right" perspective is not an interest of my action research, however (Chandler & Torbert, 2003). Instead, the purpose of retelling these narratives collected by other researchers is to appreciate how the multiple perspectives overlap, shift in opposite directions, and create pressure, friction, and heat where they meet.

Hard feelings may arise around work together when colleagues may intentionally or unintentionally exclude, distance, or provoke. Ott (2012) documented preliminary evidence of horizontal violence in the field of signed language interpreting. The study began with a survey of Ohio interpreters (n=113), followed by interviews with "newer" (n=2) and more "experienced" interpreters (n=2). Similarities were found between participant responses and the characteristics of horizontal violence in other fields. Examples include shaming younger, less experienced initiates; placing blame for perceived inadequacies from oneself onto training institutions; self-appointed gatekeeping; "hazing;" and scapegoating and criticizing others. Some participants characterized other interpreters as "cocky and egotistical" (p. 79), and impatient with each other's mistakes or areas where they may lack knowledge. They expressed a hesitation to allow their work to be observed by a colleague. Standard teaming practices involve just that, however, along with the monitor interpreter interrupting when they consider it necessary.

Intersectional identities

A deeper layer of complexity to colleagues' work together may be observed by considering intersecting dimensions of identity, power, privilege, and oppression. West Oyedele (2015) conducted three focus groups with 13 Deaf consumers, 7 signed language interpreters, and 5 more signed language interpreters, respectively, all of whom identified as African American/Black. Interviews were later conducted to expand on themes. The goal was to investigate potential issues in cultural competency among members of the majority culture when rendering services and interacting with colleagues. A total of 13 interpreters participated in the focus groups and interviews. West Oyedele reports, "All 13 (100%) shared experiences that they felt could be associated with discriminatory behaviors and practices from consumers and colleagues" (pp. 49-50). Themes developed from focus group data were corroborated by survey data, which included responses from 116 African American/Black interpreters across the United States and Puerto Rico. Lack of cultural competency in colleagues was viewed negatively. One participant commented, "the biggest issue is that non-African American/Black peers don't understand their cultural biases and seem afraid to address the issue" (p. 51).

Olopade (2017) extended this research by conducting qualitative interviews with three African American, female interpreters who work in video relay service. They told her that they experienced racial microaggressions from consumers and colleagues alike. A participant recalled when, for example, a white colleague had approached her, touched her hair without consent, and asked, "What is that?" (p. 37). The interviewees said these and other demands within the VRS setting take a toll on their emotional wellbeing, leading them to reduce working hours or silently threaten to quit. By the end of the study, two had left the field. The findings of Olopade's (2017)

and West Oyedele's studies (2015) show that systemic racial oppression is an aspect of the lived experiences of work with colleagues wholly left out of Hoza's account of teaming (2010b).

The potential ways that gender oppressions repeat themselves in the interpreting field is an area that has just begun to be explored. Artl (2015) demonstrates that, among signed language interpreters, gendered roles are becoming less bounded to gender identity. She shows, however, that female interpreters consider their appearance, dress, facial expressions, and other gendered norms more often than do male interpreters, influencing the decisions they make on assignment. Males in the study considered their gender less in making decisions and may not be aware of the additional labor that female interpreters may take on within interpreting situations, on top of the effort required to actively and dynamically collaborate.

Deaf interpreters in Deaf-hearing teams continue to experience systemic and personal oppression within interpreting. Hearing interpreters largely remain the gatekeepers who decide whether Deaf interpreters are brought on to an assignment, tying Deaf interpreters' professional livelihood to hearing interpreters' decision-making (Tester, 2018; Roberson, Russell, & Shaw, 2011). Roberson, Russell, & Shaw (2011) report that among the surveyed legal interpreters (n=1,995), the hearing interpreter or the agency was responsible for making the determination to use a Deaf interpreter 53% of the time. When on the job, there may be trust issues between the Deaf and hearing interpreter. When Reinhardt (2015) asked Deaf and hearing survey participants what "one thing" they would like to say to the other group, 25% of responses "suggested historical or current dissatisfaction with the team dynamics, or implicit references to trust issues" (p. 53). These and other indications of trust issues were present despite many in both groups stating they wished interpreters would work together (Reinhardt, 2015).

Deaf (DI) and hearing interpreters (HI) may feel "threatened" by the other's presence. One participant in Bentle-Sassman & Dawson's (2012) study said, "The hearing interpreter feels that they are not good enough" (p. 22). Although the tasks that a DI-HI team performs are different from a HI-HI team's, both may identify with a shared purpose. The DI is "not there to steal their [the HI's] work, but to enhance it for the goal of effective communication for all the clients involved" (Bentle-Sassman & Dawson, 2012, p. 22). Hearing interpreters may respond by attempting to assume unilateral control of the assignment. A Deaf interpreter in Hill (2018) characterized their interactions with hearing interpreters by saying, "It seems like one of their control options is to exclude me, the Deaf interpreter" (p. 48).

The above discussion helps illuminate the experiences that interpreters may bring to or encounter in their work together. Experiences of teaming above do not always echo the optimism and positivity of Hoza's collaborative and interdependent model of teaming (2010b). Some of the reported actions of interpreters may have been out of concern for the fidelity, accuracy, and completeness of the message, but what is not clear is whether the interpreters could not still meet those responsibilities while also being sensitive to colleagues' competencies, intersectional identities, traits, and personalities. The complexity of teaming's personal, interpersonal, and professional aspects can pose a challenge to someone who, like myself, hopes to achieve both effective interpreting services and positive teaming experiences.

Values

Earlier I described this hope as a commitment to the values of collegiality and respect for professional autonomy. To explain the relation of values to practice, I refer to *creative actualization*, a novel theory of value, values, valuing, and evaluation (McDonald, 2011). The theory attempts to answer the questions, "What is good," and "where does good come from?" In

this theory, “value as creative actualization includes evaluation of worthwhile goals, action and activity in pursuit of such goals, and the creative actualization of goods” (p. 16). All values, according to creative actualization, are inherently and intrinsically good. Secondly, all that exists is good, coming from the activity of valuing that results in creation, differentiation, and improvement to the world. McDonald explains with an analogy to the Wright brothers’ invention of the airplane. The ability to fly was and is inherently a good thing, apart from and before the existence of airplanes. Inventing the plane was to find a (new) way for the value, *flying*, to be actualized as a tangible reality. The existence of a single flying machine does not exhaust the potentialities of the tangible world, however. There may be, and have been since, other ways to turn the value *flying* into a matter of practice.

Creative actualization has much in common with the action research paradigm described by McNiff (2013). All people, perspectives, and even competing values are good, even while experienced social realities can be oppressive and harmful. The action researcher hopes to ethically and positively influence social realities to better align them with widely held values (Bradbury-Huang, 2010; McNiff, 2013) The forms that these values may take in practice are potentially many, but the relationship between values and practice is subject to constant monitoring and questioning, an ethical rather than purely scientific endeavor. (McNiff, 2013). Through systematic and critical processes, the action researcher may contribute to new beginnings, transformation, plurality, social change, and social goods (McNiff, 2013).

To begin to live my values, I start with the goals I have evaluated as worthwhile, to inquire into collegiality and respect for professional values in interactions and work with colleagues. What form these values may take is not constrained except by the pre-existing state of the world, such as the quality and history of my work relationships and my own interpersonal

competencies. Determining the standard for the value is a creative and ethical activity of asking how the thing in practice might “function well” as an actualization of the value (McDonald, 2011, p. 22; McNiff, 2013). In McDonald’s plane analogy, this standard is a simple one: does the plane fly?

What might be the standards for collegiality and respect for professional autonomy? I associate collegiality with cooperation, listening and understanding, compassion, and utmost regard for other persons, in the spirit of Buber’s I-Thou relation (Buber, 1970). I associate autonomy with the universal capacity for human flourishing and self-determination (McNiff, 2013). Within the professional context of interpreting, I see interpreters as independent experts on how they would like to conduct their own practice, including how they would like to work with others. Approaches to practice and past experiences with work together might vary across interpreters, as the above literature review demonstrates, making it important in practicing collegiality and respect for professional autonomy not to gloss over differences among individuals.

I therefore have a place to start inquiring into collegiality and respect for professional autonomy. It would not be consistent with my understanding of these values to independently determine my standards, not even by comparison to apparent standard practices, which could pass over individual differences. Understanding individual approaches to practice might be achieved by asking a colleague about how to work with them, following through with their requests while making ethical decisions about my own practice, and seeking their comment afterward on what I did. A recursive process of inquiring, acting, and reviewing my actions together is thus an approach with the potential to incorporate cooperation, listening and understanding, and utmost regard into my work with colleagues.

METHODS

I have now introduced the current state of teaming practices among hearing signed language interpreters and offered a framework to explain the relationship between values and practice. Describing my personal understandings of collegiality and respect for professional autonomy pointed to some initial directions for how I might go about living my values in practice. The next section will show the methods I employed to question and monitor my values in my practice with others.

Interviews with colleagues

As my inquiry was about my practice, I wanted the data collection methods to be embedded within my practice and to adhere closely to existing practices. As established in the literature review, pre-conferencing is a common practice among signed language interpreters assigned to the same job (Bentle-Sassman & Dawson, 2012; Cokely & Hawkins, 2003; Gajewski Mickelson & Gordon, 2015; Hoza, 2010b; Russell, 2008). Conferencing afterward about what went well and what other choices might have been effective is also a common practice (Hoza, 2010b). Before beginning this study, I had regularly engaged in conferencing with my teams both before and after teamed assignments, although my approach was neither consistent nor systematic and did not involve data collection. By embedding research processes into existing practices, my approach to the research thus has more in common with ethnographic methods, where the researcher is a full participant, than with scientific traditions that position the researcher as a dispassionate and neutral observer (Bradbury, 2015; Bradbury-Huang, 2010; McNiff, 2013). In ethnographic research, action research, and other traditions of science, validity of the research stems in part from systematicity in data collection and analysis and transparency regarding these processes with the reader (Braun & Clarke, 2006; McNiff, 2013; Whitehead,

1989). To make my inquiry systematic, I devised questions corresponding to my objectives for use with colleagues during pre- and post-conferencing with the intent to listen to the multiple perspectives on my practice involved in second-person inquiry (Chandler & Torbert, 2003). I offered the choice to participate to every colleague I was assigned to work with during the study and stopped collecting data when I believed I had collected enough data to find well supported themes. Interview data was recorded by taking contemporaneous notes.

