



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

BRIDGING THE LANGUAGE GAP: ENHANCING HEALTHCARE FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PATIENTS THROUGH SIMULATION

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BACKGROUND/PROBLEM

- 25.7 million people in the United States have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) with around 67% of them being Spanish speaking¹
- LEP patients, mostly first-generation immigrants, encounter a healthcare system inadequately equipped to address their linguistic needs²
- Crucial need for language concordance in healthcare delivery, particularly through proficient medical interpretation and translation services³
- Healthcare professionals are often ill-equipped to work with interpreters and are unaware of the negative repercussions of using family members or not using an interpreter when engaging with patients⁴
- Simulation-based learning (SBL) demonstrates promise in enhancing intercultural competence among healthcare professionals, illustrating effective strategies for work with interpreters in healthcare settings and emphasizing the risks of utilizing family members as interpreters

PROJECT GOALS

This project aims to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of using simulation-based learning (SBL) to teach an interdisciplinary team of students and future healthcare workers best practices in working with medical interpreters in healthcare settings. We will compare and contrast the use of family members vs trained medical interpreters, utilizing Spanish speaking simulated participants in SBL. The results of the program will be circulated to help health professionals improve healthcare outcomes for people with LEP.

METHODS

- Mixed Methods
- Pre/post survey
- Video/audio recordings of simulation and debriefing
- SET-M post simulation
- Focus group style debrief with a Plus/Delta starter
- Thematic analysis of recordings and qualitative data



PARTICIPANTS

- 4 Spanish Speaking Simulated Participants
- 20 nursing students, 20 social work students, 10 medical interpretation students



SIMULATION DESIGN

- Two live simulations focused on hospital discharge preparations with Spanish-speaking Simulated Participants (SPs).
- Multidisciplinary student teams: Nursing, Social Work, and Medical Interpretation students.
- Developed using the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning's Healthcare Simulation Standards of Best Practice.
- Includes prework preparation, structured simulation facilitation, and guided debriefing.

PRELIMINARY THEMES

Importance of interpreter as member of the healthcare team

It helped me to understand that interpreters are valuable and necessary when it is evident that a patient cannot communicate with you in English.

Developed skills around working with interpreters

It helped learn the best way to communicate information in shorter phrases to allow for interpretation as well as engaging with the patient while doing so.

Language concordance improves healthcare outcomes

It gave first-hand experience on how interpreting poorly can lead to worse health outcomes.