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TRIPLE CHALLENGE FOR REMOTE INTERPRETING: TECHNOLOGY, PROFESSION AND TEACHING

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Abstract

New technologies have opened up a range of new, faster and more effective methods for providing worldwide information. In this sense, remote interpreting is quickly being promoted for its convenience, as interpreters do not have to be physically present, but can be available at any time using a device as simple and widespread as a phone or a computer, saving time and money for all the parties involved. Remote interpreting is becoming increasingly common nowadays, as it enables distance communication with a professional interpreter almost instantaneously and with satisfactory results. Remote interpreting has been widely used in many community interpreting settings, such as hospitals, courts, police stations, emergency services, or schools, although it has received little attention in terms of training so far.

Resumen

Las nuevas tecnologías permiten ofrecer información a nivel mundial de manera más rápida y eficaz. En este sentido, la interpretación a distancia se ha implantado rápidamente por su efectividad, ya que los intérpretes, sin tener que estar presentes físicamente en un lugar determinado, pueden estar disponibles en cualquier momento utilizando dispositivos tan sencillos y cotidianos como son un teléfono móvil o un ordenador, de esta forma se ahorra tiempo y dinero para todas las partes implicadas. La interpretación a distancia se está haciendo cada vez más popular a día de hoy, pues permite la comunicación con un intérprete profesional de forma prácticamente instantánea y con resultados satisfactorios. Por ello, se ha empleado ampliamente en contextos profesionales, especialmente dentro de la llamada "interpretación social", que tiene lugar en los hospitales, tribunales, comisarías de policía, servicios de urgencias,

centros educativos, etc. aunque quizás ha recibido menos atención en cuestión de formación, al menos hasta la fecha.

Keywords: Interpretation. Remote interpreting. Interpreting training. Telephone interpreting. Videoconference.

Palabras clave: Interpretación. Interpretación a distancia. Formación. Interpretación telefónica. Videoconferencia.

1. Introduction

The main objective of this article is to analyze remote interpretation from a professional, pedagogical and technological approach. Tools for interpreting and for training interpreters have radically changed this discipline from the introduction of equipment used to enable oral communication - starting with booths used for simultaneous interpreting, evolving with telephones for remote interpreting, to the Internet, to videoconferences or even social networks, to mention just a few.

Before the creation of interpreting equipment, the techniques used in different contexts were consecutive interpreting, whispering or dialogue interpreting (also known as liaison interpreting). Nevertheless, since the 20th century, simultaneous and remote interpreting techniques (both via telephone and videoconference) are also used. Currently, these modes are on the rise, as they offer plenty of possibilities for clients and a broader flexibility for both the hiring party and the interpreters. In this sense, it is important to understand that technologies should help in the process of interpretation, not hinder it. Therefore, the equipment used for communication should offer the appropriate quality.

It is common to find professionals advocating for an improvement of the devices, especially regarding videoconference. For instance, the conclusions of a comparative empirical study carried out in 2010 on interpreting in medical contexts (in person, on the phone and via video) indicate that more research on video conferencing is required: "additional research on technology also is needed. Bandwidth is still an issue affecting video" (Locatis et al. 2010: 347). Besides, remote interpreting has raised alarm bells among professionals and researchers on several important matters, such as quality or the working conditions of interpreters:

> The actual development of remote and teleconference interpreting has sparked heated debate among practitioners and interpreting scholars and has raised questions of feasibility and working conditions; but the debate has also been linked to the efficiency of service provision and the sustainability of the interpreting profession. (Braun 2015).

In any case, remote interpreting, in its different techniques, is being adopted in many places professionally. Also, some scientific and academic studies have already been published, as we will see hereinafter, whose aim is to analyze and to regulate this practice for it to be as efficient as possible:

> […] la interpretación remota no pretende reemplazar a las modalidades de interpretación in situ: ambos modos pueden coexistir y utilizarse en función de las necesidades concretas de quien recurre a la contratación de servicios de interpretación. En concreto, la interpretación remota ya se solicita hoy día y hay ya un número elevado de empresas que ofrecen este servicio a nivel mundial. De este modo, tanto el sector público como el privado podrán optar por la contratación de servicios de interpretación remota en tanto en cuanto tengan a su disposición determinados medios tecnológicos (Furtado 2014: online).

