



Northeastern University

Center for Atypical Language Interpreting

Navigation Guide

Unit of Learning: Interpreting Strategies Used with Deaf Immigrants

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Welcome and Learning Objectives

[Unit of Learning: Interpreting Strategies for Deaf Immigrants, Welcome and Learning Objectives](#)

Sample Syllabus

[Unit of Learning: Interpreting Strategies for Deaf Immigrants, Sample Syllabus](#)

Week 1:

1. Watch: Introduction to Unit
[Introduction to Unit](#)
[Introduction to Unit \(English Transcript\)](#)
2. Activity: “Living in America: Challenges Facing New Immigrants and Refugees”

Watch: Living in America

[Living in America Summary](#)

[Living in America Summary \(English Transcript\)](#)

Read the Report: [Living in America: Challenges Facing New Immigrants and Refugees](#)

Optional: Fill out the response sheet

[Living in America Response Sheet](#)

3. Watch “Introduction to Exploring the Deaf Immigrant Experience”
[Introduction to Exploring the Deaf Immigrant Experience](#)
[Introduction to Exploring the Deaf Immigrant Experience \(English Transcript\)](#)

4. Activity: Learn how to make an ecomap

Now that you have a sense of the challenges faced by immigrants and refugees living in the United States, let's narrow our focus to the Deaf community. We will build a visual diagram of a deaf immigrant experience as a way to conceptualize the quality of relationships and types of resources available to them.

For this next exercise, we will be using a type of ecomap called a Culturagram. A Culturagram is a specialized ecomap used in social work to diagram, using a cultural frame, the way an immigrant family engages with the outside world. The goal of a culturagram is to examine the family through their own cultural values and beliefs with the goal of preserving them. In social work it is a tool to guide the social worker in how to engage with families by referring services, connecting families to resources etc.

- a. Learn how to build an ecomap by viewing this video. Be sure to turn on captions: [How to Make an Ecomap](#)
- b. Learn the 10 categories of the Culturagram: [Practical Applications of the Culturagram to Social Work](#)

5. Activity: Explore Deaf Immigrant Experiences

Typically you would build a Culturagram collaboratively through interviews with the family over time, however, we will be using the tool to examine recorded narratives. As you watch each narrative imagine you are at an interpreting assignment and this is an opportunity to learn about the family. Since this is only one encounter it may not be possible to capture information in all of the Culturagram categories. Rather, you are encouraged to practice listening using this framework to home in on important relationships and resources, as well as cultural values, beliefs and experiences of deaf immigrants.

1. Choose two (2) deaf immigrant narratives to explore.
2. Create an ecomap and fill in the categories of the Culturagram for each family based on the information provided. Note, this template will need to be printed.

Narratives to choose from:

1. [Deaf Immigrant Eduardo](#)
2. [Deaf Immigrant Francis](#)
3. [Deaf Immigrants Maria & Luis](#)
4. [Deaf Immigrant Elias](#)
5. [Deaf Muslims in Minnesota](#)

6. [Deaf Refugees Bhutan](#)
7. [Deaf & In Detention: Challenges to Outreach, Advocacy & Support](#)

6. Reflection Opportunity
[Reflection Opportunity](#)
[Reflection Opportunity \(English Transcript\)](#)
7. Watch “Resources for Deaf Immigrants”
[Resources for Deaf Immigrants](#)
[Resources for Deaf Immigrants \(English Transcript\)](#)
8. Watch “Advocacy Groups”
[Advocacy Groups](#)
[Advocacy Groups \(English Transcript\)](#)
9. Watch “Finland Model for Supporting Deaf Immigrants”
[Finland Model for Supporting Deaf Immigrants](#)
[Finland Model for Supporting Deaf Immigrants \(English Transcript\)](#)
10. (Optional) Read “Interpreting with Immigrant Deaf People” thesis
[Interpreting with Immigrant Deaf People](#)
11. Watch “Finland Study Summary”
[Finland Study Summary](#)
[Finland Study Summary \(English Transcript\)](#)

