



What Did They Say?

Interpreting for Social Justice

An Introductory Curriculum

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Highlander was founded on the idea that people are experts in their own lives and carry within them what they need to engage in the struggle to improve their lives. Popular education, or education for liberation, honors the knowledge that people bring with them into any given space. This knowledge, gained through everyday living and disseminated through the sharing of peoples' stories, is put front and center in any strategy, effort, and work. Knowledge, understanding, and wisdom come from the people and belong to the people.

In that spirit, Highlander has never believed in the gatekeeping of information and materials. Educational and skill building tools, whether developed at or shared with Highlander, are forwarded and made available to anyone at no cost or for a modest fee to offset the printing costs. This applies to this piece of work – it was not developed for profit-making and we hope that it will not be used as such.

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INTRODUCTION

“The revolution will not just be in English.” A speaker at Highlander’s 75th Anniversary Celebration uttered these words in September 2007. The speaker was looking out onto a tent full of a couple hundred people, all listening intently, though they did not all speak English. However, they heard and understood the words coming out of his mouth as he said them and responded with a hearty applause. How was this possible?

A careful glance around the tent would reveal that many in the audience were wearing headsets; more observation shows several people with microphones providing a simultaneous interpretation of the speaker’s words. Highlander intentionally set up a multilingual space at its anniversary, ensuring that folks could communicate with each other as seamlessly as possible across language barriers. That communication, and what comes of it, is at the heart of interpreting practice in a social justice space.

In the past couple of decades movement spaces are populated more and more by people that speak languages in addition to or instead of English. These folks are being integrated into the US social justice movement through various entry points: immigrant rights, labor justice, or anti-racist work. Sometimes this integration happens organically, sometimes more awkwardly.

Besides the obvious linguistic barriers, which are the focus of this curriculum, there can be other less apparent, yet deep reasons why folks may be wary of working with each other. Among these are different political analyses, a deliberately imposed economy of scarcity, open race-baiting, and a lack of understanding of the global forces that cause millions of people to migrate away from their homes in search of economic sustainability. These wedges are verbalized in political spaces by such comments as “These folks came here on their own, we were brought against our will,” “We do the work no one else wants to do,” “This is not a civil rights issue,” and to this curriculum, “Why don’t they learn English?”

For those who view the building of a broad-based movement that is cross-race, intergenerational, and multi-issue as key to moving forward a progressive social agenda, the above points of dissension raise the following questions:

- How do we build a movement when folks can’t talk to each other?
- How do we create a space where folks can share stories of struggle and triumphs in an effort to find common ground?
- What is needed for folks to be able to sit face-to-face and have the difficult but necessary conversations that move us from a place of distrust to one of understanding and solidarity?

Whatever people may offer as answers to the above, one thing is undeniable: none of these conversations happen if people can’t **talk** to and **understand** each other. Yet the issue goes deeper than the mechanics of language. It is a space where people are invited to bring their whole selves into the room. It is about creating a space where no one language is dominant; rather every language in the room holds equal footing. It is one where all the participants are respectfully committed to a process of open communication and transparency.

This concrete frame can be heady. Let's bring it down a bit to the level of personal experience. Let's think about our own language for a minute. The language that we dream in, the language that we sing in. The language of our lullabies, our stories, our jokes. The language that we use to name our food, our hometowns, ourselves. Language is personal, visceral, and powerful; it is tied to our lands and to our bodies. Every time we open our mouths to speak in our accents and dialects, we identify ourselves and bring all these things with us. When we come together to have the hard conversations, it is important that we are able to express ourselves in the language that most fully conveys the depth and nuance of our hopes and our frustrations.

Interpreters are key to these conversations; so it is important that interpreters in social justice spaces have both the linguistic skills and the political analysis to carry out this important work. This curriculum offers an introduction to both. We hope you find it useful.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is important to take a moment to thank and acknowledge the folks who laid the groundwork or in other ways contributed to both this curriculum and Highlander's current multilingual work.

Highlander worked on developing its multilingual analysis and practice for many years. The passing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993 and its consequent influx of immigrants into the US from many parts of the world, particularly Latin America, affected Highlander's strategy for achieving social change. Highlander started doing work across political borders and trying to figure out how to plug all the internationally displaced folks now living in the US into social justice work in their local communities. This required tackling the question of communication and language.

Highlander's current Multilingual Capacity Building (MLCB) Program has its roots in that particular moment in time. We acknowledge and honor all the folks – both English and non-English speakers – who worked with and pushed Highlander to develop its analysis and practice around language.

Thanks also to some specific folks who shaped both the work and this curriculum. Alice Johnson was the first person to coordinate the MLCB program at Highlander. She laid the foundation, developed the work, and left some big shoes to fill. Andrea Arias – Center for Participatory Change in Asheville, NC – has been a deeply invested ally and partner in language work from the beginning and continues to provide practical support and encouragement in our frequent collaborations. Pancho Arguelles Paz y Puente – Colectivo Flatlander in Houston, TX. Pancho is an excellent mentor and comrade to Alice, Andrea, and me, mostly by fervently setting up and maintaining the integrity of multilingual spaces to make sure that no one is left out of the conversation and everyone's voice is heard. We thank Alice and Pancho both for the opening quote.

The Language Access Team of the US Social Forum – Atlanta 2007 – which included Alice as well as Hilary Klein (San Francisco) and Viviana Rennella (Oakland). Preparing the language access plan for the US Social Forum was one of the most challenging assignments I have ever undertaken; it was also an invaluable learning opportunity that greatly informed this curriculum.

The MLCB interns that have come through Highlander in the last three years – Daniel Chapman (Atlanta, GA), Francisco Flores (Memphis, TN), John Van Rooy (Rochester, MN), Amber Martin (Amherst, MA), and Maria Ana Gonzales (Buenos Aires, Argentina) – have done much of the important and many times tedious work required to develop the program. Highlander Intern Elizabeth Wright – (Knoxville, TN) – sketched and wrote the first grant proposal specifically for the MLCB program, which is still used. Highlander Intern Kaylea Algire (Roanoke, VA) was here for the home stretch. She did much of the editing and all the layout, as well as contributed brilliant ideas to the popular education and other sections of the curriculum.

Gustavo Orellana (Chicago, IL) took the plunge and co-facilitated this workshop when we were still working out the bugs. Tony Macias (Durham, NC) and Patrick Lincoln (Harrisonburg, VA) - who through discussion and co-facilitation of this workshop have deepened the analysis and sharpened the exercises from their original templates.

All the folks that have come through Highlander’s Interpreting for Social Justice Workshop over the last four years – both at Highlander and in their local communities. Each group of folks helped refine the curriculum as well as pushed to make it adaptable.

Finally, my immigrant family, and especially my grandparents – Guadalupe y Hortencia Mercado – who in their desire that their grandchildren not lose their mother tongue, constantly said “En Español, por favor” whenever we spoke in English. That desire and discipline wired my brain for playing with words, stoked my love of languages, and engendered my preoccupation with achieving communication between people through language negotiation.



PURPOSE AND USE OF CURRICULUM

This curriculum was designed as an introduction to the concept of interpreting in a social justice context and creating a multilingual space. It is known informally as “Level 1” or “101.”

People who find themselves negotiating language in a social justice context come from different backgrounds and have different levels of experience. Some folks come from formal interpreting training programs, which emphasize skills, technique, and offer a very defined analysis of the ethics of interpreting. Most folks however, find themselves in the catchall position of “interpreter” because they are bilingual and happen to be the person available at the time. Their learning comes from everyday practice. Both methods of learning have their advantage. Similarly, folks who engage in this work can be in very different places in terms of their politics. Some folks come with a well-developed personal politic, while other folks focus primarily on language negotiation with very little attention paid to the power dynamics and ethical questions that are present in every interpreting situation. These workshops are usually comprised of folks from all these divergent positions.

This dissimilarity presents the challenge of creating a curriculum that provides learning opportunities for everyone in the room. The curriculum was intentionally designed to push everyone’s thinking and skills in a way that allows them to move at their own pace. Especially around the analysis/discussion, there is flexibility in terms of participant’s personal political development. Additionally, the entire curriculum was developed using a popular education frame and methodology. To the extent possible, participants will be learning from each to other and engaged in a peer review process. The role of the facilitator should be to move the participants through a collective learning process.

The curriculum is comprised of modules that build on each other and that are presented here in the chronological order in which they are realized in the current workshops. Facilitators should feel free to follow the flow as presented here, or to use only those modules that are pertinent to them. As with all popular education, we hope folks make the curriculum their own and tweak or adapt it to use in their local communities. We would also hope that they share it freely with others doing this work.

Conversely, this curriculum is not setting itself up to be *THE WAY*. Rather it is a tool to help us think about the politics of interpreting and to practice the necessary skills. This ethos of avoiding absolutes helps to navigate some of the murkier waters. For example, many times in interpreter spaces you there are a 45 minute discussion on the correct way to interpret a word or phrase. The beauty of language is that you don’t have to pick one definitive one. (Off the top of my head, I can think of four different options for the English word *straw[drinking]*: popote, pajilla, sorbete, pitillo.) Each one is right in its own context and definitely in its country of origin. Participants should be encouraged to appreciate the fluidity and expanse of language instead of being tied down to deciding on the definitive interpretation (with more than 25 countries around the globe that claim Spanish as their official language, it’s never gonna happen).

The same can be extended to some of the ethical questions posed by the practice scenarios. Not everyone responds the same way to similar situations. Though guiding principles are offered

throughout the curriculum, there is always the conflict that exists between the ideal and real life. The important thing to remember is that every decision we make as interpreters impact both the conversation itself as well as all parties present.

This leads to a final note about tone: A couple dynamics contribute to the tendency to want establish a definitive answer. One is that interpreting – especially at a specialized professional level – can be a very competitive and ego-driven profession. The other is that it can be a nerve-racking experience to interpret in front of other interpreters. These dynamics are two sides of the same coin and together can create a learning environment that inhibits folks from taking chances and trying new things. Setting a tone and drawing agreements at the beginning in such a way that establishes the workshop as a space of mutual support and encouragement is a helpful way for participants to put themselves out there.

SOURCES AND CREDITS

Former and current Highlander staff developed parts of this curriculum. Other parts come from well known training publications. Still others come from them being shared in a “I saw this done at a workshop once” kind of way. Whenever possible, participants are referred to acknowledged source material

PREPARATION AND FACILITATION

The following is a list of considerations when preparing for the training. These considerations are informed by the learning objectives of the training. Thinking about them before hand will save the facilitators from having to make a series of on the spot decisions around learning goals.

- 1) Use of language in the space
- 2) Outreach and recruitment
- 3) Space and Materials
- 4) Popular Education

USE OF LANGUAGE IN THE SPACE

In talking about multilingual spaces, especially in the context of immigrant rights organizing, people tend to default to an english-spanish combination. Keeping to an English-Spanish combination undermines the language justice principles that we are trying lay out in both this curriculum and the broader language justice work. The purpose of this training is the creation spaces where ALL languages represented in the room are on equal footing and that allow for participants to be able to express themselves in the language that most genuinely “speaks” to their experience.

With a little planning, these language trainings can be designed to accommodate as many language combinations as needed. It is important however that there be at least two people that speak and work in the same language combination (i.e. two EN-SP, two EN-Kurdish, etc). This is because the skills building portion of the curriculum involves actually interpreting practice and requires working with partners that speak the same language. That some of the exercises in this curriculum are presented with a Spanish-English binary combination is reflective only of the author’s particular skill sets and not any inherent value placed on English-spanish bilingualism over other language combinations.

To create space that equally honors all language combinations, a specific group agreement may be helpful. Because folks come from different language backgrounds, and because this workshop is about linguistic accessibility, participants are invited to speak in whatever language is most comfortable to them. The agreement, however, is that if someone speaks in a language that is not understood by everyone in the room, they must repeat themselves in a commonly understood language (usually English). This insures that everyone understands what is being said in the public space.

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

Who is in the room of any learning space impacts what is learned and how it is learned. It’s helpful for the facilitators to have a clear understanding of their purpose in offering the training. This will inform who is invited into the room and by extension, the outreach effort.

There are different ways to think about for whom this training would be most useful. One thought is that this training should be geared toward people that are already interpreting in social justice spaces regardless of their interpreting skill level.

The implication is that these interpreters already have a political context around power dynamics. The workshop would serve to connect this understanding to the role of linguistic accessibility and would also provide the opportunity to sharpen their interpreting skills. Conversely, there is the thought that the training should be geared towards skilled practicing interpreters who have a good foundation of the mechanics and ethics of interpreting. The workshop would provide the political analysis of language as a tool of power and the interpreter's role in the negotiation of power dynamics. Still another thought is that the invitation should be made to both types of interpreters. This mixed environment requires all participants to be simultaneously challenged by new ideas and to learn to be present with their current experiences and skill sets.

Highlander facilitates workshops using all three models. One is not inherently better than another. The decision of which model to use should be informed by the organizers' political and learning goals as well as the strategic needs of the community. Regardless of which model is used, the outreach materials - applications and announcements - should specify who is welcome to apply.

SPACE AND MATERIALS

The facilitation space should be comfortable and conducive to long days of learning. Besides the usual suspects of good ventilation, good lighting, and accessibility, the ideal space should also allow for folks to sit in a circle and has enough break out space to accommodate a large number of small groups. A space that allows some of the work to be done outside would be particularly helpful but not necessary.

Basic Materials:

Flip Charts

Markers

Pens

Notepads

Tape

Name Tags

Music

8 1/2 x 11 construction paper

Scissors

Interpreting Equipment if available

Plastic ware (knives, forks, spoons)

Soccer ball

4 Orange cones if available

Postcards (optional)

Certificates (optional)

POPULAR EDUCATION



Popular Education begins with the idea that people already have the knowledge within themselves to change the world around them. We start each workshop by posting expectations, and guidelines to maintain a respectful, anti-oppression space. Participants accept each guideline before moving on. This is important because there needs to be freedom of expression so that everyone can learn and can be comfortable to learn. Workshops begin by listening to participants. From their stories connections are made to the similarities in their lives. Each participant's experiences and opinions are valued, even if they are different from our own. Popular education is not about a teacher transmitting information to students, but it is about creating a space where the facilitator and the participants share and learn from each other.

Once participants see where their experiences overlap, they are exposed to new information to expand what they already know. This new information, compounded from what they can learn from others, results in more effective organizing efforts. At this point participants engage in a participatory activity that reinforces the knowledge they brought with them, the knowledge gained from others, and the introduced new theory. After the interactive activity, participants debrief about what they experienced and how they can apply it in their communities. The important thing about the debrief is for the participants to take away ideas and information to share with their communities as part of their capacity building effort, again resulting in more effective organizing.

Popular education does not put people through a formal, industrialized system. Participants already come with knowledge and information. It is the facilitator's job to connect and guide people through their learning and to maintain an anti-oppression space. The positioning of everyone in the space as an equal learner and teacher engenders self-confidence and invites everyone to value what they bring to the table. Overall, popular education empowers people to do their work in communities with a strong belief in who they are and what they would like their community to be.

SETTING UP THE SPACE: Icebreakers, Introductions, and Agreements

Concentric Circle exercise modified from Training for change

Materials: flip charts, 8.5x11 construction paper, markers, tape. music

Time: 60-90 minutes

Objectives:

- Participants start the process of getting to know each other and building the trust needed to do the work ahead.
- Participants claim their responsibility in the learning process.
- Participants decide on collective agreements to guide interactions in the space throughout the workshop.
- Participants engage in first skill building exercise

Facilitator explains that in the first session participants will have multiple opportunities to present themselves to each other and the group. The first will be a quick round-robin to get to know who is in the room and how folks want to be addressed throughout the training.

Everyone goes around and states

Name (participants offer their formal name and/or what they go by or would like to be called throughout the workshop)

Gender Pronoun Preference (Can be asked simply as “What gender pronoun do you use/prefer?” or modeled as “I’m Roberto and I use male gender pronouns.”) We recognize that some folks both identify and present themselves in terms of gender identity in ways that may be non-conforming to mainstream norms. This allows for folks to define for themselves how they would like to be addressed. It also speaks to the idea of assumptions – in this case the assumption we make about a person’s gender-identification based on what we perceive visually – and the value of asking. Interpreters should be wary of making assumptions about anyone in the spaces they work in; instead, they should have the confidence to ask the necessary question to get the information they need to do their job well.

