



**Resource**

**Work Voices #5**

**Carlos Garcia – Health Interpreter**

*It is helpful to view one segment at a time*

**Context**

Carlos Garcia, from Nicaragua, describes how he chose his career. While in hospital undergoing treatment, he helped translate for a fellow patient who did not speak English and couldn't communicate with the doctors and hospital staff. He became what he calls an "over the curtain" interpreter. Through this experience, Carlos came to understand the importance of communication between a patient and health care professional, and how an understanding of medical terminology was a crucial in making this happen.

Carlos was trained at [City College of San Francisco in the Health Care Interpreter Certificate program](#) which is "designed to train bilingual and bicultural students to develop the awareness, knowledge and skills necessary for effective language interpretation in health care settings." He is now a nationally certified medical interpreter and has worked in a freelance capacity in San Francisco since 2002.

**Preview activities/Introductory questions**

*Warm up questions*

- In what situations have you found interpretation useful?
- Who have interpreted for you?
- What is interpretation?
- How does it differ from translation?
- Why is it important to be a health specialist?

**Vocabulary**

Bicultural, bilingual, freelance, certified, entrepreneur, proficient, compassionate, linguistics, fluent, facilitate, rendition.

**Focus questions**

- What does it mean to be bilingual and bicultural?
- How does Carlos explain its importance?
- What prerequisites/ requirements are needed for the training?
- How long does the training take?
- What strategies does Carlos describe as helpful for finding employment?
- What jobs can you do with this certificate?

*Discuss responses.*

### **Post viewing**

#### **Research**

##### **a Training courses**

- Find training programs for a health interpreter in your area.
- Find the information you would need about each program in order to decide to apply for it.

##### **b Job opportunities**

- Look for jobs as a health interpreter in your area.
- Investigate the range of positions.
- Explore the pay rates in different positions.

*Summarize findings for a and b in two paragraphs to share with the class*

#### **Reflection**

- Do you think Carlos enjoys his job?
- What are the challenges?
- What kind of personal qualities would work well for this job? List the qualities you would need.
- What personal qualities does he bring?
- What transferrable skills does this job offer?

*Write a short reflection paragraph in response to these questions*

#### **Contact assignment**

Interview someone who works in the health field in a job that interests you. Record the interview if possible.

Post it to your class blog – if you have one.

### **Further resources**

- **Health Education Resources for ESL Educators** [www.kqed.org/healtheducation](http://www.kqed.org/healtheducation)
- [Health Care Training at City College of San Francisco](#)
- [City College of San Francisco in the Health Care Interpreter Certificate program](#)