THE COMMUNITY INTERPRETER®
The International Edition

AN INSTRUCTOR’S GUIDE

by

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Based on the textbook The Community Interpreter®: An International Textbook
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Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................ iii
How to Use This Instructor’s Guide ................................................................................. vii

PART ONE: THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Program Learning Objectives ....................................................................................... 2
Sample Class Schedule ................................................................................................. 5
Overview of the Program ............................................................................................... 7
The Medical Edition ...................................................................................................... 15
The Licensed Trainer’s Slide Kits ................................................................................ 17
Logistics for Presenting the Program ............................................................................ 19

PART TWO: LESSON PLANS

Lesson Plan Overviews
Table-format lesson plans for Modules 1-5 ................................................................. 39

Detailed Lesson Plans

MODULE 1: Introduction to Community Interpreting
Module 1 Schedule and Objectives ............................................................................. 51
Module 1 Detailed Lesson Plans ................................................................................ 55

MODULE 2: Interpreting Protocols and Skills
Module 2 Schedule and Objectives ............................................................................. 127
Module 2 Detailed Lesson Plans ................................................................................. 132

MODULE 3: Strategic Mediation
Module 3 Schedule and Objectives ............................................................................. 177
Module 3 Lesson Plans ................................................................................................ 179

MODULE 4: Professional Identity
Module 4 Schedule and Objectives ............................................................................. 223
Module 4 Lesson Plans ................................................................................................ 225

MODULE 5: The Role of the Interpreter
Module 5 Schedule and Objectives ............................................................................. 265
Module 5 Lesson Plans ................................................................................................ 267

APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Final Participant Assessments and Answer Keys ................................. 297
Appendix 2: Sample handouts and templates for instructional materials ............... 313
Appendix 3: Film/DVD and Role Play Resources ....................................................... 433
Appendix 4: Sample Participant Certificates ............................................................... 440
Appendix 5: Sample Program Evaluation Form........................................446
Appendix 6: Current Licensing Agreement...........................................448
INTRODUCTION

Meeting the need

This book, and the program it supports, represent an extraordinary achievement: the growing professionalization of community interpreting.

Around the world, the profession has evolved at breathtaking speed. Today the scope of the need for trained, qualified interpreters in medical, educational, social services and refugee interpreting is staggering. Research is expanding. A number of international conferences focus on or include community interpreting. An international standard for community interpreting was published in December 2014¹. Technology has revolutionized the delivery of community interpreting. Above all, however, increased migration, language legislation and concern for quality of care and access to services has driven the growing need for trained community interpreters.

The program

Education and training programs in the field are proliferating, yet many of these programs “reinvent the wheel.” Trainers and curriculum developers have often learned the hard way what works—and doesn’t work—when training community interpreters.

This program, The Community Interpreter®: The International Edition, is the first of its kind in the world to offer a concrete digestion of lessons learned about how to train community interpreters, structure it as a practical, easy-to-implement program and make that program available to a growing national and international corps of educators and trainers of community interpreters.

This instructor’s guide is based on a unique textbook called The Community Interpreter®: An International Textbook. Published in 2015, the textbook is the first comprehensive textbook in the field, and the only one carefully designed to support both university and college programs for community interpreting (whether undergraduate or graduate degrees, certificate programs or isolated courses) and short training programs. The textbook has a companion workbook called, The Community Interpreter®: An International Workbook of Activities and Role Plays.

The textbook and its companion workbook support a training-of-trainers program that has been delivered across the United States. Cross-Cultural Communications (CCC), the agency that created and owns this program and its predecessor (The Community Interpreter®), licenses trainers and university/college instructors to deliver the program.

Each session can be delivered in a 40- or 60-hour format. Already taught in other countries, the program is designed for use around the world. Most of the information provided here addresses

¹ ISO 13611, 2014: Interpreting: Guidelines for Community Interpreting. The author of this guide was a contributor to this standard as part of the U.S. Technical Advisory Group to ISO (the International Organization for Standardization). The standard can be purchased from ISO at http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=54082.
all community interpreters in any country where the profession exists, including those who interpret in signed languages.  

The program can be delivered in one of several ways:

- For medical interpreters only.
- For educational interpreters only.
- For social services interpreters only.
- Any combination of these three audiences.
- As a generic program that targets any or all specializations of community interpreting, including mental health, refugee, victim services, disaster response and faith-based interpreting, among other emerging specializations.

