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WE’RE LISTENING: DEAFNESS AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY – A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY EXPERIENCE OF CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF

by
Guillermina Duarte

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
In
Library and Information Science

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

August 2013
This dissertation is dedicated to my
Mom and Dad

Through your unselfish actions you taught us what it means-
To sacrifice for someone you love;
To show compassion for others;
To feel passionate about a cause;
To devote time and energy into making dreams become reality.

Thank you, for all you have done for us.

I LOVE YOU!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Unbeknownst to me, the journey on this road began years ago when a wonderful teacher, Mr. Tom Scotese, introduced me to ASL and Deaf Culture. Without your support those many years ago, I would not be here at this point in my life. Thank you.

Along the way I have also received unending support and encouragement from an endless number of individuals.

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Abstract of Dissertation

Submitted to
Dominican University

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of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
ABSTRACT

Library and information science (LIS) literature focusing on people with disabilities often combines this entire user population as a single group, even though the individuals within the population all have varying needs and degrees of disabilities. More specifically, limited LIS literature exists about the Deaf Community’s information needs and behaviors. The literature addresses several topics, including assistive technologies, accessibility, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and basic service guides. To understand the Deaf Community and how social and cultural factors influence user behavior, however, we must first consider this population’s lived experiences in relation to public libraries. Using a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach, this study explored the public library experiences and perceptions of children who are Deaf and the role family plays in influencing these experiences and perceptions. Additionally, two theoretical frameworks (Elfreda Chatman’s information poverty and Erving Goffman’s face threat) and the concept of Mellon’s library anxiety provided a context for this study. To understand this phenomenon, children who are Deaf and their parents were interviewed. From these interviews, a textural and structural description was developed that illuminated the “essence” of their experiences. Primary findings of this study indicate that the children had limited independent experiences using the public library. Additionally, parents influence the library experiences of children who are Deaf, which may affect children’s future usage of libraries. Finally, these experiences create and reinforce Chatman’s small-world concept, thus affecting information behaviors and acceptance of information resources.
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CHAPTER I—Background

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Survey of Income and Program Participation, approximately 1 million people (0.38% of the population) over five years old are “functionally deaf,” and approximately 8 million people (3.7%) over five years of age are hard of hearing (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). These statistics indicate a high likelihood that librarians working in a public library will interact with patrons with hearing disabilities. Several factors often set the stage for the development of positive or negative perceptions or experiences that may affect whether or not individuals will continue to use the public library. These factors include but are not limited to (1) the physical layout of the library, (2) the location of the library, (3) the environment of the library, and (4) the librarian-patron interactions.

As a profession that prides itself on serving diverse populations (American Library Association [ALA], 2006d) and providing information access to everyone (ALA, 2008), the library and information science (LIS) professional literature does attempt to address the information needs of some underserved populations, including, for example, immigrants (Burke, 2008; Cichanowicz & Chen, 2004; Naficy, 2009), the elderly (Dieterle & Becker, 2011; Web, 2002), and prisoners (De la Peña McCook, 2004; Roos, 2012; Stearns, 2004; Vaccarino & Comrie, 2010). LIS literature also addresses individuals with disabilities. Much of this literature, however, tends to combine all of the members of this user population into a single group, even though the individuals have varying needs and degrees of disabilities (Burke, 2009; Fulton, 2011; Jaeger & Bo, 2009; Oud, 2011). In addition, LIS literature about people with disabilities usually does not fully address user needs or user behaviors;
instead, the focus is typically on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessibility issues (Marks, 2005; Noland, 2003; Rodriguez & Reed, 2003). More specifically, the professional and research literature lacks information about the user behaviors of the Deaf Community from a cultural model perspective. Through the use of the cultural model perspective (in contrast to the medical or social model perspectives), a more holistic, multifaceted, and deeper understanding of the Deaf Community’s unique experiences in public libraries will be achieved.

**Purpose of the Study**

In the LIS profession, it is important to recognize the contexts that shape library usage and perceptions. To effectively and adequately serve library users, library staff must first understand the information needs and behaviors as expressed by the users (Josey, 1985).

The purpose of this study was to explore the public library experiences and perceptions of children who are Deaf and the role family plays in shaping these experiences and perceptions. By understanding the public library experiences of children who are Deaf, I examined how these “lived experiences” might influence public library perception and usage. In brief, a lived experience is a firsthand account of an incident as seen through that person’s eyes. As Moustakas (1994) explains in describing the contribution of a phenomenological research approach, “The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essences or structures of the experience” (p. 13). The lived experience is important in that it describes what happens to real people in the real world.
Through interviews with children aged ten through fourteen, I gained insight into the ways that usage and perceptions of the public library are influenced by their experiences. The role of the parent or guardian in shaping these perceptions was also explored.

**Research Questions**

The main research question addressed in the study was the following:

- *What are the public library experiences of children who are Deaf?*

This broad question touches on issues related not only to the public library experiences and perceptions of children who are Deaf but also to the extent to which family and related factors affect these experiences. To answer the main research question, other subquestions include the following:

- How do the public library experiences of children who are Deaf shape their perceptions of the library?
- How might these experiences affect their future use of public libraries?
- What role does the parent/guardian play in shaping library perception and library usage of his or her child who is Deaf?
- What other factors shape public library perception and usage within this user population?

**Theoretical Frameworks**

Two information behavior theories provide a framework for this study: Elfreda Chatman’s information poverty (Chatman, 1996) and Erving Goffman’s face threat (Goffman, 1982). Chatman’s theory of information poverty focuses on the social norms of an insider/outsider world concept that dictates the flow of information. Erving Goffman’s
face threat theory posits that individuals strategically decide whether to hide or share information about themselves during social interactions in order to keep their public image of “self” in accordance with approved social roles and behaviors. These theories provided a lens for understanding how individuals who are Deaf may experience person-to-person interactions. I analyzed the data collected to determine if the participants’ experiences and perceptions amplified these theories in new ways.

**Importance of the Study and Anticipated Benefits**

This study has theoretical and practical implications that will contribute to the LIS field. The first implication is that the study’s results will help practicing LIS professionals. By understanding the experiences of individuals who are Deaf, practitioners will gain insights about the Deaf Community, Deaf Culture, and how culture shapes experience, perception, and the usage of public libraries by children who are Deaf. Additionally, the stories and experiences of children who are Deaf can provide librarians with valuable information about library services that can be the groundwork for creating or improving partnerships with the Deaf Community.

Second, by using the two theoretical frameworks (Chatman’s information poverty and Goffman’s face threat), LIS researchers and scholars will have a foundation on which to build their knowledge about the information behaviors of an underserved population. Finally, this dissertation research will address a gap in LIS literature about the Deaf Community and its use of public libraries.
Perspectives on Deafness

Three common perspectives about the Deaf Community provide a framework that illuminates how members of the Deaf Community see themselves compared to how they are often seen by others. The following brief synopsis introduces the three common models of disability: the medical model, the social model, and the cultural model.

Models of disability

Historically, people with disabilities have been defined primarily through the medical model perspective, which focuses on their capacity limitations and classifies them as having an impairment or being a victim of their impairment (Oliver, 1990). That is, those who cannot attain such “species-normal” functioning as seeing, hearing, and walking are considered “disabled” and can only be “normalized” through surgical repair, rehabilitation, or adaptive aids (Tarzain, 2007, para. 2). Placing the “disabled” label on an individual may result in his or her exclusion from educational, social, and employment opportunities. This label also influences perceptions, thus giving power and influence to those without disabilities. Deafness becomes a trait that can and should be fixed by doctors whenever possible to ensure that the patient conforms to the majority of society (Moore & Levitan, 2003). This restrictive view focuses on deafness as pathology and not on the positive ways that the remaining senses are used to cope, create, and communicate. Those who are Deaf do not see themselves as pathological specimens but commonly see themselves as fully functioning members of the Deaf Community, a perspective that emphasizes cultural aspects rather than medical aspects (Moore & Levitan, 2003).
The second model, the social model perspective, developed as a critique of the medical model of disability. The social model is rooted in the belief that terms such as “disability,” “disabled,” or “disablement” are sociopolitical constructions (Lang, 2001). As a result, society or social arrangements work to restrict the lives of people with disabilities (Barnes, Oliver, & Barton, 2002). Through the lens of this model, the problem does not lie with the individual who is “disabled”; instead, it resides with society. Society creates an unfriendly physical environment because its social structures oppress, stigmatize, and isolate the “impaired” individual, leading to discrimination. For example, Tarzain (2007) explains, “a paralyzed woman may ambulate with a wheelchair but she becomes ‘disabled’ when she must rely on others to open a door or help her maneuver over a curb” (para. 2). Additionally, the social model perspective maintains that attitudinal and structural barriers preventing all individuals from participating fully in society should be removed so that people can live with autonomy and dignity (Tarzain, 2007). A criticism of this model is that it puts the power of influence on society, which then creates a pattern of exclusion through social norms (Hughes & Paterson, 1997). Therefore, this model implies that “disability stems from the failure of a structured social environment to adjust to the needs and aspirations of citizens with disabilities rather than from the inability of the disabled individual to adapt to the demands of society” (Hahn, 1986, p. 132).

Finally, the third disability model is the cultural model perspective. Padden (1989) describes culture as "a set of learned behaviors of a group of people who have their own language, values, rules for behaviors, and traditions" (p. 4). The Deaf Community has a set of beliefs, behaviors, and values, as well as a common language (American Sign Language), that create Deaf Culture (Moore & Levitan, 2003; Padden, 1989; Padden & Humphries,
2003). Unlike the medical and social models, which place power on external sources, the cultural model returns the power to the individual. With the cultural model, the focus is no longer on the impairment and society’s view of it. Alternatively, the disability is looked at as an inclusive trait of a larger community. From this perspective, deafness is not a pathology that needs to be fixed. Instead, deafness is seen as a “difference” in experience and language (Moore & Levitan, 2003; Padden & Humphries, 2003), thus creating a sense of community, pride, and identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical Model</th>
<th>Social Model</th>
<th>Cultural Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>Focuses on capacity limitations</td>
<td>Highlights sociopolitical constructions that create an unfriendly physical environment</td>
<td>Emphasizes the set of learned behaviors, languages, values, and beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals labeled as disabled or handicapped</td>
<td>Society oppresses, stigmatizes, and isolates individuals who have disabilities</td>
<td>Deafness viewed as an inclusive trait of the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deafness is a pathology</td>
<td>Deafness is a sociopolitical issue and experience</td>
<td>Deafness is not an impairment to be repaired or mainstreamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires surgical repair or adaptive devices</td>
<td>Remove attitudinal and structural barriers that promote an all-inclusive environment (mainstreaming)</td>
<td>Deafness is a difference in experience and language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power resides with those who do not have disabilities (majority)</td>
<td>Power resides with those who do not have disabilities (society)</td>
<td>Power resides with the individual</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 1. Models of Disability

Use of the cultural model is particularly well suited for this study for two reasons. First, the cultural model accounts for true cultural differences that exist. In a dominant culture, there is a tendency to want others to acclimate to the majority, which often leads to generalizations about a particular group of people. However, individual experiences, gender, age, culture, and other factors play roles in how and why individuals use certain
information resources. Acknowledging that culture is an important consideration and that it affects information-seeking strategies and behaviors will lead to a more robust, sound study.

The second reason for using the cultural model is that it embraces how a person identifies himself or herself as well as how he or she may want to be seen by others. The focus of this study is not on the “disability” itself. Rather, this study aims to view public library experiences from the perspective of users who are Deaf. To effectively do so, we must first aim to understand the users and define them as they define themselves. Using the cultural model to study a particular group is critical to creating authentic research. Not acknowledging cultural context negates an individual’s identity and his or her right to be understood from an inclusive and holistic perspective.

**People first language**

The disability model chosen for this study uses specific language to identify and describe individuals with disabilities. When writing about or communicating with individuals with disabilities, using proper disability etiquette is important. Disability etiquette fosters a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that encourages open communication and ensures respect for individuals. Because this study emphasizes and incorporates cultural aspects of the Deaf Community, addressing individuals as they have chosen to define and address themselves is essential. Not doing so would be equivalent to negating a culture. In this study, people first language conventions will be used when describing, discussing, or addressing individuals with disabilities.

In the 1960s, cross-disability rights activism gave rise to the people first language movement. The terms “handicapped” and “disabled” invoked negative feelings such as pity, sadness, and fear and also increased the stereotypical perception that all people with
disabilities are alike or are victims of their disabilities. Advocacy groups pushed to describe individuals with disabilities as “people first,” followed by the disability. This push resulted in the creation of the people first language (Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, 2008; Shapiro, 1994).

With people first language, the emphasis is on the person and not the disability. A person-noun is used first, for example, “a person with disabilities,” as opposed to simply “the disabled.” This language suggests that disabilities are not persons nor do they define people. People first language also differentiates between “disability” and “handicap.” The terms disability and handicap are not synonymous and should not be used interchangeably. Handicaps are social or environmental obstacles imposed upon those with disabilities. A disability can be a disorder or impairment, but it does not imply inability. People have disabilities, not handicaps (Folkins, 1992; Shapiro, 1994; Snow, 2012).

Finally, words such as “normal” and “challenged” are not used to describe individuals. Using the term “normal” when describing individuals implies that those with disabilities are abnormal. The term may only be used to define limits for specific attributes such as “hearing sensitivity within normal limits.” Furthermore, using “challenged” implies that the individual should try harder. Euphemisms such as “differently abled” or “vertically challenged” do not hide the disability, but they tend to create confusion (Folkins, 1992; Shapiro, 1994; Snow, 2012).

However, there are exceptions to using person first language, primarily when sentence structure is awkward and no alternative phrase is suitable. In addition, one should follow the preferences of a disability group, even if it violates other people first principles. For example, within the Deaf Community, an uppercase D is used to denote Deaf Culture
and Deaf Community, not the loss of hearing. “Deaf” is preferred to “a person with deafness” (Folkins, 1992).

The three disability models and people first language provide a framework for understanding how others view individuals who are Deaf and how people who are Deaf see themselves. For this study, deafness will be defined and guided by the tenets of the cultural model perspective, and “Deaf” will be used to ensure respect and inclusivity of all individuals who are Deaf.

**Definitions**

**American Sign Language (ASL):** ASL “is a complex visual-spatial language that is used by the Deaf Community in the United States and English-speaking parts of Canada. It is a linguistically complete, natural language. It is the native language of many Deaf men and women, as well as some hearing children born into Deaf families” (Nakamura, 2008, para. 1).

**Children:** individuals, aged up to and including fourteen, as defined by the American Library Association’s Association for Library Service to Children division (ALA, 1999b).

**Deaf (uppercase “D”):** a Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing (HOH) individual who culturally identifies fully in the Deaf world (Singleton & Tittle, 2000; Padden & Humphries, 1990).

**deaf (lowercase “d”):** the audiological condition of not hearing (Padden & Humphries, 1990).

**Deaf Community:** groups of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing people who live in a particular location or share the common goals of its members; can include individuals who are not Deaf but who actively support the goals of the group (Padden, 1989).
**Deaf Culture:** a set social beliefs, traditions, and history by a group of people affected by deafness who have their own language (ASL), values, and rules for behaviors (Padden, 1989).

**Hard-of-Hearing (HOH):** individuals having a mild to moderate degree of hearing loss, who may, but do not necessarily, identify themselves in the Deaf world (Moore & Levitan, 2003; Padden & Humphries, 1990).

**Hearing:** used by people who are Deaf to describe the non-Deaf majority and meaning people who can hear (Moore & Levitan, 2003).

**Mild hearing loss:** thresholds for various pitches are between 21 and 40 dB HL. With a mild hearing loss there may be difficulty hearing soft speech, speech from a distance, or speech with background noise. Individuals may or may not require amplification (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000).

**Moderate hearing loss:** thresholds are between 41 and 55 dB HL. With a moderate hearing loss there may be difficulty hearing conversations, especially with background noise. Individuals may hear conversation at three to five feet or one-on-one conversation (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000).

**Moderate to severe hearing loss:** thresholds are between 56 and 70 dB HL. With moderate to severe hearing loss, individuals may have problems with reception and understanding of spoken words. They will need amplification from assistive devices such as a hearing aid or an FM system. The clarity of speech is significantly reduced, and most hearing difficulty will occur in groups (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000).

**Parent:** a father or mother. Also, in extended use, a woman or man who takes on parental responsibilities toward a child, e.g., a stepmother or an adoptive father (“Parent,” 2013).
**Profound hearing loss:** thresholds are 91–120+ dB HL. Hearing is the primary mode of communication. Individuals with profound hearing loss may hear some loud, low-frequency sounds. Individuals will not be able to understand conversation even with use of hearing aids (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000).

**Severe hearing loss:** thresholds are between 71 and 90 dB HL. Individuals may hear loud speeches but may not understand them. Individuals may be able to hear loud environment sound and vowels but not consonants. Normal conversation will not be audible, and individuals with severe hearing loss will only hear speech if shouted or amplified (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000).

**Total communication:** method of communication educators use to teach students who are deaf that combines sign language, finger spelling, speech, and auditory training (Moore & Levitan, 2003).
CHAPTER II—Literature Review

This chapter discusses current and past literature relevant to the topic of this dissertation. Review of the literature illuminates the need for more research concerning children who are Deaf and their library experiences. Additionally, more research is needed that incorporates the cultural model perspective as it relates to this user group and the impact of culture on information behaviors.

Libraries and People with Disabilities

Within the library and information science field, very little research exists about the information-seeking behaviors of people who are Deaf. To prepare for this study, which explores the public library experiences of children who are Deaf, I examined various resources. Searching numerous literature databases\(^1\) and journals\(^2\) with the descriptors “Deaf” and “library, librarian, or libraries” yielded very few results. The term “disability” (or any of its variants) was not used, as it is often applied in a broader scope that is inclusive of any disability. Search results uncovered a limited body of research on the information needs or behaviors of the Deaf Community.

The issue of inclusive services for people with disabilities tends to be a common theme within the LIS literature, and rightfully so, because one of the core values of the LIS profession is to ensure access for all (ALA, 2008). However, several issues emerged. First, people with disabilities are often studied together as one group, even when individuals

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\(^1\) Academic Search Complete, Dissertation & Theses Full-Text, Educational Resource Center (ERIC), JSTOR, Library Information Science and Technology Abstracts with Full-Text, OmniFile Full-Text Select, Project Muse, and ProQuest

within this group have varying needs and degrees of disabilities. Second, much of the literature does not incorporate concepts from the disability models that provide an understanding of the varied context and cultures of people with disabilities. Third, most of the literature is based on practical experience and is not research based. Finally, very little literature, if any, is written from the perspective of a user with disabilities. Overall, the LIS literature related to deafness falls into six distinct categories:

4. Library services specifically for people who are Deaf (Alexander, 2007; Cohen, 2006a; "Seattle adds," 1977);
5. Accessibility (Cohen, 2006b; Green, 2009; Jaeger & Bo, 2009)

In sum, it is important to reiterate that the majority of the LIS literature addresses topics related to the practical implications of assistive technologies, accessibility, and ADA, and it is rarely research based. Furthermore, much of the LIS literature combines Deaf-related
issues with the more general literature about “people with disabilities,” which does not differentiate one user population from another.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is an important piece of legislation for people with disabilities because it prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination of individuals based on their disability. This law addresses such issues as employment, public entities, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Public accommodations include libraries, museums, and private educational facilities (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). Since passage of this legislation, the LIS literature has increasingly addressed accessibility or ADA issues, with a primary focus on assistive technologies.

**American Library Association and People with Disabilities**

The leading professional organization for librarians, the American Library Association (ALA), and the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA), a division of ALA, provide guidelines and general resources for serving people with disabilities (ALA, 2006c). ASCLA acknowledges that there are “no overall statistics on library services for people with disabilities” and that “anecdotal information is what we have” suggesting that “efforts are uneven” (ALA, 2006b, para. 7).

ALA created ASCLA in an effort to represent the interests of special agencies that “provide material and service to populations with special needs such as those with sensory, physical, health or behavioral conditions or those who are incarcerated or detained” (ALA, 2006a, para. 3). ASCLA unanimously approved the Library for People with Disabilities Policy in 2001, a policy that addresses services, facilities, collections, library education,
training and professional development, ALA conferences, and ALA publications and communications (ALA, 2006a). The ASCLA statement “Facts: Why an ALA Disability Policy? Why Now?” gives the following explanation:

The library community has no overall statistics on library service for people with disabilities. There are, of course, statistics on the network of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. A few notable libraries of other types also report on such services. Otherwise, anecdotal information is what we have [emphasis added]. It suggests that efforts are uneven and library staff want help in this area. At the same time, libraries are turning to ALA in rapidly increasing numbers for help, especially with regard to technology accessibility issues. This is an opportunity for ALA to lead significant improvement of library services in our communities (ALA, 2006b, para. 7).

This statement is a clear indication that there is limited statistical information about users with disabilities who access library services. From this statement, one can also infer that limited empirical research exists about people with disabilities and libraries.

To specifically address services to people who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, ASCLA has created a forum, “Library Service to People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing,” which has the following mission:

Promote library and information service to deaf persons by: fostering deaf awareness in the library community and in the deaf and hearing populations at large; monitoring and publicizing legislation and funding developments related to library and information services for deaf persons; encouraging employment and career opportunities for deaf persons in libraries, and encouraging their
participation in the American Library Association; stimulating the production, distribution, and collection of materials in formats that are readily accessible to deaf persons and that accurately portray deaf persons; and developing and operating a clearinghouse of information on services for deaf persons to assist libraries in collection development and programming (ALA, 1999b, para. 1).

ASCLA carries out this mission in part by providing the following information to the LIS community:

1. Communication resources: a list of services and information about assistive technologies including an ASL browser; CART (Computer Aided Real Time Translation); and a Gallaudet University guide, *Communicating in a Library with People who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (HOH)*

2. Publishers and vendors: a list of publishers and vendors that sell material (books, video, games, educational material, etc.) specifically about deafness and Deaf Culture

3. Collection development: a short list of title recommendations “created by individuals who work extensively with people who are deaf or hard of hearing” (ALA, 1999b, para. 1)

4. Links to Gallaudet University’s library catalog: access points for information about books with Deaf characters or by Deaf authors and Deaf-related online resources (ALA, 1999b)

ASCLA has also developed a tip sheet for serving children with disabilities that includes information on how to communicate and interact with them; however, this tip sheet encompasses all children with disabilities and does not specifically address children who are
Deaf (American Library Association, Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, 2010).

Additionally, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of ALA that supports and enhances library service to children, has created educational opportunities designed to be inclusive of children with disabilities. For example, ALSC has offered workshops to teach librarians how to create sensory story times for children with autism (ALA, 1999c) and how to serve children with disabilities (ALA, 1999a). Again, however, these workshops did not specifically address children who are Deaf.

Many ALA resources address basic practice-based and how-to guides for librarians but do not focus on more complex information behavior issues or cultural differences. Addressing ADA concerns and accessibility for people who are Deaf is one step toward inclusivity, but it is also important to acknowledge that different cultures shape experiences in different ways and these cultural differences should be part of the professional discussion. Attention to the important role of culture will lead LIS professionals to a better understanding of this population and to improved services and resources.

**Literature from Other Disciplines**

Although LIS lacks literature addressing the information needs and behaviors of individuals who are Deaf, other fields do focus on issues surrounding deafness. Most of this literature comes from the medical and the educational fields. In the medical field, it is not surprising that the literature is usually written from the medical model perspective. Often, the focus is on medical advances, such as cochlear implants, improving hearing, understanding the role of genetics, and creating support groups. Most are scientific studies,
and although the literature in this area is abundant, these studies are beyond the scope of this study.

Another discipline that contains an abundance of literature is the education field, and the literature generally addresses literacy, reading, instruction, language, writing, modes of communication (e.g., ASL and oralism), experiences of students in academic settings, and specific educational programs. In this field, many articles also address the history of education for people who are Deaf, which is not a primary focus of this study. Although some literature in education briefly touches on libraries, the emphasis tends to be on academic settings and usually addresses accessibility, technology, or academic achievement (Albertini, Kelly, & Matchett, 2012; Convertino, Marschark, Sapere, Sarchet, & Zupan, 2009; Reed, Antia, & Kreimeyer, 2008; Smith, 2006). Furthermore, literature that discusses the academic library setting is usually not research based nor does it present the viewpoint of the individual who is Deaf.

Other disciplines, including sociology, communication, and business, have also generated literature, but in these fields, many of the articles about people with disabilities focus on religion, human resources, communication modes, or identity. Thus, the majority of literature from these fields is not directly relevant to this study.

Almost all of the mentioned fields of study noted an attempt to address the accessibility of technology, the physical workplace, or the school setting. With the exception of the medical field, some disciplines (but not many) also attempt to include either the social model perspective or the cultural model perspective, but these models are only mentioned briefly, and the topics covered in the literature from these fields are not within the scope of the research questions guiding this study.
The recreation professions, which include museums, park services, social clubs, recreational facilities, and travel, generally have goals and purposes that are similar to libraries, and the literature from the recreation field does address the issue of Deafness. Similar to the LIS literature, however, very little has been written from the user perspective about services for people with disabilities. The focus of articles from the recreation field is typically about accessibility, inclusivity, integration of people with disabilities, and the types of services provided (Atherton, 2009; Coco-Ripp, 2005; Jones, 1995; Lieberman & Stuart, 2002; Olivia, 2004; Oliva & Simonsen, 2000). The recreation professions also tend to combine all people with disabilities into a single group. Admittedly, the recreation profession understands that removing communication barriers and providing access are part of the solution, but more attention is needed to ensure social accessibility. Moreover, additional research addressing Deafness is needed because the “deaf and hard of hearing population in many localities are greatly underserved” (Oliva & Simonsen, 2000, p. 83).

Theoretical Frameworks

To provide a context for the study of the experiences of children who are Deaf and their families within the public library setting, two theoretical frameworks shaped this study. These information behavior theories are Elfreda Chatman’s information poverty and Erving Goffman’s face threat. Additionally, Constance Mellon’s concept of library anxiety is also discussed. Although library anxiety tests were not part of the study, anxiety was expected to be one of the obstacles that participants may have experienced.
Information poverty

Elfreda Chatman spent months with groups composed mainly of janitors and imprisoned women, observing and interviewing them in depth about how they shared or did not share information within their world. Based on Chatman's theory of normative behavior and her concept of small worlds, Chatman offers explanations of how small-world communities are socially constructed. Through interactions, members adopt social norms and worldviews from each other. The insiders (those who are part of the small world) determine what information is needed, what information is acceptable, and what sources are valid. Outsiders (those who are not in the small world), or the “legitimized others,” shape, change, and/or modify information that enters the small world from the outside. These outsider/insider roles establish the norms and worldviews that dictate information behavior (Chatman, 2000).

Social norms of the small world also dictate how insiders interact with one another and with outsiders (Chatman, 2000). In addition, these norms also determine what is considered right and wrong within their small world or community, resulting in varying norms from community to community (Chatman, 2000). Social norms are rules, stated implicitly or explicitly, that guide behavior, whereas a worldview is a “collective sense that one has a reasonable hold on everyday life” (p. 3). These worldviews and social norms, according to Chatman, contribute to the community’s perception of what information and information sources are acceptable and unacceptable based on whether the individual or source providing the information is considered an acceptable source or an outsider (Chatman, 2000).
In addition to the small-world theory, Chatman also developed four key concepts that contribute to the lack of information exchange within the small-world concept: secrecy, dependency, risk-taking, and situational relevance. Together, these four concepts create self-protective behaviors for transferring information. Chatman’s studies revealed that cultural, social, or religious perspectives can shape the insider’s lived experiences and behaviors. Because insiders have doubts as to whether outsiders can understand their “world,” there tends to be an information barrier as the insiders shield themselves in secrecy and deception (Chatman, 1996). Combining the small-world concept with factors affecting a lack of information exchange creates an information-impoverished community.

Chatman’s concept of small worlds and information poverty provides a backdrop for understanding the Deaf Community. Since it is a closed community, the social norms, worldviews, and self-protective behaviors within the community create a small world that may filter information flow and interactions. Furthermore, the Deaf Community shares cultural and social norms that may not be familiar to outsiders, creating an insider/outsider dynamic. Using this theoretical framework provides a lens for understanding how a library may or may not be an acceptable source for information.

**Face threat**

In a library, interactions between participants (patron/librarian) are an everyday occurrence. An interaction is framed by the participant’s expectation about the setting, socially defined roles, and the appropriate action for the encounter. During interactions, individuals may maintain different public roles to preserve “self or face” (Mon, 2009).

Face threat (or threat to face) is a concept developed by sociologist Erving Goffman during his exploration of face-to-face, interpersonal interactions in public and behaviors that
occur “behind the scenes,” where a person keeps himself or herself backstage and away from the public eye. The concept of face, according to Goffman (1982), is defined as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact” and “an image of self-delineated terms of approved social attributes” (p. 5). Goffman argues that “face” is an emotional representation of “self” and that it is shaped not only by the individual but also by the reactions and perceptions of other participants during an interaction (Goffman, 1982).

Goffman outlines three different “faces” a person may experience: “have, be in, or maintain face,” “wrong face,” or “out of face.” To “have, be in, or maintain face” means that the desired image of “self” presented is acceptable to the other participants. During interactions, a person “in face” must maintain “face” during the activity. Typically, a person “in face” responds confidently and with assurance during his or her encounter; however, if a person loses “face,” that person runs the risk of embarrassment or humiliation (Goffman, 1982).

A person is said to be in “wrong face” when “information is brought forth in some way about his social worth which cannot be integrated, even with effort, into the line that is being sustained for him” (Goffman, 1982, p. 8). That is, a person has been assigned a “face” that does not fit with a desired self-image. “Wrong face” can occur because of what the person intentionally or unintentionally does that can affect his or her status as a participant. Being in “wrong face” can bring about emotions such as shame, humiliation, or inferiority (Goffman, 1982). For example, “students fear being in ‘wrong face’ if their library skills are revealed to be inadequate” and anticipate shame and humiliation (Radford, Connaway, & Williams, 2007, p. 1).
A person is said to be “out of face” when one fails to have a line ready for portrayal. That is, a person does not know how to act because he or she does not have the appropriate attributes of who they were thought to be. Again, when a one is “out of face,” he or she can encounter unpleasant emotions such as embarrassment, disgrace, or inadequacy (Goffman, 1982). Being “out of face” is similar to committing a faux pas, such as when a dinner party guest tries to impress the host but uses the wrong cutlery.

In addition to “face,” societal rules and etiquette also determine how individuals should interact. These rules are ingrained in the individual’s sense of “self,” and the value of “self” is shaped by the other participant’s reactions and perceptions and the way he or she is treated. A person “maintains face” or is “in face” when his or her sense of “self” stays consistent throughout the encounter, upholds the perceptions and reactions, and is accepted by others. Threats to “face” occur when there is a sense that the individual’s public self-image may be at risk (Goffman, 1982). A person who accidently stumbles in front of others, for example, may pretend not to notice in order to “maintain face” or stay “in face.”

Because a library typically revolves around interactions between individuals in various specified roles, this theoretical framework should enhance our understanding of the experiences of children who are Deaf. Goffman’s face threat will also allow me to explore whether services or interactions affected by the concept of saving “face” or “self” may inadvertently alienate users.

**Library anxiety**

Although Chatman’s information poverty and Goffman’s face threat are two information behavior theories that provide a context and framework for this study, research about library anxiety enhances our understanding of factors that may also influence
information behavior. Library anxiety is often studied in an academic library and uses a Likert scale response instrument to determine if a person experiences library anxiety. This type of test was not used in this study; however, some studies have focused on characteristics that heighten library anxiety, such as self-perception. Because self-perception ties into the concepts of face threat and information poverty and the cultural model of disability, I thought it best to address library anxiety as it may relate to this study.

Library anxiety can affect students beginning in primary school and can continue into the college years. As librarians, we need to understand users and how they feel as they use the library. Constance Mellon, professor of library science at East Carolina University in North Carolina, developed the concept of library anxiety in 1986 (Cleveland, 2004). Library anxiety is time and situation specific, and it is usually independent from trait-based anxiety. Although anxiety has various forms (math anxiety, communication anxiety, and foreign language anxiety), library anxiety is typically more common because most students need to use the library at some point during their schooling (Onwuegbuzie, Jiao, & Bostick, 2004). Students who exhibit symptoms of library anxiety often feel fear, apprehension, uncertainty, tension, helplessness, and self-defeating thoughts that can impede their ability to properly use the library. Students may also feel an emotional or physical discomfort when performing library-related tasks. These tasks can increase heart rate, respiration rate, and blood pressure. Affective symptoms include apprehension, frustration, helplessness, tension, uneasiness, and mental disorganization. Levels of library anxiety vary from low to high, and they can be either a motivating factor or a debilitating factor (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004).

Jiao and Onwuegbuzie (1999) also looked at the role that self-perception plays in library anxiety and defined self-perception as “our view of who we are and how we fit into
Since self-perception is developed through interactions with others and the world, the components of self-perception are primarily social. Self-perception determines how we relate to others, it tends to be inflexible and resistant, and it is a necessary feature of our personalities. Self-perception also serves to guide our behavior and enables us to assume particular roles in life (Jiao & Onwuegbuzie, 1999).

The two information behavior theories and the concept of library anxiety informed and enriched the description and understanding of the lived experiences of children who are Deaf. They also helped guide my research approach and design.

In summary, LIS literature attempts to ensure accessibility and inclusivity; however, it continues to overlook issues unique to the Deaf Community. The profession should address this literature gap by incorporating the voices of people who are Deaf and developing more research-based studies that are framed by the social or cultural model of disability. LIS should also focus on the information needs and user behaviors of people from the Deaf Community and integrate the ways in which social and cultural factors influence user behavior.
CHAPTER III—Methodology

This chapter presents the research approach and methodology of the study. A description of the data collection, an overview of the analysis process, and consideration of the study’s credibility are also included. As this study was qualitative in nature and explored an underresearched phenomenon using phenomenology, no hypotheses were developed. Instead, the methodology of this study was to describe the phenomenon as experienced and portrayed by the participants.

Research Approach

Qualitative design.

A qualitative design is chosen when there is a “need to study a group or population, identify variables that cannot be easily measured, or hear silenced voices” (Creswell, 2012, p. 48). The Deaf Community’s voice is rarely heard in LIS literature. Because Deaf Culture is complex, a qualitative design helps to develop a descriptive and detailed picture of the phenomenon as experienced by the participants. In brief, a qualitative approach empowers individuals to “share their stories” and allows us to “hear their voices” through the context of their lives and experiences (Creswell, 2012).

Key characteristics of a qualitative design identified by Creswell (2012) are described below in relation to this study.

- A natural setting is used as opposed to a contrived setting, which allows for gathering information by talking directly to the participants (p. 45). I interviewed the participants at their elementary school, a setting that was familiar to the participants. Familiarity with
the interview setting provided participants with a sense of control and a recognizable environment that increased the likelihood of openly discussing their experiences during the face-to-face interviews.

- **Researcher as key instrument** (p. 45). I used semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions to give voice to the participants. I developed the questions, and no third-party instrument was used. To determine the effectiveness of the interview questions, I examined the responses of the first interviewee to decide if any questions needed to be reworded, added, or deleted.

- **Multiple methods** (p. 45). Interviews were chosen to get the essence of public library experiences by children who are Deaf and to provide an opportunity for participants to share their stories using their own voices in their own context. The lack of literature about public library usage by this user population indicated a need to collect data via a primary source. Although only interviews were conducted, two sets of participants (children and their parents) allowed me to gather multiple perspectives and varied data about the same phenomenon.

- **Complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic** (p. 45). By building patterns, themes, or categories from the “bottom up,” I moved from particulars to broader categories and identified a “common meaning.” Additionally, these categories or themes allowed me to create a detailed description of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012).

- **Meaning about a problem or issue is derived from the participant’s perspective** (p. 47). This research method relies on the participant’s view of a situation, which arises from historical and cultural norms that operate within that individual’s life, thereby
constructing his or her own meaning of the situation. Because experiences vary and are unique, this methodology not only utilizes the unique experiences of the individual but also integrates both thoughts and feelings into the collected data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2009).

Creswell emphasizes that the design of qualitative research evolves and may need modification during the process of the study. Because of its holistic nature, a fuller and larger picture emerges through description and articulation of various elements of the phenomenon, making the research design appropriate for this study (Creswell, 2012).

**Phenomenological approach to the problem.**

Phenomenology is the study of a phenomenon as it is seen in one’s consciousness (Creswell, 2012). It focuses on an individual’s “lived experience” (Creswell, 2008), and the aim of the research is to describe and understand the essence of the experience. In other words, phenomenology describes the shared and common meaning of lived experiences for those experiencing a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). This study’s aim was to uncover the meaning and essence of a phenomenon (i.e., public library experience) as seen by individuals who are Deaf.