Where they are from (folks can self-determine how to answer this question – it can be current community, country of origin, etc)

This is also a good time to

- pass out name tags if it hasn’t been done so already
- bring up the issue of audio or video recording, if necessary

After the initial go-through, the group can proceed to the following, more involved exercise

Concentric Circles

Context: In creating a popular education learning space, it is important for folks to recognize the role they play in their own learning. This is balanced against the learning provided by the facilitators. Learning partners provide a mechanism for participants to be able to check in with someone besides the facilitator about the learning goals, needs, and process.

Exercise: Participants are asked to form two circles –an inner and an outer one. Everyone should be looking at someone directly in front of them. Music is played and the two circles move in opposite directions. When the music stops, participants turn look at who is in front of them. Facilitator explains that this is their learning partner (or accountabilibuddy) for the weekend.

Pairs of partners are invited to find a spot where they can talk. The facilitator reads three statements to prompt discussion around learning (these should be already printed on a flip chart).

They are:

- Something that helps me learn is...
- Something that gets in the way of my learning is...
- One way you can support my learning is...

The facilitator reads the first question aloud. One partner goes first – they have one uninterrupted minute to finish the statement. The other partner is engaged in active listening – not asking questions or saying “that happens to me too”. Just listening. The facilitator will call time and read the second statement aloud. The same person again has a minute to reply. This is followed by the third statement. Following the third statement the sequence is repeated with the roles reversed.

Something that helps me learn is...

Something that gets in the way of my learning is...

One way you can support my learning is...

Helps	Hinders	Support

After both partners have a turn, folks come back into the big group. The facilitators repeat the first statement again and ask folks to share what came up in the conversations with their partners. These will be captured on the flip chart. Push folks to be concrete in their offerings (e.g. “What do you mean by/can you give an example of “trust”?). This is more helpful than general statements. The same is repeated for the remaining two statements.

Group Agreements

These offerings also serve as the basis for group agreements. After having discussed all three statements, facilitator and participants should look over the articulated learning needs and from them glean the principles and agreed upon practices that will guide how everyone works together throughout the weekend. The “trust” example above can be expounded to touch on active listening, mutual respect for each other and our different opinions, etc.

When the group is finished listing principles and practices, the facilitators should look for any gaps or specific agreements that would be helpful (e.g. please keep phones on vibrate so if you get called you won't disrupt the process) and offer these to the group. Ultimately folks are asked if they feel they can agree to the list as a group. The list can always be added-to or modified if needed.

Note: Some folks call these ground rules. Participants can be asked to list what they would do for themselves and fellow participants to be able to participate fully in the workshop. In Highlander workshops, we frame these agreements as creating an anti-Oppression space, as opposed to a neutral or safe space. Meaning, that besides asking folks to be mindful of what they put in the public space, we also make a collective agreement to challenge any comment that is deemed to be racist, sexist, homophobic, etc., or that makes any participant feel unsafe.

- Because folks come from different language backgrounds, and because this workshop is about bilingual accessibility, participants are invited to speak in whatever language is most comfortable to them. The agreement, however, is that if someone speaks in a language that is not understood by everyone in the room, they must repeat themselves in a commonly understood language (usually English). This insures that everyone understands what is being said in the public space.
- The collective agreements are also a good space to have the discussion about creating a supportive and non-judgmental working environment.
- At the end of this section, it is also a good idea to set up a parking lot section using flip chart paper, where participants write down topics that may need further discussion before the workshop is over.
- On another sheet of flip chart paper, we also create a self-facilitated vocabulary list. This list is created by participants who, throughout the weekend, write down specific words or phrases that come up for which they would like suggestions on translations. There's usually not enough time to have a group discussion on the words that are noted on the paper, so participants are asked throughout the weekend to jot down their translation suggestions underneath the proposed word.
- This is also a good section to talk about any logistics around space, food, etc., and remind participants to take care of themselves throughout the workshop.

- Because of the participatory nature of this workshop, we strongly encourage participants to sit in a circle where they can see each other, as opposed to sitting in rows.
- There are many different icebreaker exercises and facilitators should feel free to use whichever exercise feels comfortable to them.
- There are 60-90 minutes allotted for this grounding work, which can vary depending on the size of the group. While it is important to be mindful of time, it is equally important to not rush the process by which participants start to get to know one another.

30 Second Intro

One set of partners comes into the middle of the circle. When the facilitator says “Go”, one partner introduces himself to the group by speaking for 30 seconds. There are no assigned topics. The person has 30 seconds to tell the group anything they want to about themselves. Their partner is listening intently because when the facilitator calls time, the partner will immediately relays the information to the group – IN FIRST PERSON.

Guidelines: 1) no helping from group or partner – the point is to see how much information was retained. For this introductory exercise, it doesn’t matter if whole chunks are forgotten. 2) Relayer should not stop the process in an effort to remember a forgotten detail. If they get to a gap in the relays, they should decide on a strategy quickly and move on. Quick decision-making is an important interpreter skill.

This exercise introduces participants to interpreting skills and principles (memory, cache, recall, and using first person) that they will be building on over the rest of the workshop. It also gives folks the opportunity to deal with any stage-fright they may have about interpreting in front of others.



BUSINESS CARDS: Who's in the Room?

Alice Johnson, Andrea Arias, and Roberto Tijerina

Materials: flip chart paper, markers, tape

Time: 60 minutes

Objective:

- **Get a picture of the different type of interpreters and the different type of interpreting work that is represented by the participants in the room.**
- **Allows participants to start connecting with other folks that may be doing similar language work as they.**

Facilitator prepares a flip chart with the following:

Name

Organization (Organizational affiliations is not necessary to complete this exercise. Participants representing one organization should all work together to make one organizational business card. Individuals can make either an organizational business card, or if they are freelancers, an individual business card. Organization info should include name of the organization and location [City & State, if the gathering is regional; complete street address if all the participants are from the same city.]

What (Document translation, one-on-one interpretation, large meeting interpretation, conference interpretation, telephone interpretation, any other language negotiation)

Where (Doctor's office, courts, attorney's office, social service agencies, social justice organizations, political spaces)

Who (Who does the interpreting? Staff interpreters, contracted interpreters, community members)

How (Simultaneous or consecutive, with or without equipment, relay)

Languages (What language does your organization work with? Who is this audience?)

Facilitators then give each participant one sheet of flip chart paper and several markers. Participants are asked to create a business card that includes all of the above information. The facilitator explains that we are trying to capture the different types of language work that are represented in the room. Participants are encouraged to be as creative as they want when creating their business cards. If several participants represent one organization, they should work together in creating one collective business card. Participants who are there by themselves can create an organizational or personal business card (*in the event that they freelance or are not affiliated to an organization*).

Participants are given 15-20 minutes to design their business cards. When they are finished, participants come back to the larger group to present their work. Facilitators should be mindful to ask participants to offer a brief snapshot of their work as they work their way down the list. Participants can make opportunities deeper explanations throughout the workshop. Participants are then invited to post their business cards throughout the room for the duration of the workshop.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY (Part 1): Interpreter Fishbowl

Materials: four chairs, flip chart, marker, tape

Time: 60 Minutes



Objectives:

- Participants come to see the commonalities in their interpreting experiences.
- Participants and facilitators identify common themes in terms of questions and frustrations.
- Participants and facilitators start connecting through shared stories.
- Identify stories from participants' actual experiences to use as case studies.

This is a typical fishbowl exercise. It offers participants the ability to identify common experiences and dynamics in their interpreting work by means of sharing “war stories”.

Participants create a small circle within the larger circle, comprised of four chairs. Facilitators asks for four volunteers to start the sharing process. There are three basic guidelines: the outside circle must remain completely quiet while the inside circle is speaking, only one person is allowed to speak at a time, everyone is encouraged to take a turn speaking.

The facilitator starts the process by asking folks to take a couple minutes to think about their everyday interpreting work. Participants are asked to recall memorable interpreting experiences. These can be times when the interpreting went horribly awry, when there was a breakdown in communication, or when the participants felt inadequate as interpreters. They can also be stories of successful interpreting when they communication just flowed, and the participants felt confident in their skills. Lastly, they can be stories of times where participants found themselves in

interpreting situations where either ethical or linguistic decisions had to be made and the interpreters did not know what to do.

After a few minutes of thinking, the facilitator invites four volunteers to start the discussion. Participants are then asked to have an informal conversation – like having coffee with friends. If someone in the outer circle wants to share, they can quietly tap the shoulder of one of the participants in the smaller circle, and trade places with them.] They should ask someone who’s already shared, as opposed to someone who has not shared yet. [Facilitator should ask if there are any participants that do not like to be touched and if so how they prefer to be signaled.]

The facilitator plays a light role, mostly guiding the conversation if it stalls. Examples: “Has anyone ever been interpreting when the speaker said a word, and your mind totally blanked and you couldn’t come up with the equivalent word? How did you handle it?”, “Have you ever been interpreting in a situation where someone was asked a question and the person turned to you and said, ‘Don’t tell them this but...’?” These are sure to generate discussion.

While the participants share their stories, the facilitator captures some of the common themes that are presented in the conversation on the flip chart. Some of the common themes are: vocabulary mastery, recovery skills, interpreter role, placement of interpreter, power dynamics, and preparation. Besides capturing the themes, the facilitator should keep an ear out for particularly interesting stories that can be used as case studies for the following exercise or the Lorenzo Reyes show. (See Appendix) At the end of the fishbowl, facilitator and participants review the lists of common themes and highlight the ones that came up most often.

Note: This can vary greatly depending on the size of the group and the energy in the room. Sometimes the stories flow nonstop through the entire hour, sometimes the flow stops after about 30 minutes. The facilitator needs to balance pushing the participants to share while not forcing a conversation. This particular exercise offers a bit of a buffer in terms of time, in case the previous exercises go a little bit long.

It is helpful if the participants are asked to think of scenarios they have experienced or questions that have come up for them before arriving at the workshop (perhaps in a welcome or logistics email). This allows folks to think ahead of time and not be pressed to come up with something on the spot. Sample language: “Because this is a popular education workshop and the learning is based on your life, we ask folks to come prepared to share interesting interpreting experiences - good or bad.”

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY (Part 2): Interpreter Role Play

Time: 30-60 minutes

Objectives

- Use stories pulled from the fish bowl to highlight technical problems and ethical challenges.
- Discuss, evaluate, and come up with options to deal with these challenges.
- Identify best practices

The facilitators identify teachable scenarios from ones shared in the fish bowl. When the fish bowl exercise is over facilitators ask the participants that presented those scenarios if they would be willing to share for some group learning. The participants are asked to recruit volunteers from the group, break down the scenario to them in detail, and then re-enact it for the group. The facilitator lists the specific teaching points that should be highlighted during the reenactment. Participants are then given time to prepare.

When the group comes back together, folks take turns reenacting a scenario. after each reenactment the facilitator opens a conversation. For example, if the scenario is one in which the interpreter is aware that one of the parties is lying and the question is: Does the interpreter knowingly repeat the lie? Does the interpreter stop the process to call out the lie? What are the ethics behind each decision? After the group thoroughly discusses the scenarios the facilitator asks:

“What could have been done differently?”

“What options did the interpreter have?”

“What could have been done before and after the interpreting event?”

--OR--

- What were the power dynamics at play in this scenario? Who had the power? Was there more than one person with power? What, if anything, did the different characters have to lose?
- What do you think about the decision the interpreter made? What was the consequence of that decision? What are other possible consequences of that decision?
- What other choices could the interpreter have made, and what would have been possible consequences to those?

Note:

- Ideally the scenarios should be pulled from the real life stories from the fish bowl. The facilitators should be listening carefully to the stories to identify the ones with teaching potential. If no stories with teaching potential are identified, the facilitators should have two or three scenarios ready to use in their stead.
- The facilitators should choose scenarios that really highlight issues of power and self-determination. Also those that present clear ethical challenges in respect to the interpreter’s role.

- A break is useful after the fish bowl. This allows the facilitators to setup the scenarios with the participants who presented them. At Highlander workshops the fishbowl is done right before lunch and the role play right after lunch. This gives the participants plenty of time to prepare.
- The discussions around these scenarios will lay the ground for the later power analysis around language. The scenarios and ensuing discussions are usually deep, animated, and passionate. They get to the core of this training - language and power. The facilitator should keep in mind the flow of the curriculum and remember that there is a specific module later in the curriculum that fleshes out these points concretely. The point is to get the participants thinking about the complexities of the interpreter role, not necessarily to give them answers at this point. So while it is important not to cut off these conversations and let participants start exploring these questions, facilitators should be careful to not undermine the overall learning course of learning. A suggested frame: "this exercise is meant to raise up all these issues and questions. It gives us the opportunity to discuss, analyze and brainstorm options for them. We want to hold these discussions as we proceed through the rest of the workshop. Closer towards the end we delve more concretely in the issues raised by these scenarios."
- It is ok to ask participants to intentionally sit with these questions. The resolution discussion will come the following day. Meanwhile the participants are invited to mull over any uncertainty, anxiety, and lack of comfort overnight to see what insights they may have to share the next day.
- After trying out a new dynamic, the next scenario can be played out. The flow of the exercise is role play --> discuss --> role play with new strategies --> next scenario.
- This exercise should leave the participants mulling over questions of autonomy, buffering, and personal power.



BRAIN, BODY AND HEART IN INTERPRETING

Andrea Arias, Alice Johnson, Roberto Tijerina

Materials: Flip chart, markers

Time: 30 Minutes

Objectives:

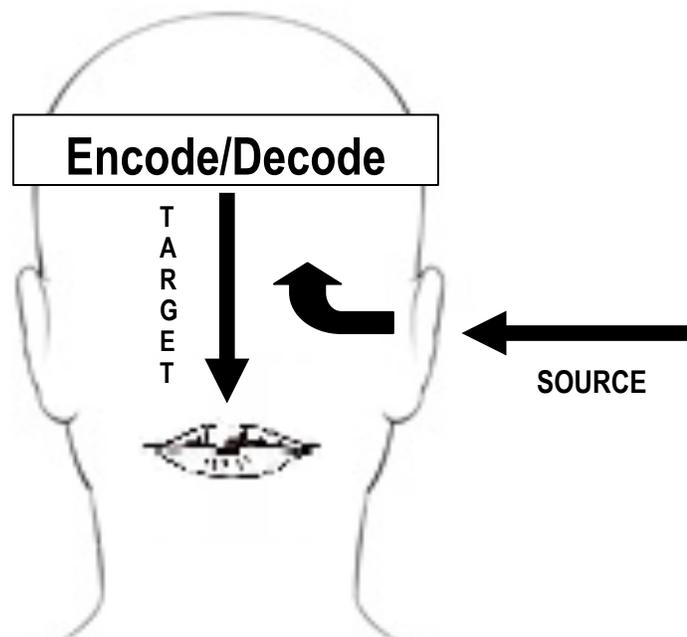
- Participants will understand the physiological and mental processes involved in interpreting
- Participants will discuss what are the concrete mental skills required in interpreting
- Participants will discuss some of the physical and emotional responses to interpreting

Facilitator replicates the drawing below on a flip chart.

Interpreting requires the brain to engage in several physiological/mental processes at the same time. To understand the mental skills needed for interpreting, it is important to understand the interpreting process at its most brass tacks.

When people talk, what is happening is more than an exchange of words. It is an exchange of ideas and concepts. One person has a discrete concept in their mind and they are trying to transmit/communicate that thought to another person. Words are really just codes imposed onto the concepts to be able to transmit them.

In interpreting, the interpreter hears the words that comprise the message with their ears. This message then travels electronically to the brain, where the message is stripped of the codes down to the essential concept. This process is called decoding. Once the brain determines that it has captured the concept, it starts the process of adding code – encoding – by adding layers of words that the receiver will understand. This encoded message then travels down from the brain to the mouth or hands (ASL).



There are certain “brain skills” – listed below – that are important to proficient interpreting. Participants can be asked to brainstorm these and the facilitator can fill out the missing ones.

- Focus/Concentration: interpreters need to be able to focus on both the message and the process
- Cache: the brain has storage compartments called caches (pronounced CASH or CASHES). It can be compared to RAM memory on a computer. It holds information in storage until its needed and recalled. Folks have different size caches with different retention capacity. Caches are not static. They can be strengthened and enlarged with memory retention exercises. Interpreters should know the capacity and limitation of their cache; this will help determine if consecutive, simultaneous, or both types of interpreting are a better fit for them.
- Recall: It is important to be able to retrieve the information stored in the cash quickly and accurately.
- Multitasking and split-focus: It is important to be able to focus on the interpreting process and other things that distract the interpreter (equipment, outside noise). Also, the brain is working at two levels many times: negotiating the message while analyzing it at the same time.
- Quick decision making: along with good recall, interpreters have to make split second decisions in terms of word choices, recovery of lost words, and judgment calls.