Because more than half the licensed trainers for the program choose to present this program to medical interpreters only, we have referred to that particular way of presenting the program as the “Medical Edition.” It carries special instructions, noted in Part One of this instructor’s guide.

**Schedule**

Those instructors who plan to present sessions of *The Community Interpreter® International* based on the information in this textbook should be aware that the program is typically conducted over a schedule of five 8-hour days adding up 40 hours. The program can however be taught on any schedule and extended to five or six days (60 hours); an optional schedule for the 60-hour program is provided in Part One.

However, this instructor’s guide is based on the assumption that the program will most often be presented as a 40-hour session, typically in five one-day segments (or ten half-day segments). That schedule may be, and has been, adapted in a variety of ways to facilitate delivery, for example:

- Five consecutive days
- Consecutive weekends
- Two weekends: 4 hours each on Friday; 8 hours each on Saturday and Sunday
- Evening classes of 4 hours hour
- A combination of evening and weekend classes
- Any other schedule that suits the needs of the instructor and the group

Because it is easier to present this curriculum over a longer rather than a shorter period, and because research strongly suggests participants will retain more information on a longer schedule, this program should not be presented over a period of five consecutive days unless there is no feasible alternative schedule. A longer period of study also benefits participants by allowing them more time to read the textbook, absorb the information and learn new skills.

When working on a modified schedule, please keep in mind that the training will need to last at least 40 hours to retain the title, *The Community Interpreter®: The International Edition*

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2 The program was initially designed for spoken language interpreters, and its authors come from that field. It has however undergone a gradual evolution over the years to meet the needs of signed language interpreters who seek specialized training in community interpreting.
(henceforth referred to at times by its shorter and slightly more colloquial title: The Community Interpreter® International).

Materials

This program works with the following materials available for licensed trainers, who may order any number of copies of the books below at the licensed trainer discount rate for their participants but not for general resale. They are:

1. This instructor’s guide.
4. A professionally designed electronic trainer’s slide kit with one module corresponding to each of the five chapters of the textbook and workbook.
5. A set of templates and handouts (both print and electronic) for trainers’ convenience when preparing recommended materials and handouts for the program.

The Medical Edition of the program includes all the materials above and in addition:

2. An electronic copy of the instructor’s guide on how to deliver a one-day medical terminology workshop based on that program (currently $25 for licensed trainers and $40 retail).
3. A professionally designed electronic trainer’s slide kit with two modules to support that program.

Licensed Trainers and Licensed Organizations

Only instructors who have attended this program’s Training of Trainers offered by Cross-Cultural Communications (CCC) and who are licensed and authorized by CCC to present The Community Interpreter® International may do so.

Trainers are permitted to present the program to any audience of their choosing, as specified in the licensing agreement (see Appendix 6 for a sample copy of that agreement). There are no fees for licensing. The only requirement for presenting the program is to purchase, at the licensed trainer discount rate, one copy of the textbook per participant. (Purchase of the workbook and medical terminology handbook is highly recommended but not required.)

A trainer is licensed to present the program only for the organization specified in the licensing agreement or for any other licensed agency. All other presentations of this program require written permission from Cross-Cultural Communications. For questions about licensing, contact 410-312-5599 or info@cultureandlanguage.net.
Developing best practices for the training of community interpreter instructors is a work in progress. Please let us know your thoughts so that we can support each other as we go down this road together.

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HOW TO USE THIS INSTRUCTOR’S GUIDE

This instructor’s guide accompanies an intensive “training-of-trainers” program that supports instructors who intend to present sessions of The Community Interpreter® International. The instructor’s guide is structured as follows.

• **Part One:** This section offers details about the “big picture” of the program and the logistics of how to deliver it.

• **Part Two:** Here you will find the short and long lesson plans that show how to teach the program.

• **Appendices:** These valuable sections include:
  - The final written assessment for the program and its answer key.
  - Sample handouts.
  - Templates to create suggested instructional materials.
  - Ordering information for helpful film resources.
  - Sample certificates and program evaluations.
  - A copy of the boilerplate CCC licensing agreement.

**Part One**

This section provides a practical overview of the program, including its history and pedagogical perspectives. Because a 40-hour program can be a daunting exercise for instructors who have not delivered one before, the logistics of setting up and delivering a 40-hour (or longer) interpreter training program are addressed as well.

