

# TECHNOLOGY TIPS

## A Guide for Hosting Bilingual Online Engagement for Communities Experiencing Hearing Loss



H3 COALITION

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## GETTING STARTED WITH BILINGUAL MEETINGS

### CREATING A WELCOMING VIRTUAL SPACE

The purpose of this document is to provide tips that can help to optimize effective communication during virtual meetings for bilingual audiences who may also have hearing loss. Today's virtual world provides technological benefits that can ease communication and language access needs.

In this document, we will share suggestions for meeting planning and implementation that will help to support participation of audience members who may have difficulty hearing or may not speak the language of the meeting facilitator (or other attendees).

While there is significant planning needed to successfully host a bilingual meeting with the integration of technology, increasing language and communication access encourages full participation from audience members, builds a sense of belonging for those attending, and demonstrates mutual respect for community stakeholders.

Our team encourages meeting planners to embrace a universal design perspective that will affirm the value of all attendees and share the responsibility of communication access with those organizing the event.



# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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## ABOUT THE H3 COALITION

The Hispanic Hearing Healthcare Access Coalition (H3 Coalition) engages stakeholders from diverse backgrounds on the topic of hearing loss interventions for Hispanic/Latinx adults age 50+ to build capacity for patient-centered outcomes research. Key stakeholders include those with lived experience, family members, and representatives of organizations with interest in hearing intervention research.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our coalition has worked to shift our engagement to the virtual setting. This document leverages our lessons learned from virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic for bilingual audiences inclusive of people with hearing loss.

Our team worked to host several different types of meetings including town halls, advisory board meetings, workshops, and health provider trainings. These meetings included people from many different types of backgrounds and with varying levels of technological proficiency.

Over the last year, we have also gained experience trying different methods for hosting events for bilingual audiences using the Zoom platform.

We hope that all we have learned and share in this tip guide will help other teams as they work to expand language and communication access in the virtual setting.



# POTENTIAL MEETING FORMATS TO SUPPORT BILINGUAL AUDIENCES IN ZOOM

## Meeting Format: Single Meeting with Real-Time Simultaneous Bilingual Audio Interpreter

**Description:** This meeting format will maximize inclusiveness and minimize bias of any single language (e.g., English). The meeting presenter will communicate in one language. A bilingual language interpreter will interpret the conversation into the other language simultaneously (with slight delay). Meeting participants will listen to the interpreter's speech by selecting their preferred language, of available options, from the Zoom menu. Participants may adjust the "mixing ratio" to decide what volume the interpreted conversation is played at compared with the presenter's speech. The interpreter will also interpret questions from the audience.

### Essential Communication Meeting Personnel:

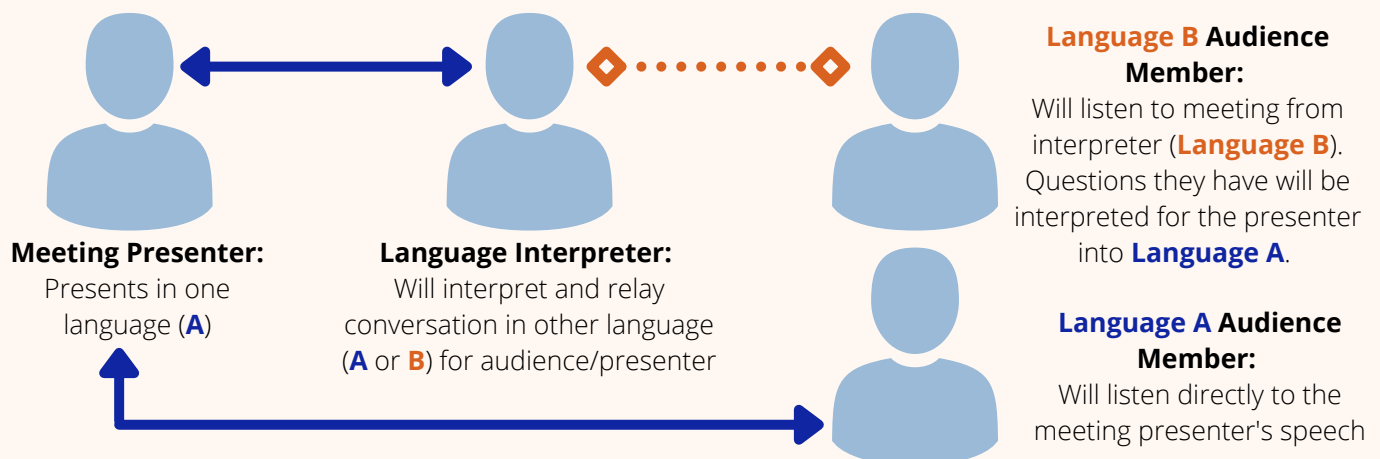
- Meeting Presenter (may use one language, or be monolingual)
- Bilingual Language Interpreter

