

Practice Makes Competent: Virtual Skill-Building Mini-Conference

Abstracts, Learning Objectives and Bios

Practice Makes Competent, Relentless Improvement Makes Mastery

Vonessa Costa, CoreCHI-Performance™

CCHI defines a certified healthcare interpreter as “a person who is able to perform the functions of a healthcare interpreter competently, independently, and unsupervised in any setting and in any modality where healthcare is provided, with the knowledge, skill, and ability required to relay messages accurately from a source language to a target language in a culturally competent manner and in accordance with established ethical standards.” Do you see yourself in this description today, or do you sometimes feel like a shadow of the interpreter you once were? Are you regularly engaging “in any setting and in any modality”, or have you settled comfortably into a smaller scope of practice? Whether newly certified or entering your fourth renewal cycle, regular deliberate practice is foundational to maintaining, strengthening, and extending the reach and range of your skills.

The concept that "practice makes competent" applies to all professions, including health professions. In the fast-evolving field of healthcare, continuous improvement is paramount. In this talk, we will first consider the importance of deliberate practice in all professions and then articulate specific ways in which healthcare interpreters can adapt models from other health professions for refining and sharpening their skills through self-study, instructor-led practice, and peer feedback – not just as they enter the field, but throughout their career trajectory.

Together, we will take a deep dive into the concepts of deliberate practice and relentless improvement and provide a blueprint for charting a personal path from competence to mastery. We will outline specific steps that when followed will help healthcare interpreters to continuously grow their knowledge and refine their skills, ensuring they consistently provide the highest quality interpretation in diverse healthcare settings. Finally, we will demonstrate how a personal commitment to relentless improvement not only benefits interpreters but also contributes to health equity in the communities in which they live and work.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define the concepts of deliberate practice and relentless improvement in healthcare interpreting.
2. Contrast competence and mastery and outline how a personal competence development plan can help interpreters achieve and maintain a progressively higher skill level.
3. Explain the connection between relentless improvement and health equity.

Vonessa Costa is Senior Director of Quality for the Health Care Interpreter Network (HCIN), a collaborative of health systems that share interpreter resources. Prior to her current position, Vonessa was director of Multicultural Affairs and Patient Services at Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA), named the number one hospital in Massachusetts for Health Equity and Community Benefit by the Lown Institute (2021). She was a project lead for CHA's video interpreting initiative honored with a 2014 Amerinet Healthcare Achievement Award for technological advances that have enhanced capacity to care for a diverse patient population, over forty

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percent of which receives care in a non-English language. Prior to her work at CHA, Vonessa was director of the Cross-Cultural Communication Institute at CCCS, Inc., where she specialized in curriculum development for interpreter and provider training and lectured nationally on topics related to intercultural communication and language access. Vonessa is a CoreCHI-Performance™ (CoreCHI-P™) practitioner, credentialed by the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters. She has served as a CCHI Commissioner since 2020 and was recently named Chair (October 2023). Vonessa is a member of the NCIHC Outreach and Membership Committee. She is a past secretary of both the Forum on the Coordination of Interpreter Services and the International Medical Interpreters Association. She is a graduate of the America's Essential Hospitals Fellows Program, and has served on the AEH Education Committee.

Decalage is Not a Dirty Word: Simultaneous Interpreting for Healthcare Interpreters

Elena Langdon, CT, M.A.

This hands-on session will present the basic theory and skills necessary to learn, monitor and improve one's ability to interpret in the simultaneous mode. We will start with a framework for understanding the appropriate use of simultaneous in the field of healthcare interpreting, based on the national standards of practice. After examining some theoretical models of interpreting, we will break down this mode into skills that can be learned, and spend much of our time practicing exercises that help build those skills. We will cover apps and software to use when practicing simultaneous, the importance of continuous monitoring and improvement, and groups that can help with future deliberate practice. In order to get the most out of this session, please bring a recording device (including a phone, iPad or digital recorder) and a pair of headphones.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will understand when simultaneous is appropriate in healthcare settings
2. Participants will be able to describe a few basic theoretical principles of simultaneous interpreting, including cognitive load, the effort model, and deliberative practice
3. Participants will learn and practice skill-building exercises such as clozing, shadowing, chunking, and lag time flexibility

