

**An Exploration of Minnesota Novice Interpreters'
Decision to Start Their Careers in Elementary School Settings
(References and Appendices)**

By
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A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

**Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies
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Committee Member:

Abstract

In the state of Minnesota, the number of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students in mainstream educational settings has slowly increased every year. With more students being educated in a setting using indirect methods of communication (ie interpreters), the need for more qualified sign language interpreters has grown. In the state of Minnesota, educational sign language interpreter qualifications allow many young, recently graduated interpreters a place to begin their careers and improve their skills as professionals. Through this qualitative research, not only were participants asked why they started their careers in education, but what factors inhibit interpreters, not only novice interpreters, to be successful in their work. Most participants felt drawn to the educational setting because of a steady paycheck and consistent schedule, as well as a passion for supporting DHH students' education. The barriers to providing this crucial service effectively were the ill-defined roles and responsibilities of interpreters, how The System and DHH programs affect their work, and what improvements can be made for incoming interpreters. By interpreters learning what they need and how to advocate for resources, they begin to set a standard for current and future educational interpreters consequently providing better service to DHH students.

Charts and Figures

Figure 1: NAIE

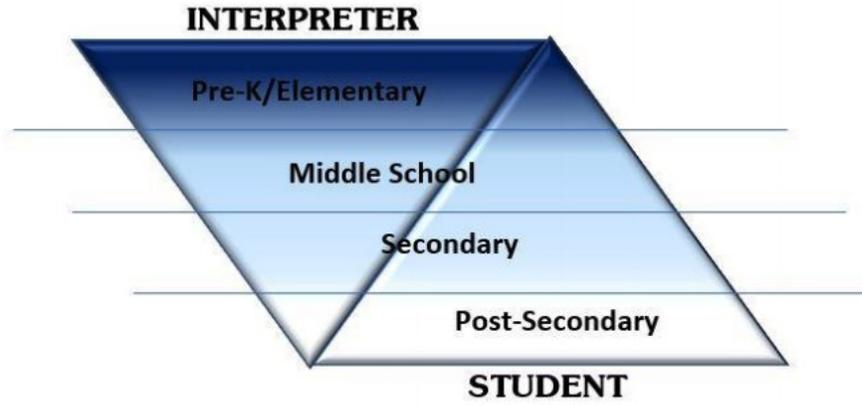


Figure 2

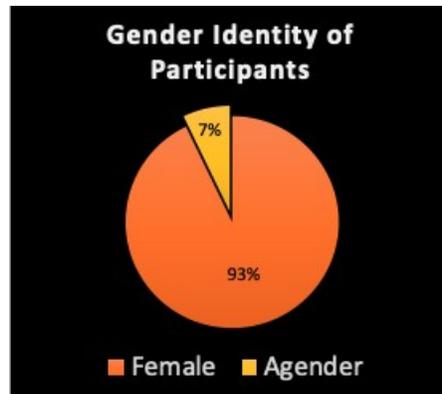


Figure 3

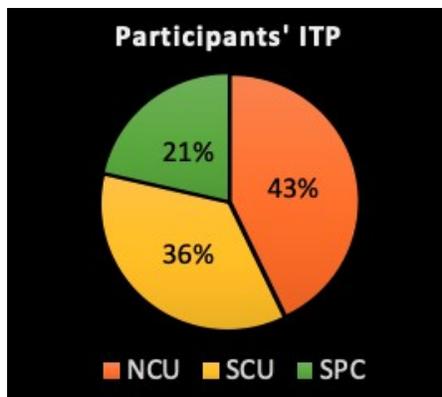


Figure 4

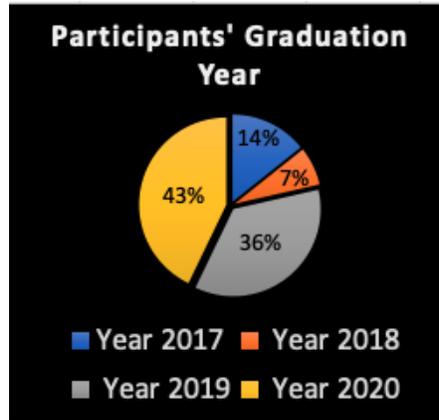


Figure 5

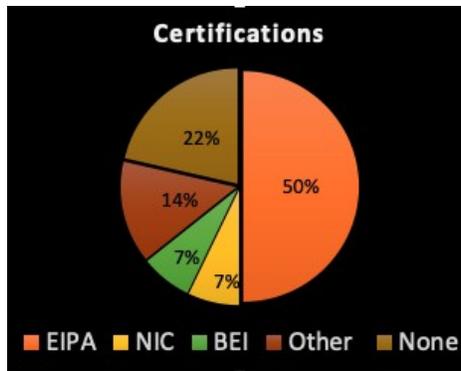


Figure 6

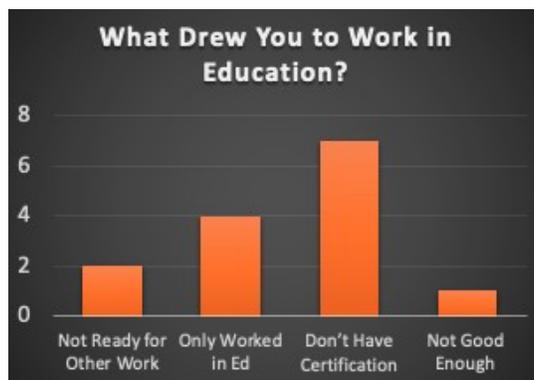
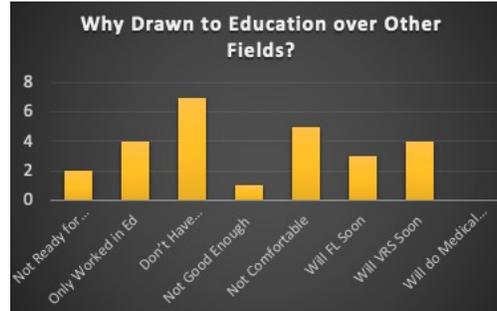


Figure 7

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Appendix A: Survey Consent Message and Survey Questions

Consent Message

