Hi,

Here is an in-depth explanation about Confidence Intervals (CI).  Refer to Example 7.1 on page 310 of your textbook.  At the end of this problem, the author states the following 2 comments about the CI (11.15, 12.05):

(1)  At the 90% Confidence Level (CL), we estimate the mean number of unoccupied seats per flight to be between 11.15 and 12.05 during the sampled year.

(2)  At the "Look Back" comment following the above statement, he further states the following:  The 90% refers to the procedure (process) used.  If we were to apply that procedure repeatedly to different samples, approximately 90% of the intervals would contain u (the population mean).  Although we do not know for sure whether this particular interval (11.15, 12.05) is one of the 90% that contains u or one of the 10% that do not, our knowledge of probablity gives us "confidence" that the interval contains u.

With (1) and (2), the above CI can finally be interpreted as follows:

(3)  We can be 90% confident that the mean number of unoccupied seats per flight is between 11.15 and 12.05.

Item (3) is the common interpretion for CIs.  However, keep in mind that (3) implies that you understand (1) and (2).

I hope this explanation provides some insight into this difficult concept.

Mark