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## Making the Dream Work: Teaming Intimacy for Interpreters in Freelance Settings

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**Making the Dream Work:  
Teaming Intimacy for Interpreters in Freelance Settings**

Rebekah J. Cheeley

Western Oregon University

## ABSTRACT

### **Making the Dream Work: Teaming Intimacy for Interpreters in Freelance Settings**

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Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies

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December 2020

Intimacy is a quality of a relationship, and includes trust, open self-disclosure, emotional closeness, and reciprocity (Timmerman, 1991). It is measurable only by the perceptions of members of the relationship. This concept, considered in terms of the Choice-Constraint Approach to Studying Similarity in Intimacy (Mollenhorst, Völurker, & Flap, 2008), has important implications for teaming freelance interpreters who must work together. Intimacy has also been linked to self-efficacy and sense of community theories, which are used as frameworks in this paper. The goal of this research is to identify perceptions which impact teaming intimacy and discuss the importance of intimacy for teaming freelance interpreters.

Data was collected on my perceptions of intimacy, using a Likert scale to gauge personal trust, professional trust, open self-disclosure, emotional closeness, and

reciprocity, based on Timmerman's (1991) concept of intimacy. My own perceptions about basic, general characteristics about teams was also noted and journal entries collected post-job were analyzed to look for patterns of emotion-based words and whether those related to teaming intimacy.

*Keywords:* Intimacy, Teaming, Sign Language, Interpreting, Sense of Community, Self-Efficacy

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project concluded in a pandemic, in a time of greater political upheaval than many people had previously experienced, and in which my own personal life never stopped happening (darn shame, that). Through that all, I was never without the undying support of my friends and family. I want to especially thank Emily, for being my biggest fan throughout this process and helping me find the nuggets of gold already inside my pan, Savanna for lending me her eyes and brilliance in the editing process, and Rachel for absolutely being the reason this got done at all. And of course my husband; there's not enough gratitude I can express to say how much it means that he loved me (and lived with me!) through grad school.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“Recognizing his need for professional improvement, the interpreter will join with professional colleagues for the purpose of sharing new knowledge and developments, to seek to understand the implications of deafness and the deaf person’s particular needs, broaden his education and knowledge of life, and develop both his expressive and his receptive skills in interpreting and translating.”

—Original RID Code of Ethics (Fant, 1990)

### **Background**

In my own experience as an emerging professional who works primarily in freelance-based settings, I have had the opportunity to work with teams I know well personally and those that I do not. Interactions during individual jobs made me begin to wonder at some of the feelings of discomfort I was experiencing, working with people I knew well as friends but not as well professionally, and why it seemed like I was able to connect with teams thoroughly for the duration of a job, even when our relationship did not continue into our personal lives. I found myself wondering at the way I tended to conflate my relationship to individual interpreters with my relationship to the interpreting community, or my identity as a professional interpreter. Additionally, I was curious about the impact of interpreters’ interactions on their teaming intimacy and I began to ask questions: When do teaming interpreters benefit from a personal relationship outside of

the interpreted interaction? When does that relationship become a hindrance? Is it merely collegiality that makes personal relationships successful on-the-job, even when personal relationships might flounder with the same two people? Where does on-the-job trust come from? Most importantly, how do interpreters come to work together closely, collegially, and collaboratively, regardless of personal relationships? Upon reflection and some initial research, I came across the concept of intimacy in relationships as a factor external to and separate from important elements like trust, self-efficacy, and sense of community.

### **Position in Literature**

Studies of intimacy have saturated the fields of therapy (e.g. Heller & Wood, 1998), medicine (e.g. Manne, et al., 2004), nursing (e.g. Sinclair & Dowdy, 2005; Williams, 2001), and mental health (e.g. Timmerman, 1991), and studies of healthcare professionals demonstrate an important relationship between social support - a concept closely linked to intimacy - and self-efficacy (e.g. Oman, Richards, Hedberg, & Thoresen, 2008; Wang, Tao, Bowers, Brown, & Yang, 2018). These concepts also appear in the studies of freelance workers, by way of entrepreneurs, (e.g. Arora, Haynie, & Laurence, 2013) and, more recently, ASL<sup>1</sup>/English interpreters (e.g. Chin, 2019; Harwood, 2017; O’Bleness, 2019; Woods, 2019). Research conducted within the field of ASL/English Interpreting studies have been primarily focused on the interpersonal dynamics that impact the interpreters’ work. Research has considered the role of folklore (e.g. Flora, 2013), personality traits and values among interpreters (e.g. Hewlett, 2013; Puhlman, 2018; Ramirez-Loudenback, 2015), horizontal violence and microaggressions

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<sup>1</sup> American Sign Language will be abbreviated “ASL” throughout this paper.

(e.g. Hill, 2018), and teaming dynamics in particular (e.g. Hoza, 2010; and Reinhardt, 2015). In this study, I will ask: for teaming freelance interpreters, what *intrapersonal* behaviors best promote teaming intimacy?

### **Statement of the Problem**

Teaming intimacy, or professional intimacy between working colleagues, contributes to increased effectiveness and productivity, as well as a reduction in field tension (Boeh, 2016; Flora, 2013; Hewlett, 2013; Hill, 2018; Hoza, 2010; Reinhardt, 2015; Robert, Denis, & Hung, 2009). However, there is not yet much research focusing specifically on the role of professional intimacy between teaming interpreters, nor, in particular, the ways in which interpreters can act individually to promote a positive teaming dynamic. This is particularly important in light of the fact that there are times when factors contribute towards a negative teaming experience or decreased feelings of intimacy. In these cases, interpreters often still must work together, and may have little or no control in how their team interacts with them. Instead, interpreters can only act *interpersonally*, with the hope of influencing the development of a more intimate relationship, or *intrapersonally*, to make themselves more receptive to an intimate relationship. Many of the previously cited works studying the interpersonal dynamics between interpreters have especially considered the ways in which intimacy is *not* achieved. These theses and other projects identified tension and a culture of horizontal violence, as well as other failures to achieve intimacy. Before the onset of COVID-19 and its impacts on the availability of on-site, teamed freelance work in community settings, the focus of this study was to examine what can be done to successfully achieve intimacy. When the world turned upside down and inside out, this study necessarily shifted some,

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and the focus became an exploration of data collected based on my own perceptions of teams and teaming intimacy. The focus of this study now is to examine the relationship between perceptions of teams and teaming intimacy, looking especially at my perceptions of my teams' general characteristics, self-efficacy, and sense of community.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary goal of this study is to identify some of the factors that contribute to intimacy development between teaming freelance interpreters. A subjective, perception-based approach is in line with Timmerman's (1991) concept analysis of intimacy, wherein the researcher described intimacy as a quality of a relationship based on the perceptions of those who are part of that relationship, and in line with related work in the field of interpreting, such as Chin's (2019) study of her own journal entries in exploring social support and mental health. This study serves as an inventory of one interpreter's experiences and perceptions of intimacy in teaming rather than of the teaming process itself. Although these ideas are linked, it is important to note that this study is not intended to suggest specific teaming practices, only to observe and document some of my perceptions during teamed interpreting experiences and the ways they may have impacted teaming intimacy. Because of the connections between intimacy and effectiveness, however, this study does still hope to uncover ideas for improving teaming success.

## **Theoretical Framework and Organization**

The overarching theoretical frameworks for this study were Bandura's (1993) theory of self-efficacy and various Sense of Community theories. These served both as starting points for shaping the research questions and data collection, lenses to analyze the data, and finally as frameworks for understanding the stories the data was telling. Sense of community theory was especially important, although both frameworks were connected, especially in that they led me to ask how my own feelings of connectedness with members of the interpreting community made me feel more or less like a member of the community myself.

### ***Self-Efficacy***

Bandura's (1993) theory of self-efficacy serves as one of the frameworks of this study, primarily in terms of data analysis. A study by Wang, Tao, Bowers, Brown, and Zhang (2018) linked the impact of social support on the resilience of emerging nurses and their self-efficacy; the researchers noted that their self-efficacy also impacted the degree to which coworker support influenced the nurses in the study. Additionally, the support of friends and peers served to increase self-efficacy and thus increase resilience and success (Wang, et al., 2018). The basis of this study was Bandura's (1993) theory of self-efficacy: the fact that individuals' decisions and feelings impact their interactions, suggesting a high level of importance in individuals' belief in their ability to succeed. Importantly, this theory was selected after the collection of data was well underway, as it seemed to best reflect some of the themes appearing in preliminary data analysis at the time.