Hello! Thank you for your interest in taking this survey to benefit the interpreting community and deaf students in elementary settings in Minnesota! This survey will begin by asking you specific questions to determine your eligibility to be in this study, then will ask basic demographic information, and then will go on to ask about your experiences as a K-5 sign language interpreter. At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would like to participate in an interview with me, the researcher. The first three questions are mandatory to answer, but the rest of the questions, including your participation in the interview, are completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate in the interview, you will be asked to provide your name and preferred method of communication. This response will NOT be linked with your previous survey answers; all your answers will be anonymous. On the next page, please read the consent form. Thank you so much for your participation!

You are invited to participate in this research project because you are an American Sign Language interpreter that is currently working in a K-5 elementary school setting or has worked in a K-5 elementary school setting in Minnesota. This project is being conducted by Jamie Schumacher, student in the Masters of Arts in Interpreting Studies and Communication Equity program at St. Catherine University. The purpose of this survey is to explore the role, skills, and effectiveness of interpreters in an elementary school setting. The survey includes items about demographic information and your experiences in this setting. It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Your responses to this survey will be anonymous and results will be presented in a way that preserves the confidentiality of all involved. Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the survey technology used, Qualtrics. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties.

Your participation is voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationships with the researcher or St. Catherine University. If you decided to stop at any time you may do so. You may also skip any item that you do not want to answer. If you have any questions about this project, please contact Jamie Schumacher at jrschumacher@stkate.edu, or the Institutional Reviewer Board Chair: John Schmitt, PT, PhD, [651.690.7739](tel:651.690.7739); jsschmitt@stkate.edu. By responding to items on this survey you are giving us your consent to allow us to use your responses for research and educational purposes.

