



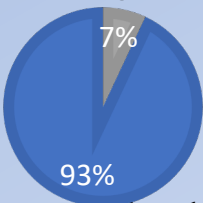
INVESTIGATING THE ASL INTERPRETER SHORTAGE FOR LEGAL SETTINGS

SMU

Bates, Angelica-Jasmine
Meadows School of the Arts – Southern Methodist University

Overview:

Communication access within the court and legal system for our linguistic minorities is a prevalent issue, especially for the Deaf community. Yet, only 7% of the certified interpreters in Texas are capable of providing the necessary assistance for this communication gap. With this in mind, why is there such a shortage of ASL interpreters within the legal setting?



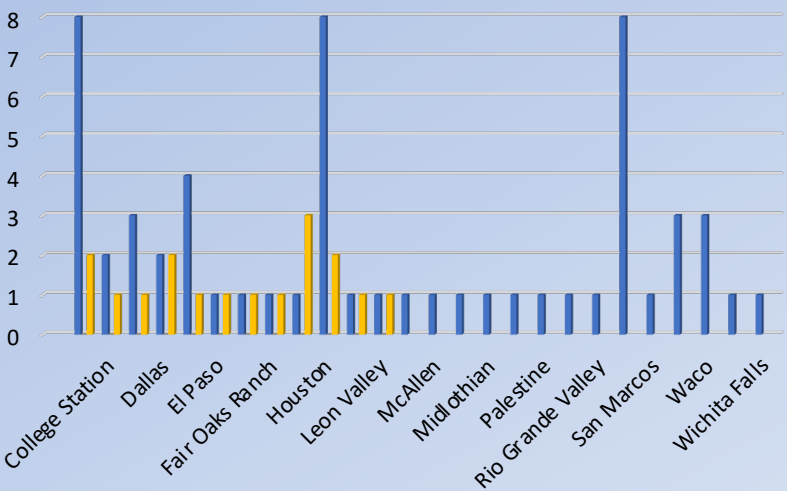
Study Participants:

100 participants - consisted of certified court and legal interpreters of Texas from the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI)

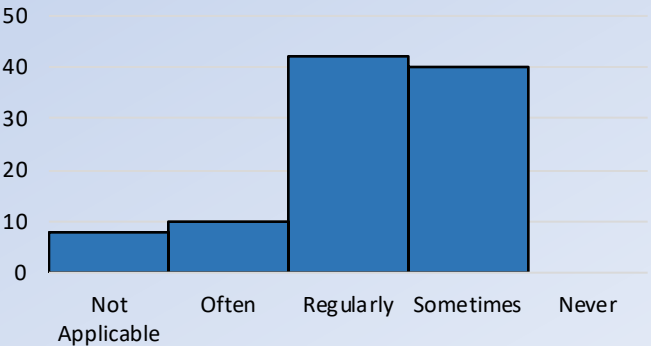
Some of which are affiliated with one or more of the 12/26 registered interpreting agencies within Texas that specialize in court interpreting (as noted by the Texas Health and Human Services. *DHHS Contractors for Fiscal Year 2020*).

The average amount of years working as an interpreter was 19.

Deaf Services and Agencies in Texas



Poll: Do You Have Difficulties Court Interpreting?



The Questions and Results:

The data collected included the interpreter's years of experience, background and education, possible mentorship, difficulties within the certification process, and any recommendations they had to better the court interpreting experience.

Many of which agree there is a struggle when interpreting legal terminology to layman's terms then to American Sign Language (ASL) for their Deaf client. Other times, the jargon used may not be understood by the interpreter. In other instances, there isn't an interpreter available to offer the necessary services.



This can be changed if:

- There were more interpreters interested in the field
- There were classes and workshops readily available to stay abreast of terminology.
- The signing style between client and interpreter was familiarized and understood.
- There was more awareness within the Interpreters Education Programs (IEP) for aspiring interpreting students.

References:

Texas Health and Human Services. “Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Registry.” 2020
Self-administered survey presented to 100 certified Texas interpreters. 2020.

Student Details:

Bates, Angelica-Jasmine
Meadows School of the Arts – Southern Methodist University

Cell: 469-209-3842
Email: arbates@smu.edu