***Sense of Community***

Sense of community theories suggest that not only does belonging to a community impact the ways in which people interact, succeed and fail, work, and live, but so does the sense they have of the communities to which they do belong (Obst & White, 2005). Additionally, that sense impacts the behaviors of people who sense connections to communities they do not want to associate with, who do not sense a connection to communities they do want to associate with, and more. The interaction between sense of community, desired sense of community, and the community itself is highly relevant to this study.

Townley, Kloos, Green, and Franco (2011) conducted a literature review of Sense of Community theories in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in their ability to explain behavior. They concluded that a Sense of Community theory on its own is at odds with theories which value diversity, and thus must be considered more carefully in terms of studying social groupings which are not homogeneous. At the same time, they suggest that valuing only diversity belies the importance of sameness for human social interactions. They draw from Wiesenfeld (1996) in suggesting that there may be multiple levels of belonging - the macro and the micro - and that whereas one may value diversity on a macro scale, it is in the small microcosms that the importance of a sense of community is found. Obst and White (2005) also suggest that there is a strong connection between Sense of Community and social identification, and found that “the strength of Ingroup Ties is constantly the strongest predictor” of a psychological sense of community (Abstract). Furthermore, Townley et al. (2011) draw from Putnam (1996; 2000) in suggesting that the introduction of social capital - such as an exchange of resources - may

help introduce value in diversity without undermining the value of sameness and community. Putnam (2000) discusses the concept of *bridging* versus *bonding* and suggests that, while members of a single community may bond over their commonalities, members of different communities may form bridges to help span the gaps between their groupings. Townley et al.'s (2011) consideration of the various branches of the Sense of Community theory influence both the methodology and the data analysis of the current study.

***Organization: Sense of Self and Professional Identity***

In order to examine the role of self-esteem and professional identity as they relate to teaming intimacy and dynamics, this study will consider Bandura's (1993) suggestion that actual skill or ability is not the only factor in success, but also a person's *perception* of their own skill or ability. Preliminary data collection for this study also suggested a correlation between intimacy and self-efficacy. Additionally, Obst and White (2005) suggest that a person's ability to find in themselves some merit that allows them to relate to a given community may increase their ability to feel close to other members of that community. As I am studying my relationship with skilled professional practitioners, I am interested in studying how principles of sense of community theory, as studied by Obst and White, impact teaming dynamics. This is explored further in Bandura's exploration of feedback framing, and the impact of social evaluation on self-efficacy. With this in mind, the interventions will explore whether taking preemptive action to bolster a sense of self-efficacy or sense of community will impact teaming intimacy. To see how these theoretical frameworks may serve both as a lens and foundation for this study, consider the graphic organizer in Appendix B.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There has been a significant boom in ASL/English-specific literature in the past decade, and in interpreting and translation studies as a whole. Teaming relationships have been examined by several studies upon which this study drew (see below) and the importance of intimacy between teaming interpreters cannot be overstated. Still, the majority of related research is outside of the field of interpreting, predominately in studies of other practice professions where the importance of intimacy has been made clear.

### **Intimacy**

Research in other fields suggests that the job performance of workers improves when workers are able to “recognize the usefulness or value of their coworkers’ knowledge” (Kim & Yun, 2014, p. 581). Additionally, Hewlett (2013) examined the impact of different kinds of feedback provision in interpreted situations and found that “positive” affect whilst teaming leads to “a better interpretation, a good connection between professionals, and perhaps a more positive outlook toward colleagues” (p. 27). Studies of teaming professionals suggest that the development of trust - an important part of common conceptions of intimacy - may depend on individuals’ dispositions and their discernment of their teams’ characteristics (Robert, Dennis, & Hung, 2009). Mollenhorst, Völker, and Flap (2008) suggest that intimate relationships depend on perceived similarity with the other members of the relationship, enforced proximity, such as through work or school, and the time spent in settings that place individuals nearer each



other. In Timmerman's (1991) concept analysis of intimacy in nursing, she noted a common trait in definitions of intimacy: "a sense of closeness or connectedness between two objects or persons" (p. 21). As such, intimacy is a quality of relationships that can only be measured "by examining the perceptions" of those in the relationship (Timmerman, 1991, p. 22).

### ***Timmerman's (1991) Conditions of Intimacy***

Timmerman (1991) posed four "conditions" (p. 23) of an intimate relationship: trust, emotional closeness, open self-disclosure, and reciprocity. She described reciprocity as a mutual exchange, or the act of sharing in each other's experiences and acknowledging each other equally, by sharing or listening. Other studies of intimacy concur (Duck, 1991; Leakey & Cohen, 2000; Sinclair & Dowdy, 2005; and Williams, 2001). These features are also linked to identity formation, either as a requirement for intimate relationships (e.g., Erikson, 1963) or as a measure through which people may identify (e.g., Gilligan, 1979). The development of intimacy in friend relationships can have such a significant impact that relationships will often be maintained even when they are not satisfactory (Anthony, 2015). This suggests that intimacy is independent of individuals' feelings about each other, and bodes well for the development of intimacy between teaming interpreters, regardless of how well they get along outside of work.

Hoza (2010) further explores the collaborative nature of effective team interpreting, comparing it to a mountain climb, in which "all of the members are capable, but they also need to assist each other and work together at various points in the journey upward" (p. 144). Acknowledging that it is possible for a single interpreter (or climber) to succeed in completing their task, working in teams is more likely to bring about success,

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making it crucially important for people who have the opportunity to work with others to be able to do so effectively. Collaboration and interdependence, for Hoza, are the most important elements of effective teaming. Norland (2019) adds that “interdependence in Hoza’s model requires vulnerability and trust” (p. 17) and, in his action research project, Norland explored trust and teamwork as collaboration as well. He found that his teams were more likely to have more positive comments about his collegiality and about his respect for professional autonomy when he and his team had time to pre-conference, even when what they pre-conferenced about diverged from what actually occurred during the assignment. He noted that “talking beforehand helped to reassure [teams] that we were there for the same reasons and that my actions were not motivated out of self-interest” (p. 67), and especially that the intentionality he set during the opportunity to pre-conference with his team carried forward throughout the assignment, even when his actions during the job did not necessarily demonstrate those intentions explicitly by themselves. Hoza (2010) suggests that “interpreters themselves create a team and sustain the relationship” (p. 53), particularly in the way they use a pre-conference to promote effective interpreting. This meeting is important because it is the opportunity for interpreters who are working together for the first time to begin their working relationship, and the opportunity for any interpreters to discuss logistical and practical matters before beginning the job.

### ***The Role of Similarity***

Heller and Wood (1998) studied intimacy in marriage relationships and looked especially at similarity. They noted that similarity in relationships may not be a requirement for intimacy, but that it may deepen connections based on “sharing cultural

values” and “congruent psychological needs” (p. 274). Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap (2008) also identified similarity as an important part of intimacy in relationships. They explored this concept through a *choice-constraint approach*, suggesting that people choose their friendships and other intimate relationships both due to their own preference and choices and due to the constraints imposed by proximity, social standards, and institutional restrictions. Similarity plays an important role in both of these aspects. Although there was some evidence to suggest that people who were similar in some way, particularly demographically, were more likely to engage with each other, that could not account for all of the relationships developed between individuals in any social context because of the role of that social context itself.

For interpreters, the results of the study by Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap (2008) are important in a number of ways. First, the field of ASL/English interpreters in the United States is largely homogeneous. The majority of ASL/English interpreters in the United States identified themselves as female (between 76.2% and 93.5%) in studies conducted from 1984 to 1999 (compiled in McDermid, 2008). Additionally, those studies also found that between 80% to 98% of interpreters identified themselves as Caucasian (in McDermid, 2008). The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf reported the results of a 2017 membership demographic survey and found that, of 14, 284 memberships, 56% belonged to “Euro American/White” interpreters, and 63% belonged to “Female” interpreters (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., 2018), evidence of a shrinking but still consistent majority in the field, to which I belong. While this means that many interpreters are working with people who are similar to them, demographically, a lack of diversity limits the ways in which people can engage and grow; interpreters who do not

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identify as women or are not Caucasian are primarily working with interpreters who are less similar to them demographically. Secondly, whether or not teaming interpreters share demographic traits, they can benefit from the inherent similarity of having chosen the same career as their team. As such, they may be similarly constrained not only by the social norms of the context in which they are working, but also by institutional standards that may impact them on-site, regional conventions of interpreter behavior, agency or employer policies, RID's Code of Professional Conduct, or other factors. In these terms, the choice-constraint approach (Mollenhorst, Völurker, & Flap, 2008) is a helpful way to consider some of the dynamics that present themselves during teamed interpreting assignments. Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap (2008) further reported that "enforced interactions not only make the emergence of relationships within that context more likely, but also affect between whom a relationship will originate" (p. 942).