Thus, in this article we intend to briefly analyze remote interpreting (video-conference and telephone interpreting) from technological, professional and pedagogical points of view.

2. Definition, history and regulations

Remote interpreting, as the name suggests, is a type of interpretation that takes place when the interpreter (or any other participant in the communication) is not physically present during a multilingual conversation. Therefore, it is performed thanks to a technology used since the 20th century that opens up a wide range of new possibilities for professional markets, many of them yet to be explored.

2.1. Video-conference interpretation

The type of remote interpretation that is performed through a video device is called video-conference interpretation (in this sense, video-calls could be considered both video-conferencing or on the phone interpretation, but it is normally classified within video-conference).

> Remote interpreting by videoconference is often simply called remote interpreting when it refers to spoken-language interpreting. In sign-language interpreting, the term video remote interpreting has established itself. Remote interpreting is best described as a method of delivering interpreting. It has been used for simultaneous, consecutive and dialogue interpreting (Braun 2005: online).

According to Esteban Causo (2003: 145), the first video-conference was called "Symphonie Satellite" and it was performed in the UN in 1970 to connect the

cities of Paris and Nairobi. Since then, some other international organizations have shown a special interest in its development. Centres such as the UN, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council and the *École de Traduction et d'Interprétation* (ETI), for instance, have taken the lead in promoting some projects (Braun 2015). In such a way, today, video-conferencing has been substantially improved, and professional interpreters' associations advocate for its use when technical conditions are appropriate, both for consecutive and simultaneous interpretation:

> Participants and interpreters must hear and see the same thing, at the same time. Sound-image transmission between the meeting place or places and the interpretation place must be instantaneous and of high quality. […] Perfect sound–image synchronisation is crucial. […] For instant and complete understanding of a speaker's message, interpreters need to hear and see the speaker. Therefore, there must be dedicated cameras and operators focusing on the speaker of the moment (AIIC.net 2011: online).

Similarly, in medical and legal sectors, many organisms in European countries use video-conferencing. They have installed the necessary equipment in their rooms for this interpretation to be suitable:

> Many European countries have implemented videoconferencing facilities in courtrooms based on the ITU's more recent H.323 standard for videoconferences using the internet, which provides better video and audio quality than ISDN-based systems. Together with high-end peripheral equipment such as cameras and microphones, these systems can provide better support for videoconference-based interpreting than older systems. At the same time, the availability of web- or cloud-based videoconference services providing varying and unstable sound and image quality, and access to them on tablets and other mobile devices (Braun 2015: online).

Some standard protocols, regulations, norms (ISO) and glossaries have been created to regulate the use of video-conferencing interpretation for event organizers and interpreters.

> AIIC's position on the use of videoconferencing, as advised by the Technical and Health Committee, is that an interpreter should not be required to work more than 3 hours a day in a videoconference. If it is scheduled to last longer, manning strength must be increased. Because of the growing relevance of videoconferencing and its impact on conference interpreters, AIIC has drawn up a Code for the Use of New Technologies in Conference Interpretation, available in English which gives more details on how videoconferencing can be used to its best advantage in a multilingual situation (AIIC.net 2000: online).

