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Content Development of the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities Guiding Checklist

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to extend development of the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist, which was designed to assist the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in determining and documenting individualized roles and responsibilities of the educational interpreter, as appropriate to the needs of the student receiving such services and the qualifications of the interpreter as a related service provider. Literature indicates a long-standing state of confusion regarding the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the educational interpreter, as well as the need for more clear guidelines and procedures. The Checklist was initially designed by a certified teacher of the deaf who was experienced as an educational interpreter and supervised educational interpreters across a public-school d/Deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) program. To continue preliminary instrument development towards content validation, knowledge of laws and strategies related to DHH education were deemed critical. As such, seven certified teachers of DHH students, who had at least three years' experience supervising, overseeing, and/or providing training to educational interpreters, provided extensive feedback regarding the Checklist. Content analysis was utilized to determine themes that emerged. Results indicated significant support regarding the need for the checklist, as well as contributions towards further development, thus concluding in 63 revisions. Next steps towards development and validation are presented.

INTRODUCTION

Educational interpreting is an essential specialization of interpreting which requires a unique set of skills and considerations beyond those required of sign language interpreters in community settings for adults (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2010; Schick, 2007). In addition to the complexities of interpreting educational content, educational interpreters are members of collaborative educational teams, thus serving as adult role models for the developing children and youth with whom they work (Schick, 2007). Despite being legally designated as related service providers by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) over a decade ago, specific guidance regarding the appropriate use of educational interpreters continues to be limited at best (Schick, 2007; Schick & Williams, 2004; Schick, Williams, & Kupermintz, 2006). Within the provision of their services, educational interpreters must consider child and language development, a range of communication modalities, and each student's strengths and weaknesses,

as well as individualized educational goals (Patrie & Taylor, 2008; Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2010; Schick, 2007).

Per IDEA, all instructional and related services, including educational interpreting, are subject to the individualized needs of the student for whom they are prescribed. Students who require educational interpreting services have greatly varied language usage, responses to hearing assistive technology, academic and cognitive levels, communication modalities, and social skills (Cawthon & Leppo, 2013; Martin & Mounty, 2013; Moores, 2013; Schirmer & McGough, 2005; Vernon, 2005). While it is widely acknowledged that educational interpreting differs greatly from other interpreting specializations (Patrie & Taylor, 2008; Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2010; Schick, 2007), at the time of this study, those specific differences had not yet been comprehensively investigated, nor had a consensus been reached regarding how educational interpreters' roles and responsibilities are appropriately individualized in compliance with IDEA (Smith, 2010). As such, there has been a longstanding state of ambiguity, confusion, and controversy amongst stakeholders regarding the unique roles and responsibilities of interpreting in educational settings (Antia & Kreimeyer, 2001; Beaver, Hayes, & Luetke-Stahlman, 1995; Dahl & Wilcox, 1990; Duffy, 1990; Hayes, 1991; Kurz & Langer, 2004; Jones, 2004; Jones, Clark, & Soltz, 1997; Langer, 2004; Stewart & Kluwin, 1996; Smith, 2010).

RATIONALE FOR EIRR GUIDING CHECKLIST

Legally, decision-making regarding the specific provision of educational interpreting services, as well as the related educational goals that must accompany them, are required to be individualized, developed collaboratively by the entire IEP team, and documented within the IEP itself (Educational Interpreting Certificate Program Workgroup, 2003; Wisconsin Department of Education, 2004). Despite these mandates, educational interpreters often perform the aforementioned tasks with little guidance and make their best guesses in determining appropriate roles and responsibilities in working with the students (Langer, 2004; Public Policy Associates, 2006; Wolbers et al., 2012). Even more concerning is that these decision-making attempts usually occur without the knowledge of, or input from, other educational team members (Wolbers, Dimling, Lawson, & Golos, 2012). Collaboration is the cornerstone of individualized educational planning, and no related service provider can appropriately be expected to make unguided decisions regarding student needs. Due to differences in professional experiences, training, and credentialing requirements, individual skill sets vary greatly among educational interpreters (Manitoba Citizenship, Education and Youth, 2009; Monikowski, 2004; Patrie & Taylor, 2008; Schick, 2004; 2007), further contributing to the need for collaboration and guidance. The entire educational team, including the educational interpreter, must convene to make decisions about student needs related to educational interpreting, and it is just as essential that these decisions are justified with objective documentation (Wisconsin Department of Education, 2007; Schick, 2007).