Below are a list of techniques, that while not physiological brain skills, are integral to proficient interpreting.

- Chunking: Recall studies show that the human brain can remember up to 7 discrete pieces of information before starting to lose accuracy. Going back to the cache as computer memory analogy, the brain has the capacity to squeeze discrete pieces of information into chunks, thereby making more room in the cache. An example of this is a telephone number. We usually don't try to remember them as seven or ten discrete numbers (8-6-4-3-7-3-8-5-4-3). Rather we chunk them into pieces that make them easier to remember: (864) (373) (85)(43) or (8543). By compacting information this way, we make room for more chunks and by extension, more information.
- Expansion/Contraction: Some times when a specific word is dropped or unknown, these two techniques can be used to convey the concept. As a basic example of expansion, if the interpreter forgot the linguistic equivalent of the English word “color”, they could expand on the concept by offering a list of concrete examples. “You know, like red, green, blue, yellow.” This would convey the concept of color. Contraction works in the opposite direction. If the speaker is naming a long list of related items or words and the interpreter does not know them all, they can contract the discrete words into a heading. For example, if the speakers lists love seat, recliner, chaise, sofa, etc., the interpreter can say “chairs” if they are having trouble keeping up or don't know the exact interpretation of every single word on the list.
- Drop the English: Sometimes it is easy to get caught up in the words. Interpreters focus on matching word for word and forget they are transmitting concepts and ideas, not words. When a word is dropped, the focus on matching the exact word stops the interpreting process while the interpreter struggles to find the right word. In simultaneous interpreting, the source message continues without interpretation. In those moments, it's good to breathe and remind ourselves that we are dealing with ideas.

If the interpreter is fluent in the source language and understand the concepts the speaker is putting forth, and is equally fluent in the target language, they have what they need to interpret. Construct the message in a way that is understandable to the listener. This is not as ideal as having structural and word equivalency, but it will get the message conveyed.

- Anticipation: the brain has a natural tendency to recognize and fill in gaps in sequences. This can be seen in brain teasers and mind puzzles where there is a component missing from a pattern or a word missing from a sentence. At first reading we may not notice the missing word because our brain fills in the gap. The same is true for human speech. There are certain sequences - based on grammar, syntax, vernacular, etc - that the brain is wired to recognize. When listening to discourse the brain recognizes these patterns and finishes the thought before the speakers utters it. These few seconds of extra time results in flexibility for the interpreter. Speakers sometimes throw curve balls or go in unanticipated directions, so the interpreter should be mindful not to become overly dependent on anticipation or follow the speaker too closely.

Besides what happens in the brain, there are also physical and emotional processes and responses involved in interpreting that are worth a quick mention.

Physical

Be able to physically hear the message
Able to speak loudly and clearly
Have good diction
Important to stay hydrated
Sometimes required to stand for long periods
Breathing (will help keep a steady pace as opposed to slowing down and speeding up)
Do not breathe into the mic or create other noise around

Emotional

Able to convey, but not mimic, the emotion
Able to hold but separate personal feelings
Able to remain impartial

NUTS AND BOLTS

Alice Johnson, Roberto Tijerina

Materials: flip charts, markers, interpreting equipment

Time: 60 Minutes

Objective:

- Participants will be introduced to a concrete interpreting frame based on a working definition of interpreting
- Participants will learn what does and does not constitute interpreting as well as the different modes of interpreting and other language negotiation techniques
- Participants will discuss the dynamics of most common social justice interpreting spaces
- Participants will be introduced to working with equipment, and will have the opportunity to try the equipment out
- Participants will discuss the value of working with a partner and learn techniques as to how to do it effectively
- Participants will discuss a variety of troubleshooting techniques

Start this section by passing out the interpreting equipment. Make sure that each participant has a working receiver and earpiece. These will come into play later.

What follows is a list of basic interpreting concepts that interpreters should be familiar with to do this work skillfully. There are of no particular order of importance. This section is the most traditional lecture-style portion of the curriculum. To prevent standing and talking for a solid hour, the facilitator may want to introduce the different topics and ask the participants what they know about them. After capturing the collective knowledge in the room, the facilitator may fill in the missing points. This section can go at a pretty quick pace – the information is useful and helps round out interpreting skills, but does not require deep discussion.

Fields of Interpreting:

Medical	
Specialized Vocabulary Training/Certification One-on-one Consecutive Liability	
Legal	
Specialized Vocabulary Training/Certification One-on-one Consecutive Liability	
Conference	
Mostly Simultaneous Prepared Material Breakouts Written Material Opportunity to Prepare	
Ad-hoc/Community	
Informal Consecutive or Simultaneous Relay Interpreting Improvised Requires Flexibility	

Modes of Interpreting: Simultaneous, Consecutive

Other Forms of Language Negotiation: Translating, Transliterating (written), Transliterating (visual), Relay, Sight Translation

Interpreting: Translating a message through the process of encoding/decoding, from a source language to a target language without adding, deleting, or changing.

Not Interpreting: Paraphrasing, Summarizing, Add/Subtract

A Language: Mother-tongue, usually first language learned, language we dream in, understand cultural nuances, can manipulate expertly, can code-switch

B Language: Acquired language, fluent and conversational, can code-switch, understand cultural nuances, can manipulate at an almost or at a native level

C Language: Acquired language, not fluent, does not understand cultural nuances, cannot code-switch, does not have mastery of vocabulary or grammar

Fields of Interpreting:

The four most common arenas for social justice interpreters to work are Medical Interpreting, Legal Interpreting, Conference Interpreting, and Ad-hoc/Community Interpreting. The facilitator will draw the figure below on flip chart paper, and ask the participants what they would say are the defining characteristics of each field of interpreting. Medical and Legal interpreting are very similar, in that they are both usually consecutive interpreting involving two individuals. They both require specialized vocabulary and depending on the state or municipality, specialized certification. It is important to note to participants that this training does not qualify as any type of specialized training; folks that are seeking specialized training are encouraged to look at their local community college or universities, many whom offer interpretive training programs and/or degrees in interpretation.

Conference interpreting usually requires a higher skill level, and for the most part is simultaneous. It also mostly requires the use of interpretation equipment though not always, especially if there are break-out sessions. Conference interpreting requires a more general knowledge base for vocabulary development; it also many times offers the luxury of being able to obtain prepared material ahead of time. This allows the interpreter to come into the space already familiar with what is going to be said. Finally, there is Ad-hoc/Community interpreting, probably the type of interpreting that folks in social justice spaces work in the most. If one is lucky, one has the opportunity to prepare, many times however, these are last minute requests and the interpreter has to show up prepared to interpret anything. This type of interpreting requires lots of flexibility, because you never know what the space will look like, if you'll have equipment or not, if the attendees are familiar with working with an interpreter, if you'll have a partner, or if you'll even have a break. The tone and the dress sometimes allow for a bit less formality.

Modes and Other Types of Language Negotiation:

There are only two modes of interpreting, **simultaneous** and **consecutive**. **Simultaneous interpreting** is when the message is being relayed instantaneously, sometimes with a two or three word delay. Many times it involves the use of equipment.

Consecutive interpreting is when the speaker speaks in chunks, pauses to let the interpreter relay that chunk, and continues to the next chunk. It involves turn taking, and can double the length of a session. These are the only two **modes** of interpreting. There are other ways to negotiate language, but they are not considered interpreting. The following list explains the different ways to relay and negotiate language:

- *Interpreting*: To work between two languages orally or visually (manually)
- *Translating*: To work between two written languages with a shared alphabet (e.g. English to Spanish)
- *Sight-translation*: To work from a written document into a verbal translation
- *Transliterating (written)*: to work between two different languages that do not share an alphabet (e.g. English to Arabic)
- *Transliterating (visual)*: Assigning English word equivalents to specific signs as opposed to working with English and ASL
- *Relay Interpreting*: Working with three or more languages. It involves setting up a sequence of relay interpreters, each of which is fluent in at least two languages

Note:

- Depending on time and group energy the facilitator can just list and state the characteristics of each field and ask for additional comments at the end.

Paraphrasing and Summarizing are two language negotiation techniques, but are not interpreting. Interpreting involves staying as close to the message as possible without adding, deleting, or editing. It conveys tone, register, and emotion.

To do interpretation well, interpreters should limit themselves to working between their A & B languages. Interpreters can work with their C language in a pinch, but are discouraged from doing so because it can lead to misunderstandings and breakdown in communication.

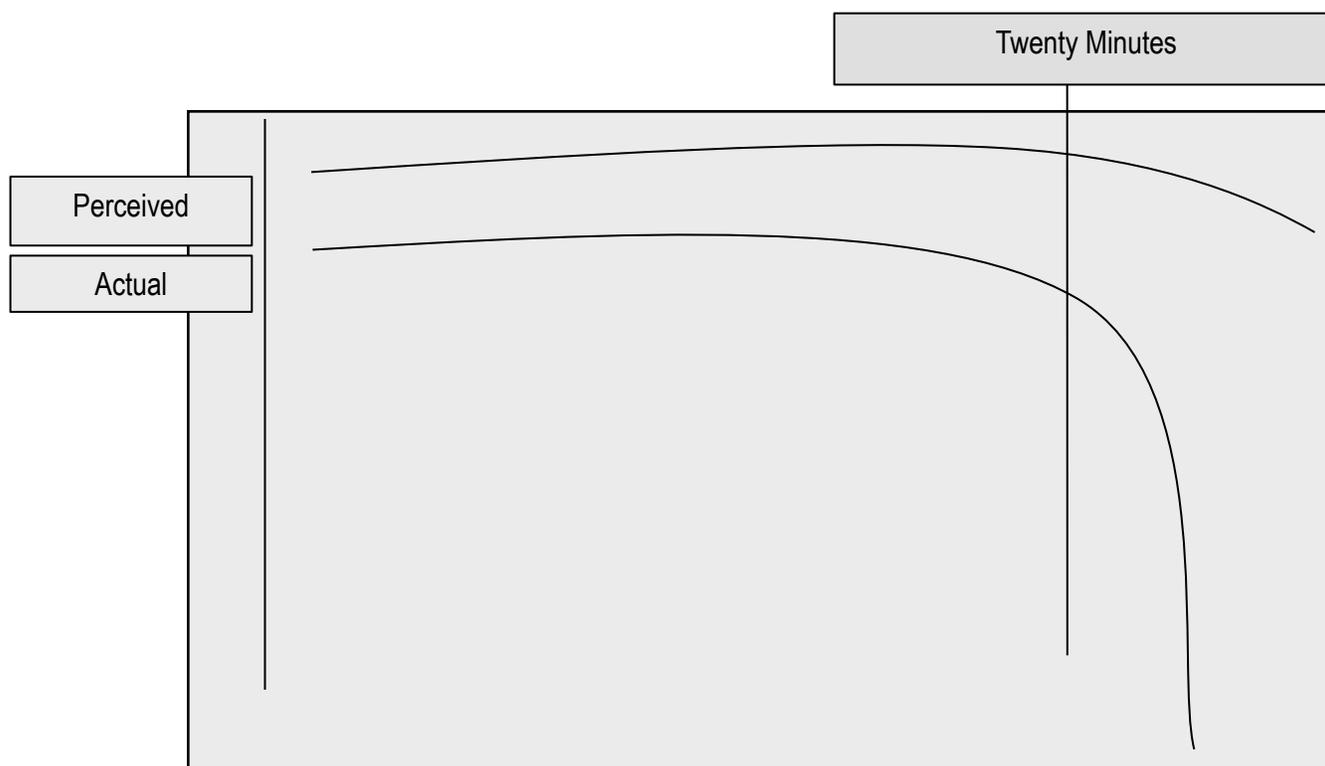
Partners: Working with partners is very useful and allows for interpretation of long events. To work with a partner successfully, it is important to set up agreements with your partner before the beginning of the assignment. These include the following:

- *Timing*: Partners should decide how long the intervals will be. Twenty minutes is the standard recommendation, not to exceed thirty. This is not only to prevent fatigue, but also to ensure the integrity of the message. Studies have shown that after twenty minutes, the accuracy of the message begins to decline; after thirty minutes the accuracy is fifty-percent at best. The chart below illustrates a study that was done where interpreters were asked to interpret non-stop for an hour and self-evaluate their interpretation for accuracy. The top line shows the self-assessment of the interpreters which shows only the tiniest drop in accuracy. At the same time, their interpretation was being evaluated by monitors, who recorded the actual accuracy level of the interpretation. As you can see, the actual level of accuracy was much lower than what the interpreters had thought. Switching off every twenty minutes helps to ensure that the message is accurate.

Having said that, for some inexplicable reason, the industry standard is two hours for a single interpreter. Anything over two hours requires two interpreters and the interpreters should feel free in asking for a partner.

- *Off-time:* Partners should decide what the “off” interpreter should be doing. While the off interpreter is using this time to rest, they should also be mindful of providing support to the “on” interpreter. This may mean spotting them for missed vocabulary words, jotting down numbers and/or lists on paper, looking up words in the dictionary, or anything else that might the “on” interpreter may need. The “off” interpreter should also deal with equipment problems or people that come up to the interpreting table with questions so that the “on” interpreter can focus on the work. Partners should also decide how to help each other. Some interpreters like their partners to sit right next to them, ready to whisper missed words. Others prefer to be left to work alone unless they signal their partner for help.
- *Switching Equipment:* Partners should work out ahead of time how they are going to switch out the equipment during the shift change. They should pick a way that is comfortable and non-intrusive, and will not interrupt the message. Some interpreters wait for a pause in the message to hand over the mic; others start shadowing the “on” interpreter and pass the mic seamlessly from one to the other. *Facilitator can model this with the transmitter mic.*

Short-term Memory Retention and Accuracy



Equipment: There are different types of interpreting equipment and it is important that the interpreters be familiar with the equipment that they are assigned to use. At this time ask the participants to put in their earpieces and turn on their receivers. The facilitator should turn on the transmitter and mic. The facilitator can use the mic for the rest of this session, speaking softly into it so that participants can get used to hearing a voice coming into their ear. Some things to know about equipment:

- *Equipment Can Be Testy:* It is important to check all the equipment before every single interpreting assignment. This will allow the opportunity to replace weak or dead batteries, or broken earpieces. Nothing interrupts the flow of interpretation more than the interpreter having to stop to check out non-functioning equipment. The message gets lost and people are rightfully frustrated. Whenever possible, the interpreter should ask if they can come test out the equipment in the space before the actual event. This will allow the interpreter to find any dark spots in the space and also see how the equipment will function amongst any other possible electronic signals (wireless networks and other audio equipment).



- *Tracking Equipment:* Equipment is expensive. Roughly broken down, the receivers are about \$75, the earpieces \$7-15, the transmitter \$400, and the mic anywhere from \$20-100. Equipment can be easily lost or misplaced, especially in big events, so it is important to devise some way to keep track of it that is not invasive of peoples' privacy. Some interpreters use a simple sheet where folks can put down their name, receiver number, and current cell phone number. That way, if the equipment does not show up at the end of the event, there is a number where folks can be reached. Some organizations

ask for ID such as driver's licenses, though folks who have a hard time accessing those documents may be discouraged from asking for equipment.

- *Every Mic is a Live Mic:* It's not just politicians that forget that. It's important that the interpreter remember to turn off the mic during breaks and at the end of the day. Also to be mindful of what they say when there is a microphone around. Interpreters (both male and female) have been known to take the microphones into the bathroom and do their business with the mic on.

Preparing a Space: It is important to set up the interpreting dynamic in any space. For conferences or breakout sessions interpreters should ask the facilitators for one to two minutes in the very beginning, before any speaking has begun, to set up how the interpretation is going to work. This is especially helpful for folks that are not used to interpreters and/or equipment. It is important to frame it as a collective process, and as a social justice issue, as sometimes the most difficult part is to get the monolingual English speakers to agree to use equipment. The following is a sample script.

QUICK INTRO FOR INTERPRETING

The following quick orientation to interpreting should take less than 2 minutes to do with the group, and should be done right at the very beginning. It is only sample text, and can be changed to fit the needs of the group.