Pre-conferencing

In developing the pre-conferencing questions, I had not yet deeply consulted the literature on teaming. As such, the questions were partly my own invention, partly a product of my tacit knowledge of being a practitioner (McNiff, 2013; Whitehead, 1989). I tried to keep the questions simple:

1. What do you know about the topic, context, or history of this assignment that you would like to share with me?
2. How would you like me to support you as a team?
3. What kinds of teaming practices would you not find helpful?
4. Do you have an approach or philosophy to working together you would like to share?
5. What questions would you like to ask me?

It so happens that these questions overlap with Hoza's (2010b) findings of standard pre-conferencing practices among hearing interpreters: building rapport, gathering and sharing information, sharing needs, discussing roles, and other topics. I hoped that asking these questions would allow me to gain some initial insight how my colleague would like me to work with them

during the assignment. Their responses would become my guidelines for decisions that involved or affected them.

Post-conferencing

In devising the post-conferencing questions, I referred to research on helping individuals to identify discrepancies between their espoused values and their values in practice (Argyris & Schön, 1974). In this literature, conceptions of one's own action strategies are rigid and difficult to dislodge (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Dick & Dalmau, 1999). As in Chandler and Torbert's (2003) description of second-person inquiry, seeking the perceptions, interpretations, and feelings of others regarding one's actions is key to understanding the impact of those actions (Argyris & Schön, 1974). My questions were adapted from the work of Dick and Dalmau (1999), who explain and extend Argyris and Schön (1974):

1. When I . . . what material consequences did my action have for you?
2. When I . . . what did you do?
3. When I . . . what did you think were my motivations?
4. When I . . . what did you feel?
5. When I . . . what material consequences do you believe my action had for our consumers?
6. What does the action I took say about the way I embody collegiality or respect for your professional autonomy?
7. What would you rather I have done differently?
8. What other actions did I take that you would like us to discuss which affected you or the consumers?

I asked for my colleagues' input on the potential consequences my actions may have had on consumers to help me reflect later on the ethical and practical dimensions of my action. Material consequences are similar to *consequences* within the Demand-Control Schema, being value-neutral, observable phenomena for which the action is an antecedent (Dean & Pollard, 2013; Dick & Dalmau, 1999). Question 6 was intended to ask directly about what my colleagues thought about the relationship between my action and the values in question. Question 7 was to aid my own reflection and learning, in case there were some action they wished I had done instead. After answering these questions about any actions a colleague would like to talk about, there was a final set of questions:

1. What is most important for me to consider when working with colleagues?
2. What would you suggest I change about the research I am conducting to better embody collegiality and respect for professional autonomy?

I hoped the first of these final questions would elicit anything else about their general philosophy that they had not shared in pre-conferencing. It may also have been interpreted as a question directed at me, in case they had some personalized advice to share that was not elicited elsewhere. The final question was intended to encourage them "to express dissatisfaction" with the research process (Dick & Dalmau, 1999, p. 90). It was also how I could build reflexivity into the research by formally providing a choice to my colleagues to influence the direction of the study (Khanlou & Peter, 2005; Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007).

Reflective practice

Bringing attention to discrepancies between one's own espoused and lived values often results in distress and surprise (Friedman & Lipshitz, 1992; Dick & Dalmau, 1992). Learning from such discrepancies, however, is greatly aided by an individual's taking responsibility for his

or her actions (Friedman & Lipshitz, 1992). Reflection through journaling on my teaming experiences and my colleagues' responses was how I considered what I might learn about collegiality and respect for professional autonomy in my practice.

Journaling is a common approach to data collection in action research, providing the "subjective perspective that needs to be triangulated with other perspectives" (Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007, p. 429-430). Deciding in advance what to reflect on is not desirable, since doing so would quash the unpredictability of discovery that writing hopes to achieve (Choi, 2016). Such discoveries may be critical moments, critical incidents, or critical experiences, inflection points of personal significance where one's understandings, frame, or perspective change direction (Choi, 2016).

I kept a digital journal of my experience learning about action research, conducting the research, and engaging in assignments. Doing so enabled me to record my critical questioning of the power relations in the research, asking how I could make the process more reflective of collegiality, while recording the dilemmas, joys, and hard feelings that came up in working teamed assignments. I consulted these reflections in writing this paper, including the narrative accounts of my teaming situations.

Seeking to understand the action

The data I ultimately collected was rich, complex, and varied. After trying several different approaches to analysis, the data made the most sense by treating the pre-assignment questions with generalized thematic analysis and the post-assignment questions to narrative inquiry (Hamilton, Smith, & Worthington, 2008; Toledano & Anderson, 2017).

Inductive approaches to qualitative data analysis seek to represent the entire data set by interpreting the concepts or ideas indigenous to the text, as opposed to searching for evidence

that matches the constructs of a pre-existing theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The researcher begins with an initial reading of the entire data set and proceeds recursively, assigning codes, journaling, developing themes, and checking themes, returning often to the source data to modify codes and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I identified codes by reading the qualitative data line by line and grouping text that was marked by a transition, or that was internally similar and distinct from surrounding text (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In seeking to clarify my theoretical position, I followed Toledano & Anderson (2017) who appeal to critical relational constructionism to show how narrative in action research methodologies can be a useful method of inquiry. They review how social worlds exist in the relations and understandings of the people who live in them, being co-constructed through narrative means of attending to relevant information, sense-making and telling. Meaning in an exchange is always incomplete, being created through the sense-telling rhetorical effects on another person, whose response reshapes or validates the narrative (Pearce, 2007). Clarity of metatheoretical approach is what ensures that a mixed methods design is effective in elucidating underlying structures and is not merely haphazard (Danermark, Ekstrom, Jakobsen, Karlsson, & Bhaskar, 2001).

Narrative inquiry and thematic analysis sit uncomfortably together, since thematic analysis effectively removes an utterance from the circumstances in which it was said and recontextualizes it within the discourses of the larger dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Analyzing colleagues' responses in aggregate makes it difficult to seek *empathetic resonance* toward the specific person who said it in the contextualized moment when they said it, aligning it more with research *on* than *with* my colleagues (Campbell, DeLong, Griffin, & Whitehead, 2013; Wood, McAteer, & Whitehead, 2018; Heron & Reason, 2001). Furthermore, the aim in the phenomenological paradigm of action research is “not to survey large sample of populations or

‘subjects’ in order to predict future trends or to make generalizations about past and present” (Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007, p. 423). Due to the volume of data, however, my other option was to discard the bulk of their responses entirely. A thematic analysis of teaming preferences, however, would allow me to categorize my actions in relation to how my actions supported that initial theory, thus enabling me to make sense of their responses without disregarding any, and also focusing on responses that posed the biggest dilemmas for me, pointing to issues in teaming. Where appropriate, I could also connect colleagues’ responses to pre-conferencing questions with the feedback provided during post-conferencing. This type of analysis has much in common with Grounded Theory, the intent being to develop a theory that corresponds closely to the data rather than proceeding from pre-existing theoretical commitments, which theory then is further used to analyze other data (Oktay, 2012).

I will describe the broad themes in colleagues’ expectations for our work together, stating beliefs about our responsibilities and setting expectations for strategies, before relating the post-assignment responses to this initial theory. Several aspects of the following beliefs, shared goals, and expectations are corroborated in the post-assignment responses. Afterward, I will focus on some individual teaming experiences. These narrative inquiries will feature temporality, sociality, and place, within the constraints of confidentiality (Hamilton, Smith & Worthington, 2008). Where it seems relevant, I will mention how a colleague’s responses to pre- and post-assignment conferencing relate. I will retell the circumstances of assignments where the actions discussed fit into themes of the pre-conferencing data, including co-creating the shared rendition, adapting to changing circumstances, and practicing open communication. These are also the actions that support the claim that time spent planning and conferencing beforehand can contribute to effective teamwork, especially to establish tone and shared expectations. Finally, I will spotlight

two times my colleagues' responses caused me to reflect more deeply on my responsibilities as a team interpreter.

Limitations

Consistent with McDonald's (2011) theory of creative actualization, the relationship between values and action requires constant monitoring of the implementation (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Dick & Dalmau, 1999; McNiff, 2013). Likewise, reflexive researchers seek to know while recognizing the knowledge is imperfect, always tentative, and never certain (Choi, 2016). The usefulness of the knowledge created through the research processes in this study is as a starting point for practitioners' deeper engagement with inquiry and learning in their own practice.

These limitations can be attributed in part to the unique circumstances of the study. As will be explained later, the working relationships I had with many of the colleagues who participated were new or relatively new. Being engaged in a study on collegiality, I was concerned with being on my best behavior, which may have influenced my practice and their first impressions of my practice. Colleagues also may have been concerned with first impressions and may have been reluctant to convey negative opinions. If colleagues were not reluctant to convey negative opinions, it is remarkable that almost none emerged. The ones that did were relatively minor. One colleague suggested I might have printed a script with bigger font. Another qualified their criticism by saying they were just being "nitpicky." The positivity could possibly be attributed to the interpreting community in the area where I conducted the study. I have been told anecdotally that this community is unique in the support that interpreters desire to show for each other.

Timely action is responsive to individuals and the unique circumstances of contexts (Chandler & Torber, 2003). The claims within this paper are thus not authoritative, but relational.

Its meaning is shaped by readers who consider its claims and then respond, by using it to inquire into their own practice, for example (Toledano & Anderson, 2017). In the same way, I will personally continue to shape the meaning of the study through actions that I take afterward, acting with sensitivity to individuals and contexts, and asking myself and others whether the actualization of my personal and professional values meets appropriate standards.

RESULTS

Participation & Responses

Over the course of about two months, eleven colleagues elected to participate before or after our work together. I offered the choice to participate to every colleague whom I was assigned to work with during the course of the study and did not discriminate based on past history with any colleague. In all assignments, my colleagues and I functioned as hearing interpreters. Ten of the eleven colleagues provided responses to the pre-assignment conferencing questions. Two of the eleven emailed longer responses to the pre-assignment questions after the assignment was over. These responses were included in the dataset. The final number of my in-assignment actions that colleagues responded to totaled twenty-two.