Due to the inherent and legally mandated need for individualization regarding special education services, it would not be appropriate to arbitrarily develop a standardized set of educational interpreter roles and responsibilities to apply to all situations. However, further guidance regarding roles and responsibilities of educational interpreters is undoubtedly needed. Continued research, along with development of guidelines and supportive tools, has long been acknowledged as the first step toward addressing the precarious state of interpreted education for

Deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students (Antia & Kreimeyer, 2001; Langer, 2004; Patrie & Taylor, 2008; Schick, 2007; Stewart & Kluwin, 1996).

More specifically, Antia and Kreimeyer (2001) found that having no policies in place to determine the role of the educational interpreter can lead to haphazard decision-making instead of the professional and collaborative decision-making that is required by law. Educational interpreters in another study indicated that having the ability to clearly articulate their own roles and responsibilities to classroom teachers on a regular basis was a contributor to interpreter effectiveness, and ultimately, student success (Langer, 2004). Despite the legal requirement that educational interpreting services be individually determined and documented, at the time of this study, there were no known tools available to assist the IEP team in doing so. Therefore, the aim of this study was to move toward the validation of one such instrument – the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist.

An initial draft of the EIRR Guiding Checklist was developed in response to a specific need within one public school district's PK-12 program for DHH students. The researcher, a certified teacher of DHH students and educational interpreter, who also served as the supervisor of educational interpreters, created the initial draft of the EIRR Guiding Checklist after an existing tool could not be located. The checklist was constructed based on the potential roles and responsibilities perceived necessary in that location at that point in time, after a brief review of the literature related to appropriate roles and responsibilities of educational interpreters, as well as a look at the current students' services. The document was presented for review at each IEP team meeting, and consensus was reached regarding the roles and responsibilities that the educational interpreter would fulfill based on the needs of the individual student. The first draft of the EIRR Guiding Checklist was officially incorporated during annual review IEP meetings for six students who utilized interpreter services. From that point forward, the EIRR Guiding Checklist was utilized at each annual or special review IEP meeting that was held for any student who potentially required educational interpreting services. Based on stakeholder feedback within the district (Stufflebeam, 2001), as well as an ongoing review of the literature (Hales et al., 2008; Stufflebeam, 2001) the EIRR Checklist itself was revised at least annually to meet the needs of the students within the DHH program.

The EIRR Guiding Checklist provides a preliminary tool to utilize during educational planning. Classrooms are fast-paced, and even under ideal conditions, impossible to interpret with 100% accuracy (Monikowski, 2004; Wolbers et al., 2012). Because of the inherent lag time in processing the source message before presenting it in the target language (ASL-to-English or English-to-ASL interpretation), students using interpreting services in educational settings already face barriers to full participation (Winston, 2004). Such barriers to accessibility can be exacerbated when the interpreting process is interrupted by situations in which the interpreter is unsure how to proceed. By clearly discussing, determining, and documenting the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the educational interpreter before such decisions arise (in the IEP team meeting as opposed to in the classroom), the consequences of last-minute and unguided decision-making can be substantially reduced.

METHODS

DESIGN & PROCEDURES

This study was constructed to investigate the validity of the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist. Prior to the implementation of this study, the EIRR Guiding Checklist was revised annually by the developer and researcher based on stakeholder feedback within the PK-12 public school deaf and hard of hearing education program where it was first utilized (Stufflebeam, 2001), as well as an ongoing review of the literature (Hales et al., 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Martz, 2009; Scriven, 2005). A total of 64 revisions were made to the EIRR Guiding Checklist over four years prior to the implementation of this study, including 10 additions of content, 14 deletions of content, 26 instances of clarification, and 14 instances of formatting. In this qualitative study, seven certified teachers of DHH students provided extensive feedback regarding the content and formatting of the Checklist through document reviews, critical feedback questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews.

INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF AND REVISIONS TO THE CHECKLIST

Effectively developed checklists can serve as standalone tools to guide the collection, analysis, and documentation of information teams will use in decision-making (Boritz & Timoshenko, 2014; Hales et al., 2008; Martz, 2009; Scriven, 2005). A checklist is particularly useful when applied to complex situations, as it can condense large amounts of critical information into more concise categories with which teams can more easily interact (Scriven, 2005). Although flexible, depending on stakeholder needs and the specific domains being addressed (Stufflebeam, 2001), best practices in checklist development begin with the inclusion of criteria grounded in the literature and published guidelines (Hales et al., 2008; Scriven, 2005). The EIRR Guiding Checklist was likewise based on current literature and initially drafted by a certified DHH teacher with experience as an educational interpreter, who supervised educational interpreters across a district-wide public-school program for DHH students. Its original purpose was to provide guidance to all IEP team members while determining and documenting individualized student needs related to educational interpreting in compliance with IDEA.