“We want to let y’all know that we are interpreting between Spanish and English today. This is because we have speakers of these two languages with us (at least these two!) and we want to encourage everyone to feel confident and at ease to participate using the words that are most meaningful to them.

We believe that the language we use is intimately connected with who we are, our thoughts, our emotions, our dreams, our cultures, our passions, our politics... everything. We are interpreting these sessions in English and Spanish to help create an inclusive space where each of us may feel free to bring our whole selves into the room.

To make the interpreting as inclusive as possible, we want to ask folks to please keep the following in mind:

1. **Speak at a moderate pace**, not too fast nor too slow.
2. **Speak in a loud voice**, so you can be heard clear across the room.
3. **Speak directly to your fellow participants**, no need to look at the interpreters.
4. **One person talk at a time**, interpreters can’t choose which one to interpret for.
5. For bilingual folks, please **feel free to switch languages** as much as you like, **but please not within the same sentence.** (*this is meant to be humorous!*)
6. For those using equipment: if there is any **trouble with the equipment** or its batteries, please come over and **get a different set** as soon as you notice the problem (please don’t suffer in silence!)
7. **When you yourself are talking**, it is often helpful to **pull your earphones off, or turn down the volume**, so the interpreter’s voice in your ear won’t distract you.
8. The language in which the conversation is occurring can switch at any moment, and we want folks to feel at ease to speak in whichever language they want. If the discussion flows into a language that you don’t need interpreted, it’s fine to turn the volume down, but please **keep the earphones close by and ready**, should the language suddenly switch again. This is so we don’t make anyone feel “on the spot” for switching languages, and cause us to go scrambling for our headphones and lose momentum because we weren’t ready for it.
9. At the end of the day and during breaks, please turn off the equipment to save the batteries.

If folks start talking too fast or too quietly, we like to use some hand signals to let folks know to slow down or speak up. Usually we do this:

<<< >>> (*demonstrate a hand signal for “SLOW DOWN”*)
^ ^ (*demonstrate a hand signal for “SPEAK UP”*)

Are these hand signals that are ok with y’all to use?

(If not, ask the group to agree on their own hand signals)

If the interpreter starts making these hand signals and the speaker doesn't notice, but other folks in the group see it, can we agree as a group to help out by doing the hand signal, too?

(hopefully they say 'Yes')

Are there any questions?" *(answer, thank everyone, and continue with workshop)*

In smaller interpreting spaces such as doctors' or attorneys' offices, it is equally important that the interpreters set up their dynamic from the very beginning. Usually this involves coming in and introducing yourself and the process to both parties. It can go something like this: "Good morning, my name is [Insert] and I'll be interpreting for you today. Have you ever worked with an interpreter before? Ok, well just to lay out the process, everything that you say I will be relaying to the other person and everything that they say I will be relaying back to you. If there is anything that you do not want relayed, it's better to keep it to yourself because once something has been said I will be relaying it so that everyone in the room knows what is being said and no one is left out of the communication. Do you have any questions?" Then go ahead and repeat the same spiel to the other person in the room in their language.

When setting up the interpreting space for small one-on-one's, the placement of the interpreter is key to encouraging the two parties to communicating directly to each other. Many interpreters use a classic triangle with the interpreter positioning themselves between the two parties. The drawback to this configuration is that whether than speaking to each other, both parties tend to turn their heads and speak to the interpreter. This also leads to the practice of the two parties speaking in third person, as opposed to first person (i.e. "Please tell the doctor that..." or "Please tell her..."). If the interpreter positions themselves behind and slightly to the right or left of one of the speakers, this leaves a clear sightline between the two parties and encourages direct communication. The speaker behind which the interpreter is sitting would have to turn their neck all the way around to look at the interpreter, and by looking off to the side or their shoes, the interpreter avoids looking directly at the party on the opposite side, thus encouraging them to engage with the other speaker.



Troubleshooting: If time allows, we open up the space for folks to ask questions about those unforeseen things that can happen on interpreting assignments and asking the participants to brainstorm their solutions. The most common ones are:

- *What Happens if Your Partner Doesn't Show Up?:* Possible strategies include calling local folks that you know to see if they can come and help, advising the point person about the situation and see if they can round up another interpreter, make an announcement to see if there are volunteers in the audience. If one is stuck doing the interpreting on their own, advising the point person about the situation, telling them that one is going to need frequent breaks, that the interpretation may not be as accurate, and that there may be times when the interpreter just may have to stop.
- *What Happens if the Equipment Doesn't Work?:* Possible strategies include switching from simultaneous to consecutive interpreting if time and space allow, positioning folks into small groups and simultaneously interpret through whispering, see if you can find replacement equipment.
- *Last Minute Requests:* A particularly useful strategy for last minute requests – especially for topics that the interpreter may not be well versed in - is a vocabulary tree. This works by envisioning the topic as the trunk of a tree and possible themes on that topic as branches. These themes are then used to create lists of possible vocabulary words. The interpreter then goes down this list of vocabulary words to see if they're familiar with the linguistic equivalent. For example, if the topic is "HIV/AIDS", the interpreter may think possible themes are "causes of", "treatment for", "symptoms", "prevention", etc. Under causes of the interpreter could start making a list of possible vocabulary: bodily fluids, blood, semen, breast milk, placenta, etc. Under symptoms: lesions, Karposi Sarpcoma, blindness, bloating, pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, etc. The interpreter can then identify what vocabulary they are familiar with and where they may have gaps.



BRAIN GYM I – Consecutive Interpreting Skills Building

These exercises in the following two modules come from a variety of sources. Some from individuals and others picked up in the field.

Materials: Flip chart, Markers, timer or a watch with second hand

Time: 2-3 hours depending on schedule

Objectives:

- Participants will engage in a series of verbal exercises designed to utilize key interpreting skills such as recall, cache memory, decision making
- Participants will simulate consecutive interpreting scenarios and take turns negotiating linguistic and power dynamics in the roles of interpreter, service provider, and client
- Participants will have the opportunity to collectively debrief the scenarios and identify key learnings

Warm-Up Exercise – Back-to-Back Relay

Facilitator prepares a series of flash cards with basic shapes in increasing difficulty.

Ex: 

Facilitator places a blank flip chart page in front of the room. Participants are then divided into two groups (three if it is a large group) and asked to form two lines, grammar school style, with the persons at the front of the line standing in front of the flip chart with marker in hand.

Facilitator walks to the back of the line and shows the flip chart only to the folks at the end of the line. Those folks then draw the shape on the back of the person in front of them. That person repeats the shape on the back of the person in front of them. The shape is relayed until it gets to the person at the front of the line, who draws the shape on the flip chart. The “winner” is determined both by speed and accuracy.

There are three rules to be explained prior to starting:

1. There is no talking (to prevent spilling the beans or giving hints)
2. There is no turning of the head, participants have to remain facing forward.
3. The shape can only be drawn on the back once; it cannot be repeated.

This exercise models some of the dynamics of consecutive interpreting: having to pay attention, trying to capture the message the first time, needing to focus, being in sync with a partner. Also taking in the message, holding it in the cache, and putting it out.

At the end of the exercise, participants can engage in a quick debrief of what they noticed, what were the challenges, any strategies used, and learning about themselves.

Facilitator can point out the pros and cons of consecutive interpreting. Pros are that the space is a little slower, which gives the interpreter a little more time to analyze the message and make word choices. Cons are that there is only so much space in the cache; interpreters have to be mindful and assertive in controlling the flow of information.

Exercises:

Facilitator should make sure to take the time to explain the exercises clearly, and ideally, model them before starting. Equally as important is to take the time to debrief after each exercise. Points for reflection:

- What did you think/feel about the exercise?
- What did you find challenging?
- What did you learn about yourself and your interpreting skills?
- Did you notice any strategies you engaged in that helped you?

Consecutive Interpreting Skills Building

Word String Builder

Description: Group sits in a circle. First person says a random word aloud. The next person repeats that word and adds another word. Each consecutive person must repeat previous word(s) and add their own random word.

This pushes critical decision making skills.

Example: Cow Cow/Shoe Cow/Shoe/Bicycle...

Note:

- Exercise should be done at least twice, once in each direction, so that folks have the experience of being at the beginning and end of the sequence.
- Folks should be mindful of what strategies they use to retain information. Some folks look at every person in the circle to make an association. Other folks look at their shoes and keep it all in their head.
- Did folks use chunking? If so, at which points did folks chunk? At what point did folks start dropping words.
- This is a memory exercise. People should be allowed to push their memory. If someone forgets a word or words in the sequence, other participants should not prompt them. They should skip it and go on to the next word that they do remember and their own word at the end.
- Guidelines:
 - o No helping
 - o No notepads
 - o No pausing

Paragraph Builder

Description: Group sits in a circle. First person says a word aloud. The person repeats that word and adds another word that would start constructing a sentence. Each consecutive person must repeat the previous word(s) and add a word that helps build a sentence/paragraph.

Example: One One day One day my One day my dog...

Note:

- Exercise should be done at least twice, once in each direction, so that folks have the experience of being at the beginning and end of the sequence.
- Folks should be mindful as to what strategies they use to retain information. How did this exercise compare to the first?
- Did folks use chunking? If so, at which points did folks chunk? Did the sequence come to an end point and a new sentence start?
- People should be allowed to push their memory. If someone forgets a word or words in the sequence, other participants should not prompt them. They should skip it and go on to the next word that they do remember and their own word at the end.
- The sequence can continue around the circle several times until it comes to a breaking point.
- In the building of the narrative the conjunctions BUT, THEN, SO, AND can only be used one time. Once they are used in the narrative, they can not be used by anyone else.
- Guidelines:
 - o No notepads
 - o No helping
 - o No pausing

Long Story Replay

Description: One person tells a story using first person narrative (approximately three minutes). When they are finished a second person must attempt to retell story as accurately as possible using same words and expressions as first person. When they are finished, other group members may ask questions to prompt second person to remember missed details of the story.

Example: If the storyteller says, "I decided to take my blue raincoat because it looked like rain was coming..." and the relayer says, "I took my raincoat because it looked like rain was coming..." other participants can prompt the details by asking, "What color was the raincoat you decided to take with you?"

Note:

- Important to note how folks did with the details. Were they dropped, and if so, did it fundamentally change the story?
- How about sequence, did the relayer follow the original sequence of event?
- Besides the content, did the relayer also convey the tone, mood, and register of the storyteller?
- After a couple of forward-moving relays, participants can try to relay the story in reverse order. Start at the end and work up to the beginning of the story.
- Guidelines
 - o No helping
 - o No pausing
 - o No notepads

Scenarios in 3's

Description: 3 person activity. Participants are divided into groups of three and spread out throughout the space (this activity makes for a loud room). The groups recreate a consecutive interpreting environment. Each person takes on one role: service provider, client, interpreter (this should be decided before starting the exercise). Every two or three minutes the facilitator calls out "Switch" and the participants change roles. All participants should have the opportunity to try all three roles.

Note:

- The scenarios should be culled from the participants' real life experiences.
- If scenarios are needed, some common ones are: a doctor's office, an attorney's office, dealing with a police officer, an interview with ICE, applying at a social service agency.
- Participants should be creative in trying out different power dynamics so that the person playing the interpreter role has an opportunity to negotiate them.
- At the beginning of the scenario, the first interpreter should start by setting up the space as outline under Nuts and Bolts – Setting up the Space
- During the debrief, participants should have time to discuss their experience playing all three roles.
- How did the intro go? How did the interpreter set up the sight lines? Did the interpreter use first person?
- Did the interpreter have to deal with any issues around role or ethics?

BRAIN GYM II – Simultaneous Interpreting Skills Building

These exercises in the following two modules come from a variety of sources. Some from individuals and others picked up in the field.

Materials: Flip chart, Markers, Scratch paper, pens, reading material heavy with text, plastic or silverware (knives, forks, spoons), timer/watch

Time: 2-3 hours depending on schedule

Objectives:

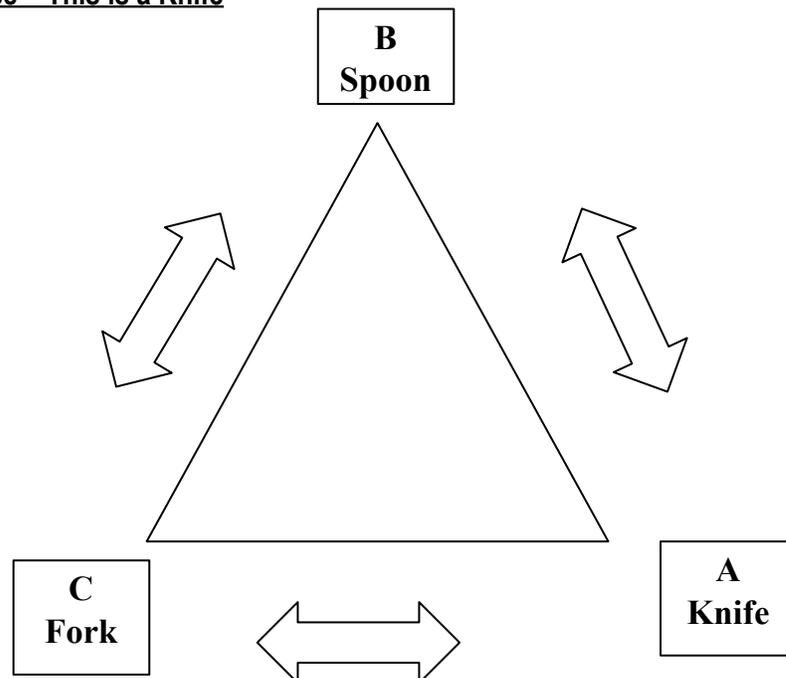
- **Participants will engage in a series of verbal exercises designed to utilize key interpreting skills such as split-focus, quick decision making, word recall, speed**
- **Participants will practice sustained simultaneous interpreting is a collective process that will allow for peer support and review**
- **Participants will have the opportunity to collectively debrief the exercises and identify key learnings**

Note:

- Some of these exercises require interpreting equipment.
- It is important that for every language represented in the room besides English, there be at least two people in the room who speak that language. This is because most of these exercises require working with partner in two languages. If there is only one person that speaks French for example, that person would have no one with whom to practice interpreting between French and English.

Warm-Up Exercise – This is a Knife

Acting Exercise



This exercise is a bit tricky and requires plenty of time to set up and mode. Participants are divided into groups of three, each group is given a set of silver or plastic ware (a knife, spoon, and fork), and spread around the room.

The group starts with person A looking to the person on the right, holding out the knife, and says, "This is a knife." Person B, "A what?" "A knife," "A what?" "A knife," "Oh, a knife." Person B then takes the knife, shifts to look at Person C on their right and starts the sequence again with, "This is a knife." The sequence looks like this:

"This is a knife"

"A what?"

"A knife"

"A what?"

"A knife"

"Oh a knife" (pass to the next person and start the sequence again)

After person C has passed the knife back to person A, person A keeps the sequence going by passing it to person B. As soon as person B takes the knife and turns to look at person C, person A takes a spoon and starts the process again by saying to person B, "This is spoon." They follow the same pattern but person B (in the middle) is negotiating both.

They look right - This is a knife

Look left – a what?

Right – a knife

Left – a what?

Right – a knife

Left – oh a spoon.

Person C now introduces the fork into the sequence. The purpose is to get all three persons having to simultaneously negotiate different silverware from both sides. One on side they are receiving, on the other they are giving. Hint: Try to set the rhythm so that everyone is asking "A what?" at the same time.

This exercise models some of the dynamics of simultaneous interpreting: speed, quick decision making, holding a steady flow, receiving and transmitting information at the same time.

At the end of the exercise, participants can engage in a quick debrief of what they noticed, what were the challenges, any strategies used, and learning about themselves.

Facilitator can point out the pros and cons of consecutive interpreting. Pros are that you do not have to worry about holding information in the cache, or having to hold on to details. The con is that there is no spare time for analysis. You have to make one quick decision after the other. If you drop a word you have a second to decide on a recovery technique or let it go.

Exercises:

Facilitator should make sure to take the time to explain the exercises clearly, and ideally, model them before starting. Equally as important is to take the time to debrief after each exercise. Points for reflection:

- What did you think/feel about the exercise?
- What did you find challenging?
- What did you learn about yourself and your interpreting skills?
- Did you notice any strategies you engaged in that helped you?

Simultaneous Skills Building.