Survey Questions

1. Are you 20 years or older?
Yes, No
2. Are you currently or have you worked in a K-5 elementary school setting as an American Sign Language interpreter in the state of Minnesota?
Yes, No
3. Did you graduate from an Interpreter Training Program **BEFORE** 2017?
Yes, No
4. What gender do you identify with?
5. Which ITP (Interpreter Training Program) did you graduate from?
6. What year did you graduate from your ITP?
7. What type of certification do you have?
NIC (National Certification Exam; both written and performance passed)
BEI (Board of Evaluation of Interpreters Exam); if yes, which test did you most recently pass?
EIPA (Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment); if yes, what score did you receive?
N/A
Other
8. Which grade do you primarily work with?
9. Please indicate the priority of these roles in your work as an interpreter (1= most important, 6= least important)
Interpreter/Transliterater (anything defined as “interpreter”)
Tutor (aiding the student’s educational progress)
Assistant (aiding the teacher and other educational staff)
Consultant (advise educational staff and student’s family members about student’s needs)
Advocate (supporting not only language needs but other accessibility needs)
Other/Additional Comments
10. I have had education specific to working as a K-5 educational interpreter (select all that apply)
No specialized training
One or more workshops
One or more college courses
Specialization Certificate
11. I believe licensure and standard screening processes are crucial for educational interpreters
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
12. I am familiar with the National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE) Professional Guidelines document.
I’ve never seen it
I’ve read it

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- I refer to it sometimes
I use it every day
13. I feel there are enough professional development opportunities for me to improve my skills as an educational interpreter
- Strongly disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
14. An EIPA (Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment) score of 3.5 or above is easily attainable for me.
- Strongly disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
15. I see myself continuing to serve as an educational interpreter for more than five years.
- Strongly disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
16. Why do you believe you are a good fit for interpreting in elementary school settings? (check all that apply)
- I've experienced elementary school as a student
I graduated from an ITP (Interpreter Training Program)
I passed a certification exam (please indicate which certification exam)
I have the skills and knowledge to work effectively
Please provide any additional comments below
17. What drew you to work in the elementary school setting?
- Steady paycheck
Consistent work
Passion for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students' education
Work I am able to do now to improve my skills
Please provide any additional comments below
18. Why did you feel drawn to the elementary school settings over other interpreting fields (freelance, Video Relay Service, medical interpreting, etc)?
- I don't feel ready for other work yet
I haven't worked in other fields outside of elementary education yet
I don't have the certification to allow me to work in those fields
I am not good enough for that type of work
I am not comfortable in any of those settings, yet
I am planning on working as a freelance interpreter soon
I am planning on working as a Video Relay Service interpreter soon
I am planning on working as a medical interpreter soon
Please provide any additional comments below
19. Would you be willing to participate in an interview to further discuss your work as an elementary school interpreter? The interview would last no more than one hour and

would be conducted over Zoom, an internet-based video platform. This interview will also be video recorded via Zoom and QuickTime.

Sign me up!

No, thank you!

Appendix B: Interview Script and Questions

Consent Forms:

- 1) any questions?
- 2) informed consent: you have the right to not answer any of these questions and your participation is voluntary- thank you for being willing ☺
- 3) videotape consent- for me to record the meeting; the recording will not be shared with anyone and will be used for my eyes only for data review- so I'm not looking down and taking notes the entire time

Point of Research:

I am not a K-12 interpreter. I started my career in FL and have continued ever since because of personal preferences- not good with kids – feel like I don't have the disposition or personality to feel comfortable to succeed – why do you feel you are a good fit.

Interview: Informal- I have some questions ready, but I want to follow your lead. Did anything come up during the survey that you wanted to discuss?