BENEFITS OF A CHECKLIST

Checklists have proven effective in improving processes utilized by multidisciplinary teams in medical settings (Hales et al., 2008) and have assisted educational evaluative teams in making informed decisions, meeting accountability requirements, and providing documentation and reporting of such decisions (Stufflebeam, 2001). When simultaneously utilized by multiple stakeholders with varying perspectives, checklists have the added potential to clarify expectations, provide a method of documentation, and promote periodic review of implementation (Boritz & Timoshenko, 2014). However, the value of professional judgment and holistic reflection must not be discounted (Martz, 2009), particularly as they are cornerstones of the IEP process. Like most effective checklists, the EIRR Guiding Checklist is a guiding tool rather than a diagnostic one, with the intent of facilitating discussion about roles and responsibilities for an educational interpreter to fulfill, as ultimately determined by student data and IEP team decisions (IDEA, 2004; Jones, 2004). Because research in educational interpreting is still emerging and professional

resources often offer conflicting guidance, recommendations for best practices in educational interpreting have not been standardized (Schick, 2004; Winston, 2004; Brown & Schick, 2011). The validation of this procedural checklist, however, can contribute to such standardization within the field (Boritz & Timoshenko, 2014; Hales et al., 2008).

CHECKLIST FORMATTING AND INSTRUMENTATION

Prior to the implementation of this study, the EIRR Guiding Checklist was one page in length (Appendix A). It encompassed six specific domains: Interpretation Required, Communication Modality, Language Facilitation, Accommodations, Related & Supplementary Services, and Teacher of DHH Students Required. Below each heading was an indented list of several specific roles and responsibilities under that particular domain. The fifth section, Related & Supplementary Services, encompassed four subsections: Tutoring, Audiological Management, Consultation, and Behavioral Management. To the left of each specific role or responsibility was a single blank line. To use the EIRR Guiding Checklist, IEP teams simply determine whether or not the educational interpreter is to take on each listed role or responsibility in regard to the individual student being discussed.

SOLICITING EXPERT FEEDBACK

The sharing of ideas amongst expert stakeholders must occur to move toward clarity and consensus in the field of educational interpreting. Qualitative methodology was chosen in order to gather rich data with multiple and varying perspectives. A qualitative approach from a constructivist viewpoint allowed the researcher to gather and acknowledge such multiple perspectives, which is an essential first step towards preliminary validation of the Checklist. In addition to perspectives that further supported information revealed in the literature, new perspectives were also uncovered.

PARTICIPANTS

In this study, seven stakeholders in interpreted education provided feedback so that revisions could be made prior to soliciting input from a broader group of targeted users. Checklist clarity, usability, appropriateness of content, and formatting were critical areas to be addressed (Hales et al., 2008; Martz, 2009). The population of teachers of DHH students in the United States is relatively small (Benedict et al., 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2014), with the number of those teachers who also have expertise in educational interpreting being even smaller (Yarger, 2001). For these reasons, a non-randomized sampling procedure was appropriate (Babbie, 2015; Glesne, 1999). The use of an expert panel was most appropriate for this qualitative checklist instrumentation study (Hales et al., 2008; Martz, 2009), thus allowing exploration of perspectives of a particular yet diverse group of participants who were able to yield a comprehensive and relevant set of data.

Inclusion criteria for this study were defined as having current or previous certification teaching DHH students and at least three years' experience overseeing educational interpreters through supervision and/or the provision of specialized educational interpreter training. The decision to allow for participants who had previously held certification was to include expert stakeholders who had transitioned to positions beyond the classroom, such as administrators and post-secondary professors. At the time of this study, literature indicated that many working educational interpreters

were lacking training in foundations of DHH education and sometimes even in educational interpreting itself (Schick, 2007; Schick, Williams, & Bolster, 1999; Schick, Williams, & Kupermintz, 2006; Yarger, 2001). Requirements for qualifications had also not been nationally standardized. As such, many educational interpreters would have had difficulty providing theoretically informed feedback about the content of the Checklist. Given also that teachers of DHH students do not inherently have training or experience in educational interpreting, three years' experience overseeing or providing training to educational interpreters was a secondary requirement for participation. End-user populations, such as working educational interpreters and teachers of DHH students without expertise in interpreted education, will play an important role in continued development and validation (Martz, 2009).

ANNA

Anna was a doctoral candidate who served as an itinerant teacher of DHH students for six years, five of which included the oversight of educational interpreters.