Phenomenology encourages the use of open-ended questions because these types of questions prompt responses that allow the individual to give meaning to his or her own experience without undue guidance from the researcher (Creswell, 2008). Since little LIS research exists from the Deaf Culture perspective, it is important to first understand the lived experiences of this population in order to establish a foundation before conducting further research.
A phenomenology research method was appropriate for this study because I sought the participants’ perceptions of their lived experiences pertaining to public libraries. The participants’ descriptions of their experiences in public libraries revealed the essential elements that give meaning to their experiences. Moreover, a description and discussion of these essences and meanings provide a deeper understanding of an unexplored area in the LIS literature.

Key concepts of phenomenology as outlined by Moustakas (1994) are described below, and their relation to this investigation is explained.

- *Phenomenology is the first method of knowledge because it begins with the phenomenon itself* (p. 58). Because almost no empirical research on the information needs or behaviors of people who are Deaf exists and there is little research that incorporates the Deaf voice, it is important to first begin by looking at the phenomenon itself. This approach will provide a broader picture and deeper understanding of the phenomenon, and the findings will become the grounding for future research.

- *Phenomenology focuses on the appearances of things, a return to things just as they are given, removed from routine and biases, from what we are told is true in the natural world of everyday living* (p. 58). Through interviews, the participants discussed their public library experiences as they saw and experienced them through their unique cultural context.

- *Phenomenology is concerned with wholeness, with examining entities from many sides, angles, and perspectives until a unified vision of the essences of a phenomenon or experience is achieved* (p. 58). By looking at the experiences of both the child and his or her parent, I explored the phenomenon from two different perspectives. These two perspectives allowed me to create a fuller, more multifaceted description of the phenomenon than
currently exists in the literature.

- *Phenomenology seeks meanings from appearances and arrives at essences through intuition and reflection on conscious acts of experience, leading to ideas, concepts, judgments, and understandings* (p. 58). Because the voices of individuals who are Deaf are almost nonexistent in the LIS literature, this study sought to provide a larger context for understanding the public library experiences of this user population. In addition, through reflection on those experiences, a richer picture of the phenomenon and its meaning emerged.

- *Phenomenology is committed to descriptions of experiences and not explanations or analysis* (p. 58). Logic indicates that the lack of literature about library services from the perspective of someone who is Deaf makes it important that we initially gain a description and understanding of this phenomenon before we begin to explain or analyze the phenomenon itself. Aiming to present a complete picture of this phenomenon through the participant’s eyes made the use of phenomenology an ideal approach.

In addition to these key concepts, Moustakas asserts that “the puzzlement is autobiographical” (p. 59), or that key questions emerge from one’s own curiosity and experience regarding the phenomenon being explored and become integral to understanding the phenomenon more fully. Thus, the research questions did not seek a specific answer; the questions were used to lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon and to capture the essences of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).
Research Design

For this study, I chose to use purposive/nonrandom sampling. This method targets a specific type of individual or a specific characteristic. In this study, deafness is the central focus, and purposive/nonrandom sampling allowed me to reach the targeted population quickly (Jupp, 2006). This was also a sensitive research study, involving children who are Deaf and their parents. Because deafness is not readily distinguishable and reaching the targeted population may be difficult, prior knowledge of the individual’s hearing status was important in selecting participants. The participants in this study were associated with an elementary school located in a large midwestern city with a Deaf and Hard of Hearing program.

Furthermore, since this research used a vulnerable population, a full review by Dominican University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) was required. After receiving approval from Dominican’s IRB, I obtained approval from the elementary school’s administrators to conduct my research on school property. Recruitment for participants began during the fall semester of 2012.

Participants

My study involved two sets of participants. The first group consisted of children who are Deaf. Since the purpose of this study was to examine the library experiences of children who are Deaf, I felt that it was essential to interview the children to learn how they view and use the library. The second group consisted of the parents or guardians of these children. It would have been ideal to have both a child and a parent from the same family participate, but it was not a requirement. Since the children were under eighteen years of
age and may not have the verbal abilities and confidence to respond fully to all of the
questions, I felt it was important to ask the parents to take part in this study. Including the
parents meant that a more detailed and complete picture would emerge about the potential
role of family in the child’s experiences in libraries.

To participate in this study, the children under eighteen years of age required
parental consent and also had to sign an assent/consent form. If the parent chose, the child
could have participated in the study without the parent’s participation. It was also
acceptable to include a parent in the study even if the child did not participate. Any child
who chose not to sign the assent/consent form was excluded from the study.

**Recruitment**

To recruit participants, I first met with the head of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Program, Mrs. Smith (pseudonym used). Mrs. Smith received copies of the summary of my
study (Appendix A) and the consent forms (Appendix B). During the fall of 2012, Mrs.
Smith and I set up two dates for me to meet with parents to recruit participants and to
answer any questions parents might have regarding the study. At one scheduled meeting, I
met two families, both of whom chose to participate. Through Mrs. Smith, all parents in the
Deaf and Hard of Hearing program received copies of the summary of the study, assent
forms, and consent forms. Four parents signed consent forms allowing their children to
participate. The children also signed assent/consent forms. Six parents signed consent forms
to participate; however, only five parents actually participated in this study.
The school.

The school I worked with is a pre-K through eighth-grade elementary school located in a large midwestern city. The school uses the total communication method, which incorporates sign language, lipreading, finger spelling, speech, and auditory training. Students are placed into three types of classes: self-contained (Deaf and HOH students only), mainstreamed (placed in classrooms for subjects based on their ability level), or inclusive classrooms (full day with hearing students). In many cases, students placed with hearing students have an ASL-fluent teacher who works individually with the student during class time. This allows the classroom teacher to proceed to teach the other students while the ASL-fluent teacher works independently with the student who is Deaf or HOH to ensure that the student understands the material.

Children.

Four children participated in this study. Children ranged in ages from ten to fourteen and were in grades five through eight with reading levels at approximately the first or second grade. Table 2 provides a profile of the children who participated in this study. Pseudonyms have been used to conceal each child's identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stephanie</th>
<th>Danny</th>
<th>Becky</th>
<th>Jorge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Grade</td>
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<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Latino</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Latino</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Child Participants

*Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.
Parents.

Parents of the children in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program formed the second group asked to participate in this study. All of the parents of the children who were interviewed signed consent forms to participate; however, prior to the interview, Stephanie’s mother withdrew from the study. There were also two parents who chose to participate in the study but whose children did not. Table 3 provides a profile of the parents who participated in the study. Again, pseudonyms are used to mask the identity of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teresa</th>
<th>Christina</th>
<th>Anna</th>
<th>Veronica</th>
<th>Nicole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Latina</td>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>Latina</td>
</tr>
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<td>Master in library science</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Some college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Jorge</td>
<td>Becky</td>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>*Alexa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Parent Participants

*Did not participate but parent refers to the child.

Interview Procedures.

Upon receiving approval from Dominican University and the elementary school’s administration, I began to work with Mrs. Smith to set up the interviews. Prior to the interviews, as previously described, Mrs. Smith distributed the consent forms and summary of the study to the parents and children in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program, and several consent forms noting agreement to participate were returned.

I scheduled the interviews with the children first. Part of this decision was logistical. Since the interviews were to be done during school hours and on school grounds, it seemed
that scheduling these interviews would be the easiest. Additionally, I wanted to interview
the children first to prevent myself from asking leading questions based on information that
the parents might provide.

The children were all interviewed on school property with an ASL interpreter
present. The ASL interpreter works closely with the children in the school setting, so the
children had some familiarity with her. The interpreter also satisfied the requirement by the
school’s IRB that a staff member be present during any interaction with the children while
on school property. Prior to the beginning of the interview, I briefly went over the study
with each individual child, explaining the study and what would happen during the
interview. After each child agreed to continue, I turned on the video camera and proceeded
with the interview.

The parent interviews were more difficult to schedule. Due to unforeseen setbacks
related to staffing issues at the elementary school, scheduled programs, and arranging the
interviews with the children, there was a gap of almost one month between when the
parents submitted their consent forms and when I was able to schedule their interviews. As I
attempted to contact the parents, several phone numbers were disconnected, or no voice
mail was available for me to leave a message. After identifying this problem, Mrs. Smith
provided me with updated information, and I was able to make contact with the parents. I
called each parent to determine if he or she was still interested in participating, and if so, I
scheduled a time and date for the interview. I also offered them several options for when
and where we could conduct the interview. One parent asked that I interview her at the
school while she waited for her daughter to finish with her speech therapy. Another parent
asked that I interview her at her home. I accommodated both of these requests. Three
parents asked to be interviewed over the phone. Although I would have preferred to do the interview in person, I settled for an over-the-phone interview as long as the parent knew that the interview was being recorded.

Before I began each interview (parent and child), I briefly outlined the purpose of the study to the participant and asked each individual if he or she was still willing to continue with the interview. I also explained that they were free to withdraw from the study at any moment. Having the signed consent form(s) in hand and a verbal (or visual, i.e., sign language) agreement to proceed, I turned on my recording device and began the interview.

Data Collection

The participant interviews in this study were videotaped and/or audiotaped, which allowed me to review and to transcribe the responses to the questions. The children who volunteered for this study were videotaped. Because the children are Deaf, it was important to videotape the interview to watch for nonverbal cues (Silverman, 2005; Simons, 2009). Audio recording would not have been suitable because ASL is a visual language and uses body and facial cues as forms of expression. Although the parents had the option to be videotaped or audiotaped, all of the parents interviewed were audiotaped.

Each semi-structured interview lasted just under 60 minutes on most occasions. The interview questions were designed to gather personal information about the participants and to focus on specific areas that solicited information about library usage, reading habits, and information-seeking behaviors. During the interviews with the children, an ASL interpreter was available. Each of the participants was given a number (e.g., Participant #1), which was the only source of identification. The parent was given a letter (e.g., Participant D) as
identification. I was the only person with knowledge of the participants’ personal information, including relationships between child and parent.

A formal record of the research was kept in a journal and remained in a locked cabinet at my home when not in use. Any other records with identifying information such as assent or consent forms were placed in a second locked file cabinet, accessible by only me, located at a nearby relative’s home. All videotapes and audiotapes were kept in a third location, my safety deposit box, also accessible by only me. In accordance with IRB protocol, this was done to ensure that if a third party were to gain access to one set of records, individuals who participated in the study would not be readily identifiable.

*Interviewing Children*

Interviewing children can provide useful insight into their social worlds and is a technique suitable for a subjective description of experiences and the way a child conceptualizes his or her world (MacDonald & Greggans, 2008). Care must be taken to create trust between the child and the researcher (Gardner & Randall, 2012). To better find the child’s authentic voice, the environment in which the interview takes place is important. Since the environment is part of the child’s social world, trying to change or control it may hinder open dialogue (MacDonald & Greggans, 2008). It is also important to acknowledge that there is a power relationship in an interview situation, and the child may answer or participate in an interview to please the researcher (Kortesluoma, Hentinen, & Nikkonen, 2003).

To counter some of these concerns, children were given information about the study prior to the interview and again the day of the interview. I also used open-ended questions, which allowed the children to describe their views in their own words and increased
credibility when examining a child’s expressions, feelings, and experiences (MacDonald & Greggans, 2008). Participants were assured that there was no right or wrong answer and that everything they said about their experiences was important. They were also assured that saying “I don't know” or not answering a question was acceptable. Long interviews were avoided due to children’s relatively limited ability to concentrate (Kortesluoma et al., 2003).

The interviews were conducted in the children’s school setting with a school staff member present. This arrangement provided continuity for the children by allowing them to be in a familiar environment and by having someone they knew as the interpreter. The participants were also told that they were free to withdraw at any time and were not required to answer every question. Finally, because I was interested in understanding their lived experiences pertaining to public libraries, I chose to use a semi-structured interview to give participants an opportunity to express their views in their own words.

**Data Analysis**

For the interviews, I used a digital recorder to video record the interviews with the children and to audio record the interviews with the parents. No parent requested to be videotaped. During the interview, I took detailed notes of behavior and relevant observations and reactions. I transcribed the interviews verbatim and then read the transcripts and my notes several times in their entirety to gain a sense of the interview as a whole.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used because IPA focuses on the understanding of the experience from the participants’ points of view. IPA allows the researcher to go from particulars to shared commonalities over several cases, which aided in
going from a descriptive analysis to an interpretive analysis. There are five steps to using IPA.

1. *Reading and rereading the transcript* (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). In this case, I transcribed the interviews of each individual to become more familiar with the participant's voice, manner of speaking, and types of wording used. Transcribing, listening to, and reading the interview several times allowed me to write notes and bracket them off to reduce the level of irrelevant “noise.”

2. *Initial noting* (Smith et al., 2012). This step allows the researcher to gain familiarity with the transcript by writing notes that center on descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments. It helps to inform the researcher in the analysis of the data (Smith et al., 2012). Transcripts were read several times during this step. Using a fresh copy of the transcript each time, I wrote comments that allowed me to focus on similarities and differences in relation to the participant responses, themes, patterns, and topics.

3. *Developing emergent themes* (Smith et al., 2012). Here the researcher begins to map the relationships, connections, and themes that emerged from the interview (Smith et al., 2012). As a result, I created tables and concept maps that helped me connect comments within the interview that were either related or interesting. Themes began to emerge from each individual transcript.

4. *Searching for connection across emergent themes* (Smith et al., 2012). In this step, the initial themes are formed into clusters of related themes (Smith et al., 2012). I began to look at each theme and consider ways in which they were or were not related to
one another. I ordered the themes in different ways, for example, by concept, by wording, or by topic, to create my clusters of themes.

5. *Moving to the next case* (Smith et al., 2012). The previous four steps are applied to each individual interview transcript.

6. *Looking for patterns across the cases* (Smith et al., 2012). This final step allows the researcher to move from case to case building larger themes found across the various interviews (Smith et al., 2012). I reexamined the emerging themes in each interview and began to develop larger clusters of related themes. Resulting themes are discussed in the next chapter.

Bracketing is the first step of phenomenology and IPA and essential to the integrity of the study, because it provides a means for the research to become aware of his or her preconceptions about the object of the study. The purpose of bracketing is to approach the study with an openness about the phenomenon and to “see what is there” and for the experience “to be just what it is and to come to know it as it presents itself” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 86). Through bracketing, I focused on setting aside biases and prejudgments to be able to view the individuals and situations with a fresh perspective and new eyes. By keeping a log of my thoughts, preconceptions, beliefs and biases prior to and throughout the study, I was more prepared to approach the interviews with an open mind and to reach conclusions about the data collected by looking solely at the evidence available at hand and not on preconceived knowledge. Although it is impossible to completely remove biases, bracketing helps to reduce the level of noise and leads to a better readings and analyses of the transcripts and a more authentic understanding of the participants’ stories as relayed through their voices.
Using textural and structural descriptions, I built the “essence” of the experience to provide the reader with an understanding of “what” and “how” the phenomenon is experienced (Creswell, 2012). In addition, common themes and subthemes that emerged from the data were examined in relation to key concepts of Chatman’s information poverty, Goffman’s face threat, and Mellon’s library anxiety to further develop knowledge about the information behaviors of children who are Deaf.

**Credibility**

To establish the trustworthiness or credibility of a qualitative study, researchers must employ various methods to ensure that their studies align with what is actually being studied. Because I am exploring an unknown phenomenon, the overall goal of this study was to portray and accurately describe this phenomenon. To do so, I used several methods including triangulation, peer debriefers, and thick description to enhance the depiction of this phenomenon.

**Triangulation.**

The use of triangulation in a qualitative study may involve the use of different methods, such as observation, interviews, and documents to collect data, or it can involve the input of people to verify individual viewpoints and experiences against one another (Shenton, 2004). For this study, triangulation included interviews from two different sources (children and parents) to compare experiences and viewpoints. By using the parent interviews as a form of triangulation, I was able to address possible flaws or inconsistencies that may exist in the child interviews. Additionally, I incorporated the information behavior
theories of Chatman and Goffman as a theoretical lens to better understand these experiences and viewpoints and help me draw a rich, thick description of the phenomenon.

**Peer debriefers.**

Peer debriefers review the information and create an interpretation beyond that of the researcher (Creswell, 2008). I worked with peer debriefers to ensure that I remained true to the transcripts and my interpretation of them. One peer debriefer is a librarian and former ASL interpreter with knowledge of Deaf Culture. My second peer debriefer was an individual who has a background in special education, including people with disabilities. These readers brought their experiences and perceptions to help broaden my understanding of the phenomenon and to draw attention to flaws, biases, and preferences that might have occurred in my analysis of the transcripts and the development of themes. The peer debriefers also provided additional insight into the potential limitation and flaws that may result when interviewing children who are Deaf, particularly in the use of sign language and relying of information communicated by a third party (the interpreter). For example, during one interview I ask “When you get homework, where do you look for information for your homework?” but the interpreter asks, “When you get homework and you have like a topic, where do you get your information from? What do you use to get information?” As a result, this translation may cause the child to respond to “what do you use to get information” versus “where do you look for…” Translations such as this one may cause the child to respond to a slightly different question than I asked.
Thick description.

A detailed account of the situation, including the context surrounding the situation, helps the reader determine for himself or herself if the findings of the study “ring true” (Shenton, 2004). To provide readers with a true sense of the phenomenon, I wrote a thorough and detailed description of the phenomenon and included social and cultural influences, experiences, individual viewpoints, and thoughts. Taken together, these elements created a full picture as well as an understanding of how these factors contributed to the situation. Throughout all phases of the study, I bracketed my assumptions, beliefs, and feelings to allow the participants’ voices to illuminate the phenomenon. The goal of this study was primarily to describe the phenomenon rather than explain it.

Ethical issues.

I anticipated minimal risk for the participants of this study. Prior to beginning each interview, I explained the purpose of the study to each of the participants and indicated that participation was voluntary and that he or she had the option to stop the interview at anytime or decline to answer any question. Participants were also told that saying “I don’t know” or not answering was also acceptable. I also indicated that all information was confidential and would be kept in a secure location. To assure participants about confidentiality, I explained that they would be known only as a number, e.g., “Participant 1,” during the interview and no identifying information about the participants or the school would be used. Later, I chose to use pseudonyms for clarity and to facilitate reading.

Due to participant confidentiality, the parents were not allowed access to their child’s responses from the interview and vice versa. As an outsider of this group, I had to develop a
relationship of trust with the participants, which was key to my study. Breaching this trust could have compromised the child’s desire to participate if confidentiality was not guaranteed. Also, if the children knew that their parents had access to their interviews, the data might have been compromised because the children’s responses would have been guarded or they might have answered the questions in a way that they thought their parents might have wanted to hear.

Finally, I informed all participants that one year after the study, all audiotapes and videotapes would be destroyed. Participants were advised that they could contact the dissertation committee chair or Dominican University IRB representative if they had any questions about the study or me. All necessary information to contact the dissertation committee chair and the IRB representative was given to the participants.
CHAPTER IV—Findings

This research study looked at how children who are Deaf experience the public library and the role the parents may play in shaping the child’s perception of libraries and usage. Using the child and parent interviews, this section describes the library experiences of the children who are Deaf. The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section describes the themes that developed from the children’s interviews, and the second section focuses on the themes that emerged from the parents’ interviews. The third section of this chapter presents the composite experience: a narrative of a potential library experience for a child who is Deaf produced as a result of the combination of the experiences of both the children and the parents. The final section incorporates the theoretical frameworks and considers how they contribute to our understanding of the way children who are Deaf may experience the library and the potential impact of these experiences on their information behaviors and utilization of resources in the future.

For the purpose of discussion, responses of the participants have been slightly edited for clarity. That is, words such as “um” and “you know” have been removed to provide more fluid quotes to facilitate reading. Full, unedited transcripts of each participant’s interview are in Appendices D and E.

Child’s Experience

Four parents consented to have their children interviewed for this study, and the children consented to participate. The children were then interviewed individually with a school staff member present who also acted as an ASL interpreter. Additionally, although an attempt was made to ask each child the same questions, depending on the child’s
openness or experiences, adjustments to the questions were made as necessary. This section begins with a brief summary of each child, compiled from information provided by the child, the parent, and the school. The children have been given pseudonyms.

**Stephanie**

Stephanie is a fourteen-year-old African-American female who wears a cochlear implant and was diagnosed as profoundly deaf at age two. She also has cognitive disabilities and attends speech therapy once a week for a 60-minute session. Currently in eighth grade, Stephanie’s reading level is approximately at the kindergarten to first-grade level. Stephanie has two sisters, ages unknown. Her parent declined to be interviewed.

**Danny**

Danny is a ten-year-old Latino male who is in fifth grade and was diagnosed as moderately deaf at age three. Danny, whose reading level is approximately at the first- or second-grade level, wears a cochlear implant, has no other disability, and attends speech therapy once a week for 60 minutes. Rosie, Danny’s younger sister, is five years old and was also diagnosed as moderately deaf at age two. Anna, Danny’s mother, was interviewed for this study.

**Becky**

Becky is an eleven-year-old Latina female who was born deaf and wears a cochlear implant. A fifth-grader with a reading level at approximately second-grade, Becky, who is moderately deaf, has no other disability and attends speech therapy once a week for 60 minutes. She is an only child, and her mother Christina was interviewed for this study.
Jorge

Jorge is a twelve-year-old Latino male, currently in the sixth grade and reading at a second-grade level. Diagnosed as moderately deaf, Jorge wears a cochlear implant, has Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and attends speech therapy once a week for 60 minutes. Miguel, Jorge’s younger brother, is five years old and is hearing. Teresa, Jorge’s mother, was interviewed for this study.

Table 4 is a quick reference guide of the individuals who participated in the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Name</th>
<th>Child Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Parent declined interview)</td>
<td>Stephanie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Danny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina</td>
<td>Becky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa</td>
<td>Jorge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>Alexa (did not participate but parent refers to her)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole</td>
<td>Frank (did not participate but parent refers to him)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: List of Participants

Themes.

After reviewing the children’s interviews, three prominent themes emerged. To develop these themes, I used interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). This method of data analysis provides a framework for the researcher to read through interview transcripts and move from particulars to broader categories or themes found through the connections or patterns within interviews. The goal is to describe and understand the participant’s point
of view as he or she experiences it by taking the reader through an interpretation, theme by theme with participant quotes provided as supporting evidence (Smith et al., 2012).

Italicized text indicates that the child responded verbally; otherwise, the child responded in sign language. Responses in square brackets indicate the translation of what was signed by the child. See example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Response</th>
<th>Signed Response with Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I went to the library.</td>
<td>Yes, me library go [Yes, I went to the library]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The children were asked questions about a variety of topics likely to be familiar to them, including leisure activities, reading, school assignments, and library experiences. The first theme that emerged addresses the child’s interest in reading. The second theme speaks to the extent to which the children understand the role and functions of a library. The third theme centers on the child’s independent experiences in libraries. Taken together, these themes provide insight into the child’s experiences within libraries.

**Child theme 1: Children enjoy reading.**

After asking each child a few general questions about age and grade, I asked what he or she would like to tell me about himself or herself to give the participants an opportunity to have an open discussion about any activity or topic that interested them. At times, the children needed additional prompting to answer the question. Although the children responded with brief answers, the responses indicated that they enjoyed a variety of activities. Sample responses are described below.
Stephanie did not respond immediately. She began to think and tapped her right index finger against her chin. The interpreter signed, “I know you like to draw, right?” Stephanie smiled as if remembering, nodded her head excitedly, and answered, “Me draw.” Another child, Danny, did not answer this question immediately. Instead, he shrugged and looked around the room. The question was then restated and he replied, “Play with sister.” Similarly, Jorge remained silent and looked around the room. The question was restated and upon further prompting he responded, “Like out play games.” Finally, Becky smiled and immediately signed, “I like to books read” [I like to read books].

Each child was also asked if he or she enjoyed reading. If the child answered in the affirmative, I then asked what type of material he or she read. All of the children said that they enjoyed reading. For example, Becky instantly indicated that she enjoyed “Star Wars,” and Danny stated he liked reading sometimes and when asked what he like reading he replied the “Avengers.” Jorge nodded and said “yeah” and, after a few seconds, stated that his favorite book was about a “boy” named “Henry.” Stephanie enthusiastically signed, “My book see reading” [I like reading], and after being asked if she liked reading about animals, people, or places, Stephanie responded, “Places.” Two of the children, Jorge and Becky, were asked where they got their books to read. Jorge indicated, “From my home,” and Becky responded, “I don’t know not name but near school” [I don't know the name but it's near a school].

Summary of Theme 1

The children’s responses indicated that they enjoy different leisure activities but they appeared reluctant to share more with me. This reluctance could be a result of many factors, including the children’s unfamiliarity with me, their possible confusion about the way a
question was phrased by the interpreter, or their own personality traits. Reading is an activity all the children seem to enjoy; however none of the children elaborated much on the material they like to read. I decided to ask the parents more about their children’s interests, including reading, during the parent interviews because I felt that the parents might provide a more detailed and complete picture of activities the children enjoy.

**Child theme 2: Children have a limited understanding of libraries.**

Because this study focused on the library experiences of children who are Deaf, I asked a series of questions that pertained to library usage. I began by asking if he or she went to the library. I intentionally chose not to define or explain a library to better understand their perception and experiences of the library.

The first question regarding libraries was, “Do you ever go to the library?” Three of the children instantly responded in the affirmative, and one did not think he went to the library. These responses suggest that at least three of the participants had some experience using the library. The question prompted the following responses:

- **Stephanie:** “Many books. Many shelves see many shelves” [I look at the books on the different shelves].
- **Danny:** “Yeah. Get movies.”
- **Becky:** Nods
- **Jorge:** “Not think” [Don’t know].

To determine the role and function of the library in their lives, the children were asked questions pertaining to school assignments and/or library usage. Three of the four children indicated they had used the library.
Stephanie had difficulty staying on track with the questions, which may be a result of her cognitive disability, so there had to be some adjustment of the questions and the order in which they were asked. In terms of library usage, Stephanie focused on the physical aspect of the library itself. She continuously signed, “Many floors,” including “many, big, long,” which alluded to the shelving units. When she was asked what she might change about the library she happily signed, “My library stairs floors” and “down down down” [She likes going on different floors], which referred to her enjoyment of visiting different floors. Stephanie’s response was not directly in line with the question asked and could be a result of her choice not to respond to the question asked, a cognitive misunderstanding of the question, her primary focus on the physical aspect of the library, or she may have had difficulty interpreting what was being communicated via sign language.

Stephanie was also asked to discuss what she liked and did not like about the library. To the question, “What do you like best about the library?” Stephanie signed, “My many long, many, books, shelves to look” [Many books to pick], referring to the many books she can browse and chose. When asked what she did not like about the library, Stephanie responded, “Waiting number me, my [Lisa] and [Linda] thinking” [Waiting for her sister Lisa and Linda to pick their books]. Her response referred to waiting for her sisters to pick out books.

In this particular case, it was clear that Stephanie used the library, and so I asked if the library was the place were she found information for her homework. She responded, “Yes use pencil listen quiet closed mouth,” which meant that yes, she uses a pencil and should be quiet when in the library. Stephanie was also asked about her use of the library for homework, and she responded, “Homework, look and write” [She works on homework].
Stephanie was also asked if she used a library to find information for her homework: “Yes,” she replies, “use pencil listen quiet closed mouth” [Yes, I use the pencil, you have to listen and be quiet, don’t talk]. These answers illustrate that Stephanie understands that libraries are often quiet places and places where children can work on their homework.

Another participant, Danny, seemed to have some trouble understanding the questions. Perhaps Danny was nervous, or, he had difficulty comprehending the question even when the question was spoken and signed. Also, Danny does not fully know sign language, and he may have had difficulty interpreting what was being communicated via sign language. When asked about going to the library, Danny responded, “Yeah. Get movies.” In response to what he liked best about the library, Danny answered, “Movies,” and he was “not sure” as to what he disliked about the library. Danny was also asked where he finds information for his homework, and he replied, “Pencil.” After restating the question, Danny responded, “I don’t know.” Again, Danny has experience using the library but in a limited capacity. His indication that he only uses it for checking out movies suggests that his experiences in libraries may not be extensive, he may not have attended programs or other activities or if he had attended programs or activities he may not have enjoyed them.

Becky was a bit more familiar with libraries than the other children. She acquired her books from a place “near school”; however, she may not have been referring to a library. In this case, it could mean a bookstore, a public library, or the school library where her mother works. She also finds information for her homework from “library books.” Because I knew that her mother worked in a school library, I decided to ask Becky if the library she visited was a library where only kids went (school library) or where everyone went (public library). To this question, Becky replied, “Family and school.” This response suggests that she likely
meant a public library or she visited both a school and public library. Becky's favorite aspect of libraries is “reading many books and quiet. Quiet.” Her reference to “quiet” implies that she enjoys the quietness of the library. She also likes everything about the library and could not find something she dislikes about the library. Becky also indicated that if she needed help, she would ask “library person” [librarian], giving us the impression that she understands the role of a librarian or staff member in this setting.

Because Becky was more outgoing and appeared more comfortable during the interview than the other children, I asked if she had been to any story time or craft programs at the library, and she responded, “No.” I also asked if she would be interested in attending story time or arts and craft programs. Her response elicited wide eyes, a huge smile, joy, excitement, and an emphatic “yeah!” From her responses, it appears that Becky has had more experiences in libraries than the other children interviewed. Also, Becky’s mother’s is a school librarian, and this may contribute to Becky’s experiences using libraries. However, Becky’s experience in a library setting appears to be limited, and she likely has no experiences participating in programs, story time, or other library activities.

Another participant, Jorge, also appeared to have trouble understanding some of the questions during the interview. Similar to some of the other children, Jorge may have been nervous, there may have been a communication gap, or it may have been in part due to his ADHD. He was questioned about where he obtained his books for reading and where he obtained information for his homework. His answers to the first and second questions were “from home” and “ask mom,” respectively. Jorge was also asked if he went to the library, and he responded, “Not think” [Don’t think so], suggesting that he may not go to the library. This response could indicate that Jorge may not be sure what a library is, he may not go to
the library, or he may not have understood the question. However, when asked why he did not go to the library, he responded, “Mom working.” I chose not to ask this participant more about libraries because I did not want to force a response from him to suit my study.

**Summary of Theme 2**

The responses of all these children may imply that the children have a narrow view of libraries. They use the library for specific purposes such as finding books, selecting movies, and doing homework, but there was no mention of any other activities they participate in. No child mentioned attending story time, arts and crafts, or any other type of program, which may indicate that they do not participate in library activities or they may not be familiar with the array of services offered by libraries.

**Child theme 3: Children lack independent experiences in libraries.**

The children in this study range in age from ten to fourteen years old. In public libraries, children in this age group often visit the library independently from their family. For example, children go to the library on their own to use computers or to participate in after-school programs. Given the frequency of this type of activity, questions about independent visits to the library were asked. Two categories related to independent experiences emerged from the interviews: (1) communication and (2) family. These categories will be discussed as one broad theme because they are interrelated. Based on the analysis of the interviews, I found that children in this study often rely on a family member to communicate with nonsigners, and the family often prefers to be present when their child interacts with a nonsigner.

To better understand the independence of these children, I asked the children a hypothetical question: “If you were at the library with a friend working on a school project
and no one was there that could sign, would you ask for help?” Two of the children did not hesitate to respond and indicated they would. The third child said he would not ask for help, and the fourth child did not know how he would react in that situation. The children responded with the following statements:

Stephanie: “Me, look book, thinking, open book, looks, looks shelves books. Old 16” [Looking for books, someone that is 16 that is older helps me look].

Danny: “Nobody.”

Becky: “Library person” [Librarian].

Jorge: “Don’t know.”

This question was asked to elicit a response about whether the children felt a sense of confidence to ask for help on their own. Although the question posed was “Would you ask for help?” or “Who do you ask?” in retrospect, it may have been more meaningful to ask, “What might you do...?” to allow the children an opportunity to expand on their possible reactions.

Based on the responses to other questions during the interview, it was discovered the children are rarely alone in the library. Usually, a family member is present to facilitate communication with nonsigners. For example, Danny was asked if he always goes to the library with Mom or Dad, and he responded with “yeah.” Subsequently, he was asked who takes him to the library; “Family,” was his reply. From these responses, we can imply that he has not gone on his own to the library and has always had a family member with him in a library setting.

Becky indicated that she would ask the librarian for help and therefore was also asked if the “librarian signs” to see if communication played a role in whether she would
ask for assistance. Interestingly, she replied, “Mom.” In this particular case, Becky could be referring to her mother (who is a librarian and signs) or her mother who acts as an interpreter. Becky was also asked whether she still ask for help if her mother was not there. Becky nods and signs, “Sometimes cousin, uncle or father,” which clearly shows that there is always someone with her who signs, and it is usually a family member.

Jorge stated he did not use the library. Therefore, I asked why he did not use the library. Jorge replied, “Mom working.” From his answers, we can surmise that if he does or would use the library, it is unlikely he would go on his own.

Summary Theme 3

The interview responses indicate that at least three of the four children do not have independent experiences with regard to using the library. (Stephanie was not asked about her independent experiences, because this question was created after her interview.) Instead, there is always someone with them, usually a family member who acts as an interpreter or is there to supervise the children. These responses also show that within a library setting, the children may not have had the opportunity to venture out and explore the library on their own. Because communication can be a challenge, a mediator is more than likely present and thus limits the child’s independent experience in a library setting.

Summary of the Child’s Library Experiences

These three prominent themes—children enjoy reading, children have a limited understanding of libraries, and children lack independent experiences—are important findings in understanding the experiences of these children, because they are based on the actual lived experiences of the children. Although each child is unique and has different experiences, these four children share some common experiences. All of the children
mentioned reading as an activity they enjoyed, and almost all of the children have public library experiences. However, as noted in discussion of the themes, their library experiences are not extensive, and the children have few, if any, independent experiences in a library setting. These narrowly defined experiences may affect their overall perception of the library, its services, and the resources available, and, in all likelihood, their perception may affect their future use of libraries.

**Parent Experience**

In this study, five parents consented to be interviewed. Three of these parents (Teresa, Christina, and Anna) also gave consent for their children (Jorge, Becky, and Danny, respectively) to participate in the study. The other two parents, Veronica and Nicole, participated in the study, but their children were not interviewed. Veronica’s daughter, Alexa, was below the targeted age of the study, and Nicole did not consent for her child, Frank, to participate in this study. Following is a brief description of each parent, which was compiled based on information provided by the participant and the school’s records. Pseudonyms are used for each parent.

**Teresa**

Teresa is a married mother of two boys, twelve-year-old Jorge, who is moderately deaf, and five-year-old, Miguel, who is hearing. Born in a large midwestern city, Teresa is Latina, has an associate’s degree, and currently works as a hairstylist.

**Christina**

Christina is a married mother of one child, eleven-year-old Becky, who is moderately deaf. Currently working in a public high school as a librarian, Christina was born in a large midwestern city and has a master in library science degree.
Anna

A homemaker with a high school degree, Anna was born in Mexico and is a married mother of two children, Danny and Rosie. Both children have been diagnosed as moderately deaf.

Veronica

A divorced mother of one, Veronica has a four-year-old girl, Alexa, who is mildly to moderately deaf. Born in a large midwestern city, Veronica, who is also Latina, has completed some college courses and currently works in a business office.

Nicole

Nicole is a divorced mother of three boys, John, age twenty-two; Michael, age nineteen; and thirteen-year-old Frank. John, her oldest son, has some mild hearing loss, and Frank, her youngest son, is profoundly deaf. Nineteen-year-old Michael has no hearing loss. Born in a large midwestern city, Nicole is Latina, has a high school degree, and currently works as a case administrator for a bankruptcy court.

Themes.

To understand the parent’s experiences in a public library with and without their children and to gain a more complete picture of the children’s experiences, I asked parents a variety of questions that pertained to communication preferences at home, library usage, public reactions to their child, and questions about their thoughts on their child’s future educational experiences. The parent’s detailed responses help to develop a more descriptive picture of the child’s experience in order to better understand the phenomenon. This detailed picture will convey not only “what” the phenomenon is but also “how” the phenomenon is experienced.
This section focuses solely on the experiences of the parents. Similar to the children’s experiences, the responses to the interview questions provided the content for developing themes created through interpretative phenomenological analysis. After analyzing the parents’ interviews, five major themes emerged that will become the focal point for the discussion in this section:

- parents’ experiences influence their child’s experience of the library,
- parents straddle more than one culture,
- parents want a sense of autonomy for their child,
- parents experience heightened anxiety about their child’s future, and
- parents’ worries about their child are compounded by the additional challenges their children face.

**Parent theme 1: Parents’ experiences influence their child’s experience of the library.**

Parents were asked questions pertaining to their own library experiences as well as their experiences with their child in library settings. I felt that it was important to also ask about experiences parents may have had outside the library setting with public reactions to their child’s deafness to examine if these experiences may affect library usage. Parents, for example, may have had strong public reactions to their child’s deafness that could affect future use of such recreational facilities as park districts, museums, or libraries.

**Nonlibrary Experiences**

To determine if experiences in other public settings, aside from libraries, affected library experiences, parents in this study were asked to discuss their experiences regarding public reaction to their children. Responses were mixed, with both positive and negative
experiences. Nicole, whose son Frank is profoundly deaf, has not had a negative experience in a public setting and stated:

Never had a problem, but we do go to the park because he’s in programs, so the park that we go to, he hangs out with the kids that are hearing or whatever so I haven’t had a problem with that.