Word Water Ski

Description: One person reads random words aloud from a newspaper/magazine article. They read them at a moderate pace (2 words/second) in a loud, clear voice. The second person waits until the first has said the second word and is about to start on the third, then starts to repeat the list starting with the first word. The goal is to repeat the list exactly while staying two words behind. When predetermined time is up, facilitator calls out ‘Switch,’ and the partners switch roles. How long and how many times participants repeat the exercise depends on the total time allotted for the Brain Gym. It should be enough that participants can try these exercises several times.

Example w/2 word delay:

1st person reads: Jump, car, burn, she, lift, turn, up, stop, ring, black, tape

2nd person: Jump, car, burn, she, lift, etc.

Note:

- For this first exercise, the readers should not be reading sentences from the written material, rather should be picking words randomly from the page.
- Because at this point the participants are shadowing as opposed to interpreting, they can work in two or more languages. The point is to shadow and repeat the spoken words
- Facilitator can vary the exercise according to time. Participants can push themselves to try to stay three or four words behind. Alternatively, they can increase the speed of words.
- The interval between when the speaker starts speaking and the interpreter comes in is called *decalage*. The interpreter’s goal is to maintain a steady and constant decalage. A good illustration is water-skiing. The boat (speaker) takes off first. There are a few seconds while the slack of the rope is being pulled (decalage), then the water-skier (interpreter) starts to follow boat. The skier follows the boat consistently, through turns and other maneuvers, always at the same distance.
- Did folks have a hard time keeping a constant decalage? What were the challenges?
- What strategy did the participants use to try to keep up?

Dual Task Math

Description: Besides the reading material, each team is given some scratch paper for writing and a pen. One person starts reading a paragraph from the reading material in a loud clear voice and steady pace. The second person waits two or three words and starts shadowing. While they are shadowing the narrative, they simultaneously start doing subtraction on the paper. Starting at 100, subtract down by threes. If participants make to 1, they can start all over again. When predetermined time is up, facilitator calls out ‘Switch,’ and the partners switch roles. How long and how many times participants repeat the exercise depends on the total time allotted for the Brain Gym. It should be enough that participants can try these exercises several times.

Example:

1st person reads: The boy went to the zoo on Sunday with his mother. Later in the day...

2nd person repeats sentences while counting backward on a piece of paper:

100,97,94,91,88,85,82,79,76,73,70, etc.

Debrief.

Shadow and Switch

Alice Johnson

Description: Participants are divided into teams of two and spread throughout the space. In this activity, one person tells a story. The story should be extemporaneous and not practiced. The relayer “shadows” the storyteller, first in the same language and at other times interpreting to a second language. The cycle starts and ends in English. After completing one cycle, the facilitator calls out “Switch,” the two people switch roles. The second person immediately becomes the storyteller.

Example (using English and Spanish):

Cycle

1st Person 2nd Person

English-----English

Spanish-----Spanish

Spanish-----English

English-----Spanish

English-----English

(Switch roles)

Note:

- During this exercise, participants should push themselves to get through the sequence without stopping and starting over. One of the objectives of the exercise is pushing the brain to produce something, anything. This applies to the interpreter as well as the storyteller (telling an improvised story from the top of your head is not easy).
- Participants should be mindful of the transition from shadowing to interpreting. Did they keep the flow? Did it become more difficult and if so, how?
- Was it easier interpreting from their A language to their B language or vice versa?
- Were they able to keep up or did they drop words? If so, what recovery techniques were used?

Group Interpreting Round Robin

Alice Johnson

Description: The facilitator(s) will have to speak extemporaneously without interruption for two minutes per participant. If there are 15 participants, facilitator(s) will have to speak for 30 minutes non-stop. The facilitation teams should decide ahead of time if one person will carry the entire exercise or if the time will be divvied up among the facilitators. The advantage of one person is that there is one single narrative for the participants to work with. The advantage of multiple speakers is that the participants will be exposed to a variety of speaking styles.

Participants are asked to sit in a circle with their receivers on and ready to use. The facilitator explains that there will be a continuous narrative and that each participant will interpret simultaneously for two minutes into a live mic. The other participants will be listening on their headsets.

The facilitator gives the mic to the first person. (When it is a participant's turn on the mic, they should remove their earpiece so as not to become confused. Also, they should turn down the volume on the receiver to avoid feedback with the mic.) The facilitator starts speaking in English for one minute with the interpreter working into the second language. At the minute mark the speaker switches to the second language for one minute with the interpreter working back into English. At the next minute mark, the speaker switches back into English and the mic gets passed to the next person in the circle, who starts to interpret into the second language. The sequence then continues until everyone has had a turn. This allows all the participants to practice interpreting in both directions. The speaker should be mindful to switch languages every minute and to not break during the exercise.

Participants should be listening intently to their peers interpret. They listen for word choices, recovery techniques and dropped words. The guiding question should be "If I did not understand the source language and was only listening to the interpretation, would it make sense? Is it coherent?"

Debrief:

- How was that? What was the level of anxiety, if any? What was the anxiety over?
- Did you hear any good word choices? How did they compare to your own?
- Did you hear any good recovery techniques?
- Were there certain words or ideas that were problematic to everyone?
- What did you learn about your interpreting by doing this exercise?

Note:

- This is the last exercise in this section. Facilitators can point out what was accomplished by asking "Was this the first time anyone has done simultaneous interpreting?" or "Who thought this morning that they would be capable of doing this type of interpretation?" Something to appreciate how far folks have come and how we may be more capable than we think.
- This particular exercise can be particularly daunting for some participants. During the debrief, space should be made for participants to offer encouraging remarks to each other, or to point out particularly skills word choices or recovery technique that were used.

- This exercise flows smoothly when working with two languages. When working with more than two, the facilitators may need to get creative with the configuration of the space. Ideally, the storytellers should be able to communicate in every language that is represented in the room. This is not always possible. If there are interpreters in the circle working in a language that is not spoken by any of the storytellers, these folks can be seated next to each other. This allows the storyteller to speak in the common language and have an uninterrupted string of interpreting into the third language.
 - For example: There is a circle with 15 participants, 12 of whom work in English and Spanish, 3 of whom work in English and Vietnamese. The facilitator (speaker) works in English and Spanish, but does not know how to speak Vietnamese. The circle can be set up so that the three Vietnamese interpreters are seated next to each other at either the beginning or end of the circle. This sets up two strings of uninterrupted interpretation. Regardless of who goes first, when the storyteller works with the Spanish interpreters, they can follow the sequence as outlined above. When the storyteller works with the Vietnamese interpreters, the interpretation will out of necessity be only one directional. The storyteller can speak in English for two minutes to the participants who will interpret into Vietnamese and can be critiqued by their Vietnamese-speaking peers. It is not an ideal situation; the practice is only in one direction. This configuration is offered as a suggestion for training that do not have the capacity to present in every language represented in the room.
- The two warm-ups offered for the Brain-Gyms are intentionally designed to prime the brain to execute the necessary functions. An alternate activity is to play either Scattagories or Outburst, both board games. These two games employ the same set of skills and stimulate the same neural responses as the warm-up exercises. The games can also be kept around for downtimes.

POWER DYNAMICS EXERCISE (SOCCER FOR SUCKERS)

Learned from Mujeres Unidas y Activas

Materials: 4 orange cones (if available), soccer ball

Time: 60 Minutes



Objective:

- To explore the concepts of power and privilege
- To explore the concept of choices and ramifications
- Land exercise ready to connect discussion to a power analysis around interpreting for social justice.

Context:

Before there can be a discussion around language as a tool of power and the role of the interpreter in the power dynamic, the group has to develop a shared understanding of power differentials. This is especially true in groups where the participants are politicized differently. Conversations about power can go deep - that is not the primary goal of this exercise. The goal of this exercise is to create a base line understanding of how power can play out in a way that is both fun and familiar. Note: Because of the physical nature of this activity facilitators should check-in with participants around their ability to participate.

The facilitator announces that we are going to play a game of soccer (don't tell them the name of the activity).

Form 2 teams. Depending on the size of the group, 2-5 people will be team 1 (they are clearly the minority), and everyone else is team 2.

Tell participants that like all games, this one has rules:

- Rule # 1. Team 1 gets to make the rules
- Rule # 2 Team 2 MUST follow all the rules
- Rule # 3 Team 1 can change the rules at any point in the game.

Give Team 1 a few minutes to make up the rules. Facilitator can motivate them to make up the most arbitrary, unfair rules possible.

- Examples:
 - Team 1's goal is 6 feet wide and Team 2's goal is 6 inches
 - Team 2 must score two goals for every point, or Team 1 gets two points for every goal
 - TEAM 2 CANNOT COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER THROUGH SPEECH. (see Note below)

Give people who are unable or unwilling to play the option of being the fans or cheerleaders. They should be observing the game and making mental notes.

The game continues for a few minutes (around 5 min, or enough time for participants to realize the power dynamics in play). When facilitator deems that it is time to end the game (at a point where Team 1 is winning), s/he quietly approaches Team 1 and tells them to call and end to it.

Debrief

- Ask participants from Team 2 what they experienced, and how they felt.
- Ask Team 1 how they felt being in power.
- Ask spectators what their observations were. (After giving spectators time to note their observations you may ask: How did you feel towards Team 1 and Team 2? Did at any point did you feel moved to help? Did you feel guilty, and if so what was that guilt about?)
- Ask: does this remind us of how things work in real life (arbitrary system of rules, being told that the rules are set up for everyone's benefit, being told that you MUST follow the rules or risk being penalized)? Ask participants to offer concrete examples from their organizing experiences.
- What could Team 2 do next time to prevent Team 1 from winning under these unfair conditions? [What were Team 2's options (continue to try to satisfy the rules, quit or opt out of the game, organize and resist - and if so how?) and what are the consequences of each action? How are decisions made in regards to which action to follow?]

Facilitator explains: this game shows how institutions use their power to make decisions that affect many people and benefit only a few. The group that makes these decisions is small. But people can also have power if they organize and try to change the rules of the game (the power relations so that they are fairer.

Optional discussion questions:

- What are some examples in real life of institutional power?
- What are some examples of how the people have organized to challenge institutional power?
- What do the people need to develop and exercise this people power?

Note:

- The learning potential is greatest in this game when participants are given the least amount of context possible - pick teams, go over rules, and GO! This most allows for the learning points to come up organically. Depending on specific learning goals and the political composition of the group the facilitators may decide to tweak this exercise by giving a little more context to certain participants. For example, they may tell one person on Team 2 that their purpose is to organize the team against the unfair set of rules without telling them that they are being organized.
- At some point in the game Team 1 should introduce the rule that Team 2 cannot communicate with each other through speech. The impact of this rule should be discussed during the debrief. This specific rules relates directly to language access and is integral in tying this exercise to the following discussion.



LANGUAGE AND POWER: Bringing It All Together

Materials: Flip Charts, Markers, Tape

Time: 90 Minutes

Objective:

- To develop an analysis of language as a tool of power, and how language can either be used to include or exclude people from conversations and/or processes.
- To develop an analysis of interpreting through a social justice lens
- To develop an analysis of the role of the interpreter in relation to the power dynamics in any interpreting situation; to understand that the interpretation does not happen in vacuum.
- To develop an understanding that the choices that interpreters make – both linguistic and/or ethical – have impacts that go beyond the immediate situation.
- To develop an analysis of how a skillful interpreter empowers both sides in a conversation to communicate and advocate for themselves.

This section in many ways is the heart of the workshop. It is where we discuss theory and bring it together with our practice. This particular section is ever-evolving and in four years, has never been facilitated the same way twice. Previous participants have described it as eye-opening, frustrating, moving, reality-shifting, infuriating, and having given them much to think about for days to come.

Part of the challenge is that it is in this discussion where participants' diverging political beliefs and development are highlighted and push up against each other. There are various ways to enter and frame this conversation. The two most commonly used are:

- For groups with no or newly emerging political consciousness, start with some type of political analysis exercise to raise consciousness about the different ways that power and privilege can play out (e.g. Soccer for Suckers). This is followed by a discussion of the scenarios and questions lifted up by the participants in the earlier exercises. These are then fleshed out in terms of who is holding the power and what is the interpreter role in that situation.
- For groups comprising of folks with a more developed political consciousness, the power analysis piece can be skipped and the group can delve immediately into the groups and scenarios, thereby allowing the discussion to go deeper and be more nuanced.

Because this section tends to be fluid, we won't be offering a concrete step-by-step format. Rather, this curriculum will outline some of the major questions posed by the various scenarios. It is important to frame this section in the beginning with two corollaries: 1) In terms of the power analysis, we are using a very broad frame to set up some parameters. It is understood that the question of power and privilege is much more complex than presented here and can be parsed down to many levels. This particular section of the workshop could constitute a workshop on its own (Indeed, a level 2 curriculum that will delve into the issue has been suggested). We ask the participants, especially the ones with a much more developed political analysis, to trust the facilitators in laying out this process and allow for the creation of a political frame for less politicized folks. 2) We are not presenting absolute rules in terms of the decisions an interpreter should or should not make when facing questions around their role or their ethics. Real life interpreting situations are very complicated, and interpreters have to make the best decision that they can in any given moment. We are emphasizing that interpreters should be mindful in making these decisions as to whether they are empowering or further marginalizing either agent in a conversation.

The facilitator can open the conversation by using some of the following questions/scenarios that can be used to set the stage for the discussion. These questions should be asked one at a time and fleshed out. They highlight many of the tensions that come up in everyday interpreting.

Following the questions is a list of the pertinent social justice principles. The facilitators should become familiar and have a strong grasp with the frame as a whole before starting the discussion.

You are interpreting in a medical situation. The doctor asks the patient if they are taking their medicine as prescribed. The patient says to you, “No, not really. I don’t like that medication, but tell the doctor, ‘Yes’.” How does the interpreter proceed?

Points:

- Do people have a right to lie?
- Do people have a right to ask the interpreter to lie for them?
- How can this situation be avoided?

You are interpreting at a social service agency for someone requesting services from the agency. The agent that you are dealing with keeps making racist remarks about the client under their breath, but still audible. Does the interpreter relay those racist remarks?

Points:

- Do people have the right to make racist remarks?
- Do people have a right to know what is being said to them?
- How can this situation be avoided?

Same situation as above – only this time, the client is using profanity in their native language to describe the agency representative. Does the interpreter relay the profanity?

Points:

Same as above



While interpreting, the interpreter realizes that the client not only does not understand English, but does not understand the way the system works. Therefore, even though the interpreter is relaying the information, the client remains confused and the information makes no sense. How does the interpreter proceed?

Points:

What avenues are available for the client to obtain that information?

Is there a way for the interpreter to be helpful without undermining the integrity of the interpreting process?

In the course of interpreting, the interpreter realizes that the service provider is either cheating the client or denying them due process by withholding information or outright lying. How does the interpreter proceed?

Points:

What is the avenue for obtaining due process for the client?

Is there a way for the interpreter to be helpful without undermining the integrity of the interpreting process?

Role

There is interpreter and there is advocate. Each one has a very specific skill set, and comes with definite parameters.

The interpreter role carries the following specific objectives:

- Communicate what one person is saying to everyone else in the room.
- Ensure that everything that is uttered in the public sphere is heard and understood by everyone, with complete transparency.
- To keep the integrity of the message without adding, deleting, or editing.
- To remain impartial in the communication and encourage the communicating parties to not only speak directly to each other, but to negotiate their conflict among themselves.
- To make sure that everyone has the necessary information to make informed decisions.
- To promote the autonomy of every agent in the conversation.

The advocacy role requires:

- Taking a specific side.
- Speaking on behalf of someone.
- Filling in gaps in information.
- Taking a more active role in decision-making.

While an advocate can many times serve as an interpreter, an interpreter cannot advocate and retain the integrity of the interpreting process. It is not that one is more important, loftier, or purer than the other is. It is that they are different roles with different responsibilities and processes. The person handling the language negotiation should decide beforehand which role they will be playing, and should clearly define that role to everyone involved. If the person represents themselves as an interpreter, than it is important to follow interpreting guidelines. There are several reasons for this:

- Interpreting only works well if everyone involved trusts the process. If the interpreter is not trusted, it makes the process moot. A reputation for integrity is an interpreter's greatest asset. If an interpreter is not trust and therefore no longer invited into these spaces they are no longer in a position to help anyone do anything.
- The latitude that comes with advocacy (adding to or editing the message) will undermine trust in the interpreter and the process.
- Interpreting, when done well, empowers folks to advocate for themselves and not rely entirely on the interpreter for advocacy.

