

THE COMMUNITY INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR AND/OR INTERCULTURAL  
MEDIATOR TRAINER PROFILE

COMPETENCES OF THE TRAINER OF COMMUNITY INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS  
AND/OR INTERCULTURAL MEDIATORS

1 INTRODUCTION

The following pages set out a general reference framework for competences applied to a community interpreter and translator and/or intercultural mediator trainer staff. A trainer staff should aim to acquire the competences proposed in each of the five areas. This proposal, however, does not prescribe how, when or where this should be done, and trainers are not expected to have all these competences when entering the profession of trainers of community interpreters and translators and intercultural mediators.

THE TERMS “COMMUNITY INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR” AND “INTERCULTURAL MEDIATOR”

This document uses both terms “community interpreter and translator” and “intercultural mediator” since “in France, Italy and parts of Belgium and Germany the terms interpreter, cultural mediator and, also intercultural mediator are used interchangeably and the role boundaries are unclear” (Martin and Phelan 2010). In addition, we are aware that some communities prefer the terms “public-service interpreter and translator”, “interpreter in institutional discourse” or “dialogue interpreter”. The decision to use these two particular terms was influenced by the use of the term “community interpreter” and the definition of the profession in the international standard ISO 13611:2014 *Interpreting — Guidelines for Community Interpreting*, and by the definition of the term “intercultural mediator” in the Erasmus+ project TIME (*Train Intercultural Mediators for a Multicultural Europe*, 2014-2016).

With the use of the terms “community interpreter and translator” and “intercultural mediator” we do not want to imply that these terms should be used interchangeably in every environment, we do not want to impose any particular denomination in order to harmonise the terminology or to imply that there is no difference between two professions if they are defined as separate professions in a particular community. We believe that the use of a particular term for a particular group of professionals is in the hands of the community employing or certifying them.

With the terms “community interpreter and translator” and “intercultural mediator” we indicate individuals who facilitate communication between parties who do not share a common language, typically between the public-service provider and the service user. Community interpreters and translators and/or intercultural

mediators are therefore always involved in an encounter involving at least three participants and they transfer verbal or non-verbal messages in real time between the language of the service provider, which is typically the societal language(s) of the country, and the service user who uses the language of a specific language and/or ethnic group. Community interpreters and/or intercultural mediators may be also asked to perform sight translations and translate documents in both working languages when applicable and needed to facilitate equal access to public services.

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### THE TERM TRAINER

The use of the term “trainer” in this volume should be understood in the meaning ascribed also to the terms “teacher” and “educator”, since we believe that trainers should have the theoretical knowledge, practical experience and the ability to prepare their trainees for a professional role as reflective practitioners. We do not see training, teaching and education as opposites and recognize the value of training as a sub-component of a wider conception of education.

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### CHIEF INSPIRATION

This document is based on the document *The EMT Translator Trainer Profile: Competences of the trainer in translation*, produced under the auspices of the European Master’s in Translation (EMT) by Yves Gambier, Federico Federici and Nike K. Pokorn in 2013 and TIME project definition of the profile of trainer of intercultural mediators (2016). Additional inspiration was found in the works focusing on translator trainers, such as the, work by Sonia Colina (2003), Dorothy Kelly (2008), Daniel Gouadec (2007), the project paper by the Consortium for Training Translation Teachers (CTTT) and in literature dealing with interpreter training (Andres and Behr 2014, Bowen 1989, Gile 1995, Manuel Jerez 2004, Sawyer 2004, Setton and Dawrant 2016, Viaggio 1992, Wadensjö 2013).

## 2 COMPETENCES

The competences listed below are not presented in order of importance. They have each been classified into one domain for the sake of clarity, although some competences may be argued to belong to more than one domain.



Figure 1. Competences of community interpreter and translator & intercultural mediator trainers.