**Part Two**

This section contains lesson plans for the program. It comes in two sections:

- Lesson plan overviews (each day “at-a-glance”)
- Detailed lesson plans

**Lesson plan overviews**

The lesson plan overviews are one-page lesson plans, each corresponding to a half a module (four hours) and displayed in a landscape table format.

When you present a session of the program, you may wish to copy these pages and keep the two lesson plan overviews for that day (e.g., Module 1 on the first day of training) in an area where you can see them easily. The visual format allows you to see at a glance exactly what you need to do. That way, if you fall behind, you can plan on how to catch up: for example, by omitting optional activities and compressing any lecture time.

**Detailed lesson plans**

The detailed lesson plans are the “blow-by-blow” plans that provide step-by-step instructions for each portion of the curriculum. Start with the detailed lesson plans. The detailed lesson plans often include background information and knowledge that may be of use for instructors new to
the field, or for those who find they are weaker in some areas of the curriculum than others.

The detailed lesson plans also offer in-depth guidance, practical tips and answer keys for the relevant workbook exercises (since not all of the workbook activities are included in the 40-hour program).

These detailed lesson plans are the “security blanket” portion of the textbook. Instructors typically begin their initial preparation here and later proceed to the lesson plans overviews, which are leaner and crisper.
CCC often receives inquiries from its licensed trainers about small classes (fewer than 10). Yes, they are feasible; but also be a challenge. With fewer than 10 participants, it often requires more energy from you as the instructor to create a dynamic atmosphere. Larger groups create their own sense of energy. They propel momentum and excitement. Small groups can be quiet.

The downside of the larger groups is that they tend to engage too much discussion; participants have many questions that can derail trainers and lead them to neglect time management. Try to have a smaller rather than a larger group for your first sessions.

**Seating arrangements**

If possible, ask for a U-shape set-up with long tables: i.e., a long rectangle with one short end left open (see below). Avoid a wide U. Also avoid “classroom” set-up (straight rows) which does not promote face-to-face discussion and can makes adult learners feel as though they are back in school.

![U-shape setup diagram](image-url)

Let the open end of the U face your projection screen. If you lack automated equipment and a fixed projector, you can set up a table for audiovisual equipment in this open part of the U. Set up an easel to one side if you do not have a marker board.

U-shape requires approximately twice the space needed for classroom set-up for the same number of participants. If you cannot set up a U-shape due to the restrictions of your room size or the room’s shape, consider:

- Round tables (smaller size, no more than 8 participants per table)
- Short tables set up in T-shapes around the room
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time/Title</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Suggested Materials</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. | After completing these objectives and their corresponding exercises, the learner will be able to: | - Handout 5, Review activity, Part 2 | • Review Activity for Module 2  
• Review exercises for Chapter 2 (20 min)  
• Announce Day 3 learning objectives | Review, with a focus on Module 2 unless you feel that they need reinforcement of Module 1 |
| 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. | 3.1 Show awareness of bias while interpreting. | - Trainer Template 5: scripts for demo role plays  
- Project Implicit website: set it up in advance for the demo | • Unconscious bias demo role play (15 min)  
• Activity 3.1(a) “The Interpreter’s Dilemma” role plays (30 min)  
• Introduction to implicit bias (30 min)  
• Activity 3.1(b) Project Implicit demo (15 min) | Interpreters are human and therefore biased. Lead them to how to become aware of our unconscious biases. |
| 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. | Break | | | |
| 10:45 – 11:30 a.m. | 3.2 Apply four decision-making criteria to assess whether or not to mediate. | - YES/NO cards | • Four criteria for intervening (15 min)  
• Activity 3.2(a): “Should I mediate?” (30 min) | Present the rationale for non-intrusive approach to mediation. |
| 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | 3.3 Develop basic scripts for performing mediation in community [or medical] interpreting. | - Recording devices | • Activity 3.3(b): Write Basic Mediation Scripts (60 min) | Focus on the importance of having mental scripts to avoid “deer in the headlights” freezing when deciding what to do if mediation is called for. |
| 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | LUNCH | | | |
MODULE 3.2  Deciding When to Intervene
10:45 – 11:30 a.m.

Objective: Learning objective 3.2 Apply four decision-making criteria to assess whether or not to mediate.