It is important to remember that interpreting is, in some ways, an unnatural dynamic. Interpreters find themselves in situations that were it not for their needed services, would be very inappropriate for them to be present. Interpreters find themselves at people's deathbeds, in their room during invasive medical procedures, at childbirth, and when people are receiving news – good or bad.

To the extent that the interpreter can minimize their presence and impact on the communication, they should do so. They should strive to create the perception of direct communication between the parties involved.

Note:

- The most consistent and transparent way for there to be clarity around roles is for the interpreter to explain the process clearly before any communication starts. Example: “Hi my name is _____ and I will be interpreting for you today. Have you ever worked with an interpreter? You should know that everything that you say I will be relaying to the other person and everything that they say I will be relaying back to you. I will be relaying everything and its entirety, so if there is anything that you do not want relayed I would ask that you keep it to yourself. Once something has been said I am responsible for communicating it. That way no one is left in the dark and everyone knows everything that is going on at all times.” This is repeated to both parties in both languages. Having given fair warning it is then IMPORTANT that the interpreter follow through. It usually only takes one time that the interpreter relays something embarrassing or inappropriate for the parties to be mindful of what they say. This also empowers people to decide for themselves what they do and do not want to say.
- It is also important to appreciate that many social justice interpreters, especially those working for non-profit organizations are many times tasked with playing the dual role by virtue of being the bilingual person in the organization. To the extent possible a person should not be asked to be both the advocate and the interpreter. This leads to a confusion of roles and possibly undermining the process.
- Transparency is very important in this process. If a person shows up and says “I’ll be the advocate for _____, and I will be handling the interpreting,” the parties involved then have the opportunity to decide if that is acceptable to them. They may say “No, you handle the interpretation, and we’ll find another advocate, that way I know that the interpretation is unbiased,” or vice versa. The person may decide “Ok, you can do both.” Then they can proceed knowing that the person handling the language negotiation also has an agenda and a bias. The point is that folks can’t make these informed decisions without us being transparent from the start as to our role.

Ethics:

The decision one makes in regards to what role one may play has ethical implications. Among the more common ones are:

Does a person have a right to lie? People have the right to decide to not tell the truth. They don’t have the right to ask the interpreter or put them in a position to lie for them. It is important that this be made clear to all parties prior to beginning the interpretation. The interpreter is obligated to relay everything they hear into the public sphere. If there is something that one party does not want known by the other, they need to keep that to themselves. Once something is put into the public sphere, they abdicate the right to censor. It is easy for the interpreter to be used as a buffer between the power dynamics being played out. Sometimes the agents in the conversation do this to abdicate both their autonomy and their responsibility. The social justice interpreter negotiates language in a way that promotes autonomy and accountably, not in a way that undermines them. *Again, this is under the interpreting model, and not under the advocacy model.*

Does the interpreter censor profane language? People have the right to express themselves and to be fully understood. If a person speaks in a way that is angry, joyous, or sexually inappropriate, they have the right to do so. This goes back to the previous point. If the speaker does not want the listener to be aware that they are using profanities, then they should not put them in the public sphere. Sometimes, however, the quandary arises with the interpreter, not the speaker. The interpreter may be hesitant to relay profane or inappropriate language, either out of their own discomfort or because they do not wish to agitate the listener, and potentially make a bad situation worse. That is not a decision for the interpreter to make. If there is an escalation of conflict as a result of a faithful rendition of the message, the interpreter can then negotiate the resolution efforts of the parties involved. Again, one of the interpreter's main objectives is to get folks to communicate with each other directly. Reflection Point: If we were dependent on someone to communicate our thoughts and desires, how would we feel if we found out that they were taking liberties with what we were trying to say and made decisions that impacted the way our message was received by others without consulting with us?

What decisions fall under the interpreter's discretion, and which do not? A guiding principle in thinking about this question is that *every decision that the interpreter makes is one that someone else is not making*. Interpreters should take a moment to ask themselves *Who should be making this decision?* Interpreters can make decisions about phrasing, word choice, grammar, and other mechanics of language. Interpreters cannot make decisions in regards to the message itself. The message has to be rendered faithfully, not just in terms of grammar and vocabulary, but also in regards to tone, temperament, and register. Folks who do language negotiation and social justice arena many times say, "Interpreting doesn't happen in a vacuum. When I interpret, I bring my whole self into the room. My biases, passions, conscience all play a part in the decisions that I make." That is a very true statement and there is more to it. Reflection Point: When an interpreters decisions are ruled by our passions and biases, and not mindful consideration, it can be easy to start making decisions for others instead of letting them make decisions for themselves. In doing so, we deny them full agency. In some sense, we are treating already marginalized folks in a way that compounds that marginalization. Ironically, we show up to help people use their voice, and can end up silencing that voice ourselves.

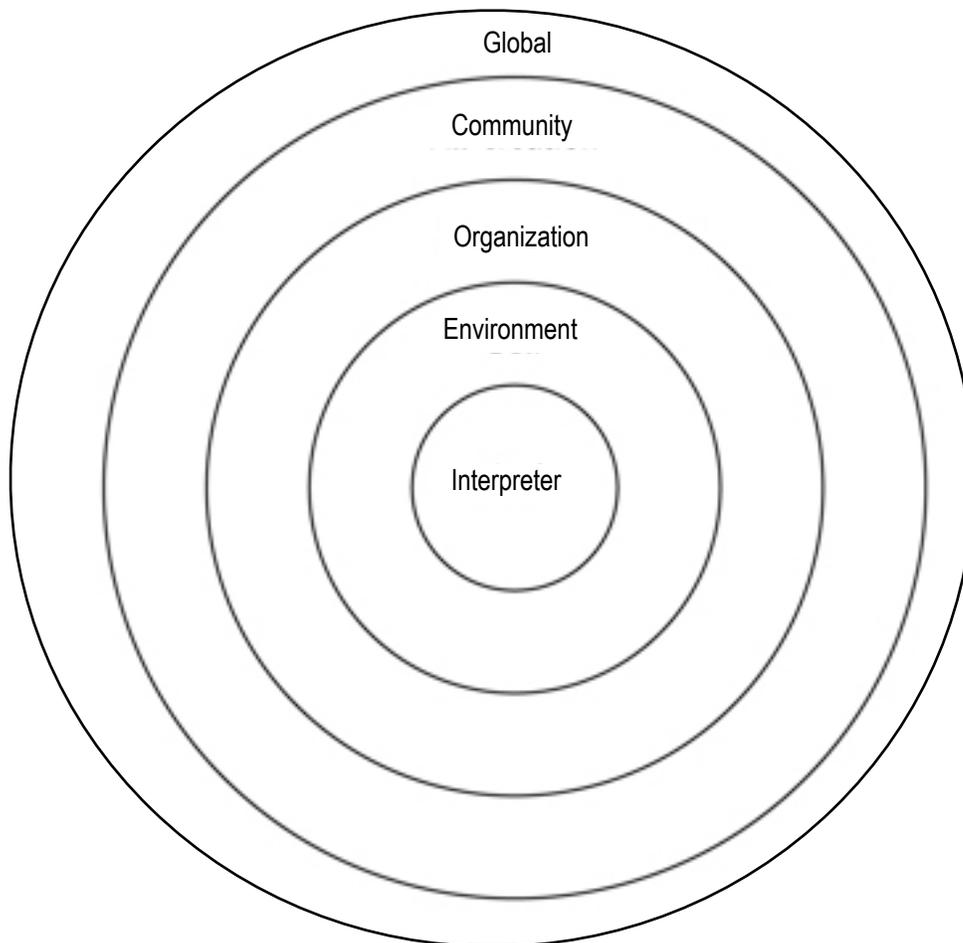
One last point: interpreters cannot ethically accept assignments for which they know they do not have the skills and should not accept assignments for which they know that they will not be able to be impartial. Interpreters should think carefully before accepting assignments they know will push their personal or political buttons. Once accepting and arriving at assignments, interpreters need to remain impartial and render the message faithfully. If this is impossible to do, an interpreter can refuse to continue to interpret, but that should be the very last option.

Should children be used as interpreters? This again is an area where ideal practice pushes against the reality of life. Many times children are the most available people in the community to provide language negotiation between monolingual adults. Indeed, many young people become politicized at a young age through the interpreting role that they played in their communities. The capacity and willingness of children to help their community in this way should not be discounted. However, to the extent possible, children should not be the first people that communities turn to for interpretation. It is a lot of responsibility to ask a child to hold. First is the question of capacity – children many times do not have the developed vocabulary or language skills to interpret concise

and technically difficult conversations, i.e. medical appointments or legal sessions. It is a lot of weight for a young person to carry the expectation of success in a negotiated transaction based on their interpretation. Secondly, there's the negotiation of ethical dilemmas, some of which adult interpreters struggle to resolve. For example, a child is asked to interpret a parent-teacher conference. After some praise, the teacher expresses areas of concern or informs the parent of some inappropriate behavior. The child-interpreter is not equipped in an ethical quandary. Lastly, there's the emotional toll of interpreting embarrassing or even violent conversations. What impact does it have on a child to have to interpret a diagnosis of cancer to one of their parents? If a child is interpreting between a parent and a service provider, and the service provider calls the parent a "f**king wetback", what options does the young person have? They can either swallow the insult and internalize that shame or they can relay the insult and feel responsible for the ensuing angry confrontation. If the parent decides to not be confrontational and swallow the insult themselves, the young person is then left to carry the parents' resulting embarrassment and shame.

Having said that, there's something to be said for a strategy of building multi-lingual capacity in young people of a certain age that will allow them to be economically self-sufficient. It is the type of skill that lends itself to an underground economy, making it advantageous for young people that may have difficulty integrating into a mainstream workforce.

Sphere of Influence



Another thing to consider is how much an interpreter can realistically do at any given moment. Often interpreters say “I’m the only thing standing between this person and prison, deportation, losing their kids, etc.” That dynamic needs some thought. Going to prison or losing custody of your children are serious consequences AND are also the result of deeply rooted unfair institutions that systematically oppress folks that are already marginalized. It is not fair or helpful (and can actually be quite detrimental) to lay on the shoulders of the interpreter the responsibility of fixing a situation that is the end result of an unjust process that started long before they showed up on the scene. A lot of decisions have been made and a lot of actions taken that led to that particular moment.

That does not mean that there is absolutely nothing that the interpreter can do. There are many different spheres of influence where the interpreter can have an impact when they are “not on the mic”. For example, if the interpreter knows that there is a certain form that would allow access to services to the client but the service provider is not providing that information, the interpreter can not fill in that gap without undermining the process and their credibility. When the assignment is over, however, the interpreter can tell the client about the form and offer to interpret the request for that for if the client so chooses. The interpreter can also arrive early to talk and strategize with the client, effectively saying, “Look, you may be asked XYZ. You should think about how you may want to respond to that. Or possible options to respond to that may be... either way let’s figure it out now because once we go in and I’m on the mic I won’t be able to help or advise you.” This is one point where social justice interpreting parts ways with traditional interpreter training, where interpreters are strongly advised to avoid having conversations with clients before the start of the assignment at all costs.

This is just the first sphere of influence while off the mic. From the immediate environment work can be done on an organizational level to change policy. From there work can be done in our communities to prepare folks to deal with the system. Of course, work can be done on a global level to try to change dismantle systemic oppression.

Closing

Even though this module offers itself to different discussions and processes, the curriculum does land on a specific point.

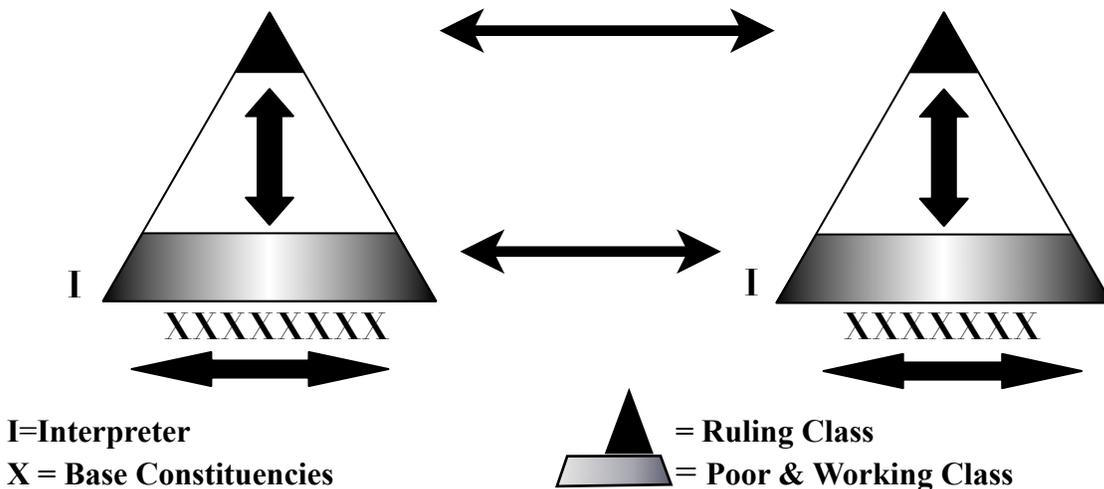
It is that social justice interpreters currently hold a unique position in movement work. On the one hand, they work vertically as discussed in detail in this section. They empower marginalized folks to use their voice to advocate for themselves, and negotiate the systemic power differentials. But their work is also horizontal. As wealth and power is consolidated into a smaller number of ruling elite, the middle class is shrinking, and the number of people in poverty is increasing. Divide and conquer continues to be a successful strategy in hindering the building of a broad-based movement as people continue to work in silos of single-issue and/or identity politics. When you add the extra challenge of language barriers, the task can seem overwhelming. Interpreters have the unique opportunity of helping overcome those barriers on two levels.

In the mainstream immigrant rights work is synonymous with Latinos and Spanish-speaking people. This has caused wedges within the immigrant rights movement; immigrants from other countries have expressed frustration that Latino movements get the lion's share of both media attention and resources. Interpreters provide the opportunity for immigrants from different countries that speak different languages to come together to learn from each other and strategize collectively. Within the broader social justice movement, interpreters create a space for all immigrants to come together with English-speaking activists from other movements to create a broader, more progressive, social justice agenda. That's a pretty powerful and special place to be.

A final thought on resources. As language justice work gains momentum more organizations are starting to value this work. Organizations and communities are starting to view interpreting less and less in a patronizing "gonna do this 'cause it's nice or the right thing to do" kinda way. They are also moving beyond the practicality of it in good organizing practice and are starting to understand that it is a concrete way to put into practice anti-racist, anti-colonialists principles. Language justice is on par with other anti-oppression politics and practices.

Which begs the question: How do we value it? Organizations are grappling with the challenges of finding the resources to implement and sustain this work. It is a given that the global ruling class (represented by the tip of the pyramids) spare no expense in making sure that they have linguistic access to each other. They do this partly by employing professional interpreters who get paid hundreds of dollars an hour. They understand the importance of working together to build and maintain power.

We also understand the importance of working together across language barriers. Do our practices reflect that? Do our budgets allocate adequate resources to be able to hire interpreters for our work? Or are we overly reliant (perhaps unjustly depended) on on the kindness and commitment of movement interpreters? Do we ask them to work for free or for a pittance, especially those interpreters with professional level skills that depend on free lance work to pay their bills? This adds an economic justice component to the afore mentioned values. Part of our long term work in bringing this analysis and practice to social justice organizations is to get them to understand to the importance of allocating resources to this work.



Preparing a Multilingual Space or Event

Roberto Tijerina, Alice Johnson, Andrea Arias

Materials: flip chart paper, markers

Time: 60 – 90 minutes

Objectives:

- **Participants will brainstorm suggestions for required work in planning a multilingual space or event.**
- **Participants will simulate preparing a multilingual event in a team environment and present their plan to the larger group for collective evaluations**
- **Participants will learn the key questions to ask in preparing a multilingual space**

Creating a multilingual space is about more than providing interpreters. In terms of practice, it can be helpful to think of it as language access. Are any written materials (handouts, announcements) translated? Is the website translated? Is every conduit of communication linguistically accessible to every person? Is that even possible in terms of capacity?

In terms of theory some guiding questions are: Is one language dominant over others or are all languages given equal time? Is the information coming from the podium (or facilitators) all in English being interpreted *into* other languages or is it coming in different languages, requiring interpretation *into* English? Are *all* participants being asked to commit to the communication process by using the receivers unless they are fluent in every language represented in the room? Is there the capacity for that?