A study by Duke Corporate Education (2005) suggested that these relationships may further develop through repeated or prolonged opportunities to interact, as trust is so often built upon the longevity of a relationship. Regardless, trust can be promoted by perception of honesty, as behaviors like forthcomingness, reliability, willingness to celebrate, and active listening may impact these perceptions. When people feel safe to exchange their truth, then they are most likely to perceive the other person in the relationship as more honest. Intimacy is a related but distinct concept, wherein people not only feel safe to exchange their truth, but to discuss difficult topics. The authors of this article emphasize that this "is not about sharing your private life with stakeholders, but about sharing your personal thoughts and ideas regarding the challenge at hand" (Duke Corporate Education, 2005, p. 82), which is an important part of interactions between

teaming interpreters, despite the lack of access to either repeated or prolonged opportunities to interact.

While the lack of diversity in the field of interpreting is not the focus of this paper, it is crucially important to consider, and it relates to the topic of intimacy between teaming interpreters. Similarity plays an important role in the way that people interact and the relationships they develop with colleagues and a lack of field diversity may have an impact on the development of intimacy between interpreters of minority (relative to the field) groups. Additionally, acknowledging the role of similarity in teaming dynamics may help interpreters remember that similarity alone is not a sufficient basis for intimacy, and that much more can be done. For a more in depth exploration of the implications of this lack of diversity, consider works previously published through Western Oregon University, among others (Artis, 2019; Carpenter, 2017; Jones, 2017; Martinez, 2017; Olopade, 2017; Rivera, 2017; Nakahara, 2016; Artl, 2015; Shambourger, 2015; Oyedele, 2015; Ott, 2012).

### **Self-Efficacy**

Sinclair and Dowdy (2005) studied intimacy in personal relationships and found that patients with rheumatoid arthritis were better able to cope with their diagnoses and treatment when they reported higher intimacy in a relationship of their choosing. Sinclair and Dowdy suggested that these patients had the greatest sense of self-efficacy, which manifested as an increased ability to recognize and take advantage of resources that were already available. Those who “lack[ed] positive expectations regarding self-worth and the way others will respond to their needs” were less likely to engage in intimate relationships and less likely to report strong feelings of intimacy (p. 203). Decreased

feelings of intimacy tended to precede decreased self-efficacy, and decreased self-efficacy tended to precede decreased intimacy.

Bandura's<sup>2</sup> original theory of self-efficacy suggested that individuals' success was directly related to how much they believed they could succeed. Bandura's (1993) exploration of the impact of perceived self-efficacy on cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection processes is particularly important to this study. He suggested that higher self-efficacy leads individuals to set more advanced goals for themselves and to strive harder to reach them, often recovering from setbacks and failures more readily than individuals with lower self-efficacy. Much of human thought is about predicting possible futures and planning for them and success more often stems from positive predictions and a willingness to accept them as real possibilities. One study of an interpreter in her first year of professional work found a connection between that interpreter's perceptions of team interpreters' openness and her own self-efficacy (Williams, in press). Other studies of self-efficacy (Wang, Tao, Bowers, Brown & Zhang, 2018; Lubbers, Loughlin, & Zweig, 2005) reported supporting findings, suggesting that increased self-efficacy was an important factor in workers' resilience, persistence, and ability to manage conflict. In a study of the effects of counterfactual thinking on the self-efficacy of entrepreneurs, Arora, Haynie, and Laurence (2013) agreed that self-efficacy was "an important antecedent to entrepreneurial action" (p. 360).

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<sup>2</sup> Since Bandura originally proposed this theory, it has been used, amended, and considered through a wide variety of lenses. Bandura's 1993 work will be the primary source of information in this paper.

## *Sense of Community*

There is an important relationship between a person's internal perceptions about themselves and the world around them, and the external factors that play into this dynamic. In the context of self-assessment, which the authors suggest is critically important to the development of professional success, and feedback from colleagues, Mann, et al., (2011) identified three categories of tension: tensions within self, tensions between people, and tensions in the learning environment.

Learners believed that feedback from others was key to their successful development, but also that they were afraid of the feedback they would receive and how it might fit with their own perceptions of self (Mann, et al., 2011). This was identified as a *tension within self*. Part of this related to the importance of moving beyond an emotional response into a space where feedback could be taken and analyzed for value without harm to the subject of the feedback.

One of the primary struggles for learners was the need both to be capable of their own self-appraisal, and the need to relate to others for growth and personal purposes: "the need to be autonomous, yet to be part of a network or group of colleagues" (Mann, et al., 2011, p. 1123). As this tension related to feedback, the authors identified additional areas of tension, where learners wanted feedback but were afraid "to look incompetent" (p. 1123), or else worried about the quality of the feedback they were receiving. Additionally, learners said that they could not ask for or accept feedback from just anyone, but required a certain level of safety in their relationship with the giver of feedback. Elements of a relationship that would satisfy this level of safety included trust and respect, but relationships which learners perceived as having higher trust and respect

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were also where feedback was the least likely to be given, possibly because feedback givers did not want to disrupt the relationship.

Mann, et al., (2011) look to Bandura and his social cognitive theory (SCT) to understand why some of these tensions arose, suggesting that social learning - that is, learning by watching peers perform a learned activity - was critically important to skill development. They also drew from Bandura's theories of self-efficacy, describing it as "the perceptions that persons hold of their ability to execute a specific task or set of tasks" (p. 1125). They also pointed to other theorists who maintain that learning cannot occur in a vacuum, but only in context. As such, it is inherently a social endeavor: "A key tenet of situated learning is that learning occurs through the learner's participation in, and becoming an increasingly responsible part of, the community" (p. 1125). This is not only important for learners and new community members, as they may also contribute to the knowledge and growth of more experienced practitioners.



## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This research took place in freelance settings and data collection was limited to my own feelings, perceptions, and observations; as I was the only participant, no IRB approval was required. These jobs were contracted through three interpreting agencies and two local post-secondary institutions, as well as through several post-secondary and K-12 institutions that contract with the interpreting agencies. In the course of considering my own perceptions, I noted what I perceived of my teams' gender, age, and years of experience; no teams were asked to provide information about these characteristics explicitly, although some of my observations were based on what I knew to be fact. Because this research was focused on my own perceptions of intimacy, it was less important to collect objective facts about teams and more important to collect my own perceptions of that information.

Over the course of several months of teamed work assignments, from November 2019 through March 2020, my data collection sheet (see Appendix A) included Likert scales, which were used to rate my pre-job, during-job, and post-job perceptions of the areas of intimacy outlined in Timmerman's (1991) work - trust, openness to self-disclose, emotional closeness, and reciprocity - and an additional distinction between personal and professional trust. For sake of consistency and objectivity, Sinclair and Dowdy's (2005) 5-Item Emotional Intimacy Scale (EIS; see Appendix A) was kept in mind as underlying premises for Timmerman's areas of intimacy, but the EIS was not explicitly used as a scale in its own right for this project due to its focus on personal relationships rather than

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professional ones. Likert scales ranged from 1-5, with an additional option for 0 in the case of interpreters with whom I had no prior experience. These Likert scale ratings were based on my perceptions and personal feelings, not on my team. Therefore, I was rating my own personal and professional trust, my own feelings of openness in self-disclosure, my feelings of emotional closeness, and my perceptions of our shared reciprocity. Finally, after each teamed job, I conducted a brief free-write or journal exercise about whatever stuck in my mind about the teaming experience.

Data was analyzed by looking at the numerical values and patterns present in three main sets of data: my perceptions of teams' characteristics, my pre-, during-, and post-job ratings in each of the five areas of intimacy, and my coded journal entries. Totals and averages were considered as well, especially as a tool for analysing data when I worked with the same team multiple times; at times, I used individual intimacy ratings from separate jobs with teams and other times I used total average intimacy across each job with a team. I also examined whether there was any correlation to perceived characteristics of teams I worked with for those jobs. I coded the journal entries coded for frequency of various emotion-based words, based on the Junto Emotion Wheel (Chadha, n.d.) and Chin's (2019) application of this same wheel in the analysis of her own data. The Junto emotion Wheel features a number of words, categorized as love, anger, sadness, fear, joy, or surprise words, and I additionally coded for synonyms of words in each of these categories (e.g., "incompetent" coded for fear, as a synonym of the word "inadequate," on the wheel). Finally, Gebruers' (2020) use of egocentric sociograms, wherein she asked interpreters to plot their professional network on a set of concentric circles with themselves at the center and then explain the reasoning, was adapted to

consider similarity between myself and my teams, to be analyzed based on Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap's (2008), and Heller and Wood's (1998) conceptions of similarity in intimacy. These items were examined for correlation using IBM SPSS Statistics software, build 1.0.0.1406.