#### BENEFITS

- Audience members do not need to speak the same language as the presenter. This allows for exchange of ideas that is not separated by language.
- Presenter does not need to speak the same language as the audience members, as the interpreter will also interpret questions/comments from the audience members.
- Single meeting is presented in both languages without additional time needed for sequential interpretation.

#### LIMITATIONS

- Fees for service of language interpreter may exceed financial resources.
- It may be difficult to find someone with the language and interpretation expertise that you are seeking.
- In contrast to a bilingual presenter, a language interpreter will likely not have subject matter expertise and may have difficulty with discipline-specific language or technical concepts (some elements may become lost in the process of language interpretation).



# POTENTIAL MEETING FORMATS TO SUPPORT BILINGUAL AUDIENCES IN ZOOM

## Meeting Format: Single Meeting with Real-time Sequential Bilingual Presenter

**Description:** The meeting presenter will communicate information in both languages, one after the other. They will also serve as an interpreter for other meeting participants. This format also benefits from audience support of inclusion of both languages in the meeting due to the increased time needed.

### Essential Communication Meeting Personnel:

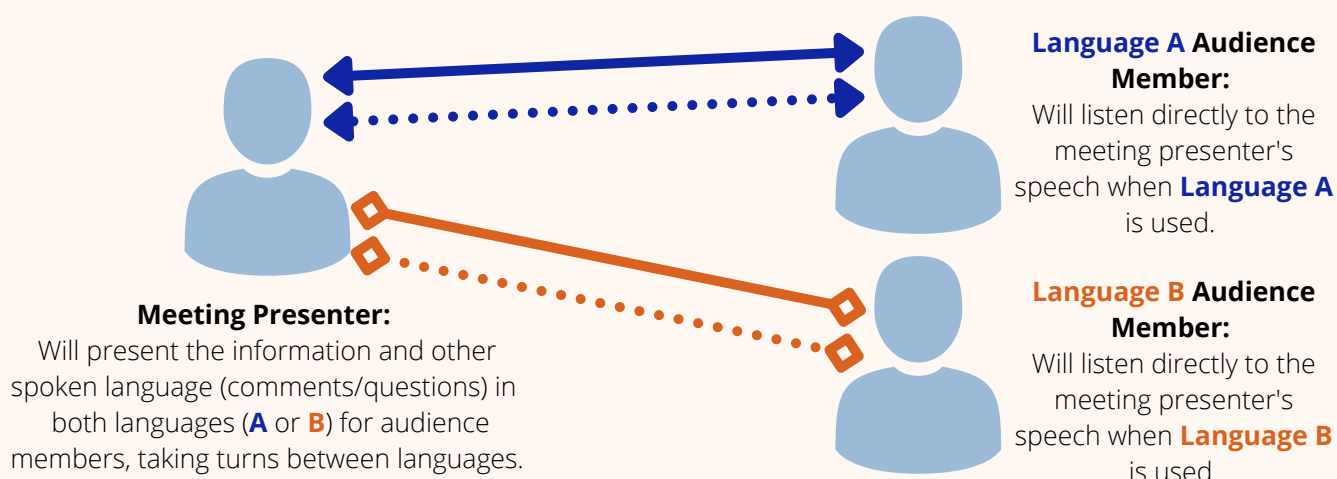
- Meeting Presenter (must be bilingual and comfortable presenting content in both languages). Of note, while some presenters are bilingual, they may not know discipline specific terms in the second language.