Raised on an island off the coast of Brazil, Elena Langdon is a certified Portuguese-English translator, conference and community interpreter, and interpreter trainer with over 20 years of experience. She has a Master of Arts in Translation Studies from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and took the first Train the Trainer course at the Middlebury Institute for International Studies at Monterey that was offered for healthcare interpreter trainers. She currently teaches healthcare interpreting in the Master of Arts in Conference Interpreting (MCI) program at Glendon College, York University. Elena delivers workshops around the country and abroad and is recognized as an engaging and approachable

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speaker. She pulls from experience interpreting and translating, managing interpreters, and teaching for programs at the University of Chicago, Boston University, UMass Amherst, and Glendon College. For over six years, Elena supervised a staff of 50 interpreters and managed internal translations at a Level I Trauma, 734-bed academic medical center in western Massachusetts. A thought leader in the language industry, she volunteered and served on the Board of Directors for the American Translators Association, the New England Translators Association, the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC), and the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters. Elena continues to support the production of bimonthly webinars for interpreter trainers for the NCIHC.

A Closer Look at Sight Translation

Amanda David, MA, BEI:III and Medical, RID CI/CT, CoreCHI-P™

This session will take a deep dive into the work of sight translation. We will briefly discuss considerations, guidelines, and necessary skills for engaging in the work. We will identify common situations in which interpreters are asked to do sight translation. We will then work with commonly used medical forms to create translations. Interpreters will walk away with an increased awareness of the nuances of the work, and tools to increase effectiveness.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify three necessary skills for doing sight translation work
2. Examine different strategies for approaching sight translation
3. List three different situations in which sight translation is likely to occur

Amanda David is a native of southwest Louisiana. After graduating from McNeese State University in Lake Charles, LA, she completed coursework in the Interpreter Training Programs at Collin County Community College and Houston Community College, both in Texas. She holds a Master of Arts in Interpreting Studies and Communication Equity from St. Catherine University. Amanda specializes in conference interpreting, scientific/technical interpreting, and interpreting for d/Deaf professionals in healthcare settings. She is a staff interpreter at Dell Medical School at the University of Texas, and lives between Austin, TX, and South Louisiana.

Dizziness, vertigo, or lightheadedness- having trouble finding the right words for a patient's symptoms?

Chi-Wei Chang, CHI™-Mandarin & Kun Shi, CHI™-Mandarin

In this workshop, attendees will practice interpreting 3 dialogues between a provider and a patient. In dialogue 1, the patient's chief complaint is back and leg pain. In dialogue 2, the patient feels dizzy and weak. And, in dialogue 3, the patient suffers from swelling.

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Through these exercises, the participants will have an opportunity to interpret in both English and Mandarin Chinese and to discuss as a group what descriptors should be used when interpreting medical symptoms.

Chi-Wei Chang was born and raised in Taiwan. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the prestigious National Taiwan University. After coming to the U.S., she pursued her master's in early childhood education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Chi-Wei has worked as a preschool teacher and administrator. She joined the University of Michigan Health System Interpreter Services in 2003 as a contract interpreter and became a staff Chinese interpreter in 2004. In 2010, Chi-Wei was appointed one of the two lead interpreters within the program. She is now the supervisor of a team of 8 Chinese interpreters. Chi-Wei is a nationally certified healthcare interpreter, CHI-Mandarin. She is also an English-Chinese translator. Chi-Wei is also a registered nurse licensed in the state of Michigan. In addition to interpreting, she works as an RN case manager at Trinity Health. Chi-Wei is the mother of three grown children plus three cat daughters. She also has two cat grandsons. In her spare time, Chi-Wei enjoys music, Zumba fitness, and traveling the world.