It is worth noting that this project spanned the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, all data collection ceased before the introduction of interventions could occur, and none of the data collection is influenced more than minorly by COVID-19, although the data analysis might be. While authors of action research papers would normally collect data, introduce an intervention, and collect data on the impacts of that intervention, my data does not include these last two steps, and was analyzed in terms of patterns recognized after the fact. Suggestions for further research, including those based on the research that I would have conducted had the pandemic not hit when it did, can be found in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Throughout this and the next section, I will refer to categories of intimacy by their names rather than by the meaning of the terms themselves. Thus, “post-job reciprocity” does not refer to reciprocity demonstrated after a job, but to my post-job perceptions of reciprocity in my relationship with a given interpreter. This is true across all five categories and all three times (pre-, during-, and post-job), but for the sake of readability, this will not be expanded each time. Additionally, I want to emphasize that this information and perceived team characteristics are just that: perceived. Information reported here is based on my own perceptions of my feelings or of observable information, but simplified here for ease of readability.

### **Results**

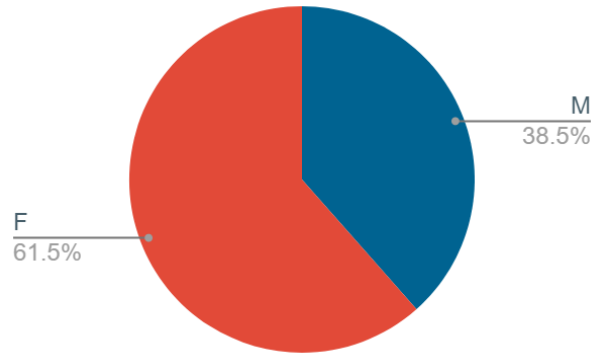
There did not appear to be any relationship between total average intimacy (the summary of pre, during, and post-job ratings in all five categories) and time, suggesting that external factors such as the introduction of data collection, the transition from fall to winter terms, the holiday break, and the season, did not influence my data collection. This may also suggest that simply being aware of these things and considering them after each job is not enough to promote intimacy between teaming interpreters, although increased intentionality or mindfulness may have an impact. For a study of the impacts of mindfulness practices on interpreters’ work, see Chambers’ (in press) study.

### *Perception of Team Characteristics*

In total, I gathered data on 26 teamed jobs, with 16 different teams, although two jobs occurred without me collecting journal entry data and there was one journal entry which was related to an interaction with a team outside of a job. I worked with 9 of these teams only once during that time, 4 twice, and 3 three times. I worked with 11 different interpreters I perceived to be women across 16 jobs, and 5 interpreters I perceived to be men across 10 jobs (see Figure 1 for percentages of having worked with either men or women). I documented my perceptions of team gender characteristics as having perceived them to be men, perceived them to be women, or perceived them to be non-binary or otherwise identify with a gender other than male or female. However, during the period of time I collected data, I perceived all of my teams as either men or women. When looking at intimacy by team, rather than by job, my highest and lowest average intimacy were both with interpreters I perceived to be women. This was also true when considering intimacy by job, as the job where I rated my feelings of intimacy highest and lowest were both when I was teaming with interpreters I perceived to be women. Of the teams I perceived to be men that I worked with, my highest and lowest intimacy ratings were both with teams I worked with on more than one occasion, and there was a narrower range of intimacy when looking at intimacy with these interpreters by team rather than by job. On jobs with teams I perceived to be women, the team I felt the most intimacy with was one I worked with on multiple occasions, but the team I felt the least close to was one I only worked with once. However, intimacy with teams of all genders spanned nearly the same range by job, and similar by team (see Table 1).

**Figure 1**

*Percentage of Jobs by Perceived Gender of Team*



**Table 1**

*Ranges of Intimacy by Job and by Team, by Perceived Gender*

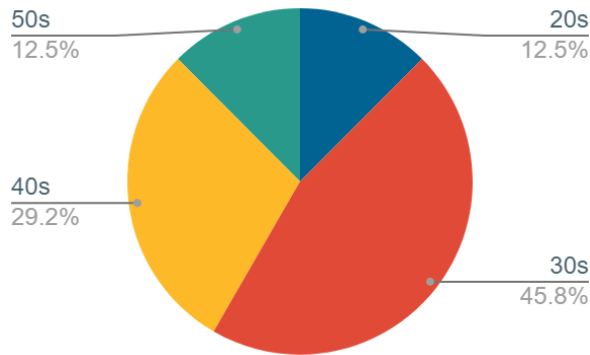
Perceived Gender	Range by Job		Range by Team	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
Women	1.97	4.67	1.97	4.61
Men	2.03	4.57	2.2	4.32

Three of the 26 jobs were with teams who appeared to me to be aged in their 20s, 7 in their 30s, 4 in their 40s, and 2 in their 50s (see Figure 2). My perceptions of these interpreters’ years of experience, or what I knew to be true of their years of experience, correlated almost exactly to their age, although there were fewer divides: there were a total of 3 interpreters with less than 5 years of experience, 8 with 10 or more years of experience, and 5 with 20 or more (see Figure 3). There were no interpreters I perceived or knew to have more than 5 but fewer than 10 years of experience that I worked with. It may also be true that I am more likely to perceive interpreters’ years of experience as

dependent on their age. Intimacy ranged similar ratings for each group by years of experience<sup>3</sup> by job and by team (see Table 2).

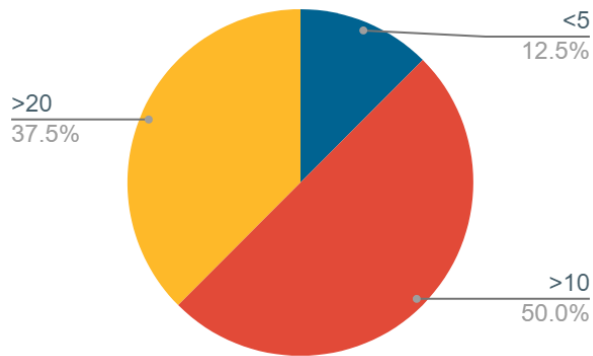
**Figure 2**

*Percentage of Jobs by Perceived Age of Team*



**Figure 3**

*Percentage of Jobs by Perceived Years of Experience of Team*



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<sup>3</sup> Ranges by age are not provided here to avoid potentially identifiable information.

**Table 2**

*Ranges of Intimacy by Job and by Team, by Perceived Years of Experience*

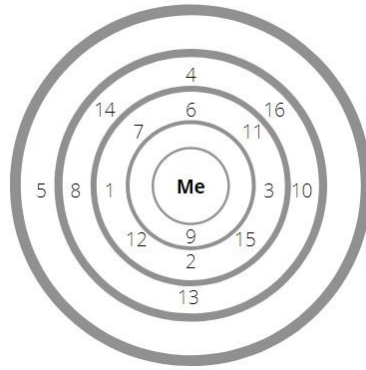
Perceived Years of Experience	Range by Job		Range by Team	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
5>	2.03	4.4	2.2	4.4
10<	1.97	4.67	1.97	4.61
20<	2.67	4.57	3	4.32

Teams were classified as either “same” or “not the same” as myself, based on our similarity in at least two of the three categories considered: age, gender, and years of experience. At the time of data collection, I was a 23-year-old woman, with 1.5 years of professional interpreting experience. In consideration of my social circle and personal life, I considered interpreters I perceived as in both their 20s and 30s as similar to me in age. Adapting Gebruers’ (2020) sociogram idea, I used concentric circles to diagram similarity with my teams. With myself in the middle, the first concentric circle out was for teams who were like me in all three categories, the next circle for those that were alike in any two, and so on, until the last circle is teams who were not like me in any of the three categories. I only perceived 1 interpreter as like me in all three categories, 8 as like me in two of three categories, 6 as like me in just one category, and 1 was not like me in any category (see Figure 4). Figure 5 shows that interpreters with whom I had 2 areas of similarity, rather than just 1, had a slightly higher intimacy range, but that both were comparable.



