PROXIMITY
A reliable voice in your ear.
From the back of the room, or from beyond...
The web version of this Issue also includes updates in our two ongoing series:

**Imperial Intermediaries**

“We also engaged the most important subordinate member of the Expedition – the interpreter, Karma Paul... He served us very well indeed from one end of the Expedition to the other, and it was a great deal owing to his cheerfulness and to his excellent manners and way with the Tibetans that we never had the smallest possible misunderstanding with any officials... ”

In the latest essay in her Looking for Interpreter Zero series, Christine Adams follows Karma Paul, the 1922 Mount Everest expedition interpreter, whose unique grasp of language and culture was a major contribution to the expedition’s success.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8808/

**FAQ 11: “How Do I Win the Bid”**

“...to win the bid, we have to be cheaper than anyone else the prospect can find with a quick online search. But do we really want to be the cheapest? It's a tough position to defend, as someone else could always come in just that little bit cheaper. And it's not like we don’t have bills to pay.”

Julia Poger continues her Business of Interpreting series with tips on how to recognize the jobs that you actually don’t want.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8812/

Find these articles, alongside those presented here, aiic.net/webzine
From the Editor

A tragic loss
In March this year AIIC and the interpreter community were devastated by news that three much-loved members, and the daughter of another, were amongst the victims of the horrific airline disaster in Ethiopia. This Issue includes personal tributes to these colleagues, offered on behalf of all members.

A new look
The Advisory Board’s Brand and Visibility Group presents of an upgrade to the AIIC brand, proposing ways that members can promote their professional identity.

Remote interpreting
We also include discussions of remote modes of interpreting, and what this means for the profession, in “The long view: AIIC and remote interpreting” and “Remote simultaneous interpreting: time to start a dialogue”. One heightened risk with remote interpreting is acoustic shock, and we look at the risk factors and measures to counter them.

Regional focus
“Keeping up with the growing German market” shares the findings of AIIC Germany’s 2017 market survey, calling for intensified efforts to raise AIIC’s visibility. And in China, meeting demand for professional interpreters led to particular training challenges.

Consecutive
Two of the articles consider consecutive interpreting: practical guidance in how to prepare for official consecutive interpreting assignments and a review of Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course, introducing Andrew Gillies’ new textbook.

I hope that you enjoy Communicate! Issue 74: Proximity. Please get in touch with your comments or suggestions for future issues.

Martin Field
EDITOR
March 2019 AIIC and the interpreter community were shocked to hear about a tragic airline crash in Addis Ababa, taking the lives of three beloved AIIC members, and the daughter of another. On 18 March AIIC members, friends and colleagues around the world wore flowers in remembrance, and services were held to celebrate their lives and remember their professional and personal contributions.

The AIIC Executive Committee invited colleagues to write these personal tributes, on behalf of the Association, to Suzan Abul Farag, Graziella de Luis and Esmat Orensa, the AIIC interpreters who lost their lives in the Ethiopian Airlines disaster.

Dearest Suzan, Gachi, Esmat and Pilar, may you rest in peace.

Suzy is an unforgettable charitable person, a devoted wife and loving mother and grandmother. We shall always cherish the memories of our numerous joyful days together. She will always be in our hearts. May God bless her forever.

Khadiga Barrada and Dalia Kashmiry

Graziella “Gachi” de Luis
We are so lucky that Hurricane Gachi passed through our lives.

So many photos to choose from. Gachi with the Pope. Gachi with Stephen Hawking. Gachi with a camel. Gachi with an Icelandic geyser. The inescapable metaphor of a comet burning brightly across the sky and then falling to the ground.

Homage at UN Geneva. The flag at half mast at FAO. The cousins in Merida all in white. The pictures in the booth in Nairobi. The colleagues all over the world wearing flowers in the booth last Monday. Bouquets in front of the door in via delle Fratte di Trastevere.

The most vibrant of personalities. The passion for persons, places, and things. The most loyal friend that ever was, and a fairly implacable foe as well. The generosity, the organization of lunches on the terrace, of birthday parties, of excursions on mission, of trips to unlikely places.

And always the pursuit of delicious food, the cooking of, the eating of, the finding of, the collection of books about. The fridge bursting with ingredients, plus the odd bit of santeria. The having of time for everyone, the laughter heard a long way down the corridor.

The inimitable phrases: ‘se cree el último
The passion for her causes. Interpreting itself of course, at home and abroad, including much volunteer work. Seeing justice done, in our little world and elsewhere. Supporting young colleagues. Being there for anyone who needed her, sometimes in the unlikeliest and most rocambolesque of ways. Immortalizing moments great and small on the omnipresent i Pad.

Her family. Her partner Phil, her father in Spain, her brother in Boston and his family, her sister Isabel who is also our colleague in Geneva, her many cousins in Mexico and Spain and the United States and elsewhere. But also a vast and far-flung web of colleagues and friends and acquaintances around the world who are bereft and grieving today.

