

**Key elements of effective mentoring in short-term practicum placements for
American Sign Language/English interpreting students**

Denise Smith
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Supervisor: Dr. Cornelia Schneider

ABSTRACT

Framed within the field of the psychology of coaching and mentoring, this study looks closely at five professional interpreter and four student experiences with practicum placements for student interpreters preparing to graduate from a diploma program at the Nova Scotia Community College in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Results suggest that principles of the psychology of coaching and mentoring apply even in short-term placements, especially when students have had previous placement experience; that students who exhibit greater self-efficacy and an internal locus of control perceive placement experiences more positively, even when faced with challenge and conflict; that interpreters come to the mentoring experience aware of the potential benefits to themselves and to the field and that they would benefit from more opportunities to develop their ability to guide and mentor students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the students and interpreters who gave up their time to be interviewed and who so openly shared thoughts and observations about their experiences in this profession. Without you this research would not have been possible. To my supervisor, Dr. Cornelia Schneider: thank you for your calming patience, guidance and final pushes, without which I would not be writing these words. Thank you to Dr. Terrah Keener for her support, especially her vetting and editing. I am grateful to my Academic Chair, Doug Barnes, and Organizational Learning at NSCC for supporting faculty learning. To all the many librarians and staff at Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Community College, Waterfront campus, and Halifax Central Library: thank you for all your help and the numerous book renewals.

Over these months of bringing this thesis to completion, many friends and family have inquired, listened and nodded knowingly, or pretend-knowingly, and I have appreciated all of it, every single bit. Some lessons you cannot learn too often; the value of an encouraging word here and there really does make a difference. And thanks to my biggest cheerleader: my very patient husband, Merle, a fantastic editor and also an excellent judge of when not to get involved.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION.....	6
Background and Research Question.....	6
Terminology.....	8
American Sign Language and Interpreting.....	9
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
Introduction.....	11
Length of Mentorships and Frequency of Interactions.....	12
Setting Goals and Expectations.....	16
Psychosocial Functions of Mentoring.....	18
Level of Influence and Matching Mentors with Mentees.....	24
Summary.....	28
Gaps in the Literature.....	31
Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY.....	33
Introduction.....	33
Qualitative Approach.....	33
Interviews.....	34
Sampling and Selection of Participants.....	34
Data Collection.....	35
Coding the Data.....	36
Ethical Considerations.....	37
Limitations.....	39
Chapter 4 RESULTS.....	41
Introduction.....	41
Open Communication and Accessibility.....	41
Goals and Challenges.....	44
Mutual Respect and Trust.....	48
Exchange of Knowledge.....	51
Passion and Inspiration.....	54
Role Modeling.....	57
Caring Personal Relationship.....	59
Independence and Collaboration.....	62
Mentee Qualities and Self-Efficacy.....	63
Recommendations for Sponsoring Educational Program.....	67

Chapter 5 DISCUSSION and LIMITATIONS.....	71
Chapter 6 FUTURE RESEARCH and CONCLUSIONS.....	79
REFERENCES.....	82
APPENDICES.....	88
Appendix A INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	88
Appendix B LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT.....	91

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Research Question

ASL/English interpretation is a young profession. In North America, interpreters first began to organize as a profession in the mid 1960s (Ball, 2013). Today, some 50 years later, there has been considerable growth. The field of interpreting and the practice of educating ASL/English, or signed language interpreters, has blossomed to the point where, in 2014 there were reported to be over one hundred education programs in the US and five in Canada (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2014; Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada, 2014). In both countries programs range from two-year, diploma to four-year, bachelor's degrees. It is possible to study interpreting at the Masters or PhD levels at Gallaudet University as well (Gallaudet University Department of Interpretation, 2014). In Atlantic Canada, there is one such program, a diploma program, at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), where I have been teaching since it was established in 1993. Starting out as a two-year diploma program, the American Sign Language/English Interpretation program (AEIP) added a third year in 2007 in the form of a pre-requisite, Deaf Studies program, where American Sign Language (ASL) skill and knowledge of Deaf culture is advanced.

Over the course of all this growth, research into interpreting and into Deaf culture and ASL instruction has consistently helped to improve curricula and program delivery in the classroom. Still, interpreting skills are not mastered in a classroom and the interpreting profession remains dependent on practicum placements and the participation of practicing professionals to help educate student interpreters and get them ready to graduate. In the case of the program at NSCC, second-year students have three

placements; in fall, winter and spring semesters. As in other fields, these practical experiences are invaluable for students' education.

The Nova Scotia Community College's AEIP graduated its first cohort in 1995. Twenty years later, finding effective practicum placement opportunities for students still proves challenging (NSCC AEI program faculty, personal communication, January 2015). Information sharing and discussions of practicum placement with other program faculty in both the U.S. and Canada, reveals similar challenges. There are several influencing factors. First, interpreting work is already taxing and interpreters are often, understandably, hesitant to accept the extra responsibilities that come with mentoring a student. Secondly, most programs provide preparation and guidance but little or no formal training to the would-be mentor. Unless she or he has pursued mentor training independent of what the program provides, the professional interpreter is figuring out how to mentor while on the job. Thirdly, in our own case at NSCC, the community of Deaf people and therefore interpreters, is relatively small so that finding enough supervising interpreters for placements is a challenge. Finally, although there is potential for a rewarding, two-way learning experience, these rewards are not guaranteed, but neither are they advertised or used for promoting greater involvement.

All this has led to several questions about improving our own practicum programs: Could we provide mentor training for practicing professionals? Could the training be mandatory? Would such training lead to greater returns on the professional's commitment and to better mentorship experiences for all involved? Additionally, would identifying and "marketing" the rewards of mentoring lead to more professionals coming forward to mentor students, a crucial need? How can we better prepare students to make

the most of their placements? With these questions in mind, I set out to find what the research had to teach me about effective and not-so-effective mentorships, especially where the opportunity is short term. The research question I would try to answer was: Which elements of an ASL/English interpreting mentorship do student mentees and their interpreter mentors perceive to be most important for an effective short-term practicum placement?

Terminology

The literature on mentoring uses a number of synonymous labels, especially for the less-experienced member of the mentorship dyad: *mentee*, *protégé*, *student*, *intern*, *novice*, *apprentice*, all of these and more can be found. However, there is some indication the field of ASL/English interpretation commonly uses or identifies most strongly with *mentee* (National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, 2014) and that is what I will use, as well as *student* and *student interpreter*.

Mentor is most widely accepted as the term for the more experienced half of the mentorship dyad, although other terms may be used as well. *Preceptor* is used in some of the nursing literature (Hayes, 1998) or *cooperating teacher* in the teacher-education field (Killian, 2011; Russell & Russell, 2011). As it appears to be most common, *mentor* is what I will use, as well as *supervising interpreter*, unless the literature being referenced uses different nomenclature.

Whatever terms are used, defining *mentoring* can be challenging. Eller et al., (2013) point out that social science literature alone contains over 50 definitions of mentoring. Crisp & Cruz in, *Mentoring college students: A critical review of the*

literature between 1990 and 2007 (2009), looked at 17 years' worth of mentoring literature regarding college students and likewise, found an acceptable definition of *mentoring* hard to come by.

Efforts to neatly define mentoring aside, for purposes of my work as an interpreter educator, I will use mentoring to mean short or long term mentor-mentee relationships of more-experienced practitioners with novice or student interpreters, where that relationship provides opportunity to address both career and psychosocial functions of interpreting service provision (Kram, 1983; Eby et al., 2010; Eller et al., 2013). These two functions of mentoring will be discussed in greater detail below.

American Sign Language and Interpreting

In 1960, when William Stokoe first published his monograph, *Sign Language Structure: An Outline of the Visual Communication System of the American Deaf*, it marked the beginning of an effort to have academia recognize American Sign Language (ASL) as a bona fide language (Stokoe, 1993). This gradually saw the need for formalized ASL instruction grow and evolve. Today, some 50 years later, courses in ASL are taught according to second, or foreign-language learning principles all over North America, and beyond, just like courses in French, Arabic, German and other spoken languages (National Association of the Deaf, 2016; Wilcox and Wilcox, 1991). Stokoe's work also marked the beginning, in North America, of the professionalization of ASL/English interpreting and interpreter education.

The research presented here is based on the assumption that in any interpreted event, cross-cultural elements arise and present extra communication challenges

(Angelelli, 2001) and that often, when discussing ASL/English interpretation, in addition to language and cultural differences, there exists a power relationship that favours the non-deaf party. Navigating this aspect of interpreting work can be challenging and requires a sensitivity to and an awareness of the subtleties of human psychology, oppression and communication. The interpreter must bridge a cultural and sometimes psychosocial gap in a way that is fair and equitable to both parties. As the field continues to graduate younger students, many with little or no adult-life experience before entering their program, the safety that optimally comes with a supportive and skilled mentor is key for helping to build the necessary self-efficacy and interpersonal skills (Hayes, 1998). Aside from language and interpreting skill and knowledge of both Deaf and non-Deaf cultures, interpreters need excellent communication and interpersonal skills to navigate the various populations they serve. These softer skills are best honed on the job and with the support of a more experienced professional.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview and four areas of significance suggested by the literature, that affect mentorship outcomes; Length of Mentorships and Frequency of Interactions, Setting Goals and Expectations, Psychosocial Functions of Mentoring and, Matching Mentors with Mentees. This is followed by a Summary and Gaps in the Literature.

There are various ways of deconstructing what takes place during a mentorship and various perspectives from which to analyze mentoring. Some of the authors have looked at perceptions and experiences of mentees, for instance, Eby et al., 2013; Turban & Dougherty, 1994. Some focused on mentors' perceptions and experiences, including Allen & Poteet, 1999 and Ghosh & Reio, 2013, and many have sought to measure and analyze the experience of both parties in some way, including Allen et al., 2006; Eller et al., 2013; Grant, 2008; Jones, 2013, Gordon, 2008. Still other researchers have considered the role and experiences of the people who arrange and/or supervise the mentorship, for example university faculty in teacher education programs setting up student-teacher placements (He & Levin, 2008 and Levin et al., 2013). The literature also provides a look at mentoring across a variety of fields, including business, medicine (especially nurse education), teacher education, and academia. Studies reviewed here have relied on mostly qualitative methods to explore factors that influence mentorship effectiveness such as: formal versus informal mentoring programs, voluntary versus mandatory nature of mentorships, length of mentorship, functions of the mentoring relationship, goals and expectations, character traits of participants, the process of

matching mentors with mentees, and the level of support of the sponsoring organization or university faculty. Additionally, providing training to the mentor and the particular skill set of the mentee has been shown to influence results. All of these appear in the research and have been shown to affect or have the potential to affect the outcome of a mentorship.

What follows is a review of the mentoring literature and how I see it applying to the field of ASL/English interpretation and interpreter education, as well as questions that would lead to further exploration, add to the mentoring literature and contribute to the overall success of interpreter-student practicums in our program. The discussion and review of the literature is divided into four broad sections, as explained above. These categories represent significant learning for me over the last months and address concepts and ideas that I have gradually come to see as relevant to my work as an interpreter educator, especially when it comes to coordinating student placements.

Length of Mentorships and Frequency of Interactions

The length of mentorships and the frequency of interaction can be an important influencing factor on mentorship outcomes (Allen et al., 2006; Eby et al., 2013; Eller et al., 2013; Hayes 1998). Naturally, personalities and the way a mentor and mentee relate to one another will greatly affect the outcomes of a mentorship. No matter how perfect a “match” the two might be, time to interact is important for developing any kind of helpful relationship. In 2006, Allen et al published *Mentorship Behaviors and Mentorship Quality Associated with Formal Mentoring Programs: Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice* in which they discuss the dyadic structure of the mentorship.

Referencing Kram's 1985 study, they explain, "dyadic structure refers to aspects of the relationship that increase the likelihood of meaningful and frequent interactions, a recognized feature of high-quality informal relationships" (p. 569). Their study found that proximity facilitates interaction for mentors and mentees and is "associated with stronger psychological ties" (p. 569).

Hayes' case study, *Mentoring and Self-Efficacy for Advanced Nursing Practice: A Philosophical Approach for Nurse Practitioner Preceptors* (1998), looked at the value of the nurse practitioner mentor-mentee relationships and found that, "Nurse practitioner preceptor/student relationships typically are short-term, graduate-faculty assigned, intense one-on-one relationships between two strangers, which might not be adequate for the development of self-efficacy for advanced practice" (p. 54). Hayes framed her case study within eastern Taoist philosophical principles positing that they are consistent with a nursing model approach to health care in that both value the whole person.

The Tao approach to mentoring, with its emphasis on empathy, compassion, nurturing, mutual respect, and learning, is a philosophical approach that could be helpful to preceptors who are committed to meeting the socialization needs of advanced practice nurses. (p. 57).

Still, Hayes observed that the state of mentorships challenged the nurse practitioner preceptor to devote adequate time to mentoring. Instead, she posited that if the time frame was longer and the relationship voluntary, a more meaningful relationship could develop that might produce more rewarding results. Citing Hupcey's 1988 study, Hayes suggested, "With an extended investment in students, the outcomes attributed to

mentoring could occur, especially adequate socialization into advanced role practice and the development of self-efficacy for practice” (p. 54).

In Hayes’ case study, the results of a longer, voluntary mentorship proved her hypothesis – both the preceptor and novice reported having experienced a deeply rewarding mentor-mentee relationship, including a feeling of pride for the mentor and development of self-efficacy for the mentee. The author points to the limitations of the study, however, citing the exceptional attitude both parties brought to their relationship, including the fact that the two knew each other in previous professional roles.

Eby et al (2013) in: *An Interdisciplinary Meta-Analysis of the Potential Antecedents, Correlates, and Consequences of Protégé Perceptions of Mentoring*, also address mentorship length. Their meta-analysis of more than 150 mentoring research articles looked at three distinct areas of mentoring: Youth mentoring, Academic mentoring, and Workplace mentoring, explaining that: “These areas of scholarship have developed relatively independently, yet share the common belief that through sustained interactions, marked by trust, empathy, and authentic concern, mentoring can have positive, significant, and enduring effects on protégés.” (T. D. Allen & Eby, 2007; Ellis, 1992; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008, in Eby, p. 442). They found strong evidence for interaction frequency and length of relationship as factors affecting mentorship quality. Interestingly, the positive association between relationship length and relationship quality was shown to be considerably stronger for academic mentoring than for workplace mentoring. They offer possible reasons for this, including that in academic settings, mentoring relationships often last longer than in the other settings, sometimes the entire course of a student’s program studies (p. 463).