Week 2:

1. Watch: CALI’s Conversation Series: Moníca Gallego and Rayni Plaster Torres
[CALI's Conversation Series: Moníca Gallego and Rayni Plaster Torres](#)
[CALI's Conversation Series: Moníca Gallego and Rayni Plaster Torres \(English Transcript\)](#)

As you are watching the conversation between Moníca Gallego and Rayni Plaster Torres, consider the following:

- a. 5:40 - Moníca gives an example of how she adheres to CPC Tenant 4 “Respect for Consumers” by using her understanding of the immigrant experience of settling into a new country, navigating unfamiliar settings and

cultural differences to inform her interpretation and maintain the dignity of her client. Think back to a time when you have helped a family member or friend “save face” by explaining or culturally mediating a situation. What was the end result of that experience? How is Moníca Gallego’s approach different or similar?

- b. 14:50 - Moníca gives an example of an audiology appointment. Who is in the room? Who does Moníca Gallego consider her clients? Why? How does Moníca Gallego utilize them to successfully establish communication with the d/Deaf child?
- c. 18:30 - Moníca goes into some of her strategies used for interpreting with immigrant families. What are these strategies? How do they align with the information you’ve learned from the “Living in America” report and the Culturagram? Do you see yourself as being able to make the same or similar types of decisions in your own work? Why or why not?
- d. 19:30 - Rayni goes on to explain the types of communication-related decisions interpreters make that are outside of a signed or spoken message and the valuable contribution these decisions make to the overall team. What do we gain as interpreters when we expand our understanding of what it means to make an interpreting-related decision?
- e. 23:00 - Moníca explains a successful teaming experience teaming with a Deaf interpreter in a mental health unit. What made this teaming experience successful? What did both interpreters do in order to establish successful communication with the client? What common immigrant challenges did the interpreters recognize and address in their interpreting approach? How did both interpreters work collaboratively in a way that was sensitive to those challenges while respecting the family values, beliefs and culture?
- f. 37:15 Rayni gives an example of working with a trilingual interpreter in court for a deaf immigrant to obtain witness testimony. List each of the strategies she used with her client to establish communication. What finally worked? What were the limitations of this approach, as compared to the requirements of the court? What does this tell us about the possibilities and limitations of the interpreting team when working with deaf immigrants?
- g. 42:00 - Moníca speaks about how important it is for interpreters to know their local community resources. Do an internet search of resources in your area. Do you have a local immigration advocacy organization in your area? Do they serve a specific population, such as those from Africa or Latin America? Do you have a Deaf resource center or Deaf advocates in your area? Review the “Living in America” report and build a resource list of services in your area.

2. Watch “The Role of Community Interpreters”

[The Role of Community Interpreters](#)

[The Role of Community Interpreters \(English Transcript\)](#)

3. Activity: Interpreting Practice

Apply the knowledge and skills you have learned to your own interpretation. Using what you have learned, practice application of your new knowledge and skills to your interpreting process. Prepare a consecutive interpretation of the given source video of a deaf Panamanian immigrant by using the following steps:

1. Watch the client’s immigration story: [Immigration Story](#)
2. Referencing your “Living in America” outline and the 10 categories of the Culturagram, create an ecomap of their experience. Make special notations of communication-related challenges.
3. Review the immigration story for evidence of values, beliefs, and culture. Write down specific examples.
4. Now, imagine you are interpreting for this client at an intake meeting with a legal advocate at the local immigration advocacy center. The advocate has asked the client to share her immigration story, to better understand their background and circumstance for entering the United States. Prepare your interpretation, paying close attention to how you characterize their deaf immigration journey using a cultural frame.
5. Take time now to record your warm interpretation of the immigration story.
6. Review your interpretation and identify where you intentionally considered the client’s values, beliefs and culture in your interpreting decision. Use the decision-making assessment form to assist with your reflection. [Decision-Making Rubric](#)

4. Watch "Closing Thoughts"

[Closing Thoughts](#)

[Closing Thoughts \(English Transcript\)](#)

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