Ideas and language. Fluency in cubano and yucateco and porteño and peninsular. Practicing interpreting with idiotic telenovelas while on holiday in Bahia. Translating her friends’ books. And always the very great funniness, the recounting of shared sufferings at ESIT, or the hatred of the service provider of the moment, or Athenian coffee coming in micro, canónico, and megalo.

Visual things, too. Gachi studied fine arts, cared deeply about esthetics, brought beautiful and quirky things back from her travels, gave her own beautiful sketches to her friends. And the books and the movies and the music. The Cuban ear that balanced the Mexican stomach.

Gachi had not always a happy nature, she had dark moments and could be intense and brooding. Her particular genius for life was to understand that happiness was something to fight for, that the world is an infinitely interesting place and that the time is now.

Among much else, she had the sharpest radar ever for identifying interesting and worthwhile people, and those of us who knew and loved her need never be at a loss for company almost anywhere in the world we may find ourselves, because we inherit her wide and affectionate family of friends.

And this is Gachi’s legacy to us. It is up to us to go on reflecting her bright light. And on days when that seems too difficult, to hear her voice saying “Dejen de joder y vuelvan a la cabina.”

Tom Afton

Esmat Orensna

Esmat Orensna was a graceful and charming lady, a wife, mother and grandmother, who dealt with the harshest issues with grace. She did not have an easy life, but she always managed to lead it with style and glamour.

Esmat worked in UNNY from the 1980s for years and subsequently as a freelancer until her demise, famous throughout international and continental organizations for her smile and charm. Being such a stylish lady, her nickname was the “Countess” among colleagues. When discussions became tough during one of the sensitive events, we asked Esmat to take over and her calm and reassuring voice defused the tense environment.

I first worked with her in a NOAL Summit in Nicosia in 1988, and was surprised by her ability to take things easy, despite the work pressure and the diplomatic tension in sessions. She worked her sessions flawlessly, then hurried to finish her shopping. It was strange for me, still the engineer, coming from the rough construction sites, to comprehend such behavior, but strangely we became good friends.

I will miss our conversations about her grandchildren, her hardworking architect and musician son, and her beloved husband eternally enamoured of Alexandria.

I count on meeting you, Esmat, in the better afterlife.

Hasta luego!!!

Rest in peace, “Countess”.

Youssef Mokhtar

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8814/
A new look for AIIC: distinct, professional, but definitely not square!

AIIC's brand is a mark of professionalism and quality in conference interpreting. The AIIC logo is an easily identifiable symbol of those qualities. Time has come to fully leverage the value of our brand.

After the 2018 AIIC Assembly in Valencia, the Advisory Board established a Brand & Visibility group tasked with refreshing and enhancing the visual identity of our brand and to make it conspicuous and perfectly recognizable in all markets: private, public, institutional, all over the world.

The AB Brand & Visibility group is now proud to announce a suite of new products that will help us refresh AIIC’s visual identity.

An updated logo, distinctive design elements, and a series of branded products are now ready to turn heads wherever AIIC members are present. We know you can’t wait to make the AIIC brand a visible part of your professional personality.
Be visible. Be AIIC.
Rolling out new products that all members are entitled - and encouraged - to use:

• the “Member of AIIC” logo for all professional correspondences, on our websites, and wherever else we promote our professional profile.

• templates for “Member of AIIC” business cards, that are easy to use, professional and highly recognizable. Leave your mark of quality with stylish pride!

• the AIIC membership card soon to be circulated to all members. It can be worn as a badge, so AIIC colleagues will stand out from the crowd at professional events.

• the online CV generator lets us enter our personal data to generate a professional modern AIIC-branded CV - in a variety of languages. It’s time to show off our professional experience and AIIC credentials, and get noticed when it counts!

These items will be made available through the Secretariat and the Regional Bureaux complete with a set of guidelines explaining all the details on format, color, fonts, and the contexts in which the AIIC logo may or may not be used.

Brand makeover.
The AB Brand & Visibility group consulted graphic designer Guido Rossi, who has worked with AIIC since 2013 when he designed the interactive installation for AIIC’s 60th Anniversary commemoration in Milan.

Mr. Rossi has kindly shared with us part of the process behind AIIC’s refreshed identity.

“The symbol reminds me of the interpreter’s function: three moving spheres of which the one in the center connects the other two. It is an elegant and harmonious symbol that suggests worlds in motion: a plurality of elements ultimately forming a single sphere. Interpreting means rigor matched with creativity, and AIIC members cut across all sectors and contexts, but always with personality, experience, human intuition. So I tried to portray this in AIIC’s visual communications: rigor with creativity. The graphic elements are all well organized and the new oblique cut conveys a sense of personality and vitality.”

And finally, a short message from your AIIC AB Brand & Visibility Group:

“AIIC’s collective image is a valuable asset, but its members are its real strength: make use of these new products, wherever you go, wherever you work, whoever you introduce yourself to. A logo has a meaning only if those who own it are proud to wear it.”

Be visible. Be AIIC.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8818/

The AB Brand & Visibility Group are:
Luisa Malentacchi (coordinator)
Odette Buyse-Nepper
Claudia Cereghino
Alicia Fernández
Raffaella Marchese
Raquel Schaitza
Whether we like it or not, there is a revolution taking place. The advances in remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI) technology are the biggest technological changes for the interpreting profession since the development of simultaneous interpreting equipment.