Colleagues were assigned pseudonyms that matched the gendered pronouns they told me to use. Other personal, identifying details were omitted. I will try to refer to them individually wherever possible to help treat their responses as embodied, and to help the reader make connections to the individual when I relate a colleague's responses to broader themes. Because I want to take an approach that is sensitive to historical dimensions, I will take a moment to say something about the relationships I had with each colleague and a brief sketch of the circumstances for our working together. The details of assignments with some colleagues will not appear elsewhere, since space did not allow me to include narrative inquiries on post-conferencing interviews with every colleague. Assignments where we worked "independently" are where we worked separately in the same physical space without co-managing a shared rendition. I will start with myself.

Myself

I am a nationally certified signed language interpreter with one year of post-certification experience. I was not trained in an interpreter training program but went through a long and slow introduction to the Deaf community since my early teenage years. After completing an undergraduate degree and some post-graduate work in a liberal arts field, I decided to switch professions to become an interpreter, which had always been my real interest. I had formal and informal training experiences through the kindness and generosity of professionals in the Deaf and hearing interpreter communities who believed in me, and I eventually started working as an interpreter. A couple years later, I became certified, and I now have a little over a year of post-certification experience.

Lucas

I had heard about Lucas in and around the interpreting community and had seen him work, but the assignment was effectively our first meeting. We arrived with plenty of time in advance and went through the pre-assignment conferencing questions unhurried. It was early in the morning, so the location was quiet. It had an area where we could talk privately. During the assignment, we interpreted for a conversation between two people in a private setting. Some of the interactions between Lucas and I caused me to question my values and actions, leading me to a personal decision to change my practice.

Alexis

This job was my first time working and interacting with Alexis. I remembered her as looking familiar, but I couldn't place from where. The pre-assignment conferencing was unexpectedly rushed, despite arriving early. A consumer arrived before we had talked, and we used most of our time attending to the consumer's briefing. This choice was useful in that the

history of the assignment was complex. I expected it to be a job with challenging demands, and it was, having a serious topic, multiple parties to the communication, and other demands. It was emotionally difficult for both Alexis and I, and Alexis' responses led me to reflect on my values, actions, and responsibilities as a team.

Piper

Piper and I already had a working friendship going into this assignment, from at least six years prior. We first worked together in a fun, relaxed environment, and that tenor to our friendship has kept on through the other contexts we found ourselves in. She agreed in advance to participate, but I did not accurately predict how long it would take me to get there and be ready. Because of the context, we were concerned with finding our consumers, and so we did not complete a full pre-assignment conferencing session. This experience led me to resolve to do all in my power to arrive early enough to devote time to pre-conferencing.

Avery

The job I had with Avery was a technically challenging one that I had seen come through the job requests frequently but hesitated to try. I expected the subject would be highly technical and outside my expertise, and so I reached out to Avery through the coordinating agency. Having done the job before, she was able to outline what I could expect. I knew Avery from conversations in passing, but I do not remember having worked with her before. The job itself comprised a technical monologue with visual presentations. Avery commented positively in an asynchronous post-conferencing response that she appreciated my contacting her in advance to ask about her knowledge of the assignment to help determine whether I was qualified.

Ethan

Ethan and I had worked independently at a job once before, and more collaboratively at another. He participated twice during the research. The first assignment was more challenging, being fast-paced in an intimate context. We had plenty of time to conference ahead of time and afterward. For the second assignment, the consumer was already at the site when we arrived, and it seemed impolite to break away from the conversation. I remembered Ethan's general approach to teaming from last time, so I used the notebook to ask if anything had changed. This second assignment was more relaxed.

Madelyn

I had worked assignments with Madelyn several times before in various contexts, even shortly after I began working as an interpreter. I viewed our previous work experiences positively and considered our interactions as polite but distanced. The assignment was instructional but conversational and had tricky logistics and sight lines.

Mason

I do not recall teaming an assignment with Mason before, but we did have a brief, previous professional relationship. I look up to him as an experienced colleague and remembered our previous professional relationship positively. The assignment was extremely challenging, involving presentations read from a script at rapid pace in spoken English with a high concentration of proper names, abbreviations, and other concrete details.

Kinsley

I had worked my first assignment with Kinsley about two months prior. We stayed after that assignment to conference for twenty to thirty minutes. I especially liked working with Kinsley at that time and had looked forward to working together again. I was aware of how well

her work is regarded by some others. The assignment we had during this study was challenging in that it required specialized familiarity with the language being used, it lasted the better part of three hours, and interaction norms (we agreed) preferred less interruption for clarification.

Cora

This was my first time meeting and working with Cora, who identified herself in the interviews as an intern. I had asked for preparatory materials in advance, and Cora helped provide them. Pre-assignment conferencing focused on the history and context of the assignment, although we did agree on who would support whom. The setting was a class in which I was subbing for the regular interpreter under whom Cora was interning. The other regularly assigned interpreter was Ruby.

Ruby

I had worked with Ruby twice before that I remember, independently the first time, a couple years ago, and interdependently the second time, about a year later. We had known each other in an academic context before this assignment, in which we both contributed to discussions outside our roles as interpreters but had little direct interaction.

Samantha

Like Avery, Samantha and I had seen each other in passing, and had worked our first assignment together not long ago. I learned that we were teaming together well in advance of this assignment and arranged a call to discuss what we knew of its history and context. I had worked a related job, and she had worked this job. I warmed up to her over the course of our work together. The assignment itself involved interpreting in a space where we could not interrupt to ask our consumers for clarification. There were multiple consumers engaging in casual conversation, using slang, talking about subjects neither she nor I were familiar with, and

speaking in quick, rapid turns. Samantha anticipated that we might not catch everything that was said. In the pre-conferencing interview she said she thought the most effective approach was to simply interrupt if one of us heard the other struggling. Our turn-taking in the assignment followed this approach, and afterward, she said it was effective.

For many of the colleagues I worked with, I had not teamed with them many times or even once before, framing the project as more useful when first meeting and forming impressions with someone new. Another common feature of these relationships is that I regarded them all positively, and I have no reason I am aware of to believe they did not feel the same about me. My teaming experiences with them thus had this basic friendly orientation. The next section will describe the themes resulting from my analysis of colleagues' responses to the pre-conferencing interview questions.

Shared Responsibilities and Expectations

Colleagues emphasized a shared responsibility to faithfully interpret proceedings while outlining expectations for how they would like to manage sharing the task. They allowed that there could be times when some aspect of their rendition may be lacking, within or outside the domain of their awareness, at which time they invited me to act in the interest of consumers' assumed communication goals. Six colleagues, for example, told me to watch for omitted or misunderstood numbers or fingerspelled words and to be ready with the correct information. Having declared respect for their professional autonomy as a controlling value, I was especially interested in their descriptions of how, in the monitor role, I should know when to act.

Committing to a faithful interpretation

Several colleagues emphasized a shared responsibility. Ethan said that "the message is the most important thing" and interpreters are responsible to fix any deficiencies in the message.

Mason said, “We are the message as a whole. . . . We’re responsible for what happens in there.” Piper and Madelyn used the language of goals and facilitation, shifting the emphasis off the message and onto interaction. Piper said, “We are a team. We have a common goal and that is to be the communication facilitators and cultural mediators.” Madelyn wanted decisions to uphold “effective communication” as the goal and “compassion and respect” as the mission. These comments directly state or imply that we both were to assume responsibility for the interpreting task.

Other colleagues extended this assumption of responsibility in their stated expectations for my actions. Kinsley told me her “number one priority” is upholding the “communication goals of the speakers,” and upholding parties’ communication goals might require my “correcting something . . . for the purpose of accuracy and clarity.” She expressed an ease about corrections and clarifications, saying, “they don’t bother me because the work is not about me.” Lucas and Ethan also mentioned the relationship between the message and the communicating parties. Lucas asked that errors be corrected right away, lest they have a cascading effect on the interaction. Getting the message right was more important than looking good for the sake of “ego.” Ethan wanted mistakes to be corrected and for there to be transparency with the consumer about any uncertainty. He considered clarification a necessary and normal part of the process that should not be hidden from the consumers. Cora said she would support a decision to “step in” and give “necessary clarification.” Alexis and Samantha asked that I add missing information or “take over” if something had been misunderstood. Mason’s threshold for when I should act may have been higher; he said to intervene if he began to “drown.”

To be ready to act, I would need to monitor their work. “Checking out” was not okay with Piper, by getting on my phone, for example. She expected her team to be ready with a

correction for errors. Kinsley stated a preference for backchanneled information from me about the rendition, suggesting that I nonverbally affirm linguistic information about the source message, such as shaking my head when I anticipated an upcoming negation. Cora noted she may look over to check with the support interpreter about her rendition's accuracy or to get a feed, thus relying on me to be ready with that support. Samantha was more relaxed in her expectations for my level of engagement, saying, "Don't leave me alone forever."

Their comments help me to outline their general expectations for me: to monitor their work, adding missed information, correcting errors, and clarifying misunderstandings in service of the communication goals of the parties involved.

Balancing support and autonomy

Colleagues effectively asked me to take on this shared responsibility for the proceedings and acknowledged they were giving me permission to increase their cognitive load or distract from their interpreting process. Cora and Mason said that "help" from a peer sometimes disrupts their ability to interpret. Cora said she gets "thrown off" by unexpected feeds, while Mason said that teams sometimes give a feed while he is still processing the message, and the feed interrupts his process. A feed may be disruptive if it is provided at the wrong time.

A feed may be disruptive if it is too long. Longer feeds, such as one or more sentences, were said to be "less smooth," in Alexis' words. Piper said, "I don't do well if I'm fed a whole sentence." Kinsley was even more explicit, saying, "If there's an entire chunk of information that I've miscued, please do not try feeding me an entire paragraph or explanation." She requested that feeds be "brief and concise," such as "short phrases or single words." If a large section needed repair, Alexis and Kinsley said, they would rather I interpret that entire portion of the message, or "take over," in Samantha's terms.

Colleagues asked that I wait to provide support until support is requested. At least for the assignment we were about to work, Ethan said he preferred to get clarification directly from the Deaf consumer if clarification was needed. Piper wanted me to wait until she asked for a feed. Four colleagues specified what signal they would use to request support. Mason, Cora, Lucas, and Kinsley said they would “lean in” closer to me or “look over” at me, depending on the target language, to ask for help.

Turn-taking and role delineation was clarified further by the idea that we would be switching roles. Four colleagues negotiated role switches. Piper asked how long our turns should be. Alexis requested that I signal clearly when it was time to switch. Lucas sought to know how he should know it was time to switch by asking what signal I prefer to use when switching. Kinsley requested touch as the signal to switch.