Kun Shi (known as Jasmine) was born and raised in mainland China. She earned a master's degree in nursing from Xiangya Nursing School of Central South University in China. She has worked as a nurse in various settings such as the first affiliated hospital of Hunan University of TCM, SOS international clinic, and Procter & Gamble in China, as well as a lecturer in the school of nursing of Hunan University of TCM. Currently, Jasmine serves Michigan Medicine as a staff interpreter and translator, in both Mandarin and Cantonese. Jasmine is CCHI certified in Mandarin and holds a registered nurse license in Michigan. On a personal note, Jasmine is a proud mother of a teenager, along with being a pet mom to her dog Onyx and kitten Carbink. She enjoys Sudoku, singing, Chinese folk dancing, and gardening.

Varieties of U.S. English: Enhancing Interpreter Comprehension

Sarah Stockler-Rex, MA, CHI™-Spanish

Description: A large part of an interpreter's workload is processing and rendering English messages into the target language. Whether working onsite or remotely, interpreters are likely to encounter different Englishes on the job, including those who speak English as a second language. This training series will examine the main dialects of English spoken in the United States and how interpreters can train their ear to better comprehend them. This training will benefit native and non-native speakers of English (and everyone in between!) as we delve into the differences in U.S. English varieties including phonological, lexical, regional, and ethnic and/or cultural differences.

Learning Objectives:

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1. Use basic linguistic concepts as a framework for describing variation (descriptive vs. prescriptive language, language variation, linguists' use of 'dialect').
2. Describe the main varieties of U.S. English and their differences (phonological, lexical, regional vs. ethnic/cultural).
3. Employ strategies to improve their comprehension of varieties they perceive as challenging.

Sarah Stockler-Rex, MA, CHI™-Spanish, has worked as a Spanish medical interpreter, in both onsite and remote modalities, for over 12 years. She holds a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics with a specialization in Language Testing and she is in constant pursuit of providing the highest caliber language access via quality assurance and training solutions. Sarah currently oversees Martti by UpHealth's Interpreting Quality & Training Department: a team dedicated to leadership, coaching and mentoring to support continued interpreter skill development. Sarah is also a co-author of the highly anticipated textbook from Cross-Cultural Communications released earlier this year, *The Remote Interpreter: Volume I: Foundations in Remote Interpreting*.

Interpreting for Genetic Counseling Sessions: A Spanish Practicum

Mateo Rutherford, MA, MATI, CHI™-Spanish

Review the basic concepts and Spanish terminology of genetics and then practice interpreting those concepts through a real-life session with a genetic counselor. Participants will have the choice of working on Cancer, Pre-Natal or Pediatrics focused genetic disorders. Participants will be provided with one version of the practice session in Spanish for home study.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the structure of DNA in the cell.
2. Understand how DNA is copied and inherited and errors in those processes.
3. Learn and practice Spanish terminology for genetic counseling assignments.

Mateo Rutherford worked as a manager in the Interpreting & Translation Services Dept. at UCSF Health for 11 years. He holds a master's degree in Integrative Biology from the University of California Berkeley (UCB) and a master's degree in Spanish Interpretation & Translation from the Monterey Institute of International Studies. He has worked as a freelance Spanish interpreter since 1987 throughout Latin America, Europe, Asia and the United States. He specializes in topics related to the life sciences and technology. His teaching experience, in both Spanish and English, includes molecular biology, disease prevention, document translation, medical and conference interpreting. He has taught at UC Berkeley; Universidad de Especialidades Espiritu Santo in Guayaquil, Ecuador; City College of San Francisco and under contract with the CDC in Puerto Rico, Honduras and throughout the US. Mateo has also

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lectured at the Schools of Medicine and Nursing at UCSF on language access and health. Mateo is the past Chair of the CCHI Commission, a Spanish CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE INTERPRETER™ and a Spanish conference interpreter.

Consecutively Interpreting Hope and Healing: Navigating Challenges in Oncology Settings

Mutaz “Matt” Al Mudaris, CHI™-Arabic

In this interactive session, the presenter will give a brief overview of the stages of cancer treatment and guide attendees through practicing consecutive interpreting into and from Arabic. During such practice, attendees will consider the following:

1. evaluating accuracy of interpreting culturally-determined words from Arabic into English
2. identifying equivalent versions of interpreting provider’s speech into various spoken Arabic varieties
3. mitigating challenges when interpreting into Arabic for patients from a linguistic background non-concordant with the interpreter’s when using MSA may be not a realistic option.