In March 2018 AIIC issued a position paper on Distance Interpreting, acknowledging this reality. The statement calls for a consideration of evidence that will set standards for working conditions that provide for both quality of interpretation and interpreter wellbeing.

Guiding change
Klaus Ziegler, in an interview with Lourdes de Rioja for her blog, “A Word in Your Ear”, says that interpreters need to come to terms with the change:

One of the biggest challenges we have is to overcome our usual practice... it is difficult for
us to understand that things have changed all around us. Society has changed. The demand for communication in our society has changed. The way that events are set up nowadays has changed. We can’t be the only ones that say that everything needs to be the same as thirty years ago.

For this reason, AIIC set up the Taskforce on Distance Interpreting (TFDI) to ensure that the profession could continue to ensure high professional standards and protect the interests of its members.

The TFDI developed the **AIIC Guidelines for Distance Interpreting**, published in January 2019, to give guidance to interpreters, the profession as a whole, and those involved in organizing interpreted events. The Guidelines specify that interpreters should be physically located with their team members, even though remote from the event; and this location should comply with basic professional standards. They provide specific recommendations covering physical, technical, and contractual aspects of RSI, and include a checklist for interpreters to consider when negotiating conditions for contracts involving RSI.

Until recently, Ziegler says, the RSI environment has been technology-driven, with businesses seizing the opportunities that relatively cheap high-speed communications technology presented.

“Now its on us to really have an influence on the future development of these solutions, to make them as appropriate as possible to suit our own needs,” he says.

**Client demand & new blood**

Increasingly, clients are going to request remote interpreting services, not necessarily to replace traditional on-site conferences. A flurry of new needs is mushrooming on the market: businesses where simultaneous interpretation was either too expensive or technically impossible are exploring the possibility of opening up to multilingualism. Examples include webinars, NGO meetings, company board meetings and many more.

We are already seeing interpreting courses at universities putting more emphasis on remote interpreting. They are doing so, in part, to meet demand: students expect to be trained in the latest technology, especially since they know that this is a growth area and will be part of their professional career.

**Starting a conversation**

A number of regional events – in London (at the January 2019 PRIMS meeting), the Hague (November 2018), Cairo (September 2018), Athens (February 2019) – have fueled animated discussions and given AIIC members a chance to get up to speed on what they need to know to be able to make the right choices, and play their part in influencing the future of the profession.

Video coverage of some of these presentations and discussions have been put online for AIIC members. AIIC pre-candidate Tatiana Kaplun has also contributed a lively account of her impressions of the RSI training at the Hague in November 2018, on the AIIC Blog.

There is clearly a lot of interest, concern, and need for more information on this contentious topic.

**If AIIC is going to attract this new generation of professional interpreters, we will also need to recognise the changing realities of our technological environment. AIIC has a definite role in making sure that professional standards are maintained whatever the modality.**

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8816/
Remote simultaneous interpreting: time to start a dialogue

RSI is one of the biggest technological developments for the profession. At the PRIMS meeting in London, members discussed how interpreters can shape its uptake.

The second day of the PRIMS Interregional meeting in London, Sunday 13 January 2019, offered AIIC members a unique opportunity to test and compare six remote interpreting platforms, and discuss their various merits and shortcomings. The agenda also included informative presentations on AIIC’s guidelines for remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI), on the economics of RSI, and the Canadian Translation Bureau experiences of RSI.

Technological disruption

The presentations and discussions during the conference itself focused largely on how AIIC members can continue to offer their clients the highest standards of service, particularly in the current context of rapid technological innovations affecting conference interpreting. There was general agreement among delegates that just as technology has disrupted travel, accommodation, music, film, so too it is affecting the conference interpreting sector.

One of the most significant developments of recent years is Remote Simultaneous Interpreting (RSI), the technology-based system whereby rather than being located in the same room as conference speakers and delegates, the interpreters are ‘remote’ - operating from a distant site, which can be elsewhere in the venue or in another location altogether, in another country or in the interpreters’ own offices.

In response to growing interest in remote interpreting among AIIC members the Association recently released its Guidelines for Distance Interpreting, to provide minimum standards and best practice recommendations for professional interpreters and the conference industry.

Over the past few years, a number of commercial companies (several of whom participated in the London conference) have launched various RSI telecommunications platforms which provide this alternative to conference interpreters operating from booths located directly in the meeting room.

Benefits and challenges

Potential benefits for conference organisers were explored during the discussion: reduced equipment rental costs, and lower flight and accommodation expenses—this could open the market to companies and institutions that often do without interpretation services for budgetary reasons. Additionally, RSI gives a greater ability to schedule last-minute meetings with people in different parts of the world.

Advantages for interpreters were also highlighted: the use of RSI allows for a more flexible working schedule and reduces the travel-related stress from their professional routine.