#### BENEFITS

- Presenter maintains both subject matter expertise and linguistic expertise, protecting the message from being misinterpreted.
- This may be less expensive as an additional language interpreter does not need to be hired.
- Meeting presenter and audience members may feel more connection with one another due to ease of communication process.
- Allows for intergroup dialogue across languages.

#### LIMITATIONS

- Meeting length is twice as long due to content being presented sequentially.
- It can be difficult finding presenters who are multilingual and comfortable with presenting in both languages.
- This format can be taxing for the presenter and the meeting length/content may need to be limited or separated out over time.
- Subject matter experts may not have formal training as language interpreters.



# POTENTIAL MEETING FORMATS TO SUPPORT BILINGUAL AUDIENCES IN ZOOM

## Meeting Format: Simultaneous Separate Meetings in Two Languages

**Description:** There will be two separate meetings presented at the same scheduled date and time. Attendees will be provided with the meeting link where the content will be presented in their preferred language of options available. Each of the separate Zoom meeting rooms will have its own presenter providing the meeting content in one language. The pre-planned content will be similar, and meeting facilitators will coordinate meeting content in advance. Two separate Zoom meeting rooms and registration links are needed for this format.

### Essential Communication Meeting Personnel:

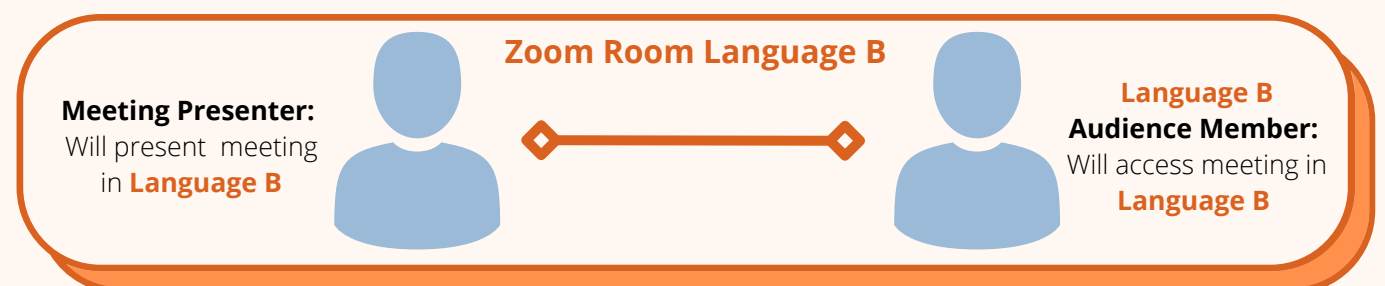
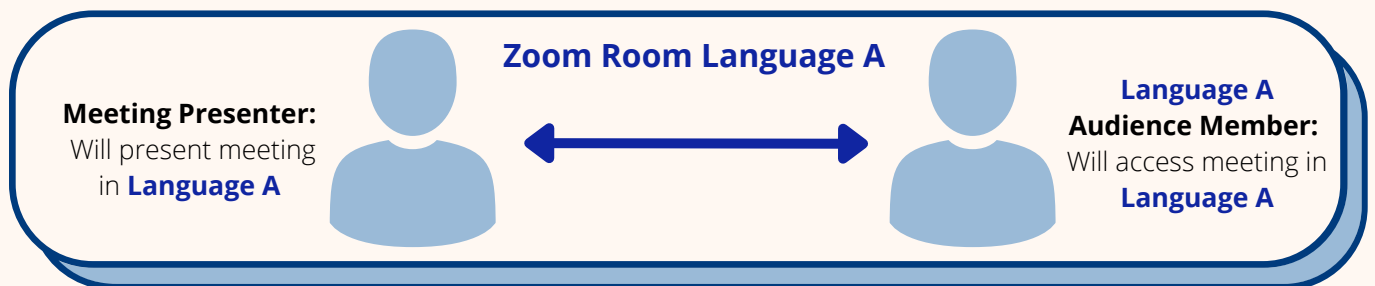
- Meeting Presenter for Language A (may be monolingual)
- Meeting Presenter for Language B (may be monolingual)