- 1) Demographic Information: Do you have any ASL interpreting certifications?
- 2) How long have you been interpreting for?
- 3) Can you tell me about the application process?
- 4) -What type of screening/assessment process did you have to do?
- 5) Did your ITP prepare you sufficiently for elementary ed?
- 6) Do you feel like your roles and responsibilities are well defined?
- 7) -Tell me about a time that you had opportunities to prepare and collaborate with the teacher.
- 8) Tell me about a challenge that you face when interpreting in the educational environment. How did you address this challenge? What would you like to see change in the future?
- 9) What types of improvements would you recommend for the educational interpreting field?
- 10) Do you support the interpreter licensure bill? HF 2634/SF 2702 (to require interpreters pass a licensure exam to be allowed to work in Minnesota)

Appendix C: Videotape Consent Form & Informed Consent Form

ST CATHERINE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for a Research Study

Study Title: "An Exploration of Minnesota Novice Interpreters' Decision to Start their Careers in Elementary School Settings"

You are invited to participate in a research study. This study is called "An Exploration of Minnesota Novice Interpreters' Decision to Start their Careers in Elementary School Settings". The study is being done by Jamie Schumacher, a Master's candidate at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, MN. The faculty advisor for this study is Dr. Erica Alley, Associate Professor in the ASL and Interpreting Department at St. Catherine University. Below, you will find answers to the most commonly asked questions about participating in a research study. Please read this entire document and ask questions you have before you agree to be in the study.

Why are the researchers doing this study?

The purpose of this study is to analyze why the potential decision of American Sign Language interpreters in Minnesota is decide to begin their careers in elementary (kindergarten- fifth grade) settings. This study is important because it will help ASL interpreters in elementary settings clarify their role, support and improve the education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in the community, and advise Interpreter Training Programs on the potential need for further training for educational interpreters. Approximately 100 people are expected to participate in this research.

Why have I been asked to be in this study?

You have been asked to partake in this study because you filled out the survey, you selected that you'd be interested in being interviewed, and fit the study's criteria:

- You have graduated from an Interpreting Training Program (ITP) from 2017-2020
- You do not have to possess any certification
- You are certified (BEI, NIC, EIPA)
- You currently or have worked in the elementary school (kindergarten through fifth grade) level as an interpreter
- You are a resident of Minnesota

If I decide to participate, what will I be asked to do?

If you meet the criteria and agree to be in this study, you will participate in a video recorded interview with Jamie Schumacher over Zoom. This interview will also be recorded through the Zoom software and I will be personally recording the interview using QuickTime as backup. Both of these recordings will be kept in secured and separate places.

In total, this study will take approximately 1 hour.

What if I decide I don't want to be in this study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide you do not want to participate in this study, please say so at any time, and do not sign this form. Your decision of whether or not to participate will have no negative or positive impact on your relationship with St. Catherine University, nor with any of the students or faculty involved in the research.

What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study?

Although this study does not have any foreseeable risks, this study may cause discomfort or an emotional response from participants when answering the interview questions. Participants are not required to answer questions that they are not comfortable answering. They can end the interview at any time.

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen if I am in this study?

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There are no direct benefits to participants; however, the data collected will be used the betterment of the ASL educational interpreting field. There are potential benefits to the Minnesota interpreting community, Minnesota Interpreter Training Programs (ITP), and deaf and hard of hearing students. This will benefit the interpreting community because this research may help define the ambiguous roles of elementary school interpreters, may show gaps in professional development opportunities, and identify who would be best suited for this type of work. The study will benefit ITPs because this study may show that novice interpreters do not receive sufficient education to be qualified for elementary school work. This will benefit the deaf and hard of hearing communities because this may give them the resources to demand for qualified interpreters and to explicitly show who is interpreting in these settings and why.

Will I receive any compensation for participating in this study?

You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

What will you do with the information you get from me and how will you protect my privacy?

The information that you provide in this study will be kept confidentially. The interview will be recorded via Zoom. This recording will be kept in a locked folder on Google Drive. The backup recording via QuickTime will be stored on an external hard drive and locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's home office. Only the researcher and research advisor will have access to this data, and any personal identifiable information will be changed for confidentiality. The researcher will destroy all original reports and identifying information that can be linked to you by December 30, 2021.