Furthermore, there are potential wider benefits: reduced travel curbs the environmental footprint of the conference industry, and could give people with physical disabilities better access to the profession.
But a key theme of the conference was how AIIC and its members can manage the challenges inherent in the use of RSI in order to guarantee the highest standards of service to their clients. This means providing consistently effective, high quality communication while managing the practical risks associated with the use of these systems.

The risks include anything from interruptions to communications due to power cuts or internet disruptions, to poor quality sound and visual input, to security and privacy issues.

The discussions also covered the relevant ethical and contractual issues, such as negotiating RSI assignments with clients while taking into consideration the appropriate ISO standards for simultaneous interpreting.

**Interpreters must be involved**

A clear conclusion of the 2-day conference was that while RSI seems here to stay, interpreters must not simply accept it without any criticism. They can - and should - be closely involved in the development process for this technology, identifying and advocating for the highest quality standards of RSI.

A step in this direction was taken at the conference itself, as the organisers had invited six different providers of RSI platforms to demonstrate their systems using the International Maritime Organisation’s own interpreting booths in the venue. Delegates had an opportunity to test the platforms and give feedback to the companies.

The general opinion was that there is still much room for improvement in the functionalities of RSI platforms, and that technology providers and interpreters must work together to fine-tune these systems in the interests of all.

Innovations in interpreting technology - and in RSI in particular - are something that all conference organisers, meeting planners and venue managers need to understand, as they are slowly but surely in the process of transforming our industry.

At the end of the day, participants expressed their appreciation to PRIMS for opening up this discussion, and including the providers. However, they stressed, much more dialogue between interpreters and other conference industry professionals is essential at this time.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8815/

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Rob Davidson, of MICE Knowledge, an authority on current developments in the meeting, incentive, conference and events (MICE) industry, gave an introductory presentation at the PRIMS London meeting. A version of this article was previously published in EventsBase and in Think MICE (in Polish).
The shocking reality of sudden noises

Interpreters are especially at risk of damage from acoustic shock, and the effects can be enduring and devastating.

With the advent of teleconferences, videoconferences and other forms of distance interpreting, acoustic shock is unfortunately becoming more and more of a reality. The ITU (International Telecommunication Union) and the ETSI (European Telecommunications Standards Institute) define it as:

Any temporary or permanent disorder of the ear or auditory nervous system caused by an abrupt and unexpected increase of the acoustic pressure in a telecommunication system.

Myriam Westcott, an Australian audiologist specializing in acoustic shock disorder assessment and management, defines it as follows:

“Acoustic shock disorder (ASD) is an involuntary response to a sound perceived as traumatic (usually a sudden, unexpected loud sound heard near the ear), which causes a specific and consistent pattern of neurophysiological and psychological symptoms. These include aural pain/fullness, tinnitus, hyperacusis, muffled hearing, vertigo and other unusual symptoms such as numbness or burning sensations around the ear.”

Typically, people describe acoustic shock as feeling like they have been stabbed or electrocuted in the ear. If symptoms persist, a range of emotional reactions including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression can develop.

Interestingly, concussions also give rise to very similar symptoms.

Luckily, we have a muscle called the tensor tympani, which does its best to protect our ears from acoustic shock by contracting against loud sounds. This tympanic reflex helps prevent damage to the inner ear by muffling the transmission of vibrations from the tympanic membrane. But this reflex has a response time of 40 milliseconds, which is unfortunately not fast enough to protect the ear from sudden loud noises like feedback.
Recent experiences in Canada
In Canada, the federal government Translation Bureau, along with AIIC Canada and the Technical and Health Committee of AIIC, sponsored audiological testing by Neumann and Müller of two portable hearing protection devices: the PreservEar and the LimitEar limiters. Testing of the PreservEar device gave rise to favourable results in terms of hearing protection. However, testing of the LimitEar devices showed that although they do provide protection against acoustic shock, the reaction time is too long and the maximum sound level is too high to ensure adequate protection. Additionally, there is no limitation function when the battery is dead.

Given the results of the tests, in consultation with AIIC Canada, the Bureau is contacting all interpreters who have been provided LimitEar devices to exchange them for a PreservEar device. For a more detailed analysis and discussion of these results, we remind you that AIIC Canada is hosting an outreach event on 23 August 2019, in Montreal, which will focus on acoustic incidents and interpreter health and safety. This event will be held in conjunction with the PRIMS meeting.

Preventative measures
On May 7, 2019, Translation Bureau CEO Stéphan Dery and Member of Parliament Steven MacKinnon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility, appeared before a parliamentary committee to discuss workplace safety for federal government staff interpreters.

Parliamentary Secretary MacKinnon recognized the hard work and expertise of the parliamentary interpreters, referring to them as “world-class.” His statement continued as follows:

“With the technological advancements made in recent years, more and more people are able to attend meetings remotely. This means that an increasing number of clients are requesting interpretation of teleconferences, often using cell phones and hands-free devices. However, these devices do not comply with ISO standards governing simultaneous interpreting, resulting in a substantial increase in the number of health and safety incidents among interpreters. Henceforth, remote participants in teleconferences must send their questions and comment by email or chat. Furthermore, all TB clients must upgrade their interpretation systems to the ISO standard, and confirm in writing that a sound technician will be on-site for the duration of the event and that compressor limiters will be installed on the interpretation consoles.