OLIVIA

Olivia had been teaching DHH students for nearly twenty-nine years in a variety of settings, twenty-seven of which she supervised and supported educational interpreters.

EMILY

Emily was an assistant professor of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education who taught DHH students for approximately nine years, supervising and supporting educational interpreters during most of that time.

SOPHIE

Sophie was a classroom and collaborative teacher who had been teaching DHH students for nearly ten years in a variety of instructional models. She supervised and supported educational interpreters for all ten years.

AVA

Ava was an itinerant teacher, sign language interpreter, and college instructor who had been teaching DHH students for fourteen years, most of which had involved the supervision and support of educational interpreters.

LILLIAN

Lillian was a post-secondary educational interpreter and American Sign Language instructor who previously taught DHH students for eighteen years, all of which involved the direct supervision and support of educational interpreters.

AMELIA

Amelia was an itinerant DHH teacher, high school American Sign Language teacher, and community interpreter who taught DHH students for fifteen years, most of which involved the oversight and support of educational interpreters.

DATA COLLECTION

The solicitation of expert perspectives was an important step in instrument validation that followed an evaluation of the content based on a literature review. The strategies utilized to explore such perspectives were critical feedback questionnaires based on document reviews of the Checklist (Martz, 2009), semi-structured interviews (Martz, 2009), and follow-up interactions with participants to and confirm and clarify feedback (Babbie, 2015; Glesne, 1999; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

PHASE ONE – CRITICAL FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRES

Firstly, each expert participant completed a document review of the Checklist and an accompanying critical feedback questionnaire, which included a series of five socio-demographic and six checklist-specific questions. Requesting written responses from participants allowed more time for the independent construction of their responses (Babbie, 2015). To support a greater level of clarity, participants were encouraged to mark directly on the EIRR Guiding Checklist through Microsoft Word track changes and/or handwritten comments, as they preferred (Martz, 2009). Specifically, they were asked to focus on the overall strengths and weaknesses of the Checklist, as well as to identify content requiring revisions in four distinct categories (addition, deletion, clarification, formatting), which had emerged in previous revisions before the implementation of this study. In this case, each participant was also provided a copy of the literature review that served in the development of the Checklist.

PHASE TWO – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Following the completion of the critical feedback questionnaire, the researcher, who developed the Checklist, and the participant scheduled an individual, semi-structured video interview for approximately one hour. Guiding interview questions were designed to target perspectives regarding general strengths and weaknesses of the Checklist as well as the need for specific revisions in four distinct categories (Martz, 2009), with time allotted to address any additional questions, comments, concerns, and topics that arose.

Interviews were conducted through the Adobe Connect video conferencing platform or FaceTime. To ensure accuracy in transcribing data, each interview was audio and video recorded with the participant's permission. While no participant used sign language exclusively, several participants code-switched to support or clarify the information they were sharing. For example, participants demonstrated certain signs used while discussing incidents or to more clearly explain specific concepts. In these situations, the signs were translated from ASL to English text and included in the transcript for the participant's confirmation. Following the completion of each interview, recordings were transcribed verbatim before coding and analysis began. The use of

interview logs assisted in ensuring the most essential information was highlighted by noting points that required elaboration, points that had been adequately addressed, and other considerations specific to the interview (Glesne, 1999; Maxwell, 2013; Seidman, 2013).

PHASE THREE: FOLLOW-UP MEMBER CHECKS

Because qualitative studies are so dependent on the accurate interpretation of multiple perspectives, it is important to ensure that the researcher and each participant share a common frame of reference. Member checks have long been acknowledged as a method to confirm that the researcher has interpreted responses accurately (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). During this third phase of data collection, each participant was e-mailed the full interview transcript, a list of checklist components as categorized by the researcher's interpretation of the participant's perspectives, and a request for additional information or clarification, as needed. Follow-up questions were constructed to address responses collected during phases one and two which were incomplete, unclear, or implied additional information that could add value to the study. Each participant then had the opportunity to confirm the transcript and preliminary analysis, provide additional or clarifying comments, and respond to specific requests for clarification. Some participants requested a follow-up discussion via videoconferencing, which was scheduled at their convenience. All of the participants provided clarification upon request of the researcher. Additionally, six of the participants confirmed that the researcher's interpretation of their perspectives was accurate, while Anna made one correction regarding an area that was misinterpreted as a strength.