The picture that emerges is of a domain of the work where my colleagues are conducting their own work without assistance, delineated roles that we share in alternation, and requests to minimize any interference I might have in their process while asking that I assist with aspects of the message that need it. Most intriguing is the idea that my support could interfere with their process, suggesting trust that I would minimize actions that might derail their concentration, comprehension, processing, and production.

Keeping an open mind

I talked with many of my colleagues about the logistics of the assignment at hand, and many of them noted that any plans we made would be contingent. Piper asked to agree on the length of turns while allowing that making “adjustments as needed” and “going with the flow” would be necessary. Ethan and Kinsley commented on aspects of the assignment that might require adjusting our decisions. Cora suggested we might need to conference during the job to

reevaluate our approach. Being able to adapt means staying flexible, which Lucas, Piper, and Samantha mentioned. Ever-changing demands and unpredictability might be partly attributed to the nature of the work, in Madelyn's reasoning: "Human communication is an ever evolving thing and our work must follow suit. Let's do the best we can with what we have."

Colleagues' comments indicated the importance of cooperation throughout the assignment. Lucas gave an example of a time when an interpreter resisted the support he believed was needed, saying the interpreter's actions were not helpful. Ethan mentioned having worked with teams who refused to communicate with him during the job, which he seemed to imply was not helpful either. Cora expressed that she wanted our communications to be "open and respectful," and Piper said a team should be a "team player."

Flexibility, cooperation, waiting until support is requested, and providing minimally disruptive support points to how I could uphold my value of respect for my colleague's professional autonomy. Review of the literature on teaming practices among hearing interpreters later revealed that they mapped closely onto the findings of Cokely & Hawkins (2003) and Hoza (2010b). Yet these expectations were not being shared lightly. Kinsley and Ethan talked about the role of trust in a teaming relationship. Kinsley said, "I value the vulnerability of working with a team and trusting someone in the work that's being done." In the spirit of open communication, she hoped that teams would communicate any barriers they might have to teaming, such as "feeling especially vulnerable, distracted, fatigue (etc.)."

Having outlined the themes in the responses from my colleagues to the pre-conferencing assignment questions, I will now take a narrative turn to the individual actions that my colleagues talked to me about during the post-assignment interviews. I am extremely grateful to everyone who took the time to talk to me, and I would love to be able to give equal space to

everyone. In the interest of space, however, it seems best to focus on some broad themes that arose and perform a narrative inquiry on two events that were the most productive in prompting critical reflection on my practice.

Action in retrospect

Twenty-two individual actions came out of the interviews with colleagues for twelve different assignments, each with a different context, setting, personality, demands, and relationships between my colleagues and me. Colleagues chose actions to discuss during the post-conferencing interviews with my facilitation.

Several actions can be grouped under successfully managing the shared interpreting task through turn-taking and offering assistance with the interpreted rendition. Colleagues viewed my actions and intent positively even when the assistance itself did not aid them in repairing the message. Another theme is the contribution of time spent before the assignment to prepare, set the tone, and establish shared expectations. Colleagues evaluated the actions I had taken in advance of the assignment, including pre-conferencing, as positive, having contributed to the decisions that were made and to their feelings toward me during the assignment. Their reactions to this time spent in advance, including the pre-conferencing questions, suggests that using the pre-conferencing questions is a usable practice for interpreters working in teams. Finally, I will focus on two actions I took during assignments in which I weighed what to do but was not ultimately happy with my decisions.

Assisting each other with the interpreted message

There were several times when I made decisions that involved changing controls, offering support, requesting support, that colleagues later referred to positively. In situations where I did

and did not follow through on agreed-upon plans, colleagues said the pre-conferencing was helpful to form a rapport that continued through the assignment.

“You gave a correction. It was helpful.”

This assignment was Ethan’s bread and butter, but for me, it was only within the scope of assignments I had done before. I was feeling nervous. It was an intimate, conversational context, so before we began, I offered that perhaps we could divide the work by modality. I would take English to ASL, and he would take ASL to English, for when the speakers might overlap. (Ethan said afterward that he sees other interpreters like this choice, but he’s “starting to develop a resistance to it” since it “ends up leaving both people on all the time.”) After the assignment started, I noticed I had not adequately assessed the room. Behind the ASL user was a tall window, blinds drawn up, indirect sunlight streaming in. I had anticipated the topic to be difficult, and this window would add to the difficulty. Ethan seemed not to be bothered. He was sitting to my right at an angle to the window. My impression of the context was that it would be inappropriate to interrupt except for the most important things. I monitored his ASL to English interpretation while weighing the value of an interruption. I could find no space to step gracefully between their turns. I thought, with these people, in this space, with this topic, they might appreciate my being unobtrusive as possible, if I could handle it. About twenty minutes in, I noticed something in Ethan’s rendition that made me start weighing whether to provide a feed. The consumer had used an indexing device without having identified it first. Its referent would need to be inferred. The noun that Ethan supplied did not fit with my prediction, and as I continued to monitor, I decided that the target message was not aligned with the source message any longer. I waited until I was sure, then I supplied the feed. We talked about this decision afterward.

He said that, initially, he felt confused when I provided the feed. “I didn’t know I had made a mistake or had misinterpreted.” In terms of its emotional effect on him, he said it did not bother him. “I try to stay on task. So once I find out something is different from I thought, I don’t usually have a strong emotional reaction, and I think if I did, that would reduce my ability to do the job.” I was relieved. He really was focused on the accuracy of the work and had trust that the correction was toward that shared purpose. There was no mistaking the error after having repaired it. He said it was a case of ‘I’m making a mistake and I don’t know I’m making a mistake,’” and receiving the feed caused him to reevaluate. He called it an “opportunity to make a correction.”

When I asked what it said about the way I embody collegiality or respect for his professional autonomy, he said, “I think it shows you listened to me when we set up our philosophy, our shared philosophy at the beginning. That accuracy of message is more important than looking like I did a good job.” He had mentioned the optics of the feed earlier, saying that he believed it had changed the ASL user’s beliefs about the interpretation. “He was under the assumption that I was interpreting accurately. I think he was initially confused. There was an interruption to his communication interaction.”

After the feed there was some momentary confusion, but the message was repaired, and the interaction continued. I noted how he had interpreted my action as a commitment to the shared philosophy we had established at the beginning.

“You offered that I could take over for a chunk”

Ethan and I talked about another action that I had taken during the same assignment, but in this case the support went in the opposite direction. We had switched roles after some time, since he had ended up taking on the bulk of the labor in this arrangement, intentionally. We

switched when he started to fatigue. I, however, was not as well suited to interpret from ASL to English for this ASL user. I was still feeling nervous, like I was just keeping up. In my own self-monitoring, I was confident that I still was interpreting accurately, that I did not need to give up my turn entirely for the sake of the message. Then the ASL user used a sign that I could not fit with the rest of the utterance. I kept going for a half a minute, to see if I could sort it out, then decided I could not. In my concentration, I had not realized that Ethan was already reaching his hand toward me to signal he was ready to give me his support. He took over for a short paragraph, then reverted the turn to me. We talked about my choice to give up my turn.

He said, “You gave it a go, but you could tell you weren’t getting the whole thing. I think I offered a short feed, and you tried to work that in, and then enough time had passed, and you said, ‘it might be easier.’ I think we were in agreement.” He referred to the action as “humility . . . professionalism . . . self-awareness” and “being accountable to your part of the team.” He said how I offered the turn mattered too. “You didn’t get upset. You didn’t take it personally that you didn’t understand. You didn’t make the client feel like he was unclear.” Both for this action and the other we had just talked about, he said he could not think of something else he wished I had done.

Ethan had some final remarks about working with colleagues, reinforcing what he had said earlier about the importance of planning beforehand: “Having the pre-conversation really does establish the shared philosophy and I think it helps establish trust as well.” I asked if he could elaborate. The previous week he had worked with someone entirely new, and he said, “I realized that’s not a small hurdle. . . .Having the chance to connect before an assignment makes it easier to do those requests for attention or requests for support.”

The teaming experience with Ethan showed that both of us used and benefited from each other's support. I needed his help, and he was able to use mine to reevaluate and repair the message, with minimal disruption to the rhythm of the interaction. We had taken time to affirm that we would support each other if necessary, and we followed through on those commitments.

Not all my attempts at support were successful with my colleagues, as in this next vignette.

“You were just trying to help in any way possible.”

My assignment with Madelyn was in the early morning, about an hour's commute away from home. It had been a while since I had worked with Madelyn. I had worked with her several times before, going back to when I had just started working as an interpreter. I thought our relationship was on good terms. We were not buddies, but we were friendly. Madelyn chose to send the answers to the pre-assignment questions just before the assignment. I was able to read them quickly, but I felt like I wanted to establish a shared approach in person, even if briefly. We talked briefly about how we would team while walking to the assignment within the location.

The assignment itself was instructional. There was a small group in the room, and just one learner. The instructor was easy going. The context would allow a greater degree of self-presentation and interaction management, much more than in the job with Ethan (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). We worked independently for most of the assignment, not pausing to rely on the other's support. Toward the end, however, the topic turned to a more complex conversation. Madelyn was now the lead interpreter, and I was monitoring her output. We had arranged ourselves where I could see both the ASL user, the English user, and Madelyn all at once, but it meant that providing a feed would have to be spoken loud enough for everyone to hear. I was

watching her renditions, and I chose two times to provide a feed, one signed and one spoken. One was helpful, one was not.

In talking about the first feed, we identified it as “offering a correction to the interpretation.” Madelyn seemed very relaxed in how she talked about it. She simply thought the speaker had said something else and did not feel offense when I signed what I had heard. Her response was that she “clarified with that correct information. Basically copy-signed you.” She said providing a feed was appropriate for the context. “It wasn’t like we were holding anyone up. . . . This was an organic and natural exchange between the five people in the room. That’s how it felt.” Rather than think my motivations were to belittle her or put the attention on me, she said she thought my motive was “precise and accurate communication.”

Like Ethan, Madelyn referred to the time spent establishing shared expectations before the assignment in influencing how she felt about my action.