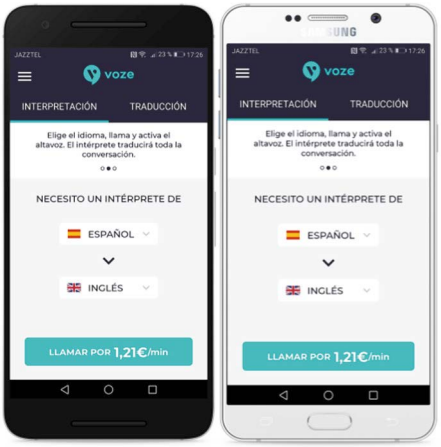
2.2. Telephone interpretation

Telephone interpretation is said to be older, in fact, it is the eldest form of remote interpretation, because it was born in the 50s (Helguera Gallego et al. 2011: 62). In particular, in 1947, within the Telephone Interpretation Service (TIS) in Australia, which was closely linked to community interpretation and developed in response to the great demand of communication between the official national language and others spoken by the immigrant population (Cabrera 2016: 4). Telephone interpretation is the mode of interpretation where the service is offered over the phone: "Interpretation that is provided via telephone. Also sometimes called over-the-phone interpreting or telephonic interpreting" (Kelly 2008:13). From that moment, other countries that also received migrants started using this type of interpretation, as we mentioned before, connected to community interpretation (in medical settings, pedagogical contexts, in police stations, emergencies, Courts or gender violence cases). Then, some specific tools for the development of this activity were installed (it is the case of companies like *CyraCom* or *Dualia* and other university patents) and standard protocols were activated. This happened, for example, in the USA, in California, where telephone interpretation appeared for the first time, according to Kelly, in 1981:

> In the United States, telephone interpreting was first offered in 1981, when a young police officer in San Jose, California, decided to team up with a colleague from the Defence Language Institute in Monterey, California, to form an organization that would help overcome barriers of language …. (Kelly 2008: 5).

During the 1980s, the company created by this policeman expanded and, from the 1990s, some other corporations offering interpretation services surged and eventually got bigger in such a way that today this mode is very popular in the country.

In Spain, it started in 2003-2004, when Dualia introduced the system into some public institutions (Ruiz Mezcua 2018:13). Other initiatives and companies, such as *Interpret Solutions*, joined the group of those who implemented the system. Later, some changes were introduced thanks to the use of *smartphones*. For instance, it is important to mention the application *Voze*, developed by *Migralingua* (Lázaro Gutiérrez 2012).



App *VOZE*
(Picture courtesy of *Voze* for the author)

As Adriana Jaime indicates, for the development of this service, it has been indispensable to determine the profile of the target population. It is devoted to foreign tourists in Spain who speak one of the languages available in the app:

> Para el desarrollo del servicio, ha sido imprescindible determinar los perfiles de la población destinataria. Se dirige a los turistas extranjeros en España que hablan uno de los idiomas disponibles en la aplicación […] También está dirigida a los hispanohablantes que están en un país no hispanohablante […] Asimismo, la aplicación de interpretación telefónica está pensada para los empresarios que hablan español y que tienen negocios internacionales […] El equipo […] estaba compuesto por dos técnicos especializados en el desarrollo de aplicaciones informáticas y de dos traductores profesionales (*Voze* 2017: online).

2.3. Advantages and disadvantages

The most important advantage of this system is that clients can receive the interpreters´ language help from any geographical location, with no need for all the parties in the conversation to be physically present. This is particularly useful for companies, as they can reduce travel expenses while obtaining the services even faster. Also, for the interpreters, as they can offer their assistance worldwide and save their time (not only in terms of travelling, also because they can work for several clients in the same day), and also for users. Users overall benefit from a quicker service, especially in cases where every minute

counts. Mainly in emergencies, both in hospitals and road assistance settings, or any other situation that cannot be predicted in advance.

On the other hand, the interpreter, especially in the case of telephone interpretation is out of context when answering the phone and he/she must use the customer´s vocal information (including the tone, doubts, slurred speech, good or bad diction, inconsistencies in the message, etc. to better understand it):

> En la interpretación remota, el/la intérprete no puede ver a los/as interlocutores/as ni lo que sucede en el lugar del encuentro (interpretación telefónica) o, incluso disponiendo de imágenes (interpretación por videoconferencias), estas pueden llegarle de manera limitada, abarcando a uno/a solo/a de los/as participantes. Para compensar esta carencia de cuñas visuales, será fundamental servirse de la información transmitida a través de la voz y la prosodia (entonación, tono, pausas, etc.) (SOS-VICs: 2014).

Remote interpretation is preferred in some contexts, but there was also a strong opposition to its practice, especially when it became more frequent within professional settings. Some researchers are against this type of work as they think that interpreters suffer more stress during remote interpretation, given the fact that they cannot directly communicate with the speakers:

> Sin embargo, hay que destacar el hecho de que desde que la interpretación remota empezó a proponerse y utilizarse muchos profesionales de la interpretación mostraron una actitud no siempre positiva hacia esta modalidad […]. Sus reticencias al respecto se deben a diversos motivos […]: el distanciamiento físico de la ubicación en que transcurre la reunión o conferencia y la falta de comunicación directa con los oradores y los demás intervinientes que conlleva, y que, en opinión de los intérpretes, puede dar lugar a sensaciones de alienación o alejamiento del acto comunicativo (Furtado 2014: online).