Mutaz Al Mudaris, also known as Matt, is a nationally certified interpreter (CHI™-Arabic) and has been working at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) in the language, cultural and educational support since 2012. He is also an online trainer for military interpreters and translators overseas, Licensed Medical Terminology Trainer (Cross Cultural Communications), Certified ESL and Arabic Language tutor, member of the Educational and translation committees at the Division of Language Services, former Educational Officer for the Multicultural Professionals Network (MPN), former Member of the Cultural Awareness Council, and a Safety coach, all at CHOP. Mutaz, a native of Iraq, moved to the U.S with his family in 2009. In 2013 he teamed up with his mother, a gynecologist, scientist, and professor who wrote a book about Iraq, moving to the U.S. and the positive impact the city of Philadelphia had on their family. The book, “Beyond the Sand Storm” got published in September, 2016. Before Joining CHOP, Mutaz has worked for bodies like Linguistic Data Consortium at Penn University, US State Dept. (Where he is on the formal roster of Interpreters), Valley Forge Military Academy and Cancer Treatment Centers of America in the U.S., Le Royal Amman Hotel as the training and development manager, United Nations, Associated Press and Red Cross in Jordan, U.S. Embassy, Baghdad Police Academy and finally Youth T.V. station in Baghdad, Iraq where he translated his first movie “Pretty Woman” starring Julia Roberts and Richard Gere. He is a voting member of American Translators Association (ATA), and a member of Delaware Valley Translator’s Association (DVTA), International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA). He Holds a Bachelor degree in Agricultural Engineering (Majoring in Plant Pathology) and is currently studying a Master’s Degree in Global and International Education at Drexel University (with a major in Peace Education). In June 2017 Mutaz traveled to the Dominican Republic as

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part of the Global Allies CHOP Program: Ninos Primeros en Salud where he delivered six informal health related presentations sessions, provided basic clinical support to poor communities as part of a team, and worked with local health promoters and nurses on preparing future lessons and activities. Mutaz was asked recently by CCHI to work as a SME on the development of the new content for the Arabic and E2E exams. The project ran between July 2018- June 2019. He also was invited by CCHI in 2017 to present an online webinar titled: “Accents and dialects: a thorny issue for healthcare interpreters”. Mutaz is a strong advocate for interpreters getting certified.

Mastering Paraphrasing to Improve Skills in all Interpreting Modes

Yuliya Speroff, CoreCHI-Performance™

When taking the ETOE™ (English-to-English) interpreting exam, test takers need to demonstrate the ability to comprehend an oral message in English and then accurately restate it in their own words - without changing the message, and adding or omitting information. The ability to paraphrase is essential for interpreters to master to be able to successfully convey a message in its entirety, including the intended meaning and all its nuances.

This presentation will introduce the participants to the concrete sub-skills involved in paraphrasing - one of the four cognitive activities that are included on the ETOE™ (English-to-English) Interpreting exam. The participants will have an opportunity to engage in guided practice of the sub-skills - such as coming up with synonyms, using circumlocution or changing the sentence structure, and to review examples of responses to the activities performed during the practice section of the presentation.

Learning Objectives:

1. Acquire a comprehensive understanding of the paraphrasing sub-skills, such as synonym selection, circumlocution, and sentence structure manipulation.
2. Actively practice the sub-skills involved in the ability to accurately restate messages.
3. Critically evaluate and improve their paraphrasing responses by reviewing examples provided during the practice section of the presentation.

Yuliya Speroff is a Russian-English CoreCHI-P™ and WA DSHS-certified medical and social services interpreter. She currently works as a medical interpreter supervisor at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, Washington. In her current role she supports a team of medical interpreters, manages translation projects and bilingual staff assessment. Yuliya fulfills her passion for teaching through her work with the non-profit Americans Against Language Barriers and providing continuing education workshops for medical interpreters. Yuliya is on the board of directors of The California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA) and a member of the National Council on Interpreting in Healthcare (NCIHC) STC Work Group. Yuliya is the author of the Medical Interpreter Blog, which provides medical interpreting resources and information for professional development.