**Figure 4**

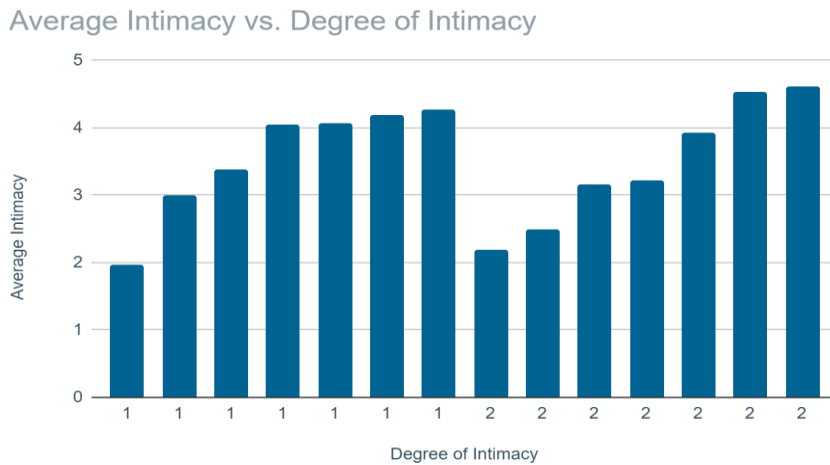
*A Sociogram Demonstrating the Perceived Sameness Between Myself and the Interpreters I Teamed With, from Three Similarities to None*



*Note.* Numbers were used to group perceptions and remove identifiable information. This information is based on perceived characteristics.

**Figure 5**

*Average Intimacy, Sorted Lowest to Highest, for 1 and 2 Areas of Similarity*



*Note.* Each bar represents one interpreter. There was only one interpreter with whom I perceived 0 similar characteristics and only one with whom I perceived 3 similar characteristics, so they are not included. “Degree of intimacy” refers to how many similar characteristics I perceived.

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Although Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap (2008) and Heller and Wood (1998) both suggest that similarity may play an important role in intimacy, my research does not suggest that there is a strong relationship between perceived similarity and intimacy in teaming relationships. In fact, perceived gender had no statistically significant relationship to any of the five areas I was examining, pre-, during-, or post-job ( $p > .05$  at all three measurements). However, there was a significant relationship between perceived age and intimacy when I perceived my team to be aged in either their twenties or thirties. There was a negative relationship between my perception that interpreters were in their twenties and professional trust pre-job ( $r = -.646$ ,  $p = .000$ ), during the job ( $r = -.520$ ,  $p = .006$ ), and post-job ( $r = -.575$ ,  $p = .002$ ), and a positive relationship between my perception that interpreters were in their thirties and post-job professional trust ( $r = .514$ ,  $p = .007$ ). There was no significant relationship between professional trust and my perception that interpreters were in either their forties or fifties.

I perceived all of the interpreters in their thirties as having had at least 10 years of experience, and all of the interpreters in their twenties as having 5 or less (often less than 1), which may also play more of a role than age does. This trend also appeared with reciprocity, wherein there was a negative relationship between my perception of interpreters as being in their twenties and my perception of reciprocity during-job ( $r = -.574$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and post-job ( $r = -.493$ ,  $p = .010$ ), and a positive relationship between my perception of interpreters being in their thirties and reciprocity during-job ( $r = .565$ ,  $p = .003$ ) and post-job ( $r = .510$ ,  $p = .008$ ). Finally, this pattern appeared in average intimacy across each of these five areas as well. There was a negative relationship between my perception of interpreters as being in their twenties and average intimacy during-job ( $r = -$

.535,  $p=.005$ ), post-job ( $r=-.466$ ,  $p=.016$ ), and the average of the averages across all three measurement times ( $r=-.479$ ,  $p=.013$ ). There was a positive relationship between my perception that interpreters were in their thirties and my perceptions of our average intimacy during-job ( $r=.476$ ,  $p=.014$ ), post-job ( $r=.510$ ,  $p=.008$ ), and the average of the averages ( $r=.495$ ,  $p=.010$ ). The sample size of interpreters I worked with and perceived to be in their twenties was also smaller than that of those in their thirties, which likely impacted the statistics.

This tendency toward reduced intimacy with interpreters either due to their age or due to their years of experience may have multiple explanations, although I can only speculate without further data. First, it is possible that I may have been projecting my own feelings of inadequacy or self-doubt onto teams with similar experience in years. This aligns with the self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993) theories as well. Second, studies into horizontal violence (Ott, 2012) have found that emerging professionals who have experienced horizontal violence from other professionals may internalize and continue the cycle of violence towards other people. Third, my perceptions of interpreters as being less experienced than other professionals with whom I worked, or as being younger, may have influenced my own behavior, leading to increased social distance, stoicism, and clinical professionalism in an attempt to seem more experienced myself. Journal entries after working with some of the teams in this perceived range of characteristics align with this possibility: in one, I specifically compared an interpreter's decision-making to my own when I had had the same amount of experience as they had; in another, I noted that I was behaving uncharacteristically patronizing, offering unsolicited and unnecessary advice, and otherwise demeaning my colleague. The last of these may also be reflective

### *Making the Dream Work*

of the potentially cyclical nature of horizontal violence. There are, of course, other possibilities as well.

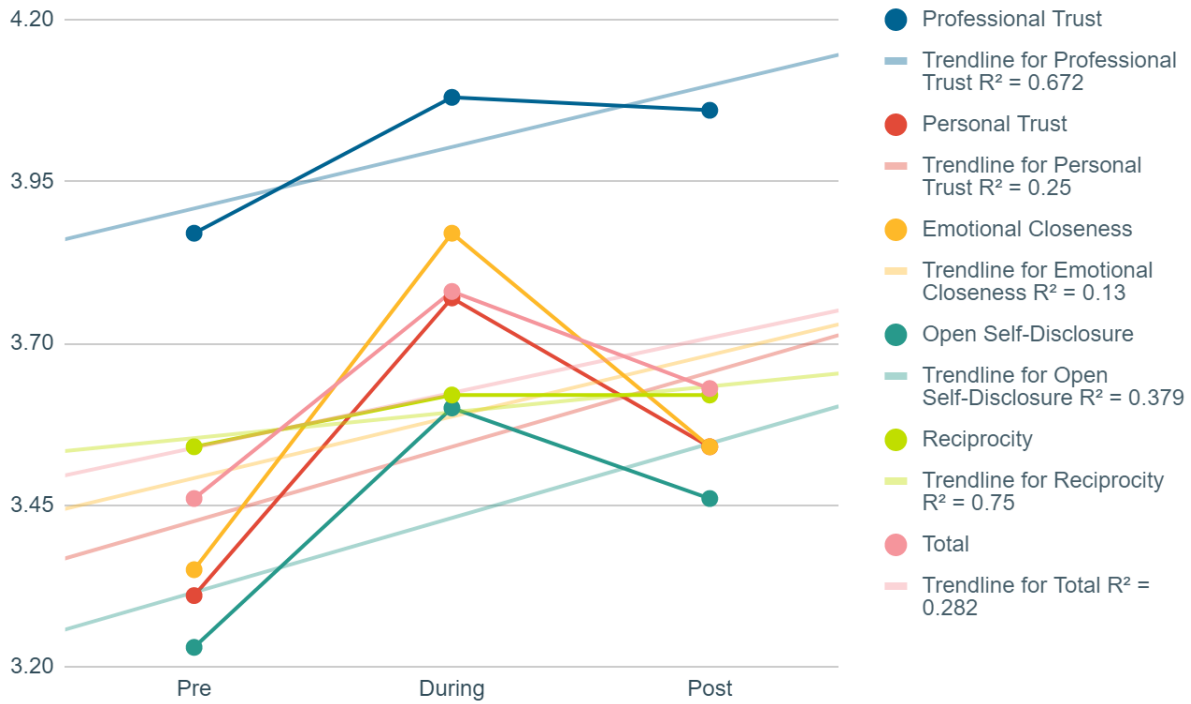
Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap (2008) also suggest that similarity as it occurs in the workplace may play a significant enough role in intimacy building by itself due to the likelihood of similar educational backgrounds, interests, and the segregation that may occur naturally by gender or age. They further point out that “[i]nteractions at work are often institutionally organized, according to division of labor” (p. 942), which is generally true of teaming interpreters, who are additionally each other’s primary point of contact and social engagement during the time they are working together. This may be evidenced by the fact that intimacy seemed to be less related to my perceptions of my teams’ demographic information and more connected to the way that we interacted during the job together.