This experience has not affected where Nicole takes her son. Other parents have had less than positive experiences. Anna, for example, stated:

Well, in the park district, it’s always uncomfortable because people are always asking why he has that [cochlear implant] or what is that for? Sometimes I answer and tell them, but other times I won’t answer.

Questions about Danny’s cochlear implant may be bothersome to Anna, but she also indicated that these experiences have not necessarily affected places she chooses to take her son.

On the other hand, some of the parents experienced negative responses to their child by others. Veronica has become more protective of her child as a result of these negative experiences in public settings. Veronica stated:

I’ve had instances where being in public they stare…I think that in the beginning for me…it bothered me, now I don’t care….But at first being new to it and being, I guess, accepting of it and understanding what went on with my daughter, I think I was a little bit more…protective of her so I noticed people staring more or I’ve had a parent purposely walk really fast to get past us to look at her to see the hearing aid. So I’ve had, I mean, I personally think there’s more…rude adults than there are children.
Teresa is also familiar with the public’s reaction to her child’s deafness, and she has had strong reactions when others have made inappropriate comments. Teresa explains:

Since my dad was deaf…I know…people who just had deaf children, and they don’t have anybody deaf in their lives, they see things…they get embarrassed of signing or the noises they make or things likes that, but since…I grew up with it…there could be issues, but I just don’t see them. There may be people staring at us or making comments or whatever, none of that stuff…bothers me. I’ve had a few incidents where…the comments have been really inappropriate and I’ve…mouthe

off…but…I wouldn’t be a good judge of that.

These experiences, particularly people staring, making inappropriate comments, or asking about cochlear implants, may contribute to the concerns parents have about what their child experiences. Less than positive experiences, especially in public settings, may amplify the parent’s need to protect his or her child from additional negative situations.

Library Experiences

Parents were asked to discuss their past and current experiences in libraries with and without their child. This line of questioning was pursued to better understand how parents and their children have different or similar experiences in the library. By recognizing how and why parents use, or do not use, the library, we can better understand how their children’s perception and usage of libraries may be affected by these decisions.

Parents’ Past Experiences

The parents’ own past library experiences were explored during the interview to compare those experiences to current experiences they may have had using the library with their children. Several parents used the library when they were young and indicated that
their use at the time was primarily for school-related assignments. None of the parents indicated that experiences in libraries as a child were unpleasant.

Teresa did not regularly use the library as a young child and only takes her son if “there is an assignment or something.” She was the first person in her family to take her child to the library and described the experience as follows:

It was fine...there wasn't...many books...well, I guess it would be a difficult thing. There is not really ever, there's hardly ever many books, like signing books or anything like that. Like much material that was for him that he could actually use since he was small, and there wasn't any video...I don't know what it's called, like multimedia. You know, videos and things like that, like Signing Time or the Bravo Family or something for me to use. And for us to use together, you know.

Growing up, Christina primarily used the library to “do homework” and recalls her earliest experience visiting the library as positive and pleasant, as described in the following quote:

The first experience of using a library, I remember walking...I think it was with my kindergarten or first- or second-grade teacher to the library and getting a library card and...being thrilled that the same day I could take out three books, I don't remember how many books it was at the time.

On the other hand, Christina's daughter, Becky, did not have a very positive first experience:

To tell you the truth, she was very young. She was only, I can't remember if she was two or three, and the experience wasn't that fantastic. I walked in and I says, ‘wow,’ for the first time walking into it, it was one of the neighborhood libraries, and...they weren't very nice. And I'm a librarian, but that one experience they weren't very
helpful and here I’m thinking, ‘OK.’ That’s me knowing how to get around and knowing that I’m a librarian, but anyone else coming in for their first-time experience, I wouldn’t go back. I knew better, and I went back, and I went to a different location but…first-time experience wasn’t very nice.

Although Christina and her child, Becky, had an unpleasant first experience in a public library, Christina was not discouraged:

It didn’t deter me because it’s my field, but I could see how it would have deterred other parents…especially if they had problems with the language, be it English, Spanish, whatever it may be…they weren’t very receptive.

In spite of these experiences, Christina continues to take Becky to the library:

Maybe, about four times a year. I mean, she comes to mine all the time, but that doesn’t count, so she’s familiar with the high school library. And it does, I guess, count too because I show her how to check the books out, and like I said, now she’s getting older, but when she was smaller she loved the preschool library that we had, too….we’re starting to go more often to the public library.

Anna grew up in Mexico and had never been to a library as a child. This information about Anna is important because libraries in Mexico have historically been used primarily by the upper class. Additionally, libraries located in rural and indigenous communities in Mexico have faced obstacles gaining access to books and the Internet. Anna never used the public library in her native Mexico and had her first public library experience in 2012 with her son, Jorge, in the United States. Anna stated that Jorge enjoyed his first visit:

He liked it. He saw a lot of kids that were playing games on the computers, and he wanted to play too.
The experience for Anna was similar to Jorge’s and recalled the experience:

The same. The person that was there helped me find stuff that I needed, and I ended up liking it.

Anna’s relatively new exposure to libraries has been positive, and she uses the library with the rest of her family.

As a young girl, Veronica used the library primarily for school related assignments.

Veronica said the following about her experiences:

For certain books that we were reading in school…certain assignments that we needed to take out a book because that was the assignment that we needed to read and do essays on. Sometimes doing research for projects, class project, maps. A lot of it was school-related things.

She continued to describe her childhood library experience:

I think back then, it was my experiences going there, it was fun, there was a lot of literature there, there was a lot of you looking at different things, cultures. It was interesting.

Although Veronica used libraries primarily for school-related work, her overall childhood library experience was a positive experience. However, the experience she had with her child, Alexa, differed and affected library usage for both the parent and the child. Veronica described her experience as follows:

Sometimes I feel like if I need to look up literature, something about my daughter…when I found about the hearing loss she had, I wanted literature on it. It was not supplied there…it was like it was a hassle…No one knew what I was looking for so I reverted to the Internet for everything. I just went on a laptop. I just think
being in a library now, because they feel you can find so much stuff on the Internet, they’re not very helpful. It’s not like it was when we were children.

She’s loud [laughs]…they want it quiet in there, and she’s loud. She likes to talk….So it was always like a quick thing, like you try to and explain it to her that you’re supposed to be quiet in there, but to her it’s just like a public place, she’s not understanding…the environment of it. It’s not like school, you’re supposed to be quiet. So for her it was fine…picking out a book and whatever, but it’s more of an in and out thing for her. We can’t stay in there and read books with her. She has a very loud voice.

As a result of these experiences, Veronica limits how often she takes her child to the library. As she explains:

Since I wasn’t even able to get literature…on my daughter and I found other resources, that’s the route that I went….A few years…prior to…my daughter, yeah we would go in there, we would get books out, we would rent books. At the time, my stepson…we had him getting books and reading especially…throughout summer so we would go to the library, but again, he’s hearing so it’s…different for him to walk in there and get certain books and…it wasn’t the same as me going in there and trying to find certain literature or asking for help. It was us just walking in there getting a book that caught his interest, and we would rent and that was it.

Because of previous negative experiences in a library setting, Veronica has chosen not to take her daughter to the public library:

I don’t think bringing her to the library, at least in the [geographic area omitted] area, they just don’t seem like they are up to par on some things…Sometimes it could be
very hard to even request things from them when it has something to do with Deaf Culture…I will not go to [geographic area omitted] library anymore because I feel that they’re not helpful. Some people…they don’t understand what you’re looking for, they don’t have an interest in it, and I don’t want to say that they’re always rude, but in a sense they sometimes are. Like you’re bothering them. They’re just there for a job and that’s it, and that’s not the way it used to be. And that’s the way I feel, that a lot of times you walk into the library here and you’re just interrupting what they’re doing, they’re just there for a job, it’s just a job and they’re getting paid and that’s that.

Although these experiences have deterred Veronica from taking Alexa to the library, she discloses that during the summer, Alexa had weekly visits to another library system with the daycare center. Additionally, Veronica indicated she is unaware of any negative experiences Alexa may (or may not) have had at another library system.

She [Alexa] does go there with daycare as well in the summer, throughout the summer. They do a once a week thing that they go, and during the summer they will do a book report, and every child gets to check out several books, and they do…three or four different book reports during…daycare…I can’t speak for [library system omitted], but I know that my daughter goes with daycare and…I don’t know that she’s ever had a bad experience there with the daycare, but again, that’s [library system omitted] not [library system omitted].

Finally, Nicole also used the library as a child, “sometimes but not a lot.” Nicole stated her reason for using the library as a child:
Probably for homework, research...can’t remember if there were any activities there going on that I went. I really don’t...have that much memory of being to the library. Unless it was a field trip or something...that had to do with school.

Nicole could not recall who took her son, Frank, to the library for the first time. She thought it was either she or Frank’s school. The first time she took Frank to the library, it was a positive experience:

It was probably maybe when he was about and if I can remember, when he was about seven or eight, and...I think he liked it, and he was...seeing all them books, he was just looking around, touching.

Nicole and her son continued to use the library but sporadically:

I do use it, not often, but I use it more than I’ve ever used it...It’s been a few months, not often, we don’t go regularly like once a month we don’t, so I’m gonna say maybe, I don’t know I can’t even say not every month, maybe every three months.

The parents in this study have had both positive and negative experiences in a library setting with their child. For parents that had positive experiences as children, unpleasant experiences involving their own child, including lack of friendliness, unpleasant customer service, and lack of assistance, appeared to have deterred them from returning to the library. Those parents that had positive experiences with their children continued to use the library.

**Libraries as a resource**

Each parent in this study was also asked a series of questions that focused on library usage and acquiring reading material for pleasure and school-related assignments. During the course of these interviews, only one parent mentioned attending a specific library program, and all parents mentioned library usage primarily for borrowing books or movies.
Parents in this study used the Internet to find information for school-related assignments and infrequently used the library for information gathering.

Teresa was the only parent who mentioned a library program in addition to finding books for assignments:

If there is an assignment or something, I take him to the library to get books and things, and they are usually really helpful, and if I can’t find a book…the librarians will go online and print up whatever the topic is…. [The library] has that…once a year it’s called [program name omitted] at the [main library], and so I take him to that every year, but that’s as much as we do.

Christina uses the public library intermittently but works and takes her daughter, Becky, to her place of work, a high school library. Although a librarian, Christina readily admitted that libraries have not been her first source of information for Becky’s assignments:

A lot of information we do get online…and then I have to admit too that a lot of the books I bring from my job, even some of them are too hard…the easier materials because…I have a little preschool library in my…high school library too and then a lot of the databases or things like World Book Encyclopedia where it’s for all levels and things like that. I have been the culprit of bringing a lot of her research stuff home.

Anna, who has used the library for less than a year, visited the library to “mainly look for books or to look for movies.” For Jorge’s assignments, Anna indicated that she gets information from the library. Anna stated:

Sometimes from the library. The teacher has told us we can go and get the information for his homework. She sends a message telling us to go there.
This comment could suggest that Anna may not have used the library if someone had not told her about the library as a place to find information.

Although Veronica’s child, Alexa, is just four years old and does not go to the library for research assignments, Veronica visits the library to find books:

There’s certain books…we would want to read that I could not find in the stores so we would go and just rent them, and we would read the book then just return it.

Veronica’s comment implies that she uses the library as a last resort when she is unable to find specific items through other avenues.

Nicole visits libraries with her son, Frank, as needed, typically during school breaks or for special research assignments:

Sometimes he’s…had a science project or something like that where we’d have to go to the library and get books. Or during the summer, during Christmas break they wanted us to read books so we had to go and get a couple of books, instances like that.

Nicole also indicated she used the library, primarily for personal use:

I’ve gone just for personal use to get a book…or to see what movies because they offer the free movies. So I’ll tell [Frank] if he wants a movie and to go there and we’ll go there to get a movie or if needed something from school we’ll go there to go get a book…Pretty much that’s about it.

With the exception of Teresa, who takes her son to an annual library program, no parents mention other library programs they attend with their child.

The parent responses imply that they take their children to the library but library usage is limited. The parents primarily chose to use libraries to obtain physical material such
as books and movies. With the exception of one parent, the other parents did not mention participating in any other library-sponsored activity.

Parents were also asked where their child obtained information for homework purposes or research assignments. The parents noted other resources in addition to the library. The only exception was Teresa, who was not asked this question because the question developed after her interview. Below is the list of information sources parents use for homework assignments:

Christina: “A lot of information we do get online”
“books I bring home from my job”
“databases or things like the World Book Encyclopedia”

Anna: “sometimes from the library”

Veronica: Child does not get research assignments

Nicole: “through school”
“through his schoolbooks.”
“we’d have to go to the library”

Teresa: Was not asked this question.

The responses show that libraries are used along with other sources for finding information for homework assignments. However, libraries were not always the first choice due to ease of access or convenience, and therefore, parents would use the Internet for information gathering. It is possible that the negative experiences may also contribute to their views that the library is not the first place to go, resulting in parents choosing to use other information resources or to look for children’s programming elsewhere.
**Reading**

During the interviews with the children, each child was asked about his or her interests. The responses by the children did not yield much information about activities they enjoyed. Each child mentioned one or two activities he or she enjoyed, and in some instances, the child was asked if they enjoyed reading and the type of material they enjoyed. The parents were also asked about their child's interests, and the parents provided more in-depth detail about the type of books their children enjoyed. The children in this study enjoy activities just as any other child would; however, the children preferred material with art, color and graphics to read.

Danny had responded that he likes to play with his sister and sometimes likes to read. His mom, Anna, stated:

He likes to play ball a little bit but when it's summer out. Right now, he doesn't really like to go out. He prefers to stay indoors watching TV or playing games.

Anna also mentioned Jorge's reading enjoyment:

He likes to read, but he gets very frustrated because he still hasn't learned to read well so sometimes he prefers to just look at books, like the pictures.

She also proceeded to say that the type of material he likes to read includes “all types but mainly he likes the ones with pictures or lots of colors.” Anna’s responses suggest that Danny enjoys activities aside from playing with his sister and provide a more in-depth view into his reading preferences. More importantly, Anna’s responses suggest that her son prefers material that is more visually appealing than text heavy, which may speak to the obstacle of learning to read without hearing sound and gaining vocabulary.
For the same question, Becky indicated that she likes to read books and mentioned no other activity. She also stated that her favorite book was *Star Wars*. Her mother, Christina, mentioned that Becky “likes to draw, she likes to read, play basketball, play volleyball.” Additionally, Christina mentioned:

- Graphic novels are her favorite thing right now. Her number one thing on her Christmas list was the *Star Wars* books.

Christina’s responses elaborate on activities Becky enjoys. Becky is active and enjoys more activities than just reading, as she stated during her interview. Graphic novels tell stories visually, which could suggest that Becky prefers visual storytelling as opposed to material with more text.

When Jorge was interviewed, he indicated that he liked “going out places and playing games.” He also mentioned that his favorite book was about a boy, Henry. When his mom, Teresa, was interviewed she mentioned that Jorge enjoys a variety of activities. Teresa stated:

- [Jorge] likes to draw, he loves to watch cartoons, play video games…anything art.
- He likes to swim.

According to his mother, Teresa, Jorge also enjoys reading and commented:

- Depends on what it is. If he's interested in the topic, yes; if not, no…like his favorite book things are like those Japan-Imation like graphic novels things, but those comic book things are his favorite to read.

Teresa’s response also suggests that Jorge prefers visual stories and gravitates towards graphic novels and other similar material.
Veronica, whose child, Alexa, did not participate in this study because her age fell below the targeted age group, stated:

[Alexa] likes…typical girlie things, Cinderella stuff…Barbies, she likes to swim…likes to color…sit down and write…tracing and outlining things, for her whether it’s the alphabet or numbers she likes to do that, she likes to count, she likes to sing, she’s definitely very active.

Although Alexa is only four years old and does not read on her own, Veronica mentioned:

She’s definitely involved in reading for story time at school. With me…she more wants to try and take over before I can get partially through a book, and she doesn’t want to be a part of that. She’s done. So it all depends on how interested she is, what is in the book that is maybe catching her interest…it all depends on her mood.

Because of her age, it is likely that her child is using picture books, which usually, but not always, combine visual and written narrative.

Nicole’s child, Frank, did not participate in this study. However, she discussed her son’s interests:

He loves basketball. He’s a basketball fanatic. He’s really good at…he loves swimming, loves his video games, he loves the computer, he loves to draw…he’ll Google stuff like how to make the Incredible Hulk, he’s very good at drawing…He loves that. …but basketball is main thing right now, I mean, he’s so intrigued with basketball…with all the players…he pulls it up on the computer and checks the stats, he’s really good, he’s surprising me how much he knows about his sports because he likes it…how many assists, how many rebounds, and I think that’s pretty good for him, and I guess that’s because he likes it so much…and with the Xbox, the video
games, you're able to put all that information in there so he’ll do research…he’ll go
on ESPN or whatever on the computer. Well, he has older brothers too so his
brothers like sports. So a lot of times they’re on the computer looking so it helps
Frank with his reading because he likes basketball…even if we have the newspaper,
he’ll go to the sports section, and he’ll pick up what he can pick up…and he wants to
know what are they saying, what is this about.

As for whether her son enjoys reading, Nicole indicated, “Not really, but if it’s something he
likes, he will, like stats, that he likes to read.” Additionally, reading material that her son
uses includes “the computer, paper, his schoolbooks…magazines…little tablet…” Nicole
clearly states her son’s preference for visual material,

When we’ve gone to the library I let them know that if what we’re looking for if I’m
looking for something for [Frank] and I want to help. [Frank] is very visual so I want
things that are more pictures and stuff.

Nicole’s statement reiterates that Frank prefers visual material as opposed to other types of
material.

Finally, Stephanie mentioned that her interests include drawing and reading, but I
was unable to ascertain any additional information because her parent(s) did not participate
in this study.

The children in this study indicated that they enjoyed various activities, including
reading. It is noteworthy that the children were not specific about the type of material they
preferred. The parent responses suggest that the children tend to gravitate toward reading
material that utilizes images, graphics, and color, which may indicate a preference for using
highly visual material to compensate for the loss in hearing. The responses given by the children would not have yielded these results had the parents not been asked.

To better understand how these families used libraries, parents were also asked about where they obtain the books for their children. Most parents choose to purchase books instead of borrowing them from the library because it is easier or their library does not carry the material they wanted. However, for this particular study, I checked the collections of the libraries mentioned by the participants and found that the libraries do carry a variety of graphic novels suitable for all ages. However, while parents in this study preferred buying material for their children this finding could imply that either the particular material they were interested was not available at the library or the material that was available was not the material they preferred. Sample parent responses for the question “Where does your child get the material to read?” are provided below.

Teresa, who often buys books for her son, said:

I buy them or I order them online…I go to eBay…and order like lots of books, and I also go to second hand and buy a lot of books from second hand.

Christina also buys books online, and explains, “A lot of it, I do purchase it, and some of it from the public libraries.”

Anna, on the other hand, obtains reading material from her local library and noted, “We recently registered at a library that is close to our home.”

Veronica primarily purchases her items online, but some material is obtained from the school. Veronica explained:
Sometimes I order things online from Signing Time… I really like the DVDs from Signing Time, I think it… helps, it teaches us to learn more signs… we do get some material from the school.

Nicole utilizes a variety of sources Frank’s leisure reading material:

The computer, paper, his schoolbooks, he’s got… magazine that I subscribe to that he has. He’s got his little tablet so he’s got lots of different little things he likes to go through.

As stated before, the parents tend to use the library primarily to find information for their child’s assignments. However, for pleasure reading, parents often preferred to purchase items. These responses suggest that libraries are primarily a place to find information and not a recreational resource.

*Summary Theme 1*

Based on the parent interviews, two main factors seem to affect the parent’s role in shaping the public library experience of the child. These factors include the way parents chose to use the library and past experiences. Generally, the parents use the library primarily for physical materials such as books and movies and would often use online resources to find information for the child’s homework. Also, only one parent mentioned attending library-related programs. Several of the parents also preferred to purchase material for the child instead of giving the child the opportunity to explore the library and discover material that he or she might enjoy. In addition, several parents mentioned that previous experiences in the library setting influenced the decision not to return to the library unless circumstances required.
These factors together may influence the child’s perception of the library. That is, if the parent perceives that the library may be a negative place that only provides material in a limited format and offers no other types of services, the child may develop the same perception. The child is not developing his or her own association with the library and the services provided, an association that could be positive. Instead, the child relies largely on the parent’s perceptions of the library, thus possibly shaping the way the child will experience the library at a future time.

**Parent theme 2: Parents straddle more than one culture.**

Padden (1989) describes culture as "a set of learned behaviors of a group of people who have their own language, values, rules for behaviors, and traditions" (p. 4). The Deaf Community has a set of beliefs, behaviors, and values, as well as a common language (American Sign Language), that create Deaf Culture (Moore & Levitan, 2003; Padden, 1989; Padden & Humphries, 2003). Using this definition, language and culture will be examined together when explaining the different cultures that are part of the lives of the families interviewed.

**Stages of Culture**

Parents have lived their lives primarily in the “Hearing culture” and must now focus on transitioning to the “Deaf Culture,” which can seem similar to moving to a new country with different customs and norms. According to Winkelman (1994), there are four stages of culture shock or cultural acclimation. These stages focus on adjusting to the culture in a new country, but they can also be applied to the experiences that these families face as they integrate into a new culture within their current country. The four stages are as follows:
Stage 1: *The Honeymoon Stage:* This occurs at the beginning of exposure to the new culture. Here you may feel excitement and euphoria, and everything you encounter is new and exciting. You will likely be eager to learn the new language or culture and are ready to take on the challenges of learning the new culture (Winkelman, 1994).

Stage 2: *Frustration Stage:* After the honeymoon stage, your initial excitement begins to dissipate, and feelings of anxiety, anger, and frustration begin to set in (Winkelman, 1994).

Stage 3: *Understanding Stage:* As you become more familiar with the culture, you become more comfortable with the language and people (Winkelman, 1994).

Stage 4: *Acclimation Stage:* At this stage, the individual has now begun to feel part of the culture and feel more at ease within the new culture. You also feel less like a “foreigner” and more like a part of the new culture (Winkelman, 1994).

As the families in this study further integrate into Deaf Culture, they will likely go through the various stages of cultural acclimation. In time, these families will likely become more familiar and comfortable with the language and cultural norms that exist in Deaf Culture.

*Integrating into Deaf Culture*

The participants likely straddle at least four cultures: their ethnic culture, the American culture, the Deaf Culture, and the Hearing culture. For this study, I asked questions pertaining to culture and communication preferences to determine if participants identified with Deaf Culture. It was somewhat surprising to me that the parents and their children had not fully integrated into Deaf Culture. Also, Deaf Culture appeared to play a
very minor role in the lives of these participants at the time of the interviews. As the children become older, Deaf Culture may become a stronger influence in the lives of these participants.

During the interviews I also asked parents about language. I was interested in determining if the children were exposed to other languages besides sign language and how the children maneuvered communicating across various languages. After examining the interview responses, the theme of straddling more than one culture emerged.

During the interview, I also asked what culture the parent identified with, and I intentionally did not define nor provide a list of cultures to choose from so as not to restrict parents to a predefined answer. Based on their responses, no parent immediately identified herself or her child with Deaf Culture.

Four of the parents identified themselves primarily with their ethnic culture, and one, Veronica, did not know which culture to indicate. It was not until I specifically asked about Deaf Culture that the parents recognized their connection with Deaf Culture. In addition, some of the parents in this study straddle the world between their particular ethnic culture and the American culture. Parents were asked, “What cultures do you consider yourself a part of?” The following responses were provided:

Teresa: “Puerto Rican.”
Christina: “American and Hispanic.”
Anna: “Hispanic.”
Veronica: “Dunno.”
Nicole: “Hispanic cultures.”
From these responses, one may infer that the parents may not have considered Deaf Culture as an option, they do not consider themselves a part of Deaf Culture, or they are unfamiliar with the concept of Deaf Culture. While this question was meant to elicit the participant’s familiarity with Deaf Culture, it is possible that when the word “culture” was mentioned, the participant’s first response was to discuss ethnic or racial culture as opposed to the broader concept that includes other cultural groups such as gay/lesbian, religious, or Deaf Culture. Thus, the participant’s responses prompted me to ask further questions related to Deaf Culture. Christina’s response (American and Hispanic) shows that there is some awareness and, at one point or another, she or members of her family may have alternated between identifying with the Hispanic culture and American culture.

I also asked parents if they (or their child) identified with Deaf Culture. Some of the parents stated that they are beginning to consider themselves a part of Deaf Culture; however, no parent considered herself or her child as being fully integrated into Deaf Culture.

Christina responded to the question with this statement: “Emerging, learning, not completely in the Deaf Culture yet.” Anna explained:

Yes, a little bit. The problem is that we don’t know much sign language. We are barely starting to learn a little more.

Veronica stated, “Now I do. . . . I’d like to be more involved in it.”

Based on the responses given by the parents, most of the families are beginning to familiarize themselves with Deaf Culture and are in the early stage of integration into Deaf Culture. It is worth noting that Christina was the only parent who identified her child as being in both the Hearing and Deaf cultures. Christina commented:
She’s seeming to hang in there you know, with hearing…the Hearing culture and the Deaf Culture.

This statement is an indication that Christina is slowly recognizing two distinct cultures (Hearing and Deaf) that Alexa has to navigate.

However, not all parents regard themselves as part of or becoming a part of Deaf Culture. Two parents, Teresa and Nicole, identified the child as being part of Deaf Culture. Teresa was asked if she considered herself or her child a part of Deaf Culture and only answered with regard to her child. “Yeah, I consider Jorge very Deaf Culture,” she replied, but she did not include herself as identifying with Deaf Culture. Nicole also stated, “Well, yeah…I mean Frank is involved, not really the culture but he’s in programs.”

Since the majority of the parents may not have been exposed to Deaf Culture before having a child who is Deaf, deafness opened the door for both the parent and the child to experience a new culture. As a result of exposure through language and interactions with their children, parents will slowly pick up and incorporate fragments of Deaf Culture within their own lives. One parent summarizes this sentiment in her statement:

I, just for me…being hearing and never having a situation like that, I’d never put myself in a situation with Hard-of-Hearing or Deaf so now that my child has it, I mean, it definitely opened up a lot of doors, and I’m more interested in it [Deaf Culture], and its something I want my daughter to be completely involved in on both sides.

*Learning a New Language*

Because language is a central feature that defines culture, it is important to take a look at the role language plays in the lives of the participants. Like culture, parents must
also navigate language, which can mean moving between two or more languages at once. Parents were asked to indicate not only which languages are spoken at home but also which language is the primary one used. Understanding the languages used is important because parents must communicate not only with their child who is Deaf but also with other members of the family. Additionally, some parents may need to learn more than one language simultaneously.

The interviewees mentioned three different languages: English, Spanish, and sign language. The breakdown for the languages used at home and the primary language is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Languages Used at Home</th>
<th>Primary Language Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teresa</td>
<td>English and sign language</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina</td>
<td>English, Spanish, and sign language</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>Spanish (at the child's father's home) and English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole</td>
<td>English and sign language</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Languages Used at Home

These responses indicate that some households speak more than one language. As a result, some of the participants or their families may require learning more than one language concurrently, which could be challenging. Learning one language is difficult
enough, but having to learn a second language is even more difficult, especially if the languages are very different as is the case with sign language and English or Spanish.

Four of the five parents interviewed speak English as the primary language, and three parents also speak Spanish in their household. With the exception of one parent (Anna), all speak English. Spanish is the primary language spoken in Anna’s home, which may create additional challenges to that household. I first met Anna and her spouse when I was recruiting parents for the study. At the time, Anna and her spouse spoke of the difficulty they experienced communicating with their children. They mentioned the trouble they experience trying to explain things to their children and getting them to understand basic everyday commands in sign language because their primary language is Spanish and they must learn both English and sign language simultaneously to communicate with both of their children who are Deaf. For this family, the language gap extends beyond their household. Anna and her spouse must not only learn sign language to communicate with their children, but they must also learn English to communicate with those not in their household, such as medical professionals, school administrators, educators, social workers, and speech therapists. For example, the sign language classes at the school are conducted in English, and therefore, Anna and her husband must attempt to understand the English instruction to learn sign language so they can learn the language their children use.

Some of the parents may need more than one language in the home, as pointed out by Christina:

I try to speak to her only in ASL and English, but my mother is Spanish, I mean, Puerto Rican, so she speaks, her main language is Spanish…it was a little bit too
difficult in the beginning to try to teach all three so I mostly speak to her in English and sign.

Here the family dynamic shows that some family members speak English, some family members speak Spanish, and all must learn sign to communicate with the child. Others, like Veronica, require extended family members to navigate more than one language:

My daughter’s father is Hispanic so his parents speak fluent Spanish, very little English, so she gets both; however, he and I are no longer together, but when she is with him, she gets both languages at his home.

These responses reveal that the impact of language is not confined to the parent/child dynamic; it extends to other family members and to situations outside the home and school environment.

To examine how parents were learning to communicate with their child, it was essential to ask about their fluency in sign language and methods central to learning sign language. Responses implied that no parent has mastered sign language, and each parent is still in the process of learning it. The reason for not mastering sign language is unclear. Several reasons could account for not mastering sign language earlier. These reasons include, but are not limited to, being told not to sign if their child has residual hearing or a cochlear implant, the difficulty in learning a new language, or the lack of time or courses offered through their available resources.

In terms of sign language fluency, Teresa stated, “I took ASL I in college.” Later in the interview, she offered up additional information:
I just want to add that my father was deaf but he was educated orally and wasn’t taught to sign. My dad read lips and...spoke, but he didn’t...sign so that’s why I had to take the class.

This statement reveals that Teresa had been exposed to deafness before her child was born. However, since her father did not sign, she had not learned to sign.

Christina stated:

I took a couple of classes...I also downloaded apps and bought videos...and the truth is mostly I learn through [Becky] herself. Anything she learns, she takes it home to me.

Anna’s fluency in sign language is “just a little.” She indicated:

[I] was going to classes. They were about half-hour long, three times a week.... but it was only a three-month course, and right now they aren't any more sessions.

Veronica indicates that “no” she is not fluent in ASL, but she mentions:

I actually just started classes...last spring...and our classes are only one day a week so I will be taking college classes in the summer so that I can become fluent. As of right now, it's more basic I would say, like ASL I. Its all basic still, and I pick up on things that my daughter learns at school as well.

Veronica later talks about her dilemma of learning sign language in a classroom setting:

I’ve only had a year now of trying to learn the sign...It’s also hard being with a four-year old, and I don’t want to miss out with her by being in school at night so I’m trying to wait until summer to do my summer classes to where its not like I’m leaving my daughter and I’m only seeing her a little bit.
Nicole discusses her fluency of sign language:

Not fluent but…to communicate with [Frank], we understand each other. I don’t know. I’m not real good. I need more practice. I understand him and he understands me.

Implications of not learning sign language as quickly as their child can potentially increase the communication gap. As the child progresses in school, his or her knowledge of sign language will likely expand faster than that of the parent, most likely because sign language will become the child’s primary language.

Each parent is in the process of learning sign language by attending classes and from her child. Christina stated that sign language classes at the school are available and are “half-hour long, three times a week…but it’s only a three-month course.” Teresa started classes and stated:

Last spring and our classes are only one day a week so I will be taking college classes in the summer so that I can be fluent.

No parent mentioned taking an advanced course to learn sign language, which suggests that parents will learn sign language at a much slower pace than their children. Nicole states the implications of learning sign language at a slower rate than the child:

I don’t understand every sign, and [Frank] is getting better and faster and learning more where his language is a lot larger than mine in sign, so it takes me a while sometimes, I have to spell it out or tell him to slow down and so I can understand what he’s doing.
Later in her interview she continues the same sentiment on communicating with her son:

I don’t know like he knows. I’m never gonna be where his level is as far as, unless I go master it in school.

This comment is a clear indication that Nicole understands the role language plays in the relationship with her son. The fact that other parents are also making an effort to learn sign language outside the parent/child relationship may suggest that the parents understand the importance of language in maintaining a healthy and dynamic relationship with their child.

*Summary Theme 2*

Because all the parents are hearing, parents are likely straddling more than one culture at a time. Parents must maneuver going primarily from a Hearing culture to also understanding and integrating into Deaf Culture because of their child’s deafness. All of the parents seem to understand the need for understanding their child’s world not only from the standpoint of language but also from a cultural standpoint. Although the stages of culture were not explored for this particular group of individuals, the best guess would be that parents are likely at stage two. Although not yet acclimated, parents are also not likely at the honeymoon stage either. The parents appear to be at stage 2, feeling frustration and anxiety primarily over learning a new language and new social norms that are part of the child’s existing world.

*Theme 3: Parents want a sense of autonomy for their children.*

To determine how parents viewed library services available to their children, it was important to ask about library usage, particularly with regard to current and past experiences. Additionally, parents were asked about changes they would like implemented
to improve library services for their children. By asking these questions, we can get a sense of which library services are lacking and what the parents see as ideal library services.

**Current Library Usage**

Parents were asked about their current library usage. Teresa takes her son to an annual event at her main library that attracts thousands of individuals. Teresa was asked if she ever saw any programming at the event for children who are Deaf. Teresa responded, “I haven’t seen any, no, there was nothing signed.” She proceeds to talk about obstacles for her son and explains:

I wish there was...a library where somebody who signed is like or a few of them where I knew that I could go and there’d be a librarian that could sign where he could directly communicate instead of me having to be…the mediator. Of course…I only took ASL I, I wish there was somebody who could maybe go in to depth and explain...how to look up books since he doesn’t really...understand how to look up books in the library and...explain to him things better. I know they have...story time and things like that, but...there’s no story time with signing or things like that. I know they have the summer reading program where they go and read, but they don’t have interpreters so he can’t participate.

By stating that she would like her son to “directly communicate” with staff, who would in turn be able to “explain... how to look up books” without relying on her as a “mediator,” Teresa implies that she would like her son to be able to communicate with library staff independently. Additionally, her child’s inability to participate in activities due to a communication gap suggests that the library does not create an atmosphere that promotes self-reliance nor does it appear inclusive for her child who is Deaf.
Christina stated that neither she nor Becky has experienced any obstacles within the public library primarily because she has always been present during the library visit.

Christina stated:

Because I’m there to help her, there haven’t been any obstacles, but if she were to go on her own, it may be a little bit more difficult.

Anna talked about obstacles to obtaining books and a communication gap between her child and library staff. She mentioned:

Well, we’d like to see DVDs in sign language for him or books too. I think I’ve seen books with sign language for kids, but I haven’t seen them at my library.

Her experience with staff has “been good…Since we’ve been taking him, he sees where the books are and where the DVDs are, and I think he could go alone.” When it comes to getting assistance from staff, however, she does not think he could do so independently. She commented:

I’ve noticed that no one there signs, they just use voice, and he has difficulty communicating by voice.

Anna feels that her son would not be able to communicate with librarians:

No, I don’t think it would be possible for him to ask for help to find a book or movie, it won’t be possible.

Both Christina’s and Anna’s statements indicate that independent experiences in the library will likely be challenging, especially in terms of communication.

Veronica, who does not use the library often, could not think of any obstacles and does not think Alexa would feel comfortable communicating with a librarian. Veronica shares her thoughts:
As of right now, no. She directs all questions to me, and I don't know if that's personality or if that's because of her condition. I don't know. So a lot of time she will direct things to me, and I will ask the questions.

For Veronica, Alexa’s reliance on her mother for communication assistance could be due to her age (four years old), personality, deafness, or a number of other unexplained reasons.

Finally, Nicole has not encountered any significant obstacles. Instead, Nicole discusses the lack of services for children who are Deaf:

The only thing I can say…I know that the library…offers things for children like activities; that’s because I do go online and I look at what's at our neighborhood library. They have speakers or things for children…storytelling, so I’ve never seen a storytelling for the Deaf, and I know they offer storytelling and…maybe I just haven’t seen it, maybe it’s a certain library. But I noticed that when you go to your public library they have stuff on Saturdays or certain nights or whatever or days and that I have never seen.

Nicole also mentions that her son, Frank, is going to have challenges:

[He’s] gonna have challenges, but because everything is so electronic now, everything is on computers, it makes it easier for him, he can do stuff from home…everything is on a computer now.

Nicole was asked if her child would be comfortable asking for help and without hesitation she responded:

Yeah he would. It would be hard. It would be hard. He's not afraid, he would be comfortable, but it would be a challenge, and it would be hard for both sides
to...understand each other. If they’re not understanding him, he’d probably write things down, he’ll find a way to make you understand.

Nicole mentioned the lack of inclusivity with regards to programming as well as the difficulty of communicating with librarians. Because of her son’s deafness, there are no options to participate in programming nor is there a straightforward way for library staff to communicate with her son. From her son’s perspective, both of these situations could potentially contribute to an increased feeling of dependence.