These findings suggest any discussion of what makes a mentorship successful has to address the time frame and the potential limitations of time constraints; that is, some mentorships may be too brief to address certain functions. For example, in my field, ASL/English interpreter education, it is rare that a single student works with a single professional interpreter for an entire placement, whether the placement is two weeks or six weeks long. It is more likely the student will spend those weeks with several interpreters, sometimes working only once with a particular professional for an assignment of two hours or less. In such situations the expectations for relationship development and psychosocial growth have to be adjusted accordingly.

As mentioned, another temporal aspect of mentorships is frequency of meetings and exchanges, which can affect the overall level of support a mentee receives, no matter how long or brief the mentorship is. In Eller, Lev & Feurer's 2013 research, *Key components of an effective mentoring relationship: a qualitative study*, the authors looked at 117 mentorship dyads. These were composed of undergraduate students and first-year graduate students who were being mentored by faculty from various academic areas that included natural sciences, nursing/health sciences, engineering and technology (p. 816). Responses of the mentees included: "Mentors should be accessible beyond office hours via email and phone." Another stated "The mentor should be willing to make time even when he's busy" (p. 817). I will further discuss Eller et al below, but this and other work, points to the relevance of discussing expectations (are they realistic or not?) and goal setting to help give mentorships a good start, however brief they may be.

Setting Goals and Expectations

A number of researchers have reported on the perceptions of mentors and mentees that there is value in setting goals and expectations, including in Allen and Poteet's 1999 research, *Developing Effective Mentoring Relationships: Strategies From the Mentor's Viewpoint*, where the authors looked at mentoring dyads in an organizational structure. Seven years later, in *Mentoring Behaviors and Mentorship Quality Associated With Formal Mentoring Programs: Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice*, Allen, Eby and Lentz (2006) examined perceived design features of formal mentorships and perceptions of career and psychosocial outcomes from the perspective of mentors and mentees and likewise, noted the relevance of setting expectations: "Offering training for mentors and protégés prior to program participation may make formal mentorships more rewarding by identifying program goals, clarifying role obligations, and establishing mutually agreed-upon relationship expectations" (p. 568).

These works point out that providing additional structure to our own placement practices - that is, offering the interpreter mentors training, possibly in combined sessions, along with the interpreter students – would provide a formal way to address expectations and realistic goals. As it stands, students typically receive hours of classroom preparation before placements, but it might carry more meaning and therefore bear greater returns if both mentors and mentees shared in a preparation session that included setting expectations.

On the other hand, in *Mentoring student nurses and the educational use of self: A hermeneutic phenomenological study*, Wilson's 2013 work regarding mentoring of nurses in UK suggests that: "Despite research to clarify expectations and develop support

structures” mentors nevertheless reported being overwhelmed by the responsibilities of mentoring while still responsible for a full workload (p. 313). In the UK, nursing education requires workplace mentoring; all nursing students are mentored, as part of their education. Even with this lived experience at the other end of the mentoring dyad, and with additional effort to support them, Wilson’s findings indicate there is no magic way to ease demands on nurse mentors.

Again, Eller et al., in their study of eight key components of effective mentorships (2013), found that protégés noted the importance of “clear and precise goals and expectations” and of “mentors raising the bar beyond [my] own expectations”. Mentors noted the importance of setting high and attainable goals and that “mentors should challenge students to go beyond their limitations” (p. 617).

Russell and Russell (2011) in, *Mentoring Relationships: Cooperating Teachers’ Perspectives on Mentoring Student Interns*, the team used open-ended surveys and observations made during a “summer workshop designed to identify cooperating teachers’ perspectives on how to better prepare them to effectively mentor student interns” (p. 6). Nine teachers participated in the entire study, all female: one African American, eight Caucasian, from junior and high school grades and across subject matter expertise. Two main themes emerged from their analysis of the data: “Role of mentor and expectations for the mentoring relationship” and “Cooperating teachers’ motivation for mentoring.” Regarding role and expectations, in general, the authors wanted to find out if mentors understood the expectations of mentoring. They observed that having expectations about roles did not mean a mentor knew *how* to be an effective mentor, and suggest that this has implications for teacher education programs, especially that

cooperating teachers should receive training in preparation for hosting a student.

Many of Russell & Russell's findings can be applied to the world of ASL/English interpreter education, specifically in the exploration of "How to be an effective mentor?". They do not provide a road map for resolving this challenge, but I can relate to their call for teacher education programs "to ensure that mentor teachers are adequately prepared to model effective strategies..." (p. 14).

Psychosocial Functions of Mentoring

Many mentorship studies have relied on Kram's 1983 work to frame their discussions of mentoring. *In Phases of the Mentor Relationship*, Kram looked at eighteen pairs of younger and older managers at a large utility company in the northeastern United States. She identified career functions and psychosocial functions of the mentorship. Career functions are: Sponsorship, Exposure and Visibility, Coaching, Protection, and Challenging assignments while psychosocial functions are described as: Role modeling, Acceptance-and-Confirmation, Counseling, and Friendship (p. 614). Career-related functions foster mentee's professional development. Psychosocial functions increase self-efficacy, self-worth and professional identity (Eby et al., 2003, 2010). Kram's early work has turned out to be seminal, as evidenced by the number of studies that have borrowed and built on her naming of mentoring functions.

For my purposes, I interpret "career functions" of the mentor in the interpreting field to be first and second-language skill building (i.e., English and ASL) and interpreting skill development, as well as professional business skills. These are the more tangible, technical skills needed for providing any level of interpreting service and each

one can be enhanced by practical experiences with supportive professionals (i.e., “coaching, sponsorship, exposure, protection and challenging assignments” (Kram, 1983). Psychosocial functions of mentoring in the professional interpreting field, relate to the mentee having the opportunity to build the aforementioned communication skills as well as self-efficacy, self-confidence, a sense of self-worth and professional identity, as Eby et al (2010) describe.

As mentioned, Eller et al (2013) identified eight key components of successful mentoring relationships. Their qualitative study, using purposive sampling, resulted in a diverse group of mentors and mentee dyads participating from a range of fields. The mentors were university faculty and the mentees undergraduate students or first-year graduate students who took part in focus group discussions about their experiences while involved in the mentorship. Using responses, from both mentors and mentees about their respective experiences, the eight categories of key components emerged. Just three of the eight referred to career functions while the other five were psychosocial functions. The most common theme to emerge was “Open Communication and Accessibility”, and was categorized as a psychosocial function. Protégés stated that “communication with mentors helps them gain self confidence in their skills and motivates them to develop their potential” and that “availability to talk” along with “empathetic listening” should be viewed as obligations for mentors. The authors suggest their results help reinforce the “importance of a supportive mentoring relationship” (p. 817). Role modeling was another theme to emerge; congruent with Kram’s 1983 work, and within this, self-disclosure was seen as part of a mentor’s responsibility to role model. “Protégés [also] identified the importance of mentors’ willingness to share their own struggles” (p. 819).

Sharing of self, including self-disclosing fears or shortcomings, career and even personal struggles are often reported to enhance a mentor-mentee relationship and contribute to greater trust. This trust can lead to greater satisfaction for both parties in the mentorship (Hayes, 1998; Huybrecht et al., 2010; Jones, 2013; Young et al., 2004).

In a 2013 study out of Gallaudet University, *Interpreter Mentoring: A Theory-Based Approach to Program Design and Evaluation*, Delk looks at several different ASL/English interpreter-mentoring efforts in the U.S., some designed for students, some for working interpreters, and explains how logic models and theories of change can be used to design and evaluate the effectiveness of mentorship programs. Logic models provide a graphic representation of the flow of development, including implementation and expected outcomes for the target population. (p. 8). The various desirable outcomes of mentorships, including psychosocial benefits such as self-efficacy, are discussed along with potential tools for measuring outcomes. Delk points out how often increased self-confidence is a goal of mentorships but that it is difficult to measure.

“The psychological construct of self-efficacy, however, is backed by a considerable body of research. Self-efficacy combines the capability to perform a task with the certainty that one will succeed in that task. Measures of self-efficacy are domain specific. They must include critical incidents or tasks specific to a profession. (p. 35)

Delk further discusses the construction of a self-efficacy scale based on a particular “philosophy or approach to interpreting”, such as demand-control theory or on feedback from mentees and mentors about their critical experiences. “Research and guidelines for developing self-efficacy scales are described by Bandura [2006] and may be a useful

reference for programs and researchers in interpretation.” (p. 35). The theory of demand-control comes from Karasak (1979) and Karasak & Theorell (1990), and challenges traditional notions of job stress and burnout. Dean and Pollard have applied the demand-control framework to the field of interpreting. The term *demand* refers to “requirements of a job, which may include aspects of the environment, the actual task being performed, and other factors that ‘act upon’ the individual”, while *control* refers to:

the degree to which the individual has the power to ‘act upon’ the demands presented by the job, perhaps by making decisions, bringing skills or resources to bear on the task, or altering the environment or other aspects of the task demand.
(Dean & Pollard, 2001, p. 2)

In Ghosh & Reio’s 2013 study, *Career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors: a meta-analysis*, the authors analyzed 18 different studies that had focused on the career benefits to mentors of having participated as a mentor. They had five hypotheses:

1. Individuals who have mentored will report greater subjective career outcomes than will individuals who have not mentored.
2. Provision of career mentoring support will be positively related to subjective career outcomes.
3. Provision of psychosocial mentoring support will be positively related to subjective career outcomes.
4. Provision of role modeling mentoring support will be positively related to subjective career outcomes.
5. Provision of psychosocial and role modeling mentoring support will have a stronger relationship with subjective career outcomes for mentors than provision of career support mentoring. (p. 108)

In summary, Gosh & Reio hypothesized that the “subjective career outcomes” (i.e., perceived rewards) of mentoring would have a stronger relationship with those parts of the mentorship where psychosocial and role modeling support was provided, and would

correlate less to “career support mentoring” being provided (p. 108). Regarding the mentors’ experiences, the authors offer, “Further, mentors may gain satisfaction, meaning and purpose in their lives, and a sense of accomplishment in finding an outlet for passing their accumulated knowledge and wisdom (Kram, 1983, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Ragins & Scandura, 1999)” (p.108).

In the interpreting field, mentoring of students is typically voluntary and comes with few explicit rewards. As stated earlier, if the field had evidence that mentoring contributes to job satisfaction or personal growth, as with Gosh & Reio’s findings, it might increase the number of professional interpreters willing to mentor a student on practicum placement.

In an Australian study, “*Personal life coaching for coaches-in-training enhances goal attainment, insight and learning*” (2008), Grant looked at 29 participants studying coaching psychology in a postgraduate degree program in coaching. The study used a “within-subject” design. That is, during the study, each participant practiced being a life coach and was also a mentee to a practicing coach. (No coaches were coached by their respective mentee.) Grant wanted to find out if mandatory personal-coaching training would result in successful “goal attainment and enhance well-being”. His second quest was to see if mandatory training would “enhance participants’ learning of coaching psychology” (p. 58). This research was of interest to me because of the mandatory component of the training program, which was of some importance to Grant as well, but not a primary focus. Likewise, I was very much interested in how effective the training might be in a simulated environment (versus a study of professional life coaches working with their clients). For professional interpreters, simulated sessions, where each

participant practices being the mentor to another professional in the role of mentee, might work well.

The quantitative analysis in Grant's study, showed a slight increase in the grades of those life-coaching students who took the training. The qualitative analysis involved looking at participants' responses to the following open-ended question: "Please take five minutes or so to write about how (if at all) you benefited from taking part in the coaching program" (p. 65). The responses suggested five categories of benefits (as well as a sixth category, "Shortcomings of the program"). "Deepened understanding" (20 responses) and "Helped build applied skill" (14 responses) were the most frequent contributions, meaning respondents said that they gained a deeper understanding of theory when they were able to practice in a real but safe life-coaching environment. On the other hand, under "shortcomings", some found the compulsory nature of the training unhelpful. One commented that, "As a mandatory client I didn't feel very motivated because I didn't feel very ready to be coached" (p. 66). Grant explains that this is in accordance with other similar research, including Murphy (2005), which found that "mandatory personal therapy resulted in some therapists-in-training feeling coerced into becoming a 'better person'" (p. 66).

When it comes to psychosocial learning for ASL/English interpreter mentees, mandatory mentor training might not lead to the same shortcomings as it did for some of Grant's participants. With life coaching, the work is inherently related to personal development and learning about self, although it differs from psychotherapy in that it is mostly outcome focused rather than insight-oriented (Grant, 2008). Compulsory training for interpreter mentors, whether in sessions combined with mentees or in separate

sessions, certainly could result in personal growth. But greater self-knowledge for interpreter mentors would more likely be a byproduct of learning how to better communicate with mentees about interpreting work, in the most helpful and supportive way, as opposed to directly addressing personal growth outcomes for mentors, as was seen in Grant's life-coaching training research.

Next, I will look at what the literature says about matching mentors and mentees and about how, or whether, perceived influence over the matching process and goal setting affects overall satisfaction of the mentorship participants.

Level of Influence and Matching Mentors with Mentees

When trying to design the perfect mentorship, it makes sense that knowing as much as possible about the participants will contribute to better matches. However, mismatches can occur in any profession. Some researchers have attempted to show that careful matching is advantageous or that specific traits will predict more success. In her qualitative, longitudinal study, Jones (2013) looked at *Factors influencing mentees' and mentors' learning throughout formal mentoring relationships* and considered the expectations of mentors and mentees before, during and after the mentorship. She was interested in “getting inside the mentoring relationship” to see how learning unfolds (p. 394). Referencing Cranwell-Ward, et al., 2004, one of her observations gleaned from the data was “sharing experience, views and stories are the most influential ways [both mentors and mentees] learn” and that this implies it is important to select mentors with the appropriate mix of work experience, “as well as key knowledge, skills and behaviours, to act as appropriate role models” (p. 405).