Any information that you provide will be kept confidential, which means that you will not be identified or identifiable in the any written reports or publications. If it becomes useful to disclose any of your information, the researcher will seek your permission and tell you the persons or agencies to whom the information will be furnished, the nature of the information to be furnished, and the purpose of the disclosure; you will have the right to grant or deny permission for this to happen. If you do not grant permission, the information will remain confidential and will not be released.

Could my information be used for future research?

No, your data will not be used or distributed for future research even if de-identified without gaining further consent from you.

Are there possible changes to the study once it gets started?

If during the course of this research study the researcher team learns about new findings that might influence your willingness to continue participating in the study, they will inform you of these findings

How can I get more information?

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If you have any questions, you can ask them before you sign this form. You can also feel free to contact me, Jamie Schumacher, at jrschumacher@stkate.edu. If you have any additional questions later and would like to talk to the faculty advisor, please contact Dr. Erica Alley at elalley@stkate.edu. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739 or jsschmitt@stkate.edu.

Statement of Consent:

I consent to participate in the study and agree to be videotaped/audiotaped.

My signature indicates that I have read this information, my questions have been answered and I am at least 18 years of age.

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Researcher

Date

Videotape Release Form

I _____ agree to be videotaped as part of my participation in the study “An Exploration of MN Novice Interpreters’ Decision to Become Elementary School Interpreters” conducted by Jamie Schumacher. I understand that the videotape will be labeled using a chosen pseudonym and kept secure on an external hard-drive stored in the researcher’s home and in a password protected Google Drive folder. I understand that the video will be kept by the researcher and used for research purposes. The video will not be shown to others without my written permission.

Please read the following and check those for which you give consent. Please note: you cannot participate in the experiment if you are unwilling to be video-recorded.

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→ YES, I give permission for my videotaped data to be used in scholarly presentations and publications. I will approve any videotaped data that will be used (i.e. the researcher will contact me and show me the clip(s) to be used).

→ NO, I DO NOT give permission for my videotaped data to be used in scholarly presentations and publications.

→ YES, I give permission to be videotaped and for those recordings to be stored by the researcher and for the researcher to use the data recorded.

→ NO, I DO NOT give my permission to be video-recorded

Participant's Signature

Date

Primary Investigator's Signature

Date

Appendix D: Recruitment and Follow-Up Email

Hi [Organization],

My name is Jamie Schumacher and I am a student at Saint Catherine University in their Masters of Arts in Interpreting Studies and Communication Equity program. I am currently working on a research project in the hopes of learning more about elementary school ASL-English interpreters in Minnesota.

I am looking for ASL interpreters who have graduated between the years 2017-2020 and are working or have worked in K-5 settings. If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to take a short online survey (http://stkate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8ojl1F8Rkq8rPCd) consisting of 20 questions. All of these questions do not require you to "free write", but I encourage you to do so.

This survey should take **10-20** minutes and is completely anonymous. Once the survey is complete, there will be a question asking if you are comfortable participating in an interview. This interview will be video recorded for data review purposes and will be destroyed on December 31, 2021.

This study is completely voluntary and confidential. If you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at jrschumacher@stkate.edu.

ASL Video: <https://youtu.be/PIFos-7W7jc>

Hello Minnesota community members!

My name is Jamie Schumacher and I am a student at St. Catherine University in their Masters program. Last month I sent out an email explaining my research that I am conducting- studying why interpreters decide to work in educational settings and to ask for your participation in my research. I wanted to extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who took the time to read my email, watch my ASL video, and participated in my survey.

I wanted to send a final reminder that I will be closing the survey (link: http://stkate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8oj11F8Rkq8rPCd) next Monday, March 1. If you haven't filled out the survey but still want to, now is a great time!

Again, thank you so much for your time and your work. If you want more information, I have attached the initial email I sent in January or feel free to contact me!

ASL Video: <https://youtu.be/GF8qr33wT0I>