#### BENEFITS

- Presenters speak the same language as the audience members, easing the communication process and connectedness of participants.
- Potential cost savings because you do not need to hire a language interpreter.
- Meeting is presented in both languages without additional time needed for interpretation to occur.

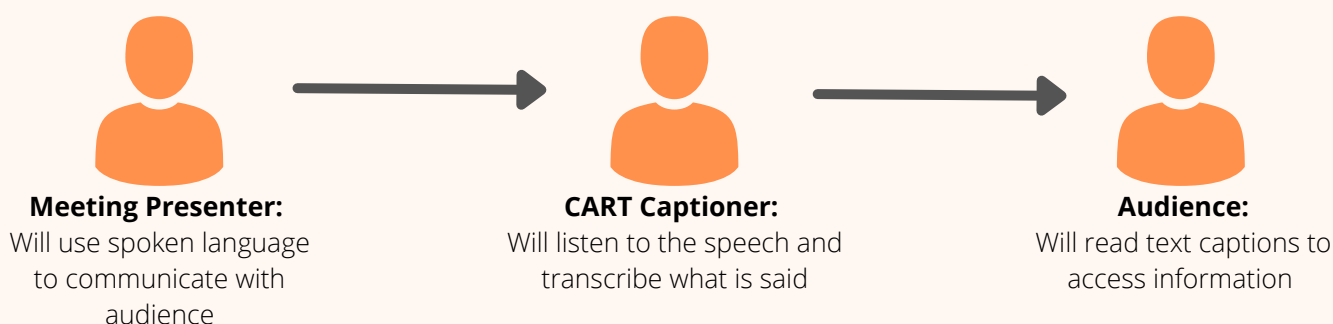
#### LIMITATIONS

- Attendees are separated into different rooms based upon language preference.
- Separating groups by language presents a barrier to intergroup dialogue.
- Session content may be slightly different due to differences in the meeting facilitator and audience participation.



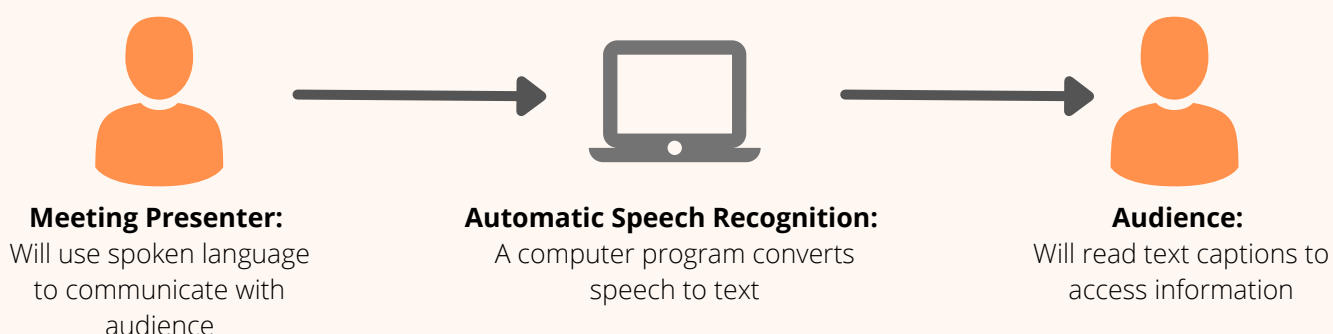
# CAPTIONING TO SUPPORT DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING AUDIENCES IN ZOOM

**Communication Access Real-time Transcription (CART):** With this service, a live captioning professional will listen to the meeting and then transcribe what is said into text that participants can read (National Court Reporters Association, n.d.; U.S. Department of Justice, 2014). This text will be displayed at the bottom of the Zoom window, if integrated into the meeting platform, or it may be made available in a separate window via a weblink to the text display.