2.4. Experiences and projects

As previously mentioned, in the last decades, several important studies have been conducted for analyzing remote interpretation. The research has been supported by some of the most prestigious international institutions where interpretation occurs daily, such as the NU, EU, EC, AIIC together with some higher education centres. Of special interest is the joint project of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with the *École de Traduction et d'Interpretation* (that started in April 1999), called "Assessment of human factors and performance parameters" (Moser-Mercer 2003: online); the *3rd Remote Interpretation Test* (December 2005) or AVIDICUS 1, 2 y 3 (2008-11), carried out by the University of Surrey (UK) and the European Commission's Directorate-General Justice (Braun 2012). Likewise, as a part of the EC Strategy

on Criminal Justice, together with the University of Surrey, we can find the IVY (*Interpreting in Virtual Reality*) project and EVIVA (*Evaluating the Use of Virtual Learning Environments in the Education of Interpreters and their Clients*). Also worthy of note is *SHIFT in Orality* project, developed by several European universities and supported by the Erasmus+ programme of the EU. All these works analyze the development of this technique and the true implementation of communication with and for interpreters using technological devices.

> Estos proyectos tenían como objetivo general, precisamente, el estudio y comparación de las modalidades de interpretación in situ e interpretación remota, dado que los intérpretes se quejaban de la existencia de un aumento en la presión psicológica que sufren, así como de un mayor estrés, fatiga, dolores de cabeza, irritabilidad, estrés y otras molestias y dolencias que bien podrían comprometer la calidad de su trabajo, al tiempo que podrían tener serias consecuencias sobre su propia salud en el largo plazo (Furtado 2014: online).

In order to complete this section, we can also mention some of the professional experiments in remote interpretation that companies are funding. For instance, what has come to be called "simultaneous telephone interpretation", proposed by the London-based company *Global Lingo*. This corporate group indicates that for participants to listen to the selected language, it is sufficient to install a soundproof booth for the interpreters and a telephony infrastructure, no need to switch the line.

> …Afirma Global Lingo que han sabido combinar sus competencias tecnológicas con su experiencia en la interpretación en esta nueva solución: la interpretación telefónica simultánea. El servicio se utilizó por primera vez el mes pasado, el 28 de noviembre, y permitió –según la empresa– una comunicación mucho más fluida (de Rioja, 2017: online).

3. University classrooms adaptation due to a changing discipline

Universities have installed language labs and more or less state-of-the-art soundproof booths for teaching consecutive and simultaneous interpretation, that is, conference interpretation, so far. All centres where simultaneous interpretation is taught in Spain have installed consoles (from different companies and with different features) inside their booths, except the University of Alicante and the University of Córdoba, where students can find a software that can be considered as a console simulator[1].

1. These universities use a software that allows students to work inside the booth with computers. It was developed by the University of Alicante in 2005 (Ruiz Mezcua 2010:

With the arrival of new technologies in this professional interpretation scenario, higher education institutions are expected to update their facilities and training methods. This will be a breeding ground to promote a space for reflection and standardization:

> Les nouvelles technologies constituent un élément incontournable du paysage professionnel sous la forme de vidéo-conférences et de télé-interprétation (interprétation à distance). Il importe de proposer aux étudiants une expérience directe de ces conditions et d'aménager au sein de la formation un espace de réflexion à leur sujet (Donovan 2010: online).

However, in most cases, remote interpretation is a "pending subject", at least generally in the degrees of Translation and Interpretation (where the amount of credits is low when compared to Translation). There are scarcely any learning-teaching tools specifically designed to train interpreters and those used in professional markets are not always available for the students.