In How Congruent Are the Beliefs of Teacher Candidates, Cooperating Teachers, and University-Based Teacher Educators? He & Levin (2008) were aiming to identify the similarities and differences in “expressed beliefs” among the three parties named in their title. Beliefs are described as closely related to knowledge, but tend to be more subjective and personal. The authors speculated that knowing beliefs of teacher candidates beforehand could allow teacher educators and cooperating teachers to better facilitate learning. Their work builds on that of Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Elbaz, 1981; and Larsson, 1987, and posits that “Research suggests that the beliefs of teacher candidates serve as filters for interpreting knowledge and experiences, guiding their decision making and influencing their actions in the classroom” (p. 38). Their study looked at Personal Practice Theories (PPTs), which they explain as:

... the systematic set of beliefs (personal theories) which guide teachers and are based on their prior life experiences (personal practices) derived from non-teaching activities and also from experiences that occur as a result of designing and implementing the curriculum through instruction (practice). (p. 39)

The content analysis of He & Levin’s data resulted in identification of four major content categories: Teacher, Instruction, Classroom, and Students. They then explored similarities and differences in beliefs among the three different groups of participants, as they related to the four categories. For example, under one of the four categories, “Teacher”, and sub-category “Nature of Teaching”, they charted responses from each of the parties that reflect their respective approaches to teaching (i.e., beliefs):

Prospective Teachers: The teacher should not always stand in front of the room and lecture, but be a facilitator for group works and student leadership;

Cooperating Teachers: Teachers should be willing to try anything for their students; Teacher Educators: The focus of teaching is student learning. (p. 44)

In their study, all 41 participants were female. All eight cooperating teachers who volunteered were from one site and as the authors note, this was a small-scale study and the results were not generalizable to other teacher preparation programs. In Levin et al (2103) however, they followed up on the 2008 work with *Teacher Beliefs in Action: A Cross-Sectional, Longitudinal Follow-Up Study of Teachers' Personal Practical Theories* (PPTs), where they provided case summaries of three of the original teacher-candidate participants, all of whom were still teaching in the school where they had done student teaching. Individual interviews, classroom observation, and follow up emails were used to explore and compare current PPTs to those recorded in the 2008 study. To summarize, the results showed that in each of the three cases, PPTs had remained relatively stable, but were expressed in terms that showed a more-student focused approach to being in the classroom. The authors posit that education programs for teachers can benefit from learning about the PPTs of their students and use this to advance best practices in the classroom.

Encouraging teachers to verbalize, share, and examine their PPTs allows teachers to become more reflective and critical practitioners; it also allows teacher educators and researchers to consider teacher quality from a broader perspective. Understanding that PPTs guide teachers' decision making and actions in their classrooms may also help school leaders and mentors provide more constructive feedback as they work to support teachers' professional growth and enhance teacher quality. (p. 215)

Two other studies focused more closely on the protégé's effect on the mentorship dyad. In *Role of Protégé Personality in Receipt of Mentoring and Career Success* (1994), Turban & Dougherty explored whether protégés' personalities influenced the mentoring they received. They point out that "much of the scholarly and popular writing on mentoring appears to assume that mentors seek out protégés, yet little research has investigated the formation of mentoring relationships" (p. 688). They looked at three protégé traits: locus of control, self-monitoring, and emotional stability, positing that these three traits appear linked to "proactive behaviors" that further lead to initiation of mentoring by the protégé. Their implication was that "proactive initiation" of mentoring by a protégé was advantageous. Citing Rotter, 1966 and Spector, 1982, they explain locus of control as "the extent to which individuals believe that rewards and outcomes are controlled by their own actions or by external forces in their environments. The former individuals have been labeled 'internals' and the latter, 'externals'" (p. 689). Self-monitoring has to do with ability to understand social cues and adapt accordingly, (a very important ability for interpreters), and emotional stability is measured in terms of self-esteem and negative affectivity, which is "a relatively stable dimension [characterized by] a tendency to experience negative states" (p. 689). They hypothesized that:

Individuals who are internals in locus of control, high on self-monitoring, and high in emotional stability will initiate more mentoring relationships than individuals who are externals, low on self-monitoring, and low in emotional stability. (p. 690)

As cited earlier, Allen et al., in 2006, published *Mentorship Behaviors and*

Mentorship Quality Associated with Formal Mentoring Programs: Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice, in which they discussed the value of informal mentorships and the spontaneous nature of the learning. Citing Ragins & Cotton (1999), and Ragins et al. (2000), they wanted to look at how organizations might design formal mentorships so that programs would best mimic the “interpersonal processes underlying informal mentorships” (p. 568), and see greater results, including improved psychosocial benefits for both parties. They posited that incorporating four design features would mean improved quality in formal mentorships:

- (a) allowing individuals to feel as if they have input into the matching process, (b) creating a sense that program participation is voluntary, (c) taking steps to increase the opportunity for frequent interaction between mentor and protégé, and (d) careful consideration of rank and departmental differences when making matches so as to increase the potential for learning, sponsorship, and the development of strong emotional ties.

For me, one of their most interesting findings was that those mentors who reported training was of high quality were also more likely to report that they had provided psychosocial mentoring. The authors speculate, “perhaps higher quality training includes more breadth of topics and focuses on not just the career-related roles that mentors might fulfill for protégés but also provides guidance on how to develop a close interpersonal relationship with protégés” (p. 576).

Summary

The question of how to improve the likelihood of a rewarding mentorship for interpreting students and supervising interpreters comes with a range of potential

answers, as suggested by the body of literature. To manage the discussion for my purposes, I have focused on the most significant learning for me and presented it in these four sections.

The research reviewed here has allowed me to consider such questions as where and when mentoring takes place and how that might affect outcomes. That is, what is the duration of the mentorship and how frequently does the dyad share time? Mentees' proximity to mentors and to program faculty can be factors as well, affecting the ability of all three parties to share feedback and reflect on learning. Managing expectations is also important. The research suggests that both mentors and mentees value a shared vision for the mentorship, i.e., setting goals and expectations. This is important for mentor and mentee especially, but also program faculty (or other sponsoring or supervisory body), as Eller et al.'s 2013 research highlighted.

In my experience, career functions of interpreting such as language, analysis and interpreting skills, are more easily addressed in the classroom than skills described as psychosocial functions. This is one reason why the psychosocial functions of mentorship are of particular interest. Teachers of interpreters look to practicing professionals to nurture all kinds of development in mentees, but especially the psychosocial functions as these help to increase self-efficacy, self-worth and professional identity (Kram, 1983, 1985; Eby et al., 2003, 2010) and may best be advanced outside of the classroom. However, there may be potential for looking more closely at students' Personal Practice Theories (He & Levin, 2008), and curriculum content to explore ways in which programs can better address these elements of students' growth to advance student self-awareness and self-efficacy ahead of practicum placements.

As mentioned above, the extent to which the mentor and mentee influence the mentorship arrangements and the matching of one with the other was identified as having potential to influence mentoring outcomes (Allen et al., 2006; Wilson, 2003). Interpreter education programs can learn from this research in order to enhance learning and mentorship satisfaction for participants.

The French essayist and teacher Joseph Joubert famously said, “To teach is to learn twice”. There is much evidence in the literature of mentors reporting on benefits of working with a mentee or protégé, of discovering the rewards of working with students and novices. It certainly isn’t always deeply rewarding, but my hypothesis is that if the sponsoring program – in this case, Nova Scotia Community College’s ASL/English Interpretation program – can improve how it prepares and supports the participants, there will be a greater return on both parties committing to the mentorship. What should these improvements to the preparation process look like? This is something I was aiming to find out by looking closely at how a group of students and interpreters currently view placement practices.

Eller et al.’s 2013 work has been very central in imagining and inspiring my own research project. As discussed, their research included a relatively large group of 117 dyads of university students mentored by faculty who were doing research in various fields, including science, social sciences, technology and math. The researchers held four-hour sessions with groups of mentors and protégés where they asked the participants “What are the key components of an effective mentoring relationship?” In the second step, brainstorming, mentors and protégés broke into separate groups and wrote answers to that focus question. The team then clustered the responses, reviewed with participants

to determine if anything had been omitted and that ideas generated were complete (p. 816). Group discussions were audiotaped. They categorized the responses into eight components descriptive of effective mentorships: Open Communication and Accessibility; Goals and Challenges; Passion and Inspiration; Caring Personal Relationship; Mutual Respect and Trust; Exchange of Knowledge; Independence and Collaboration; Role Modeling (p. 817).

Drawing from Eller et al, and their findings of eight key components of effective mentorships (2013), my study looked at the participants and their expectations, experiences and reflections, before and after their final, four-week practicum placements. The overall aim was to identify “key components of an effective mentorship” for ASL/English interpreters and their mentees, especially where the mentorships were relatively, or very, short term.

Gaps in the Literature

As noted, most of the research regarding mentoring and mentorships is focused on a field other than ASL/English interpreting such as medicine, academia or teaching. The literature regarding mentoring in the ASL/English interpreting field is helpful to an extent, but none, that I have been able to find, is framed within the boundaries of two-year diploma programs such as NSCC’s, nor does it address the short-term nature of practicum placements. As previously discussed, the interaction of students with professionals can sometimes be as little as a couple of hours for a single, shared interpreting assignment. The argument can be made that these brief shared experiences do not constitute a mentorship. As mentioned however, my working definition of

mentorship is: Short or long term mentor-mentee relationships of more-experienced practitioners with novice or student interpreters, where that relationship provides opportunity to address both career and psychosocial functions of interpreting service provision (Kram, 1983; Eby et al., 2010; Eller et al., 2013). Again, whatever it is called, when a practicing professional works with a less experienced interpreter, the potential for learning exists.

Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach used to discover details about short-term mentorships and mentee-mentor relationships in an effort to understand key elements of effective mentorships for ASL/English interpreting students. Next, a discussion of the interview process is presented, followed by sampling and selection of participants, collection of data, analysis and finally, ethical considerations and limitations.

Qualitative Approach

A qualitative case study approach was used as a research method for this study. Case study is a methodology described by Richards and Morse (2012) as research where: “Data from a small number of cases are selected to inform a particular issue or problem [and] are thoroughly described” (p. 33). This case study allowed for a close look at a particular interpreting community and mentoring environment. The aim was to discover more about the workings of interpreting mentorships, to “get inside the mentoring relationship” to see how learning unfolds, as Jones describes in her 2013 study.

As several researchers have pointed out, even though mentoring has been shown to aid in developing skills, promoting careers and increasing job satisfaction, there is still little known about specific behaviours that result in positive outcomes (Fuller, 2001; Eller et al., 2013; Murillo et al., 2006). Located within the field of the psychology of coaching and mentoring, my inquiry borrowed from that literature, especially *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of psychology of coaching and mentoring* (Passmore et al, 2013).

Interviews

One-on-one, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four student interpreters and five professional interpreters twice; once before and once after a four-week work placement in April-May of 2015. Jones (2013), referencing Yin (2009), suggests that interviews are “an essential source of case study evidence and should be ‘guided conversations rather than structured queries’” (p. 106). Rubin, in *Qualitative interviewing; The art of hearing data* (2012), also references the value of conversational partners: “Conversational partners work with you to answer your research question; they share their thinking and experiences and, in the process, often reveal much of themselves” (p.72).

Interview questions before and after placement were designed to glean the following information: a) Mentees’ expectations before the practicum; b) Mentors’ expectations before the practicum; c) Mentees’ perceptions of the practicum afterwards; d) Mentors’ perceptions of the practicum afterwards. (See Appendix A, Interview Guide)

Sampling and Selection of Participants

Working with interpreting program faculty at NSCC, purposive sampling was used to identify four student and five supervising interpreters willing to participate in the study in April – June of 2015. All four students (mentees) were interpreter-candidates in their final semester of the Nova Scotia Community College’s American Sign Language/English Interpretation diploma program. All five supervising interpreters (mentors) were Active members of the Maritime Association of Professional Sign Language Interpreters (MAPSLI) and the Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) who had worked in a range of settings that included elementary, high

school and post-secondary education, as well as community settings (medical, legal, mental health and employment), and video relay interpreting, and who committed to taking on at least one student during the spring semester, four-week practicum. Years of interpreting experience among supervising interpreters ranged from five to 16 years. All participants were 25 years of age or older. Students are required to do three short-term practicum placements in their second and final year: two weeks in the fall, three weeks in the winter semester, and four weeks in their final, spring semester. Students and supervising interpreters, therefore, sometimes had previous experience working with each other. The chart below shows break down of age and interpreters' years of experience in the field.

	Gender	Age	Years of interpreting experience
Mentor A	Female	36	12
Mentor B	Female	44	14
Mentor C	Female	28	5
Mentor D	Female	31	5
Mentor E	Female	38	16
Mentee A	Female	25	
Mentee B	Female	27	
Mentee C	Female	25	
Mentee D	Female	37	

Data Collection

Data collection took place in April and June of 2015, interviewing all participants before and after the April/May, four-week practicum. Participants were able to choose

the location for their interviews, the only limitation being a requirement for relative quiet in the environment, for recording purposes. A Philips Voice Tracer digital recorder was used to record all conversations. A semi-structured interview approach was used with the majority of the questions being open-ended. From Richards and Morse (2012):

Sometimes, the researcher knows enough about the domain of inquiry to develop the questions about the topic in advance of interviewing but not enough to anticipate the answers. A semi-structured interview is appropriate here. The researcher designs open-ended questions, arranged in a reasonably logical order, to cover the ground required. (p.127)

Interviews were transcribed by the researcher/interviewer verbatim. Questions were designed ahead of time for each group (mentees and mentors) and content varied slightly between pre and post-placement questions. The semi-structured interviews allowed for a relatively free and open discussion on the research topic, and in general, for a rapport to develop between the interviewer and the interviewee.