Facilitator will guide participants through a 15-20 minute brainstorm using the headings below to list as many questions and steps needed to prepare a multilingual space as possible. The goal is to create a checklist that participants will use in the second part of this exercise.

After creating the list, participants are divided into groups of 4 or 5. The groups are then assigned different events that need language access. Their task is to use the checklist to create a language access plan. The plan is then presented to the larger group who are invited to ask questions or make suggestions.

Logistics

- Date, Time and Place
- Schedule – how long
 - o Plenary Sessions, breakouts
- Type of event – conference, interview, appointment, court
- Attendance – how many people?
- Space – how big is the space
 - o If there are breakouts do they occur in the same room or in other rooms
 - o How far are those rooms
 - o Are they far enough that you can use equipment on different frequencies with interference
- What is the topic?
- Contact info – is there an organizational point person?

Language

- How many languages are represented in the room
- Do you want interpretation into every language or to a limited number?
- Simultaneous or consecutive?
- Will folks be free to attend any session with interpretation provided or will there be session conducted in other languages?
- Will there be time to introduce the interpreting at the beginning?

Planning

- Is it possible to visit the site ahead of time for a walk-through?
- Are there any materials (especially written) that can be submitted to the interpreters prior to the event so that they can prepare?
- Is it possible to get a written copy of any prepared remarks or speeches, preferably prior but at least at the event?
- What is the capacity of the planning with the given lead time?
- For a large or multiple day event, is it possible to have a planning/orientation session with interpreters?

Translation

- Is the request limited to verbal interpretation or also written materials?
- Who is responsible for translating documents?
- Will written announcements at the site be translated?

Staffing

- How many interpreters are needed to accomplish the work? (Ideal and minimum)
- What is the alternate plan in case there are not enough interpreters?
- Who is responsible for the recruitment and coordination of the interpreters?
 - o Are you just asking to show up and interpret or to be part of a team?
 - o If a team, who is coordinating?
 - o If asked to coordinate a team, am I responsible for finding the interpreters or will you hire them and I just coordinate?
- Will there be any type of compensation or is the interpreter being asked to donate their services?
 - o If there is compensation, will it be monetary, a meal, a waived registration fee, travel costs?
- Are there any arrangements for interpreter care?
 - o Will there be water for the interpreter?
 - o If there is food, can the interpreters partake?
 - o For larger conferences – is there a room that can be the interpreter office where interpreters and coordinators can work, hang out/talk, take short breaks, keep snacks, etc?
 - o Is there a designated person who interpreters can go to with questions or problems?

Equipment

- What type of and how much equipment is needed?
- Who is responsible for obtaining the equipment?
- Who is responsible for handing it out and tracking it?
- Who is responsible if a piece of equipment is damaged or lost?
- Does this include batteries? If not, who is responsible for having plenty of back batteries?
- In a conference with breakouts in different rooms, will someone be running the equipment between rooms and sessions or are the interpreters carrying the equipment from place to place?
- Is there an opportunity to come test the equipment in the space before the event?
- If using sets of equipment, are they compatible?
- Is there a backup plan in case the equipment doesn't work?

Note:

The scenario should ideally be culled from actual events that participants have worked on or are planning. If suggestions are needed, three commonly used ones are:

- There is a local mobile home park whose residents are comprised of both English and non-English speaking folks. The neighboring Wal-mart has petitioned the Planning and Zoning Committee of the City Council to rezone the lot so that they can expand their parking lot. This would mean that all the residents would be displaced. The community has organized an effort against the rezoning. As part of the decision-making process, the Zoning Committee has allowed the public an opportunity to comment on proposals and has invited members of the mobile home park to speak. They have never had to negotiate interpretation and have told the organizers that if they want interpretation they will provide it.
- The immigrant community has called for an action similar to the May 1, 2006 marches. Your local city is organizing a march that ends with a rally in a public park. The rally will be brief and will feature short comments by local organizers and immigrant community members.
- The central planning committee of the US Social Forum has formed a Language Access Team. The team is responsible for every facet of language accessibility of the event – 4 days, 20 sites throughout the city, and an expected 15,000 people. The scope is large: 18 months of planning, interpreting of the event, translation of documents, translation of website, etc. Your subcommittee is taking point on providing interpretation at the actual event.
- Being engaged in multilingual work means being engaged in an educational process as well. On a basic level, there is a sharing of multilingual theory, techniques, and strategy with interpreters with the hope that they will use these tools in their work as well as share them with others. On another level, there is the work of getting organizations to understand the value of creating multilingual spaces not just as strategy, but also as a social justice issue. How do we move organizations to this understanding so that they commit their resources to it, and how do we help them build their capacity to do it?

CLOSING

Materials: flip chart, markers, pens, postcards, certificates (optional)

Time: 45 minutes

Objectives:

- To offer participants a chance to reflect on the workshop and comment on what they found helpful and what they found not helpful
- To offer participants the opportunity to share key learning moments throughout the workshop
- To offer participants the opportunity to think about what comes next and to stake out some concrete next steps.

As with the opening section, there are many different ways to bring a workshop to a close and invite the facilitators to do it in a way that is most appropriate for them. This curriculum offers a sequence of steps that is used to close out this workshop at Highlander.

If time permits, we start this section by reviewing the parking lot and/or the vocabulary list.

Evaluation: Participants are invited to share their thoughts and feelings about the workshop. What was new/what did they learn? What did they find helpful? frustrating? What would they change? These are captured on a flip chart (See Appendix A). There is also a written evaluation form (See Appendix B) that gets filled out in the next section.

Next steps: Participants are given a postcard and a pen. Participants are asked to address the postcards to themselves with their current address. Participants are then given a couple minutes to reflect back on the workshop in its entirety. "Think about all you heard, seen, learned, and done." Participants are then asked to write down one concrete step they will take when they return to their communities – to learn more about a specific topic, to try a new technique, to share something learned.

While participants are thinking and writing quietly, they can be asked to take a few minutes to fill out their written evaluation forms.

- Practice those multi-tasking skills!!

When participants are finished, the facilitator asks them to go around and share their action steps. When everyone has gone around, the facilitator collects the postcards and any completed evaluation forms. The facilitator will hold on to the postcards for a period and then mail them out.

Certificates and Closing: If desired, facilitators can create certificates of completion, which can be used as part of a closing exercise.

Participants stand in a circle. Facilitator places the certificates (there should be one for every participant and no more) face-down in the center of the circle. Participants then go to the center and take one certificate AND DO NOT TURN IT OVER. They return to their place in the circle with the certificate face down. The participants then discreetly peek at the name on the certificate to make sure they did not get their own. If someone did get their own, they can trade with someone else. Finally, everyone can turn their certificates over to see whom they have chosen.

One person in the circle begins by going to the person whose name is on the certificate they are holding, presenting them with the certificate, and expressing one thing they appreciated about the person throughout the workshop. The presenter then takes their place back in the circle. The person who just received their certificate then presents to the person whose name is on the certificate they are hold and shares an appreciation of them. The sequence continues until everyone has been presented a certificate. If the sequence ends before everyone has received a certificate, another person starts the cycle again.

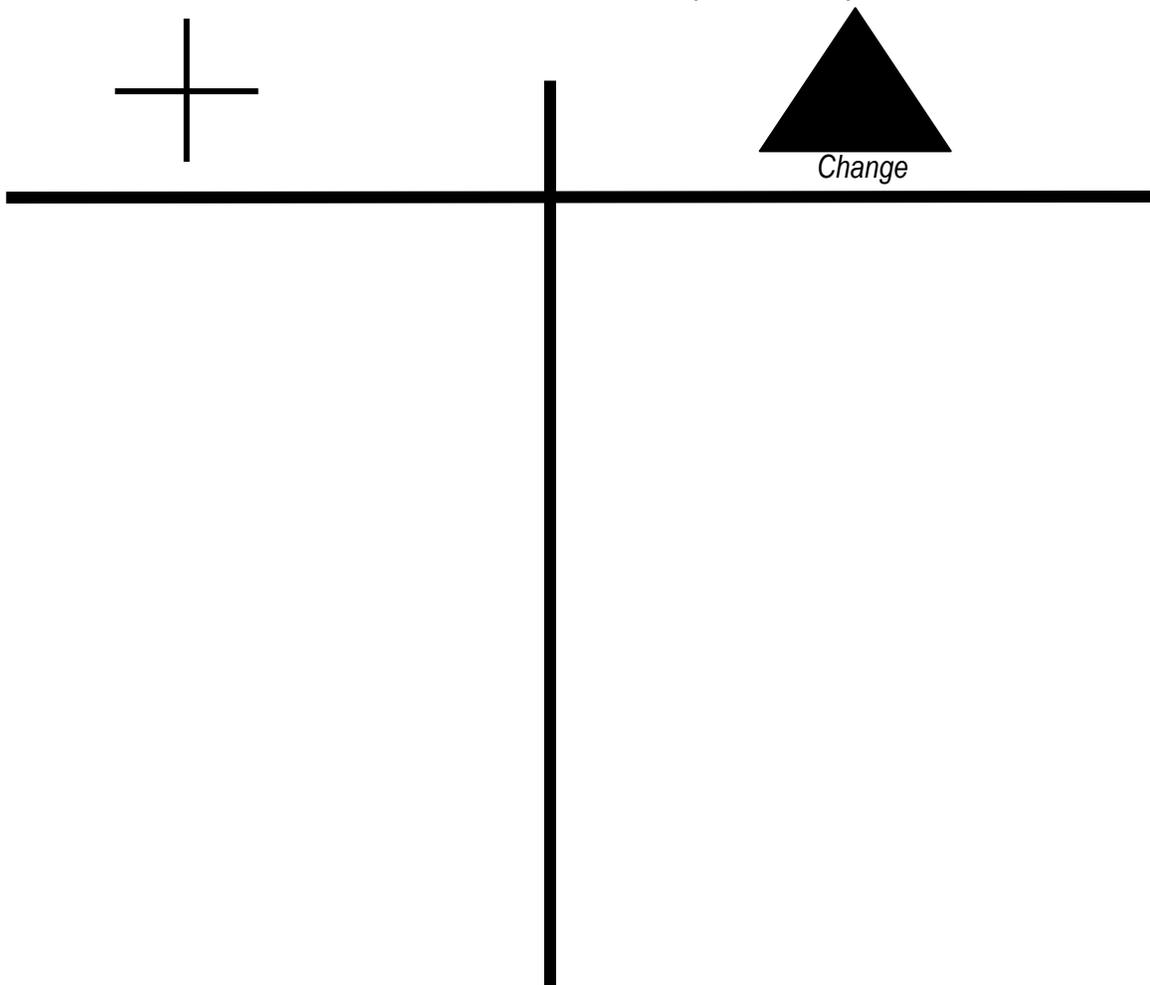
Note:

The time allotted for these modules are suggested times only. The schedule can be modified according to need. Appendix D shows the agenda as it is followed at Highlander over 2.5 days. Keep in mind that Highlander is a residential facility and provides lodging and meals for participants. It allows for a schedule that is not overwhelming.



Appendices

APPENDIX A – Evaluation (Plus/Delta)



APPENDIX B – Sample Evaluation Form
“Interpreting for Social Justice”
Evaluation Form

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback regarding your experience this weekend. This will help us with preparation and funding for future workshops, and is an important component of our planning process.

1. Name (optional) _____
2. What did you hope to gain/learn from the workshop? _____

3. Did you receive the information you hoped to gain? _____
If not, what was missing? _____

4. What were the best/most useful part(s) of the workshop? _____

5. What part(s) of the workshop would you change? _____

6. What touched your heart this weekend? _____

7. Please provide any feedback about the facilitation – what would you change, what was helpful, etc. _____

8. Please provide any feedback about the facilities/grounds – what would you change, what did you like, etc. _____

9. Do you plan to follow up with the Level 2 workshop? _____
Why/why not? _____

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback. We appreciate your presence at the workshop. Have a safe trip home.

APPENDIX C – Certificate of Completion

has successfully completed the Level 1 workshop

Interpreting for Social Change at the

Highlander Research and

Education Center

Roberto Tijerina Gustavo Orellana

Andrea Golden Francisco Flores

March 2007

APPENDIX D – Suggested Agenda Flow
PARTICIPANT AGENDA GUIDE

2 Day Agenda (better suited for a non-retreat center where folks are going home at night)

Day 1

10am-1115am	Opening Welcome and Intros of the folks here with us
	BREAK
1115am – 12pm	Organizational Intros: Our contexts where interpreting comes up
12pm-1pm	Interpreter Fishbowl: Our Burning Issues, Frustrations, Quandries
1pm-2pm	LUNCH/BREAK
2pm – 4pm	Role Play Scenarios from Fishbowl –Cull scenarios from fishbowl.
4pm-5pm	Brain, Body, and Heart in Interpreting
5pm-6pm	Nuts and Bolts of Interpretation 101
6pm-7pm	Soccer for Suckers

Day 2

10am -1030am	Getting Started
1030am-12pm	Revolution will not be in English
12pm-2pm	Consecutive interpreting skills building
2pm – 3pm	Lunch
3pm-3:15pm	This is a knife
3:15pm-5:15pm	Simultaneous skills exercises
5:15-5:30	BREAK
530pm-6pm	Evaluations and Closing

Appendix E--Alternate Agenda
Training Agenda
Interpreting for Social Justice

3 Day Agenda (better suited for retreat centers where folks are staying over and can work later into the evening)

Day 1

9am-12pm	Welcome, Overview, Intros, and Accountabilibuddies Organizational Intros: Our interpreting contexts Interpreter Fishbowl: Our Burning Issues, Quandaries, Frustrations
12pm-1pm	Lunch
2pm-4pm	Role Play scenarios from fishbowl
4pm-5pm	Brain, Body, and Heart in Interpreting
5pm-6pm	Nuts and Bolts of Interpretation 101 Fields and Modes of Interpretation

*** Breaks are built in throughout the days, to be taken according to the group's energy levels through the sessions.**

Day 2

9am-10am	Getting Started (Movement Aerobics, Buddy Check in, Energizer [Back Art Relay], Replay Day 1
10am-1230pm	Brain-Gym I: Consecutive Interpretation Skills Building
1230pm-130pm	Lunch
130pm-4pm	Brain-Gym II: Simultaneous Interpretation Skills Building
4pm-5pm	Soccer for Suckers
5pm-630pm	Language and Power

SUNDAY March 16

9am-915am	Getting Started
915am-1045am	Preparing a Multilingual Space
1045am-11am	Break
11am-12pm	Evaluation and Closing

Interpreting for Social Justice Highlander Workshops

March 14 – 16 , 2008
New Market, Tennessee

GOALS:

- To build a cadre of skilled social justice interpreters in the Southeast and Appalachia who can empower immigrant communities by providing language accessibility to promote social justice
- To encourage local leadership in immigrant communities through sharing skills by training other community members in social justice interpreting
- To create multilingual spaces in social justice communities where language is used democratically as a movement-building tool of power

WHO THIS IS FOR:

Bilingual social justice activists and workers who would like to learn more about interpreting and translating in a social justice context to empower immigrant communities and build alliances across communities.

SESSIONS WILL INCLUDE:

- Interpreter Role and Ethics
- Interpretation modes
- Use of interpreting equipment
- Differences and similarities in social justice interpreting
- Impact of language barriers in social justice movement building
- How to create a multilingual space
- Hands-on interpreting by participants throughout the workshop

These 3-day workshops are provided at no charge, and include room and board. We have limited scholarships available to assist with travel expenses. Child-care is available. **Please Note: Participants should be able to commit to the entire program schedule (Friday-Sunday). If you cannot commit to the entire weekend, feel free to apply for a workshop at a later date. This will increase availability for other participants.**

For more information, contact:

Roberto Tijerina, roberto@highlandercenter.org, 865-933-3443 x233

Please Note: This workshop may be digitally recorded for documentation, archival, and teaching purposes. By applying to participate in the workshop, you are consenting to being recorded.

APPENDIX G – Sign Out Sheet

Equipment Log/Registro de Equipo de Interpretación			
	Date/Fecha:	Event/Evento	
	Name/Nombre	Organización/Organization	Contact Info/Datos
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
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APPENDIX H – Resource Guide

- Wiilams Sound: <http://www.williamssound.com/home.aspx>

APPENDIX I: SETTING UP THE SPACE: Icebreakers, Introductions, and Agreements

Francisco Argulles Paz y Puente

Materials: flip charts, 8.5x11 construction paper, markers, tape

Time – 60 minutes

Objectives:

- Participants start the process of getting to know each other and building the trust needed to do the work ahead.
- Participants decide on collective agreements to guide interactions in the space throughout the workshop.