#### ***Pre-Job, During-Job, and Post-Job Intimacy***

My average pre-job ratings in all five categories were within 0.25 of the respective post-job score (see Figure 6). My emotional closeness with teams during jobs showed the highest jump to a much higher feeling of emotional closeness (see Table 3) during a job than before, but my post-job scores were still within 0.25 of my pre-job scores. Reciprocity also showed a jump to a higher score during-job than pre- or post-job, but was the flattest, with less than a 0.05 difference from pre- to during-job.

**Figure 6**

*Average Intimacy Pre-, During-, and Post-Job in All Five Areas of Intimacy*



*Note.* For clarity, the series, in order of top to bottom by left most (pre-job) node, are professional trust, reciprocity, total, emotional closeness, personal trust, and open self-disclosure.

**Table 3**

*Percentage of Change in Average Intimacy in Each of the Five Areas of Intimacy and the Total Average Intimacy*

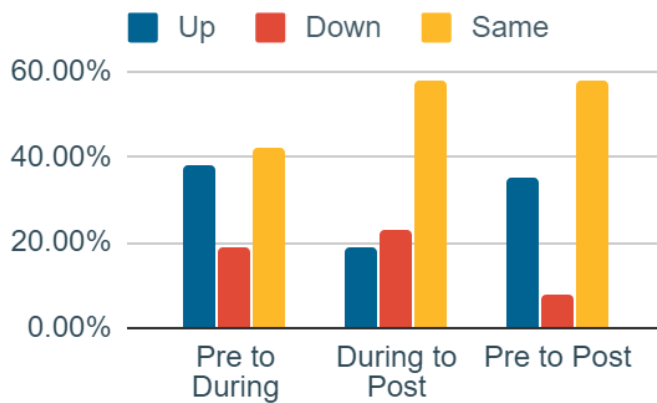
Area	Pre-Job to During-Job	During-Job to Post-Job	Pre-Job to Post-Job
Reciprocity	2.26%	0.00%	2.26%
Professional Trust	5.43%	-0.49%	4.91%
Total	9.25%	-3.97%	4.91%
Emotional Closeness	15.52%	-8.53%	5.67%
Personal Trust	13.90%	-6.10%	6.95%
Open Self-Disclosure	11.56%	-3.89%	7.12%

Reciprocity also had the most downward dives, where I felt less reciprocity between my team and myself during the job than I did before the job, although only by one more job than for professional trust or open self-disclosure, and only by two more jobs than either personal trust or emotional closeness. The jobs where my feelings were lower during the job than before, however, were not always the same team. That is to say, there were jobs where my pre-job reciprocity was higher than my during-job reciprocity, but all other areas either went up or remained the same. Figures 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 represent how often, by percentage, each of the five areas of intimacy went either up or down, or remained the same, from pre-job to during-job, during-job to post-job, and pre-job to post-job across every job studied for this paper. None of the five categories featured a tendency to be lower during-job than pre-job. In fact, the most common pattern was for ratings to be consistent across all three measurements, or else for ratings to peak during-job.

My professional trust with teams was most likely to remain the same pre-job to during-job, during-job to post-job, and pre-job to during-job. It was nearly as likely to go up pre-job to during-job, and second most likely to go up pre-job to post-job. However, it was more likely to go down than up during-job to post-job. This suggests that my professional trust tended to remain the same throughout the teamed interaction, or else peak during the assignment. Additionally, the professional trust achieved during the job tended to be long-lasting, shaping my perceptions of professional trust after the job as well (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

*Direction of Intimacy Scores of Professional Trust by Percentage of Jobs Each Direction*



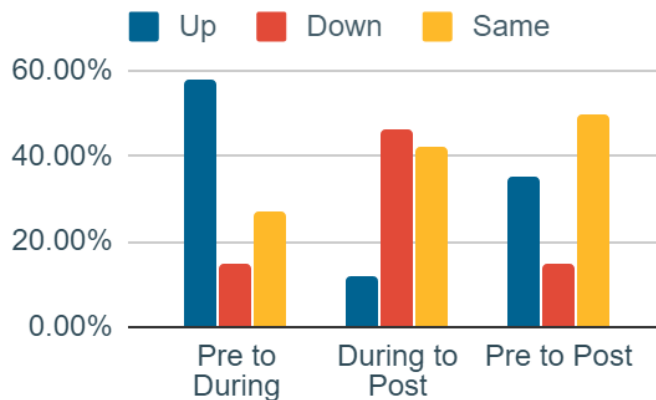
*Note.* The y-axis, labeled in percentages, is the percentage of jobs to which the x-axis labels applied.

My personal trust was vastly more likely to go up from pre-job to during-job and then down (or secondly to remain the same) from during-job to post-job. This resulted in post-job scores that tended to be the same (or secondarily to go up) from pre-job to post-

job. The peak of my personal trust with teams tended to be during-job, and this most often returned to pre-job rates after the job was done rather than being maintained (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8**

*Direction of Intimacy Scores of Personal Trust by Percentage of Jobs Each Direction*



*Note.* The y-axis, labeled in percentages, is the percentage of jobs to which the x-axis labels applied.

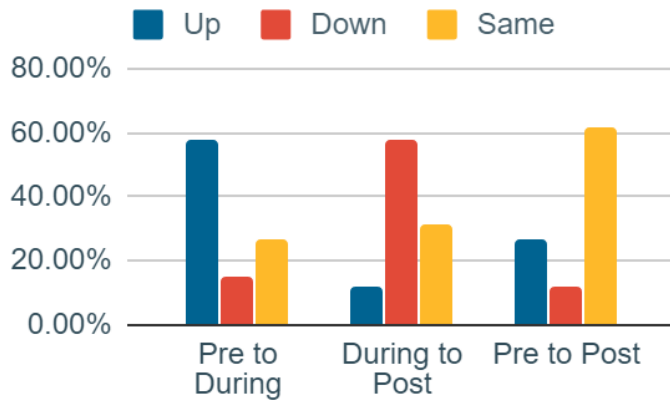
My perceptions of emotional closeness with my teams most often went up from my pre-job ratings, peaked during-job, and returned to pre-job levels post-job. It was rare that my post-job ratings were lower than my pre-job ratings. My peak emotional closeness with teams occurred during-job, but these increased levels seemed not to be maintained after the jobs were done. Of the five categories of intimacy, emotional closeness ratings that remained the same from pre-job to post-job were the only ones that exceeded 60% frequency (see Figure 9).



**Figure 9**

*Direction of Intimacy Scores of Emotional Closeness by Percentage of Jobs Each*

*Direction*



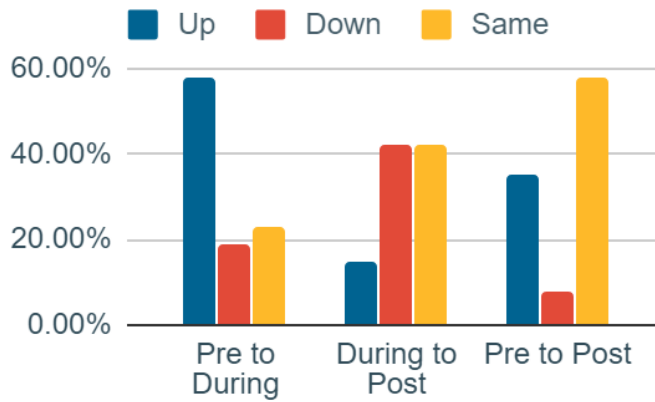
*Note.* The y-axis, labeled in percentages, is the percentage of jobs to which the x-axis labels applied.

My feelings of openness in self-disclosure tended by far to be higher during-job than pre-job. Ratings then tended to either remain at during-job levels (higher, lower, or the same as pre-job levels) or else go down after the job, each in the same frequency. This resulted in post-job ratings that primarily tended to be the same as pre-job ratings, or else be higher than pre-job ratings (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10**

*Direction of Intimacy Scores of Open Self-Disclosure by Percentage of Jobs Each*

*Direction*

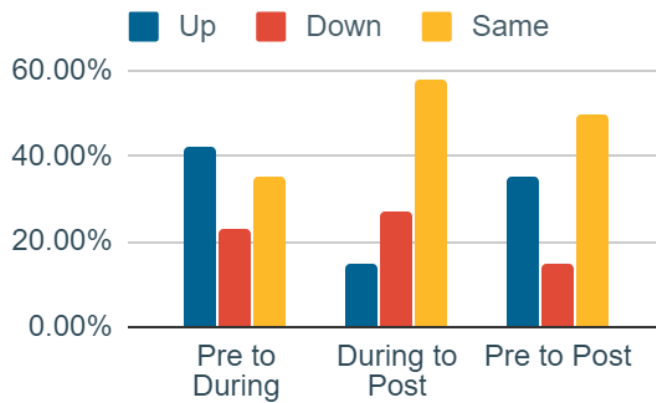


*Note.* The y-axis, labeled in percentages, is the percentage of jobs to which the x-axis labels applied.