Coding the Data

The researcher transcribed all 18 interviews verbatim, protecting identities of individuals and organizations where appropriate. Transcribing the audio recordings offers the researcher an opportunity to repeatedly listen, read and re-read, checking accuracy as part of the ongoing transcribing process, and becoming more familiar with the content. For this reason, the researcher chose to transcribe the interviews herself rather than use an outside party. Once data was transcribed, it was coded using MAXQDA software. Interviews were coded for ten key themes. Eight key themes were borrowed from Eller et

al.'s work. As discussed in chapter two, these were: Open Communication and Accessibility; Goals and Challenges; Passion and Inspiration; Caring Personal Relationship; Mutual Respect and Trust; Exchange of Knowledge; Independence and Collaboration; Role Modeling (p. 817). A further category, Mentee Qualities and Self-Efficacy, including concepts of self-efficacy, was suggested by participants' responses. Although the Eller et al study did consider mentee qualities in their overall look at key elements of effective mentorships, there was significant sufficient data from the present study to suggest a separate category. This will be discussed further in chapter four. Lastly, interview responses were coded for Recommendations and Feedback for the host institution.

Ethical Considerations

A research proposal was submitted to the researcher's supervisor. Ethical approval for the proposal came from both the Nova Scotia Community College Research Ethics Board and the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board.

Eller et al (2013) gathered their data in discussion groups that included both mentors and protégés. They describe potential shortcomings of this approach, noting that:

Responses from participants identified only positive characteristics because they were asked to identify key components of an effective mentoring relationship. Mentor–protégé dyads were present at the workshops, potentially preventing the expression of negative experiences. Future researchers should question each group separately about both positive and negative components of the mentoring relationship. (p. 819)

It does appear that the combined-group format has potential to stifle the expression of negative feedback. Constructive (negative) feedback is important for getting a full sense of the mentees' and mentors' experiences, and the power-over position of the mentor is potentially limiting, were she to be present. Partially for this reason, the interviews were conducted one-on-one. Also, unlike with the research that Eller et al did, in this study it turned out that participants were not necessarily dyads. That is, students all had had practicum assignments with more than one of the participating mentors or with other Supervising Interpreter(s) who were not participating in the study, any or all of whom might be referenced during interviews.

Although there was the possibility that the interpreters might feel threatened by the prospect of mentees speaking openly about their experiences, and that this might in turn, influence mentors' behavior, the risk was minimal. In the professional interpreting community, it is well established among practitioners, from the outset, that students return to the classroom after placements, discuss their experiences in a professional manner, and must write-up each assignment. Additionally, modern signed language interpreter education emphasizes the importance of developing feedback skills – the giving and receiving of constructive observation of all aspects of interpreting work – and its place in lifelong learning and professional and personal development. In other words, interpreting work is already open to scrutiny and learning how to share and discuss the good, the bad is an integral part of students' education. It doesn't mean professionals and students do not care what others might say or think, but it is understood that the work will be reflected upon and discussed in a critical manner.

Also, mentors are aware that program requirements mean that students write up each interpreting assignment as part of their developing, reflective practice. The added formality of individual interviews within the context of a research study with someone who could be considered an outsider, however, could pose a threat. To ensure participants' full understanding of the research project and expectations, a description of the research and its goals was explained, in writing, and participants had the opportunity to ask questions and/or withdraw at any point in the process (Tri-Council Policy Statement 2: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 2015). (See Appendix B, Letter of Informed Consent)

Limitations

There are some important limitations of this study, most notably the small number of participants, which means caution must be used in drawing any generalizations. The lack of diversity among participants is also a limitation. All were hearing, female, and of perceived European descent. No Deaf interpreters participated in this study. The use of semi-structured interviews, however, did prove effective in gaining rich and meaningful information about the mentors' and mentees' experiences.

Another consideration with this type of research is the researcher's bias, especially as the interviews were less, rather than more structured. Although none of the participants were in a position to be future students of the researcher, all but one mentee-participant were past-students, where the researcher was in a position of influence regarding student assessment. The researcher also has been in a position, in the past, to partner with two of the four mentor participants in a professional, interpreting role. As much as this might be considered a limitation, it is also a potential asset to be seen and

understood as a member of a community of interpreters and as someone working toward advancing the profession. This researcher has made every effort to be aware of biases and potential biases and to check for this during every step of the study.

Chapter 4 RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter describes main findings stemming from the interviews and subsequent data analysis and provides a discussion of findings. Relying on Eller et al.'s 2013 *Key components of an effective mentoring relationship: A qualitative study*, the data was analyzed for eight key themes; Open Communication and Access, Goals and Challenges, Passion and Inspiration, Caring Personal Relationship, Mutual Respect and Trust, Exchange of Knowledge, Independence and Collaboration, and Role Modeling. In addition to the analysis related to those eight key elements, participants' responses suggested two additional categories, which are also analyzed here; a specific category looking at what the mentee brings to the mentorship, Mentee Qualities and Self-Efficacy, as well as Recommendations for Sponsoring Educational Program. There appeared to be no significant difference between pre-placement and post-placement interview results. That is, mentees had an additional four weeks of being mentored to discuss, and could report there was skill development, but they called on all of their experiences to answer the interview questions, including previous practicum placements, as discussed in Chapter One.

Open Communication and Accessibility

“Mentoring involves skills in human relations, such as empathy.” (Gordon, 2008, p. 54). Openness, honesty, a willingness to listen, observe, reflect and communicate about the interpreting work was shown to be highly valued among participants. One

mentee talked about the importance of mentors making an effort to understand the student as someone who is trying to figure things out:

Open communication is key. Just being understanding of – reflecting on their own time as a student and just making sure that, you know, students are still learning so if they do something, or if they say something, always seek clarification as to maybe why they did what they did. – Mentee C

Students also highlighted they value directness and openness. *Openness* in the sense that mentors should be open to seeing and understanding a student's needs and be honest in providing feedback and guidance. In several comments, students expressed a desire to have feedback presented in a straightforward manner, even if it meant a level of personal upset at first. One student said: “always [be] open and not afraid of hurting [the student] when giving feedback.” – Mentee C. Another student talked about some direct guidance that helped her improve. Referring to her supervisor, she said: “She was just like ‘get your shit together’, that was over the course of a week. She’d have something direct to say which made me better for the next [assignment].” – Mentee A

Overall, mentors differed in their approach to providing feedback with some expressing value for directness more than others, but all showing a concern for the mentee's self esteem and confidence. One interpreter said: “I’m nice to them but I’m direct as well.” Discussing a particular student she had worked with in the past, she noted the trust that developed over time:

So coming into this situation, she would have expected that [I’d be direct] and I think what she also discovered is that – she discovered different styles of feedback that work better for her. So for her, the directness was – [...] the very

very first time, might have been a little bit harsh, but by the third time around, she's like "No, that's what I want." And so then at [a different setting] she was able to say [to me] "If I'm missing something, just yell it at me! Don't be afraid to say it, just tell me – just snap me out of whatever it is I'm doing." – Mentor A

When asked "What quality or qualities do you see as most important in a supervising interpreter?", one mentor responded:

Patience. Learning, or knowing how to tease things out of a student rather than telling them. [...] It's easy sometimes to say, ok, that didn't work, try this, but getting the student to come to that realization themselves through discussion.

– Mentor C

Accessibility includes being accessible as a non-judgmental support for the student (Eller et al., p. 817). Time to debrief and share feedback was shown to be valued by both groups. One mentee offered: "If possible, always set aside time to talk about the day, even if it's 15 minutes, or in a car while we're driving to the next assignment. Just making sure there's time set aside for questions. That's important." – Mentee C. At times, schedules were too full for thorough, post-assignment discussions and sharing of feedback. Depending on the content, feedback is ideally exchanged while both parties can easily recall the context in which the relevant task took place (Thomas & Arnold, 2011). If it isn't possible to do at least a general debrief following a shared assignment, feedback may be less effective. On the other hand, some content is best left for later, especially if it involves a difficult exchange, corrective feedback (negative) and/or if fatigue is a factor. At times, though there is little choice but to discuss immediately after

the work. Referencing an evening assignment that did not go well and was at the end of a long day, a student said:

It's just picking the [right] time. You could have the best feedback in the world [for a student], but if someone is not in the head space to receive it, it's absolutely wasted by not picking the right moment. Had the interpreter come the next day and been like, "Great try...", or "If I were you...", "The things I noticed . . . etc." Just pick your moment, so that it's something – so that it can be received.

– Mentee B

Although timing of feedback can be important, depending on content, it would appear mentees who are on the receiving end can be more sensitive about when and how it is presented, which is understandable. They did expect corrective feedback, though. Unlike the Eller et al study, where "protégés focused on their need for positive feedback, while mentors emphasized their need to provide both positive and negative feedback" (p. 818), interpreter mentees expected constructive feedback and all of them could clearly express a preference for an open and honest approach from mentors.

Goals and Challenges

In the field of American Sign Language/English interpreter education, goals and challenges during placement relate to expectations for the entire four weeks or for a specific interpreting assignment, but also includes the challenge of finding appropriate opportunities for the student to improve. Goal-setting is driven by the needs of the mentee. Setting goals is a practice that is well established in the students' interpreter education program and, in general, interpreters have an expectation that students are

ready and able to discuss these prior to placement. Typically, areas in need of attention relate to: interpreting skill; language skill (ASL, English) and; professional skills, such as e-mail and other communication, punctuality and organization; problem solving; overall deportment and; giving and receiving feedback, interpersonal and social skills.

Naturally, frequency of interaction can affect the degree to which goals can be met and challenging opportunities provided (Allen et al., 2006; Eby et al., 2013; Eller et al., 2013; Hayes 1998). As discussed, an interpreter may work only once with a student during a four-week placement, or the two may share many assignments. In this study, there were instances of both among the nine participants. Aside from mentors' personality and communication style, setting expectations and goals is also partially influenced by the dyad's relationship as well as the amount of time available prior to, or after an assignment. Additionally, the interpreting setting may dictate which mentee skills will be addressed. For example, if the assignment is a formal gathering of a large group with an English speaker who is not going to take questions, interpreting may only be one-directional, from English to ASL. If there is no opportunity for Deaf audience members to interact with the speaker, a student would not have the chance to practice skills associated with ASL to English work.

When it came to discussing and sharing expectations with student mentees, interpreters varied in their approach and communication style, but used phrases about their expectations for students such as: "having goals for each assignment", "knowing what they're working on", and "being flexible". One mentor offered:

I know when I go to assignments, I have two or three goals for each way [English to ASL and vice versa], that I'm going to be working on for this meeting. And

it's going to be specific to what I'm working on. So having something in her (student) head that she knows that she's working on, because otherwise, it's really hard to evaluate the work. It's too much needing to [search and] pinpoint something. – Mentor C

When asked about goal-setting for their upcoming four-week placement, students knew what they expected to be working on, even if that might change as they progressed: “For myself, my goal is receptive skills and confidence.”; “I’ll be working on masking skills again. That’s something to look forward to.”; “Closing the [discourse] triangle and connecting thoughts with previous thoughts and predicting where it’s going without predicting too far.” And; “Well, I think the needing to think on your feet quickly. Because I need to practice that.”

Depending on the mentor and also on what kind of assignment the two would be sharing, mentors had expectations that the student approach the work as an equal partner in the assignment, as a peer:

I expect and what I have told every single student, is “you’re my teamer, I expect you to... be my teamer.” So, I hold them to a higher professional standard, I don’t baby them as students, so I want to make sure [they know] “...you’re my teamer, I’m counting on you” I want them to feel ... feel that pressure, but at the same time, I don’t want to tear them down. – Mentor A

Another mentor had expectations for the mentee to be responsible about communications prior to an interpreting assignment. She expressed concern about being “too open and too flexible” with a student if she allowed more than a couple of days to respond to an email she had sent about an upcoming interpreting assignment, saying: “I’m going to

wait. I may send one more prompting email, if I don't get too busy," (Mentor B), but didn't want to overdo communicating with the student before their interpreting assignment, pointing out that this was part of her guiding the student to develop good work habits, to be an active participant in the planning, to show responsiveness.

Mentees talked about the importance of getting to know an interpreter so that they could figure out her boundaries, "...getting to know what I can ask, what I can't ask [about an interpretation I observed], what she expects...". – Mentee A. The expectation that students always have questions or feedback for an interpreter sometimes caused stress for the student. One said that sometimes she was so focused on coming up with questions, which was clearly expected by the interpreter, that she couldn't really pay attention to what was being interpreted.

Students also showed an appreciation for interpreters who set high expectations and did so clearly: "[The Supervising Interpreter] was a great mentor to me – or as a placement supervisor – because she would always have high expectations and she would always be honest if you didn't meet them..." – Mentee B. Students also named specific qualities they would expect or hope a mentor would bring to the placement. One said:

I think [mentors] need to bring patience, um... honesty. Also asking questions beforehand, you know what are their expectations, what are our expectations, you know putting everything on the table so that nothing happens to impact the rest of the practicum. Asking what kind of feedback they want because everyone's an individual. You know, does the student want positive feedback followed by negative, or kind of mix it up? Or should they sugar coat the negative?

– Mentee C

Mutual Respect and Trust

Students and their supervising interpreters all know that there is a skills and experience gap between interpreter education and interpreting on the job. As in other professional studies, placements or internships are meant to help bridge that gap.

Students expect to make errors but also expect a certain level of support and understanding from their supervising interpreters. As mentioned, interpreters differ in how they approach mentoring, but in this study, all demonstrated an awareness of the importance of closing this gap.

Participants referenced placements as mutual learning experiences, or mutually beneficial exchanges, suggesting they respect what each other brings to the placement, that it is not meant to be completely one-sided. One mentee put it this way: “I would like to say that it goes both ways, like they [mentor] seeks advice from the mentee and the mentee seeks advice from the mentor on equal grounds, but I think it’s much more demanding on the mentor.” – Mentee A. Mentors referenced opportunities that arise where they treat the student as a colleague, trusting the mentee to do the job. Some interpreting situations, though, might be too daunting or just inappropriate for the student’s skill level. For example, a serious medical or legal transaction where the consumer’s well-being is at risk, or a post-secondary course where a review of material is being discussed before a critical exam. Still, all of the interpreters showed an interest in finding opportunities where the student could shine, or at least be safe while struggling to produce an effective interpretation or manage an interpersonal exchange. Helping the student feel safe with the mentor builds trust. One mentor said that when working with a student for the first time she believes that, just like working with another interpreter, even

if they don't know each other they both understand 'they're there for the same reason', to provide a professional service, and that they share an understanding of the profession.