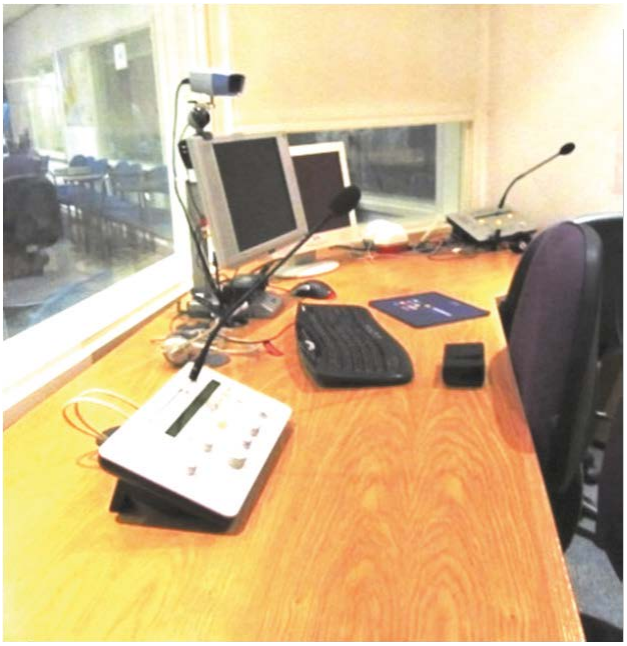
Curiously, there are some exceptions. Since the 1950s, some authors report the use of telephones for teaching telephone interpretation, for example, in 1949 in the University of Mainz in Germersheim, Germany (Torres Díaz 2014: 402).

The fact is that today we are more than familiar with the basic tools used for remote interpretation: computers that support video-conferencing (using different free or under payment software, like *Skype*, *Adobe*, etc.) and mobile phones (smartphones). Telephones have greatly evolved in recent years, as they have become an essential device that any adult carries in his/her pocket and uses with any purpose, both working and having fun. For telephone interpretation, a hands-free terminal with ear-phones is required, or a headset with independent sound production unit, device that facilitates three-way conversations.

Many universities, particularly those where master degrees, expert courses or special workshops can be studied, have already installed a system to use video-conferencing. This way, they can connect teaching staff from different

285) in response to the growing number of students taking interpretation lessons. It is a pioneer equipment designed to convert any computer room into a booth room, and there is no need to install any especial hardware for it to function (Ruiz Mezcua 2010: 234-240; Ruiz Mezcua 2012: 320-24). The system is compatible with true interpretation consoles. Nevertheless, the use of these is required when training professional interpreters. It is different when the subject is mandatory and all students must enroll it. Maybe for this reason, the University of Alicante has recently uninstalled the software (2018) and acquired a new system provided by *Televic*. At the University of Cordoba it is still in use.

universities, they can promote remote meetings, give international lectures or remotely participate in PhDs, etc. For instance, the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the University of Córdoba has organized video-conference rooms for doctoral Thesis and Final master defenses since 2013. In the same sense, the UML in London has installed some cameras (on their computers) inside the booths for video-conferencing. Every semester a multilingual debate is organized for the students to improve their remote conference interpretation skills. This activity is performed and transmitted via live stream for those willing to follow it from abroad.



Interior of a booth in the UML university
(own authorship image, 2012)

The University of Geneva is one of the first in training interpreters in the world and it has also installed some tools for teaching remote interpretation : "Our booths are all equipped with computers and screens, speakers are either presenting live or on screen, tablets thus represent additional visual input that is not synchronized with the main input" (Moser-Mercer 2015), to mention some of the most prestigious. Besides, the Master in Specialized Translation

and Interpretation in Porto (Portugal) includes, within its syllabus, a subject called "Remote and Teleconference interpretation" in the *Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração de Oporto* (ISCAP). From its creation there has been a special interest in analyzing the working conditions and performance of interpreters *in situ* and in remote settings. This is evidenced, for example, by the presentation of a PhD research carried out by Dr. Furtado, which has been quoted in the paper (2014).

The use of this kind of device is very positive, but it requires a great investment by the institutions. Moreover, the presence of trained IT staff who can arrange the virtual meetings and solve any unexpected technical problems is crucial. Some teachers, particularly of degree level, find it difficult to prepare interpretation exercises using video-conferencing due to the large amount of students in class. These types of activities should be performed in small groups. For this reason, many of them teach their lessons according to traditional and on-site methods.