I liked that we talked about it beforehand. I guess our values or our goals in our work. So when the feed was presented, I don’t think there was any space to feel anything but gratitude and teamwork instead of feeling offended or taking it personally. Which perhaps if we haven’t had that conversation some other interpreters might feel that you had interjected. Which, I don’t understand that. . . . We’re here to provide as accurate communication as possible.

Talking about what would drive our decision-making ahead of time helped her to have confidence that, when I provided support, it was because I thought it was necessary.

This feed was successful. Madelyn took the information I provided and was able to incorporate it in her production right away without much harm to her process. It did not disrupt the “organic and natural exchange” in the room. My next attempt was less effective.

Madelyn was interpreting from ASL to English. I saw the ASL user produce a sign that was a regional sign. It stood out to me right away. I remembered once having used this sign and learning it was regional from observing an ensuing conversation about it. So when I saw it used and heard Madelyn's rendition pause, I said the English gloss aloud almost immediately.

I realize now that Madelyn has been working in the region for many years. She knew what that sign meant. But in the moment, I acted on the first explanation that came to mind. She told me later she had been struggling for a different reason.

"My mind was still trying to put together the sentence in English that I would want to use." She said she was "running all the scenarios in my mind, which sometimes happens when you don't know exactly what the consumer is trying to get across." The sign was not the issue, but its place within the larger discourse was. In what happened next, there were several beats of back and forth between Madelyn, the ASL user, and myself. I had been trying to figure out the same thing as Madelyn, and I finally thought I had it. So I spoke my rendition aloud. Madelyn said later, "I liked how you took over and just started voicing." We were able to move on with the interaction and get past the block. In terms of my initial attempt, however, she said she was confident she knew my intentions: "You were just trying to help in any way possible based on the schema and information that you have." She said she didn't have anything else I should have done instead.

Earlier, Madelyn had mentioned how talking about our work beforehand had helped her to feel positively about when I offered a feed. In her final comments, she connected that practice to the wide variations in the interpreters and assignments we encounter. "I think you can't predict what other people are going to do. So just keep doing what you're doing." Recommending specific teaming behaviors might be counterproductive, since "anything taken out of context and

put on paper somewhere could seem arrogant or out of place.” She recommended that I “always approach each situation as though it’s brand new. . . . Coming into it with an open mind, embracing flexibility, knowing you’re going to do the best you can.”

My first feed had the information Madelyn needed to repair the message right away. The second time, reaching an understanding about what the ASL user meant took more time, but neither Madelyn nor I thought the extra time had any serious adverse consequences. Neither feed bothered her. We had agreed to manage the interpretation together and had followed through on that commitment.

Adapting to changing circumstances

A shared commitment to consumers and the message appeared to provide my colleagues and I the confidence to tackle the unpredictable, changing circumstances of assignments. There were times when I and my colleagues had to be flexible, when we realized during the assignment that our plans were not working out as planned. In some cases, we agreed how to tackle these together. In others, communication was not so explicit.

“It made me feel like an equal.”

The assignment with Ruby and Cora had a hurried start. I arrived a few minutes after I said I would. I had my excuses, but I resolved again to follow through on my time commitments. I am not sure how long they were waiting for me. Since the assignment was a class, we sat outside, close to the door, so we could see and follow when the student walked in. I had not anticipated that we might have to suddenly wrap up our planning, since I was still thinking of it as something we could do at our own speed. We spent most of the time on the history and context of the assignment, which was fine with me. Being a one-time sub halfway through the term, I was thinking of how my role here might be different. They would have had their own

practices they had been following and would go back to after I was gone. Collegiality, I pondered, might mean listening and watching, and questioning those practices only when I thought it was really important. Cora commented on this choice afterward. For the moment, however, we had just started talking about how to rotate being the support interpreter when the student walked by. We packed up immediately and followed the student into the room.

Cora, Ruby, and I had agreed to rotate the roles of lead and monitor interpreter. This arrangement led to two of us being in the monitor position. When we followed the consumer into the room, we took a place where there was space on the side of the room. This arrangement meant that the monitor interpreters could not alert the active interpreter to an aspect of the message that needed clarification or repair, an aspect to the logistics that became more apparent as the assignment went on. While Cora and I were in the monitor role, she brought this up to me and suggested one of us change our position. The new position potentially brought more attention to the interpreters but was still not obstructive and would enable a direct line of sight between the lead interpreter, monitor interpreter, and the ASL user.

Cora sent an asynchronous reply after the assignment commenting on my response to her suggestion. “As an intern, sometimes I hesitate to offer up my ideas in fear of offending the more experienced professionals or being shut down.” She said that, when I considered her suggestion, “it made me feel like an equal It made me feel like my voice was important.” Her suggestions do not always get considered, she said. “Sometimes due to my inexperience, people may make the decisions themselves for what is best during an assignment.” From her responses, I felt affirmed in my choice to commit to respect for her and Ruby’s professional autonomy by being sensitive to their established practices. I had decided at first to watch and listen before saying “no” or interfering with their work. Cora’s responses indicated gratitude and a belief that

our work became more effective as a result. We were both able to contribute to managing the responsibility for the message that we shared equally.

In our pre-conferencing, much of Cora and Ruby's responses centered on the first question, telling me about the history and context of the situation, and their established practices. They mentioned their appreciation of being able to share this information. Cora said, "Sometimes subs come in and they're just like this is what we're doing, this and this and this." Ruby said the following:

Some interpreters I work with don't ask that question. Some don't ask how can I support you. Some just come in as their role as sub. And there's a different attitude. I'm just here one time, I'm a sub. I'm getting this material only one time. I'm working with these people only one time, so I kind of don't care. Whereas I felt like you truly, it wasn't a 'sub' role, it was, 'I'm a role of a professional interpreter.'

Pre-conferencing contributed to establishing rapport. In my own reflections, I noted how I wished we had had more time to conference. We spent more time on the first interview question than I had in other assignments, but we ran out of time for the other questions in part because I had shown up a few minutes later than I had told them to expect me. I had a similar problem in the assignment with Piper, due to not accurately predicting various factors. Arriving at or before the time I tell them to anticipate me seemed to me an important part of collegiality.

"I thought you read the situation."

Perhaps surprisingly, co-managing the decisions was not always explicit, and did not always fall in line with what we had agreed on beforehand. In my assignment with Mason, we had about thirty minutes to conference before things started. It was a formal event, and, as mentioned earlier, we expected it to be dense material. I had printed off the script that had been

provided to us, albeit in half-size so I would not use more paper than necessary. It turned out that having this script was invaluable. One of the agreements we came to during pre-conferencing was that we might take turns being in front of the consumer and in the line of sight of the stage, and the other interpreter would move to be able to monitor the production, opposite them. We did not do this when we got into the assignment, however. For me, I started feeling anxious about the message when I heard how fast and how dense it was. I felt like I would not be able to provide support by monitoring and feeding omitted or inaccurate details. The primary goal here was to do our best with the rapid pace and dense content. I might have blocked others' view, too, if I had followed through on the agreement, and brought unwanted attention to myself. Instead, we stayed seated next to each other. Staying seated next to each other let us reference the script, pointing out names and other concrete details so we could spell them correctly. We did not explicitly communicate with each other that we had changed our agreement, but afterward, Mason said he thought I was paying attention to what would be most effective and had taken the course of action that would let us actively team. "I thought you read the situation and noticed that moving to the other side of the table would be awkward for set up." He said that he felt "supported and like you were thinking through our options."

I think that I could have better embodied collegiality and respect for professional autonomy by more openly communicating with Mason. He responded to another action in which my choices diverged from what we had agreed after circumstances had changed. With this action, too, he believed my motivations were to read the situation. Although he said it left him feeling on his own, he said he could not think of something else I should have done. Even in this situation, it seemed that our pre-conferencing factored into his reading of my actions. "If we

believe our team is motivated to be there for the same reason we are (or at least they are there for a reason), then we can better understand their approach even if we do things different.”

Mason said that pre-conferencing influenced how he understood my actions. Still, the situation made me feel like I had not quite been a good of a team as I could have, and that perhaps I should have tried harder to communicate about changing expectations during the assignment. This feeling fits with what other colleagues told me about how communicating and clarifying expectations affected them within the assignment.

Practicing “open communication”

As mentioned in the analysis of pre-assignment conferencing responses, colleagues expressed a preference for “open communication” and staying “flexible.” Some of the narratives have already illustrated what these terms might mean, but I would like to use an example of this point more directly.

“I like having your touch”

Kinsley and I were in the middle of our challenging assignment. We were using technology to convey the interpretation to those present, and it felt like it would more appropriate to have a low interaction management role space (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). The content was challenging for us both, as the grammatical constructions being used were quite different from English constructions, requiring more attention to context and use of memory. We had agreed that communicating through touch would be a good way to convey simple, encouraging signals, a touch on the shoulder. I was aware that touch could sometimes be ambiguous, and it was not something I had used often in other teaming experiences, but it made me feel comforted, reassured. At a moment’s break, I leaned over to Kinsley and said, “I like having your touch.”

Kinsley and I had a bit of trouble landing on something to talk about when debriefing afterward. She was very positive, saying she felt comfortable and that she enjoyed working together. She stressed how “the dialogue we have had prior set the tone. And it also did help to outline expectations.” We spoke about another action first, and then got to when I said, “I like having your touch.” To that she said, “Again, so many of the effects of that mirror all my other answers. That was reassuring. That was openly communicating, reducing ambiguity, heightening trust.” I felt the same, and I appreciated our being able to check in with each other during the assignment and afterward, to communicate about our implementation of what we had talked about beforehand.

Tough decisions

Every colleague so far has said how pre-conferencing contributed in some way to setting the tone, establishing rapport, and setting expectations. I would now like to turn to two examples that were more difficult for me. Both situations occurred on the first day of conducting research, as I was just beginning to explicitly consider collegiality and respect for professional autonomy as guiding values for my practice. They provide examples of the more entangled choices that might present themselves in teaming.

A “cosmetic” feed

Lucas and I had plenty of time to talk beforehand and establish a rapport. He told me he tried to be easy to get along with and stay flexible. He told me of a time when an interpreter was resistant to receiving and giving help, and how he didn’t like that experience. The message was the priority, and we would be working on it together. The assignment space was just us around a large conference table in a medium sized room. My impression was that the contextual norms

would be able to handle more clarifications and quick repairs, which we did throughout the assignment (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014).