The Translation Bureau is also working closely with the parliamentary multimedia service to improve audio quality, thereby ensuring the safety of the working conditions for interpreters. Both the House of Commons and Senate chambers now have simultaneous interpretation systems and consoles that meet the ISO standard, with built-in compressor limiters to protect interpreters from acoustic shock injuries. This summer all of Parliament’s committee rooms are scheduled to be fully upgraded to ISO-compliant consoles. Until then, all interpreters have been provided with portable sound limiters.”

Future initiatives
A Canadian audiologist—a post-doctoral Fellow at the Laboratoire des Neurosciences Sensorielles et Cognitives (LNSC) at Université d’Aix Marseille and the CNRS—has requested that AIIC collaborate on a research project. The research group is investigating symptoms of acoustic shocks, namely, the characterization of tinnitus and hyperacusis mechanisms. They are interested in better understanding the symptoms of auditory hypersensitivity (hyperacusis), tinnitus, and ear pain, and conference interpreters is a new target group for them, which should help them increase their study sample.

Certainly such research will be particularly valuable, especially if it raises awareness of the dangers of acoustic shock, and thereby contributes to better prevention and protection. As experience has shown, interpreters are especially a risk, and the effects can be enduring and devastating.

Typically, people describe acoustic shock as feeling like they have been stabbed or electrocuted in the ear.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8811/

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Gillian Misener (EN A, FR B) is a staff interpreter at the Canadian Parliament and a trainer with the University of Ottawa MCI program. She is currently completing the Masters of Advanced Studies in Interpreter Training at the University of Geneva.
Following the example of our colleagues in France, the German Region of AIIC decided to conduct a market survey for interpretation services in 2017 in order to try and shed some light on issues highly relevant to the interpreting community.

Together with the German Association of Conference Interpreters (VKD) and with financial support from AIIC international, AIIC Germany commissioned a market research agency to conduct telephone interviews with members of our (potential) target groups.

In a total of 149 interviews, direct customers (e.g. companies, public institutions, NGOs), event agencies, interpreting agencies and technical equipment providers were asked about their needs and perspectives.

The aim was to find out more about who our customers actually are, how they make their decisions when procuring interpreting services and where the (German) market is headed in general.

Some of the results were quite surprising; others confirmed what many colleagues had experienced themselves over the years.

**First the good news...**

From an interpreter’s perspective, the results of the 2017 market study are both positive and negative.

Let’s start with the **good news**: Our market seems to be very stable or, in many segments, even growing! And even though English is often considered the new lingua franca in Germany, the strongest demand for interpreting services is still for English, followed by French, Spanish and Chinese.

Simultaneous interpreting from the booth is still the predominant mode of interpreting, even though *bidule* interpreting is also quite common.

Many customers, especially those with smaller event volumes per year, prefer...
to book interpreters directly instead of through translation agencies.

This customer group also attaches more value to membership in a professional association although - and this is part of the bad news - very few clients are actually aware of any professional associations in the field.

**Growth in agencies**

Since translation and interpreting agencies seem to be more and more present on the German market, some questions in our market study focused on interpreting volumes assigned to these agencies and on how they do in terms of satisfaction, pricing etc. when compared to individual freelance or consultant interpreters.

The results were sobering and encouraging at the same time: the biggest growth on the market was indeed registered by interpreting agencies. Clients with higher event volumes indicated a tendency to use agencies for convenience reasons since most agencies provide one-stop solutions (including multiple languages, interpreting equipment, etc.).

Since end-customers and event agencies are faced with a large variety of interpreting service providers with a wide price range, AIIC members need to be clearly positioned within this field. Seeking direct customer contact, advertising AIIC membership and specialty qualifications could be key to this strategy.

**Surprises**

Other surprises included the fact that clients indicated they would like to see more detail in the quotes they receive from interpreters in order to facilitate their decision-making process.

The time needed to prepare for an interpreting assignment for instance was one of the items mentioned that could be listed separately from the actual interpreter’s fee when issuing a quote for an interpreting job.

It also turned out that booking decisions in
most companies and organizations are not taken by one single person but rather by a group of people, often above the interpreter’s initial point of contact with a potential client.

Many interviewees also indicated that when looking for interpreters for multilingual events, they were mainly looking for specialists focusing in their respective industry or field.

Additional services offered or one-stop-shop solutions were another selling point for clients when trying to find interpreters online.

Conclusions
So what are the conclusions we can draw from the German market research? Well, first of all the satisfaction scores for directly booked interpreters (and especially AIIC interpreters) were very high among all groups of clients interviewed. But while that’s great news and we can certainly build on that, there still seems to be a lot of untapped potential: if clients are satisfied with AIIC interpreters, we should proudly advertise the fact that we’re members of this association!

For instance by making abundant use of our logo, but also by simply mentioning AIIC when talking to our customers.

We also need to make sure that our professional association and its significance as a quality label become more well-known among existing and potential clients by exploring new communication strategies on an association level.