Materials: YES/NO cards

Set-up: Distribute, or have someone distribute, the YES/NO cards, one set per person.

Transition: After exploring the many factors that can unconsciously influence our decisions about whether and how to mediate, let’s look at one approach to helping us make the decision: “Should I mediate?”

Activities: • Four Criteria for Intervening 15 minutes
  • Activity 3.2(a) “Should I Mediate?” 30 minutes

Instructor’s Tip

YES/NO cards can be used at any time during the program. If you want to find out what the group thinks about a certain key point that has just arisen, or if they understood a point already addressed, simply pose the question as a “yes or no” question. If you see a sea of red or green, you can move on. If there is division, or if you see a few outliers or those who hold up both a YES and a NO card, ask for their opinion and discuss—time permitting. Try to call on the more quiet participants.

It can be helpful to have the YES/NO cards available throughout the entire program.

Four Criteria for Intervening 15 minutes

Keep this section brisk: the goal is simply to introduce key terms used in this program and the four criteria for deciding whether or not to intervene so that participants can apply them to the activity that follows.

If you wish, display Slide 26 to show the learning objective. Now clarify the terms used, displaying the relevant slides if you wish.

Slide 27 focuses on a very important pillar of this program: that you have essentially two “roles” or “tasks”: either you are interpreting, or you are mediating. The rest is really administration.

How to interpret was the big topic of Module 2. How to mediate is the big topic of Module 3.
Module 3: Slide 27

First, as instructors, it might be helpful for you to be aware that in English the two terms *intervening* and *mediation* are sometimes a source of confusion in the field. In general, *mediation* is an international term of art used in interpreting to apply to acts of the interpreter that are not interpreting per se (whether during or outside the session). The term *intervention* or *intervening* would be a standard term used in U.S. medical interpreting.

To avoid confusion, the textbook authors did two things:

- The author of Chapter 5 devoted a whole learning objective and section of the textbook, in Unit 5 (Section 5.2) to the concept and practice of mediation. *Mediation* is practiced somewhat differently around the world in community interpreting and also as a parallel profession in several countries whose practitioners are often called “intercultural mediators.”
- The authors in general applied the word *intervening* to the interpreter’s act of interrupting a session (for any reason) and the word *mediation* or *strategic mediation* to whatever the interpreter says and does after intervening.
- The authors have suggested that we, as community interpreters, *intervene* to execute a *mediation*.

When you teach this curriculum, we ask you to make the same distinction. You can use Slide 29 to assist. It defines *intervening* as follows:

- *Intervention* (in this program) refers to the *act* of intervening: i.e., interrupting the session for any reason.
- So you will *intervene* in order to perform *strategic mediation*.

The same slide defines *strategic mediation* to distinguish *mediation* in general from the particular way the term is used in this program, as followed:
• *Strategic mediation* refers to any act or utterance of the interpreter that goes beyond interpreting and is intended to remove a barrier to communication or facilitate a service user or patient’s access to the service.

(Remember that *service user* is just an international way of referring to a “client” of community services, since “client” is not an internationally well-understood term in the context of community interpreting.)

**Slide 30** (below) further clarifies an important point about mediation, including what we call “strategic mediation” (which, as you will see, is a particular technique for performing mediation that supports communicative autonomy). Here is the point: mediation can take place during or outside the session and community interpreters do both. However, if mediating outside the session ideally the interpreter:

- Will restrict mediation with the provider to *debriefing* (unless the interpreter is a bilingual employee who is a colleague of the provider).
- Will restrict mediation with patients or clients to *finding an appropriate provider for whom to interpret* the patient or client’s questions or concerns (unless the interpreter decides to engage in advocacy; advocacy is discussed in Module 5).

**Module 3, Slide 30**

**Slide 31** (bullets are listed below) reviews and repeats the point made earlier about when to intervene:

- Mediate for any communication barrier that could have serious consequences.
- Ask yourself:
  - *What will happen if I don’t intervene?*
  - What are the probable *CONSEQUENCES?*
- If the potential negative consequences of NOT intervening exceed the risks of intervening, then and only then, would you mediate.