She described the value in using this common ground to help build trust with a student:

You [mentee] know that I'm a supervising interpreter, you know that this is in my control, you know that if it's not, that I will do something about it, you know that if something's going wrong, I will change the situation and you know that I'm not going to leave you on [interpreting] to mess things up entirely. I'm going to switch you off, or I'm going to feed you or do something to make it go smoothly because that's part of my responsibility. – Mentor D

Another mentor referenced the challenge of figuring out how to work together when the team is new to one another, whether mentor and mentee or professional and professional:

That's just part of the process too, because very few of us only get to work with one or two people, so that's part of their [students'] learning process too, is how to then interact with a new person. That's just part of the challenge of our job because it's so intimate and you work so closely with somebody and sometimes you don't know them. Sometimes it works well, sometimes it's awful, but that skill building is trying to figure out "how do I work with this person? How do we do feedback and how can I get myself to the point where I am focusing on the feedback I'm getting versus the fact that I just don't like this person." Right? It's hard. – Mentor A

This comment was reflected in other discussions with mentors. Even if they felt a student's skill level wasn't always adequate, interpreters knew that placement sometimes

means putting students in “sink or swim” situations, as long as the support is there – from the interpreter and, at times, from the Deaf and/or hearing consumers.

Overall, mentees expressed an awareness that trust was important, even if that trust didn't always develop. One said: “I believe them one hundred percent. If they say something, I... agree [laugh] unless I don't. Well I mean, [...] Let me rewind for a second... I trust that what they're saying has weight.” – Mentee A. Another mentee implied her level of trust in expressing her appreciation for the support she was feeling:

“... there's lots that you learn from your people when you're on placement. And I think the biggest thing is how much they want to help you. And how much they see in you that you didn't even know was there. And they understand where you are because they've been there. – Mentee D

Openness was often referenced with regard to mentors being open to learning with and/or from the mentee, respecting their student perspective. Interpreters expressed an appreciation for students' views and contributions and all of them could identify how students remind them of important theories and help keep them fresh. Additionally, working with a mentee can help professionals see their own growth. One mentor had this to say about student placements:

Well, I think it's good for everybody. It's good for me, it's good for them. You forget sometimes where students are. You forget how far you've come. I think the students talk about work in a way that I don't think about very much anymore. So it's - they ask good questions. When the students who ask questions and are ready and participating [...] they talk about your work in a way where you're like “Oh man, I haven't thought about it like that in so long”. It's not like you

shouldn't think about it anymore, it just that you haven't thought about it in a while. – Mentor A

Similarly, another mentor referenced one of the benefits of working with students:

“Although some of the jargon and current practices are still fresh, I don't necessarily use them to speak about my work on a daily basis. And I find having a student brings them back into my daily focus.” – Mentor D. And another mentor put it this way:

I learn myself. We'll give feedback and we'll discuss it, [...] you know [I] get the new lingo as well, as they're fresh from school. And there's lingo from other professional development that I've done, I introduce the students to, so it's a two-way street that way. I definitely benefit. – Mentor E

Even with mutual respect, mentors expressed a sense of position, an understanding of who takes the lead on placement. Referring to students who might disagree with a supervising interpreter's decisions, one mentor said:

I'm open to those [disagreements] but at the same time, I've been doing it longer. I have reasons for my decisions, I believe in those reasons. I'm open to having a discussion as to why my reasons may not be the best, but I won't learn at all if I don't stay open to having those conversations with the student. – Mentor D

Exchange of Knowledge

In the Eller et al study, the mentors and mentees were focused on building research skills and knowledge in a particular discipline. In the field of ASL/English interpretation, in addition to knowledge about the everyday workings of the profession, theories and practices, skill-building takes place during practicum and can include skills

such as those mentioned previously: interpreting skill; language skill (ASL and/or English); professional skills, such as e-mail and other communication, punctuality and organization; problem solving and conflict resolution; overall deportment and; interpersonal and social skills. Part of interpreting is remaining outwardly neutral and this skill is sometimes referred to as *masking*. One mentee recalled learning that this was something she had not yet mastered via classroom practice. When asked if there was anything concrete she took away from her placement, she said:

Oh, definitely, yes absolutely. I can mask better now. I mean it's certainly not perfect by any means, but I can think in my head without you being able to see it, which is huge for me. If you come from my family, it's huge! [laughs]. So, that itself is tremendous growth for me and I feel like I'm in a better position now but [there's] still a long way to go. – Mentee B

When asked about how she learned to mask her feelings and reactions, she said:

Mostly [with] the interpreter's feedback [and] that overused saying that [the interpreting] "Is not about you", because it's really not about you. And also, [I learned to] re-focus. The purpose is not about my feelings or whether I agree or disagree with the [situation], it's about their business needing to be taken care of, it just has nothing to do with me. [...] [Supervising interpreters] have looked over at me and said, "Um, you're reacting poorly." And I [thought]: "I hadn't even said anything." But they could see it. So that's enough, that other people are aware, that's enough for me then [to work on improving my masking]. – Mentee B

In the post-placement interviews with students, in addition to masking, and important, though subtle lessons about communicating with consumers, mentees reported

improvements such as “increased confidence”, “a sense of accomplishment”, and “I was impressed with the progress I made [with my interpreting skills] in such a short time”, as well having learned more about how to invoice for services and, “Accepting feeds while interpreting.” Language learning was referred to as well. One mentee said “I improved in my use of [ASL]” and was able to see that she progressed in her ability to use fewer individual signs and more characterization. Another mentee commented on her skills interpreting from ASL to English and how she could “feel the words coming easier over time.”

As mentioned above in chapter one, a number of mentor skills and qualities were identified as desirable in *Current Practices in Mentoring – Synthesis of 2007 Focus Group Discussion* (Gordon, 2008), regarding mentors working with new (not student) interpreters, or with experienced ASL/English interpreters wishing to specialize. These included having knowledge of adult learning and basic pedagogical principles and techniques and “...being flexible in their approach and directly teaching if it supports the mentee in their process.” (p. 99) One of my participant-mentors expressed that more important than interpreting skill might be the ability to share knowledge and work together:

You know, I mean, being skilled is fantastic and I think that would be super awesome as a mentor, but I don't think you necessarily need to be [an exceptionally] skilled [interpreter]. I really don't. I think if you have the knowledge and you can share that and you can work with somebody, you don't have to be [a] better [interpreter] than somebody to make them better. You just have to know the information to kind of guide them. – Mentor B

And another mentor said:

[Mentors should be] encouraging, sharing the knowledge, um, learning from each other. It's not a one-way street. Um, yeah, encouraging and just sharing that knowledge, what I have to give them and what they have to give me, and trying to make our work better – it's about the work. – Mentor C

Passion and Inspiration

In the Eller et al study, the participants were academics doing research in a variety of fields and working with protégés who were first-year graduate or undergraduate students. The mentor-mentee relationship was longer term and offered students more access to their mentors. In that study, a majority of participants discussed the importance of “shared enthusiasm and passion and the protégé’s need for inspiration” (p. 818). In the ASL/English interpreting study, student and supervising interpreter comments regarding concepts of passion and inspiration were largely related to mentors’ dedication to the quality and integrity of the interpretation being provided and to whatever other individual qualities that compel a particular interpreter to work with a student on placement. There is no remuneration and it requires extra time and patience, so professionals have to find their own reasons for accepting mentoring responsibilities. They showed a passion for the importance of bringing students and new interpreters along. Additionally, they could identify being motivated by opportunities to learn from their student(s). Referencing the importance of “the work” – the quality of interpretations and attending to consumers’ needs – also helps mentors to get over potential feelings of discomfort when directing

students or providing corrective feedback. Talking about a student who is struggling and should be switched out, one interpreter said:

Sometimes a student may feel they're "on it", and they're not and when the "cane" comes out and takes them off the stage, it's not being mean, it's about the work. If [the message is] not getting through. We'll talk about [it] later, we'll work it through, but right now we have to make it work. – Mentor C

Referring to her own experience as a student on placement, when she was interpreting and her emotional reaction to the content made her freeze, one mentor said she had learned from the interpreter: "[The interpreter said to me,] 'What do we do when things become uncomfortable? We keep working.' I really just wanted to run and cry." – Mentor B. This is another example of the supervising interpreter taking care of the interpretation, showing that in the moment the message supersedes the student's emotions.

Referring to the importance of being a good team, another mentor said:
 ...you don't really want personalities to come into play... it's about the work.
 And I wouldn't say that when I was a student, but I can say that now [put]
 personalities aside... as long as they can work with you, we can make this
 [interpretation] better. – Mentor C

If not "passion and inspiration", commitment and dedication came through as interpreters talked about the ethical obligation of mentoring as well: "[Taking a student on placement helps me] start thinking in the mindset of someone's who's now – not looking after another person – but responsible to bring them along." – Mentor D.

Another interpreter said “I feel very strongly about that, because the profession wouldn’t be growing and going forward if we didn’t have the support when we were students.”

– Mentor C.

Students recognized the need for commitment in mentors too: “Definitely [they should be] supportive and passionate about interpreting in general, because there’s nothing like being with someone who’s like ‘Uh, it doesn’t matter’ because it always matters.” (Mentee B). This mirrored results in Gordon’s 2008 report: “Participants indicate that the number one skill necessary for mentors to possess is ‘motivation’ (primarily meaning the mentor’s personal motivation to the work although a specific definition was not provided in the demographic form).” (p. 55). One mentor echoed these sentiments saying that one of the most important things about mentors is “wanting to do it”. Speaking of her own student experience, she said:

I feel as though I’ve been in situations where you could just tell that the supervising interpreter wasn’t there because they wanted to do it. And they didn’t...nothing became fruitful. I had a hard time learning, we butted heads or the trust wasn’t there. – Mentor D

When asked what was the best thing or highlight of placement, one mentee likewise, appreciated the encouragement and support from other interpreters. While she was overwhelmed in her new environment, she said the best thing was:

Talking [to the interpreters there] and expressing my concerns and hearing their feedback. [...] My concerns – like, after probably the first three days, my concerns were “I don’t have a clue what I’m doing” it was getting harder and harder and I was sinking further and further. And everyone that I would say that

to, was like “I can’t manage this and this and this all at the same time” and they were like, “No, no, no, we couldn’t do it either.” And “I had five years interpreting and then [tried this environment], so the interpreting part was under control, and then I came in and had to manage this situation. Where [I] have [only student interpreting experience] and [am] trying to do this and this all at the same time.” So, hearing that from [the interpreters] was great. And they were all so supportive. – Mentee D

Role Modeling

The importance of mentor as role model has been discussed in numerous studies of mentorships. Kram (1983) identified role modeling as a psychosocial function of the mentoring relationship. Some of the qualities mentees said that they would like to see from mentors have been discussed above, including sharing of knowledge and their interpreters’ willingness to share their own struggles. Other remarks related to mentors’ role modeling included comments similar to: “I think most of them are being professional and a good role model for the student.” – Mentee C. One student who was working on remaining professional even when she disagreed with what was happening around her, said that one way her supervising interpreter was helping her develop was by role-modeling professional behavior: “I think she’s already started [teaching me] in the sense that she sets a professional example that I can then copy.” – Mentee B. Another student observed:

I enjoy that they reflect on their time as a student ‘cause then it makes us feel like

[they've] overcome all these things and here you are now, and I can do that too, one day. Like it isn't always going to be scary, or this hard. – Mentee C

Students sometimes identified negative role modeling, or examples of behaviors they did not want to emulate. One mentee recounted:

It was with one interpreter who I worked with [in the past], and her professionalism was – I mean I'm not over the top professional, but I'm a student so I'm still learning those ropes. But she would do things, ethically, that I felt were – not oppressive, but I felt, borderline; attacking the personal life of the teamer, really inappropriate stories, or going on Facebook or whatever, while the student was working – like in the computer lab, open for the other students to see, and I just think it doesn't give the interpreting profession a good name. [The] students and the teacher can see what they're doing and they probably don't take the interpreter that seriously, seeing that. – Mentee C

Another mentee observed that “Sometimes when [the interpreter] gets comfortable with somebody [consumer] they don't always set the best example, where they'll just go ‘I shouldn't really do this, but’ Or something like that.” – Mentee B. Another recalled having witnessed unprofessional behaviour and wondered “why they took on students in the first place.”