**Future Library Usage**

To improve and effectively serve a community, librarians often ask and take suggestions from residents about desired programs or services. By asking these parents what they would like to see changed in libraries or what they think would improve services for them and their children, we can begin to develop strategies to serve members of the Deaf Community and be more responsive and proactive in serving their needs. Responses to this line of questioning varied, but several parents indicated that staff knowledge of sign language is a critical need.

Teresa: “signing storyteller”

“somebody that could show him how use other resources at the library”

“somebody who signed”

Christina: develop a relationship with “neighborhood Deaf programs”

“understand a little bit more about Deaf Culture”

“get a little seminar on what to expect and how to make the experience easier”
Anna: “someone who understands or can communicate in sign”
“have more books with sign language in it or more movies with sign language”
“a person who is there especially for them”

Veronica: “people in there that could possibly sign”
Programs such as “basic signing”

Nicole: “aware of Deaf Culture”
“central location for the Deaf Culture”
“interpreters”

Parent responses indicate that the following services would likely create an environment conducive to more independent activities for their children who are Deaf: 1) staff who know sign language to facilitate better communication, 2) material such as graphic novels, DVDs, and highly visual books that appeal to the visual sense, and 3) programs or services such as story-time in sign language and sign classes. These responses reflect the parents’ desire for their children to be able to participate independently in library services.

Summary Theme 3

During the interviews, parents acknowledged the communication gap that currently exists in the library setting. Although there is always a parent or family member available to assist with the communication barrier, almost all of the parents in the study mentioned the lack of inclusive services for children who are Deaf. Parents appeared to want their children to experience the library on their own if there was not a huge communication barrier. Parents may feel their child could develop independent experiences within the physical library space if the environment were more inclusive of the child, giving the child a sense of autonomy and a personal stake in their library experience.
Parent Theme 4: Parents experience heightened anxiety about their child’s future.

Knowing that an average eighteen-year-old student who is Deaf typically leaves high school with a third- or fourth-grade reading and writing level (Kyle & Harris, 2010; Nielsen & Luetke-Stahlman, 2002; Wheeler-Scruggs, 2002), I felt that it was important to ask parents about their outlook on the future of their child’s educational endeavors as well as the role of the library in relation to their educational goals. Questions were asked to determine what the parents saw as potential challenges that their children may experience in educational settings, such as school and libraries. Most parents were aware of potential difficulties related to their child’s education, including reading challenges and educational transition to higher-level schools. Parents were also asked about the likelihood of library usage in the future. Communication barriers and lack of independence were common concerns raised by the parents. Some parents acknowledged that their child would not be able to use the library independently primarily due to the inability to communicate with nonsigners.

Anna was the only parent who indicated that she did not foresee any future educational or library usage–related problems for her son. The reasons Anna may not foresee potential problems could mean that either she believes there will be no problems, very little family emphasis is placed on academic achievement, she is unaware of issues often experienced by children who are Deaf, or there are possible cultural differences.

Education

Reading

One of the topics that two of the parents mentioned in relation to education was reading levels. Christina stated that although her child has “access to books and everything,
she’s still behind on reading level.” Veronica also mentioned the potential reading challenges her child may encounter.

She’s in preschool, and we have not even got into the reading portion of that, and I know that some kids with the hearing loss, they tend to have reading issues later in second and third grade so those things worry me so I try to stay on top of her and push her more now.

Later during her interview, when asked if there is anything else she would like to add, Veronica brought up education in her statement:

I’ve researched tons of things about children with hearing loss and how they read to how they write and how far they get in life. And it’s sad when they’re not able to read properly because what type of education are these kids ever gonna have? I mean, if you can’t be in the library to get it, where else are these kids gonna go? I mean, it’s very hard. I’ve read different things on the Internet about ways to help comprehension for a child with hearing loss because they are the ones that suffer… I mean, not only do you have your comprehension problems, but on top of it, you’re not even hearing things properly so its causing even more distress to them because that’s just keeping them away from even wanting to learn because the comprehension is not good. On top of that, they can’t even read properly so it’s causing them to not be able to write.

Nicole also mentioned Frank’s reading ability by indicating that “he knows the words, but he’s not comprehending at all.” Although Nicole’s comment was in response to whether her child likes to read, it also connects to the issue of educational obstacles because if a child is
unable to comprehend what they read, then they will also likely struggle with learning in general.

**Educational Transition**

Another concern that arose for the parents was their child’s future transition from grammar school to high school. Christina expressed her concerns as follows:

Yes…as much…as she has access to books and everything, she’s still behind on reading level and…even now…I’m trying to find a good high school for her…she’s only in fifth grade, and we already started visiting, and…it’s scary. It’s scary, and ten years from now, the same thing for education. I can’t even think of sending her away anywhere. I know some of the kids have graduated from here and they’re college now in New York, and to me it’s like ‘no way,’ but of course that’s a big possibility.

Nicole also expressed her concern about transitioning to a new school:

Right now [Frank] is…in eighth grade so I’m really struggling with him leaving grammar school and going to high school. I don’t feel he’s ready. And I don’t know if it’s just me, I think it’s high school, he’s my baby…I just think that…he’s too young. He needs another year or two still in grammar school. I don’t think it would hurt him…because of…the larger amount of kids, they’re teenagers and so much goes on with teenagers so…I don’t know. I’m just really nervous about him moving on to the next level…He thinks because he’s gonna graduate in eighth grade that he’s done with school like ‘OK I’m done,’ and I’m like ‘no, you’re going to a bigger school now’…I just think it’s gonna be a little too much for him… He’s been in the same school so now he’ll be going to a public school…I don’t know. I don’t know what it’s gonna be like.
Libraries

Parents also mentioned their uneasiness about their children’s future library experiences. When asked what the library experience may be for their child ten years from now, most parents indicated that their child would likely have some challenges, primarily in the form of communication.

Nicole indicated:

he’s gonna have challenges…So, if he had to go to the library…he’s gonna have a hard time unless somebody learns how to sign as far as communicating.

Several other parents also raised this issue, including Anna, who stated that her son would be unable to communicate adequately. When asked what it may be like for her child ten years from now in a library, Christina indicated she “has nightmares about it all the time” but that “in a library, well, I think that she’ll be able to get around in the library.” Veronica thinks about it often:

Every day. I think about it all the time…it does worry me that depending on her speech is, is someone else going to, I think I’m more afraid of…people just being rude to her because…they’re not understanding her.

On the other hand, Anna thinks it “should go well” for her son, Danny. She elaborates:

Since we’ve been taking him, he sees where the books are and where the DVDs are, and I think he could go alone.

From this response, it appears that Anna feels Danny is comfortable enough with the physical layout of the library to find physical material. However, this response may also imply that Anna and her family may be using the library only for access to this type of physical material and may not be aware of other available services the library has to offer.
Summary Theme 4

In general, parents have slightly heightened worries about their child’s experiences in libraries, but worries about the child’s educational endeavors play a larger role in heightening these parental concerns. These concerns may be a result of the realization that physical library usage may not be a necessity because of the ease of finding material online or through other available resources. However, parents may better understand the impact of education in their child’s life since attending school is required up until a certain age, whereas library usage is not required nor considered a necessity if information can be gathered through other resources. Additionally, it seems that the parents in this study have worries about public libraries that focus on the child’s ability (or inability) to communicate with nonsigners in a library setting as opposed to types of services, accessibility, or material availability.

Parent Theme 5: Parents’ worries about their child are compounded by the additional challenges their children face.

Almost every parent worries about his or her child’s future. The parents interviewed were no different except that additional issues faced by their child compound their worries. In general, the parents worry about communication, independence, and the “what if” scenarios, but their fears are often multiplied in comparison to those of most parents because of their child’s inability to hear.

Communication

At some point or another, each of the parents interviewed brought up communication as an obstacle. All of the parents were concerned about their child’s inability to communicate with those who are unable to sign.
Teresa mentioned her role as “mediator” and wished that someone could teach her son more about the different library resources. She also did not think that “he would be able to communicate” with a librarian if he needed assistance.

Christina also discussed this issue throughout her interview, indicating that her daughter was “not yet” comfortable asking for assistance. Even in terms of activities in which Becky participated, Christina stated that she would like to take Becky to classes but that she looks “for things that have interpreters,” feeling that it was better to have a “coach know ASL as opposed to having someone that didn’t know.” In brief, not having someone who knows sign language will deter Christina from placing her child in a program or class.

Anna acknowledged that Danny would not ask for assistance and had “difficulty communicating by voice” and that it was not “possible for him to ask for help to find a book or movies.” Anna and her husband mentioned at our initial meeting that they had trouble communicating with both of their children because of the language barrier. After our interview, Anna told me that Danny did not have friends because he is unable to communicate with other children. Anna went on to say that when Danny attempts to use his voice, he does not speak as well, and other children have difficulty understanding him. As a result, both her son and the other children become frustrated with one another; thus, friendships do not develop due to the lack of communication. She stated that she wishes it were easier for him to communicate with people.

Veronica talked about communication not only in terms of signing but also in terms of speech:

until I know what her speech is actually like when she becomes a teenager or how far she’s gonna be able to get…I’m more afraid of…people just being rude to her
because they’re not understanding her if she’s not pronouncing something properly because she hears it differently than we do.

She also indicated:

She directs all questions to me, and I don’t know if that’s personality or if that’s because of her condition. I don’t know. So, a lot of time she will direct things to me and I will ask the questions. I’ve been dealing with schools where they put her in different situations where she had to speak to another teacher or a teacher’s aide so that she will have better communication skills with others.

Nicole also mentioned communication in her interview:

So if he had to go to a library…he’s gonna have a hard time unless somebody knows how to sign as far as communicating… he will have challenges with…yeah I think about that when he goes to the store or he’s ordering food or something.

Parents in this study worry about communication issues that their child may experience in the future, and these challenges extend beyond the school or home settings. The ability to adequately communicate is a constant concern for these parents because their children will likely face various communication obstacles and challenges whether they are in a school setting, at a library, or at a restaurant.

**Independence**

Another common concern brought up by parents was their child’s independence. Some of the parents felt that their child could not be independent and, as a result, could not let the child have independent experiences. However, as the parents spoke, they readily admitted that it was not the child who displayed the inability to be self-reliant; it was the parent’s own personal fears that perpetuated the child’s dependency.
For example, Christina mentioned that Becky “always had someone that could interpret for her. She’s never had to ask for anything on her own.” She proceeded to note that she was “there to help her.” Christina also structures Becky’s extracurricular activities to ensure that she is always able to have an interpreter present:

There’s a lot of summer classes that I would want her to…like swimming but I know…I can’t go in the swimming pool with her or…she’s a little bit too old for that now or even if there’s a vocabulary class…I know that I’m not supposed to go in the classes with her…I guess we could look for things that have interpreters, but it’s harder to find everyday classes, summer activities that have an interpreter. Even things like sports…last year she wanted to join basketball, but I convinced her to wait and join volleyball because I knew that her teacher was going to be teaching, I mean being the volleyball coach…I felt better about having the coach know ASL as opposed to having someone that didn’t know. So for her first team experience I wanted the coach to know ASL.

She also indicated:

I think the fact that she’s Deaf is probably why I’m more overprotective than most parents.

Responding to Becky’s future educational goals, Christina indicated, “I can’t even think of sending her away anywhere.” Christina has a fear of letting her child be independent and even admitted:

I need to start letting her be more independent and showing her how to do things instead of doing everything for her.
However, Christina also contradicted herself and Becky’s ability to be independent when she stated that these fears might be her own personal fears. When asked if her child would be comfortable asking for help from a librarian, Christina responded, “Not yet” but then stated:

And you know what? Maybe she will. It’s just me that’s not comfortable. I think…she’s pretty…independent when it comes to asking for help when she needs it. I think its just more me being overprotective.

Christina also states, “In the library, well, I think that she’ll be able to get around in the library…so I think she’ll be OK.”

Independence was also a topic mentioned by Veronica:

That’s why I stay away from certain things because I don’t want to put her in situations where she’s embarrassed or feels shy or out of place.

Later in her interview she also asked:

Is she gonna have a normal life? Is she going to be able to live on her own?…Sometimes I feel like I need to just let her be a four-year-old and not push her so much because of what I’m afraid for.

Nicole also mentioned Frank’s independence several times and commented:

[I’m] struggling with him leaving grammar school and going to high school. I don’t feel he’s ready. And I don’t know if it’s just me, I think it’s high school, he’s my baby…I just think that…he’s too young. He needs another year or two still in grammar school. I don’t think it would hurt him… I’m just really nervous about him moving on to the next level…I just think it’s gonna be a little too much for him.
Nicole also acknowledged that the fear could be her own. She noted:

Or maybe it’s just me, could just be me…He’s older now, and I’m thinking if I want to go to store or something, I don’t ever leave [Frank] alone….But the older he gets, he’s probably gonna want more privacy, you know.

Yet in spite of all her fears, Nicole spoke about her child’s sense of self:

One thing about him, he’s not afraid…he doesn’t feel like he’s different…or he has a disability. He’s not shy…he’s not afraid to do anything, he doesn’t withdraw from anybody…he’s very likable and friendly…he doesn’t seem to be afraid, he seems to be ready to go to high school. He’s already looking at the colleges.

Even when asked about communication with a librarian, Nicole stated:

It would be hard. It would be hard. He’s not afraid. He would be comfortable, but it would be a challenge, and it would be hard for both sides to…understand each other. If they’re not understanding him, he’d probably write things down, he’ll find a way to make you understand.

Teresa acknowledged that she is the “mediator,” and her inability to leave him alone was an issue. She noted:

It would be nice if he could go or I drop him off and be like “Go do your homework and I’ll be back in an hour.” I mean, he is twelve, and I’m sure he is tired of me being with him everywhere.

The parents have very legitimate fears about what their children may encounter. However, their child’s personality has shown that although there may be obstacles, he or she may overcome challenges because of their character or tenaciousness. Some of the parents
interviewed acknowledged that their own personal fears might cause them to be overprotective of their children.

*What if...*

A fear reiterated by three of the participants was the “what if...” scenario, the possibility of a catastrophe or the parent dying. It is likely that all parents consider this type of scenario at one point or another. However, the worries of parents of children who are Deaf are magnified because these parents must also consider their child’s capacity to be independent and to communicate. Veronica said:

As a parent, you don’t want your child like that [unable to read/write] because at some point, you as a parent is going to pass away, and your child is on their own. And those have always been my fears…is she gonna have a normal life? Is she going to be able to live on her own?

Christina also stated:

I pray to God that nothing, knock on wood, happens...just because we want to be around for her.

The added complication of a child who is Deaf and the need to reach someone during an emergency, such as a 911 dispatcher, who cannot verbally communicate with the person on the other end of the phone contributes to this heightened anxiety. Nicole stated:

What if something happens to me while I am in the house and he needs to communicate with someone?

Nicole’s statement “I think about that [communication] when he goes to the store or he’s ordering food or something” highlights the unique circumstances that these children will have to face. Although many of these children are at an age where they should be able to
call 911 during an emergency, a child who is Deaf must use a video relay service. Unless the family subscribes to such a service, some of these children cannot simply pick up the phone and dial 911 to verbally communicate with the operator, which creates a heightened sense of worry for the parents. Additionally, calling a neighbor may also be difficult. Again, the family must subscribe to a video relay service, or the neighbor must know sign language; otherwise, the child may likely have difficulty communicating the emergency to that individual.

*Summary Theme 5*

Although many of the parental concerns are not uncommon to other parents, because of the child’s deafness, common situations suddenly become uncommon. The child does not exist within a vacuum where the only contact he or she will have will be with other individuals who are Deaf. It is highly likely that these children will have contact primarily with the hearing. This may indicate that the child must learn to adapt to a hearing world rather than the hearing adjusting to the Deaf world. The child must learn how to communicate in various settings. Communication is not typically an issue the hearing think about, for example, when he or she is at a restaurant or during an emergency. Parents are also faced with the difficulty in possibly leaving their child too early in life. Many individuals with disabilities who lack family and social services support often fall through the cracks. These heightened anxieties reflect the added difficulties faced by parents.

**Summary of Parent Themes**

Although this section focused on the parents’ experiences, these experiences provide a framework for a better understanding of the overall library experiences of the children in this study. The following five themes were discussed:
• parents’ experiences influence their child’s experience of the library,
• parents straddle more than one culture,
• parents want a sense of autonomy for their child,
• parents experience heightened anxiety about their child’s future, and
• parents’ worries about their child are compounded by the additional challenges their children face.

These themes provide a context for reaching a further understanding of the parents and the unique issues they face. These themes also not only provide insight into how their child’s information world is constructed, but they also inform the reader about the way parents experience life with a child that is Deaf.

**Composite Experience**

Interpretative phenomenological analysis is used “to present a clear and full narrative account of what you have learnt about the participant” (Smith et al., 2012, p. 110). Additionally, “transcripts of interviews are analyzed case by case through a systematic, qualitative analysis. This is then turned into a narrative account where the researcher analytic interpretation is presented” (Smith et al., 2012, p. 4). This type of analysis will allow me not only to capture the lived experience but also to add my own interpretation to it. To understand the child who is Deaf and his or her experience in a public library, one overarching description was created. In this comprehensive picture, I will use a fictional character, Chris, to describe the typical library experience based on a merging of the parents’ and children’s interviews.
Chris

Chris is a preteen who enjoys a variety of activities that any typical preteen enjoys, such as drawing, playing sports, playing video games, and reading. However, unlike most preteens, Chris reads at approximately a second-grade level and gravitates toward books that are more visual, such as graphic novels and books with pictures and colors. The parent usually buys Chris’s books for leisure reading instead of checking them out of the library.

Chris’s parents have experienced the reactions of the public in response to Chris’s deafness. Some experiences have been positive, and others have not. The negative reactions experienced by Chris’s parents, including those in a library, influence their decisions as to where to take their child. For example, negative reactions in a library setting have influenced the parents to utilize the Internet for information instead of visiting a library. As a result of these negative reactions by others, Chris’s parents limit the places they take him with the purpose of avoiding exposure to negative experiences.

Library usage

Chris goes to the library sporadically and is often accompanied by a family member. The primary reason for visiting the library is to find physical material such as books or movies. Although Chris and his parents prefer to use the Internet for research assignments, from time to time he may use the library to find information for specific school assignments, such as for a science project. Chris is unlikely to participate in other library-related events such as story time or arts and crafts. When using the library, Chris will usually have a family member present to facilitate communication between the library staff and him and, as a result, will not likely use the library independently. Because a parent or a family member is always present with Chris to act as an interpreter, Chris’s library visits are dictated by the parent’s decision to use or not to use the library. Therefore, Chris does not
go to the library alone, and the parent determines how and when the library is used. As a result, it is the parent who likely influences how Chris experiences the public library.

Chris also has no autonomy or privacy within the library setting. Because Chris has difficulty communicating with a nonsigner, Chris relies on an interpreter to navigate the librarian-patron interaction. That is, a mediator must explain Chris's information needs and the nonsigner's responses to Chris. Thus, Chris does not get the opportunity to have an independent experience within the library setting. Additionally, the need for a translator, interpreter, or mediator invades the child's privacy. In my experience as a practicing librarian, it is not uncommon for children or young adults to ask for books about their changing bodies, having babies, or other similar material. Chris, in this situation, loses his sense of privacy when he must speak through an interpreter (who is usually a family member) to ask the librarian for material. Chris's ability to have an independent experience is further diminished when there is no sense of privacy.

**Communication**

Communicating with nonsigners is going to be a lifelong challenge not only in the library setting but also in other settings such as ordering food in a restaurant. In almost any setting, Chris is likely to have a parent or family member with him to act as an interpreter, or he must face the potential difficulties of communicating without an interpreter.

Chris lives among several cultures. He must not only maneuver his ethnic culture, but he must also maneuver the American culture, Deaf Culture, and the Hearing culture. Although he does not yet completely identify with Deaf Culture, Chris is in the preliminary stages of this process.
Chris and his family must also find ways to communicate when a common language is not used. Since some of his family may not speak English, Chris and his family must find ways to navigate the multiple languages used by his family. As Chris becomes more fluent in sign language, it is likely that the communication gap between mother and child will increase. That is, Chris will become more fluent in sign language, and his mother will still lag in her fluency of the language. Yet regardless of the challenge of communicating with his mother, both she and Chris will find a way to communicate.

**Independence**

Chris lacks a sense of independence because he is not given opportunities to have independent experiences. Chris’s parents worry about or fear the future because of the compounded challenges he will face because of his deafness. Mostly focused on communication barriers, Chris’s parents may worry whether he will have a normal life, if he will be understood by others when attempting to use his voice, or if he will be able to communicate with nonsigners. Although Chris’s parents are concerned that he will be unable to navigate the ability to communicate with nonsigners, Chris does not appear to have similar worries.

Although Chris’s parents limit his independent experiences such as extracurricular programs, school activities, and library-related programs, Chris appears to be open to new and independent experiences. Chris also appears more willing to explore new situations and does not appear to have fears about communicating with nonsigners.

From the interviews of the children and the parents, a deeper understanding of the way a child who is Deaf experiences the library has emerged. The role of the parent is critical and affects the way the child develops his or her perceptions. To expand our
understanding of these experiences, they can be looked at through the lens of theoretical frameworks that address issues unique to the lived experience of a child who is Deaf.

**Theoretical Frameworks**

Although a variety of theoretical frameworks, such as intercultural communication and disability theory, can be used to better understand the public library experience of children who are Deaf, I have chosen Elfreda Chatman’s information poverty and Erving Goffman’s face threat to provide a context for understanding these experiences. Additionally, Constance Mellon’s concept of library anxiety will also be discussed in relation to the data collected. All of these theoretical frameworks relate specifically to information behaviors.

**Elfreda Chatman’s information poverty.**

Elfreda Chatman examined the information needs and information behaviors of marginalized populations and developed several information behavior theories that inform the library information science profession about marginalized populations. One such theory, Chatman’s information poverty, is used to examine the information sharing among individuals who are members of a marginalized group (Hersberger, 2009). Because the Deaf Community is underserved and understudied, it may be considered a marginalized group.

Information poverty was first thought to be linked to economic factors; however, as Elfreda Chatman’s research showed, information poverty was not due to economic poverty but was linked to socially defined norms and attitudes. Chatman set the theory of information poverty within a larger conceptual framework of information insider/outsider and the “small-world” concept. As a closed community, the social norms, worldviews, and
self-protective behaviors within the community create a small world that may filter information flow and interactions. Furthermore, the Deaf Community shares cultural and social norms that may not be familiar to outsiders, creating an insider/outsider dynamic.

The insiders (those who are part of the small world) determine what information is needed, what information is acceptable, and which information sources are valid. Outsiders (those who are not in the small world), or the “legitimized others,” shape, change, and/or modify information that enters the small world from the outside. These outsider/insider roles establish the norms and worldviews that dictate information behavior (Chatman, 2000).

The “small-world” concept is influential in the creation of Chatman’s information poverty because individuals tend to adopt social networks with other individuals who maintain a similar lifestyle, belief system, and perspective of the world around them. This leads to Chatman’s argument that it is “our membership within a particular group that contributes to information poverty” (Chatman, 1996, p. 197). Information poverty focuses on the lack of information exchange within a marginalized group based on four key concepts: secrecy, deception, risk-taking, and situational relevance.

“Secrecy,” which Chatman defined using Bok’s definition as “intentional concealment” (Chatman, 1996), not only protects a person from unwanted intrusion, but it is also used as a mechanism by which a person (or group) can view themselves as insiders (Chatman, 1996). Although none of the participants (children or parents) were secretive about the child’s deafness, parents have chosen to use self-protective behaviors that may border on secrecy. By ensuring that the child is not placed in challenging situations due to their child’s deafness, parents are creating a small social world in which their child can feel
comfortable about deafness. However, this small social structure creates a wall whereby the child’s deafness is not exposed to outsiders. For example, Nicole discussed her son’s social network. She states:

He’s not out on the streets or in the neighborhood or he doesn’t have neighborhood friends where we live…His friends are either school or in the camps or wherever programs he’s in. Besides my family members, he has lots of cousins so he’s around enough kids.

Although they are protective of their children, these small social circles do not expose the child to outsiders and may be construed as secrecy intended not only to avoid potentially uncomfortable situations but also to avoid personal intrusion.

Chatman defines “deception” as a “deliberate attempt to play act, that is, to engage in activities in which our personal reality is consciously distorted. It is a process meant to hide our true condition by giving false and misleading information” (Chatman, 1996, p. 196). There was no indication that either the children or the parents in this study used deception to hide the child’s deafness.

Chatman argues that “risk-taking” is a principal component affecting the information-seeking and sharing process. “Risk-taking” is defined as “an attribute affecting the acceptance or rejection of an innovation…based on our perception of whether it is worthwhile or not. It does not seem to merit consideration if, weighed against personal or economic cost, the result would be negative” (Chatman, 1996, p. 196). Because of negative library experiences involving their children, parents in this study were less likely to choose the library as an information source. These negative experiences likely gave the parents the impression that their child might be subjected to uncomfortable situations in the library.
Therefore, parents may have weighed the use of libraries versus their child’s possible discomfort and preferred not to expose their children to potentially negative situations. Thus, in this group of parents, the personal cost outweighed the benefits of use, and as a result, the library became a less acceptable source.

Finally, Chatman defines “situational relevance” as “utility” (Chatman, 1996, p. 201) or the usefulness of the source. Several of the parents in this study did not find the library a useful source because of past experiences they had with regard to their child’s deafness. Although the library is a resource for some material, it was not necessarily the primary source for information but more of a secondary choice for information gathering and obtaining some physical material. The library was used when the parent had no other alternative for finding material or information for the child’s assignments. As a result of these experiences, parents were less likely to consider the library to be a useful resource.

From these four key concepts, Chatman developed a theoretical framework of six propositions that define an impoverished information world:

1. The information poor perceive themselves devoid of any sources that might help them.
2. Information poverty is partially associated with class distinction. That is, the condition of information poverty is influenced by outsiders who withhold privileged access to information.
3. Information poverty is determined by self-protective behaviors, which are used in response to social norms.
4. Both secrecy and deception are self-protecting mechanisms due to a sense of mistrust regarding the interest or ability of others to provide useful information.
5. A decision to risk exposure about our true feelings is often not taken due to a perception that negative consequences outweigh benefits.

6. New knowledge will be selectively introduced into the information world of poor people. A condition that influences this process is the relevance of that information in response to everyday problems and concerns (Chatman, 1996, pp. 197–198).

As a closed community, the social norms, worldviews, and self-protective behaviors within the community create a small world that may filter information flow and interactions. In this study, both the parent’s and the child’s experiences must be taken into account to understand the full scope of the child’s library experience as it pertains to this information behavior theory. The small-world concept suggests that people have contact mostly within their social group. This social group also determines what information and information resources have utility (Chatman, 2000).

**The Experience**

In this study, the children and parents are situated within a small world. The children are Deaf, and although they are not fully integrated into Deaf Culture, the unique experiences and circumstances bond these participants into a socially constructed small world. In this study, participants exhibited self-protective behaviors that may create an information-impoverished world, particularly when it comes to information-seeking behaviors and information resources.

For example, parents noted the library as one of several resources for finding information; however, the participants in this study use libraries in a limited capacity. Parents used the library occasionally for finding movies or books needed to complete homework assignments. Libraries were also not the first choice as a resource. Online
information was often the first choice of information gathering because of easy accessibility. Although this choice may also be popular among the general population, ease combined with negative experiences in the public library may compound the choice to find information through other avenues. Several parents mentioned easiness during their interviews. For example, Christina stated:

A lot of the information we do get online…Easy access [regarding online resources], a lot of times too…we get the images there, and again, it’s quick, easy access.

Veronica’s negative experience in a library also contributed to her decision to look for alternative sources of information: “Like no one knew what I was looking for so I reverted to the Internet for everything.” Nicole also indicated the ease of access using online resources, stating:

I would love for him to do this, to come here to read, but it takes me to take him there, and I don’t do it like I should. But he gets it off the computer too. I have an account so we can go on the computer and pull stuff up versus going to the library…because everything is so electronic now, everything is on computers, it makes it easier for him, he can do stuff from home, or you know everything is on a computer now.

Furthermore, several parents mentioned negative experiences involving their children in libraries as being the catalyst for choosing alternative information resources. Negative experiences and ease of online resources contributed to parents creating a smaller information resource sphere.

Also, parents did not want their children exposed to negative situations in public libraries; thus, parents exhibited self-protective behavior by limiting library usage for their
children. Self-protective behaviors and limiting information gathering are two primary concepts that lead to an information-impoverished world. The decreased usage of the physical library space by the parent may affect their child’s future usage of public libraries. Additionally, the child may not realize the variety of resources available in public libraries. As a result, parents contribute to creating an information-impoverished small world for themselves and their children. One must also remember that aside from information gathering, libraries also provide a variety of services and programs that are beneficial to everyone. Visiting libraries can help improve literacy skills, develop language skills, open up access to technology or material via databases and in print, facilitate participation in a larger community, provide opportunities to socialize and meet new people, allow participation in library-related programs, and provide access to a wide range of material for leisure use.

**Erving Goffman’s face threat.**

Erving Goffman was a Canadian-born sociologist who explored the presentation of self during social interactions. By looking at interpersonal behavior displayed in public and behind the scenes, Goffman elaborated that “face,” the positive public image of self that individuals have when interacting with others, is socially constructed. “Face” is not a permanent aspect of a person; instead, the individual constructs it during the social interaction to abide by socially appropriate expectations (Mon, 2009).

According to face threat theory, Goffman suggests that individuals strategically decide whether to hide or share information about themselves during social interactions in an attempt to keep their public image of “self” in accordance with approved social roles and behaviors. During a social interaction, the participant claims a “face” for himself or herself, or plays a role that he or she perceives to be expected, based on preexisting social roles and
behaviors. To “maintain face,” the participant reveals very few details about himself or herself (Goffman, 1982). That is, when the individual shows a positive self-image of himself or herself to others during the interaction, the individual then develops the need to keep that image intact to avoid embarrassment or being discredited. As a result, the individual remains guarded, making sure not to break the positive self-image in ways that may be unfavorable to others.

Because the Deaf Community has its own cultural and social norms that may not be familiar to nonmembers, members may try to hide those norms to be in accordance with approved roles and behaviors. Examples of social norms within the Deaf Community include the following:

- Teasing with physical contact such as backslapping or touching more casually is acceptable.
- Do not use your voice with friends who are Deaf, but do use it with Hearing people.
- It is polite to sign with your mouth full but not when your hands are full.
- Staring is acceptable because it is necessary for communication.
- Whispering (hidden signing or writing notes) is unacceptable. If a conversation is private, members go outside or to a private area for discussion.
- Attention-getting methods such as waving, tapping the shoulder, flickering lights on and off, stomping, or banging a table can be used.
- Deaf norms of grammar include using the tongue with speech, facial expressions, or pointing for spatial use or pronouns.
A person may be asked if they are Deaf or Hearing. Therefore, individuals in the Deaf Community may find it necessary to hide normal social behavior found within their social structure to maintain approved roles and behavior. Hiding social norms to maintain these approved roles is similar to the concept of deception found in Chatman’s information poverty.

Face threat occurs when situations arise that may cause the participant’s established “face” to become threatened with embarrassment or disgrace. Should that happen, the person would be “out of face” or in the “wrong face,” which can bring about emotions such as shame and humiliation. Because individuals are emotionally attached to their “faces,” an individual feels good when he or she is “in face” and bad when “out of” or in “wrong face.” As a result, he or she may attempt to maintain “face” during interactions to avoid negative feelings.

**The Experience**

Although neither the children nor the parents in this study explicitly state face threat, the concept is implicit in the responses. Parents discussed their own protective behaviors to prevent situations that may lead to face threat experiences by their children. For example, Teresa mentioned parents who are embarrassed in her statement:

I know…people who just had Deaf children, and they don’t have anybody Deaf in their lives, they see things…They get embarrassed of signing or the noises they make or things like that.

However, because of her own experience with her father being Deaf, Teresa did not notice other people’s responses to her child in public. However, another parent, Veronica, did notice the reactions of others. She stated:
I've had instances where being in public they stare...I think that in the beginning for me...it bothered me, now I don't care...but at first being new to it and being...accepting of it and understanding what went on with my daughter, I think I was a little bit more...protective of her so I noticed people staring more or I've had a parent purposely walk really fast to get past us to look at her to see the hearing aid...I personally think there's more...rude adults than there are children.

Veronica proceeds to state:

She's loud [laughs]...they want it quiet in there [the library], and she's loud, she likes to talk...It was fine in picking out a book and whatever, but it's more of an in and out thing for her. We can't stay in there and read books with her. She has a very loud voice.

Later in the interview she also noted:

It does worry me that depending on how her speech is...I think I'm more afraid of...people just being rude to her because...they're not understanding her if she's not pronouncing something properly because she hears it differently than we do....

That's why I stay away from certain things because I don't want to put her in situations where she's embarrassed or feels shy or out of place.

Veronica's worry about the library's expectations of quietness and about her child feeling “embarrassed” suggests that Veronica may have some anxiety about expected behavior from society.

Nicole's discussion about library services also implies that her son, Frank, may have negative feelings about library experiences: “I think it would be harder for him, he would feel left out.”
Although these remarks pertaining to the concept of “face” are from the parents and not the child, the parent’s feelings, over time, may negatively affect the way a child feels about his or her deafness and what others expect of him or her during social interactions.

Based on the interview responses, some parents appeared concerned about the public’s negative reactions to their child’s deafness and/or the child’s social behavior (such as making loud, incomprehensible vocal sounds). These worries centered on the idea of whether their child’s deafness would be or would not be socially acceptable based on the expectations of others during interactions. However, although more research is needed to further understand how the participants, in accordance with this theoretical framework, perceive deafness during social interactions, it is likely that parents affect the way their child assumes his or her public “face” during interactions. That is, if the parent projects the negative feelings experienced during social interactions about deafness onto the child, the child may internalize these feelings and develop a negative perception about his or her deafness. As a result, the child may develop a sense of shame or embarrassment about his or her deafness that may affect how they assume future roles (or “face”) during social interactions with individuals not in their social sphere.

**Constance Mellon’s library anxiety.**

Constance Mellon, professor of library science at East Carolina University in North Carolina, developed the theory of library anxiety in 1986 (Cleveland, 2004). During her two-year qualitative study of 6,000 students, Mellon discovered that 75–85% of the students felt some anxiety during their library research. This is based on her analysis of the students’ responses to their library experiences and feelings when they conducted searches. Students
reported feeling lost and unable to find their way around the library and were reluctant to approach library staff for assistance (Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2004).

Similar to other academic anxiety (statistics anxiety, writing anxiety, or research anxiety), library anxiety for many students is similar to learning a new language. This comparison is made based on students being required to learn a new set of language-based rules when learning to use the library or conducting library searches (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004). Students who exhibit symptoms of library anxiety often feel fear, apprehension, and self-defeating thoughts. Anxiety is time and situation specific and is usually independent from trait-based anxiety. Although there are various types of anxiety (e.g., mathematics anxiety, communication anxiety, foreign language anxiety), library anxiety tends to be the most common because everyone needs to use the library at some point during his or her schooling (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004). For members of the Deaf Community, this anxiety is compounded by language barriers in addition to library usage.

**What is library anxiety?**

According to Jiao, Onwuegbuzie, & Lichtenstein (1996), library anxiety is “an uncomfortable feeling or emotional disposition, experienced in a library setting, which has cognitive, affective, psychological and behavioral ramifications” (p. 152). Library anxiety can cause tension, fear, uncertainty, helplessness, and self-defeating thoughts that can impede a student’s ability to properly use the library for their assignments (Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2004).

Students who experience library anxiety may feel an emotional or physical discomfort when performing library-related tasks. It can increase heart rate, respiration rate, and blood pressure. Affective symptoms include apprehension, frustration, helplessness,
tension, uneasiness, and mental disorganization. Levels of library anxiety vary from low to high and can be either a motivating factor or a debilitating factor. (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004).

One of the most significant tools used to identify library anxiety is the Library Anxiety Scale (LAS) developed by Sharon L. Bostick in 1992. The LAS assess five subscales of library anxiety. These subscales are barriers with staff, affective barriers, comfort with the library, knowledge of the library, and mechanical barriers (Jiao & Onwuegbuzie, 2003).

*Barriers with staff or interpersonal anxiety:* This level refers to the perceptions that librarians and other library employees are intimidating and unapproachable. Users perceive that employees are too busy or have other more important duties than to help them (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004). Because the children’s experiences in libraries are not extensive, the children may find staff unapproachable most likely because of the communication barrier. Also, because several of the parents had negative library experiences with their child that influenced their preference for other sources (the Internet), the children may be unintentionally convinced that library staff is not helpful. As a result, the child may experience anxieties asking for assistance. Although two of the children indicated they would not be afraid to ask, it is possible that because of the child’s natural personality, this anxiety may be secondary to other areas of library anxiety.