I was in the monitor position when I saw the ASL user produce a sign being used in a novel (to me) way. This was the second time during this assignment it had been used, so I had some time to think creatively about how to articulate the meaning apparent from the context of the discourse. It must have struck Lucas as novel, too, because I thought the word he chose did not make sense in the target rendition. He had chosen the ASL gloss, TOUCH.

It was just one word. It is hard for me as someone who has access to both languages to imagine what understandings the consumers can derive on their own. We had talked about being flexible and providing feeds before. I decided to whisper my solution: “Address.”

Lucas quickly added my feed into the rendition, and the interaction moved on.

My choice to speak this feed was among the first things he mentioned when we left the assignment to conduct the post-assignment interview. Another action seemed to gain more importance as we talked, and Lucas chose that action to use in answering the post-assignment conferencing questions. I had slid the notebook as a signal to switch, and Lucas told me in his responses how he appreciated the attempt, but it was unclear what I meant, and he had started worrying I was trying to tell him something important on the page. I had distracted him from his interpreting.

I noticed that his demeanor was different from when we had started. He seemed agitated, perhaps from the pressure to perform in the assignment itself. I remember the walk from the assignment had been at a brisk pace. During the post-assignment interview, he shifted in his seat and was more animated. My own nervous system was in a heightened state of arousal. Getting out of the assignment had felt like I had stopped holding my breath. When I asked the questions

about how my actions had made him feel, he replied with answers like “nothing,” and (jokingly) “I’m emotionally dead inside.” (Those questions were about the action I had taken, not about what he was feeling during the interview.) Throughout the interview, I found myself trying to understand the apparent discrepancy between what I was hearing and seeing.

We had wrapped up the entire interview process when his comments returned to the feed I had provided. I asked if it was worth going through the post-conference interview questions about this action. He said yes.

Choosing an action to discuss with each colleague was more or less a joint affair. I asked if they had anything they wanted to talk about, then listened as they talked. When their thoughts seemed to coalesce around an action I had taken, I offered a short, concrete description of the action, then ask if that’s how they wanted to say it. I adopted a more deliberate facilitator role as I gained experience with the interviews.

Lucas was my first colleague to interview, and I had not practiced how to facilitate yet. Throughout the assignment, I had been thinking about what was worth providing a feed for and had started using “substantive” and “cosmetic” as adjectives to help me start thinking about this issue. (Later I decided these adjectives relied on the conduit model of communication and started searching for other words to describe it [Reddy, 1979].) When I gave Lucas the feed, I started questioning whether it had been necessary. In negotiating with Lucas how to define this action, I used my own terms to call it a “cosmetic addition.”

Answering the interview questions, Lucas appeared to be still deciding what he thought about my action. He initially followed my wording in calling it a cosmetic feed. He said he did not feel an emotion when I gave him the feed, but he did have something else to think about. At this point, he believed that my feed did not make a substantive difference in the message. He had

no preference for what I should have done differently. In pre-conferencing, we had agreed on a philosophy of abundance—the more information the better, regardless of whether it was really necessary.

After a while of talking about it with me and going through these questions, he said that he changed his mind. It had mattered. It was substantive. Even so, at the very end, he seemed to allude to it again in the final questions. He said that it is always helpful to talk beforehand, but when it comes to the word choices a team makes, “I tend to let the person answer for themselves. Because interpretation is just that.”

I was not sure where we had landed. Had it mattered to make that addition? He was giving me mixed signals about what he thought. How much had I influenced him by calling it a “cosmetic feed?” This feed was less distracting to him since it was something he could and did deal with quickly, but I had distracted him earlier with a different action. I thought it was an important clarification to make, but I could not be sure. I found myself trying to balance his autonomy and our shared commitment to the effectiveness of the communications and not knowing how I could make it less a matter of personal, fallible judgment.

I was aware of no objective criteria to guide this decision-making. Based on my observations of Lucas’s response, I decided that I would dial back my involvement in my team’s rendition. This decision may have influenced the hands-off approach I initially took to my next assignment, below.

“How do you think it’s going?”

I wanted Alexis and I to have more time to conference privately. We both had arrived in advance, but the consumer had arrived even before us. We greeted the consumer and began to establish a rapport with them, who also told us valuable information about the complex history of

the assignment. At what seemed like an appropriate time, we broke away to go through the pre-conferencing questions with our remaining time, but that time was short. She told me her philosophy and what to do if I noticed she was struggling with larger portions of the message. She wanted me to take over instead of trying to give her short feeds. I told her what I knew about my approach to teaming, which I was still formulating, now that I was thinking more deliberately about how to describe it. The process felt rushed. Should we have arrived even earlier, or spent less time with the consumer so we could connect?

There were multiple actors in the room. The mood was somber, serious. Lower self-presentation and interaction management seemed appropriate (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). I felt nervous but confident I could interpret for the consumers and the content. I had some backstory, and I was familiar with the ASL user's style. We started the assignment having agreed to twenty-minute intervals. I took the first turn interpreting ASL to English and English to ASL. Speaking turns were mostly balanced between languages. I monitored myself for indications that I was making unintentional omissions, and I felt confident about my comprehension and message production (Napier & Barker, 2004). At twenty minutes, Alexis and I switched lead/monitor roles. Now the conversation shifted to the ASL user almost exclusively.

With the benefit of her responses and hindsight, I see my first shortcoming may have been not paying more attention to the visible signs of stress she was showing. She told me afterward, she was trying "not to freak me out" by her shaking and nervousness. I had missed this entirely. To my surprise, she said that in those moments she was considering backing out of the assignment. I had completely neglected to consider how she might be feeling.

I was seeing that she was struggling to interpret the ASL user's utterances into English, and that the message was not quite all there. She told me later she felt she could not get the

words out as fast as they were coming. As I was monitoring the message, there were substantive parts of the message missing, but not parts that I could repair with a single sign or word. I would have to put the brakes on the conversation to interpret for a chunk, ask the consumers to pause, and back up. Maybe if I waited a bit longer, she would bring it all back together. I had never seen her work before, so she could be having a rough start and just needed a minute. I noticed that the ASL user had changed demeanor too, watching her interpretation intently. We both seemed to be monitoring the situation, and I know from afterward that Alexis was too. I was hoping that she could bring it back on track, otherwise we might have to change our approach.

I think it would have gone differently if the situation were more relaxed, if the topic was not so serious, or if we had not simply accepted the unspoken assumption that we had made that we needed to have a low interaction management orientation, i.e. be unobtrusive (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). I was weighing whether the deficiencies in the message were enough to warrant an interruption, and she kept going when her own self-monitoring was telling her it was not going well.

Suddenly, there was a pause in the proceedings. Something happened outside, and the ASL user had to leave the room. It is hard to say how long we had gone like this. I took advantage of the moment, turning to her and asking, “How do you think things are going?”

In her responses afterward, she said the question “opened the door” for her to express what she had been thinking, that it “allowed me to flex my brain—what we might do.” And she said, “I wish we could have this pause in every encounter” where all the proceedings would stop for the sake of the interpreters to evaluate how things were going and make changes as necessary. She felt relieved, like she had a moment to “breathe.”

Even though she had positive things to say about the question, I think it was the second time I could have done better. She said other things in her responses that made me think perhaps she was still deciding how she felt about how I had acted, or that she did not trust me quite enough to be frank. (It was only our first time working together, after all, and I was asking her to criticize my actions—a tall order.) She said it was like a question a mentor might ask. Ouch. I had not meant to be condescending. I knew I had been feeling nervous, but now I was seriously questioning my own motivations.

I had overlooked something else. She had been watching, assessing, and thinking about me, asking herself what she could trust me with. When I asked, “How do you think it’s going?,” she remembered a conversation she had had with other interpreters, who said that you should not be too revealing of your insecurities to your peers. She thought of how I was doing research on teaming, “I felt right away, he wants to make sure things are working.” She decided to turn the question back on me, “How do you think it’s going?”

I was not direct. I feared being frank with myself about my own judgment, that the ASL to English interpretation was inadequate, while genuinely searching for how to adopt a problem-solving frame of mind. We each took a few turns speaking. She asked what suggestion I had, so I told her what I had already been thinking but was too timid to say. I could interpret ASL to English, and she could interpret English to ASL. She accepted this arrangement, though I would have considered other solutions if we had thought of any. The person who left came back in the room, and we proceeded with this configuration for the remainder of the assignment. The new approach seemed more effective.

During the assignment and the interview afterward, I was not completely honest with myself. I had assumed that being collegial meant the situation had to be positive, and I withheld

the thoughts and feelings I was afraid to share with her, to prevent her thinking I was being mean or judgmental. I think she knew what I was thinking better than I did, based on how upset and nervous she told me she was, and our interactions felt like the subtext was more tense than our overt interactions suggested. Argyris and Schön (1974) argue that non-coercive exchange through free and informed choice requires parties to provide valid information about relevant thoughts and feelings. With valid information, a person is able to make their own choices, including to say or do things that might make the other person uncomfortable, or to make judgments about that person (Argyris, 1997). One interpretation of my interaction with Alexis is, I withheld relevant thoughts, feelings, and judgments about the quality of the interpretation. I circumvented a negative reaction to my negative evaluations, effectively keeping our explicit communications positive, by hiding those evaluations. In so doing, I exercised a coercive influence on the exchange. I do not think that was in the spirit of cooperation or collegiality.

I will probably continue to think and reflect on this, and more wrestling with these questions may lead me to a different answer. I do not mean to argue that being more candid was the right course of action, but I may try it in the future. Something else I may try is to exercise my ability to manage the interaction through polite interruptions, more quickly when I notice our choices are not working (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). Interaction management is worthwhile for the sake of the communications even when contextual norms may dictate low interaction management in the interpreters' role space (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). I felt pressured by contextual norms to keep the pace of the communications, but Kent (2012) has argued that these norms are hearing-, not Deaf-centric.

My takeaway for my interactions with Alexis is, she and I had agreed to support each other, and I had not quickly rendered that support. Later, I did not give her all the information she

needed about my feelings and thoughts for her to make free and informed choices. I had suppressed conflict, and so attempted to control the outcome instead of enabling her to control the outcome (Argyris & Schön, 1974). I believe this was a misalignment of my actions and my intent to support her professional autonomy.