DATA ANALYSIS

Content analysis is particularly appropriate for assessing new attitudes towards a topic, particularly through expert reviews, interviews, and open-ended survey questions, which were each utilized in this study (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kondracki et al., 2002; Krippendorff, 2013). More specifically, directed content analysis allowed for the anticipation of specific themes based on information gathered during the four years of precursory Checklist use and associated revisions (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Meanwhile, comprehensive content analysis incorporated calculations and comparisons of the qualitative data after collection. Data collected were initially categorized and coded as either background information or one of six directed categories of checklist considerations – strength, weakness, addition, deletion, clarification, or formatting. Responses that did not fit into one of the aforementioned categories were initially coded as “other” and later categorized into one of the additional categories that emerged during analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Data were reviewed thoroughly and reclassified several times until no new categories emerged. A secondary coder, who was a certified teacher of DHH students and familiar with the Checklist but uninvolved in the study, reviewed the analysis, resulting in an intercoder reliability rate of 98.21%. Categorized data were then examined per participant and comparatively across participants to determine patterns and themes that emerged.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

One particular strength of qualitative interview data is its ability to address a kaleidoscope of often conflicting perceptions (Patton, 2015) which is certainly the case related to the roles and

responsibilities of educational interpreters (Kurz & Langer, 2004; Smith, 2010). When attempting to make inferences about a particular concept, a combination of interviews and open-ended survey questions are appropriate strategies to utilize synergistically (Glesne, 1999; Kondracki et al., 2002; Martz, 2009; Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2011). More specifically, the reciprocal utilization of questionnaires and interviews is an effective piece of the meta-evaluation process (Stufflebeam, 2000). The evaluative purpose of the EIRR Guiding Checklist comes from the guiding and supporting evidence it provides to assist the team in making specific conclusions by examining individualized components of a larger decision-making process (Boritz & Timoshenko, 2014; Scriven, 2005). Compared to written responses alone, qualitative data obtained through interviews allowed for a more comprehensive exploration of the roles and responsibilities of educational professionals (Griffin-Shirley et al., 2009).

RESULTS

Despite having vastly different professional experiences, all participants indicated that the Checklist was a needed tool and valid method to guide the IEP team in decision-making and documentation, and to promote the inclusion of educational interpreters as fully participatory IEP team members, which is prescribed by federal law (IDEA, 2004). None of the participants indicated already having a procedure in place for determining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the educational interpreter. Additionally, a majority of individual checklist components were specifically indicated as strengths by at least one participant. Of those supported components, very few were flagged by any participant as a weakness, thus providing preliminary content validation.

Table 1: Total Unique Components for which Participants Provided Feedback (by Type)

Participant	Strengths	Weaknesses	Additions	Deletions	Clarification	Formatting
Anna	8	0	0	8	8	0
Olivia	18	0	8	0	6	1
Emily	9	2	12	0	17	1
Sophie	8	0	9	0	2	0
Ava	29	0	8	4	22	2
Lillian	14	1	2	0	3	0
Amelia	12	2	6	5	11	3

Olivia referred to the Checklist as “excellent,” Ava as “amazing,” and Lillian as

“fabulous.” Olivia and Sophie specifically stated that it “has no weaknesses.” Olivia stated that everything included is “valuable,” and Emily stated that “nothing should be deleted.” Olivia said that she “felt validated” by the Checklist in her philosophy to include educational interpreters as fully integrated “IEP team members.” Sophie stated that it could be used to “validate” some of the educational interpreters she works with who often face opposition in advocating for their “full inclusion” within educational teams.

Anna, Olivia, Sophie, Ava, and Lillian indicated the “comprehensiveness” of the Checklist as a strong point. Specifically, Olivia noted how it covers a “range of services,” and Sophie affirmed that it includes roles and responsibilities which are sometimes controversial amongst interpreters. Ava supported that it could be applied to a “variety of students” in “multiple settings.” Lillian noted that it covers a “multitude of accommodations” and tasks, including those that could easily be overlooked.

Anna and Olivia spoke to the “explicitness” of the document and Lillian to the “detail,” while Sophie and Lillian specifically mentioned the “clarity.” Anna, Ava, Lillian, and Amelia discussed how the Checklist clearly indicates appropriate roles and responsibilities not only for the educational interpreter’s “reference” but also for “classroom teachers” and other “educational professionals.” Amelia noted that this is especially important for IEP team members who may be less familiar with educational interpreting and for educational interpreters who do not fully realize their obligation to address student needs that extend beyond traditional interpretation. Emily noted how it could be “quickly and easily shared” with IEP team members. Ava and Lillian found it beneficial that the Checklist indicates which roles and responsibilities should not be fulfilled by leaving them unchecked. Lillian discussed the ability of this document to address the concern of hiring underqualified interpreters and to “assist in the recruitment” of interpreters who are able to fulfill required roles and responsibilities. Lillian also stated that it could be used as a “method of accountability” for educational interpreter performance.