*Affective barriers or perceived library anxiety:* This level refers to the user’s feelings of inadequacy when using the library. These feelings are also heightened by the assumption that other library users are more skilled than they are at using the library (Jiao & Onwuegbuzie, 2003). Three factors may affect the child’s comfort using the library: (1) reading level, (2) communication, and (3) previous experiences. Reading may affect the
child’s anxiety because they may not be able to understand or grasp the “language” used to do searches or find material. This can result in the child feeling inadequate in their ability to navigate the library to find material, raising the anxiety level, especially if they assume that others are better skilled at navigating the library. Communication may also contribute to increased library anxiety because the child may not have proper instruction over the course of their education on library usage. That is, if the interpreter used (family or professional) cannot translate library jargon, the child may receive only partial instruction on library usage. Partial instruction can result in increased anxiety if the child is unable to understand how to conduct useful searches or find material. Finally, because the children have limited independent experiences in libraries, they may have heightened feelings of inadequacy using the library particularly for information gathering. The child may be unfamiliar with basic library usage such as searching databases, using the library catalog, or finding material via call numbers. Being unfamiliar with the library setting may also affect how they view their adequacy level in comparison to hearing students.

Comfort with the library or perceived comfort with the library: This level refers to how safe, secure, welcoming, and nonthreatening the library is perceived to be by the users. If the user is not comfortable with the library, they will experience increased levels of library anxiety (Jiao & Onwuegbuzie, 2003). Since the child has limited independent experiences in libraries, there may be some increased library anxiety because the child may be uncomfortable in an unfamiliar environment. Additionally, the library space and staff may be welcoming; however, if the types of services or programs available are not inclusive, the child may feel excluded and uncomfortable in the library space, thus raising the level of anxiety.
Knowledge of the library or location knowledge: This level refers to how familiar the user feels with the library. If the user is not familiar with the library, there can be a sense of frustration and increased anxiety that can lead to avoidance behaviors (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004). Again, because the child has had limited experiences in a library setting, he or she may be unfamiliar with the library environment and as a result may experience increased anxiety or avoid the library itself.

Mechanical barriers or mechanical anxiety: This level refers to the user’s ability to operate library equipment such as copiers and computers. The user’s inability to operate the mechanical equipment can lead to higher levels of anxiety (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004). The child may not experience increased anxiety with library equipment. That is, the child may have familiarity with computers because they, along with their parents, have used the computer previously to access the Internet in search of information for their school assignments. However, although the child may be familiar with the computer, they may still have difficulty navigating the catalog or database. The physical equipment itself may not raise the level of anxiety, but the way in which it is used or the complexity of sites may cause more increased anxiety.

Finally, Onwuegbuzie et al. (2004) adds “resource anxiety.” This refers to a user’s level of anxiety stemming from the selection of books or articles that are listed as results in a computer search but are not available at their library. The inability to access the material increases frustration and anxiety (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004). The child’s reading level may also play a factor in resource anxiety. Aside from being unable to easily locate material, the child’s ability to carefully select and extract the needed information versus unimportant
information may increase frustration and anxiety. Here the child may not be able to
distinguish the usefulness of various sources, and thus, anxiety would heighten.

**The Experience**

Since the children have limited exposure to libraries and library services, it can be
theorized that the limited library usage by the children in addition to communication
barriers may cause or increase library anxiety should the children need to utilize the library.
In this particular group of children, always having a mediator or interpreter with them
decreases their level of anxiety because they can communicate with someone. However, if
the children should have to navigate the library search process on their own, because of their
unfamiliarity with libraries, the children may experience some form of anxiety. This anxiety
may increase over time and thus affect their usage of libraries in the future. More research
on this would have to be conducted to determine to what extent the children experience
library anxiety.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided a brief overview into the way a child who is Deaf experiences
libraries. While the children are young, parents play a key role in shaping their child’s
perceptions of libraries and the way the child uses the library, in the present and in the
future. Chatman’s information poverty theory, Goffman’s face threat, and Mellon’s library
anxiety help enlighten the way this group of participants may or may not utilize information
sources according to their socially constructed worlds. Since this was a phenomenological
study to examine the lived experiences of the participants, more studies need to be
conducted to truly understand how these information behavior theories apply to this
particular user group. Additional discussion about the findings is found in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V—Discussion

The previous chapter focused on the lived experiences of the child and his or her perceptions and usage of public libraries. The goal of this chapter is to report the findings that were significant to the purpose of this study and discuss the implications of the research, possible limitations, and suggestions for future research.

Discussion of Findings

Two findings in particular stand out in this study. The first primary finding is the extent to which the parent influences the child’s experiences of the public library. In this study, the parent appeared to have influence over the “when” and “how” of the child’s library experiences. These influences revolve around communication issues, the level of independence a child is allowed, a parent’s past experiences, and reasons to use a library.

Because of communication barriers, the parent (or a family member) often acts as an interpreter; thus, the child must always rely on others to take him or her to the library. This scenario may contribute to the lack of independent library usage by the child because the child does not go the library on his or her own and therefore does not learn to use the library independently. Instead, the child has little room to have an independent experience whereby he or she not only explores the physical collection but also learns to navigate the librarian-patron interaction and explore the array of services and programs offered. Communication issues and lack of independent experiences coupled with how the parent chooses to use the library may also influence the child’s perspective of the library. For example, the parents in this study primarily used the library for finding physical material such as books and movies but neither they nor their children participated in library programs. Additionally, several of
the parents preferred to purchase reading material for leisure reading for their child as opposed to giving the child an opportunity to find leisure reading material on his or her own in a library that may possibly enhance the child’s reading enjoyment. Instead, the child may develop the perception that a library is a potential resource for books and movies and may not be completely aware of other available services or programs.

Finally, past experiences also influence how parents utilize the library. If the parent has had a negative experience in the public library with his or her child, it increases the potential for not returning to the library. It should be noted that this type of reaction is likely not just for the parents in this study but is also a likely response for any individual in any setting freely chosen. In this study, several parents mentioned negative experiences in the public library that included the child. These negative encounters also affected the parent’s use of the library. Instead of seeking out information resources via the library, some parents elected to find their own information online via the Internet. The parent’s decision to discontinue or limit use of the library likely reinforces the child’s narrowed perspective of the library. Although negative experiences in public libraries may not have been the only deciding factor, if the parent feels that service at the public library is less than adequate, that experience can be a reason for deciding not to return. The decision not to return to the library or to limit public library usage reinforces the library as an undesirable place to visit. If the child does not have positive experiences within the public library setting, whether by not going to the library or by having limited use of the library, it is possible that the negative perception of the library for the child is reinforced.

The combination of all of these factors may influence the child’s narrowed perspective of libraries, which, in turn, can potentially affect the “when,” “how,” and
“why” of a child’s utilization of the library in the future. This finding does not mean that the child will never know about other library-related programs and services offered; however, it may be later in life that he or she learns about these services, which can then affect the comfort level of using libraries. This low comfort level could also contribute to library anxiety and a lack of willingness or desire to use the library. Therefore, the parent’s influence on how the child perceives the library and its uses can potentially affect the child’s future use of public libraries.

The second finding that stood out was the child’s lack of independent experiences and the difference between the parent’s perceptions and the child’s perceptions about the ability to be independent in the library. This finding emerged from the comments about communication barriers and parental concerns. The parents in this study rarely provide opportunities for the child who is Deaf to explore the library on his or her own. The parent typically has concerns about whether the child will or will not be able to communicate with library staff who do not sign. The uneasiness of the parent about the child’s communication and the decision to always have someone present to act as an interpreter may hinder the child from learning to communicate with nonsigners and affect the opportunity for the child to learn to use the library independently. By always having a parent or family member present to act as an interpreter, the child is also not given privacy because the child must always relay information via a third party. Therefore, should the child have a question or want information on a sensitive topic, the child may decide not to request information from the library staff because he or she lacks autonomy and privacy.

In this study, the lack of independent experiences extended beyond the library setting. By the parents’ own admissions, they acknowledged their role in limiting their
child’s opportunities for independent experiences, not only within the library but also in other settings. Additionally, parental concerns about the types of experiences the child may have in the public library, or in other settings, related to communication issues and seem to restrict the how the child experiences the world in general and the library in particular. Although these parental concerns are legitimate, some of the children did not have the same perspective. The parents also acknowledged that the child would likely find a way to communicate successfully if given the opportunity. In brief, it is the parent’s concerns that not only impede the child’s current ability to be independent in various settings but also affect the child’s opportunity to develop strategies for communicating with nonsigners. This pattern potentially affects the future use of libraries. If the child does not become familiar with the public library, have positive interactions, and develop strategies to communicate with library staff, the child may not feel comfortable utilizing the library as he or she becomes older.

These findings are particularly important to professional practice. As a librarian who has worked in communities with non-English speakers, I am aware of communication barriers. I was not surprised that communication played a key role in whether the children participated in library programs or not. However, I was surprised at the extent to which the parent’s perspective influenced the way that the children developed their own view of the library and how the children experienced the library.

I often see parents bring their children to the library and allow them the opportunity to explore the library space and various materials to develop their own experience of the library setting. The child is often encouraged to find material that “speaks to them,” which gives the child a sense of autonomy and a personal stake in their reading choices. By being
allowed to pick and choose material that interests them, utilize the full array of services, and participate in programs, children will likely gain a well-rounded experience of the public library. They will also likely develop a positive association with the library because they have created the association through personal choice and independence. I often hear a parent tell his or her child to “ask the librarian” for assistance as a way to teach the child to communicate with others, learn independence, and gain confidence in asking for assistance. The parents in this study, however, seem to restrict their children from developing this type of public library experience.

In addition, I have seen children younger than the participants in this study visit the library and take part in activities such as story time, arts and crafts, and book discussion without the direct supervision of parents or an accompanying adult. Although it is not surprising that communication might be a limiting factor for not participating in programs, it is surprising that the children in this study do not visit the library independently, whether just to explore the physical space, find their own reading material, or socialize with other children. In short, parents in this study seem to limit their children’s opportunity to grow and develop an independent library experience in ways that other children their age do.

The interviews shed light not only on the library experiences of children who are Deaf but also on current library practices affecting this user group. As LIS professionals, the literature indicates that we do not fully understand the information behaviors or information needs of this user group. Several parents in this study mentioned a lack of inclusive services and limited materials of interest to their children. To better serve the needs of this particular user population, several steps should be taken. Practicing librarians should conduct a community analysis to determine if there are schools in the area with Deaf and Hard-of-
Hearing programs and identify organizations that work with individuals who are Deaf. It is important for librarians to collaborate with schools, associations, and organizations to design programs and inclusive services and to create a positive working relationship with these groups. Librarians should also develop procedures to ensure that programs and services are promoted and marketed to members of the Deaf Community.

Aside from collection development and programming for children, practicing librarians should also seek to become culturally competent. Being a cultural competent professional will help librarians understand, communicate with and effectively interact with individuals from different cultures, including individuals associated with disability cultures and the Deaf Culture.

Although online resources were not specifically addressed in this study, it is important to note that parents in this study often resorted to online resources as opposed to using the physical space of the library. As a result, it may feasible for librarians to offer database classes, particularly to parents of children who are Deaf to better promote online resources they can use from home. This type of programming would help parents learn to navigate and utilize online library information resources to be able to better assist his or her child navigating online resources.

It is also important to examine the library collection and determine if it is meeting the needs of this particular (or any other) user group. As librarians, our collections should reflect our user communities. Books on deafness should be culturally appropriate and meet the needs and interests of the user. Again, it is vital to work with schools, associations, or organizations to ensure that the user's information needs are being met.
Participants also discussed the types of experiences they have had in public libraries, which ultimately are affected by customer service. The participants had these negative experiences not necessarily because library staff did not understand deafness but primarily because the library employees created a negative environment that was not inclusive and positive. It is likely that some of these negative experiences involving staff are not limited to just these participants. Instead, others may also experience these unpleasant interactions, which points to the importance of having good customer service. As practicing librarians, if possible, take a class on learning basic sign language or a class on serving people with varying disabilities. Additionally, librarians should create and develop customer service best practices. Good customer service will create a positive experience not just for individuals who are Deaf but for any individual using your library.

Finally, for LIS degree programs, it is important to prepare the students to work with all members of the public, including those with disabilities. Classes should be created to learn methods to reach and serve patrons with disabilities. These classes should reflect history, disability culture, and disability theory to further understand the information behaviors of patrons with disabilities. By doing so, graduating librarians will know how to create positive relationships with these user groups and serve these individuals who are often marginalized by society, thus promoting an environment of inclusivity.

The findings of this study reflect the limited literature on this user group within the LIS field. As previously discussed in the literature review, existing practical methods exist to serve members of this community; however, there is no discussion of the impact of culture and social norms that influence library usage or perception and no discussion of this community’s use of information resources. There is also no discussion of how these
practices were developed. There must also be more separation as to how people with disabilities are mentioned in the LIS literature. Often, people with disabilities are combined as one user group even though they have varying degrees and levels of disabilities.

The gap in the LIS literature needs to be addressed in both theory and practice. From a practical standpoint, library organizations at the national, state, and local level should develop opportunities to address the gap in the literature. By soliciting theory, research-based, and inclusive best practices, more knowledge about this user group would be available. There would be a better understanding of how to serve members of the Deaf Community as well as others with disabilities.

From an academic standpoint, more research is needed to build theories pertinent to better understanding the information needs and behaviors of this user group. Again, LIS academic literature is limited, and it is important to develop more research-based literature to further understand the unique information behaviors of the Deaf Community. Additional theoretical frameworks for this user population should also be explored from the LIS perspective. Doing so would not only help practicing librarians address information needs and behaviors but would also narrow the gap between what they want and what we offer.

**Implications of Research**

The findings of this study have both practical and theoretical implications that will contribute to the LIS field. The theoretical frameworks used (Chatman, Goffman, and Mellon) also help researchers and scholars understand the complexity of information needs and behaviors of this underserved population. Additionally, this study begins to address the roles culture and social norms play in influencing user behavior of this user group.
Using the theoretical models led to better understanding of this user group; however, the findings were not definitive, and further research is needed to fully comprehend how these theoretical models help understand the experiences and perceptions of children who are Deaf. More exploration of perceptions and library usage is needed and should be examined on a larger scale to see if these perceptions and usage are not limited to these particular participants.

**Information poverty via the small world.**

Another theoretical concept that has potential impact on practice is Chatman’s small-world concept. I suggest that the “small world” decreases in size when the insider has an additional disability because the disability further hinders information transference and acceptance. I will call this situation “a small world within a small world.” For example, the children in this study are situated in a socially constructed small world. This “small world” becomes even smaller when additional factors are introduced. Thus, as a group, the individuals are all members of a socially constructed small world influenced by the parent.

The parent creates this first small world through a series of decisions for their child. There are five areas that I have identified that parents influence to create the first layer of a socially constructed small world: education, social world, information resources, experiences, culture, and information resources. Although it can be argued that every parent makes many of the same decisions, the impact of the child’s deafness very likely has more profound implications than say, the decisions made for a hearing child.

*Education*

For almost any child, the parent determines how their child’s educational path will start. The parent can choose to send their child to a private school, public school, or home
school. Although parents make the same type of school choice for a child who is Deaf, the difference in this case is that the type of school the child is sent to will also determine the type of deaf education the child receives. Depending on the type of school, the child may be taught using the Bi-Bi model, which is a bilingual-bicultural approach where sign language is the primary language of instruction and which emphasizes Deaf Culture, or the child may be taught using the auditory-verbal/auditory-oral approach, which follows the idea that a child who is deaf can be taught to listen and speak without the use of sign language or cued speech. The child may also be mainstreamed, segregated, placed in an inclusive classroom, or excluded from school altogether. Thus, the educational method is one contributor to the development of the small world as a result of the parent’s decision.

Social World

A topic briefly explored in the interviews was the child’s social world. Although the child may be outgoing and confident, the way the child interacts with others outside his or her social sphere can potentially affect the creation of the small world. As some of the parents mentioned, several of the children do not have a large circle of friends; instead, their friendship network is limited to either friends at school (within the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing program) or other family members. Small social worlds can be a result of the communication barrier or the types of activities in which the child does or does not participate. As mentioned by several parents, their own concerns about communication challenges affect the type of extracurricular activities the child participates in and as a result, limit the child’s social sphere. The limited opportunity to socialize outside of this close group of friends also contributes to the creation of the small world whereby the child
becomes comfortable within this small social sphere that over time develops into an exclusive social world.

*Experiences*

Parents may unintentionally limit experiences for their child who is Deaf. As noted early in the findings, parents limit the opportunities for independent experiences not only within the library setting but also outside the library setting. By having limited experiences, the children do not gain comfort outside this small world, which results in a high likelihood of staying within the confines of the created small world, thus contributing to the development and reinforcement of the small world.

*Family or Culture*

Family or culture is also important in creating a small world. Ethnicity, immigration status, social norms, customs, or culture can affect the development of a small world. Although individuals may be in proximity to others with similar culture practices or norms, these customs may be exclusive, which thus creates an insider/outsider dynamic. In this study, the participants are on the cusps of integrating into Deaf Culture. As the individuals assimilate into Deaf Culture, again, an insider/outsider dynamic begins to take form. The insider/outsider concept is central the concept of the small world.

*Information Resources*

Several of the participants in this study discussed their preferred method for obtaining information. Although the focus of this study was situated within the physical library space, the parents’ preferred method can play a role in creating the small world. The children in this study are guided by the parent to the type of resource used for school assignments. Although more in-depth research is needed, parents may be limiting the type
of information resources used by the children. There is an array of information sources available, such as the radio, the Internet, television, and libraries, to name a few. If the parents were to choose only one or two types of resources to expose their child to, the parents would limit the information type and the way in which the information may be relayed.

Since the premise of the small world centers on the flow of information and acceptable resources by the insiders, the parent (who I consider to be an insider) restricts the flow of information from outsiders. See Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Parent-Influenced Small World](image)

The concept of the small world within the small world develops when the child’s own world is developed based on the small world influenced by the parent. That is, the child will likely develop his or her own social world based on the individual’s social relationships...
and hearing status, but he or she has limited opportunities for expanding that social structure due to the small world produced by the parent’s influence. See Figure 2.

As a result, the parent has structured the type of information and the way in which information flows in and out of the “small world.” However, the child who is Deaf is situated in a much smaller world because of his or her deafness, in addition to his or her reliance on the parent for information flow. The parent-influenced small world also likely decreases the choices the child has to form his or her own social world. The child now functions in a much smaller world formed not only by his or her deafness but also by the reliance and trust placed on his or her parent’s role during the information flow process. Should the child have an additional disability, the world may become even smaller, because compounded disabilities make the flow of information more difficult. See Figure 3.
Ultimately, the small world continues to decrease with each additional component. As the “small world within a small world” becomes smaller, the way information is transferred or accepted decreases. The parents thus create a socially constructed small world for their child where information acceptance is developed based on the parent’s decision and the world of information will continue to decrease because the child’s deafness will also affect the information flow process.

**Face threat.**

Because one-on-one interactions are the basis for library-patron interactions, the concept of face threat has practical implications. Both child and parent may have their own idea of what behaviors are socially acceptable in various settings, such as the public library, that may affect how and why these participants may visit the library. However, should the parent or child feel that they are unable to maintain face without exposure, it may affect
whether they choose to use the library and possibly their comfort level when asking for assistance. That is, patrons who are Deaf may be visiting the library, but to prevent others from knowing their hearing status, they may choose to hide it by not bringing attention to themselves through interaction with staff, thus leaving the library without having their information needs fulfilled. Although further exploration of the theory of face threat as it relates to this user group is needed, in this study, the topic was touched on from only the parent’s perspective and not that of the child. By learning more about the user group and how the concept of “face” plays a role during their library-related interactions, future research can provide additional insight into whether individuals utilize libraries or not because of this concept.

Although the concept of Mellon’s library anxiety was discussed, it was not tested. Additional research is also needed in this area. Exploring this theoretical framework as it pertains to children who are Deaf may inform us of the physical and emotional reactions faced during the library search process. Additionally, learning more about the role of library anxiety for this particular user group allows librarians to develop methods by which to address the obstacles faced and possibly develop methods for improving library services.

The practical implications of this study will help practicing LIS professionals by providing an understanding of the experiences of children who are Deaf. Practitioners will also gain knowledge about the experiences of this user group and the way the perceptions of libraries are influenced by the parent, culture, and past experiences. By understanding the stories and experiences of children who are Deaf, practicing librarians will gain valuable insight about the way public library services are used by these individuals and can lay the
groundwork for creating or improving library services for individuals who are Deaf as well as improving partnerships with the Deaf Community.

The findings of this study have implications for the way children who are Deaf develop their perceptions of public libraries and the way they choose to use libraries. On a practical level, children whose parents limit their library experience will have a narrow view of services provided by public libraries as they get older. Being unaware of potentially useful services may hinder not only their educational endeavors but also their daily lives.

**Implications for Future Research**

The findings in the previous chapter are the lived experiences of the children; however, there were limitations to this study. Limitations are listed below along with recommendations for changes and additions for future research.

**Limitations.**

This study sought to find the essence of lived experiences of children who are Deaf, but there were limitations:

- This study is not representative of all public library experiences by children who are Deaf because lived experiences are unique and emerge from different contexts.
- Subjectivity is inevitable (Simons, 2009). Although precautions were made to ensure objectivity, it is unlikely that all biases have been removed.
- The number of four children and five parents may be an acceptable number of participants for a qualitative study, but it is not representative of the entire population. Additionally, Creswell (2012) recommended between three and fifteen participants for phenomenological studies.
• This study focused on individual experiences, which are unique; therefore, this study is not transferable to the entire Deaf Community.

• The Deaf Community has had a history of distrust of the Hearing community (Harmer, 1999). As a result, those who participate in this study may not have developed a level of trust that allowed for full and open communication with me.

• Despite the fact that ASL interpreters attempt to render the messages faithfully, there may be some mistakes in the translations. Words do not always translate perfectly from ASL to English and vice versa (Evans, 2004). Since information was relayed via a third party, there may have been some miscommunication or misinterpretation of question or responses between the researcher/translator/participant.

• It was also important to acknowledge the inherent power relationship between the children and me (an adult and an outsider). Children may have answered questions in ways that they believed would please me (Kortesluoma et al., 2003).

• This study was also limited to the use of the physical library space. No exploration of library related online resources were examined.

Acknowledging these limitations helped me critically evaluate the results of the study and suggest directions for future research.

Because I found limited literature on children who are Deaf and their information needs and behavior, it was important to hear the participants' voices as they discussed their own experiences. However, this study is not without flaws; thus, there are methods to improve this study. If I were to replicate this study, one of the changes I would implement would be to develop a relationship with the children who participate. Since several of the children in this study appeared slightly nervous, it may have been beneficial to establish a
relationship prior to the interviews so that the children may feel more at ease with the interviewer.

The second aspect of the study that I would change is the ability to follow up with more questions for both the parent and the child. The children were interviewed first so that there would be no leading questions asked; however, after the parent interview, more questions emerged that might have provided more detail or information about public library perceptions or usage. For example, it might have been informative to ask the children about specific library experiences that parents discussed during their interviews.

Finally, it may have been beneficial to sit face-to-face with the parent during the interviews. Because the parents were often busy, several of the interviews took place over the phone. During a face-to-face interview, facial expressions and a more intimate conversation may have yielded more information about the children and their usage of libraries. These personal interactions may have allowed me to develop a more intimate connection that would allow me to explore other topics in relation to libraries, such as family interactions in public libraries or other public settings.

**Future studies.**

To learn more about the information needs and behaviors of children who are Deaf, more studies are needed. Future studies may include repeating this study with individuals who are Deaf at different age levels (e.g., young adults, adults, or seniors). By examining the perceptions and library usage at different ages, a deeper and more robust description can be developed. Additionally, studies at different ages will help understand what public library perceptions they have; whether these perceptions changed over time; and if so, how and why they changed.
There is also an opportunity for direct observation of library visits, which can be studied to investigate librarian-patron interactions and to determine what effect, if any, these interactions have on shaping public library perceptions. By observing the children in the library setting, researchers can examine not only the interactions but also other potential factors that may affect library services to individuals who are Deaf, such as signage and library services and programs. These observations can be made one child at a time or during a classroom visit.

Alternatively, an in-depth ethnographic study can be developed, whereby the researcher can examine the meaning of social activities as they exist within Deaf Culture in relation to information transference and the role that the public library plays in the information cycle for this user group. Through the ethnographic study, the researcher can observe information sources such as libraries from the point of view of the participants. This will allow for a deeper understanding of the role Deaf Culture and social norms play in the information cycle for the Deaf Community.

There is also the potential for a longitudinal study. Since these are children in grades five through eight, researchers can follow the children throughout their school years to see how perceptions of public libraries may change over time. As the children get older, there may be more potential for independent activities that include public library usage. Additionally, during later school years, the potential to test for library anxiety may arise, giving LIS professionals the opportunity to explore library anxiety in either a school setting or a public library setting.
Other possible studies involving individuals who are Deaf include the following:

- Examining how and where individuals from the Deaf Community get their information needs met
- Examining if and how online library databases are used by members of this particular community
- Examining the role of the library for the medical professional, school, social service agency, or social worker as it relates to individuals who are Deaf
- Reading behaviors of children who are Deaf and the role of the library

Because literature about this user group is limited, a plethora of studies can be developed.

Finally, other information behavior theories can be used to learn more about this user group. For example, some theoretical frameworks that may help us better understand this user group include but are not limited to the following:

- Savolanien’s “Everyday Life Information Seeking,” which can be used to examine how cultural or social factors affect the individual’s preferred use of information sources
- Brenda Dervin’s “Sense-Making” to examine how individuals derive meaning from the information
- Kulthau’s “Information Search Process” which examines the information search process from the user perspective

By using these or other information behavior theories, a deeper understanding of the information needs and behaviors of the Deaf Community can be explored.
Conclusion

The way individuals who are Deaf experience the library has been an overlooked topic in the LIS professional and scholarly literature. Using a phenomenological approach and the cultural model perspective, this study focused on the way children who are deaf experience the library. Through the collective stories of the participants in this study, it was discovered that parent’s influence the way children perceive and use the physical library space and resources. Additionally, the children in this study have not had independent experiences in the library. Taken together, these two findings may affect future library usage by this group. Furthermore, by looking at the experiences through the lens of prominent information behavior theories, fuller understandings of these experiences emerged. Finally, the suggested idea of “the small world within the small world” illuminates the possible impact of the parent on the flow of information for these children.

As a result of this study, a more holistic approach to studying the information needs and behaviors of individuals who are deaf was used. In addition, by looking at the library experiences of the participants through the cultural model perspective, a conversation has been initiated to develop more effective ways to meet information needs, improve services, and develop relationships with members of the Deaf Community. It is my hope that this dissertation makes a useful contribution to the LIS discussion about underserved communities, including the Deaf Community.
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Appendix A—Summary of Study

Summary of Study

I am asking you to participate in a study. This form gives you information about what I will be doing. I will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions.

Project Title: *We're Listening: Deafness and the Public Library*

Principal Investigator: Guillermina Duarte, Doctoral Student
Dominican University
duarguil@my.dom.edu
(Phone number removed)

Faculty Advisor: Karen Brown, Dissertation Chair
Dominican University
kbrown@dom.edu
708-524-6856

What the study is about:
I am conducting this study to learn about the library experiences of children who are Deaf. By taking part in this study and learning about your experiences, we can learn how to better serve the Deaf community.

What we will ask you to do:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to take part in an interview. In the interview, I will ask questions about how you feel about using a library, how and where you look for information and about your reading habits. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. I would also like to videotape the child’s interview and audiotape (or videotape) the parent or guardian, so that I can go back and look at it and write out what was said in the interview. A [name deleted] ASL interpreter will be available.

Risks and discomforts:
There is a small risk that you may find some of the questions about your experiences to be sensitive. You might feel a mild sense of sadness, fear, anger or other emotions.

Benefits:
You will benefit from this study by talking about your experiences and being able to express your opinions and feelings. By being in this study, it may help other people now or in the future because librarians can understand the experiences you face, and it will help how they serve the Deaf community.
**Payment for participation:**
There is no payment for participating.

**Audio/Video Recording:**
Interviews of the children will be videotaped to review and write out what was said in the interview. The parent/guardian can either be videotaped or audiotaped in order to be able to review and write out what was said in the interview. The parent or guardian can chose between being videotaped and audiotaped. An ASL interpreter will be available if you need one.

No information about you (like your name or school) will be used; instead you will be known only by a number. When being interviewed, I will state your number and ask you for your consent to participate. To make sure that your interview remains confidential, the audio or video tape will be kept locked in a safety deposit box until March 30, 2014 and then the audiotape or videotape will be destroyed.

Any other information about you that is not on the audiotape or videotape will also be kept in a separate location, in a locked file cabinet or drawer that can only be seen by me.

**Privacy/Confidentiality:**
Any information about you in this study will be kept strictly private. Only I will see all audiotapes, videotapes and other information. I will keep a copy of what you say in the interview for up to 5 years, but the videotape or audiotape will be destroyed 1 year after I finish this study (March 30, 2014).

**Taking part is voluntary:**
- You do not have to take part in this study if you do not want to.
- If you decide you want to take part in this study, you can stop being in this study anytime you want.
- If I ask you a question you do not want to answer, you do not have to answer it.
- If you want to stop being in this study at any time, you will be asked to sign a form that says you do not want to participate and you get a copy for your records.
- If you decide you do not want take part in this study or want to stop, it does not affect your relationship with [name deleted], my school (Dominican University), or me.

**If you have questions:**
You may ask questions about this study at anytime. You can ask before the study begins, during the study or after the study. You may reach me, Guillermina Duarte, by calling me at (phone number removed) or by email at duarguil@my.dom.edu. My research study supervisor, Karen Brown, can also answer any questions you have by calling 708-524-6856 or by sending her an email at kbrown@dom.edu. If you have any questions about your rights in this study, please contact the chair of Institutional Review Board, Dennis Kirchen, by calling him at 708-524-6908 or by sending him an email at dkirchen@dom.edu.
Resumen del Estudio

Le estoy pidiendo a participar en un estudio. Este formulario le da información acerca de lo que voy a estar haciendo. Voy a describir este estudio y responderá a sus preguntas.

Título del proyecto: Estamos Escuchando: La Sordera y la Biblioteca Pública

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kbrown@dom.edu

De que se trata el estudio:
Estoy llevando a cabo este estudio para conocer las experiencias de la biblioteca de los niños que son sordos. Por tomar parte en este estudio y aprender acerca de sus experiencias, podemos aprender cómo servir mejor a la comunidad sorda.

Lo que vamos a pedirte que hagas:
Si usted se compromete a participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que tome parte en una entrevista. En la entrevista, le hará preguntas acerca de cómo se siente acerca del uso de una biblioteca, cómo y dónde buscar información y sobre sus hábitos de lectura. La entrevista tomará alrededor de 45-60 minutos. También me gustaría grabar en vídeo la entrevista del niño y grabación de audio (o video) al padre o tutor, para que yo pueda volver atrás y mirar y escribir lo que usted dice en la entrevista. Un intérprete de [nombre eliminado] ASL estará disponible.

Riesgos y molestias:
Hay un pequeño riesgo de que usted pueda encontrar algunas de las preguntas acerca de sus experiencias de ser sensible. Usted podría sentir una leve sensación de tristeza, miedo, ira u otras emociones.

Beneficios:
Usted se beneficiará de este estudio al hablar de sus experiencias y ser capaz de expresar sus opiniones y sentimientos. Al participar en este estudio, puede ayudar a otras personas ahora o en el futuro, ya que los bibliotecarios pueden comprender las experiencias que se enfrenta y se puede ayudar en la forma en que se sirve a la comunidad sorda.

El pago de la participación:
No hay pago por su participación.

Grabación de Audio / Video:
Las entrevistas de los niños serán grabadas en video para revisar y escribir lo que se dice en la entrevista. Para los padres / tutores pueden ser grabados en video o audio con el fin de poder revisar y escribir lo que se dice en la entrevista. El padre o tutor puede elegir entre ser
grabado en video y audio grabado. Un intérprete de ASL estará disponible si lo necesita.

No se mantendrá información personal de usted (como su nombre o en la escuela) se utilizará, en su lugar un número. Al ser entrevistado, se indicará su número y se le pedirá su consentimiento para participar. Las grabaciones de video y de audio no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video, y escucharán las cintas de audio. Para asegurarse de que la entrevista es confidencial, la cinta de audio o de video se mantendrá bajo llave en una caja de seguridad hasta el 30 de marzo 2014 y luego la cinta de audio o video serán destruidas.

Cualquier otra información sobre usted que no está en la cinta de audio o de video también se mantendrá en un lugar separado, en un archivador cerrado o en el cajón sólo puede ser visto por mí (investigador).

**Privacidad / Confidencialidad:**
Cualquier información sobre usted en este estudio se mantendrá estrictamente privada. Las grabaciones de video y de audio no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video, y escucharán las cintas de audio. Se guardarán una copia de la entrevista escrita para un máximo de 5 años, pero las cintas de video o de audio serán destruidas un año después de que la investigación haya terminado (30 de marzo de 2014).

**La participación es voluntaria:**
- Usted no tiene que tomar parte en este estudio si no quiere.
- Si usted decide que quiere participar en este estudio se puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento que desee.
- Si le hago una pregunta que no quiere contestar no tiene que responder a ella.
- Si desea dejar de participar en este estudio en cualquier momento, se le pedirá que firme un formulario que menciona que usted no quiere participar y obtendrá una copia para sus registros.
- Si usted decide que no quiere tomar parte en este estudio o quiere parar, no afectara su relación conmigo, [nombre eliminado] o de mi escuela; la Universidad Dominicana.

**Si usted tiene preguntas:**
Usted puede hacer preguntas acerca de este estudio en cualquier momento. Usted puede preguntar antes de comenzar el estudio, durante el estudio o después del estudio. Usted puede ponerse en contacto conmigo, Guillermina Duarte, llamando al (número de teléfono eliminado) o por correo electrónico a duarguil@my.dom.edu. Mi supervisor del estudio de investigación, Karen Brown también puede contestar cualquier pregunta que tenga al 708-524-6856 o enviando un correo electrónico a kbrown@dom.edu. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta acerca de sus derechos en este estudio, por favor póngase en contacto con el presidente de la Junta de Revisión Institucional, Dennis Kirchen, llamándolo al 708-524-6908 o enviándole un correo electrónico a dkirchen@dom.edu.

Se le dará una copia de este formulario para sus archivos.
Appendix B—Consent Forms

Participation Consent

I am asking you to participate in a study and to consent for your child to participant in the study. This form gives you information about what I will be doing. I will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions.

Project Title: We’re Listening: Deafness and the Public Library

Principal Investigator: Guillermima Duarte, Doctoral Student
Dominican University
duarguil@my.dom.edu
(Phone number removed)

Faculty Advisor: Karen Brown, Dissertation Chair
Dominican University
kbrown@dom.edu
708-524-6856

What the study is about:
I am conducting this study to learn about the library experiences of children who are Deaf. By taking part in this study and learning about your and your child’s experiences, we can learn how to better serve the Deaf community.

What we will ask you or your child to do:
Your Child: If you agree to have your child participate in this study, he or she will be asked to take part in an interview. In the interview, I will ask questions about how your child feels about using a library, how and where he or she looks for information and about his or her reading habits. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. I would also like to videotape the child’s interview, so that I can go back and look at it and write out what was said say in the interview. A [name removed] ASL interpreter will be available.

You (as parent or guardian): If you agree to participate in this study, I will ask you to take part in an interview. In the interview, I will ask questions about how you feel about your experiences using libraries. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. I would also like to audiotape (or videotape) the interview, so that I can go back and look at it and write out what was said in the interview. A [name removed] ASL interpreter will be available.

Risks and discomforts:
There is a small risk that you or your child may find some of the questions about library and related experiences to be sensitive. You and/or your child might feel a mild sense of sadness, fear, anger or other emotions.
Benefits:
You and/or your child will benefit from this study by talking about experiences and being able to express opinions and feelings. By being in this study, it may help other people now or in the future because librarians can understand the experiences you and your child face and it will help how librarians serve the Deaf community.

Payment for participation:
There is no payment for participating.

Audio/Video Recording:
Interviews of the children will be videotaped to review and write out what was said in the interview. As the parent/guardian, you can either be videotaped or audiotaped in order to be able to review and write out what you say in the interview. The parent or guardian can chose between being videotaped and audiotaped. An ASL interpreter will be available if you need one.

No information about you or your child (like your name or school) will be used; instead each participant will be known only by a number. When being interviewed, I will state the participant’s number and ask you and/or your child for consent to participate. I will not show your and/or your child’s videos or play the audiotapes to the public. Only the people helping with the research will see the videotapes or listen to the audiotapes. To make sure that the interviews remain confidential, the audio or video tapes will be kept locked in a safety deposit box until March 30, 2014 and then the audiotapes or videotapes will be destroyed.

Any other information about you or your child that is not on the audiotape or videotape will also be kept in a separate location, in a locked file cabinet or drawer and can only be seen by me.