DISCUSSION

The majority of my teaming experiences were successful. Colleagues commented positively about my embodiment of collegiality and respect for professional autonomy in the actions they chose to answer the post-conferencing interview questions. A major contributor to their responses appeared to be time spent in advance of the assignment. Pre-conferencing influenced colleagues' beliefs about my motivations even when my actions departed from agreements without explicitly communicating about a change in strategy. Changes in strategy were sometimes necessary when our predictions of the assignment's circumstances were inaccurate. Commitment to flexibility and open communication in pre-conferencing helped us to be prepared for such eventualities.

My teaming experiences also highlighted challenges associated with the monitor role in the teaming relationship. My feeds were not always immediately helpful, nor did colleagues always agree they were necessary. Actions that I took had the potential to distract my team or interrupt the proceedings. Being tasked with shared responsibility for the message carried with it complications affecting how or when I might provide support, modify, or correct the interpreted rendition. Each of these two themes will be discussed in turn.

Positive effects of pre-conferencing

The single theme consistent across colleagues' responses during post-conferencing interviews was how talking beforehand helped to reassure them that we were there for the same reasons and that my actions were not motivated out of self-interest. The intentions I had communicated beforehand were carried into the interactions, even when it was not directly related to the pre-conferencing, as when Alexis said she thought I wanted to "make sure things are working" because I was conducting research on teaming.

The colleagues who I worked with wanted to manage the interpreting tasks and the demands of the assignment for the sake of achieving our consumers' communication goals. This was true for each of the vignettes above, as well as for other vignettes that were not included in the final paper. It matches the existing research in the literature that claims that establishing shared goals, planning how to meet them, and adapting as necessary is something many interpreters expect from their colleagues (Reinhardt, 2015; Cokely & Hawkins, 2003; Hoza, 2010b). This expectation may stem from the nature of the job. In one view, the responsibility of an individual interpreter is to render an accurate and complete message; or in another view, to effectively manage the communications of the parties involved in a way appropriate to the context (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2014). When interpreters accept an assignment together, that responsibility becomes shared (Swabey, 1999). It is then up to the interpreters to determine what roles and task divisions are most effective (Hoza, 2010b). The most effective approach to interpreting a situation is not pre-determined, however, but is dependent in large part on the circumstances, parties present, context, and other factors (Dean & Pollard, 2013).

If successful strategies are not predetermined, and the evaluation of those teaming experiences depends on the shared expectations of the team members, a great deal of importance rests on the pre-conferencing assignment in affirming a shared goal and establishing some preliminary strategies for how this goal will be reached, including what tasks the team members will fulfill (Holcomb, 2018). When I reached out to Avery in advance of the assignment to determine my qualifications and the match with the assignment, she said, "I so appreciate that you took initiative to reach out and engage in a collaborative assessment process." Ruby mentioned preparation as an indicator of my professional commitment to the assignment, that "coming in prepared . . . gave an extra layer to how to support us." Mason stated our pre-

assignment conferencing gave him reason to believe that I was actively assessing the situation and determining the best outcome based on changing circumstances, even when chosen strategies did not match our original plan. Lucas told me in his general statements about teaming that pre-conferencing is very helpful, always. Pre-conferencing is a key practice in enabling both interpreters to approach decision-making in the assignment together and coordinate such tasks as co-creating a rendition, in which hearing interpreters alternate taking the lead role.

My colleagues' belief in the effectiveness of pre-conferencing corroborates existing literature on teaming practices, in which interpreters state a belief in the usefulness of pre-conferencing (Hoza, 2010b; Roberson, Russell, & Shaw, 2011). The current study extends this research, however, by moving beyond self-report surveys to interviews about actual teaming experiences. It provides some direct evidence that pre-conferencing is not just standard practice, but best practice, when it comes to forming beliefs in teams' commitments to shared goals in the work.

Knowing when to get involved as the “monitor” interpreter

A major aspect of my work with the hearing colleagues who participated was negotiating how to co-create a shared rendition while adopting, in turn, lead and monitor roles. It was during this work that I found “spaces of discomfort,” where it was not always clear to me how or whether to act (Choi, 2016, p. 84). Ambiguities in what was the “right” course of action could be easily dismissed within a model of interpreting that considers errors and miscues to be self-evident, which is why it is necessary to explain the differences between a conduit model of communication and a cognitive model.

A predominant view of interpreters, held especially within judicial systems, is that interpreters are “unobtrusive devices or channels, straightforward technical adjuncts” (Morris,

1999, p. 8). Morris (1999) cites multiple court cases that refer to interpreters as “a transmission belt; transmission wire or telephone,” a “cipher,” a “translating machine,” and others (p. 8).

Identifying errors in interpretations is thus supposed to be straightforward, a matter of more or less direct comparison between inputs and outputs (Wilcox & Schaffer, 2005). Communication, however, is not a conduit, say Wilcox and Schaffer (2005). Meaning is not conveyed, encoded, or decoded. Such terms incorrectly frame words as containers and meaning as substance (Reddy, 1979). To communicate, a listener/observer independently constructs an understanding of a speaker/signer’s intended meaning from the linguistic units that were provided, using their own private fund of experiences and knowledge as materials for the task (Reddy, 1979; Wilcox & Schaffer, 2005). In this cognitive model of communication, it is not remarkable that communication ever “fails,” but that it succeeds (Wilcox & Schaffer, 2005). Applied to interpreting, errors and miscues are not apparent simply by a cursory comparison of the forms of the source and target texts (Wilcox & Schaffer, 2005).

The situation is further complicated by observing that interpreted renditions will often feature acceptable choices that are nonetheless attributable only to the individual interpreter. Cerney reviews two studies of interpreting, Shaw (1987) and Zimmer (1990), to conclude that the “individual and personal style of an interpreter will influence and infuse every target text that interpreter creates” (p. 23). In co-creating a shared rendition, the monitor interpreter is tasked with differentiating between what aspects of the rendition can be attributed to personal style, and what aspects of the rendition deserve more attention through clarification or repair. I experienced the difficulty of this dilemma in my teaming experiences with Madelyn, Lucas, and Alexis.

Factors in deciding my degree of involvement

The stakes for these decisions are high. The interpreter's essential task is sometimes couched in religious terms—rendering a “faithful” interpretation from the “sacred” source message (Moody, 2011, p. 40; Morris, 1999). As Gile (2009) explains, interpreters often feel “great stress” by any perceived “failure to accomplish their mission,” despite “some clumsiness and some loss of information occur[ing] very frequently” in interpretations (p. 113). As came out in the pre- and post-conferencing interviews, a miscalculated feed could distract my team. Colleagues described strategies to minimize this distraction by providing feeds proportionate to the length of the message needing repair, waiting to provide a feed until asked, and avoiding unnecessary, unrequested feeds. Sometimes with a feed, understanding was restored quickly, but other times it took more turns, with my team and me asking questions and clarifying what was meant. Still other times, contextual cues led me to be more cautious about offering support, as in my assignments with Lucas and Ethan.

I wanted to avoid *unnecessarily* adding to the effort colleagues had to expend in producing their rendition, reserving those changes in direction for times that mattered. My teaming experience with Lucas brought this point home for me. The cognitive load of the lead interpreter may often be at or near capacity while producing a rendition (Gile, 1999; Seeber, 2015). Lucas mentioned in one of his responses that my ambiguous request to switch roles had led to his being distracted while he continued to attend to the message and the environment, comprehend the message, and render a target language rendition. This example illustrates the problematic ambiguity in signals sometimes used between teams (Cokely & Hawkins, 2003). As mentioned earlier in the paper, a “lean” or a hand touch indicates nothing of what kind of support is being requested. It is up to the monitor interpreter to give their best guess as to what might be

needed. This happened to me in my attempt to support Madelyn, when I gave her a process feed (the single sign before she produced her target rendition) that turned out not to be what was needed (Hoza, 2010b). Providing the needed support in the form of feeds, requested or unrequested, is more art than science.

Another factor influencing the degree of the monitor interpreter's involvement is the importance that context and participants may place on conducting their business quickly and efficiently. Contextual considerations are one of many factors that interpreters may consider in making decisions (Dean & Pollard, 2014). With Ethan and Alexis, the dynamic I observed between the consumers led me to believe that higher role delineation and a higher threshold for when to interrupt was more appropriate. In my teaming experience with Madelyn, higher self-presentation and interaction management seemed more acceptable in that setting (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2013). The former situations were an opportunity for me to interrogate power by asking whose interests were being served, however (Choi, 2016). Some predominantly hearing contexts may place a premium on saving time, influencing the interpreter(s) to adopt a role space with a low interaction management orientation, but saving time is a value not universally held among Deaf culture, as demonstrated by Deaf interpreting and communication strategies (Kent, 2012; Stone, 2009). Madelyn referred to this consideration in our post-assignment interview in suggesting we had another control strategy—partnering with the other culturally Deaf person in the room—saying, “I’m a strong advocate for using CDIs and using Deaf professionals wherever possible.” Interpreters committed to critically questioning power structures may place a higher importance on interaction management strategies that favor fullness of understanding over time constraints (Holcomb, 2018; Kent, 2012; Russell & Shaw, 2016).

Yet another factor in weighing how involved to be in my team's rendition, I was conscious of the possibility that my behavior could be misconstrued by consumers to mean something it did not mean. Russell (2008) found that the collaborative and interdependent style of the legal interpreters in her study, in which they co-managed a shared rendition through conferring behaviors, was confusing and disconcerting to the Deaf witnesses. Russell (2008) reports,

Each time the interpreters would visibly pause and confer with each other, the Deaf consumer questioned how well they understood the witness's use of ASL. While the witnesses acknowledged that they would like the interpreters to stop them if the interpreters were not sure, they also said that when it occurred several times they began to lose faith in the abilities of the interpreters. (p. 131)

Since co-creating a shared rendition is standard practice, Deaf consumers are likely used to a degree of intra-team conferencing, but in this instance began to wonder when it rose above that threshold (Russell, 2008). The interpreters' behaviors had a similar effect on the lawyers, who had not fully understood why the team would be requesting and rendering support so frequently. Said one lawyer, "I started to wonder if they knew what they were doing. I felt concerned about how often it occurred and I didn't understand why they were doing this" (Russell, 2008, pp. 134-135). What the interpreters considered unambiguously good practice was read differently by the consumers. Confusion about the interpreting process has led lay hearing consumers to give lower ratings of Deaf consumers' competence, intelligence, likeability, and other positive traits (Jones, 2017). Consumers observe their interpreters and may ascribe meanings to their behaviors not shared by the interpreters. For these reasons, it is extremely important that interpreters be transparent about their confidence in the interpretation and communicate about their teaming

practices with consumers, perhaps even deciding together on the approach to take to the assignment (Holcomb, 2018). Since the interpreters in Russell's study (2008) had prepared the consumers to expect them to confer and co-create the rendition, however, interpreters might consider how their teaming behaviors are being perceived when the benefits to high involvement in each other's rendition are negligible.