Emily and Ava highlighted the “ease” of using the Checklist. Ava especially supported the “minimalist look” of the document, with just a few words per task and category for “quick and easy reference.” Anna, Olivia, and Ava specifically stated a need for this document in the field, to “support IEP team discussion and decision-making.” Ava stated that she wished she had been able to access the Checklist when she was still overseeing interpreters in the public school system.

RESULTING REVISIONS TO THE CHECKLIST

In addition to their support of the EIRR Guiding Checklist, each participant expressed some concerns and/or suggestions for improvement. After coding, each suggested revision, weakness, or deletion was analyzed further to assess its validity. These concerns and suggestions were reviewed extensively within the context of each participant’s feedback and then compared to other participants’ feedback, to determine if and how the concerns and suggestions should be addressed. Each suggested revision was further analyzed holistically to determine if implementation would benefit a variety of potential users (Kilpatrick, 2015) – in this case, a multitude of IEP teams. Participant feedback resulted in numerous revisions to the Checklist during this study. Based on the feedback’s potential to benefit multiple IEP teams, 63 revisions were made to the Checklist

following this study, including 21 additions, 9 deletions, 24 clarifications, and 9 instances of formatting. (Appendix C)

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore educational stakeholders' perspectives regarding the content validity of the EIRR Guiding Checklist. Prior to its development, there were no known instruments for documenting the roles and responsibilities of an educational interpreter working with a particular student. This study provided introductory evidence supporting the EIRR Guiding Checklist that is sufficient to validate its content in revised form and promote continued investigation.

In the context of interpreted education, the vast range of individualized student needs and differences in qualifications among educational interpreters must be strongly considered (Moore, 2013; Patrie & Taylor, 2008). Therefore, the nature of the EIRR Guiding Checklist is comprehensive and versatile, allowing for multiple perspectives to be considered at each IEP meeting. Although a universal application of prescribed roles and responsibilities is not appropriate within the context of *individualized education*, the validation of the EIRR Guiding Checklist can contribute to standardized procedures for individualized decision-making within the field (Boritz & Timoshenko, 2014; Hales et al., 2008).

The preliminary content validation of the EIRR Guiding Checklist that resulted from this study has implications for multiple stakeholders in DHH education. Primarily, IEP teams can confidently utilize this instrument to assist in their determination and documentation of an educational interpreter's roles and responsibilities. It is important to emphasize that the EIRR Guiding Checklist, like most effective checklists, is a guiding tool and not a diagnostic one. When designed properly, a checklist has great potential to provide decision-making guidance, but should not be construed as an instrument for non-reflective, rigid application (Hales et al., 2008; Martz, 2009; Scriven, 2005). IEP meetings are convened with the intent of collaboratively making decisions based on collective data analysis and professional judgement. As such, it would not be appropriate to utilize a tool that superficially determines student needs related to educational interpreting services. Rather, the EIRR Guiding Checklist can help facilitate the discussion of roles and responsibilities that have been deemed potentially appropriate for an educational interpreter to fulfill, should student data and IEP team decisions support them.

LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for future research that emerged from this study were threefold. They include replication of the study, extension of the study, and investigation of related factors. While data from this study indicated overwhelming support for the need of the EIRR Guiding Checklist, it is possible that other experts may provide alternate perspectives. Although the small sample size is representative of the small, specialized population, this study could be replicated with a larger and/or more diverse sample of expert participants.

The primary delimitation of this study was the selection of participants who had very specific experience in the field of DHH education to include certification as teachers of DHH

students and experience providing training and/or supervision to educational interpreters. While these participants are certainly not the only stakeholders in the education of DHH students, their knowledge of educational law and considerations of DHH education were considered essential for this preliminary study. However, the perspectives of end-users, such as teachers of DHH students without educational interpreting expertise, educational interpreters themselves, and other IEP team members should be considered for future studies (Martz, 2009).

Investigating the actual implementation of the Checklist was beyond the scope of this study and should be considered for future research. Having concluded that the content of the EIRR Guiding Checklist is valid according to these participants, more intricate features of the EIRR Guiding Checklist can be explored. This can be done by investigating the effectiveness, resourcefulness, and ease of actual (as opposed to perceived) use. This line of research can later be extended by looking at the decision-making processes involved in determining and documenting educational interpreter roles and responsibilities within the context of an IEP meeting.