When asked was there any time when you felt “I wish I knew what to say in this situation?”, one interpreter suggested there was value in being genuine with the student about not having all the answers:

Probably I would just tell them I didn't know [laughs] or that there could be other ways to find the answer. I wouldn't just say I don't know, I would – hopefully

offer some other way to resolve it. [“I don’t know is okay] sometimes, and in most situations, I have a teamer, it’s not just me and I can bounce things off of a teamer, that’s beneficial. But other than that, I’d say I don’t know if I don’t know. [...] Some sort of indication that it’s not answer-less, it’s just that I don’t have it. – Mentor D

Caring Personal Relationship

I think that signing up to be a supervising interpreter is so much more than just being a supervising interpreter. I mean, it’s not just letting someone tag along and try to interpret, I think it’s- I think it works much better with the relationship there. Um, and enough time to build on that relationship. – Mentee A

This study looked at mentoring within a placement that was four weeks long. Sometimes mentors and mentees knew each other from previous, shared assignments, sometimes not. Citing White et al., (2010), Eller et al observed:

“...protégés used the term “friendship” while mentors did not. In fact, one group of mentors addressed the need for healthy personal boundaries. Nurse educator mentors noted that “reciprocal relationships” were essential for successful mentoring, while nurse educator protégés discussed “meaningful relationships”.
(p.819)

Likewise, in this study overall, mentees had more to say than mentors about the desire for a relationship outside of the interpreting work. This was generally in the context of how a relationship with some level of personal meaning would make sharing and discussing the work more comfortable. When asked “What does mentoring mean to you?”, one

mentee said:

[They] share their practice with [the mentee] including personal experiences, uh, one-on-one feedback, both positive and negative feedback. And just being there for them on a relationship level as well – that’s a perk. Being able to have open conversations without any judgment being made, knowing that the mentee is still learning and can fall on their face. [...] And also be there for me when I’ve done something well. – Mentee C

Mentors were asked “Why did you say ‘Yes’ to working with a student?” The Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada establishes the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct for ASL/English interpreters in Canada. In part it states: “Members have a professional obligation to assist and encourage new interpreting practitioners in the profession.” (AVLIC, 2000). Even with an awareness of this code of conduct in mind however, none of the interpreters ranked that code as the main motivation for working with students. It appeared to be secondary to a stronger, more personal sense of obligation. They were inspired to work with students for a greater good, to “give back”, to help the profession move forward, or for the rewards they’ve described, including “staying fresh” and the gratification that comes with sharing the work. One mentor offered this:

It’s the learning and I think I feel a certain sense of responsibility to give back. I know what I know because somebody gave their time, so I feel that responsibility to kind of pay it forward. And it’s part of our Code of Ethics. . . [laugh]. And the learning experience; I learn so much about everything, and not even just work. It’s life, it’s health, it’s family. They all come with so much you just want to

allow them to share it. – Mentor B

Sharing of self, including self-disclosing fears or shortcomings, career and even personal struggles are often reported to enhance a mentor-mentee relationship and contribute to greater trust. This trust can lead to greater satisfaction for both parties in the mentorship (Hayes, 1998; Huybrecht et al., 2010; Jones, 2013; Young et al., 2004).

When asked what makes a good mentor, another student said:

It helps if they are someone who shares their experiences of – like if I'm having a bad day, interpreting-wise, of how I – maybe they've been in that situation and someone who can share their experiences of that too; that they too have been in that spot, or they've been in those shoes, or they know how it feels, those sorts of things. – Mentee D

Hayes (1998) noted that the relative short-term nature of some practicum placements is problematic when it comes to developing meaningful bonds. Her case study, *Mentoring and Self-Efficacy for Advanced Nursing Practice: A Philosophical Approach for Nurse Practitioner Preceptors*, looked at the value of the nurse practitioner mentor-mentee relationships and found that, “Nurse practitioner preceptor/student relationships typically are short-term, graduate-faculty assigned, intense one-on-one relationships between two strangers, which might not be adequate for the development of self-efficacy for advanced practice” (p. 54). Instead, she proposed, if the time frame was longer a more meaningful relationship could develop that might produce more rewarding results. One interpreter mentee commented that time and effort be given to building that relationship prior to time spent on practicum:

“...building a relationship before entering the placement is important because we

only have so much time on our placement and if you spend, you know, the first week getting to know each other and realizing each other's limits, that takes time away as well. So, having that relationship and that foundation ready before you enter, you [can] focus on the work more, potentially, and it's more comfortable."

– Mentee A

Independence and Collaboration

In the Eller et al study mentees said things like “the mentors should be team players” and “provide opportunities for co-authorship” and “mentors should identify the mentee as a colleague” (2013, p.818). In the field of interpreting, depending on the setting, (i.e., elementary, middle high school, post-secondary, community settings) service is sometimes provided by teams of two or more. Quality of service is partially dependent on seamless teamwork between the interpreting partners. When switching places, their aim is to do so without disrupting proceedings and they also aim to share common terminology, making ASL and English vocabulary choices that are shared, at least for the duration of the assignment and especially if the interpreted discourse includes specialist vocabulary. Students on placement have the opportunity to be part of the ‘team’ and can be put in positions where their role is identical to professional, paid, work, where they are considered an equal to their partner(s). As shown previously, all five of the interpreters in this study could identify instances of collaboration where they trusted the student to be part of the team. At times, interpreters made special efforts to find challenging assignments but where there was also a good chance the student could succeed and feel accomplished. Below is one such story:

Yeah, so this student was struggling in an environment that had a lot of technical challenges, versus interpreting-skill challenges. So, I talked to [faculty] who wanted to get a feel for how the student would do outside of that environment. So we worked together in a different setting. [...] It was four deaf people on a panel [...]. She [interpreted for] two people and worked the entire time – an hour and a half, managed really well, I mean I had to jump in a bit but did really well. I thought it was possible because it was in a classroom that the student was familiar with and I was familiar with the deaf consumers enough too. And I'd worked with [student] before. By an hour, [student] really started getting tired, but was still able to manage. – Mentor A

Collaboration for the mentee and mentor appears to require the mentor to understand her role as sometimes teacher, sometimes guide, sometimes equal partner. One interpreter reflected on her understanding of the role since she had been a student:

[The mentoring] process – it's not so much that power dynamic as I thought originally. [As a student] I originally thought I was there to learn and to experience and now [I've learned] that it's very back and forth. It's not really that I'm just going to tell you [mentee] everything and then you're going to go off and be a better human being, interpreter. It'll be back and forth. [...] And sometimes you can go down a whole different path if you're not trying to maintain being in control of everything [as the mentor]. – Mentor B

Mentee Qualities and Self-Efficacy

Although Eller et al.'s eight key elements (2103), have greatly informed the

research here, this additional, ninth section provides an opportunity to specifically discuss mentee-participants, their perceptions of success on placements, and what they do - or do not do - to influence that success. A number of studies have included a focus on mentees' experiences and what they bring to the mentorship. As cited previously, Hayes (1998), looked at self-efficacy among nurse protégés and, citing Bandura (1977), describes self-efficacy as "a personal belief or conviction in one's ability to carry out a behavior that will produce a particular outcome, a sense of confidence that one can organize and complete a behavior competently (p. 54). In *Role of Protégé Personality in Receipt of Mentoring and Career Success* (1994), Turban & Dougherty looked at protégés' loci of control, self-esteem and self-monitoring abilities and found that "proactive initiation" of mentoring by a protégé was advantageous. The results indicate that "protégés can influence the amount of mentoring they receive. Specifically, individuals with internal loci of control and high self-monitoring and emotional stability were more likely to initiate and therefore to receive mentoring." (p. 698). As discussed in Chapter 2, an internal locus of control refers to an individual's sense that his or her actions affect outcomes, versus seeing such consequences as being due to environmental or outside forces, which would be external locus of control (Rotter, 1966; Spector, 1982). Similar to these findings, some of the ASL/English interpreting mentees were clearly aware of how they contribute to and affect the success of placement, having learned in the classroom and on previous placements. One said: "It's my responsibility to tell them what I need. And what I think I need and what they think I need could be entirely different and that's important to discuss as well", and later expanded on this idea:

I can get the most out of the placement if I state what I need, and how I need it. For example, I can go to a place, to an assignment on placement, but without the discussion before and after, it's not as useful as it could be. So, I really try – depending on who I'm with and how much time they have on their hands, I try to explain what I'm working on, what I need to work on, what challenges I face in this particular setting, what challenges I've faced in the past. – Mentee A

As this comment suggests, mentees were able to identify specific areas of self-growth, in this case not just the ability to say what she thinks she needs, but an increased awareness of the value of discussing work with her supervising interpreter. Mentee B could explain how she came to prefer straightforward, direct feedback and guidance from supervising interpreters, noting that she's learned that she can sometimes intimidate others, without intending to, and this can lead to a "soft" approach from a mentor, which does not work as well for her. She said, "I don't like too much love." Knowledge of self, then, seems to have played an important part in students' perceptions of why things worked out for them and their learning. One student was keenly aware of her nerves and how that affected her interpreting. Interpreters need to lag, or hold back until there is at least one complete proposition or idea to process and interpret. Jumping in too soon can cause errors in the interpreted message. She describes the self-talk that helped her get past her nerves:

I just remembered that last assignment [...] and I remembered how nervous I was then, and I'm just like "I'm not *that* nervous [now] and I did okay during that [assignment]." So, I just kind of always reflect on that moment whenever I'm nervous now. That's what I always try to remember now, if I can just get my nerves to not impact me. And by remembering that time, "This is better,

compared to that one time” [laugh]. – Mentee C

As mentioned, debriefing and feedback discussions require the mentee to be engaged and to ask questions about ASL and English vocabulary choices, the interpretation, the physical set up – anything about the work and the decisions being made while providing service. Placements are seen as opportunities to learn more about how to talk about interpreting, which improves learning. “I try to come prepared with questions from previous [assignments], um, to get different opinions and also to have questions ready. So I’m not just sitting there like a lump on a log.” – Mentee A. In the post-placement interview, one mentee also observed that she understood the importance of asking questions and knowing what to ask, but had learned to ask fewer yes/no questions, and more who, what, where, when, why questions. – Mentee C. She noted this elicited more discussion with her mentor and deeper understanding, especially in post-assignment feedback and debriefing. These students perceive their communication skills as key to a successful mentoring experience, again suggesting the relevance of self-efficacy and self awareness on the part of mentees.

In the same vein, mentors valued “students who ask questions”, are “ready and willing to participate” and don’t “walk in thinking they’ve got everything figured out, because they don’t”. One interpreter mentioned age of students as a concern, pointing out the importance of attitude:

The interpreting skills are second, which is the sad part sometimes, but it’s the other stuff that will make me want to work with or not work with someone. And those – the pattern that I notice – is that the challenges that I would have with any student typically comes from youth. And attitude. [...] Are they incorporating

feedback or not? Are they receptive to feedback or not? Are they giving you excuses while they're doing that or are they trying to think about it and trying to put it in somehow or apply it to their work. So, that's – it all comes back to the person and who they are and how they cope with all those things. – Mentor A

Recommendations for Sponsoring Educational Program

This final Results and Discussion section will summarize findings related to the sponsoring educational institution (NSCC) and its interpreter education program. In post-placement interviews, interpreter-participants were asked: “Is there anything you wish the sponsoring educational institution could do differently leading up to or during placement?” Their responses showed an appreciation for all of the coordinating that practicum requires. Additionally, mentors pointed to valuing their relationship and communication with program faculty. All five supervising interpreters have first-hand experience with the College and its interpreting program, having graduated from same. The two-year program accepts a maximum of sixteen students. Small class size means faculty become familiar with individual learners and can adjust instructional approaches accordingly. This relative intimacy also offers the potential to engender strong bonds among students and teachers. As mentioned, students often report deep self-growth and instructors are witness to this. One supervising interpreter expressed the importance of her relationship with faculty, which would have begun while she was still a student:

And I feel that – if I needed anything from [faculty], I know that I can contact her because I have that relationship. Maybe if that relationship didn't exist, I wouldn't feel as comfortable, but I do. Having that availability makes me feel

better, or knowing that she would be there if I needed her [...]. She would be there to decompress afterwards, or offer advice. – Mentor D

This all points to the value of faculty's relationship with the community of interpreters and how it can influence interpreters' willingness to work with a student on placement. Feeling supported by program faculty is important, but could that level of support increase, and how? Some of the participants brought up assigning one central, supervising interpreter for each student. When possible, having a central supervisor is preferable as it helps with the ongoing challenge of finding and scheduling appropriate, student-friendly assignments. In addition to sharing their own assignments with the student, a central, supervising interpreter can coordinate interpreting opportunities with other interpreters and remain in the mentoring role. This can be especially helpful in making contact with interpreters working as freelancers, or contract professionals, who do not necessarily have a regular, daily schedule. Depending on schedules and the setting(s) a student might be working in, a formal, face-to-face meeting with faculty, supervising interpreter and student does not always occur during placement. One mentor said a more formal meeting, at least once during placement, is always beneficial. When there is a central, supervising interpreter, it is easier to arrange a meeting with the student and faculty to review how placement is going. The interpreter described how a formal meeting sometimes gives faculty the opportunity to refer back to class discussion and more effectively address student behaviours that have proved a challenge on placement. Further, at a later time, the mentor could use these discussions to also help with mentee learning, i.e., "Remember in our meeting when [faculty] said 'that'? And how you can try 'this' instead...".

In students' second (final) year, course work includes a lot of classroom interpreting practice. Simulated interpreting scenarios are used and professional interpreters and members of the Deaf community are welcome to drop in and participate and share feedback. Other suggestions for improving placements included opportunities for seeing more of the students beforehand, possibly more classroom visits, or an orientation session. One interpreter said she would like to get to know the students and their skills better:

I'd like to get in prior to, get into the class, see for myself when the students are doing drills. Just, I mean that's on me to make that time, so that way I'd have a better idea for myself, of the growth of the student, 'cause that's also important. [...] They may also have the ability to continue with that growth. So, it's the potential, looking at that as well. That I feel I miss, I don't see that, so I should be more involved in the classroom, just to observe, just to get in and observe.

– Mentor E

The impetus for this study came from a desire to see more interpreters offer their professional practice for sharing with a student, to become a mentor. One supervising interpreter pointed to a need for offering “more guidance as to how to go about mentoring”, that some interpreters may “shy away” from working with a student if they haven't done it before. – Mentor C. Another said it would be good to get more feedback “about how I'm doing” or any guidance that “let's me know that I'm on the right path, or not.” – Mentor D. Interpreters spoke, in general, about a desire for more mentor training, including:

“I would love to see a more formal mentoring program in Nova Scotia. It's

lacking, I think. There are lots of great of interpreters here who are giving their time and energy, but to have it more formalized would be invaluable. – Mentor A

In summary, participants' responses point to recommendations for the host program that include providing more formal training to interpreters, assigning one, central supervising interpreter during placements, and providing more opportunities for interpreters to get to know students prior to placements, to aid in matching mentors with mentees.

Chapter 5 **DISCUSSION and LIMITATIONS**

Discussion

Interview content was analyzed for key themes that would help elucidate the mentee-mentor relationship. The following discussion of results and limitations looks at relevance, parallels with previous research, potential impact on mentee and mentor preparation and education, all in an effort to answer the original research question, “Which elements of an ASL/English interpreting mentorship do student mentees and their interpreter mentors perceive to be most important for an effective short-term practicum placement?”