Minimally disruptive support strategies

A monitor interpreter may contribute to the lead's interpreting process while minimally interfering with their process and not ambiguously suggesting that the interpreter is unreliable. In my teamed assignment with Mason, I had printed off a script of the proceedings in advance. As luck would have it, this script was accurate and complete, and the proceedings followed it exactly. While Mason was interpreting, I pointed to the corresponding places on the script when a name was said to help Mason track with his eyes, read, and fingerspell the name correctly. He followed suit when I was the primary interpreter. Commenting on this move afterward, Mason said it was very helpful. He felt "supported and like I had a team with a mind set I could depend on," and that "the consumer was provided with more specifics such as names of people and title of departments" as a result. By planning in advance, thinking creatively, and having a bit of luck, we were able to assist each other in attaining our shared goal of a faithful interpretation through means that carried little associated cost to processing capacity.

Summary

The value of respect for professional autonomy that was clarified for me through these teaming experiences may thus be stated in terms of minimizing cognitive performance costs to the team by eliminating low quality feeds while maximizing information exchange of high quality information, considering what meanings may be ascribed to my teaming behaviors, and

pursuing transparency with consumers about my teaming behaviors where possible. More broadly, collegiality and respect for professional autonomy entailed asking about colleagues preferred and established practices (as with Cora and Ruby) and watching and listening before acting. Active involvement in the lead interpreter's rendition is only one possible support strategy. Partnering with consumers in determining teaming arrangements is a potential area of undoing hierarchical power relationships between interpreters and consumers that was underexplored in the assignments I took on during this study.

The dilemmas in my teaming with Alexis may have arisen from her not having the requisite controls for the demands we created by assigning ourselves the tasks that we did (Dean & Pollard, 2014). Hoza states that, in his model of collaboration and interdependence, he assumes that both interpreters have the requisite skills (2010b). Rather than it being about only skill, I believe there may be significant opportunity to use the available resources contributed by both interpreters to find suitable controls. The second approach Alexis and I took to the task was more successful; we had reconfigured our strategy to better fit the resources we independently brought. Interpreters may find themselves in situations with teams of varying experience, personal and professional resources, and abilities, just as Ethan was the local expert in our assignment together, and I was the novice. Together, a team has a better chance of having the controls that will meet demands. While there may be an idealized model for how to work together, the real challenge is navigating the relationships and stakes to maximize the choices of the participants and colleagues and uphold the ethical, personal, and professional commitments of the interpreter. Pre-conferencing to establish shared goals, share expectations, accept tasks, and reiterate an openness to change is helpful toward this end.

Critical reflections on the research process

Participation is a “choice point” for action researchers that takes place on “a continuum from consultation with stakeholders to stakeholders as full co-researchers” (Bradbury-Huang, 2010, p. 102). Participatory action research attempts to foster communicative space, in which persons attempt to come to mutual understanding through honest, non-coercive, and transparent exchange (Kolenick, 2017). I attempted to incorporate participation in decisions about the research in two ways, first to determine the direction of the research, and second to invite comment on its conclusions before its final publication.

One of the final interview questions with colleagues asked for their suggestions on how I could change the research to better embody collegiality and respect for professional autonomy. In adding this question, I hoped to receive "divergent, surprising responses" from my colleagues that would allow me to adapt the research based on feedback I was receiving (Chandler & Torbert, 2003, p. 144). No colleagues suggested anything that would have had an effect on the essential design of the data collection and analysis. While adding the question did allow for more participation in research decisions than in conventional studies, it scores low as a way to share power with my participants. Rigid and highly defined research processes increase the researcher’s ability to focus the study but put limits on the potential for participants to take the inquiry in entirely new, unexpected directions into issues that matter personally to them (McNiff, 2013). In a more participatory study with more time, I might have begun conversations with colleagues interested in improving their practice with me, jointly identifying a research question, and agreeing on methodology together. Such an approach might have avoided the unusual formality of asking pre-conferencing questions in an interview format, rather than as a

conversation responsive to the person and circumstances in front of me (Chandler & Torbert, 2003).

Even in action research into one's own practice, it is recommended that the evidence, writing, and findings be done in the presence of critical friends. Tidwell & Staples (2017) report that "critical friends" can provide "support and encouragement" in a "safe environment" and address the potential insularity of speaking solely for oneself (pp. 89-90). Bradbury-Huang (2010) calls this process of critical questioning a "peer review mechanism" (p. 105). Throwing one's own understanding "into the 'melting pot' of intersubjective discourse" is necessary for it to be valid (Waters-Adams, 1994, p. 198).

Critical friends and colleagues were offered the choice to read a draft of this paper before its final publication, including all colleagues who participated. Publication of the paper was held for three months to allow for sufficient time to read, consider, and respond to its conclusions. Conversations with readers led to changes in the structure and organization of the paper to improve readability and to more clearly relate evidence to claims. The intersubjective discourse continues, however, in your own reading and critical questioning of its application to your own practice.

CONCLUSION

As I looked over my journal and considered everything that had happened, I came across a passage that ties everything together:

What do I hope to accomplish? Shared understandings of teaming philosophies. Shared trust. Common ground. Giving the other person confidence that I will be interested in working with them. Communicating that intent seems to be pretty important in my conversations with teams so far. Just having the conversation ahead of time—how can I support you?—has gone a long way toward building shared trust.

I was feeling about my teaming practices what my teams were telling me they felt. Talking, planning, establishing a rapport, really did have a positive effect on our resilience. This positive relationship helped get through times when I said the wrong thing or tried to help and had made a wrong prediction.

My experience with my colleagues provided some direct evidence to support Hoza's claim that pre-conferencing is an effective strategy for building rapport and planning an interpreter team's approach (2010b). I used five questions in my pre-conferencing, asking what knowledge of the assignment my team would like to share, how I should support them, what practices would not be helpful, and what was their philosophy or approach to teaming. Finally, I asked what questions my team would like to ask me. Colleagues' answers formed the foundation for the decisions we would make but did not determine them, as in my teaming experiences with Mason. Asking these questions allowed me to gauge the type and degree of involvement I would adopt in my team's practice, such as using touch as a signal of encouragement to Kinsley or deciding how much to contribute to our shared rendition. Validation of the usefulness of these strategies came from colleagues' comments on my actions afterward, during post-assignment

conferencing, in which they positively evaluated my actions and attributed beliefs about my motivations to the pre-conferencing work we had done. In validating the usefulness of pre-assignment conferencing, I also claim that this aspect of my practice upheld my values of collegiality and respect for professional autonomy in the act of inquiring after how my colleagues, individually, would like to team as opposed to imposing a predetermined template on the situation.

It remained a challenge to maintain my personal commitment to my values and implement them in practice with reference to what my colleagues shared with me. The *creative actualization* theory of values holds that to live one's values is to embrace creativity while measuring one's discoveries by standards suggested by the values (McDonald, 2011). Hoza's account of teaming pays little attention to the potentially ambiguous or uncomfortable aspects of teaming with colleagues, and in attempting to bring my values to bear on my practice, I discovered how involvement in my team's rendition can be ambiguous and uncomfortable. Following standard practices when they align with colleagues' practices and what is necessary for the situation may still require the practitioner to engage in serious ethical and moral reflection.

An implication of my claim to the usefulness of pre-conferencing is how important it is to make time to talk with my team, agreeing on a time to meet and following through. My teaming experience with Piper showed me how this might involve predicting what kinds of unusual complications might arise in trying to get there at the appointed time. Assignments with Ethan and Alexis led me to think about how we could break away from conversations with the consumers to pre-conference privately and partner with the consumer in obtaining information about the assignment and making decisions about what kinds of teaming practices would be most

helpful to them. I want to continue to build rapport with my team and better align my practice with the needs and goals of our consumers (Holcomb, 2018).

The literature review shed some light on how the lived experiences of teaming when working with other interpreters is difficult and challenging, helping to provide a more complex, embodied, and contextualized view of teaming than is currently in the literature (Cokely & Hawkins, 2003; Hoza, 2010b). My own experiences, my colleagues' perspectives, and my own reflections on them inquired into some of the discomfort and ambiguity that I experienced. The usefulness of listening to the many, overlapping lived experiences of work with colleagues lies in the practitioner's greater ability to make ethical decisions and take timely action in their own practice (Chandler & Torbert, 2003). Implementation of collegiality and respect for professional autonomy in practice may look different depending on the context and the people involved, as the practitioner makes novel discoveries of how to actualize their values and then continuously monitor the implementation (Argyris & Schön, 1974; McDonald, 2011). Because of these assumptions about the nature of the findings, values, and of practice generally, it would not be appropriate simply to use the proposed pre-conferencing practices uncritically without asking what might make them (in)effective given the present relationships, historical and contextual factors, identities, and other relevant factors. For instance, I may have worked with particularly confident colleagues who were used to a collaborative and interdependent approach to teaming and expected my contributions to the shared rendition. Each practitioner has the responsibility to act ethically within the circumstances and constraints of their own practice.

The core issue in teaming as viewed by value-driven self-improvement research, before any technical aspects of the structure of teaming "how-to," is the strength of an individual's internal commitments, communication of these commitments to others, and awareness of their

subsequent behavior's transformation into a text of their trustworthiness (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Delgado-Márquez, Aragón-Correa, Hurtado-Torres, & Aguilera-Caracuel, 2015; McNiff, 2013; Øgland, 2017; Whitehead, 1989). Individual interpreters pursuing their values, making ethical judgments, and being reflexive about how their actions align with their values can make teaming practices more responsive to their present circumstances. I did not have a long history of working together with many of the colleagues who participated. My behaviors, however, have now influenced their expectations for how I will act in the future (Delgado-Márquez, Aragón-Correa, Hurtado-Torres, & Aguilera-Caracuel, 2015). Whether I can continue to live up to my values of collegiality, respect for professional autonomy, and my other ethical and professional commitments, is a matter of personal commitment, one that will continue to unfold in my practice as I fail, succeed, and learn.

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