## FIELD COMPETENCE

- Ability to perform any task assigned to the students/trainees according to the quality standards required in professional practice, in particular, language proficiency and intercultural competences.
- Knowledge of the professional field including:
  - Community interpreting-related and/or Intercultural-mediator-related professions;
  - Constraints of interpreting and/or intercultural mediation projects (e.g. time/budget/qualities);
  - Domains of specialization in interpreting-related and/or Intercultural-mediator-related professions;
  - Market requirements;
  - Operating procedures and tools used in professional community interpreting and/or intercultural mediation;
  - Scholarship and research relevant for the course;
  - Foreseeable development of the professions.
- Community-interpreting-service and/or intercultural-mediation-service provision competence:
  - Knowledge of the existing standards and specifications;
  - Ability to critically analyse these standards and specifications;
  - For **community-interpreter** trainers: Ability to perform the tasks and sub-tasks involved in the community interpreting-service provision (including planning, terminological preparation for the interpreting task, mastering techniques used in consecutive interpreting and manifest highly-developed listening skills, memory skills, note-taking skills and delivery, knowledge of interaction dynamics);
  - For **intercultural-mediator** trainer: Ability to perform the tasks and sub-tasks involved in the intercultural-mediation-service provision (including planning, terminological preparation for intercultural mediation task, knowing the cultural specifics of the cultures involved in the mediation process, knowing the legal framework of functioning of the host country, language mediation).

## INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE

- Ability to integrate into a teaching team and work as part of a team.
- Ability to identify, adopt, apply and critically assess a code of professional ethics for community interpreters and translators & intercultural mediators and for trainers.
- Ability to teach students/trainees how to apply and critically assess codes of professional ethics for community interpreters and translators & intercultural mediators.
- Ability to establish suitable learning environments for students/trainees.
- Ability to manage time and resources.
- Ability to teach students/trainees time and resource management.
- Ability to manage stress.
- Ability to teach students/trainees to work in sensitive settings.
- Ability to teach students/trainees to deal with trauma-informed interpreting.
- Ability to create collegial networks. (e.g., to provide support to other colleagues in the field and receive it from others.)
- Ability to teach students/trainees how to manage stress.
- Ability to take decisions and justify them.
- Ability to train students/trainees in decision-making and how to prioritize.
- Ability to take into account all the relevant constraints depending on the situation, and explain them clearly (specifications, deadlines, budgets etc.).
- Ability to introduce students/trainees to the relevant constraints depending on the situation (specifications, deadlines, budgets, etc.).

## ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCE

- Ability to understand students/trainees' needs and expectations in relation to the overall programme.
- Ability to design a community interpreter-training or intercultural mediation curriculum or an understanding of the rationale for an existing interpreter-training or intercultural mediation curriculum.
- Ability to articulate the learning progression assumed by the programme (e.g. as manifested in the order in which modules are taught).
- Ability to design a course syllabus or an understanding of the structure of an existing course syllabus.
- Ability to update the programme or a course in anticipation of and in response to changes to the profession.

## INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCE

- Ability to specify the tasks to be performed in relation to each course or module component:
  - Ability to explain the learning objectives of the subjects taught;
  - Ability to break down the educational components into tasks and sub-tasks drawing on the relevant theoretical knowledge;
  - Ability to encourage students/trainees to become aware of the challenges and issues involved in the task and sub-task in the relevant field(s), e.g. drawing on the relevant theoretical knowledge.
- Ability to draw up a lesson plan by integrating Interpreting Studies scholarship and research relevant into teaching:
  - Ability to create a list of all the tasks relevant for a given lesson and organize them in terms of priorities, sequences, time available and overall syllabus;
  - Ability to create the course or module materials;
  - Ability to create content and choose the appropriate teaching method (e.g. virtual learning environments, seminars, tutorials, etc.).
- Knowledge of the findings of interpreting didactics and the ability to integrate them into training (e.g. ability to use appropriate methods for teaching and learning).
- Ability to incorporate the process and outcomes of relevant Interpreting Studies research and scholarship.
- Ability to use existing professional and specialist tools and integrate them into training.
- Ability to motivate students/trainees.
- Ability to encourage students/trainees to develop: precision, a focus on quality, curiosity, learning strategies, and their ability to analyse and to summarize.
- Ability to encourage students/trainees to develop a critical approach during the execution of tasks.
- Ability to stimulate reflective thinking (i.e. self-reflexivity).

## ASSESSMENT COMPETENCE

- Ability to define assessment methods and criteria to evaluate each task relevant to the course.
- Ability to assess students/trainees' entry level.
- Ability to assess students/trainees' level of attainment (competences they have acquired and

competences they lack).

- Ability to evaluate a curriculum, syllabus and lesson as a self-reflective practitioner, re-assessing practices, knowledge, and competences at regular intervals.
- Ability to adapt to the results of the evaluation of a curriculum, syllabus and a lesson.

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