Concepts of open communication, access and empathy came up frequently in interviews with participants. In keeping with much of the mentoring literature (Eby et al, 2013; Gordon, 2008; Hayes, 1998; Rhodes & Dubois, 2008), all nine participants in this study showed an understanding of the importance of empathy and compassion on the part of mentors. Mentees’ expectations overall, appeared realistic when it came to how much time and access they could expect from their supervising interpreter(s). Similar to Eller et al.’s 2013 study however, mentees had higher expectations than mentors did for developing a “caring personal relationship” or friendship. Mentees did not assume personal relationships would develop, but saw it as valuable, as an extra benefit if it happened.

Although this study was conducted before and after a particular four-week final placement in spring, students had been on practicum placement twice before in the same academic year: once for two weeks in fall semester, and once for three weeks in winter semester. During these placements and other interactions with the community of

interpreters, students had formal and informal opportunities to get to know interpreters, and vice versa. This might partially explain how, even with such a short-term placement, two of the four students reported developing a personal bond with a mentor. As some of the participants have suggested, additional efforts to require or support students and interpreters to become more acquainted with one another, could improve the prospect of deeper mentor-mentee relationships for all mentees and mentors and therefore enhance the mentorship experience for both parties. (Eller et al, 2013).

As mentioned previously, programs are seeing younger applicants, who lack adult-life experience. Pointing to this, one mentor said that some students are not active enough in getting to know interpreters and in initiating professional relationships, that they need to be “pushed a little further”. Another mentor agreed that more could be done to bring students and interpreters together but preferred something structured, as opposed to an open social event, which she finds awkward. She suggested something timed where students come with their own questions and get to sit down for ten or fifteen minutes with each interpreter, this would add to the formal and informal options students already have for meeting interpreters in and outside of the classroom and could promote better matching of mentees with mentors.

Although there is evidence, as discussed, that mentee self-efficacy, assertiveness and internal locus of control can contribute to mentorship success (Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Spector, 1982; Rotter, 1966), some of the supervising interpreters in this study are calling for *explicit* effort on the part of students to initiate and engender relationships with interpreters, seeing it as necessary to students’ education. Whether this leads directly to a formal mentee-mentor relationship or not, those connections are important for students

during their program and afterwards as they look to work in the field. Additionally, unlike some fields, ASL/English interpreting program graduates typically go on to paid work that looks exactly the same as the partnerships they were part of while on placements. That is, interpreters call on the same interpersonal skills and professional-partnering abilities to provide service whether they are working in tandem with a student or an experienced peer. The decisions might differ depending on each parties' skills and abilities, but the same set of questions about the physical set up, turn taking, the consumers' needs, goals of the interaction and so forth, have to be considered regardless of the team's combined capabilities or years of experience. The evidence suggests that quality of the relationship has the potential to make the work more or less effective.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Allen et al., in 2006, published *Mentorship Behaviors and Mentorship Quality Associated with Formal Mentoring Programs: Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice*, in which they describe how mentors who reported mentor training was of high quality were also more likely to report that they had provided psychosocial mentoring to a mentee. Recall that Kram (1983), described psychosocial functions of mentoring as increasing self-efficacy, self-worth and professional identity (Eby et al., 2010, 2013). The authors of this study speculate that: "perhaps higher quality training includes more breadth of topics and focuses on not just the career-related roles that mentors might fulfill for protégés but also provides guidance on how to develop a close interpersonal relationship with protégés" (p. 576). This would seem parallel to findings in the present study. That is, mentors and mentees had opportunity (via interview questions, Appendix A) to discuss skill development ("career functions" of mentoring) and did, but more numerous and seemingly more relevant were concepts of

relationship, communication, self-growth and self awareness in both groups. These are the “psychosocial functions” named by Kram (1983). A bias may exist here, as one of the researcher’s early interests was in the psychosocial functions of mentorships and, however unintentionally, could have influenced interview question development and interview conversations.

Kram also cites Erikson’s “generativity versus stagnation” stage (1963, 1968, 1978), and points to a mentor’s opportunity to “feel challenged, stimulated, and creative in providing mentoring functions as they become ‘senior adults’ with wisdom to share.” (p. 609). Additional research, with a greater number of interpreters and students in a short-term placement, might provide for greater generalizability and further evidence that when mentors are able to provide for psychosocial functions, the mentorship relationship is more rewarding.

Content coded under “Goals and Challenges” suggests there is room for improving the amount of preparation mentors receive prior to working with a student. Likewise, responses about feedback for the host institution point to the value of having one, central supervisor even if the student ends up working with several interpreters. This has not been specifically discussed in the literature but is closely related to concepts of communication and relationship building, both of which have been shown to affect the mentoring process. (In fact, most research into mentoring assumes a de facto dyad: one mentor matched up with one mentee.) In this particular community (Nova Scotia), it is not presently realistic to find one central supervisor for each student and for each placement. However, there is value in identifying that this is preferable and working toward an ideal model.

Everything mentors and mentees had to say about setting goals and reflecting on and adjusting those during placement is potential material for mentor training and mentee preparation. Helping both parties understand each other's hopes and perceptions of placement can ameliorate the negative effect of any unmet expectations.

Where interview results were categorized as discussing Role Modeling, participants could identify both positive and negative examples. Remarkably, students – or mentors recalling their experience as students – could describe clear instances of seeing “what not to do” while on the job. It is unclear why a professional would exhibit undesirable, unethical or even unprofessional behaviour(s) ever, but especially while mentoring a student. Being aware that students see and register these behaviours, however, is important for preparing both groups, mentors and mentees. Otherwise, the in vivo nature of learning from working professionals provides many positive behaviours for students to emulate.

Limitations

The most notable limitation of this study was the number of participants, five interpreters and four interpreting students. When conducting any type of research, it is beneficial to involve a larger number of contributors, to improve the researcher's ability to generalize the results to a wider population, and to allow for a more comprehensive study. Likewise, the diversity of participants was limiting in its scope as all participants were of perceived European descent and all were female and hearing, or non-Deaf. The perspectives and life experience of a more diverse group has the potential to uncover additional information about the mentee-mentor relationship.

A case-study approach was used here, individually interviewing each participant twice, before and after a four-week practicum placement. Interview questions relied on mentoring literature and the field of coaching and mentoring to construct eleven or twelve open-ended questions for each interview (Appendix A). The resulting semi-structured interviews generally required participants to give some thought to their answers. A greater number of students and interpreters could have been included if a written survey was used and distributed more widely and this might have provided participants more time to think about their responses. The original interest however, was an in depth look at a particular program at the Nova Scotia Community College and its challenges to place students with supervising interpreters.

This study was conducted in a relatively small Canadian province and results may not be generalizable to programs in larger centers with larger Deaf and interpreter communities. The focus of this research was on mentorship effectiveness in short-term placements and some results may not be applicable to longer-term placements for interpreting students. On the other hand, conducting a similar study involving a longer placement, could provide a deeper look into the student-supervising interpreter experience.

The working definition of *'mentor'* used here is “short or long term mentor-mentee relationships of more-experienced practitioners with novice or student interpreters, where that relationship provides opportunity to address both career and psychosocial functions of interpreting service provision.” This allowed for a close look at the mentee-mentor relationship even if the dyad shared a single interpreting assignment. As discussed above, however, the value of one, central mentor who works

with a student and also oversees assignments with other professionals, would appear to be of value, especially where the aim is mentees' psychosocial development, including increasing self-efficacy.

Throughout this study I have been aware of my role as an interpreter in the community and as interpreter educator in the very institution where all nine participants have attended at one time or another. I have been a teacher to all but one of them and have shared team interpreting responsibilities with some. This has been an advantage in some ways, as I sought to have a "conversation" about mentoring and we share a common vocabulary and experience. I recognize, however, the potential for bias and have made a conscious effort to minimize bias throughout the entire research project.

Summary

Results of this study point toward human communication skills such as listening and being empathetic as central to the mentorship success, which in turn, is closely related to the idea of relationship and trust between the two parties. The suggestion that the quality of the relationship is important points to the value of students and interpreters getting to know one another prior to placements as well as education programs providing more preparation and training to mentors.

Although this research project began with the broad question of how to improve interpreter-mentor preparation and training for working with students, results suggest efforts at increasing student self awareness and self-efficacy have just as much, if not more potential for influencing mentee and mentor perceptions of the mentorship as successful. This observation relates back to Hayes's 1998 study of nurse practitioner

preceptors and students, where she says: “With an extended investment in students, the outcomes attributed to mentoring could occur, especially adequate socialization into advanced role practice and the development of self-efficacy for practice” (p. 54). Exactly what that “extended investment in students” involves, is a question for further consideration, curriculum development and future research.

Chapter 6

FUTURE RESEARCH and CONCLUSIONS

Mentee qualities, including skills and abilities but also level of self-awareness and self-efficacy have the potential to affect mentorship outcomes. In keeping with much of the mentoring literature, the data here suggests a correlation between mentee self-efficacy and positive perceptions of the mentorship. This connection might be an area for future research, specifically regarding ASL/English interpreting students and short-term placements, but involving a larger group of participants than was involved here. Research and guidelines for developing self-efficacy scales are described by Bandura (2006) and may be a useful reference for programs and future research in mentoring interpreting students (Delk, 2013). Jones (2003), has observed that becoming self aware is important, but “how do you help mentees act on this learning?” (p. 401). This question suggests further research as well but it also can inform more immediate efforts to improve mentee and mentor education and preparation in the field of ASL/English interpreter education. Based on the discussion of findings discussed in Chapter 5, additional recommendations for future research are offered here:

1. This study looked at on-the-job mentoring versus electronic mentoring or mentoring/coaching outside of the working dyad. Further study of the value of an “outside” mentor who is not directly involved in the mentee’s interpreting assignments on placement but provides guidance, support and advice has the potential to enhance student learning.
2. Conduct research to compare male versus female experiences as both interpreter mentors and mentees; additionally, look at effectiveness of different gender combinations in the two roles.

3. Research the potential effect of an individual's position of privilege on mentee-mentor interpreting relationships in the field of ASL/English interpretation.
4. Conduct research into mentee-mentor dyads where ethnic and cultural diversity may play a role in how professional interpreters mentor or how mentees perceive mentorship, including mentors and mentees of Deaf heritage.

The main objective of this study was to identify which elements of mentoring relationships are most important for an effective mentorship, specifically in short-term student practicum placements for ASL/English interpreting students in Nova Scotia. To uncover these key factors, semi-structured interviews were used to gain insight into the student-interpreter interaction and to understand what each party perceives as important, lacking, helpful, unhelpful or otherwise impacting the placement results. Interpreting programs are challenged to find enough placement opportunities for their students and this was motivation to take an in depth look at the student – supervising interpreter relationship in order to see how the odds of persuading more interpreters to work with students could be increased. Results point to the value of improving mentor preparation, including formal training, and to mentee's self-efficacy as factors that influence perceptions of mentoring effectiveness.

The data and analysis collected here can inform a dialog between students, program faculty, members of the Deaf community and interpreters, including interpreters who have not, but would be willing to consider supervising students. If the mentor experience can be made more rewarding and therefore more attractive, the potential is there to increase interpreter participation and enhance mentee learning. Likewise, the

more self-knowledge and self-efficacy students can bring to the mentorship, the greater the likelihood they will experience significant growth.

References

- Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., & Lentz, E. (2006). Mentorship behaviors and mentorship quality associated with formal mentoring programs: Closing the gap between research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*(3), 567-578. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.91.3.567
- Allen, T. D., & Poteet, M. L. (1999). Developing effective mentoring relationships: Strategies from the mentor's viewpoint. *Career Development Quarterly, 48*(1), 59-73.
- Allen, T. D., & Eby, L. T. d. T. (2007). *The blackwell handbook of mentoring : A multiple perspectives approach*. Malden, MA ; Oxford: Malden, MA ; Oxford : Blackwell Publishing.
- Angelelli, C. V. (2001). *Deconstructing the invisible interpreter: A critical study of the interpersonal role of the interpreter in a cross-cultural/linguistic communicative event* . (304726933).
- Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada. (2014). Interpreter Education. Retrieved from <http://www.avlic.ca/about/ieps>
- Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada. (2016). Retrieved <http://www.avlic.ca/ethics-and-guidlines/english>
- Ball, Carolyn. (2013). *Legacies and legends: History of interpreter education from 1800 to the 21st century*.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for creating self-efficacy scales. In T. Urdan & F. Pajares (eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing
- Clandinin, J. D., & Connelly, M. F. (1987). Teachers' personal knowledge: What counts as personal in studies of the personal. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 19*(6-), 487-500.
- Cranwell-Ward, B., Grover. (2004). *Mentoring: A henley review of best practice* Palgrave, MacMillan.