CART can be requested in multiple languages for your meetings. In this scenario, you will have two captioners, one transcribing for each language. You also can have captioning provided with interpretation into another language. When scheduling your CART services, it is important to clarify which option(s) you are requesting: captioning within the same language (e.g., Spanish audio to Spanish text), or captioning with interpretation (e.g., English audio to Spanish text captions).

**Computer-Generated Transcription:** This tool uses automatic speech recognition to identify speech and a computer algorithm turns it into written words (Kafle, 2019). This text will be displayed at the bottom of the Zoom window. There are other applications and software tools outside of Zoom that can perform this function as well and in different languages.



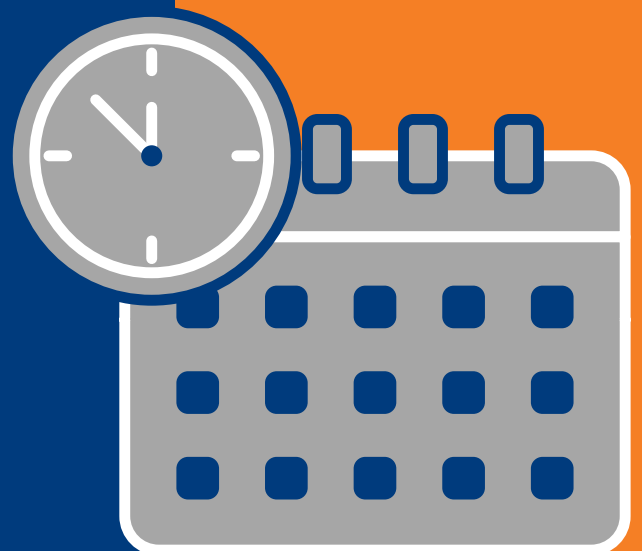
Automatic speech recognition is not sufficient to meet best practices for communication access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. One limitation specific to multilingual populations is that the quality of the captioning may be less accurate. Machine algorithms may have increased difficulty identifying multiple dialects. If the speech detected does not match the average speech samples that the algorithm was built on, there is the potential for error.

# PLANNING FOR LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS IN VIRTUAL MEETINGS

## TIMELINE: BEFORE THE MEETING

### BEFORE THE MEETING

- Budget and allocate funds to hire language interpreters and captioners.
- Seek recommendations from your local university disability resource center or advocacy groups that have experience working with captioning/interpretation companies.
- Request financial quotes for captioning and interpretation services in order to estimate the cost for your meeting. Some companies use an hourly rate, while others have a minimum service contract.
- Create the Zoom meeting link with "Interpretation" enabled.
- For audio language interpreters, their email address will need to be provided in the Zoom scheduling interface so that they will receive an invitation to provide the language interpretation during the meeting.
- Create meeting invitation and flyers in both languages.
- Include information on meeting flyer that captions will be available and that attendees may request any additional accommodations.
- Create meeting registration in a bilingual format. You can create your own bilingual meeting registration with a separate program. Attendees can also be directed to change the language of their Zoom account to access the registration in their preferred language.
- Request language interpreter and captioner one month in advance. Send materials in advance to these professionals so that they can familiarize themselves with the discipline specific vocabulary and names.
- For lengthy meetings, you will may need to hire multiple language interpreters that will trade off. The caption organization will help to facilitate this.
- If you are going to want a transcript from the meeting captions, you can ask the captioning company in advance of the meeting to send this to you once the meeting has ended.