**Slide 32** (pictured above) lists the four criteria for intervening: linguistic challenges; role confusion; cultural misunderstandings; service system barriers.
## ROLE PLAY MANAGEMENT GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Play Management Guide</th>
<th>Set-up</th>
<th>Assign Roles</th>
<th>Group Planning</th>
<th>Execution</th>
<th>Language Coaches (optional)</th>
<th>Processing of Role Plays</th>
<th>Demonstration Role Plays (optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Fold card stock to make name tents and have participants write their languages on the cards at the beginning of the program.</td>
<td>● Count every individual in each group off as “1” “2” or “3” and ask them to remember their number. (A language coach could be “4.”)</td>
<td>● Those without language partners can interpret from English to the other language (for full scripts) or “English into English” (for unscripted role plays).</td>
<td>● Non-Spanish interpreters will try to sight translate the client text into the other language.</td>
<td>● Where language coaches are available, each triad should have its own coach.</td>
<td>● Wait until at least two persons in most or all groups have played the interpreter.</td>
<td>● Time permitting, demonstration role plays can be done at least occasionally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Ask speakers of the most common language to stand up. Divide them into triads and continue with other languages OR pick up, shuffle and redistribute the name card tents for all speakers, dividing them into triads who speak the same languages.</td>
<td>● Meet people in the eye as you call their number, to be sure they hear, or let them count themselves off.</td>
<td>● If only two people speak the same language, they will play client and interpreter except when the third person plays the interpreter.</td>
<td>● After a group finishes a role play, Number 2 should play the interpreter for the same role play or for the next one.</td>
<td>● Coach will have pen and paper.</td>
<td>● Assign faster groups another role play.</td>
<td>● Invite (do not force) a group to demonstrate in the open part of the U setup.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● If there are not three persons available for a language put two who speak the same language with a third person who speaks any other language.</td>
<td>● Announce that 1’s will play the interpreter, 2’s will play the client and 3’s will play the provider.</td>
<td>● Ask the “client” and “provider” to read the script.</td>
<td>● If time permits, Number 3’s and 4’s may also play the interpreter.</td>
<td>● Coach should not interrupt often but allow the flow to develop.</td>
<td>● Role plays can be loud: a porter’s bell is helpful way to save your voice when ending the role plays.</td>
<td>● Thank each group that does a demo and keep the group up front while you invite audience feedback e.g., “What did they do well?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Use break-out rooms if possible.</td>
<td>● “Leftover” participants can play a family member, e.g., a spouse, grown child, sibling or parent OR let one play both the provider and the client.</td>
<td>● The interpreter should know only the general situation and type of service and should not read the script.</td>
<td>● Let them begin.</td>
<td>● After each person has played the interpreter; the coach can give feedback as follows: interpreter self-evaluates first; coach and group then give positive feedback first; then coach and group offer gentle feedback and suggestions.</td>
<td>● When everyone is seated and quiet, ask what went well, and what was challenging. Discuss.</td>
<td>● Segue into possible errors but constructively, with warmth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● With pen and paper, monitor the room, listening and making notes about e.g., use of 3” person, eye contact, linguistic errors, use of informal address, omissions, ethical violations, etc. (but do not write down any names).</td>
<td>● Ask if there are questions.</td>
<td>● Let them off.</td>
<td>● Continue with the next person playing the interpreter.</td>
<td>● Offer comments from your notes (without naming any interpreters).</td>
<td>● Invite responses from language coaches (if present).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repeat the demonstration with another group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:
- A guide on managing role plays, including setup, assignment of roles, group planning, execution, language coaches, and role play processing. The guide provides detailed instructions on how to conduct role plays, including language and role assignment, as well as feedback and evaluation processes.
# Interpreting Feedback Sheet

**Date:** _________________________________________________________________

**Topic:** _________________________________________________________________

**Mode:** ☐ Consecutive ☐ Sight Translation ☐ Simultaneous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accuracy and Completeness</th>
<th>Did the interpreter:</th>
<th>☐ Leave content out?</th>
<th>☐ Add content?</th>
<th>☐ Distort meaning?</th>
<th>☐ Communicate the message?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Was the delivery:</td>
<td>☐ Confident?</td>
<td>☐ Smooth?</td>
<td>☐ Understandable?</td>
<td>☐ Hesitant?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Strategies</td>
<td>Did the interpreter:</td>
<td>☐ Analyze content?</td>
<td>☐ Restructure sentences?</td>
<td>☐ Problem-solve?</td>
<td>☐ Show background knowledge?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: _________________________________________________________________