- Crisp, G., & Cruz, I. (2009). Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. *Research in Higher Education, 50*(6), 525-545.
doi:10.1007/s11162-009-9130-2
- Dean, R. K., & Pollard, R. Q. (2001). Application of demand-control theory to sign language interpreting: Implications for stress and interpreter training. *Journal of Deaf Studies & Deaf Education, 6*(1), 1.
- Delk, L. (2013). *Interpreter Mentoring: A Theory-Based Approach to Program Design and Evaluation*. Gallaudet University.
- Eby, L. T., Durley, J. R., Evans, S. C., & Ragins, B. R. (2006). The relationship between short-term mentoring benefits and long-term mentor outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 69*(3), 424-444. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.msvu.ca/10.1016/j.jvb.2006.05.003>
- Eby, L. T., Butts, M. M., Durley, J., & Ragins, B. R. (2010). Are bad experiences stronger than good ones in mentoring relationships? evidence from the protégé and mentor perspective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77*(1), 81-92.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.msvu.ca/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.02.010>
- Eby, L. T., Allen, T. D., Hoffman, B. J., Baranik, L. E., Sauer, J. B., Baldwin, S., . . . Evans, S. C. (2013). *An interdisciplinary meta-analysis of the potential antecedents, correlates, and consequences of protégé perceptions of mentoring* doi:10.1037/a0029279
- Elbaz, F. (1981). The teacher's "practical knowledge": Report of a case study. *Curriculum Inquiry, 11*(1), 43-71.
- Eller, L. S., Lev, E. L., & Feurer, A. (2013). Key components of an effective mentoring relationship: A qualitative study. *Nurse Education Today, 34*(5), 815-820.
doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2013.07.020
- Fuller, S. S. (2000). Enabling, empowering, inspiring: Research and mentorship through the years. *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association, 88*(1), 1-10.
- Gallaudet University. (2014). Department of Interpretation. Retrieved from

- http://www.gallaudet.edu/interpretation/phd_program.html
- Ghosh, R., & Reio, T. G., Jr. (2013). Career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 83(1), 106-116.
- Grant, A. M. (2008). Personal life coaching for coaches-in-training enhances goal attainment, insight and learning. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 1(1), 54-70.
- Gordon, P. (2008) Current Practices in Mentoring, Synthesis of 2007 Focus Group Discussions. A Report of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers.
- Hayes, E. (1998). Mentoring and self-efficacy for advanced nursing practice: A philosophical approach for nurse practitioner preceptors. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, 10(2), 53-57. doi:10.1111/j.1745-7599.1998.tb00495.x
- He, Y., & Levin, B. B. (2008). Match or mismatch? how congruent are the beliefs of teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, and university-based teacher educators? *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(4), 37-55.
- Hupcey, J. E. (1988). *The Socialization Process for Master's Level Nurse Practitioner Students: Students' Expectations of their Future Roles and the Socialization Factors which Influence these Role Expectations*,
- Huybrecht, S., Loeckx, W., Quaeyhaegens, Y., De Tobel, D., & Mistiaen, W. (2011). Mentoring in nursing education: Perceived characteristics of mentors and the consequences of mentorship. *Nurse Education Today*, 31(3), 274-278.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.msvu.ca/10.1016/j.nedt.2010.10.022>
- Jones, J. (2013). Factors influencing mentees' and mentors' learning throughout formal mentoring relationships. *Human Resource Development International*, 16(4), 390-408.
doi:10.1080/13678868.2013.810478
- Killian, J. (2011). Mentoring: Not only for student teachers. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 20(2), 6-9. doi:10.1177/1057083710395118

- Kram, K. E. (1983). Phases of the mentor relationship. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 26(4), 608-625.
- Kram, K. E. (1985). Improving the mentoring process. *Training and Development Journal*, 39(4), 40,42-43.
- Larsson, S. (1987). Learning from experience: Teachers' conceptions of changes in their professional practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 19(1), 35-43.
- Levin, B. B., He, Y., & Allen, M. H. (2013). Teacher beliefs in action: A cross-sectional, longitudinal follow-up study of teachers' personal practical theories. *Teacher Educator*, 48(3), 201-217. doi:10.1080/08878730.2013.796029
- Levinson, D. J. (1978). others. *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Murillo, H., Reece, E. A., Snyderman, R., & Sung, N. S. (2006). Meeting the challenges facing clinical research: Solutions proposed by leaders of medical specialty and clinical research societies. *Academic Medicine: Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*, 81(2), 107-112.
- National Association of the Deaf. (2016). American Sign Language. Retrieved from <https://nad.org/issues/american-sign-language/learning-american-sign-language>
- National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. (2014). What is the Definition of Mentorship? Retrieved from <http://www.interpretereducation.org/aspiring-interpreter/mentorship/faq/>
- Passmore, J., Peterson, D. B., & Freire, T. (2013). *The wiley-blackwell handbook of the psychology of coaching and mentoring*. Chichester, UK ; Malden, MA: Chichester, UK ; Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell.
- Ragins, B. R., & Cotton, J. L. (1999). Mentor functions and outcomes: A comparison of men and women in formal and informal mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84(4), 529-550.

- Ragins, B. R., Cotton, J. L., & Miller, J. S. (2000). Marginal mentoring: The effects of type of mentor, quality of relationship, and program design on work and career attitudes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(6), 1177-1194. doi:10.2307/1556344
- Ragins, B. R., & Scandura, T. A. (1999). Burden or blessing? expected costs and benefits of being a mentor. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 20(4), 494.
- Rhodes, J. E., & DuBois, D. L. (2008). Mentoring relationships and programs for youth. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 17(4), 254-258. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8721.2008.00585.x
- Richards, L., & Morse, J. M. (2012). *Readme first for a user's guide to qualitative methods*. Sage.
- Registry of interpreters for the Deaf. (2014). Finding an Interpreting Program. Retrieved from http://rid.org/interpreting/new_to_interpreting/index.cfm/AID/61
- Rotter, J. B. (1990). Internal versus external control of reinforcement: A case history of a variable. *American Psychologist*, 45(4), 489-493.
- Rubin, H. J. (2012). In Rubin I. (Ed.), *Qualitative interviewing : The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.. ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Thousand Oaks, Calif. : SAGE.
- Russell, M. L., & Russell, J. A. (2011). Mentoring relationships: Cooperating teachers' perspectives on mentoring student interns. *Professional Educator*, 35(1)
- Scandura, T. A. (1998). Dysfunctional mentoring relationships and outcomes. *Journal of Management*, 24(3), 449-467.
- Spector, P. E. (1982). Behavior in organizations as a function of employee's locus of control. *Psychological Bulletin*, 91(3), 482-497. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.91.3.482
- Stokoe Jr., W. C. (2005). Sign language structure: An outline of the visual communication systems of the american deaf. *Journal of Deaf Studies & Deaf Education*, 10(1), 3-37. doi:10.1093/deafed/eni001
- Thomas, J. DeLima; Arnold, Robert M. (2011). Giving Feedback. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 14(2), 233-239, Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.

- Turban, D. B., & Dougherty, T. W. (1994). Role of protégé personality in receipt of mentoring and career success. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37(3), 688-702.
- Wilcox, S., Wilcox, P., & ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages, and Linguistics. (1991). *Teaching ASL as a second language*.
- Wilson, A. M. E. (2014). Mentoring student nurses and the educational use of self: A hermeneutic phenomenological study. *Nurse Education Today*, 34(3), 313-318.
doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2013.06.013
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). London: Sage.
- Young, J. P., Alvermann, D., Kaste, J., Henderson, S., & Many, J. (2004). Being a friend and a mentor at the same time: A pooled case comparison. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 12(1), 23-36.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Guides ASL/English Interpreting Students and Supervising Interpreters

Before Practicum Placement		
	MENTEE	MENTOR
1	Can you please tell me about how you came to apply to the AEI program and what attracted you to interpreting?	Can you please tell me about how you got into interpreting? How long have you been an interpreter?
2	Mentoring. What does that mean to you? What do you think of when you think of mentoring?	Mentoring. What does that mean to you? What do you think of when you think of mentoring?
3	Please describe for me your most memorable experience with a mentor [teacher/leader/other experienced person]. - Worst experience with a mentor? - Best experience with a mentor?	Please describe for me your most memorable experience with a mentor [teacher/leader/other experienced person]. - Worst experience with a mentor? - Best experience with a mentor?
4	What have you learned from previous placements? - How might this experience apply to the upcoming placement?	Reflecting on your own experience as a student, please describe what that was like for you, going out on placements.
5	How do you think this upcoming placement will compare with your previous placements? - What do you imagine it will be like? - What are you most excited about? - What are you least excited about?	Do you have previous experience as a supervising interpreter? - How many times have you worked with a student? - How do you imagine this placement will compare? - What are you expecting during the upcoming placement, what do you imagine it will be like?
6	What has preparing for this placement been like? - Goal(s) setting? - Describe communication and collaboration with supervising interpreter.	Why did you say “Yes” to working with a student? What is it that attracts you to this kind of additional responsibility?
7	Other than [reference answer(s) to #6] skills what, if any other skills do you imagine might be addressed on this upcoming placement?	What has preparing for this placement been like? - Describe communication and collaboration with student. - What skills will the student be focusing on?
8	How do you imagine these learning goals might be addressed?	What do you see as the role of NSCC and program faculty when it comes to placement? - What materials or information, if any, has NSCC or the program faculty provided regarding this placement?

9	How would you describe your responsibilities as a student interpreter on placement?	[Referring to #6] You mentioned that [Student] will be focusing on [Goal(s)]. How do you imagine helping [Student] address this/these goal(s)?
10	What quality or qualities do you see as most important in a supervising interpreter?	Can you describe what it is you look for in a student interpreter, on placement?
11	Is there anything else you would like to add or ask?	What quality or qualities do you see as most important in a supervising interpreter?
		Is there anything else you would like to add or ask?

After Practicum Placement		
	MENTEE	MENTOR
1	Now that your last placement is over, how does it feel?	How are you feeling about the placement now that it's over?
2	What was the best thing or highlight of this placement for you? Can you please share a favourite story?	What was the best thing or highlight of this placement for you? Can you please share a favourite story?
3	All in all what was/were the greatest challenge(s) of this placement? - Please explain how you met the challenge(s) - What role, if any, did your supervising interpreter play in helping to meet the challenge(s)	All in all what was/were the greatest challenge(s) of this placement? - Please explain how you met the challenge(s) - What role, if any, did you play in dealing with the challenge(s)?
4	How was this placement similar to your other placement experiences? Different?	How was this placement similar to your other placement experiences? Different?
5	How do you feel about your skills after placement? Can you please describe your learning? - Specific interpreting or language skill learning? - Other learning (e.g. Business skills, interpersonal skills)	What progress, if any, do you feel [Student] has made with her/his interpreting skills? - Language skills? - Other learning (e.g. Business skills, interpersonal skills)
6	When you think of the role of your supervising interpreter, how do you relate your learning to the guidance provided?	Thinking about that progress [Student] made with [skill/s named in answer to #5], what role, if any, did you play in that progress? What decisions did you make that contributed to his/her learning in that example?

7	<p>What about [Supervising interpreter] style of communication and collaboration? What did you find most helpful?</p> <p>- Least helpful?</p>	<p>What if any, communications have you had with program faculty during placement? Please explain.</p> <p>- Is there anything you wish NSCC could do differently leading up to or during or after placement?</p>
8	<p>Reflecting on your placement experience, is there anything you would have done differently?</p>	<p>How would you describe your communication style with [Student]?</p>
9	<p>Before this placement, you answered that [Answer to #10]. Has your answer changed at all to “What quality or qualities do you see as most important in a supervising interpreter?” and if so, how?</p>	<p>Reflecting on this placement experience, is there anything you would have done differently?</p>
10	<p>What about student interpreters? What do you see as ideal?</p>	<p>Before this placement, you answered that [Answer to #10]. Has your answer changed at all to “What quality or qualities do you see as most important in a supervising interpreter?” and if so, how?</p>
11	<p>Is there anything else you would like to add or ask? Anything you wished I’d asked that I have not asked?</p>	<p>What about student interpreters? What do you see as ideal?</p>
12		<p>Is there anything else you would like to add or ask? Anything you wished I’d asked that I have not asked?</p>

Appendix B

Letter of Informed Consent

Mentoring Processes for ASL/English Interpretation Students/Supervisors on Practicum Placements

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear _____,

I am looking for both interpreting students planning their final placements before graduation, and their supervising interpreters to participate in a research project on mentoring.

Project Goals

The purpose of the project is to learn more about how students learn and how mentors mentor, when it comes to placements in the interpreting community, here in Halifax Regional Municipality and throughout Nova Scotia. The aim is to use results from this project to enhance the way NSCC's ASL/English Interpretation program prepares both students and interpreters for placements.

Participation

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to attend two approximately one-hour interviews where the researcher will ask questions about past student-interpreter or supervising-interpreter experiences, mentoring, learning, preparing for placement and expectations for placement. The request is that participants do not discuss or name any consumers of the interpreting services they provide or have provided. The focus of the project is on the student and supervising interpreter and the learning that takes place.

Individual interviews will be held with each participant. The first interview will be scheduled before spring placements begin (April 27, 2015), and the second one-hour interview will be scheduled at some point after placements end, May 22, 2015. It may also be necessary to do follow-up interviews to clarify or further discuss your contributions. All interview times and locales will be arranged at your convenience. Your answers and our discussion will be audio recorded for thoroughness and possible later review during analysis of all responses.

Confidentiality

In analyzing and writing about results for my thesis, any and all interview material will be referred to anonymously and identities of all participants will be kept confidential. Anyone willing to participate and who would like to be acknowledged in future curriculum design for students and supervising interpreters will be given credit for their participation.

Potential Benefits of Participating

I believe it would be worthwhile to participate in this project so as to make the most of the many different interpreting experiences you have had, and will have on placement, whether as a student or a supervising interpreter. All participants will be provided with results of the study, which can be expected to include information that points to how practicum placements can be enhanced and improved for all parties.

Potential Risks

Questions about your learning and/or your mentoring may mean discussing sensitive or personal

experiences. To minimize the possibility of any personal discomfort, I want you to know that:

- Your participation is voluntary, and that you can withdraw from my study at any time.
- All names, position names, other identifying information will be replaced in the data analysis and write up so that no one can recognize who has said what.
- All information will be locked in password-protected folders on a computer hard drive.
- NSCC and MSVU have strict ethical policies governing research.

I intend to preserve all information from this project for use in conference presentations, professional publications, and professional workshops for three years from the completion of the project. At the end of this period, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this study, you can contact me, or my professor, Dr. Cornelia Schneider (see contact information below). This research activity has met the ethical standards of the University Research Ethics Board at Mount Saint Vincent University and the Nova Scotia Community College. If you have any questions or concerns about this study and wish to speak with someone who is not directly involved with this study, you may contact the University Research Ethics Board, by phone at 902-457-6350 or by e-mail at research@msvu.ca.

If you are willing to participate in the Mentoring Processes for ASL/English Interpretation Students on Practicum Placements project under these conditions, please sign your name in the space provided.

Many thanks for joining the project!
Sincerely,

Denise Smith
Candidate, Master of Educational Psychology
Denisemary.smith@nsc.ca

Dr. Cornelia Schneider
MSVU – Faculty of Education
Phone: 902 457-6206
Cornelia.schneider@msvu.ca

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the study and that you agree to participate.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

One signed copy to be kept by the researcher, one signed copy to the participant.