Thirdly, the feedback provided by participants regarding concerns in the education of DHH students should be acknowledged. Interview discussions incited numerous conversations regarding the multiple issues surrounding inclusive and interpreted education of DHH students. Given that these concerns have a long history, it is clear that they continue to require urgent attention. While it was beyond the scope of this study to investigate how the Checklist will be implemented, current lack of oversight and support for educational interpreters appear to be factors that could preclude its effectiveness, which must be strongly considered.

The EIRR Guiding Checklist was developed to provide an essential tool for determining and documenting the specific roles and responsibilities that an educational interpreter should fulfill in order to meet the individualized needs of the student receiving interpreting services. In addition to validating its content for that purpose, participants pointed out the potential benefits of the Checklist being utilized to assist in the implementation and regular review of such IEP team decisions, as well as to develop job descriptions and evaluate educational interpreters. However, it is important to emphasize that the Checklist has been developed as a supportive tool, rather than a diagnostic one, to assist in the process of determining and documenting appropriate roles and responsibilities. Of most importance, nothing can take the place of sound, evidence-based professional judgment being carried out by qualified educational professionals.

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APPENDIX A – EIRR GUIDING CHECKLIST: VERSION AT STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

Roles and Responsibilities of the Educational Interpreter: **Word Document for Editing** 1

Roles and Responsibilities of the Educational Interpreter

(to be determined by the IEP team and included in the student’s Individualized Education Program)

Student: _____ Grade: _____ Meeting Date: _____
 Case-Manager: _____ Primary Interpreter: _____

I. Interpretation Required:

- _____ Core content classes
- _____ Extracurricular classes & activities
- _____ Therapy (Speech, Occupational, Physical)
- _____ Captioned videos
- _____ Written instructions (as requested)
- _____ Questions and answer choices
- _____ Reading Passages

II. Communication Modality:

- _____ Total Communication
 - _____ Auditory/Aural
 - _____ American Sign Language (ASL)
 - _____ Signed Exact English (SEE)
 - _____ Pidgin Signed English (PSE)
 - _____ Cued Speech

III. Language Facilitation:

(For students exhibiting language delay)

- _____ Model language
- _____ Communicate directly with the child
- _____ Disregard indication of speaker
- _____ Supplemental explanations/expansions
- _____ Support student’s language attempts
- _____ Present information in simpler terms
- _____ Delete extraneous information
- _____ Utilize visual supplements

IV. Accommodations:

(under direction of certified teachers)

- _____ Facilitate preferential seating
- _____ Facilitate other IEP accommodations
- _____ Provide signed/oral test administration
- _____ Translate dictated answers

V. Related & Supplementary Services:

(Under direction of certified professionals)

- _____ Tutoring
 - _____ Math
 - _____ Science
 - _____ Social Studies
 - _____ Informal language instruction
 - _____ Pre-teach vocabulary
 - _____ Sign language
- _____ Audiological Management
 - _____ Daily listening check
 - _____ Replace batteries
 - _____ Troubleshoot equipment
- _____ Consultation with Teachers & Providers
 - _____ Use of educational interpreter
 - _____ Classroom accessibility
 - _____ Communication usage
 - _____ Academic & IEP goal progress

Behavioral Management

- _____ Prompt student to stay on task
- _____ Provide behavioral feedback
- _____ IEP behavioral intervention plan

VI. Teacher of DHH Students Required:

(Educational interpreting services insufficient)

- _____ Reading
- _____ Writing
- _____ Math
- _____ Science
- _____ Social Studies
- _____ Language

Author

You may choose to use this Word document to make suggested revisions through the "track changes" feature. After making changes, save this file as a new name, and return it to me via e-mail.

You may also choose to print this document and make suggestions in written form.

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APPENDIX B – EIRR GUIDING CHECKLIST: REVISED FOLLOWING STUDY

Roles and Responsibilities of the Educational Interpreter

(to be determined by the IEP team and included in the student’s Individualized Education Program)

Student: _____ Grade: _____ Meeting Date: _____

Overseeing Professional(s): _____ Primary Interpreter: _____

I. Essential Considerations:

- _____ Student requires one-to-one interpreter
- _____ Student requires teacher of the deaf
- _____ Interpreter requires additional training

II. Interpretation Required:

- _____ Core content classes
- _____ Special/Deaf education classes
- _____ Extracurricular classes
- _____ Extracurricular activities & events
- _____ Interaction & conversation with peers
- _____ Therapy (Speech, Occupational, Physical)
- _____ Captioned videos & media
- _____ Written instructions
- _____ Questions & answer choices
- _____ Reading passages

