

WHEN TO USE INTERPRETING AT RC WORKSHOPS

1. Interpreting at RC workshops will occur whenever the workshop leader does not speak the language of the people who live where the workshop is taking place.

We have excellent guidelines for interpreting at workshops (*Guidelines for Organizing Interpreting at RC Workshops*). These guidelines are to be consulted and a coordinator for interpreting should be identified prior to the workshop.

2. Whenever possible, interpreting should be done into the languages spoken by all the workshop participants and by all individuals desiring to attend a workshop.

When someone wants to attend a workshop that will not be conducted in a language he or she understands, he or she may consult with the organizer to see if interpreting can be arranged through other individuals who plan to attend the workshop. If this cannot be done, he or she will need to organize the interpreting, while staying in contact with the workshop organizer. (It is not the organizer's job to find interpreters in every situation.)

3. Interpreting is often useful even when all participants are able to communicate well in the language of the workshop leader but are not native speakers of that language, for the following reasons:

- Interpreting will facilitate inclusion of and comprehension by these participants,
- It will increase everyone's awareness of language oppression,
- It will slow the pace of the workshop, often a welcome change for all.

For the above reasons, it is sometimes useful to have up-front interpreting into all the languages represented at the workshop, for all or part of the workshop, even if no one but the interpreter speaks that language.

Interpreting a workshop does reduce the amount of information that can be communicated. Sometimes language liberation is not a key issue for a particular

group and it is more important to use available time to address their key issues. When all participants can communicate well in the leader's language, the leader can decide whether or not any part of the workshop needs up-front interpreting. ("Whisper" interpreting can be organized wherever and whenever there are the resources for it.)

The workshop leader needs to weigh the following factors:

- Key issues for those participating in the particular workshop,
- The value of interpreting to the non-native speakers of the leader's language,
- The importance of raising awareness of language oppression,
- That slowing the pace of the workshop by interpreting can give everyone more time to think about what the leader is saying and will contradict urgency patterns (for example, from the "speed-up" from capitalism),
- That slowing the pace of the workshop by interpreting can reduce the amount of theory that can be presented.

4. Workshop leaders can prepare themselves to lead well while interpreting is happening. This involves speaking slowly, pausing between sentences, and discharging on anything that is restimulated by having interpreting at the workshop. The leader can learn some words in the language spoken where the workshop is located, and practice using the words, with discharge, prior to leading the workshop. In particular, monolingual leaders are encouraged to open their minds to new languages and to language liberation as part of their leadership and re-emergence.

5. An individual should volunteer to do up-front interpreting only when he or she is able to clearly and efficiently communicate the leader's words and not interfere with the leader's thinking or attention. Interpreting should not distract the leader from the job of leading the workshop. (See *Interpreting at Workshops*, by Xabi Odriozola.)