Privacy/Confidentiality:
Any information about you or your child in this study will be kept strictly private. I will not show the videos or play the audiotapes to the public. Only the people helping with the research will see the videotapes, or listen to the audiotapes. I will keep a copy of what you and/or your child says in the interview for up to 5 years but the videotapes or audiotapes will be destroyed 1 year after I finish this study (March 30, 2014).

Taking part is voluntary:
• You and/or your child do not have to take part in this study.
• If you decide you and/or your child want to take part in this study, either you or your child can stop being in this study anytime.
• If I ask you a question that you do not want to answer, you do not have to answer it.
• If I ask your child a question that he or she does not want to answer, he or she does not have to answer it.
• If you decide you and/or your child do not want take part in this study or want to stop, it does not affect your relationship with me, [name removed], my school (Dominican University).
If you have questions:
You may ask questions about this study at anytime. You can ask before the study begins, during the study, or after the study. You may reach me, Guillermina Duarte, by calling me at (phone number removed) or by email at duarguil@my.dom.edu. My research study supervisor, Karen Brown, can also answer any questions you have by calling 708-524-6856 or by sending her an email at kbrown@dom.edu. If you have any questions about your and/or your child’s rights in this study, please contact the chair of Institutional Review Board, Dennis Kirchen, by calling him at 708-524-6908 or by sending him an email at dkirchen@dom.edu.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information about the study and all my questions have been answered.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN PERMISSION FOR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY:

☐ I am willing to let my child participate in this study.

Child’s Name (printed):______________________________________________________

Your Name (printed):_______________________________________________________

Your Signature: ___________________________ Date __________

PARENT OR GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION IN STUDY:

☐ I am willing to participate in this study.

Your Name (printed):_______________________________________________________

Your Signature: ___________________________ Date __________

Printed name of person obtaining consent:_____________________________________

Signature of person obtaining consent:_________________________ Date:____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least five years beyond the end of the study.
Consentimiento para la Participación

Estoy solicitando su participación en un estudio y que den consentimiento a su hijo(a) para participar en el estudio. Este formulario le dará información acerca de lo que se va estar haciendo. Voy a describir este estudio y responderá a sus preguntas.

Título del proyecto: *Estamos Escuchando: La Sordera y la Biblioteca Pública*

Investigador principal: Guillermma Duarte, estudiante de doctorado
La Universidad Dominicana
duarguil@my.dom.edu
(Número de teléfono eliminado)

Facultad Director: Karen Brown, Presidente de Tesis
La Universidad Dominicana
kbrown@dom.edu

De que se trata el estudio:
Estoy llevando a cabo este estudio para conocer las experiencias de los niños sordos en las bibliotecas. Por tomar parte en este estudio y aprender acerca de su experiencia y la de su hijo(a), podemos aprender cómo servir mejor a la comunidad sorda.

Lo que vamos a pedirle que haga usted y su hijo(a):
A su hijo(a): Si usted se compromete a que su hijo(a) participa en este estudio, el o ella se le pedirá que tome parte en una entrevista. En la entrevista, se le preguntara acerca de cómo se siente usando la biblioteca, cómo y dónde el o ella pueden buscar información y sobre los hábitos de lectura de el o ella. La entrevista tomará alrededor de 45-60 minutos. También me gustaría grabar en vídeo la entrevista del niño(a) para poder volver atrás y mirar y escribir lo que se allá dicho en la entrevista. Un intérprete de [nombre eliminado] ASL estará disponible.

Usted (padre/tutor): Si usted se compromete a participar en el estudio, le pediré que tome parte de una entrevista. En la entrevista, se le preguntara acerca de cómo se siente de sus experiencias al usar la biblioteca. La entrevista tomará alrededor de 45-60 minutos. También me gustaría grabar en vídeo (o en audio) la entrevista para poder volver atrás y mirar y escribir lo que se allá dicho en la entrevista. Un intérprete de [nombre eliminado] ASL estará disponible.

Riesgos y molestias:
Hay un pequeño riesgo de que usted o su hijo(a) puede encontrar algunas de las preguntas acerca de sus experiencias de ser sensible. Usted y/o su hijo(a) podrían sentir una leve de sensación de tristeza, miedo, ira u otras emociones.

Beneficios:
Usted y/o su hijo(a) se beneficiará de este estudio al hablar de sus experiencias y tener la capacidad de expresar sus opiniones y sentimientos. Al participar en este estudio, puede ayudar a otras personas ahora o en el futuro, ya que los bibliotecarios pueden comprender
las experiencias que se enfrenta usted y su hijo(a) y se le podrán ayudar en la manera de cómo se puede servir a la comunidad sorda.

**El pago de la participación:**
No hay pago por su participación.

**Grabación de Audio / Video:**
Las entrevistas de los niños serán grabadas en video para revisar y escribir lo que se allá dicho en la entrevista. A los padres / tutores podrán ser grabados en video o audio con el fin de poder revisar y escribir lo que se dice en la entrevista. El padre o tutor puede elegir entre ser grabado en video y audio grabado. Un intérprete de ASL estará disponible si lo necesita.

No se usara información personal de usted o de su hijo(a), (como su nombre o en la escuela); En cambio se utilizara un número para cada participante. Al ser entrevistado, se le indicara el número del participante y se le pedirá su consentimiento a usted y a su hijo(a) para participar. Las grabaciones de video y de audio de usted y de su hijo(a) no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video, y escucharán las cintas de audio. Para asegurarse de que la entrevista es confidencial, las cintas de audio o de video se mantendrán bajo llave en una caja de seguridad hasta el 30 de marzo 2014 y luego las cintas de audio o video serán destruidos.

Cualquier otra información sobre usted y de su hijo(a) que no estén en la cinta de audio o de video también se mantendrá en un lugar separado, en un archivador cerrado o en el cajón y sólo puede ser vistas por mí.

**Privacidad / Confidencialidad:**
Cualquier información sobre usted y la de su hijo(a) en este estudio se mantendrá estrictamente privada. Las grabaciones de video y de audio no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video, y escucharán las cintas de audio. Se guardaran una copia de la entrevista de usted y la de su hijo(a) escrita para un máximo de 5 años, pero las cintas de video o de audio serán destruidas un año después de que la investigación aya terminado (30 de marzo de 2014).

**La participación es voluntaria:**
- Usted y/o su hijo(a) no tiene que tomar parte en este estudio si no quiere.
- Si usted y/o su hijo(a) decide que quiere participar en este estudio puede usted o su hijo(a) dejar de participar en cualquier momento que desee.
- Si le hago una pregunta que no quiere contestar no tiene que responder a ella.
- Si le pregunto a su hijo(a) una pregunta que el o ella no quieran contestar, el o ella no deben de contestar.
- Si usted y/o su hijo(a) decide que no quiere tomar parte en este estudio o quiere parar, no afectara su relación conmigo, [nombre eliminado] o de mi escuela; la Universidad Dominicana.

**Si usted tiene preguntas:**
Usted puede hacer preguntas acerca de este estudio en cualquier momento. Usted puede
preguntar antes de comenzar el estudio, durante el estudio o después del estudio. Usted puede ponerse en contacto conmigo, Guillermina Duarte, llamando al (número de teléfono eliminado) o por correo electrónico a duarguil@my.dom.edu. Mi supervisor del estudio de investigación, Karen Brown también puede contestar cualquier pregunta que tenga al 708-524-6856 o enviando un correo electrónico al kbrown@dom.edu. Si usted y/o su hijo(a) tiene alguna pregunta acerca de sus derechos en este estudio, por favor póngase en contacto con el presidente de la Junta de Revisión Institucional, Dennis Kirchen, llamándolo al 708-524-6908 o enviándole un correo electrónico a dkirchen@dom.edu.

Se le dará una copia de este formulario para sus archivos.

**Declaración de Consentimiento:**
He leído la información anterior sobre el estudio y todas mis preguntas han sido contestadas. Doy mi consentimiento para participar en el estudio.

**PADRES/TUTORES PERMISO PARA LA PARTICIPACION DE SU HIJO(A) EN EL ESTUDIO**

☐ Estoy de acuerdo que mi hijo(a) participe en este estudio.

Nombre del Niño (impreso): __________________________________________________________

Tu nombre (impreso): ____________________________________________________________

Su firma: _____________________________________________ Fecha: __________

**PADRE/TUTOR PARTICIPACION PARA EL ESTUDIO**

☐ Estoy de acuerdo en participar en este estudio

Tu nombre (impreso): ____________________________________________________________

Su firma: _____________________________________________ Fecha: __________

Nombre de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento: ___________________________________ 

Firma de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento: ________________________ Fecha: __________

*Este Consentimiento se mantendrá por el investigador durante al menos cinco años, después del estudio final.*
Participation Consent for Child

I am asking you to participate in a study. This form gives you information about what I will be doing. I will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions.

**Project Title:** We’re Listening: Deafness and the Public Library

**Principal Investigator:** Guillermna Duarte, Doctoral Student
Dominican University
duarguill@my.dom.edu
(Phone number removed)

**Faculty Advisor:** Karen Brown, Dissertation Chair
Dominican University
kbrown@dom.edu
708-524-6856

**What the study is about:**
I am conducting this study to learn about the library experiences of children who are Deaf. By taking part in this study and learning about your experiences, we can learn how to better serve the Deaf community.

**What we will ask you or your child to do:**
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in an interview. In the interview, I will ask questions about how you feel about using a library, how and where you look for information and about your reading habits. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. I would also like to videotape your interview, so that I can go back and look at it and write out what was said say in the interview. A [name removed] ASL interpreter will be available.

**Risks and discomforts:**
There is a small risk that you may find some of the questions about library and related experiences to be sensitive. You might also feel a mild sense of sadness, fear, anger or other emotions.

**Benefits:**
You will benefit from this study by talking about experiences and being able to express opinions and feelings. By being in this study, it may help other people now or in the future because librarians can understand the experiences you face and it will help how librarians serve the Deaf community.

**Payment for participation:**
There is no payment for participating.
Audio/Video Recording:
Your interviews will be videotaped to review and write out what was said in the interview.

No information about you (like your name or school) will be used; instead each participant will be known only by a number. When being interviewed, I will state the participant’s number and ask you for consent to participate. I will not show your videos or play the audiotapes to the public. Only the people helping with the research will see the videotapes or listen to the audiotapes. To make sure that the interviews remain confidential, the audio or video tapes will be kept locked in a safety deposit box until March 30, 2014 and then the audiotapes or videotapes will be destroyed.

Any other information about you that is not on the audiotape or videotape will also be kept in a separate location, in a locked file cabinet or drawer and can only be seen by me.

Privacy/Confidentiality:
Any information about you in this study will be kept strictly private. I will not show the videos or play the audiotapes to the public. Only the people helping with the research will see the videotapes, or listen to the audiotapes. I will keep a copy of what you say in the interview for up to 5 years but the videotapes or audiotapes will be destroyed 1 year after I finish this study (March 30, 2014).

Taking part is voluntary:
• You do not have to take part in this study.
• If you decide want to take part in this study, you can stop being in this study anytime.
• If I ask you a question that you do not want to answer, you do not have to answer it.
• If you decide you do not want take part in this study or want to stop, it does not affect your relationship with me, [name removed] or my school (Dominican University).

If you have questions:
You may ask questions about this study at anytime. You can ask before the study begins, during the study, or after the study. You may reach me, Guillermina Duarte, by calling me at (phone number removed) or by email at duarguil@my.dom.edu. My research study supervisor, Karen Brown, can also answer any questions you have by calling 708-524-6856 or by sending her an email at kbrown@dom.edu. If you have any questions about your rights in this study, please contact the chair of Institutional Review Board, Dennis Kirchen, by calling him at 708-524-6908 or by sending him an email at dkirchen@dom.edu.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information about the study and all my questions have been answered.
CHILD PARTICIPATION IN STUDY:

☐ I am willing to participate in this study.

Your Name (printed): __________________________________________

Your Signature: __________________________________________ Date________

Printed name of person obtaining consent: ______________________________

Signature of person obtaining consent: __________________________ Date:_____

*This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least five years beyond the end of the study.*
Consentimiento para el Estudiante

Estoy solicitando su participación en un estudio y que den consentimiento para participar en el estudio. Este formulario le dará información acerca de lo que se va estar haciendo. Voy a describir este estudio y responderá a sus preguntas.

Título del proyecto: *Estamos Escuchando: La Sordera y la Biblioteca Pública*

Investigador principal: Guillermina Duarte, estudiante de doctorado  
La Universidad Dominicana  
duarguil@my.dom.edu  
(Número de teléfono eliminado)

Facultad Director: Karen Brown, Presidente de Tesis  
La Universidad Dominicana  
kbrown@dom.edu

De que se trata el estudio:  
Estoy llevando a cabo este estudio para conocer las experiencias de los niños sordos en las bibliotecas. Por tomar parte en este estudio y aprender acerca de su experiencia, podemos aprender cómo servir mejor a la comunidad sorda.

Lo que vamos a pedirle que haga usted:  
Si usted se compromete a participa en este estudio, se le pedirá que tome parte en una entrevista. En la entrevista, se le preguntara acerca de cómo se siente usando la biblioteca, cómo y dónde buscan información y sobre los hábitos de lectura. La entrevista tomará alrededor de 45-60 minutos. También me gustaría grabar en vídeo la entrevista para poder volver atrás y mirar y escribir lo que se allá dicho en la entrevista. Un intérprete de [nombre eliminado] ASL estará disponible.

Riesgos y molestias:  
Hay un pequeño riesgo de que usted puede encontrar algunas de las preguntas acerca de sus experiencias de ser sensible. Usted podría sentir una leve de sensación de tristeza, miedo, ira u otras emociones.

Beneficios:  
Usted se beneficiará de este estudio al hablar de sus experiencias y tener la capacidad de expresar sus opiniones y sentimientos. Al participar en este estudio, puede ayudar a otras personas ahora o en el futuro, ya que los bibliotecarios pueden comprender las experiencias que se enfrenta usted y se le podrán ayudar en la manera de cómo se puede servir a la comunidad sorda.

El pago de la participación:  
No hay pago por su participación.
**Grabación de Audio / Video:**
Las entrevistas serán grabadas en video para revisar y escribir lo que se allá dicho en la entrevista.

No se usara información personal de usted (como su nombre o en la escuela); En cambio se utilizará un número para cada participante. Al ser entrevistado, se le indicara el número del participante y se le pedirá su consentimiento a usted para participar. Las grabaciones de video de usted no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video. Para asegurarse de que la entrevista es confidencial, las cintas de video se mantendrán bajo llave en una caja de seguridad hasta el 30 de marzo 2014 y luego las cintas de audio o video serán destruidas.

Cualquier otra información sobre usted que no estén en la cinta de de video también se mantendrá en un lugar separado, en un archivador cerrado o en el cajón y sólo puede ser vistas por mí.

**Privacidad / Confidencialidad:**
Cualquier información sobre usted en este estudio se mantendrá estrictamente privada. Las grabaciones de video no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video. Se guardarán una copia de la entrevista escrita para un máximo de 5 años, pero las cintas de video serán destruidas un año después de que la investigación aya terminado (30 de marzo de 2014).

**La participación es voluntaria:**
- Usted no tiene que tomar parte en este estudio si no quiere.
- Si usted decide que quiere participar en este estudio puede usted dejar de participar en cualquier momento que desee.
- Si le hago una pregunta que no quiere contestar no tiene que responder a ella.
- Si le pregunto una pregunta que no quieran contestar, no deben de contestar.
- Si usted decide que no quiere tomar parte en este estudio o quiere parar, no afectara su relación conmigo, [nombre eliminado] o de mi escuela; la Universidad Dominicana.

**Si usted tiene preguntas:**
Usted puede hacer preguntas acerca de este estudio en cualquier momento. Usted puede preguntar antes de comenzar el estudio, durante el estudio o después del estudio. Usted puede ponerse en contacto conmigo, Guillermina Duarte, llamando al (número de teléfono eliminado) o por correo electrónico a duarguil@my.dom.edu. Mi supervisor del estudio de investigación, Karen Brown también puede contestar cualquier pregunta que tenga al 708-524-6856 o enviando un correo electrónico a kbrown@dom.edu. Si usted y/o su hijo(a) tiene alguna pregunta acerca de sus derechos en este estudio, por favor póngase en contacto con el presidente de la Junta de Revisión Institucional, Dennis Kirchen, llamándolo al 708-524-6908 o enviándole un correo electrónico a dkirchen@dom.edu.

Se le dará una copia de este formulario para sus archivos.
Declaración de Consentimiento:
He leído la información anterior sobre el estudio y todas mis preguntas han sido contestadas. Doy mi consentimiento para participar en el estudio.

**PERMISO PARA LA PARTICIPACION EN EL ESTUDIO:**

☐ Estoy de acuerdo en participar en este estudio.

Tu nombre (impreso):__________________________________________

Su firma: ____________________________________ Fecha:_______

Nombre de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento:__________________________________________

Firma de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento:____________________________________ Fecha:_______

*Este Consentimiento se mantendrá por el investigador durante al menos cinco años, después del estudio final.*
Parent/Guardian Interview Consent

Project Title:  We’re Listening: Deafness and the Public Library

Audio/Video Recording:
Interviews for the parent/guardian can either be videotaped or audiotaped in order to be able to review and write out what was said in the interview. Interviews will last 45-60 minutes. If you are deaf or prefer to be videotaped, please let me know. An ASL interpreter will be available if you need one.

No information about you (like your name or school) will be used; instead you will be known only by a number. When being interviewed, I will state your number and ask you for your consent to participate. To make sure that your interview remains confidential, the audio or video tape will be kept locked in a safety deposit box until March 30, 2014 and then the audiotape or videotape will be destroyed.

Any other information about you that is not on the audiotape or videotape will also be kept in a different location, in a locked file cabinet or drawer and can only be seen by me.

Please sign below if you are willing to have this interview audio recorded/videotaped.

Parent/guardian consent for audio recording the interview

Parent/Guardian name:______________________________________________

☐ I am willing to have my interview audio recorded.
☐ I do not want to have my interview audio recorded.

Signature: __________________________________________________________ Date:_______

OR

Parent/guardian consent for videotape interview

Parent/Guardian name:______________________________________________

☐ I am willing to have my interview videotaped.
☐ I do not want to have my interview videotaped.

Signature: __________________________________________________________ Date:_______

Signature of person obtaining consent______________________________ Date:_______

Printed name of person obtaining consent________________________________

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least five years beyond the end of the study.
Consentimiento de la Entrevista para Padre/Tutor

Título del proyecto: Estamos Escuchando: La Sordera y la Biblioteca Pública

Grabación de Audio / Video:
La entrevista para los padres/tutores pueden ser grabado en audio o video para el uso de revisar y escribir lo que usted diga. La entrevista tendrá una duración de 45-60 minutos. Un intérprete de ASL estará disponible.

No se mantendrá información personal de usted (como su nombre o en la escuela) se utilizará, en su lugar un número. Al ser entrevistado, se indicara su número y se le pedirá su consentimiento para participar. Las grabaciones de video y de audio no serán mostradas al público. Sólo las personas que ayudaran con la investigación verán las cintas de video, y escucharan las cintas de audio. Para asegurarse de que la entrevista es confidencial, la cinta de audio o de vídeo se mantendrá bajo llave en una caja de seguridad hasta el 30 de marzo 2014 y luego la cinta de audio o video serán destruidos.

Cualquier otra información sobre usted que no está en la cinta de video se mantendrá en un lugar separado, en un archivador cerrado o en un cajón y será disponible sólo por el investigador.

Por favor, firme abajo si usted está dispuesto(a) a tener la entrevista en grabación de video/audio.

Consentimiento de Padres para la entrevista en grabación de audio.

Nombre del padre/tutor:__________________________________________________

☐ Estoy de acuerdo en tener la entrevista en grabación de audio.
☐ No estoy de acuerdo que la entrevista sea en grabación de audio.

Firma del padre: __________________________________________ Fecha: __________

O

Consentimiento de Padre/Tutor para la entrevista en grabación de video.

Nombre de Padre/Tutor:__________________________________________________

☐ Estoy dispuesto(a) a tener mi entrevista grabada en video.
☐ No estoy dispuesto(a) a tener mi entrevista grabada en video.

Firma del Padres/Tutor: ______________________________ Fecha: __________

Nombre de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento:__________________________________________________

Firma de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento:________________________________________ Fecha: __________

Este Consentimiento se mantendrá por el investigador durante al menos cinco años, después del estudio final.
Confidentiality Agreement

Project Title: *We’re Listening: Deafness and the Public Library—A Phenomenological Approach to Understanding the Public Library Experience of Deaf Children.*

I, ________________________________, do hereby agree to maintain full confidentiality when serving as a supervisor of the children during the interview process.

Specifically, I agree to:

1. Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g. disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the primary investigator;
2. Hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual revealed during the course of performing research tasks;
3. Not make copies of any raw data in any form or format (e.g. disks, tapes, transcripts), unless specifically requested to do so by the primary investigator;
4. Keep all raw data that contains identifying information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession. This includes:
   b. Closing any computer programs and documents of the raw data when temporarily away from the computer;
   c. Permanently deleting any email communication containing the data.
5. Give all raw data in any form or format (e.g. disks, tapes, transcripts) to the primary investigator when I have completed the research tasks;
6. Destroy all research information in any form or format that is not returnable to the primary investigator (e.g., information stored on my computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

As an undersigned I understand that any information regarding the participants or the identities of the participants that is disclosed to me, as a supervisor of the children for this study, is confidential. I am fully aware that the law protects confidential information and that I am absolutely prohibited from making any disclosure of this information. I hereby agree to adhere to the law of confidentiality of participant information and will refrain from disclosing any participant information.

Provide the following:

Printed Name of Assistant: ____________________________________________ Date

Address: ____________________________________________

Telephone Number: ____________________________________________
Signature of Assistant: __________________________________________________________ Date

Printed Name of Primary Investigator: ___________________________________________ Date

Signature of Primary Investigator: _______________________________________________ Date
Appendix C—Interview Questions

Interview Questions for the Children

Project title: We’re Listening: Deafness and the Public Library

Demographic Questions:
To be asked of all the children at the start of the interview. Throughout the interview participants will be reminded that participation is voluntary and are free to withdraw from the study at anytime if they wish. Also, throughout the interview, participants will be reminded that they can skip or chose not to answer any question at any time.

1. How old are you?
2. Where were you born?
3. Can you tell me about your family, like do you have brothers or sisters? How many?
4. Do you know when you became Deaf?
5. Can you tell me what Deaf culture or Deaf community is?
   a. Do you think you’re part of Deaf culture/Deaf Community?
   b. How about any other culture? Race?
6. What would you like to tell me about you?
7. Can you tell me what you like to do when you’re not in school?
8. Do you like reading?
   a. What do you like to read?
   b. Where do you get the _____ to read?
9. When you get homework or projects, where do you look for information that you need to do your homework or project?
10. Do you ever go to the library?
    a. Which library do you go to?
11. Can you tell me about the first time you went to the library?
    a. The first time you went to the library, do you remember what the best thing was about the visit? Can you tell me about it?
    b. The first time you went to the library, do you remember what you didn’t like about the visit? Can you tell me about it?
12. What about now? Do you still go to the library?
    a. Negative answer: How do you feel about not going to the library?
       i. Can you tell me why you don’t go to the library?
    b. Positive answer: Why do you go to the library?
       i. Can you tell me why you like going to the library?
    c. What is your favorite thing about going to the library?
    d. Was there anything you didn’t like about your visit?
13. Imagine you and your best friend had to go to the library for a project. Can you tell me how you would feel if you had to ask the librarian to help you?
14. If you could change something about your library visit or make it different, what would it be?
15. Is there anything else you want to tell me about your visits to the library?
Preguntas de la entrevista para los niños

Título del proyecto: Estamos Escuchando: La Sordera y la Biblioteca Pública

Preguntas demográficas:
Para preguntarles a todos los niños al comienzo de la entrevista. A lo largo de la entrevista los participantes se les recordaran que la participación es voluntaria y son libres de retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento si así lo desean. Además, durante toda la entrevista, los participantes se les recordaran que pueden saltar o preferir no responder a cualquier pregunta en cualquier momento.

1. ¿Qué edad tienes?
2. ¿Dónde naciste?
3. ¿Me puedes decir acerca de tu familia, como si tienes hermanos o hermanas? ¿Cuántos?
4. ¿Sabes cuándo te quedaste sordo?
5. ¿Puedes decirme lo que la cultura sorda o comunidad de personas sordas es?
   a. ¿Crees que eres parte de la cultura sorda / Comunidad Sorda?
   b. ¿Y de cualquier otra cultura o raza?
6. ¿Qué te gustaría decirme acerca de ti?
7. ¿Puedes decirme lo que te gusta hacer cuando no estás en la escuela?
8. ¿Te gusta leer?
   a. ¿Qué te gusta leer?
   b. ¿De dónde sacas el __ para leer?
9. Cuando tienes tareas o proyectos, ¿dónde buscas la información que necesita para hacer su tarea o proyecto?
10. ¿Algún vez asistido a la biblioteca?
    a. ¿Qué biblioteca vas?
11. ¿Me puedes decir acerca de la primera vez que fuiste a la biblioteca?
    a. La primera vez que fuiste a la biblioteca, ¿acuerdas de lo mejor de la visita en la biblioteca? ¿Qué me puedes decir al respecto?
    b. ¿Te acuerdas de qué fue lo que no te gustó de la visita a la biblioteca? ¿Qué me puedes decir al respecto?
12. ¿Y ahora? ¿Todavía vas a la biblioteca?
    a. Respuesta positiva:
       i. ¿Por qué vas a la biblioteca?
       ii. ¿Puedes decirme por qué te gusta ir a la biblioteca?
    b. Respuesta negativa:
       i. ¿Cómo te sientes acerca de no ir a la biblioteca?
       ii. ¿Puedes decirme por qué no vas a la biblioteca?
    c. ¿Qué es lo que más que te gusta de ir a la biblioteca?
    d. ¿Qué es lo que más no te gusta de ir a la biblioteca?
13. Imaginate que tú y tu mejor amigo tengan que ir a la biblioteca para un proyecto. ¿Me puede decir cómo te sentirías si tuviera que pedirle a la bibliotecaria que te ayude?
14. Si pudieras cambiar algo en tus visitas a la biblioteca que es lo que arias diferente?
15. ¿Hay algo más que quieras decirme sobre tus visitas a la biblioteca?
Interview Questions for the Parent/Guardian

Project title: *We're Listening: Deafness and the Public Library*

**Demographic Questions:**
To be asked of all the parents/guardians at the start of the interview. Throughout the interview participants will be reminded that participation is voluntary and are free to withdraw from the study at anytime if they wish. Also, throughout the interview, participants will be reminded that they can skip or chose not to answer any question at any time.

1. Are you over 18?
2. Are you the parent or guardian?
3. What is your race/ethnicity?
4. Where were you born?
5. What languages do you use at home?
6. Can you tell me about your family?
   a. How many children?
   b. How many family members are deaf?
7. Do you work? What is your job?
8. What was the highest level of school you had?
9. What cultures do you consider yourself part of? Family? Child who is Deaf?
   a. Why?
10. When you were younger, did you go the public library?
    a. Which library did you go to?
11. Try to remember the first time or the earliest time you went to a public library.
    a. Can you tell me about that visit?
12. How about now, do you go the library?
    a. What library do you go to?
    b. What are some of the reasons you go to the library?
13. Do you take your child to the library now?
    a. Positive answer: Why do you take your child to the library?
       i. Which libraries do you go to?
    b. Negative answer: Why don’t you take your child to the library?
14. Were you the person that took your child to the library the first time?
15. Thinking back to that day, can you tell me how you felt about taking your child who is deaf to the library for the first time?
    a. What was the best part of taking them to the library that first time?
    b. What was the worst part of taking them to the library that first time?
16. Your child is deaf. How do you think it would be if your child went alone to the library and had to ask for help with a school project?
17. If you ran your public library what would you want to see for your child who is deaf at the library?
18. Are there any good or bad experiences in public libraries that you and your child had that you want to tell me about?
19. Is there anything else you want to tell me about your visits to the public library?
Preguntas de la entrevista para el padre / tutor

Título del proyecto: Estamos Escuchando: La Sordera y la Biblioteca Pública

Preguntas demográficas:
Se pide a todos los padres o tutores al inicio de la entrevista. A lo largo de la entrevista los participantes se les recordarán que la participación es voluntaria y son libres de retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento si así lo desean. Además, durante toda la entrevista, los participantes se les informarán que pueden saltar o preferir no responder a cualquier pregunta en cualquier momento.

1. ¿Tiene más de 18 años?
2. ¿Es usted el padre o tutor?
3. ¿Cuál es su raza / origen étnico?
4. ¿Dónde nació usted?
5. ¿Qué idiomas se utilizan en el hogar?
6. ¿Me puede decir de su familia?
   a. ¿Cuántos niños?
   b. ¿Cuántos miembros de la familia son sordos?
7. ¿Trabaja usted? ¿Cuál es su trabajo?
8. ¿Cuál fue el nivel más alto de escuela que usted tiene?
9. ¿Qué culturas se considera usted? Y su familia? Y su niño(a) que es sordo?
   a. ¿Por qué?
10. Cuando era más joven, ¿fue a la biblioteca pública?
    a. ¿Qué biblioteca va?
11. Trate de recordar la primera vez o la primera vez que fue a una biblioteca pública.
    a. ¿Me puede decir acerca de esa visita?
12. ¿Y ahora en el presente, va a la biblioteca?
    a. A que biblioteca va?
    b. ¿Cuáles son algunas de las razones por las que va a la biblioteca?
13. ¿Lleva sus hijos a la biblioteca ahora?
    a. Respuesta positiva:
       i. ¿Por qué lleva a sus hijos a la biblioteca?
       ii. ¿A que biblioteca va?
    b. Respuesta negativa:
       i. ¿Por qué no lleva a su hijo(a) a la biblioteca?
14. ¿Usted fue la persona que llevo a su hijo a la biblioteca por primera vez?
15. Pensando en ese día, me puede decir cómo se sentía al llevar a su hijo(a) que es sordo a la biblioteca por primera vez?
    a. ¿Cuál fue la mejor parte de llevarlos a la biblioteca por primera vez?
    b. ¿Cuál fue la peor parte de llevarlos a la biblioteca por primera vez?
16. Su hijo(a) sordo. ¿Cómo cree que sería si su hijo fuera solo a la biblioteca y tuviera que pedir ayuda para un proyecto escolar?
17. Si manejará usted la biblioteca pública que desearía ver en la biblioteca para su hijo(a) que es sordo?
18. ¿Tubo experiencias buenas o malas en las bibliotecas públicas que usted y su hijo(a) tuvieron que quieres decirme?
19. ¿Hay algo más que quieras decirme sobre sus visitas en la biblioteca pública?
Appendix D—Child Interviews

Becky (Pseudonym)

The interview transcript does not reflect the complete interview because the visual aspect of the interview is not incorporated.

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Becky
ASL Interpreter

Interview conducted: Private elementary school, school office.

*Italicized is voiced*

[ ] Reflects what is signed

--Start of Interview--

Interviewer: Ok, you are number three
Interpreter: You are person number three, it was Stephanie, then Danny and now you. [You person number three, Stephanie, Danny, now you]

Interviewer: So how old are you?
Interpreter: How old are you? [How old are you?]
Becky: *Me eleven-years-old.* [Me eleven-years-old]
Interpreter: Eleven-years-old.
Becky: *Me eleven-years-old.*

Interviewer: And what grade are you in?
Interpreter: What grade level are you? [What grade level are you?]
Becky: *Me fifth grade.* [Me fifth grade]
Interpreter: Fifth grade

Interviewer: Ok. Can you tell me about your family? Like do how many brothers or sisters you have?
Interpreter: She wants to know about your family? How many brothers sisters you have? [She wants know about your family how many brothers sisters you have?]
Becky: *I don’t have sisters brothers.* [I don’t have sisters brother]
Interpreter: She doesn’t have sisters or brothers

Interviewer: Do you know at what age they told you you were deaf?
Interpreter: Do you know what did mom tell you how old you were when you became deaf? [Do you know did mom tell you how old you were when you became deaf?]
Becky: *Zero years old, I was born.* [When zero years, I was born]
Interpreter: She was born deaf. Zero years.
Interviewer: What would you like to tell me about you?
Interpreter: What do you want to tell her about you? What you like, what you do tell her something about yourself? [What want her tell about you what you like what do, tell her something about yourself?]
Becky: *I like to book read.* [I like to books read.]
Interpreter: She likes to read books.
Interviewer: What kind of books do you like to read?
Becky: *Star Wars.* [Star Wars]
Interpreter: Star Wars

Interviewer: Where do you get your books to read?
Interpreter: Where do you get the books when you read? Where do you get them from where? [Where get books when you read? Where get from where?]
Becky: *I don't know name but near school.* [Don't know name but its near school]
Interpreter: Said she didn't know the name but it's near the school.

Interviewer: When you get homework projects or assignments where do you look for information for your homework?
Interpreter: If the teacher gives you homework and you need to look up information where do you get information from? [If teacher give you homework need look up information where get information where?]
Becky: [Library books]
Interpreter: Other places? [Other places?]
Becky: Go downtown. [Go to Downtown]

Interviewer: So you do go to a library?
Interpreter: You go to a library sometimes? [You go library sometimes you?]
Becky: *Nods*
Interpreter: Yup

Interviewer: And you, do you know the name of it?
Interpreter: You know name your library? [You know name of your library?]
Becky: *I don't know.*

Interviewer: Is it a library that only kids go to because it’s in a school or is it a library that everybody goes to?
Interpreter: Do you know if the library there’s big people go, little kids go, your age go or only school which? [Do you know if library big people go, little kids go, your age go or only school, which?]
Becky: *Family and school.* [Family and school]
Interpreter: Goes to school library and family, both
Interviewer: Do you remember the first time you went to the library?
Interpreter: Do you remember how old the first time you went to the library how old you?
[Do you remember how old the first time you went to the library how old you?]
Becky: I don’t know. [I don’t know]

Interviewer: What do you like about going to the library?
Interpreter: What do you like about the library? [What do you like best about library?]
Becky: [Reading many books and quiet]
Becky: [Quiet]
Interpreter: Because it's quiet and there's lots of books.

Interviewer: What don’t you like about the library
Interpreter: What don’t you like about the library? [What don’t you like about library?]
Becky: Nothing. [Nothing]
Interpreter: Nothing

Interviewer: So you like everything about the library?
Interpreter: Like everything in the library? [Like everything in the library?]
Becky: *Nods*

Interviewer: If you were at the library with a friend working on a school project and no one was there that could sign, would you ask for help?
Interpreter: You and a friend go to a library and you have homework and you can't find information do you ask for help? [You and friend go library and have homework and can’t find information do you ask for help?]
Becky: Yeah
Interpreter: Yes

Interviewer: Who do you ask for help?
Becky: Librarian [Library person]
Interpreter: Librarian

Interviewer: Does the librarian sign?
Interpreter: Does that person, the librarian knows how to sign for you? [Does that person, librarian know how to sign for you?]
Becky: Mom [Mom]
Interpreter: Mom does

Interviewer: So mom always takes you?
Interpreter: Mom brings you to the library? [Mom bring you library you?]
Becky: Yeah, Mom drives. [Yea drives]
Interpreter: Mom drives
Interviewer: If your mom wasn’t there, would you still ask for help?
Interpreter: Say mom not there. Mom left went to the store come back, pick you up and you’re stuck. Do you ask for help? [Mom not here not Mom left store come pick you up stuck you ask for help you?]
Becky: *Nods*
Interpreter: Who? [Who?]
Becky: Sometimes, cousin, uncle or father. [Sometimes cousin uncle or father]
Interpreter: Sometimes cousin uncle or father

Interviewer: If you had to change anything about the library, what would you change?
Interpreter: If you can change something about the library maybe make it better what? [If you can change something about library maybe better what?]
Becky: I don’t know. [I don’t know]

Interviewer: Do you ever go to any story times or arts and crafts?
Interpreter: Sometimes they have at the library different things to do like story time or crafts do you go sometimes for that? [Sometimes have library different things to do like story time or drawing you go you sometimes for that?]
Becky: No. [No]
Interpreter: No.

Interviewer: If they had something would you want to go and would it be better if somebody could sign for you?
Interpreter: If they had story time or art time or performance there would you like to go? [If they had story or art time or acting there, would you like go you?]
Becky: Yeah.
Interpreter: Would you like an interpreter? (Would you like interpreter there?)
Becky: Yeah.
Interpreter: Yeah.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you want to tell me about going to the library?
Interpreter: You want tell her anything else about the library? [Want tell her anything else about library?]
Becky: I don’t know. [I don’t know]

Interviewer: Ok those are all the questions I have for you Thank you.
Interpreter: [Finish. Thank you]

--End Interview--
Danny (Pseudonym)

The interview transcript does not reflect the complete interview because the visual aspect of the interview is not incorporated.

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Danny
ASL Interpreter

Interview conducted: Private elementary school, school office.

