



Essential do's and don'ts when using simultaneous conference interpreters on TV

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Visibility

1. Ideally, interpreters should be able to see the set and all the people on it. If this is not possible for technical reasons, interpreters must be provided with 2 large-size colour TV monitors, one showing what the viewers are seeing at home, and one showing the rest of the set (this is necessary if only to know when the foreign guest is on the set and when he or she has left!).
2. If more than one interpreters booth is being used, there must be visibility between booths so that interpreters can communicate with each other (by sign language!), and also be aware of any difficult situation or event taking place in the colleagues booth.

Sound

1. Earphones must be light-weight and provide sound in both ears. They must be mono and not stereo headphones and never have thick padding on them. Under no circumstances should interpreters ever hear their own voice in their earphones !
Most interpreters prefer the Sennheiser or AKG-type earphone.
2. Each interpreter must have his/her own volume control switch. It is impossible to work correctly without this! Interpreters should also be able to control tone settings for their own headsets.
3. The interpreters booth must not be "live", i.e. it should be possible to switch off all mikes so that interpreters may communicate with each other, if necessary, without being heard by the people on the set or even worse by the TV audience.



4. Interpreters must be able to contact technicians at all times via an interphone system which does not interfere with the broadcast.
5. There should be a cough button so that the interpreters do not need to switch off their mikes which causes a "break" in the sound heard by the viewers or the guests .

Booths and general amenities

It should always be technically possible to work both ways from one booth, whatever arrangements may have been made. Interpreters being human may have last-minute health problems, may have run into a terrible traffic jam, or whatever.

The booths should have proper ventilation but this should not cause any problems, such as sound of fan in interpreters earphones or feed-back into microphones.

Each interpreter must be provided with a suitable chair.

Fresh water and one glass per interpreter should be provided before each program.

The interpreters booths should not be accessible to the public or anyone else (except technicians) during the broadcast and should not be used as storage rooms by TV crews!

Testing

Interpreters earphones and mikes as well as those of guests and anchor persons must always be tested before the program by the interpreters themselves and, if the guests have not arrived, by technicians seated in guests future positions and using their earphones. It is always preferable to have a trial run with the actual guests, if only to ascertain that they understand the language they will be hearing and know how to use the equipment (it is often the first time these people are in contact with simultaneous interpretation!)

When doing a "spacebridge" or duplex transmission testing is of paramount importance. The people on the other end will usually be hooked up by a satellite connection and this must absolutely be checked. Inter alia, it is of tantamount importance that the PA systems on the other end do not cover the sound or do not



send back the interpreters own voice, as is often the case in these situations. This makes interpretation technically impossible. The "other end" may be a third world country with poor installations and untrained technicians: all this must be checked by "your" network well in advance.

Pseudo-live or pre-recorded programs

Before the program, it is essential to check that questions and answers have been well synchronised. If there are inserted visual sequences (films, clips, etc.) the technicians must be aware of the fact that the interpretation is finished before it is covered over by the sound track of the insert.

It is always important to have a continuity script or log of the program, but in cases of pre-recorded programs with inserts this is even more important.

Credits

By virtue of the Universal Convention on Copyright and the Bern Convention for the Protection of literary or artistic works, interpreters names must be mentioned in the credits, either flashed on the screen during the actual interpretation or at the end with the other credits. AIIC should also be mentioned, as "union" or professional affiliation of all other persons are always mentioned.

N.B. : Booths whether built in or portable should always be in conformity with ISO standards, i.e. ISO 2603 for built-in booths and ISO 4043 for portable booths. Electrical equipment must be in conformity with IEC60914 - standard on electrical and audio requirements for conference systems.

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