

Module 4: **Communication with LEP Persons**

Module Four covers organizational responsibilities and practical realities about bilingual services, translation, and interpretation

William Hewitt

Principal Court Research Consultant

National Center for State Courts

Appearance standard of interpreter qualifications

- Person is available
- Shows up on time
- Dresses appropriately and appears professional
- Appears to be bilingual
- No one complains

Interpreter says:

- Oh, that Iron Pear, he fried my squid!

Providing meaningful language
access begins with ...

planning

As a practical matter ...

What is possible for your agency?

- Strive for highest standard
- Improve, upgrade when possible
- "There's no funding!" – no excuse to stop working on the problem

Types of resources to consider

- Bilingual personnel working for you
- Translated standard documents
- Interpreters

Bilingual personnel

- Bilingual “expert” employee – best resource
- Appropriate for clerk’s offices, community-based service organizations
- Bilingual people who interpret are a necessary evil
- Worst possible scenario - family member as an interpreter in a DV case ... find someone else!

Translation

- Translation refers to written modes of communication
- Is there important information you have, or can capture, in writing?

Translation

- Excellent resource for explaining services and procedures that are stable
- Must be done by professionals
- Expensive if done well

Use of Interpreters

- A bilingual person who is asked to interpret

VS

- A professional interpreter

Know The Difference!!!

WHAT'S THE INTERPRETER'S JOB?

- To render everything said in court in the source language, into the target language:

Render Everything

- Accurately – no distortion of meaning
- No omissions
- No additions
- No changes in style or register of speech
- With as little delay or interference in the routine pace as possible ...

What knowledge?

- Two languages
- Court terminology, procedure and concepts
- Code of Professional Conduct

Code of Professional Conduct –

- see Module 5 for complete Code

What Abilities?

- Speak two languages
- Consecutive Interpreting
- Simultaneous interpreting
- Sight translation of documents

Cognitive and Motor Skills

What interpreters do ...

- Listen
- Comprehend
- Abstract the message from the words and word order
- Store ideas
- Search for the conceptual and semantic matches
- Reconstruct the message in the other language
- While...Speaking and listening for the next chunk of language to process
- While... Monitoring their own output

We Can't Expect All That From Non-professionals

- Emphasis on Consecutive
- Managing the Session

Alternative to the appearance standard

- Knowledge and Skills Assessment
(testing when possible)
- Registration and Classification
- Minimum Mandatory Training
- Certification

Wrap Up – Building Resources

- Start with highest quality-standard possible in relation to the employment circumstances
- Seek to support full-time employment of qualified interpreters somewhere in your area
- Match compensation to demonstrated (tested) qualification level

Guiding Principles

Establish network links with other organizations

- Make best use of communication technology

A key responsibility of the service provider ...

Educate all employees about
professional responsibilities of
interpreters

**Make full disclosure to client
regarding level of qualifications
of the available interpreter!**

In our next module

Domestic Violence - *Resources for Assisting the Limited English Proficient (LEP) Person*, a self-paced module with hyperlinked information from various Web sites on the topic of Domestic Violence, Court Interpreting and Protection Orders.