

Nancy Aguilar

Dr. Luis Guadaño

Spanish 369

October 6, 2022

Breaking the Language Barrier:

Midterm Reflection Paper

To be given the opportunity to help out my community it's been a greater honor. To help those with a language barrier to demonstrate the need of medical assistance. Before this internship I was not aware that there has been a non-profit clinic in my community. Chesapeake Care Clinic has given a broader knowledge of medical terminology and working in a clinical setting.

During those 50 hours of interpreting, it has given me a greater understanding as to how interpreters have an interaction with their patient and the clinical staffs. In the beginning of the internship, I entered into an environment that I was not that familiar with. Now after being halfway, I grew to love the experience more each day. From learning medical terminology in Spanish and in English. To also familiarizing myself in medical situations from the patient. Overall growing my knowledge about any misconceptions or gaining more information about certain illnesses.

There have been special situations during my time at the Chesapeake Care Clinic. In which has changed my point of view of doing an internship as an interpreter. There was one patient that left a voicemail, my first instinct was to listen to any Spanish terminology. The

beginning of the call I was having difficulties on comprehending the patient. To my surprise it was Portuguese. It never occurred me that there could be other ethnicity feeling the same language barrier. Furthermore, I decided to be an interpreter for her, in that situation I would be labeled as Ad Hoc interpreter. My understanding Portuguese has some similarities, but the pronunciation can be different. I amazed of myself by understanding some vocabulary. Now I am comfortable in myself to interpret other Latin languages such as Portuguese. One of the memorable experiences so far that changed my perspective on interpreting. Since I had assumed that they were speaking in Spanish. The reason was that the clinic had a demand for Spanish interpreter. Nevertheless, I am now self-aware to not assume that call is designated for Spanish-speakers only.

One problem that I have noticed while interpreting would be that some doctors would not give me enough time to interpret. In some cases, there would be a lot of important information that I would have to remember. At first, I was confident in myself to ask for them to slow or if was rude of me to interrupt. Until I became aware that if I didn't ask, then I would misinterpret for the patient or the doctor. My confidence in being an interpreter has improved since the first day of the internship. In which I gained a skilled set to use, asking lots of questions to the doctor. For instance, can you repeat that for me? Are you able to explain it to me, please? With being comfortable to ask question or even to ask to go to give the interpreter some time to interpret.

Being intercultural aware before the internship has helped me understand the patient more culturally. Being culturally aware as an interpreter is an essential in order to understand the

patient and have a better communication with each other. Not only interpreting is a part of the internship but also giving intercultural lessons. It gives me the opportunity to teach my fellow clinical staff about the Hispanic/Latino community. One the lessons that I have helped my coworkers to get a better knowledge about the Hispanic/Latino culture would be their last names. They were confused at first as to why patients have two last names compared to American culture only having one. In the Hispanic/Latino culture it's a custom to have the second last name of the father and then the mothers second last name for their kids. Just as in American culture by only taking on the father's last name. I have given them a better understanding cultural but not getting the last names confused as a middle name.

Overall, it's only half of the beginning of helping patients with a language barrier. Having challenging situations, that helped me grow as a better interpreter. By helping patients that speaks Portuguese and Spanish. Giving me a better understanding about medical terminology and procedures. In general, with this internship it has given me the opportunity to interpret for Spanish- speaking patients. I am looking forward to the second part of the internship, with newer experiences.