My perceptions of reciprocity tended to be higher during-job than pre-job somewhat more often than they remained the same. My feelings during-job tended by far to remain the same post-job, or else to go down. The result was post-job scores that tended to be the same as pre-job scores somewhat more often than they were higher (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11**

*Direction of Intimacy Scores of Reciprocity by Percentage of Jobs Each Direction*



*Note.* The y-axis, labeled in percentages, is the percentage of jobs to which the x-axis labels applied.

### ***Journal Entries***

After coding my journal entries based on words on the Junto Emotion Wheel (Chadha, n.d.), both for words that were explicitly on the wheel and for words and phrases that were synonyms of or related to words on the wheel, I found 29 Love words/phrases, 9 Fear, 14 Anger, 9 Sadness, 26 Surprise, and 33 Joy (see Figure 12). Words and phrases were coded in context for my own feelings, and would not include noting that my team looked sad, for example, unless I also mentioned feeling sad about it, and some phrases were also coded. I additionally coded for words and phrases that spoke to bonding or connecting with my team in some way, and found 101 instances of such items.

When comparing perceived team characteristics and the average number of words from each category used in journal entries following jobs with teams from those categories, I found that most categories were about the same across all characteristics.

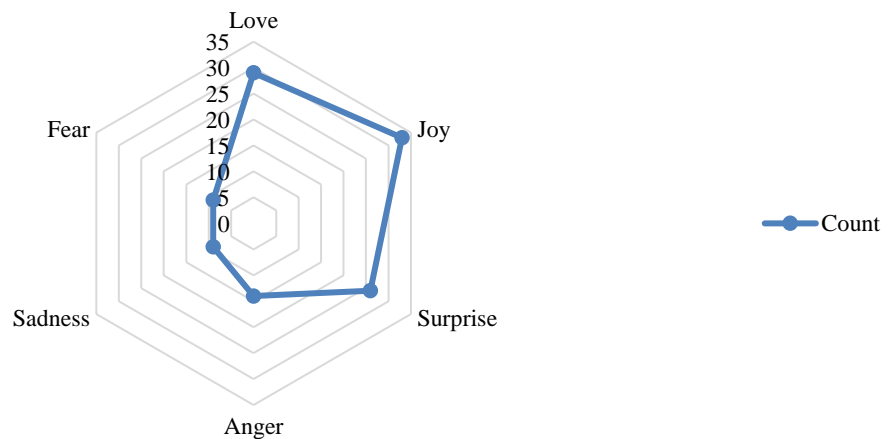
## *Making the Dream Work*

However, there was a significantly higher average number of Love words/phrases in journal entries after jobs teamed with interpreters I perceived to be in their 40s, and a higher average number of Anger words with interpreters I perceived to have less than 10 but more than 5 years of experience, and with interpreters I perceived to be in their 30s.

The presence of so many Surprise words in my journal entries may suggest that, although I am making instinctive judgments based on intuition of some sort, they are not always accurate. That being said, the additional presence of so many more positive words and the relative scarcity of negative ones may additionally suggest that my expectations are set low, perhaps out of caution. This is further supported by the fact that my intimacy with teams tended to be higher during-job than pre-job.

### **Figure 12**

*Count of Coded Words/Phrases from Journal Entries*



### ***Sense of Community***

Throughout this study, my sense of community was revealed through my actions and relationships. Additionally, I found new questions emerging as I worked with a coach (an experienced interpreter assigned to work with me through the MAIS program) and we

discussed this concept at length. One question that emerged was how I was defining the community I was seeking to identify with. As the notion of a community of interpreters was broad and vague, connection was impossible. Since I still wanted to connect, though, I often found myself feeling inadequate and unable to participate in the community in any meaningful way. However, I was absolutely connecting with the community made up of each of the interpreters with whom I was working. My sense of community could be measured almost directly by how connected I was to the people I was working with, much in the way Obst and White (2005) suggest.

While Timmerman (1991) used only “trust” in categorizing intimacy, I split this into two categories: personal trust and professional trust. Pre-job professional trust was very closely related to during-job professional trust ( $r=.736, p=.000$ ) and post-job professional trust ( $r=.876, p=.000$ ), as well as all three measurements of personal trust: pre-job ( $r=.517, p=.007$ ), during-job ( $r=.608, p=.001$ ), and especially post-job ( $r=.649, p=.000$ ). Pre-job personal trust, however, did not have a statistically significant relationship with either during-job professional trust or post-job professional trust ( $p>.05$  in both cases), only pre-job professional trust. This was in agreement with my initial line of questioning related to the differences in intimacy between teams with whom I had a strong personal relationship with and how those differences impacted our working intimacy. This also buoyed my hopes that there are ways for teaming interpreters to develop intimacy through work, regardless of their personal trust.

Reciprocity demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with every other category of intimacy across time measurements without exception. Most notably, there was a significant relationship between post-job open self-disclosure and pre-job

### *Making the Dream Work*

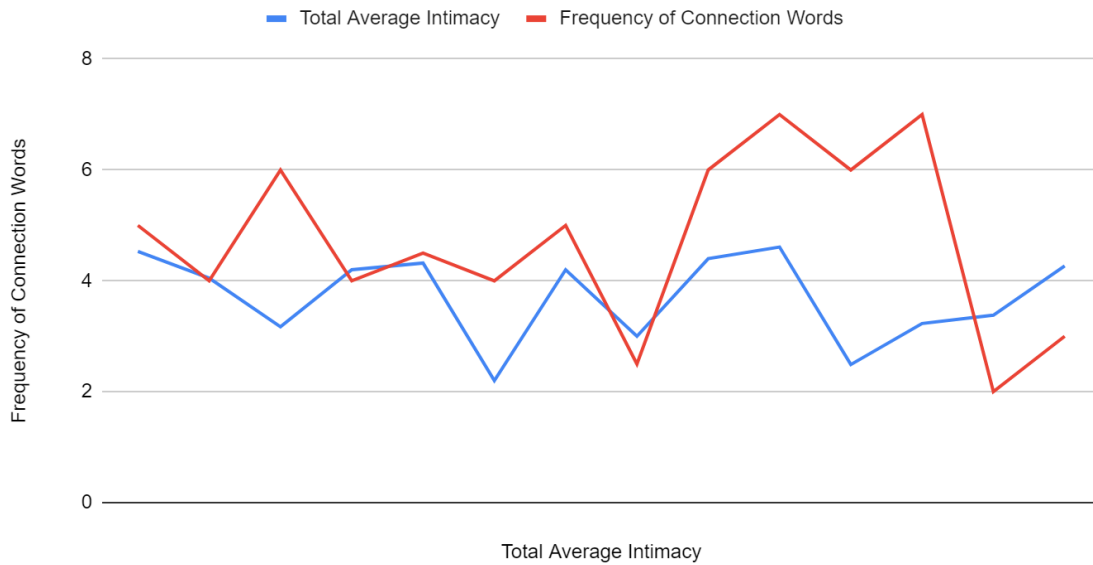
reciprocity ( $r=.774, p=.000$ ), during-job reciprocity ( $r=.836, p=.000$ ), and post-job reciprocity ( $r=.886, p=.000$ ). Additionally, post-job reciprocity and post-job personal trust were also related ( $r=.829, p=.000$ ). It is worth referring back to the fact that Timmerman (1991) described reciprocity as a mutual exchange, or the act of sharing in each other's experiences and acknowledging each other equally, by sharing or listening. Post-job reciprocity had the second strongest relationship to total average intimacy ( $r=.923, p=.000$ ), second to post-job open self-disclosure ( $r=.965, p=.000$ ). Of the five given categories for intimacy, reciprocity most closely aligns with Putnam's (2000) concepts of bridging and bonding, wherein an exchange and interaction takes place between people for the sake of improving the relationship.

This may suggest that the way that teaming interpreters interact, or the tone they set for the shared environment in which they may interact, plays a significant role in intimacy as a whole. While there was no statistical significance to the relationship between average intimacy and frequency of connection-based words in my journal entries, it appeared there was potential for a relationship to appear had there been more data to consider (see Figure 13). The count of connection-based words was an approach that arose in analysis of the journal entries and was thus not as thorough as it might have been had I been intending to collect this data from the beginning. As a result, the data may have demonstrated a different relationship had I been intentionally looking to take note of these interactions.