# PLANNING FOR LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS IN VIRTUAL MEETINGS

## TIMELINE: DAY OF THE MEETING

### DAY OF THE MEETING

- Arrive 30 minutes early to prepare the Zoom session.
- Captioners should arrive 15 minutes early so that you can assign them as a captioner, integrate them into the Zoom meeting, and run a test of the captions.
- Language Interpreters should also arrive in advance of the meeting to test out the language interpretation button.
- To provide captioning in multiple languages, select which language will be integrated into the Zoom session. The other language will need to be accessed by a weblink that is provided in advance by the caption company. This weblink can be provided to participants in the chat so that they can open it in a separate browser page.
- At the opening of your meeting, provide instructions to your participants that captions are available and emphasize to attendees that the goal is to provide communication access for all participants. You can also add specific slides on this.
- Inform participants that they are able to adjust the size of their captions and their position on the screen.
- If spoken language interpretation is available, orient participants to the button on the tool bar where they can toggle between languages (e.g., English, Spanish).
- Remember to provide the weblink for accessing external captions at multiple times in the chat throughout the event as anyone rejoining the meeting will not have access to earlier chat messages.



# PLANNING FOR LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS IN VIRTUAL MEETINGS

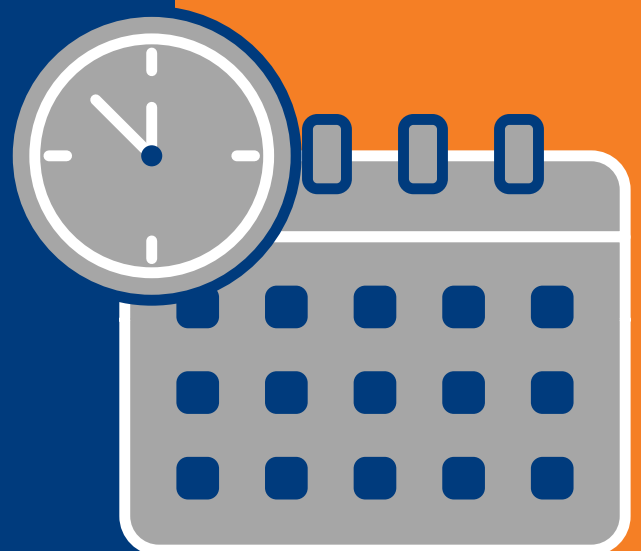
## TIMELINE: AFTER THE MEETING

### AFTER THE MEETING

- Request meeting transcript if you would like it from the captioning company for your own documentation.
- Pay the language interpretation and captioning company.
- Send written materials, such as meeting slides, in multiple languages to attendees.

### GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

- **Language Interpreter:** A professional who relays the conversation in a different language in real time (Allen et al., 2020).
- **Captioner:** A professional who provides real-time captions (speech transcriptions) of what is heard in the meeting (National Court Reporters Association, n.d.).



# TOP 10 TIPS: LESSONS LEARNED IN PLANNING FOR INCREASED LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS

1. In order to provide language interpretation in the Zoom session, you **must** enable this setting prior to starting the meeting. A language interpreter will need to be added at the time of creating the Zoom link including the interpreter's email address. This cannot be enabled after you have started the meeting.
2. Plan ahead in your budget to hire interpreters and CART captioners. You will typically need between \$300 - \$500 dollars per hour.
3. Connect with a local university disability resource center or hearing loss advocacy group to learn what captioning company they use that is reliable and cost-effective.
4. Auto captions are not accurate enough to provide a sufficient transcription, request real-time captions that are human-generated.
5. You are only able to integrate captions in one language into the Zoom session, external links can be provided for captions in additional languages. Integrate captions into Zoom in the language that will ease access for those most vulnerable to technology burden.
6. Explain how to access the captioning and language services at the beginning of the meeting (use visuals/slides).
7. Repost the caption link at multiple times during the meeting for folks joining the meeting later. You can only view the meeting chat from the time when you join the meeting and onwards.
8. Encourage audience members to join the meeting from a computer or tablet for easier access to captions.
9. Provide meeting slides and written materials in multiple languages.
10. Plan ahead for communication needs in order to provide services that facilitate equitable access.

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