III. Primary Communication Modalit(ies):

- _____ American Sign Language (ASL)
- _____ Cued Speech
- _____ Listening & Spoken Language (LSL)
- _____ Simultaneous Communication (Sim-Com)
- _____ Signed English
 - _____ Conceptually Accurate (CASE)
 - _____ Contact Sign/Pidgin (PSE)
 - _____ Exact (SEE)
- _____ Tactile Sign Language
- _____ Total Communication

IV. Language Facilitation during Interpretation:

- _____ Model correct language and vocabulary
- _____ Teach sign language to student
- _____ Provide supplemental explanations
- _____ Support student’s language attempts
- _____ Present information in simpler terms
- _____ Utilize supportive visual supplements

V. Accommodations:

- _____ Facilitate preferential seating
- _____ Provide signed/oral test administration
- _____ Translate dictated answers
- _____ Repeat instructions
- _____ Reword instructions

VI. Related & Supplementary Services:

Collaboration with Teachers & Providers

- _____ Use of educational interpreter
- _____ Visual accessibility in classroom
- _____ Student’s communication style
- _____ Communication & accessibility goals

Supplementary Academic Support

- _____ Informally pre-teach vocabulary
- _____ Provide supplementary tutoring
- Subject(s): _____

Audiological Equipment Support

- Student-owned equipment: _____
- School-owned equipment: _____
 - _____ Daily listening check
 - _____ Replace batteries
 - _____ Minor troubleshooting
 - _____ Connect to computer & media
 - _____ Report equipment concerns

Social, Emotional, & Behavioral Support

- _____ Facilitate appropriate peer interactions
- _____ Teach sign language to peers
- _____ Prompt student to stay on task
- _____ Address inappropriate behavior
- _____ Praise appropriate behavior
- _____ Follow Behavioral Intervention Plan

Notes: _____

APPENDIX C – CRITICAL FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

CRITICAL FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your feedback will be instrumental in moving toward validation of the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist. Please review the EIRR Guiding Checklist and complete the following questions. Section I solicits questions regarding your professional experiences. Section II solicits your feedback regarding the EIRR Guiding Checklist. *You are encouraged to make comments and/or suggested revisions directly on the EIRR Guiding Checklist* through Microsoft Word track changes, or by writing directly on the Checklist.

Section I – Professional Experience

1. Please describe your experience as a teacher of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
2. How long have you served as a teacher of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing?
3. Please describe your experience overseeing educational interpreting services.
4. How long have you overseen educational interpreting services?
5. Please list your current professional position(s).

Section II – EIRR Guiding Checklist Feedback

1. Upon reviewing the EIRR Guiding Checklist, what do you perceive to be strengths of the document?
2. Upon reviewing the EIRR Guiding Checklist, what do you perceive to be weaknesses of the document, or areas that could use improvement?
3. Which components do you feel need to be added to the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist?
4. Which components need to be deleted from the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist?
5. Which components need to be clarified on the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist?
6. Which components need to be formatted on the Educational Interpreter Roles and Responsibilities (EIRR) Guiding Checklist?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. I am really looking forward to finding out more about your perspectives. Your expertise is very valuable in moving towards validation

of the EIRR Guiding Checklist. I want to remind you that pseudonyms will be used throughout the interview, transcription, and study to protect your identity. Do you have a specific pseudonym that you'd like to use? I'll give you a few minutes to think about it. OK, great! With your permission, this interview will be recorded to aid in transcription and data analysis. Do you grant permission for this interview to be recorded in either audio and/or video? Thank you! Also, please know that you can skip any question that you are not comfortable answering, or stop the interview entirely at any time. Let's get started!

1. Please describe your experience as a teacher of student who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
2. Please describe your experience working with educational interpreters.

Possible probes for additional/clarifying information: How long? In which state(s)? In which placements? In which grades? Which instructional model? What were your specific duties?

3. What are your overall impressions of the EIRR Guiding Checklist?

Possible probes for additional/clarifying information: What did you perceive to be strengths of the Checklist? What did you perceive to be weaknesses of the Checklist?

4. Which components did you feel should be added to the Checklist and why?
5. Which components did you feel should be deleted from the Checklist and why?
6. Which components did you feel should be clarified on the Checklist and why?
7. Which components did you feel should be formatted on the Checklist and why?

Possible probes for additional/clarifying details: Can you tell me more? Can you give me an example? What makes you feel that way?

8. (As needed - Refer to specific written feedback that has already been collected.) Please explain/clarify/discuss written comments you have made.
9. Do you have any additional comments to share?