Both as individual interpreters and as AIIC, we need to make sure that clients can find us on the internet; that they know which fields we specialize in and what services we offer. The study shows that the German market is still growing; we just need to keep up with it!

Next up: results of the online survey of interpreters
In addition to the customer survey, AIIC Germany and VKD also conducted an online survey among conference interpreters working on the German market.

Thanks to a high participation rate, the results can be considered representative for our market and offer a detailed picture of our conference interpreter landscape.

A more in-depth report on how interpreters in Germany perceive their market and their professional situations will follow soon.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8823/

ABOUT THE AUTHORS
Sonja Hogl studied in Heidelberg and is now based in Munich. She’s a freelance interpreter and has been an active member of AIIC since 2017.

Isabelle Raskin-Jeanneret is a Munich-based freelance interpreter, working in the French booth. She joined AIIC in 2009, and got the idea for a market study after reading the results of a similar study carried out by AIIC France in 2007.
Giving voice to 1.4 billion people: Interpreter training in China

As demand for high-quality interpreters grows China, AIIC and the profession should offer guidance and support in how best to prepare the new generation.

MATTHEW PERRET
YINYING WANG

China is experiencing huge growth in the demand for interpreters, including for top-end conference interpreters. Interpreter training takes place on a huge scale, with an increasing number of new interpreters entering the market with a post-grad qualification every year (8,000 in 2017).

In 1979, the UN launched a cooperation programme with the Chinese government, to produce interpreters and other linguists specifically for the UN.

A rigid and simple method
The teaching method was demanding but rigid and simple: to train the best English students in the whole of China with UN meeting materials, practising with 10,000 hours of recorded material.

In the following decades, translation and interpreting courses tended to be taught by linguistics or literature specialists. There were a few exceptions, such as Shanghai International Studies University (SISU). Although it was not the first institution to
set up such a programme, SISU defined its aims according to the highest international standards (such as AIIC and CIUTI), and cooperated fruitfully with the EU and UN. The previous methodology for teaching interpreting had been to set written translation exercises, based on text-books, requiring a significant amount of rote-learning.

English "A" interpreters with experience at the UN, and in SCIC in the Visiting Chinese Scholars programme, moved the focus towards a litmus test of "Can the pure customer understand and follow?" [1]

The need for individual feedback

Even in 2019, with large class sizes, and a significant proportion of students trying to work into a "B" without extended periods of immersion, the challenges of offering high-calibre training are huge. While group feedback can be relevant for certain recurrent errors of approach, individual feedback is also vital because every interpreter is different.

EU and Chinese trainers working side-by-side have tried to find some "universal" principles, going from modelling (professors give "right" answers and students emulate professionals) to eliciting (helping students ask the right questions for them to learn for themselves, and empathise with speakers, "pure customers", and so on). Interpreters will need extra-linguistic sensitivities in their communication, too—knowing how "China-savvy" an audience is, in order to make choices in "retour" interpretation for the rest of the world (using techniques such as explicitation, explanation, or equivalence).

The top-down "right answer" approach can be seductive, but there are pitfalls:

1. **Perfectionism is not fluency** – If you cannot find the "right" word, you are stuck.

2. **By trying to say everything, you end up saying nothing** – If you focus on content, then you put yourself at the mercy of a fast speaker like a bucking bronco to a greater extent than if you analyse, and prioritise primary information over secondary.

3. **Noun-for-noun translation does not sound like English** – Chinese tends to be abstract and impersonal, whereas English uses personalised active verbs ("Residents may only dispose of household waste at designated times and places" becomes "spot-specific timing-specific garbage-throwing")

4. **Interpreters are not superheroes** – Misunderstandings occur between speakers of the same language. If we remove the language barrier, speakers can still be inelegant, contradictory, deliberately ambiguous or antagonistic, and listeners can still be unfamiliar with source language culture, and get the wrong end of the stick (e.g. a UK listener may have understood "family planning" as referring to a couple’s choice regarding reproductive rights, when the Chinese speaker was describing government policy).

Balancing literalism and cultural adaptation

The English A interpreter, rather than "correcting" the student, can share insights from lived experience in the English-speaking world, and help students ask the right questions as they seek the right balance between literalism and cultural adaptation. Students can then make use of the internet revolution to increase their understanding and cultural sensitivity, working with spoken-word sources rather than written. Self-training is also beneficial: students trained to give good source speeches and constructive, analytical feedback can then train each other.
There is a spectrum ranging from “The customer is always right” (the western listener to a “retour” or the relay interpreter from another UN booth) to “He who pays the piper calls the tune” (the source speaker and official “checkers” with their own preferences).

Chinese A interpreters may benefit from guidance on non-verbal communication through intonation, and become more creative public speakers.

**Guidance and support**

As the new generation enters the market, they need guidance, solidarity, international reference points, and constructive peer review rather than cut-throat competition between “lone operators”. While there are significant variations between market segments, China is at the forefront of many developments in machine translation software, the use of AI, and debates about working conditions.

