



CALL FOR PAPERS

Community Translation and Interpreting as Means of Language Access

Special Issue

In multilingual societies, access to information, public services, and full civic participation often depend on translation and interpreting practices that respond to the realities of marginalized linguistic groups. Community translation and interpreting (CTI), also known as public service translation and interpreting, are defined as services enabling members of multilingual societies to access information and participate actively (Taibi & Ozolins, 2016; Hale, 2007). As such, these have become increasingly central to questions of equity, inclusion, and linguistic citizenship. Yet despite their importance, CTI remain unevenly recognized in institutional policies, under-resourced in many contexts, and insufficiently explored in relation to the changing linguistic landscapes of minority communities (Taibi, 2018).

This special issue seeks to highlight how CTI practices can promote equitable access to public and community information and services while challenging structural barriers. Drawing on research from translation studies and allied disciplines, the issue provides an interdisciplinary and multifaceted understanding of language access in minority contexts.

Canada offers a particularly relevant context for examining these issues. The country's commitment to linguistic duality, recognition of its increasing linguistic diversity, and efforts to revitalize Indigenous languages underscore the essential role of language access for minority communities (Cordoba Serrano, 2022 and 2025). CTI research has traditionally focused on immigrant populations arising from recent migration movements, whose members do not master the official languages—an observation that also holds true in Canada. The situation becomes more complex because of the country's official bilingualism. Francophone minority communities whose language is neither recognized nor co-official at the provincial level face situations similar to those experienced by speakers of non-official languages. Unlike in officially unilingual countries such as Australia or New Zealand, where CTI services almost exclusively target newly arrived non-official language speakers, CTI in Canada can, in such contexts, serve to facilitate access to provincial public and community services in one of the official languages that may be of (ultra) minority status in that setting. In these cases, francophone communities continue to face structural barriers in accessing services in their language of choice.

In jurisdictions where French holds official status at both the federal and provincial levels (New Brunswick and, to some extent, Ontario), CTI services are not intended to replace the legal obligation of providing services of equivalent quality in both languages, as this would risk undermining language rights. Indigenous communities, for their part, must continue to advocate for the recognition and use of their languages. Immigrant and refugee populations, in turn, sometimes rely on professional translators and interpreters, but more often on volunteers, to navigate health, education, justice, and settlement systems. Across all these contexts, CTI services contribute not only to improved communication but also to well-being, justice, and the affirmation of linguistic identities.

Elsewhere in the world, community translators and interpreters work at the intersection of social services, humanitarian action, public health, education, cultural mediation, and digital communication. Their practices are increasingly influenced by technological transformations, particularly the rapid adoption of machine translation and AI-mediated communication, which raise new questions regarding quality, ethics, the role of human expertise, and linguistic equity. CTI services operate within broader dynamics of activism, epistemic justice, and the democratization of knowledge.

This special issue aims to bring together contributions that deepen our understanding of CTI serve as tools for defending language rights, promoting social justice, and supporting the vitality of minority languages. Multilingual communication, after all, is known to transcend disciplinary boundaries. To this end, we welcome proposals from translation studies as well as from other intersecting fields, including comparative analyses (e.g., Canada/Australia, constitutional rights vs. accommodations) or critical examinations of legal and policy frameworks. This volume builds on the themes discussed at the Fourth International Conference on Community Translation (ICCT4, Université de Moncton, 2026). Both Canadian and international perspectives are encouraged.

We therefore invite theoretical, empirical, and practice-based contributions that address, among others, the following topics:

- Language access for official linguistic minorities and Indigenous communities
- Technological issues in CTI service delivery and language access, including innovation, ethical challenges, and the redefinition of translators' and interpreters' roles
- CTI in contexts of migration, settlement, crisis, and humanitarian response
- Volunteer-, participatory-, or community-driven CTI models
- Activism for language access and epistemic or linguistic justice

The editorial committee for this special issue includes:

Anne Beinchet, Assistant Professor, Université de Moncton and Christophe Collard, Assistant Professor, Université de Moncton.

Please submit your manuscript to the following emails:

anne.beinchet@umoncton.ca AND christophe.collard@umoncton.ca,
at the latest December 17, 2026.

See the manuscript submission guidelines at the following address:

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