*Italicized is voiced*

[ ] Reflects what is signed

--Start of the Interview--

Interviewer: You are participant two.
Interpreter: You are number two, Stephanie was first, you're second. [You are number two, Stephanie was first, you second]

Interviewer: So how old are you?
Interpreter: How old are you? [How old you?]
Danny: Ten

Interviewer: What grade are you in?
Interpreter: What grade level are you? [What grade level are you?]
Danny: Fifth
Interpreter: Fifth

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your family? Like how many brothers or sisters you have?
Interpreter: How many in your family like brothers sisters? [Many in your family, brother, sister?]
Danny: I have sister
Interpreter: One sister. [One sister] You have brothers? [Brother you?]
Danny: huh?
Interpreter: Do you have a brother? [Brother you?]
Danny: No

Interviewer: Do you know at what age you were diagnosed as being deaf?
Interpreter: Do you know how old your mom and dad found out you were deaf? How old? [Do you know how old, your mom and dad find you were deaf? How old?]
Danny: Mom and Dad? Thirty...
Interpreter: No no no. You. How old were you when you became deaf? Were you born deaf? Where you a baby? Where you one or two years old? Do you know? Do you
know? [No, you. How old were you when you became deaf you? Where you born deaf? Where you baby? One, two years old you? Do you know?]
Danny: *Shakes head no*
Interpreter: Don’t know

Interviewer: Ok. What would you like to tell me about you?
Interpreter: What do you want her to know about you? Like what you like to do. Anything. Tell her about you. [What want her know about you? what like to do, anything. tell her about you]
Danny: *Shrugs*
Interpreter: Well, What do you like? Do you like sports? Do you like video games? Do you like to draw? Do you like going out? What do you like to do? [What you like, do you like sports, do you like video, do you like draw, going out, do you?]
Danny: Play with sister
Interviewer: Ok, play with your sister.

Interviewer: Do you like to read?
Interpreter: Do you like reading? [Do you like reading?]
Danny: Sometimes.

Interviewer: What do you like to read?
Interpreter: What do you like to read about? [What do you like to read about?]
Danny: About Avengers.
Interpreter: Adventures?
Danny: Avengers
Interpreter: Oh Avengers.
Interviewer: The Avengers

Interviewer: When you get homework, where do you look for information for your homework?
Interpreter: When you get homework and you have like a topic, where do you get your information from? What do you use to get information? [When you get homework, and topic where you get information from? What use get information?]
Danny: Pencil
Interpreter: Yes, well you use pencil but if you’re studying about the different lands where do you look for information? [Yes, use pencil but like studying about different land where look information?]
Danny: I don’t know.
Interpreter: He doesn’t know.

Interviewer: OK. Do you ever go to the library?
Interpreter: Do you go to the library sometimes? [Do you go library sometimes?]
Danny: Yea.
Interpreter: Yes
Danny: Get movies
Interpreter: To get movies.
Interviewer: Do you know which library you go to?
Interpreter: Do you know the name of the library? [Know name library?]
Danny: No

Interviewer: Is it a public library where everybody can go? Or is it a school library?
Interpreter: Is it a library where different people go? Like older people, young people? Or a school library? Which? [Is it a library where different people go like old people, young people? Or a school library? Which?]
Danny: No. School. No, not sure.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about the first time you went to a library?
Interpreter: Do you remember the first time you went into a library? [Remember first time went into a library?]
Danny: Yea.
Interpreter: When? Were you one-years- old, three-years old, first grade? [When? One years old, three years old, first grade?]
Danny: Not sure.

Interviewer: What do you like best about the library?
Interpreter: What do you like about the library? When you go to the library, what do you like there? [What like about library? You go library, like there?]
Danny: Movies.
Interpreter: Movies.

Interviewer: Do you go to the library every week or once a month or how many times?
Interpreter: How often do you go to the library? Every week, one time a month, one time a year? Do you know? [How many go library every week, one time month, one time year do you know?]
Danny: One time a year.

Interviewer: If you and your best friend had a project to do at the library, how would you feel if you had to ask for help?
Interpreter: If you went to the library you and a friend like upstairs like maybe, um like Jorge, you went to the library and you were wanting to find information about something who would you ask for help? Who do you ask for help in a library? [If you went library you and friend, upstairs, maybe, Jorge went library and want find information about something who ask help? Who ask for help in library?]
Danny: Nobody.
Interpreter: Nobody.

Interviewer: Why wouldn’t you ask somebody?
Interpreter: Why? If you don’t know why not ask? Why? [Why not? If you don’t know why not ask?]
Danny: I don’t know.
Interviewer: You already told me the best thing, what’s don’t you like about a library?
Interpreter: What don’t you like about a library? [What don’t like about library?]
Danny: *Not sure.*
Interpreter: Not sure

Interviewer: Is there anything you want to tell me about visiting library?
Interpreter: Want to tell her anything about when you go into the library when you visit?
   What do you do when you go in? [Want tell her anything about go into library when visit there? What you do go in?]
Danny: *I don’t know*…

Interviewer: Do you always go with mom or dad?
Danny: *Yeah.*
Interpreter: Yeah. Who takes you to the library? [Who take library you who?]
Danny: *Family.*
Interpreter: Who? [Who?]
Danny: *Family.*
Interpreter: Whole family.

Interviewer: OK, that’s all the questions. Thank you
Interpreter: [Finished. Thank you]

--End Interview--
Jorge (Pseudonym)

The interview transcript does not reflect the complete interview because the visual aspect of the interview is not incorporated.

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Becky
ASL Interpreter

Interview conducted: Private elementary school, school office.

*Italicized is voiced*

[ ] Reflects what is signed

--Start of Interview—

Interviewer: Ready?
Interpreter: Ready?
Jorge: Yes

Interviewer: So you’re participant four.
Interpreter: You are the fourth person, Stephanie, then Danny, then Becky and now you’re the fourth person for the interview [You fourth person, Stephanie, Danny, Becky you fourth person interview]

Interviewer: So how old are you?
Interpreter: How old are you? [How old you?]
Jorge: *mumbles*  
[12] Twelve

Interviewer: What grade are you in?
Interpreter: What grade level? [What grade level?]
Jorge: Sixth grade. [Sixth]
Interpreter: Sixth

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your family? Like do you have brothers or sisters?
Interpreter: She wants to know about your family? How many brothers sisters? [She wants know about your family how many brothers sisters?]
Jorge: I have one brother. [I have one brother]
Interpreter: One brother

Interviewer: Is he older or younger?
Interpreter: Older than you or younger than you? [Older than you or younger than you?]
Jorge: *mumbles*
Interpreter: Is he younger than you? Or older? Which? [Younger child you, older which?]
Jorge: Younger. [Younger]
Interpreter: Younger
Interviewer: Is he deaf or not?
Interpreter: Hearing or deaf, which? [Hearing or deaf which?]
Jorge: Deaf [Deaf]
Interpreter: You are deaf but your brother is he hearing or deaf? [You deaf. Brother he hearing or deaf?]
Jorge: [Brother word]
Interpreter: Yeah but is he deaf or can he hear? [But deaf he can hear?]
Jorge: Hear [Hear]

Interviewer: Do you know how old you were when you became deaf?
Interpreter: Do you know how old you were when you became deaf? [Do you know how old you were when you became deaf?]
Jorge: *Looks around room*
Interpreter: When you were a baby or first grade or do you remember when you became deaf? [When baby or first grade or do you remember when you became deaf?]
Jorge: *Looks down*
Interpreter: Do you know? [Do you know?]
Interpreter: If you don’t know just say you don’t know. [If you don’t know just say don’t know.]
Jorge: [Don’t know]

Interviewer: What would you like to tell me about you?
Interpreter: What do you want to tell her about you? What you like to do what? [What want her tell about you what like do?]
Jorge: *Looks around*
Interpreter: Favorite thing to do? [Favorite thing do what?]
Jorge: *Silence*
Interpreter: Do you like drawings, do you like movies, do you like going out, playing games? [Do you like drawings, do you like movies, do you like outside, playing games, what like you?]
Jorge: [Like out, playing games]
Interpreter: Going out places and playing games

Interviewer: Do you like to read?
Interpreter: Do you like reading? [You like reading you?]
Jorge: Yeah.
Interpreter: Yeah.

Interviewer: What do you like to read?
Interpreter: What favorite books to read? [What favorite books read you?]
Jorge: Boy.
Interpreter: About a boy? Do you know name of the boy? [About boy? know boy name?]
Jorge: Henry [H-E-N-R-Y]
Interpreter: Henry
Jorge: [Henry boy read]
Interpreter: About Henry, a boy
Interviewer: Where do you get your books that you like to read?
Interpreter: Where do you get books from where? [Where get books from where?]
Jorge: My home. [My home]
Interpreter: Your home

Interviewer: Ok, Where do you get information for your homework?
Interpreter: If you have homework where do you get information like your studying about Africa and you don’t know about Africa where do you get information? [If you have homework, where get information like studying about Africa and you don’t know about Africa where get information?]
Jorge: *Silence*
Interpreter: Do you go on the computer?
Interviewer: Do you go on the computer?
Interpreter: Do use computer read for information? Do you use books? Do you ask Mom? Do you ask your teacher? Who? [Do use computer read information books, do ask mom, ask teacher who?]
Jorge: Ask mom
Interpreter: Ask his mom.

Interviewer: Do you ever go to the library?
Interpreter: Do sometimes go library? [Do you sometimes go library?]
Jorge: [Not think]
Interpreter: No? You go to the library? Yes or no? [No? You library go? Yes or no?]
Jorge: No
Interpreter: No

Interviewer: So you don’t go to the library at all?
Interpreter: You don’t go to the library? [You don’t go library?]
Jorge: No

Interviewer: Why not? Do you know?
Interpreter: Why? [Why?]
Jorge: Mom working.
Interpreter: His mom works

Interviewer: So if you had homework, who would you ask or where would you go so you can do your homework?
Interpreter: If you have homework and you need to know something who do you ask, for help? Where do you get information? [If you have homework and need know something who ask help? Where get information?]
Jorge: Um, don’t know.

Interviewer: Ok, I guess that’s it. That’s all the questions I have. Thank you.
Interpreter: [Finished. Thank you]

--End Interview--
Stephanie (Pseudonym)

The interview transcript does not reflect the complete interview because the visual aspect of the interview is not incorporated.

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Stephanie
ASL Interpreter

Interview conducted: Private elementary school, school office.

*Italicized is voiced*

[ ] Reflects what is signed

--Start of the Interview--

Interviewer: Ready?
Interpreter: Ready? [Ready?]

Interviewer: You are the first participant.
Interpreter: You are number one, first person. [You are number one, first person]
Interviewer: Ok, so how old are you?
Interpreter: How old? [old you?]
Stephanie: [14]
Interpreter: 14

M: What grade are you in?
R: What grade? [What grade you?]
Stephanie: [P-L-A-Y]
R: No she asked you 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th. Which? [No, asked you first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seven, eighth, which]
Stephanie: [First, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, eighth]
R: Eighth.

Interviewer: Ok. How many brothers or sisters do you have?
Interpreter: How many brothers sisters you have in your family? [Many brothers sisters you have your family you?]
Stephanie: [Sister, sister, little]
Interpreter: So, two sisters. You have… [Two sisters. Have…]
Stephanie: [Baby girl]
Interpreter: She has 2 sisters

Interviewer: What would you like to tell me about you?
Stephanie: *thinking*
Interpreter: I know you like to draw. right? [I know you like draw right you?]
Stephanie: [Me draw]
Interpreter: She likes to draw.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you like to read?
Stephanie: [read]
Interviewer: You like?
Stephanie: Yes

Interviewer: So what kind of things do you like to read?
Interpreter: *Opens book * [Read you?]
Interpreter: What do you like to read? Like about? [What do you like to read what? about what?]
Stephanie: [My book see reading]
Stephanie: [Places]
Interpreter: Places.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you ever go to the library?
Interpreter: Do you go to the library where many many book? [Do you go library many many books, shelves, you go?]
Stephanie: [Many books. Many me see many shelves, shelves]
Interpreter: Yes, she sees the shelves…there is more shelves [shelves]
Stephanie: [shelves shelves shelves]
Interpreter: Yes, she says there are more shelves. Many many shelves. [Many many shelves]
Stephanie: *laughs*

Interviewer: Do you know which library you go to?
Interpreter: Do you know the name of your library? Where you go? The name? [Do you know the name of your library? Where you go? The name?]
Stephanie: [Many floors]
Interpreter: She says there’s many floors
Stephanie: [teacher, floors, girl]
Interpreter: And then there’s a teacher she says and floors, and there’s a girl there.

Interviewer: Do you remember the first time you went to a library?
Interpreter: Remember how old, long time ago you went library? [Remember how old long time back you went library?]
Stephanie: [Went, grade, went, go]
Interpreter: How old were you? [Old you?]
Stephanie: [14]
Interpreter: Yup, now you're 14. [Now 14]
Stephanie: (Many many many)
Interviewer: Do you like going to the library?
Interpreter: Do you like going to the library to look books? You like? [Do you like going library, look, read, books? you like go?]
Stephanie: [Many, big, long]
Interpreter: You like going? [like go?]
Stephanie: [Out]
Interpreter: And then you go out.

Interviewer: What’s the best thing about going to a library?
Stephanie: [My many long, many, books, shelves to look]
Interpreter: Many books to pick

Interviewer: What don’t you like about the library?
Interpreter: What don’t you like about the library? [What don’t like, awful about library?]
Stephanie: [Waiting number me]
Interpreter: Waiting
Stephanie: [my (Lisa) and (Linda) thinking]
Interpreter: Waiting for her sisters to pick books
Interviewer: To pick books…
Interpreter: And she has to wait…
Stephanie: [waiting waiting waiting, on (Lisa)]

Interviewer: Do you go to the library to do homework?
Interpreter: Do you go to do homework? [Do you go, homework, write?]
Stephanie: [homework, look and write]

Interviewer: Do you ever ask the librarian for help?
Interpreter: Do you ask the library person, working you ask, help me? [Do you ask the library person working help me?]
Stephanie: [Me look book thinking open book looks, looks shelve, books]
Interpreter: Gets a book, opens the books and she looks. With yourself or with help? [Yourself or with help?]
Stephanie: [Old, 16]
Interpreter: Someone that is 16, that is older helps her.
Stephanie: [Older reads looks book, fifteen fifteen]
Interpreter: The older person helps her.

Interviewer: If you could change anything about the library, what would you change?
Interpreter: What do you want from the library? They have books, what else do you like? [What you want from library? Have books, what else you like you?]
Stephanie: [My library stairs floors]
Interpreter: She likes going on the different floors
Stephanie: [Down down down]
Interviewer: Is there anything else you want to tell me about your library visits?
Interpreter: Anything else you want to tell her? (Anything else you want to tell her?)
Stephanie: [I like go old (John) 13 old (Mary) 12 old (Mary)]
Interpreter: Talking about all the people that go with her to the library, their ages so I going with people you might know.

Interviewer: Is that where you get the information for your homework?
Interpreter: Do you sometimes use the library for homework? [Do you sometimes use library for homework?]
Stephanie: [Yes. Use pencil. Listen quiet closed mouth.]

Interviewer: That’s all the questions. Thank you.
Interpreter: No more questions. She said thank you. [Finished She Thank you]

--End Interview--
Appendix E—Parent Interviews

Anna (Pseudonym)

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
                   Interviewee: Anna (Danny’s Mother)

Interview conducted: At the home of Anna

--Start of Interview--

Interviewer: Are you over 18?
Anna: Yes.

Interviewer: Are you the parent or guardian?
Anna: The Mom.

Interviewer: What is your race/ethnicity?
Anna: Hispanic.

Interviewer: Where were you born?
Anna: Mexico.

Interviewer: What languages do you use at home?
Anna: Spanish.

Interviewer: What is the primary language used?
Anna: Spanish.

Interviewer: How fluent are you in sign language?
Anna: Hmm, just a little.

Interviewer: Do you have any hearing problems?
Anna: No.

Interviewer: Do any members of your immediate family have any hearing problems?
Anna: No.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?
Anna: Two.

Interviewer: Boys or girls?
Anna: I have one boy and one girl.
Interviewer: What are their ages?
Anna: The boy is ten and the girl is five.

Interviewer: What is the hearing status of each child?
Anna: My ten-year-old son is severely deaf and my five-year-old daughter is moderately deaf.

Interviewer: Do you work?
Anna: No, my husband does.

Interviewer: What is the highest level of education you achieved?
Anna: I went to high school.

Interviewer: What cultures do you consider yourself a part of?
Anna: Hispanic.

Interviewer: What about Deaf Culture?
Anna: Um, well yes, just a little bit. The problem is that we don't know much sign language. We are barely starting to learn a little more.

Interviewer: How does our son handle maneuvering the different cultures?
Anna: Well, it's difficult for him. He doesn't fully know sign language and he doesn't know how to speak. He's in the middle.

Interviewer: How about the languages?
Anna: It's pretty much the same; he's in the middle.

Interviewer: How are you learning sign language?
Anna: I was going to classes. The were about half hour long, three times a week

Interviewer: Where were you taking these classes?
Anna: At their school, but it's only a three-month course and right now they aren't any more sessions.

Interviewer: Does your child use a hearing aid?
Anna: My son uses a cochlear implant and my daughter uses a hearing aid.

Interviewer: What kinds of things does your son like to do?
Anna: He likes to play ball a little bit but when its summer out. Right now, he doesn't really like to go out. He prefers to stay indoors watch TV or playing games.

Interviewer: Video games?
Anna: Yes

Interviewer: Does he like to read?
Anna: Yes, he likes to read but he gets very frustrated because he still hasn't learned to read well, so sometimes he prefers to just look at the books, like the pictures.

Interviewer: What types of books does he like to read?
Anna: He likes all types but mainly he likes the ones with pictures or lots of colors.

Interviewer: Where does he get his material to read?
Anna: We recently registered at a library that is close to our home.

Interviewer: When you were young, did you go to the library?
Anna: No.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about the first time you went to the library?
Anna: I liked it because the person that was there was very helpful and helped me find the books I needed.

Interviewer: So, this first experience, was it in the US?
Anna: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you remember how long ago that experience was?
Anna: It was just last year.

Interviewer: So, do you use the library now?
Anna: Yes.

Interviewer: For what reasons do you use the library?
Anna: To mainly look for books or to look for movies for the kids.

Interviewer: When your son is doing homework, where do he get the information for his assignments?
Anna: Um, sometimes from the library. The teacher has told us we can go and get the information for his homework. She sends a message telling us to go there.

Interviewer: Does he get research assignments?
Anna: Yes, this year he did get some.

Interviewer: How do people respond to your child in public settings like the park district or the public library, etc.?
Anna: Well in the park district, it's always uncomfortable because people are always asking why he has that [cochlear implant] or what is it for? Sometimes, I answer and tell them, but other times I won't answer. But in the library, I think because they see others with the same hearing problems, they are familiar with it and they know he as a hearing problem.

Interviewer: Does that affect where you take him?
Anna: Um, no, not really.
Interviewer: Do you take your child to the library?
Anna: Yes.

Interviewer: What are the primary reasons you take him to the library?
Anna: Because he likes going to look for movies and he wants us to take him so he could look for the movies.

Interviewer: Were you the first person to take him to the library?
Anna: Yes.

Interviewer: Can you tell me what that first experience was like for him?
Anna: He liked it. He saw a lot of kids that were playing games on the computers and he wanted to play too.

Interviewer: And for you?
Anna: The same. The person that was there helped me find stuff that I needed and I ended up liking it.

Interviewer: What types of obstacles did you encounter or are currently encountering at the library?
Anna: Um, well we’d like to see DVD’s in sign language for him or books too. I think I’ve seen books with sign language for kids but I haven’s seen them at my library.

Interviewer: How about experiences with staff?
Anna: They’ve been good. Whenever we’ve needed books for my son for school or for homework, they’ve always helped us find them.

Interviewer: Do you think about what his experiences in a library may be ten years from now?
Anna: Well, I think it should go well. Since we’ve been taking him he sees where the books are and where the DVD’s are and I think he could go alone.

Interviewer: Do you think about other obstacles like his education that he may face in the future?
Anna: No.

Interviewer: If he went to the library to do a research project with a friend, do you think he would be comfortable asking for help?
Anna: No, I don’t think so. I’ve noticed that no one there signs and using voice, he has difficulty communicating by voice.

Interviewer: What do you think would to make the experience in a library better?
Anna: There should be someone who understands or can communicate in sign so that he could have someone to communicate with in sign language and that
he would be able to speak slowly to them because there are words he can speak but those he can’t, he signs.

Interviewer: Does he primarily use sign language to communicate?
Anna: He uses both. For example, sometimes he speaks words but I don’t understand him so he will tell me in sign language.

Interviewer: Do you think he might be able to communicate with the librarians?
Anna: No, not right now. No I don’t think it would be possible for him to ask for help to find a book or movies, it won’t be possible.

Interviewer: What would you like to see changed at a public library for people who are deaf?
Anna: I think they should have more books with sign language in it and more movies with sign language and a person who is there especially for then because sometimes there are a lot of people that need help and we have to wait. And we understand that, but we need to have someone that understands that he has to be spoken to slowly or in sign language.

Interviewer: Do you have any questions for me or want to tell me about any other library experiences?
Anna: The times I’ve gone we’ve had good experiences but he always goes with me and I’ve never let him go on his own. What I’d like to know are there libraries that have the books or movies or people who sign? Where we go we don’t have any of that.

Interviewer: Ok, that’s all the questions I have. Thank you.
--End Interview--
Christina (Pseudonym)

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Christina (Becky’s Mother)

Interview conducted: On school premises

--Start of Interview--

Questions

Interviewer: Are you over 18?
Christina: Yes

Interviewer: Are you the parent or guardian?
Christina: Yes, parent, Mom.

Interviewer: What is your race/ethnicity?
Christina: I was born in [large Midwestern city]. So, Puerto Rican ethnicity but American.

Interviewer: What languages do you use at home?
Christina: English, Spanish and ASL.

Interviewer: What is the primary language used?
Christina: English.

Interviewer: How fluent are you in ASL?
Christina: Not fluent enough, I’m still learning.

Interviewer: Do you have any hearing problems?
Christina: No.

Interviewer: Do any members of your immediate family have any hearing problems?
Christina: No, except for my daughter of course.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?
Christina: One.

Interviewer: A girl, right?
Christina: Yes.

Interviewer: How old is she?
Christina: She's eleven.
Interviewer: What is the hearing status of your daughter?
Christina: She was born deaf.

Interviewer: Do you work?
Christina: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you do?
Christina: I'm a librarian.

Interviewer: In a public library or school?
Christina: High School.

Interviewer: Is it a public high school?
Christina: Yes.

Interviewer: What is the highest level of education achieved?
Christina: Master’s degree.

Interviewer: What cultures do you consider yourself a part of?
Christina: American and Hispanic.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself a part of Deaf culture?
Christina: Um, emerging, learning not completely in the Deaf culture yet.

Interviewer: How does your child handle maneuvering the different cultures?
Christina: Um, I think she's doing a better job than what I expected, I mean she’s seeming to hang in there you know, with hearing, uh, the hearing culture and the deaf culture. Um, and I think a school like this helps a lot just because, there, you know, you have a mix.

Interviewer: How about the languages?
Christina: The languages? Uh, we uh, at home I, I try to speak to her only in ASL and English but my mother is Spanish, I mean Puerto Rican, so she’s speaks, her main language is Spanish so [Becky] is now trying to learn how to um, some Spanish words too. But um, it was a little bit too difficult in the beginning to try to teach all three so I mostly speak to her in English and sign.

Interviewer: How are you learning ASL?
Christina: ASL? I took a couple of classes. Um I also downloaded apps and bought videos and uh, and the truth is mostly through [Becky] herself. Anything she learns she takes it home to me.

Interviewer: What is the hearing status of Becky?
Christina: Um…
Interviewer: Is she completely deaf or…?
Christina: Yea, basically the only thing she could hear, she could hear the vibrations of an airplane over her head and that’s about it. But she is pretty much completely deaf.

Interviewer: So she’s diagnosed as completely deaf?
Christina: Yea.

Interviewer: At what age was she diagnosed?
Christina: Um, three months. They told me she was, in the beginning they said she passed the test but I knew something was wrong so I took her back for more testing.

Interviewer: Does Becky use a hearing aid?
Christina: A cochlear implant.

Interviewer: Any other devices, assistive devices?
Christina: No, just cochlear and started using an FM system here in the classroom.

Interviewer: What kind of things does Becky like to do?
Christina: She uh, likes to draw, she likes to read, play basketball, play volleyball.

Interviewer: She does like to read?
Christina: Oh yes, all the time.

Interviewer: Do you know what she likes to read?
Christina: Graphic novels her favorite thing right now. Her number one thing on her Christmas list was Star Wars books.

Interviewer: Where does your child get the material to read?
Christina: Um, a lot of it I do purchase it, and some if it from the public libraries.

Interviewer: When you were younger did you go to the library?
Christina: Yes

Interviewer: Why did you go to the library?
Christina: Um, mostly to do homework.

Interviewer: Think back to your earliest experience of using a library. Can you tell me about that experience?
Christina: The first experience of using a library, I remember walking um, I think it was with my kindergarten or first or second grade teacher to the library and getting a library card and uh, being thrilled that the same day I could take out three books. I don’t remember how many books it was at the time.

Interviewer: Do you remember if your school had a school library?
Christina: Yes, yes we did.
Interviewer: How about now, do you use the library?
Christina: Um, yes, I work in one. I work in one and then I take [Becky] some for assignments.

Interviewer: When [Becky] is doing their homework, where does she get the information from for her assignments?
Christina: A lot of the information we do get online. Um, and then I have to admit to that a lot of the books I bring from my job even some of them are too hard but you know, the easier materials because we also have a, I have a little preschool library in my, uh high school library too. And then a lot of the databases or things like World Book Encyclopedia where its for all levels and things like that. I have been the culprit of bringing a lot of her research stuff home but lately we’ve been going more to the public library and letting her chose her own, now that she’s getting older.

Interviewer: Why do you choose to use a lot of the online resources?
Christina: Easy access. Um, a lot of times too you know, you get the images there and again its quick easy access. Not that I want to do away with books but usually I get her the books first and then if its something we need right away then we go online.

Interviewer: Does your child get assigned research assignments?
Christina: Yes, we just had to do a Mae Jamison biography.

Interviewer: How do people respond to your child in public settings like the park district, or other public setting?
Christina: Um, she’s surprisingly pretty outgoing so, I say surprisingly just because I used to worry about her a lot. But uh, she’s not afraid to go to the places and I think a lot of it too is because, um there’s always someone with her that is confident to show her how to do things. And uh, but I’ve been the one usually with her and now its time for her to be more independent. She’s never really gone to any of the park districts or any of the libraries without me or without a teacher.

Interviewer: She’s always had somebody…
Christina: Yea, she’s always had someone that could interpret for her. She’s never had to ask for anything on her own. And I think its time that we did start showing her how to.

Interviewer: Does that affect where you take her?
Christina: Yeah it does. It does because like right now, there’s a lot of summer classes that I would want her to take but, I mean things like swimming but I know its not, I can’t go in the swimming pool with her or I can’t, or she’s a little bit too old for that now or even if there’s a vocabulary class or whatever, you know. I know that I’m not supposed to go in the classes with her so um, I guess we could look for things that have interpreters. But its harder to find everyday classes, summer activities that have an interpreter. Even things like sports, you know. Last year she wanted to join basketball but I convinced her to wait and join volleyball because I knew that her teacher was going to be teaching, I mean being the volleyball coach and I felt better...
about having the coach know ASL as opposed to having someone that didn’t know. So for her first team experience I wanted the coach to know ASL. So it does affect a lot.

Interviewer: Do you take your child to the library?
Christina: Yes.

Interviewer: How often do you take her?
Christina: Um, maybe, about four times a year. I mean, she comes to mine all the time but that doesn’t count, so she’s familiar with the high school library. And it does I guess count too because I show her how to check the books out and like I said, now she’s getting older but when she was smaller she loved the preschool library that we had too.

Interviewer: So mainly you take her to your work, right?
Christina: Yea, my work. But now we’ve been going again, we’re starting to go more often to the public library.

Interviewer: Where you the first person to take her to the library?
Christina: Yes.

Interviewer: And what was that like?
Christina: To tell you the truth, she was very young. She was only, I can’t remember if she was two or three and the experience wasn’t that fantastic. I walked in and I says, “wow,” for the first time walking into it, it was one of the neighborhood libraries and um, they weren’t very nice. And I’m a librarian but that one experience they weren’t very helpful and here I’m thinking “Ok.” That’s me knowing how to get around and knowing that I’m a librarian, but anyone else coming in for their first time experience, I wouldn’t go back. I knew better and I went back and I went to different location but um, first time experience wasn’t very nice.

Interviewer: So, it didn’t deter you?
Christina: No, it didn’t deter me because its my field but I could see how it would have deterred other parents where, um, especially if they had problems with the language be it English, Spanish, whatever it may be. Um they weren’t very receptive.

Interviewer: What obstacles did you encounter in previous experiences or currently encounter now in public libraries?
Christina: Um, there haven’t really been, um, I guess because I’m there to help her, there haven’t been any obstacles but if she were to go on her own, it may be a little bit more difficult and I’ve been thinking about that. And um, I just need to start preparing her now. You know, where if she’s going in, make sure she’s goes in with a copy of her assignment and, you know, write out ahead of time, and um saying ‘can you please help me,” showing her how to go to the circ desk and asking for help. But again, I need to start letting her be more independent and showing her how to do things instead of doing everything for her.
Interviewer: Do you think about what it might be like for [Becky] 10 years from now if you weren’t with her in the library?
Christina: Yea, I have nightmares about it all the time but uh, in the library, well, I think that she’ll be able to get around in the library she’s um, she’s pretty much uh, has gotten a lot from me. Its not the same thing in a high school library in a public library but she, we have a lot of time to work on it now. But she’s comfortable around libraries and she’s comfortable around books, and now its showing her how to look for them. And she’s comfortable around computers and um, so I think she’ll be ok.

Interviewer: A lot of parents, by the time the kids are eleven, they are leaving the kids at the library on their own. I was just wondering if the fact that’s she deaf is a reason why you don’t consider dropping her off like that.
Christina: Yea, I think the fact that she’s deaf is probably why I’m more over protective than most parents. And in this day and age, even if she wasn’t deaf I, I don’t know if I would leave her alone anywhere right now. But again, I can’t say if I would have been like that if she was born hearing. But right now I’m just so overprotective that I wouldn’t leave here um, anywhere.

Interviewer: Do you think about what types of obstacles your child may encounter, as she gets older in terms of her education?
Christina: Yes. Um, even now, I mean she’s as much I, as she has access to books and everything she’s still behind on reading level. And uh, and even now, you know, I’m trying to find a good high school for her. Its, its, we’re already…she’s only in 5th grade and we already started visiting and um, its scary. Its scary, I don’t know I mean you know I, I pray to God that, nothing, knock on wood, happens um, just because we want to be around for her. But um, again, I need to start working now to try make her more independent because right now she completely relies on us, for everything. And 10 yrs from now, the same thing for education, I can’t even think of sending her away anywhere. I know some of the kids have graduated from here and they’re college now in New York and to me its like “no way” but of course that’s a big possibility. But its, its really something that we have to start working on now.

Interviewer: If your child had to go to a library to do a research project with a friend, do you think your child would be comfortable asking for help?
Christina: Not yet, but that’s something that we will get her comfortable in the next couple of months.

Interviewer: So, why do you think she won’t be comfortable?
Christina: And you know what? Maybe she will. It’s just me that’s not comfortable. I think, like I said, she’s uh, she’s pretty, she’s pretty um, independent when it comes to asking for help when she needs it. I think its just more me again being over protective.
Interviewer: Do you think your child will be able to communicate with librarians?
Christina: Yes, yes she will

Interviewer: What would you like to see changed at public libraries in terms of services for people who are deaf?
Christina: Um, I guess, just uh, and it’s hard right now. You can't have interpreters everywhere you go but um, I think just maybe even if they do like little field trips where the staff will get used to um, the neighborhood deaf programs or whatever it may be. Or else, even find out where there is someone that is willing to work with them, even a brief intro whatever they may be, where uh, where they’re friendly you know where they expect for the children to come in. It’s a perfect relationship that we can have with [name deleted] library because we’re so close to them. And uh, and if the librarians were aware that this school is here and then one day plan a trip I think that would help a lot, just to introduce the kids to the staff and make the kids feel not as apprehensive because they’ll see a familiar face.

Interviewer: Do you think more librarians should learn some sign language or understand a little bit more about Deaf Culture?
Christina: Maybe just understand a little bit more about Deaf Culture not every, its difficult to learn sign language. Like I said, I’m learning now and uh, its never ending. I mean its something that unless you do it all the time, but just to even get a little seminar on what to expect and how to make the experience easier the first time around for them and how to welcome.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you’d like to tell about yourself or your child relating to public libraries or public library experiences?
Christina: No not really, just that we need to work more and I need to get her more comfortable but I think so far she’s doing pretty good.

Interviewer: Ok, that’s all the questions I have. Thank you.

--End Interview--
**Nicole (Pseudonym)**

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte  
Interviewee: Nicole (Frank’s Mother)

Interview conducted: Over the phone

--Start of Interview--

Interviewer: Are you over 18?  
Nicole: Yes

Interviewer: Are you the parent/guardian?  
Nicole: Parent, I’m the mother

Interviewer: What is your race/ethnicity?  
Nicole: Hispanic

Interviewer: Where were you born?  
Nicole: [Large Midwestern city.]

Interviewer: What languages do you use at home?  
Nicole: Um, we speak English, [Frank] signs. We sign with [Frank].

Interviewer: What is the primary language used?  
Nicole: English

Interviewer: How fluent are you in ASL?  
Nicole: Um, I’m not fluent but um, to communicate with [Frank] we understand each other. I don’t know, I’m not real good. I need more practice. I understand him and he understands me.

Interviewer: Do you have any hearing problems?  
Nicole: No

Interviewer: Do any members of your immediate family have any hearing problems?  
Nicole: Um, his father.

Interviewer: What is his hearing status?  
Nicole: Um, actually I don’t…I mean, he wears a hearing aid, he can speak but um, it is hereditary in his father’s family. There’s quite a few of them that are deaf or hard of hearing should I say.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?  
Nicole: I have three
Interviewer: Boys or girls?
Nicole: Boys

Interviewer: What are their ages?
Nicole: Um, 22, 19, and 13

Interviewer: What is the hearing status of each child?
Nicole: Um, my oldest has a mild…when he was a child he had a mild hearing loss. He doesn’t wear a hearing aid. He can see, I mean he can speak, he can hear. Um, I remember that um, you know, he’s fine without it but, so eventually, as he got older you know, he could lose some of the sound.

How about the 19yr old?
Nicole: The 19 yr old is fine.

What is [Frank]’s hearing status?
Nicole: [Frank] is severe to profound

Interviewer: Do you work?
Nicole: Yes

Interviewer: What do you do?
Nicole: I um, I work, I’m a case administrator I work for the bankruptcy court

Interviewer: What is the highest level of education achieved?
Nicole: For me?
Interviewer: Yes
Nicole: High school

Interviewer: What cultures do you consider yourself a part of?
Nicole: Um, Hispanic cultures

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself a part of deaf culture?
Nicole: Well yea and the deaf culture. I mean [Frank] is involved in…not really the culture but he’s in programs. He’s in programs that have other, you know, that uh that he deals with other deaf children. Not just school, he goes to um, there are…swimming and art through the city at the park district and um, they have a program for HOH where he does that, you know, throughout the year, they have like a spring program and fall program and then in the summer he’s in the camp program a summer camp program that’s for the HOH. So, he’s with other children but he’s not, we’re not, we don’t go to the church that has a lot of deaf people there. So, he’s really not, that’s why I have him in all these other…(interrupted by son).
Interviewer: How does your child handle maneuvering the different languages?
Nicole: Um, well his language sign language so he doesn’t use his voice. Um, But um, His brothers, when we’re communicating with [Frank], we’re signing or anybody that is around [Frank]. If [Frank] is in the room, we’re not all signing til he understanding what’s going on as far as my family. Um but when we’re talking to him or you know, with him we will sign or if he, if he wants to know something he’ll ask me and then I’ll sign it to him a lot of time he probably sees my mouth moving and so he wants to know what’s going on. Just like he sees me talking on the phone right now he’s asking me “who am I talking to?” So he sees me talking he knows I’m talking...(interrupted by son)

Interviewer: How are you learning sign language?
Nicole: Well I’ve taken, um a couple of…I’ve taken a sign class a couple of years ago, I learned a lot through [Frank], they’ve offered it at the school, you know, little like refresher courses, even at camp with [Frank], through [Frank], you know plus on my own, books videos, you know different things and I guess being a parent or mother you know, you just find a way to communicate with your child. You know, people tell me that all the time, you know I can sign great I’m not…I can sign and he understands even the teachers say you sign well. But to receive it I have a hard time its like it’s harder for me to take it in than to say it. I think I freeze up or I get you know,…I don’t understand every sign and [Frank] is getting better and faster and learning more where his language is a lot larger than mine in sign so, it takes me a while sometimes I have to spell it out or tell him to slow down and so I can understand what he’s doing. So, I know the basics. I know, I probably know a lot more than I think I do so I’ve learned, I read books, if I don’t know, because sometimes I notice um, that he’ll do a sign that’s not familiar and it drives me crazy because what is his signing so when I get to school I’ll ask “what does this mean what does this mean” so the teachers help me out a lot. Pretty much I understand what he’s telling me but sometimes some words I’m not familiar with and I’ll ask. I think all the repetitive when I see it all the time all the time you know you pick up on it, yea.