TAC (The Translators’ Association of China) has been working on standard-setting for accreditation exams and self-evaluation tools. While attempts to produce an objective quantification of interpreting ability may have the best of intentions, they are often based on the problematic premise that students can be mechanically benchmarked against a “standard”, correct version.

In the meantime, on the market, many interpreters and trainers feel they are going it alone, with little support.

Newcomers to the profession often aspire to join AIIC, seeing membership as a badge of quality. The market already has many segments and unfortunately not all interpreters abide by the same professional standards - due to financial pressures, the way they conceive their role, or the fact that not all interpreters active on the market have received the same standard of training.

We clearly need more two-way communication between China and Europe. AIIC can play a crucial role in this, bringing together professionals to provide a top-quality human-to-human service in a changing world - including giving externally accessible and comprehensible voices to some 1.4 billion Chinese.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8823/

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**NOTES**

[1] For more discussion of the “pure customer” – who evaluates only the interpretation, without access to the original – in interpreter training, see Matthew PERRET. “Inside a conference interpreting professional development class”. Communicate! Issue 70. April 2017.
Dans le précédent numéro de Traduire [1], après une introduction générale, nous avons traité des circonstances précédant la mission d’interprétation officielle, en terminant par les aspects concernant le recrutement.

Dans cette seconde partie, nous parlerons de la réalisation de la mission, de sa préparation d’abord, puis de son déroulement. L’interprétation officielle présente la particularité de s’exercer en des lieux qui changent en permanence, ce qui implique des déplacements parfois lointains, et la nécessité de les effectuer en limitant le plus possible leur incidence sur la qualité de la prestation elle-même. Nous allons en évoquer les principaux aspects pratiques, concernant la logistique personnelle, puis certains aspects spécifiques des conditions de travail, tels que les cortèges, la sécurité, la gestion du stress et du trac, de la fatigue, etc. Nous évoquerons ensuite les relations entre l’interprète et les personnes présentes, puis dirons quelques mots du placement de l’interprète dans les différentes circonstances du cours de la mission, avant de conclure sur une situation particulière marquant la fin de celle-ci.

La préparation de l’interprète
Tout interprète doit être un « honnête homme » de son siècle, et se tenir informé de l’actualité internationale. Pour l’interprétation officielle, l’interprète doit de plus bien connaître les institutions des deux pays dont il pratique les langues, et en suivre les dossiers importants, d’actualité ou de fond : sur le plan linguistique, il doit connaître et pratiquer le langage diplomatique dans toutes ses nuances, comme il doit maîtriser le registre particulier des discours protocolaires, avec leurs références culturelles et expressions fleuries [2].

Il s’agit là d’une préparation générale, permanente, pratiquée de manière habituelle par l’interprète, qu’il ait ou non une mission en vue. Elle lui permet de mettre à jour et développer ses connaissances chaque fois qu’il rencontre une information utile.


Dans cet extrait d’un article, initialement publié dans Traduire [En ligne], 230 | 2014, Gilles Ouvrard propose des conseils pratiques et détaillés sur les différents aspects de l’interprétation consécutive officielle. Il contient des directives sur les voyages, la gestion du temps, la sécurité et le rôle des autres participants à la mission. L’article complet est disponible à l’adresse suivante : Merci à l’auteur et à Traduire de nous avoir permis de le republier.
Pour ces deux temps de préparation, le développement d'internet a grandement facilité la tâche de l’interprète. Ces recherches à partir de sources publiques sont aujourd’hui devenues très banales, nous ne nous y attarderons pas. J’insisterai cependant sur un point : les listes de vocabulaire que l’on établit ne servent par elles-mêmes à rien, ce qui importe c’est que leur contenu soit présent et disponible sans effort au moment où l’interprète en aura besoin. Elles doivent être efficacement mémorisées, ce qui nécessite de les réviser, avec une grande concentration.

Dans ma propre pratique, j’avais pris l’habitude d’élaborer des listes « très larges », comprenant, outre d’éventuels termes spécialisés, le vocabulaire et les tournures ou expressions propres à la diplomatie et qui, n’étant pas d’un usage quotidien, ont besoin d’être réactivés. Ces listes provenaient de missions antérieures sur le même sujet, enrichies par la préparation du moment ; je les révisais régulièrement avant et pendant la mission. Il s’agissait de listes manuscrites, ce point est important pour moi. Le fait de les écrire soi-même à la main et non de les imprimer automatiquement à partir d’un fichier permet, si l’on est concentré, de retenir plus efficacement le vocabulaire. Ces listes manuscrites sont par ailleurs chargées de souvenirs qui reviennent en mémoire lorsqu’on les révise, et contribuent à faciliter la préparation.

Outre les sources publiques auxquelles il se réfère, l’interprète utilise également d’autres documents.

L’interprète n’en dispose généralement que très peu de temps avant la mission, et souvent seulement pendant celle-ci.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8809/
Lire la suite (sur le site de Traduire) : https://journals.openedition.org/traduire/639

ABOUT THE AUTHOR


NOTES

[1] Le présent texte est la suite de l’article intitulé L’interprétation consécutive officielle publié dans Traduire n° 229.

Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course - a new textbook by Andrew Gillies

Conference interpreting is at a technological crossroads. Now is the time to make informed decisions and influence the future of the profession.

MICHELLE RENÉE HOF

Any in the conference interpreting community will have seen that Andrew Gillies has produced a new textbook. Gillies is best known for his earlier publications: Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course (2nd edition, Routledge, 2017) and Conference Interpreting: A Student’s Practice Book (1st edition, Routledge, 2013). This latest offering, entitled Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course, has also been published by Routledge as part of its Translation Practices Explained series.

Trainers and practitioners are sure to have some questions about this new textbook. As a trainer who makes extensive use of Gillies’ previous two textbooks and who has taken a close look at this new one, here are my responses to some of these questions.

Is this new publication a revised edition of Gillies’ textbook on note-taking technique?
This is the first question that is likely to arise, and also the easiest to answer. No, this is definitely not a revised version of Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course (as a matter of fact, the second edition of that well-known title came out just two years ago). This book is a different publication altogether.

I can understand the potential for confusion, as the titles are very similar, and the publishing house has given the two books, which form part of the same series on translation practices, the same look and feel both on the cover and on the inside pages, so at first glance this might seem to be just an update of the previous note-taking book. But let me repeat that this is NOT the case.

Gillies’ first publication, Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course, focuses (as the name implies) almost exclusively on helping readers develop and/or improve their system of notes. This new book goes well beyond what gets jotted down on the notepad, and tackles all of the various facets of consecutive interpreting (more on that in a moment).

Who has this book been written for: students, trainers, novice interpreters, seasoned practitioners, or perhaps all of the above?
Like Gillies’ other two textbooks, this new publication can be read by different audiences in different ways, although some might derive more benefit from it than others. The Student’s Practice Book published in 2013 is primarily aimed at students of interpreting and, by extension, their trainers. The original Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course is for both these groups as well, but can also be used as a workbook, in a “teach yourself” approach, by practitioners who would like to improve their note-taking skills.

This new book, Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course, while presented in a similar workbook-style format, might be slightly more geared toward the interpreter trainer-someone who is looking for guidance on how to teach all of the facets of consecutive interpreting in a methodical, structured way. Students are not likely to have the pedagogical underpinnings needed to make the most
of the material presented, and practitioners (who presumably already will have a solid consecutive technique overall) might know they need to work on a certain aspect of their consecutive interpreting technique—such as their delivery, memory, or analytical skills—but may not feel that this broad-ranging book serves their specific needs.

Having said that, interpreter trainers will find in Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course a “one-stop shop”, a handy compendium of the various facets of consecutive interpreting that they can use to structure their curriculum, plan their classes, and organise their students’ practice.

The textbook ably covers consecutive interpreting from all angles: not only does it address the traditional progression of skill acquisition from listening and analysis through consecutive without notes (memory) to full note-taking, it also includes matters related to preparation, delivery, protocol, practicalities, and more.

I already have Gillies’ other two textbooks. What is new in this book for me?

It is true that there is some overlap between Gillies’ various textbooks. Those familiar with Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course will recognise some of the material presented here in the sections on memory, analysis, and note-taking technique, among others. Also, some of the exercises in this book have equivalents in the Student’s Practice Book. But as I see it, this new book offers the added value of placing this familiar material into an overarching structure that covers all of consecutive interpreting technique, expanding on or adapting the material as necessary to produce a coherent whole.

For those considering a purchase, it is also important to note that Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course offers two completely new chapters, on reformulation and effort management, that you won’t find anywhere else in Gillies’ books. These are two hugely important, perennial topics in conference interpreter training, and it is probably worth checking out this new book just to get Gillies’ take on them. Also, the last chapter, on digitally-assisted consecutive interpreting, offers a brief overview of the use of tablets, smartpens and real-time transcription by interpreters. Obviously, there are plenty of resources available online on new technologies in interpreting, so one doesn’t necessarily need to buy this textbook to learn about them. Still, any compendium of consecutive interpreting-related matters really does need to include these topics to be complete. New technologies are rapidly gaining traction in our profession, and they are bound to take on increasing importance in the years to come, so Gillies has done well to include at least a brief reference to them here.

To wrap up: what I appreciate most, as a trainer and curriculum developer, about Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course is that it can help guide trainers’ thinking about the components that must be covered in any consecutive interpreting training program. For those who might not have taught consecutive technique before, this book offers a game plan that will help them design a complete program and offers material and exercises that can be “plugged in” to their teaching modules where needed. For those who already teach consecutive interpreting, Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course can help identify potential gaps in their course content and provides information and exercises to help fill these gaps. I, for one, am very pleased that this book has been produced, and grateful to Gillies for the effort he has put into it. It has earned itself a place on any interpreter trainer’s bookshelf and, like his other publications, is bound to be a reference for the profession for years to come.

Webpage: https://aiic.net/page/8810/

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) brings together over 3,000 professionals in more than 100 countries. Since its inception in 1953, AIIC has promoted high standards of quality and professional ethics. Our activities, projects, and collaborations with partner organizations aim to help individual practitioners and the worldwide community of interpreters meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

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