**Figure 13**

*Frequency of Connection Words Appearing in Journal Entries, by Total Average*

*Intimacy with that Team*



There was a significant relationship between my pre-job professional trust and the frequency of joy words that appeared in my journal entries ( $r=.626, p=.039$ ), as well as a strong negative relationship between my professional trust post-job and the frequency of sadness words in my journal entries ( $r=-.889, p=.044$ ). Interestingly, my pre-job perceptions of my own openness to self-disclosure were related to the frequency of joy words ( $r=.668, p=.025$ ), but my during-job open self-disclosure was strongly and negatively related to the frequency of surprise words ( $r=-.638, p=0.047$ ). These were the only relationships of statistical significance between any of the five areas of intimacy and my journal entries. I suspect this may be due in part to my own personality, and a desire and love of connecting with people with whom I feel comfortable being open if I choose

too, and to the feeling of safety required for such disclosure; surprises may have put me on my guard.

### ***Self-Efficacy***

Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993) data was not collected for this study, except in a brief post-job self-analysis of my overall feelings of success with the job, rated on a 1-5 Likert scale. This measurement of success was left intentionally ambiguous to encourage the rating to come from my feelings in the moment rather than anything more concrete, as my perceptions and feelings were an important part of this study. Success sometimes meant that the interpretation was effective and consumers seemed to accomplish the task they had set out to accomplish, and other times it meant that my team and I worked together to make the best of a situation which otherwise did not go as any of the participants might have hoped. There was a slight relationship between my feelings of success after a job and all five of the areas of intimacy I was studying except pre-job personal trust, during-job emotional closeness, or during-job open self-disclosure ( $p > .05$  in all three of these categories). There does appear to be a relationship between my self-efficacy and my sense of community, whether because I feel closer to the community of interpreters I work with when I feel better about myself, or vice versa, or perhaps for another reason. Sinclair and Dowdy's (2005) study of patients with rheumatoid arthritis found that intimacy and self-efficacy (related to healing) were closely linked, a trend which occurs here as well. The self-perpetuating cycle of increased self-efficacy stemming from and encouraging greater intimacy may also serve to explain this phenomenon here.



## Discussion

In all, my research suggests that teaming intimacy is not grounded in any one thing, although there are some possible predictors of it. There do seem to be specific characteristics that, when I perceive them in my team, make me more inclined to trust them, but it is not clear whether it is the perception of those characteristics or my relationships with people I perceived to have those characteristics that may play a role. Importantly, my feelings of intimacy pre-job are generally close to my feelings of intimacy post-job. This could be suggestive of a number of things but I posit two primary possibilities: (1) that my intuition, judgments, and assumptions about teams generally remain consistent and are fairly reliable pre-job; (2) that whatever occurs during-job has little impact on how intimate I feel with that team.

The first of these possibilities suggests that the ideas proposed by Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap (2008) and their choice-constraint approach may be true in terms of intimacy development. While the characteristics I perceived in Moyet Eames did not seem to play a role in intimacy, there was an amount of similarity already given by the fact that we were there functioning in the same role, that we were users of the same language, that we worked with the same employer or agency, and that we likely knew many of the same people. That similarity inherent to many relationships with colleagues is part of Mollenhorst, Völurker, and Flap's views on intimacy and similarity, and they suggest that judgments that two people share similar traits, beliefs, or values may impact intimacy; in this case, my judgments led to consistent, stable intimacy values. Norland's (2019) experience may also provide some insight, as he noted that his teams generally

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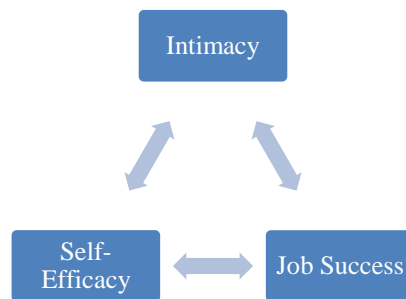
reported more positive feelings about him after the job if they had had a chance to pre-conference before the job, even when the job itself did not go as planned.

The second possibility aligns with the study by Duke Corporate Education (2005), where it was suggested that intimacy depends on long-term relationship development. The way that people engage over time and in repeated interactions plays more of a role in intimacy than does each individual interaction on its own. Other research, which suggests that opportunities to give and receive feedback or other information can be crucial in successful professional communities and for a practitioner's sense of community, agrees (Mann, et al., 2011).

Across all five areas, I was most likely to perceive greater intimacy with my team during the job than either before or after. Taken together with the fact that I generally felt the same post-job as pre-job, this suggests that there is an amount of increase to intimacy during the teaming process. While it may not last after the job, that feeling of intimacy likely contributes to improved teaming success. There is a cyclic, self-perpetuating nature to this process (see Figure 14): Hoza (2010) points out that interdependence and collaboration is crucial for successful team interpreting; Sinclair and Dowdy (2005) found that increased self-efficacy led to greater success and ability to accept help, and that a greater frequency of success and asking for help in turn led to increased self-efficacy; and Hewlett (2013) suggests that more positive teaming affect leads to "a better interpretation, a good connection between professionals, and perhaps a more positive outlook toward colleagues" (p. 27).

## Figure 14

### *The Self-Perpetuation of Intimacy, Self-Efficacy, and Job Success*



My own data found that reciprocity, a mutual exchange, or the act of sharing in each other's experiences and acknowledging each other equally, by sharing or listening (Timmerman, 1991), was closely related to all other areas of intimacy. The ability to share in a mutual exchange and experience with my team was the most crucial aspect of teaming intimacy. However, it was my emotional closeness that changed the most often, peaking during the majority of jobs and returning to pre-job levels post-job. This suggests that emotional closeness may be a feature of teaming and intimacy, but perhaps that it is reciprocity and the exchange that can be present in teaming that best promotes that intimacy in the first place.

### ***Limitations of the Study***

One important limitation of this study lies in the nature of action research itself. As data collection was based in my own perceptions, so too are the results. Demographic results from other studies of interpreters suggest that most ASL/English interpreters in the United States are of a similar demographic makeup, and that that makeup is similar to myself, at least in the three areas considered in this study (see Chapter Two for details). While similarity to my teams may play only a minor role to me in terms of intimacy, it

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may play a much more significant role for interpreters who are members of targeted communities, or who are minorities in the field of interpreting.

#### ***Suggestions for Future Research***

Future studies could include an exploration of the perceptions of intimacy of both members of an interpreting team, as well as looking at any tangible impacts on the quality of the interpreting work that occurs in tandem with high or low teaming intimacy.

Additionally, future research might benefit from more focused analyses of any of the concepts addressed here, as opposed to the inventory approach taken for this study.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This study found no significant relationship between similarity, as studied in perceptions of gender, age, and years of experience, and intimacy, but did find that each of the five areas of intimacy studied here - professional trust, personal trust, open self-disclosure, emotional closeness, and reciprocity - were linked. Additionally, my intimacy with teaming interpreters tended to be higher during our work together than before or after, and post-job intimacy tended to be nearly the same as pre-job intimacy. The relationships between pre-, during-, and post-job personal trust and pre-job professional trust were significant, but pre-job personal trust was not related to during- or post-job professional trust, suggesting again that personal and professional relationships may be related but distinct. Additionally, intuition appeared to play an important role in intimacy, and internal biases, perpetuations of horizontal violence, and more may be an important part of the reason why. Perhaps most importantly was the relationship discovered between reciprocity and intimacy in each of the other four areas, suggesting that the way that interpreters interact may indeed have an influence on the perceptions of intimacy by individual members of the team.

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## APPENDIX A: SCALES

### Data Collection Sheet

Job				Trust (prof)			Trust (pers)			Emotional Closeness			Open Self-Disclosure			Reciprocity			Avg. Intimacy			Total		
Date	Time	Hrs	Team	Feels	Pre	During	Post	Pre	During	Post	Pre	During	Post	Pre	During	Post	Pre	During	Post	Pre	During		Post	
				4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.8	4	3.93
				2	4	3	4	3	4	4	2	4	3	2	4	3	3	4	4	2.8	3.8	3.6	3.4	

### Sinclair and Dowdy's (2005) Emotional Intimacy Scale (EIS) (p. 196)

This scale served as a guiding premise for the scale used in this study, but was not used directly.

1. This person completely accepts me as I am.
2. I can openly share my deepest thoughts and feelings with this person.
3. This person would willingly help me in any way.
4. My thoughts and feelings are understood and affirmed by this person.

APPENDIX B: GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