Interviewer: At what age was he diagnosed as being deaf?
Nicole: When he was a baby. Probably about 8 months

Interviewer: Does she use hearing aid or Cochlear implant?
Nicole: He wears hearing aids

Interviewer: Does he use any other assistive devices?
Nicole: In school they have him with the FM surround…FM system so that he can just hear the teacher only. But Other than that just the hearing aids and he really don’t like wearing them. He’d rather not hear.
Interviewer: What kind of things does he like to do?
Nicole: Um, he loves basketball. He’s a basketball fanatic. He’s really good at...he loves um, swimming, loves his video games, he loves the computer, he loves to draw, he likes to um, he’ll Google stuff like how to make the incredible hulk he’s very good at drawing you know. He loves that. Um, but basketball is main thing right now, I mean he’s so intrigued with basketball he, with all the players that he looks on the comput...he pulls it up on the computer and checks the stats, he’s really good, he’s surprising me how much he knows about his sports because he likes it you know, how many assists how many rebounds and I think that’s pretty good for him and I guess that’s because he likes it so much so he...and with the Xbox, the video games you’re able to put all that information in there so he’ll do research based on, you know, he’ll go on ESPN or whatever on the computer. Well he has older brothers too so his brothers like sports so a lot of times they’re on the computer looking so it helps [Frank] with his reading because he likes basketball that even if we have the newspaper he’ll go to the sports section and he’ll pick up what he can pick up you know, and he wants to know what are they saying what is this about. So, he’s growing.

Interviewer: Does she like to read?
Nicole: Not really but if its something he likes he will like stats, that he likes to read. His reading is pretty low. He knows the words but he’s not comprehending at all.

Interviewer: Where do you get the material for your child to read?
Nicole: Um, the computer, paper, his school books, he’s got um magazine that I subscribe to that he has. He’s got his little tablet so he’s got lots of different little things he likes to go through

Interviewer: When you were younger did you go to the library?
Nicole: Um, sometimes but not a lot.

Interviewer: Do you remember which library it was?
Nicole: The neighborhood libraries

Interviewer: What where the reasons you went to library?
Nicole: Probably for homework, research, um can’t remember if there were any activities there going on that I went. I really don’t really have that much memory of being to the library. Unless it was a field trip or something you know, that had to do with school.

Interviewer: Do you remember your earliest experience using a library?
Nicole: No not really. No. No I don’t.

Interviewer: How about now, do you use the library?
Nicole: No, I do use it not often but I use it more than I’ve ever used it. I find myself and [Frank] too, I mean sometimes he’s come with me and sometimes I go by myself um,
so he has a library card, we all have a library card and he'll go and he's picked out books and I'll pick out books um, videos for him.

Interviewer: What are the main reasons that you go to the library right now?

Nicole: I've gone just for personal use to get a book, uh, or to see what movies because they offer the free movies. So I'll tell [Frank] if he wants a movie and to go there and we'll go there to get a movie or if he needed something from school we'll go there to get a book. Um, pretty much that's about it.

Interviewer: When [Frank] is doing his homework, where does he get his information for his assignments?

Nicole: Basically everything is um through school you know through whatever he reviews whatever he's done throughout the day at school so its through his school books

Does he get assigned any research projects?

Nicole: Uh sometimes. Sometimes he's has, he's gotten, he had a science project or something like that where we'd have to go to the library and get books. Or during the summer, during the Christmas break they wanted us to read books so we had to go and get a couple of books, instances like that.

Interviewer: How often do you take your child to the library?

Nicole: It's been a few months, not often, we don't go regularly like once a month we don't, so I'm gonna say maybe (long pause)...I don't know I can't even say not every month...maybe every three months.

Interviewer: How do people respond to your child in public settings like the park district, etc?

Nicole: Um I've never had a problem but we do go to the park because he's in programs so, the park that we go to he hangs out with the kids that are hearing or whatever so and I haven't had a problem with that. When we've gone to the library um, I always, I always let people know, we're at the library I let them know that if what we're looking for, if I'm looking for something for [Frank] and I want to help, [Frank] is very visual so I want things that are more pictures and stuff, and if they have anything helpful so I've never had a problem, you know with people with Frank, at all

Interviewer: Where you the first person to take [Frank] to the library?

Nicole: Yea, either me or the school, one of us.

Interviewer: Do you remember at all what that experience was like for him?

Nicole: Um, it was probably maybe when he was about and if I can remember, when he was about 7 or 8 and um I think he liked it and he was um, seeing all them books, he was just looking around, touching, he's not a big book reader so he's not crazy to go get books. but um looking for something that he likes, he likes animals so I'll take him by the book section with bugs and stuff like that so, that would interest him and he'd start just looking at stuff with pictures on it so, I like the experiencing that he, that you know, that it was important for him, that I would love for him to do this to
come here to read but it takes me to take him there and I don't do it, like I should. But he gets it off the computer too, I have an account, so we can go on the computer and pull stuff up versus going to the library.

Interviewer: What obstacles have you encountered in public libraries?
Nicole: Um, you know, I don’t know. I haven’t had any type of a problem you know or a challenge or something that um...you know, the only think I can say, well let me just say this, I know that the library do have um, like um, they offer, things for children like activities that’s because I do go online and I look at what’s at our neighborhood library they have speakers or things for children um, storytelling so I’ve never seen a storytelling for the deaf, and I know they offer storytelling and um, maybe I just haven’t seen it maybe its certain library. But I noticed that when you go to your public library they have stuff on Saturdays or certain nights or whatever or days and that I have never seen. Which would be nice I mean you might not get it see cuz that’s the thing its that everybody you know, I would love to have it right here at my library but there might just be one child, you know one person come out for one child, you know, so I mean I don’t know how that would work, maybe a center designation, location, central location, or a certain library that I knew that I can take him to, you know. Um, you know I think you know that would be nice for [Frank] because they don’t have that. I mean I can take him to activities over there, but for him to be around you know, he’s around hearing children everyday plus the children that are hard-of-hearing in his classroom, he’s around both. Um I think it would be harder for him, he would feel left out. I would just like to see more with deaf children around him, that are like him, also be in the libraries you know such as storytelling that is you know that is interpreted in sign.

Interviewer: Do you think about what the library experience may be for him say 10 years from now?
Nicole: Oh yea um he’s gonna have challenges but because everything is so electronic now, everything is on computers it makes it easier for him, he can do stuff from home, or you know everything is on a computer now. So that’s a benefit for [Frank] because everything is visual versus speaking to a person. Um, so if he had to go to a library, um, he’s gonna have a hard time unless somebody knows how to sign as far as communicating. But you know if he’s been to the library enough he knows what he needs to do and what he has to do, go in there get his books, you know. So um, yea he will have challenges with..yeah I think about that when he goes to the store or he’s ordering food or something.

Interviewer: Do you think about what obstacles he may encounter in terms of his education?
Nicole: Right now [Frank] is uh, he’s in 8th grade so I’m really struggling with him leaving grammar school and going to high school. I don’t feel he’s ready. And I don’t know if its just me, I think it’s high school, he’s my baby, he’s...I just think that um, he’s too young he needs another year or two still in grammar school. I don’t think it would hurt him um, because of um, the larger amount of kids, they’re teenagers and so much goes on with teenagers so um, I don’t know. I’m just really nervous about
him moving on to the next level. Um, he doesn’t seem to um, one thing about him, he’s not afraid of, he doesn’t feel like he’s different you know, or he has a disability. He’s not shy, you know, he’s not afraid to do anything, he doesn’t withdraw from anybody, he’s not you know, he’s very likable and friendly, so maybe because he’s been in school and been in programs and goes to camp and I do, you know as soon as something’s finishing I’m starting something else because I want him to be around other children that are hard-of-hearing like him I don’t just want it for school. So um, I try to keep you know, when we come home he’s not out on the streets or in the neighborhood or he doesn’t have neighborhood friends where we live. Uh, his friends are either school or in the camps or wherever programs he’s in. Besides my family members he has lots of cousins so he’s around enough kids. Other than that he doesn’t seem to be afraid he seems to be ready to go to high school. He’s already looking at the colleges. But I don’t think he realizes he likes colleges because he likes basketball so he’s looking at, so that’s why he looks at colleges because of the basketball. Um, he thinks because he’s gonna graduate in 8th grade that he’s done with school like “ok I’m done” and I’m like “no you’re going to a bigger school now” so I just think its gonna be a little too much for him or maybe it’s just me, could just be me. But we’ll deal with it. We’ll deal with it. He’s made it this far and I’m gonna do whatever I can do to make, you know, to help [Frank] and so far things have been working well you know. He’s been in the same school so now he’ll be going to a public school. I don’t know, I don’t know what it’s gonna be like.

Interviewer: If [Frank] had to go to a library, say with a friend, to work on a school project, do you think [Frank] would be comfortable asking a library staff member for help?
Nicole: Yea he would. It would be hard. It would be hard. He’s not afraid, he would be comfortable but it would be a challenge and it would be hard for both sides to uh, understand each other. If they’re not understanding him he’d probably write things down, he’ll find a way to make you understand.

Interviewer: So do you think [Frank] would be able to communicate with the librarians?
Nicole: Um, if he wrote it down yea. If he wrote down what he needed.

Interviewer: What would you like to see changed in public libraries to improve services for people who are deaf? I know you mentioned storytime but what else would you like to see changed?
Nicole: I don’t think I’m there enough to know, I’m only thinking from [Frank]’s perspective but I think if he needed to go to a library because of his disability he’s entitled to an interpreter as far as his rights so I’m not sure if I were to call the library and I asked for somebody to go there how that would work, I’ve never tried that. I don’t know how that would work if I were to contact them I guess I could just call to see what they would tell me.

Interviewer: Do you think it’s important for librarians to know or understand Deaf Culture?
Nicole: Um, I don’t know… no. But there should be some type of um, and maybe there is you know, if somebody is deaf there should be some type of uh, policy or
something that they have to follow to, you know to make sure that that persons needs are met. You know, so if it is calling somebody a translator or I’m not sure how that would work. Maybe they would have to, I don’t even know if they have the TTY machines there, I don’t know if they still even have them, how they would communicate with them. I don’t know because right now I do it for [Frank]. I never thought about it as far as him as what he would need.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you’d like to tell about yourself or your child relating to public libraries?
Nicole: Um, I think, the only thing is like I said, there should be more, yes I think maybe the public library should be aware of the deaf culture. Um, or maybe have a certain central location for the deaf culture so if they wanted to do story time it might not be a my library but at least I know there is a library that I can take him to for activities or you know they might not have it everyday but certain days, this is the day that you know, there’s at least we know on a certain day that there might be interpreters or somebody there to help him with his work cuz I can’t always do I, I can’t you know, I don’t know like he knows. I’m never gonna be where his level is as far as, unless I go master it in school. So if there’s an interpreter they can communicate better with him. So if there was a central location or something that they did maybe once a week or twice month or something, yea I think that would be good I don’t know if there is, there maybe something out there already, I’m not sure.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you’d like to ask or add?
Nicole: Um, no but I know that there are some programs out there because and actually we do have and this is important since and this is my fault too, I have to pursuit it and learn how to do these things so that I can teach my son. Because that’s where he falls behind because who else is gonna teach him? I mean he’s gonna learn what he needs to learn in school but other things that he needs to learn are coming from me. So we have that Sorenson VR... I don’t know if you’ve heard of that, called Sorenson and it’s a telephone through the TV. And I have it here but I don’t even have it on anymore because I forgot how to use it and when I changed my TV I shut it off, its in the box, and its really important for him to, for me to have it on because he’s older now and I’m thinking if I want to go to store or something, I don’t ever leave [Frank] alone. I mean he’s here with his brothers or whatever but even though he’s getting older and everything because of the communication gap I need to be able to know that I can get a hold of him or he can get a hold of me. So if either he’s with me or if somebody else is here with him someone's around. But the older he gets he’s probably gonna want more privacy you know, or whatever but even its important for me to have that phone connected for emergency purpose. What if something happens to me while I am in the house? And he needs to communicate with someone. So these are the things that I need to teach him but I don’t even know how to do. (interview ended because [Frank] felt she was talking too much/too long.)

--End Interview--
Teresa (Pseudonym)

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Teresa (Jorge’s Mother)

Interview conducted: Over the phone

--Start of Interview--

Interviewer: Are you over 18?
Teresa: Yes.

Interviewer: Are you the parent/guardian?
Teresa: Yes, I’m the Mom

Interviewer: What is your race/ethnicity?
Teresa: Hispanic

Interviewer: Where were you born?
Teresa: [Large Midwestern city].

Interviewer: What languages do you use at home?
Teresa: English primarily and Sign language.

Interviewer: What is the primary language used at home?
Teresa: English.

Interviewer: How fluent are you sign language?
Teresa: I took ASL I in college.

Interviewer: Do you have any hearing problems?
Teresa: No.

Interviewer: Do you have brothers or sisters?
Teresa: Yes.

Interviewer: Do any of them have hearing problems?
Teresa: No.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?
Teresa: Two.

Interviewer: Are they Boys or girls?
Teresa: Boys.
Interviewer: Two boys?
Teresa: Yea.

Interviewer: Ages of the boys?
Teresa: [Jorge] is twelve and [Miguel] is five.

Interviewer: What is the hearing status [Jorge]?
Teresa: He is hearing impaired.

Interviewer: So he has some hearing?
Teresa: Yea.

Interviewer: What is the hearing status of [Miguel]?
Teresa: Hearing.

Interviewer: Do you work?
Teresa: Yes.

Interviewer: What is your job?
Teresa: I’m a hairstylist.

Interviewer: What is the highest level of schooling you had?
Teresa: Associates Degree.

Interviewer: What cultures do you consider yourself a part of?
Teresa: Puerto Rican.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself or your child a part of Deaf culture?
Teresa: Yea, I consider [Jorge] very deaf culture. I just want to add in that my father was deaf but he was educated orally and wasn’t taught to sign. My dad read lips and um, spoke but he didn’t um sign, so that’s why I had to take the class.

Interviewer: At what age was your child diagnosed as having a hearing problem?
Teresa: Uh, officially at 3 yrs-old.

Interviewer: Does he use a hearing aid?
Teresa: Yes.

Interviewer: Is it in one or both ears?
Teresa: Both ears.

Interviewer: What kinds of things does [Jorge] like to do?
Teresa: He likes to draw, he loves to watch cartoon, play video games um, anything art, art. He likes to swim, its like the only activity that he likes physical, like he doesn’t like football or anything like that. Um, what else? Um, I think, that’s, that’s all I can think of right now.
Interviewer: Does he like to read?
Teresa: Um, depends on what it is. If he's interested in the topic-yes, if not-no. So his, like his favorite, like favorite book things are like those Japanimation, like graphic novels things but those comic book things, are his favorite to read.

Interviewer: Where does he get his books to read?
Teresa: Um, I buy them or I order them online. Like, I go to EBay um, and order like lots of books and I also go to second hand and buy a lot of books from second hand.

Interviewer: When you were younger did you go to the library?
Teresa: Um, no not really.

Interviewer: Do you go to the library now with [Jorge]?
Teresa: I take him to um, like if there is an assignment or something, I take him to the library to get books and things and they are usually like really helpful. And if I can’t find a book you know, like um, our librarians will go online and print up whatever the topic is. And I go, like [city] has that um, once a year it's called [program name]at the [main library] and so I take him to that every year but that's as much as we do at the library.

Interviewer: Did you go this year?
Teresa: No, I had to work but I took him the year before.

Interviewer: So when you went were there any programs or anything for children who are deaf?
Teresa: You know what? No. I haven’t seen any. No there was nothing signed, no. And um, when we lived in Florida for a while and in Tampa, there was this one lady who was a librarian at the library and she was apparently a CODA and you know and she set up a reading program for adults that were deaf. First she was like tutoring adults with the reading and then…but I moved so I don’t know, but she was in the process of starting something like that but I haven’t seen anything like that here.

Interviewer: Where you the first person to take [Jorge] to the library?
Teresa: Yes.

Interviewer: What was that experience like the first time you went?
Teresa: Um, it was fine I mean there wasn’t, not much, there wasn’t many books for like, well I guess it would be a difficult thing. There is not really ever, there’s hardly ever many books, like signing books or anything like that. Like much material that was for him that he could actually use since he was small and there wasn’t any video, like, I don’t know what its called, like multimedia. You know videos and things likes that, like Signing Time or the Bravo Family or something for me to use. And for us to use together, you know.
Interviewer: What kind of obstacles have you encountered in the library for [Jorge]?
Teresa: I mean, I wish there was um a library where somebody who signed is like or a few of them where I knew that I could go and there be a librarian that could sign where he could directly communicate instead of me having to be the, the mediator. Of course, you know, I only took ASL I, I wish there was somebody who could maybe go in to depth and explain how to use, you know, how to look up books since he doesn’t really, he doesn’t understand how to look up books in the library and um, and you know, explain to him things better. I know they have like story time and things like that but you know, there’s no story time with signing or things like that. I know they have the summer reading program where they go and read but they don’t have interpreters so he can’t participate.

Interviewer: Do you worry about what it may be like if your child has to go to a library, on his own and ask for help?
Teresa: Oh yea, I don’t think he’d be able to.

Interviewer: Do you think he would ask for help?
Teresa: Um, do I think he would ask for help? I think he would try but I don’t think he would be able to communicate.

Interviewer: Are there any other good or bad experiences in public libraries that you want to tell me about?
Teresa: No.

Interviewer: How about good or bad experience in other public places like the park district or public spaces?
Teresa: Oh well, I don’t have, like, um since my dad was deaf so like, I know, like people who just had deaf children and they don’t have anybody deaf in their lives, they see things. Like you know they get embarrassed of signing or the noises they make or things likes that but since you know I grew up with it, like, like, there could be issues but I just don’t see them. There may be people staring at us or making comments or whatever none of that stuff you know, bothers me I’ve had a few incidents where, you know the comments have been really inappropriate and I’ve you know mouthed off, but nothing you know, but, I mean I dunno I wouldn’t be a good judge of that. If I’m going to like the field museum or something like that um, and I really want him to know something or learn something or an exhibit or something I think he might be really interested in if you call ahead they’ll provide an interpreter for you. So I mean, and then the thing with the park district we do a lot of things so there’s always an interpreter so no I can’t complain about Chicago as far as him being deaf. But uh I can other places yes, people are terrible.

Interviewer: Are there any other experiences you’d like to share with me about public libraries?
Teresa: Um, no just that I wish there was a signing storyteller or, and somebody that could, you know, show him how to use other resources at the library. Yea and it would be
nice if he could go and drop him and “go do your homework and I’ll be back in an hour.” I’m sure he is tired of me being with him everywhere.

Interviewer: Do you have any questions for me?
Teresa: No.

Interviewer: If you have any questions in the future about this study, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time.

--End Interview--
Veronica (Pseudonym)

Individuals Present: Interviewer: Mina Duarte
Interviewee: Veronica (Alexa’s Mother)

Interview conducted: Over the phone.

--Start of Interview

Interviewer: Are you over 18?
Veronica: Yes

Interviewer: Are you the parent/guardian?
Veronica: Parent Mom

Interviewer: What is your race/ethnicity?
Veronica: White

Interviewer: Where were you born?
Veronica: Chicago, IL

Interviewer: What languages do you use at home?
Veronica: My daughter’s father is Hispanic so his parents speak fluent Spanish very little English so, she does get both, however he and I are no longer together but when she is with him she gets both languages at his home

Interviewer: What is the primary language used?
Veronica: English

Interviewer: Are fluent are you in ASL?
Veronica: No

Interviewer: How good are you at ASL?
Veronica: I actually just started classes last, I would say, last spring um, and our classes are only one day a week so I will be taking college classes in the summer so that I can become fluent. so As of right now Its more basic I would say, like ASL I its all basic still and I pick up on things that my daughter learns at school as well.

Interviewer: Do you have any hearing problems?
Veronica: No

Interviewer: Do any members of your immediate family have any hearing problems? Explain.
Veronica: There is a distant cousin um, that we have that was born deaf on my GM side and a distant cousin actually 2 of them on my GF both born deaf. But her father and
I carry a recessive gene which caused my daughter's hearing loss but did not lose her hearing after her first birthday.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?
Veronica: One

Interviewer: Girl?
Veronica: Yes

Interviewer: And how old is she?
Veronica: Four

Interviewer: What is the hearing status your daughter?
Veronica: She has moderate to severe

Interviewer: Do you work?
Veronica: Yes

Interviewer: What do you do?
Veronica: Accounts payable

Interviewer: What is the highest level of education achieved?
Veronica: Some college

Interviewer: What cultures do you consider yourself a part of?
Veronica: (Long pause) um, dunno.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself a part of deaf culture?
Veronica: Now I do. Um, and I’d like to be more involved in it. I, just for me, um, being hearing and never having a situation like that, I’d never put myself in a situation with HOH or D so now that my child has it, I mean, it definitely opened up a lot of doors and I'm more interested in it and its something I want my daughter to be completely involved in on both sides

Interviewer: How does your child handle maneuvering the different languages?
Veronica: Actually, very well.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little bit more about that?
Veronica: She um, no I mean, she's adapted very well um, she speaks and she really does speak um, pretty good and I mean, she is not, um, the type of hearing loss that she has, her speech is great. Um, you can have a conversation with her its not just myself that can understand her everybody can understand her and with the Spanish side of it, she doesn't really speak it fluently um, I think she understands it more than she's actually picking up on it to speak um, and for the Sign language portion of it, she can sign. And she's learning new things everyday to where she’ll come home and I mean, she'll, she’s speak it to me and she'll sign it to me. I’ve noticed, if she is
nervous around someone she may be doesn’t know the who the person is, she’ll sign it to me because she’s just being shy. Um, but other than that she’s very good with her speech and her language.

Interviewer: At what age was she diagnosed?
Veronica: Two

Interviewer: Does she use hearing aid or Cochlear implant?
Veronica: Hearing aid

Interviewer: Does she use any other assistive devices?
Veronica: No

Interviewer: What kind of things does your child like to do?
Veronica: She...is...definitely, she plays, um, she likes, you know, typical girlie things, Cinderella stuff, um, Barbies she likes to swim, um, she likes to color, she definitely likes to sit down and write where you’re you know you’re tracing and outlining things for her whether it’s the alphabet or numbers she likes to do that, she likes to count, she likes to sing, she’s definitely very active.

Interviewer: Does she like to read?
Veronica: Um, I can sometimes do it, but she um, she’s definitely involved in reading for story time at school. With me, um, she more wants to try and take over before I can get partially through a book and she doesn’t want to be a part of that. She’s done. So it all depends on how interested she is, what is in the book that is maybe catching her interest, um, it all depends on her mood. There are nights I can read 2 books to her before bed and there will be 2 days where she doesn’t want no part of the book before bed.

Interviewer: Where do you get the material for your child to read?
Veronica: Some times I order things online from Singing Time. Um, I really like the DVDs from Signing Time, I think it uh, helps, it teaches us to learn more signs; um, we do get some material from the school. Um, I personally don't think bringing her in the library at least in the Berwyn area, they just don't seem like they’re up to par on some things. Um, sometimes it could be very hard to even request things from them when it has something to do with the Deaf Culture.

Interviewer: When you were younger did you go to the library?
Veronica: Yea

Interviewer: Do you remember which library it was?
Veronica: Um, I went in the Bridgeport area, so, it was on Halsted and I believe, 34th and Halsted.
Interviewer: What were the reasons you went to the library?
Veronica: For certain books that we were reading in school, um, certain assignments that we needed to take out a book because that was the assignment that we needed to read and do essays on. Sometimes, doing research for projects, class project, maps. A lot of it was school related things.

Interviewer: Think back to your earliest experience of using a library. Can you tell me about that experience?
Veronica: I… I think back then it was, I just think that it’s changed a lot being in the library. I think back then, it was my experiences going there, it was fun there was a lot of literature there, there was a lot of you looking at different things, cultures. It was interesting, um, now, I just sometimes I feel like if I need to look up literature something about my daughter… when I found about the hearing loss she had I wanted literature on it. It was not supplied there, it was, it was like it was a hassle. Like no one knew what I was looking for so I reverted to the Internet for everything. I just went on a laptop. I just think being in a library now, because they feel you can find so much stuff on the Internet they’re not very helpful. Its not like it was when we were children.

Interviewer: How about now, do you use the library?
Veronica: Um, since I wasn’t even able to get literature on, on my daughter and I found other resource, that’s the route that I went. Um, a few years you know, prior to, um, my daughter, yea we would go in there, we would get books out, we would rent books. At the time, my stepson you know we had him getting books and reading especially during throughout summer so we would go to the library but, again he’s hearing so its, you know its different for him to walk in there and get certain books and it was just , it, it wasn’t the same as me going in there and trying o find certain literature or asking for help. It was us just walking in there getting a book that caught his interest and we would rent and that was it.

Interviewer: Does your child get homework at this age?
Veronica: She, uh, recently yes, because she would ask to different things so I would print out worksheets. Um, at school, she necessarily wasn’t but once I brought it to the teacher’s attention that she would ask for homework, and she would want to sit down and do things, she now sends homework sheets, and she actually is now putting them out on on like their walkers like by their cubbies and there are tons of different worksheets that us as parents can just walk in there grab as we’re getting them ready for the end of the school day and we can grab certain worksheets and she’ll put a variety of them out there. I think for her class not every child is up to par you know what I’m saying like each of then are learning on their own some kids are completely deaf in my daughter’s class um, and they need cochlear implants so they really don’t speak well. Um, there are some kids that my daughter went there last year with that this year now they’re speaking and now they seem like they uh more involved at the level my daughter is at. So I think those parents also, you know, I mean there’s a couple of kids in there that they can write name very well and you can
tell the difference as to each child and what they can accomplish and what they’re up
to par with as to counting and recognizing numbers and ABCs so she just kinda puts
these out there for what your child can do, she doesn’t necessarily want to send
homework home because some of the children can not do those things.

Interviewer: Does your child get research assignments?
Veronica: No, no.

Interviewer: How do people respond to your child in public settings like the park district,
etc?
Veronica: Um, I’ve had instances where being in public they stare. Um, I think that in the
beginning for me it um, it bothered me now I don’t care. Um, but at first being new
to it and being I guess, accepting of it and understanding what went on with my
daughter I think I was a little bit more um, protective of her so I noticed people
staring more or I’ve had a parent purposely walk really fast to get past us to look at
her to see the hearing aid. So I’ve had, I mean, I personally think there’s more um,
rude adults than there are children.

Interviewer: Do you take your child to the library?
Veronica: She has been there about four times. She does go there with daycare as well in
the summer, throughout out summer. They do a once a week thing that they go and
during the summer they will do a book report and every child gets to check out
several books and they do like, three or four different book reports during um, day
care.

Interviewer: For what purposes have you taken her to the library?
Veronica: Different books. Um, there’s certain books you know she would want to read
that I could not find in the stores so we would go and just rent them and we would
read the book then just return it.

Interviewer: Where you the first person to take her to the library?
Veronica: Actually no, daycare was.

Interviewer: The first time you took her to the library what was that experience like?
Veronica: She’s loud (laughs). Uh, she…so they really, they want it quiet in there and
She’s loud she likes to talk. Um, so it was always like a quick thing like you try to
and explain it to her that you’re supposed to be quiet in there but to her its’ just like a
public place she’s not understanding like the environment of it. It’s not like school
you’re supposed to be quiet. So for her it was fine I mean it was fine in picking out a
book and whatever but it’s more of an in and out thing for her. We can’t stay in
there and read books with her. She has a very loud voice.
Interviewer: What obstacles did you encounter or are currently encountering at the library?
Veronica: (Long pause) I mean, I don’t think really anything.

Interviewer: Do you think about what it might be like for her when she’s a teenager and has to go to the library to work on assignments?
Veronica: Everyday. Everyday. I think about it all the time. I think I sometimes, think too much into it and not giving her enough credit. I just feel that until I know what her speech is actually like when she becomes a teenager or how far she’s gonna be able to get or is something that I need to, that I’m always gonna have to be with her for. Um…it does worry me that depending on how her speech is, is someone else going to…I think I’m more afraid of, um, people just being rude to her because they’re not understanding her if she’s not pronouncing something properly because she hears it differently than we do. So, I mean there are certain things that I do worry about but, I now have the ability to speak to parents that she goes to school with that actually are deaf themselves so I have asked them different questions and they’ve reassured me that you know, you’re always going to run into a problem whether you’re deaf or hearing there’s always gonna be rude people out there so it doesn’t matter. Um…and to just let her be, let her live her life and to give her that chance, so I mean its pretty much the same thing with school with just being in school with other individuals that aren’t like her but, I mean. as of right now, um…it’s the same thing with being in the doctors office. There are some doctors that they will treat you different because of her situation. You know, and that’s not wanting to see her because of her situation. So I just think, just think it all depends. Would I allow her to go to a library within our area? I wouldn’t want her to just because I know that there are people and they’re not very helpful I wouldn’t maybe want her over here.

Interviewer: What about her educational obstacles? Do you think about that?
Veronica: I um, I do worry. Um, I hope that she has very good speech I try my best on having her in speech therapy she’s been, in the very beginning when I found out about the hearing loss I had her in speech therapy three days a week at 2 yrs old, she’s now four, they lowered her down to just 1 day a week for speech therapy because she’s doing so well. I do ask all the time about her education, um, I do see that she’s keeping up to par as a regular 4 yr old with out a hearing loss I try to make sure that she is recognizing her alphabet that she is recognizing her numbers she’s knowing her numbers so, I think I am doing pretty good staying on top of it and her teachers have reassured me plenty that she is doing very well as of now. But, again, she’s in preschool and we have not even got into the reading portion of that and I know that some kids with the hearing loss they tend to have reading issues later in 2nd and 3rd grade so those things worry me so I try to stay on top of her and push her more now.

Interviewer: Do you think, in a library, your child would feel comfortable communicating with a librarian?
Veronica: Um as of right now, no. She directs all questions to me and I don't know if that personality or if that's because of her condition. I don't know. So, a lot of time she will direct things to me and I will ask the questions. I've been dealing with schools where they put her in different situations where she had to speak to another teacher or a teacher's aide so that she will have better communication skills with others. And, it was a little bit of an adjustment but she's done it so she is getting a little bit better with it. And I think again, more that's why I stay away from certain things because I don't want to put her in situations where she's embarrassed or feels shy or out of place.

Interviewer: What would you like to see changed in public libraries to improve services for people who are deaf?

Veronica: Um, I would, I think for me the most important thing is that they have people in there that could possibly sign. Um, that are more accommodating to...all...because it's hard for you to walk in somewhere and, you know, whether you're a different race or if you speak a different language for them its even harder um, because most people, if you go into a library I've never seen one librarian able to sign. So, my concern is when students go in there because they're looking for something how are they supposed...what if she's completely deaf? How is she supposed to walk into ask a librarian for help and explain what she wants she's gotta write everything down on paper? And pass it along? So, its things like that where I feel that they should look for people that can sign um, the same way as you know, as sometimes having another language that another person knows another language to be working there but I think a lot times for the Deaf culture its hard to be around you know I mean its if its hard going into the doctors office and the doctor not knowing it how do you think it be going into a library? Its 50x harder to do that because they're hiring people that can hear and maybe they need to open up to the deaf culture as well because I don't think that a lot of deaf people go in to the library because there's not much... how are they supposed to communicate to get the help? So a lot of times I think you just resource to your computer at home and that's the route I ended up having to take because when I walked into the library explaining the type of hearing loss that my daughter had and I wanted to look it up they it was more like the woman had no clue what I was even talking about um, she never even heard of it. So, I mean, they'll point me to...well I guess you can look down this aisle over here but it really wasn't helpful so I had to reach out to doctors and from this school, I was able to find some information for my daughter as well, but for the most part I really didn't get too far with the library I did a lot of research myself at home.

Interviewer: Do you think it’s important for librarians to know or understand Deaf Culture?

Veronica: Yes I think it’s very important.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you’d like to tell about yourself or your child relating to public libraries?

Veronica: No. I mean, I think that's it.
Interviewer: Anything else?
Veronica: I think there’s you know, especially in a library, depending how many you have there I think that at least 1 should know some basic signing because if they’re going in there, obviously there are deaf children. They’re going to come in there to research things for school projects the same way that a hearing student is going to so it would only be fair to them if they need help to at least get you as far as basic to help these kids. Um, I mean, I’m the same way as of right now, its still basic my daughter is 4 um she just started school last year so I’ve only had a year now of trying to learn the sign. Um, it’s also hard being with a 4 yr old and I don’t want to miss out with her by being in school at night so I’m trying to wait until summer to do my summer classes to where its not like I’m leaving my daughter and I’m only seeing her a little bit. So, I just think that, you know, as a librarian, at least one librarian there should have somewhat of a basic, the same way that you know, they’ll accommodate and they’ll have someone that either speaks Polish or Spanish. I think it should be the same thing for them because that’s what’s gonna keep this kids out of there because they’re not getting the experience and it, as mean as it may sound you get a lot of you know, when these kids are signing they get a lot o stares and they look at you like you’re crazy and like why is your kid doing that? and those have been my experiences and that’s why in all honesty with them telling me my daughter can definitely be mainstreamed I’m not taking her out of the school she’s in because they have the deaf culture there I want her to learn it I want her to familiar with both sides of it and understand it and never feel like she’s out of place. Because putting her in a regular um, school, it would be the same thing, if these teachers don’t know and if she’s not up to par with them what, they’re just gonna hold her back instead of addressing it?

Interviewer: Is that why you picked this particular school?
Veronica: Yes. Because the public schools around here, they basically they would just throw her into a class and if she could stay up to par with them she could and if not then she didn’t. And they would just have her bussed to get speech therapy once a week somewhere but I didn’t want that you know and nobody could accommodate, a lot of these schools cannot accommodate deaf children you have very selected schools and it’s the same thing with being a library and I will not go to Berwyn library anymore because I feel that they’re not helpful some people you can have some of them they don’t understand what you’re looking for, they don’t have an interest in it and I don’t want to say that they’re always rude but in a sense they sometimes are like you’re bothering them. They’re just there for a job and that’s it and that’s not the way that it used to be. And that’s they way I feel, that a lot of times you walk in to the library here and you’re just interrupting what they’re doing they’re just there for a job , it’s just a job they’re getting paid and that’s that. I can’t speak for Chicago but I know that my daughter goes with day care and she’s, I don’t know that she’s ever had a bad experience there with the daycare but again, that’s Chicago not Berwyn.
Interviewer: Anything else you’d like to ask or add?
Veronica: I’ve researched tons of things about children with hearing loss and how they read to how they write and how far they get in life and its sad when they’re not able to read properly because what type of education are these kids ever gonna have? I mean if you can’t be in the library to get it where else are these kids gonna go? I mean, its very hard I’ve read different things on the Internet about ways to help comprehension for a child with hearing loss because they are the ones that suffer, um, I mean not only do you have your comprehension problems but on top of it, you’re not even hearing things properly so its causing even more distress to them because that’s just keeping them away from even wanting to learn because the comprehension is not good on top of that they can’t even read properly so its causing them to not be able to write. And how, as a parent, you don’t want your child like that because at some point, you as a parent, you’re going to pass away and your child is on their own. And those have always been my fears of is she gonna to have a normal life, is she going to be able to live on her own is gonna…so I’ve really tried to stay on top of her and I’ve really tried…sometimes I feel like I need to just let her be a four year old and not push her so much because of what I’m afraid for

There’s a lot of people out there that are very interested in learning sign and that’s why it wouldn’t be a bad idea to, to you know have basic signing um, you can do courses even if there is a fee to it and you know, you’re paying for you know, Sign I, you know for the ASL I it what a $35.00 fee for x amount of a weeks. I think a lot of people would be more involved in that. Cuz I know a lot of people um, being you know, being on Facebook and stuff, a lot of people are trying to research to do it and some of these classes are basic ASL I and II is like a 500 dollar course for 6 weeks. A lot of these people can’t afford that. So, I mean, I have been trying and I found that Daley College in Chicago that I could do it and I think the courses for 8 weeks and it was for ASL I for 118 so its something I mean you’re only going once a week but its something that’s a little bit cheaper to attend. I think that would be a good thing for the library to do the same way they will do Spanish classes.

Interviewer: Is there anything else?
Veronica: No.

Interviewer: Thank you.

--End Interview—