Facilitator prepares a flip chart that has the following list

liBertad rEvolucion sTruggle cOrazon

Name (participants can offer their formal name and/or what they go by or would like to be called throughout the workshop)

Gender Pronoun Preference (Can be asked simply as “What gender pronoun do you use/prefer?” or modeled as “I’m Roberto and I use male gender pronouns.”) We recognize that some folks both identify and present themselves in terms of gender identity in ways that may be non-conforming to mainstream norms. This allows for folks to define for themselves how they would like to be addressed.

Who Yo People? (Participants can decide for themselves what this means to them. For some it is birth family, for others their political community or chosen family. Still others refer to their countries of origins or the communities from which they come. Sometimes we add, “Who are the people that keep you grounded, that call you out and keep you real.”)

Where you hang your hat (This means what type of political work participants engage in. Women’s issues, anti-racist work, environmental justice, immigrant rights, etc. It can be narrowed down to ask “In what arenas do you engage in your language work?”)

Favorite Dessert – This or any other harmless question that adds a little levity and allows participants to share something personal but not too deep.

One goal for Workshop – one specific thing participant wants to get from the workshop

Share one word - pick one of the words from the name tag to share with the group and explain briefly what that word means to you

Participants are then given an 8.5x11 piece of construction paper (preferably a light color) and a marker. Participants are asked to write their name in big bold letters down the middle of the paper as shown. Facilitator states, “Take a minute to think about the concept of social justice and what it means to you. Then, using the letters of your name, write down on the paper words that speak to what social justice means to you. You can use the letters of your name in the beginning, middle, or end of your words.” Participants are then given a few minutes to think and fill out their name tags.

When folks are done, facilitator sets up the next step. “Please find someone to partner up with for the icebreaker – preferably someone you don’t know. You will have a few minutes to get to know each other by asking the following questions.” Facilitator then goes through the list of questions and explains them. “When we come back, we will ask you to introduce your partner and share what you learned about them.” Participants are then given time to get to know each other.

When finished they come back into the larger groups to introduce each other. When participants share their goals for the workshop, facilitator should capture these on a flip chart. When the exercise is over, go over the list with participants; it can then be taped on a wall for the duration of the workshop. This list should inform the facilitators as to what topics to prioritize for the remainder of the workshop.

Following the icebreaker, facilitator and participants should come up with group agreements for the workshop. Some folks call these ground rules. Participants can be asked to list what they would need from themselves and fellow participants to be able to participate fully in the workshop. In Highlander workshops, we frame these agreements as creating an anti-Oppression space, as opposed to a neutral or safe space. Meaning, that besides asking folks to be mindful of what they put in the public space, we also make a collective agreement to challenge any comment that is deemed to be racist, sexist, homophobic, etc., or that makes any participant feel unsafe.

Note:

- Because folks come from different language backgrounds, and because this workshop is a bilingual accessibility, participants are invited to speak in whatever language is most comfortable to them. The agreement, however, is that if someone speaks in a language that is not understood by everyone in the room, they must repeat themselves in a commonly understood language (usually English). This insures that everyone understands what is being said in the public space.
- The collective agreements are also a good space to have the discussion about creating a supportive and non-judgmental working environment.
- At the end of this section, it is also a good idea to set up a parking lot section using flip chart paper, where participants can write down topics that may need further discussion before the workshop is over.
- On another sheet of flip chart paper, we also create a vocabulary list. This list is created by participants who, throughout the weekend, can write down specific words or phrases that come up for which they would like suggestions on translations. There's usually not enough time to have a group discussion on the words that are noted on the paper, so participants are asked throughout the weekend to jot down their translation suggestions underneath the proposed word.
- This is also a good section to talk about any logistics around space, food, etc., and remind participants to take care of themselves throughout the workshop.
- Because of the participatory nature of this workshop, we strongly encourage participants to sit in a circle where they can see each other, as opposed to sitting in rows.
- There are many different icebreaker exercises and facilitators should feel free to use whichever exercise feels comfortable to them. We choose to use this one because it requires making a list of words and starts getting the brain into the mindset of making word choices and thinking linguistically. Most exercises in this workshop are designed to flex the language portion of our brain.
- There are sixty minutes allotted for this grounding work, which can vary on the size of the group. While it is important to be mindful of time, it is equally important to not rush the process by which participants start to get to know one another.

APPENDIX J: Power Analysis

Power Analysis (Beginner Level)

Goal: To recognize systems and institutions of privilege and oppression.

**Group Brainstorm: What do you think about when you hear the word:
(record answers on butcher paper)**

- POWER

Ex.: access, leadership, money, etc.

- PRIVILEGE

Ex.: you have access to something others don't, advantage, etc.

Facilitator Talking Points:

One of the things we have to recognize is that when someone has privilege, it is at the expense of those without it. For example, men have privilege at the expense of women.

Group Activity: (record answers on butcher paper)

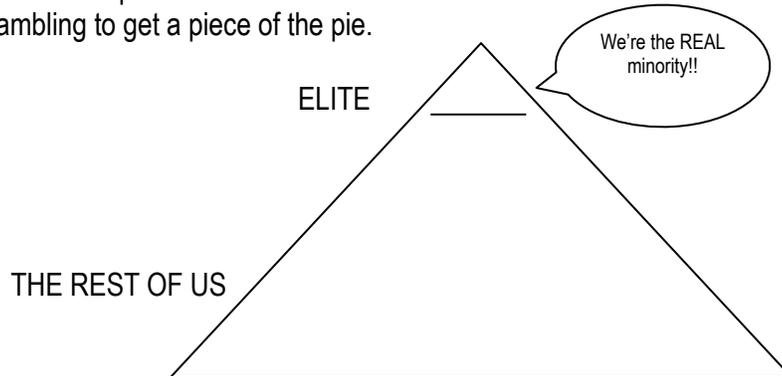
Can you all think of other people who have privilege, and at whose expense?

Ex.:

Privileged/Power/The Norm	Oppressed/ Under-resourced
Rich (People of Wealth)	Low-income folks/Poor
White	People of Color
Christians	Jews; Muslims; Atheists; Agnostics; Pagans; Earth-based religions
Heterosexuals (Straights)	Les/Gay/Bi/Trans: Queer folks
Able-bodied people	People with Disabilities
Adult	Youth
Young	Old
English as 1 st language	Non-English speaking; 'non-native' English speakers
US Citizens	Non-citizens; Residents; Refugees; Undocumented folks
Formal Education	Informal Education
Living in the US	Living in countries dominated by US policy

Facilitator Talking Points:

Power analyses are often drawn in two columns, like above. One of the problems with this is that it draws attention to our individual privileges and oppressions, and draws attention away from those that are the most powerful—those few who live in extreme wealth and excess while the rest of us are scrambling to get a piece of the pie.



There is very possibly one group or subject on our power analysis list that makes us each uncomfortable. Here at Highlander, we try to recognize that this is completely normal—because the oppression in our world is also inside of us. How different things would be if this were not true! But, we all internalize some oppressive messages if we hear them enough. One of our goals is to struggle together through our own stereotypes (whatever they might be!) and our own domination.

We believe that standing in genuine solidarity together is something we must do for survival. One example of this is when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered while trying to bridge distances between African-Americans and low-income whites.

Once MLK began this work, he was seen as incredibly dangerous by the government because he was truly threatening to the system. He was thinking beyond getting one piece of the pie, and toward a new pie for all to share. We are closest to achieving our goals, and therefore most dangerous to the system, when we struggle together genuinely to become united. Thus, while we all must go into our communities to struggle around different issues, we try to keep this broader agenda in mind.

Group Brainstorm (record answers on butcher paper)

Ask: What separates us from other people in our communities?

Ex.:

- Religion
- Fear: Losing jobs, land, housing, kids
- Transportation
- Deportation
- Struggle for survival
- Long-held stereotypes

Why are some privileged?

Facilitator Talking Points:

It is helpful to understand the historical institutional roots of power and privilege.

- Rooted in FEUDALISM: The idea that privilege is granted to you by someone in power
- SUSTAINED BY CAPITALISM: People who have money and other property are seen as more important than others.

Group Activity:

Break into pairs and talk about the following:

- In what ways have you been privileged/ are you privileged?
- In what ways have you been oppressed/are you actively oppressed?
- How did it make you feel?

Debrief: do a quick go around. Close the go-around by pointing out the ways in which even though our multiple identities and other circumstances make us be affected by oppression, we all have a degree of privilege as well.

Group Activity:

Group Discussion: have the group explain the following three kinds of oppression and examples. (Write on butcher paper)

- Institutionalized oppression
(ex. courts, jails, schools, etc.)
- Interpersonal oppression
(a racist neighbor, and inter-personal violence against queer folks, youth, etc.)
- Internalized oppression
(when we internalize the values of our oppressor, gatekeepers in our own communities, etc.)

Note: It is important to highlight that the work that we do is to shift INSTITUTIONAL OPPRESSION, because internalized and interpersonal oppression are both informed and symptoms of Institutional Oppression.

The effects of OPPRESSION:

- We are going to do an exercise to look at the ways in which oppression affects us.
- We draw a line and then we ask you to call out the least serious to the most serious ways that oppression affects us. We are going to start with how racism affects people of color.

Ex.:

I----housing discrimination-----threats-----lynching----genocide-----I

Women-bodied people (people who have women's bodies whether they identify that way or not—society defines them this way)

I---paid less---sexual harassment----low self-esteem---objectification---rape-----I

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender folks

I---paid less--- harassment----low self-esteem---job discrimination---killed-----I

Facilitator Talking Points:

Close this exercise by making the connections between these three oppressions, by race, gender and gender-identity, and sexual orientation. Wrap up by pointing out that in order to build a broad-based movement that doesn't fragment people, we have to acknowledge the connectedness of ALL oppressions.

Group Brainstorm: (write answers on butcher paper)

WHAT ARE COMMON ELEMENTS OF OPPRESSION?

(What do oppressed people have in common with each other?)

- ❖ We lack social and economic equality
- ❖ We are all stereotyped, demonized, and dehumanized
- ❖ We experience isolation
- ❖ We experience being tokenized (EXPLAIN)
- ❖ We blame ourselves...
- ❖ ...And society blames us (Ex: Gay people are corrupting our children, African-Americans are lazy and they are ruining the economy, immigrants take jobs away)

We need to acknowledge the ways we are all oppressed and not internalize those values as our own.

Real power often lays in being able to 'create' a version of reality and have others accept that version of reality as their own. An example of that is the version of American History that is taught in most public schools, which downplays any contribution by people of color, and holds European history, art, music and culture as the standard.

We must also recognize our own privilege, and learn to use it in positive ways, to work towards a broad-based movement for social justice.

** Language + Privilege ~ accountability to community as translators and multilingual folk

**Children as Translators ~ buffers for a racist & classist society

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: (if time allows)

Myth of the Leveled Playing Field

The media tells us that we are all after the **American Dream**. Not only that, but that the AMERICAN PIE is actually getting smaller...is this true? Are resources disappearing? Is the wealth of the US getting smaller? Or getting bigger?

We're going to play a game:

Line up and have everyone hold hands. Next, step forward or back according to what you can relate to...OK, everyone ready?

- MEN; take a step forward
- WOMEN; take a step back
- PEOPLE OF COLOR; take a step back
- WHITE FOLKS; take a step forward
- CHRISTIANS; take a step forward
- PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS AND ATHEISTS; take a step back
- STRAIGHT FOLKS; take a step forward
- GLBTQ; take a step back
- PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES; take a step back
- IF YOU WERE BORN IN THE US; take a step forward
- IF YOU HAVE A COMPUTER; take a step forward
- IF YOU WENT TO COLLEGE; take a step forward
- IF YOUR PARENTS WENT TO COLLEGE; take a step forward
- IF YOUR FAMILY OWNS THEIR OWN HOUSE; take a step forward
- IF YOU OR YOUR FAMILY OWNS A CAR; take a step forward
- IF YOU LIVE IN A RURAL COMMUNITY; take a step back

Debrief

OK, now let's talk...

Were you able to keep holding hands with everyone next to you? Do you see yourself in reference to others around you? What do you think?

Examples: Given the continued attacks on Affirmative Action over the years, they are telling us that we are all equal, and that no one needs 'special help', and that we are all on a level playing field. Do we all have the same chance of succeeding? What do you think?

Any questions?

Facilitator Talking Points:

Close exercise by saying that even though there is a great effort into messaging that people can simply pull themselves up by 'their bootstraps,' we have to understand that in the USA, given the history of discrimination that banned some people from accumulating wealth (such as African Americans in the South, or Japanese Americans in the West, or Mexican Americans in the Southwest) we have inherited that inequality.

APPENDIX K: THE LORENZO REYES SHOW

Francisco Argulles Paz y Puente

Materials: four chairs. This exercise will also call for three volunteers.

Time: 30 Minutes

Objective:

- Participants start to break down specific interpreting stories to identify the power dynamics at play.
- Participants start to understand how power differentials affect the decisions made by all parties in a conversation, as well as the interpreter.
- Participants are to think critically about how to negotiate power dynamics vis-à-vis the interpreting process.
- Participants and facilitator start to lay down the groundwork for the power analysis piece to follow.

This exercise is played out like a talk show, a la Oprah, Larry King (aka Lorenzo Reyes), or Cristina (the Latin Oprah).

It requires a little bit of prep work, so a break is suggested between the fishbowl and this exercise so the facilitators can do the setup.

The facilitator should have identified two or three compelling stories from the fishbowl that really offer some teaching points around negotiating power and interpreter decision-making. The interpreter should ask the people that shared those stories if they would be willing to volunteer for this talk show style exercise. Participants are told that the facilitator will be playing the role of a talk show host, and they will be playing the role of the guests. Other members of the facilitation team should play the roles of producer and call-in guests. The facilitation team members should work out the key questions that need to be addressed in the interviews ahead of time. These questions should be specific to the stories being shared. If these questions are not brought up in the natural course of the interview, one of the facilitators should bring them up by calling them into the show.

To start the exercise, four chairs should be set up at the front of the space. Three of them should be placed immediately next to each other, the fourth one (host) off to the side a little. The producer starts by warming up the audience and introducing the host. Something along the lines of, "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE WANT TO WELCOME YOU TO THE LORENZO REYES SHOW, COMING TO YOU LIVE FROM [Insert City Here]! WE HAVE A VERY SERIOUS TOPIC TODAY, AND TO START THE CONVERSATION LETS GIVE IT UP AND SHOW SOME LOVE TOOOOOOOOOOOOO... LORENZO REYES!"

The facilitator then comes out enthusiastically into the space and greets the audience. Then s/he welcomes the guests along the lines of, "Thank you for being here on the show today. Today's topic is one that... (ad-lib)... When people can't communicate, the results can be at best frustrating, and at worst tragic. Today we have with us three guests that valiantly put themselves on the front line of bridging that communication gap. They get up every day to try to accomplish the seemingly

impossible: to get people who don't speak the same language to be able to communicate with each other. Please join me in welcoming our guests (state names).”

The facilitator then proceeds to interview each guest, talk show style. S/he asks the guests to briefly recount the story that they shared earlier in the fishbowl. The facilitator needs to tease out, by means of talk show style interview questions, the important points of the stories. What were the power dynamics? What choices did the interpreter make, and why? What were the results of those choices? Would the interpreter make that same choice again? During the interview, the audience members should be encouraged to ask questions of the guests (a la Jerry Springer). The facilitator playing the caller should be listening for cues to call-in and ask questions. Regardless of the flow, we usually have the caller close the show by calling in and saying something like, “I understand and appreciate the stories that your guests have shared, my question is, ‘Why do we need interpreters in the first place? Why don't these folks learn English?’”. The host then fields this question to the guests for their reactions. This usually ends the exercise on a charged note. The host can then wrap it up by saying something like, “Well it's a very complicated issue. I want to thank everyone for their questions and opinions, and especially want to thank our amazing guests.” We then say something silly to break the intensity of the moment like, “Today's guests of the Lorenzo Reyes show will all be receiving BRAND NEW MANSIONS!” or “Tune in to tomorrow's Lorenzo Reyes show when our topic will be Moose Hunting State Governors and the Presidential candidates that love them.”

The goal of this exercise is to start framing some of the power issues involved in negotiating languages. It is important to land this section with some very clear discussion questions that involve the negotiation of power in interpreting situations and the choices that the interpreter makes.