Nevertheless, most universities and higher education centres use e-learning resources and virtual systems to teach interpretation (even if they are used just as a complementary tool), for instance, virtual rooms or virtual institutes, web platforms (*Moodle* or similar), programs like *Skype*…

> The Virtual institute is a collaborative learning platform that promotes self-regulated learning. The interface allows trainees to have their interpreting performances critiqued by teachers, tutors and peers through uploading their performance files via a web-based dual-track recording functionality (Moser-Mercer 2015).

And in the case of telephone interpretation, personal as well as professional mobile phones can be used. Sometimes, there is an open fixed land-line in the main office or the Faculty administration (which is better than private phones for the activity). By using these devices the exercise can be granted a greater realism, with the aim of replicating true situations where the speaker is not present and the interpreter cannot base his/her oral translation on any visual information.

On the other hand, there are some other initiatives to modernize interpretation training, like the creation of repositories of speeches or specific software. In this sense, *Interpretations* [P] (1999) is noteworthy. It was co-financed by the EC and was developed by Annalisa Sandrelli and Jim Hawkins (University of Hull, UK) as part of the EC program *Marie Curie Training and Mobility of Researchers*. This prototype software was designed to solve early stage problems that students have to deal with (Sandrelli 2005: 5). The first project was created in 1995. It was called "Interpr-It" and its aim was to transpose ELAO methods

to liaison interpretation training (Sandrelli 2003: 99). Since 2015, it was used together with another software called *Black Box*. The latter is similar to the programs used for language labs (i.e. *Optimas*). It consists of a set of computers connected to a local area network (LAN) (Sandrelli 2003: 99).

We can also mention ORCIT, the *Speechpool* (created by Sophie Llewellyn Smith and Matt Clarke) or NNI, *National Network for Interpreting* (a project run by several UK Universities); the surge of web pages designed for specific training of conference interpreting and community interpretation, for example, the University of Vigo (*Linkinterpreting*), the Universisity of Vic (*Speak out for Support* or *SOSVics)*, the University Pablo de Olavide in Seville (*Interpretaweb*) or the University of Córdoba (with 3 different webs: *Breaking the ICE in Interpretation*, *INAGR*, specialized in agro-food sectors and lastly, the oldest, created in 2012, *MAICS: Audiovisial Material for conference and community interpretation)*.

Likewise, there are some apps for mobile phones like *Cleopatra,* the first one designed to automatize interpretation symbols for consecutive note-taking (*ConTilde* 2018), despite not being created for remote interpretation. Additionally, *Interpreters´ Help*, was conceived to manage interpretation work. It was launched for professionals so that they can share their glossaries, gather terminology, check some dictionaries and access to a common network for interpreters.

In this professional market, some platforms have also been implemented, also for remote interpretation, for instance, *Interprefy*. It is a tool that enables simultaneous video-conferencing with no need for extra devices nor hardware, because the audience can use their mobile phone (smartphones) as a receptor:

> Interprefy provides a premium cloud-based platform for video remote interpreting of conferences, workshops and similar events. Interprefy revolutionizes simultaneous interpreting by using standard IT equipment instead of specialized hardware. Interpreters work remotely from laptops with stable, high-quality sound and video from the event. The audience on site hear their crystal clear voices through smartphones. Participants use their smartphones, tablets and/or laptops, and connect via Wi-Fi or mobile data networks to professional interpreters working remotely. Traditional headsets with standard IR/ radio transmitters can also be used (*Interprefy* 2018).

These types of tools are known as CAIT (Computer Assisted Interpreter Training):

> CAIT (Computer Assisted Interpreter Training) is a relatively new field of Interpreting Studies which began to develop in the mid-1990s. The impetus behind CAIT is an attempt to exploit the multimedia capabilities of Information

> and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance the teaching and learning of interpreting in various ways (Sandrelli & de Manuel 2014: 269).

Even if people are familiar with these types of devices (and normally they are easy to use), remote interpreting technique requires a certain degree of preparation (as we have mentioned before). Interpreters must get used to working with nonverbal communication, using the participants' voices and applying remote interpreting protocols, being aware of their role at any time and trying not to exceed the limits of their performance under any circumstances. This means that interpreters must receive detailed training, for instance, at the very least, on how to manage the stress or the turns of the dialogue, to give the floor, to ask some questions that allow him/her to obtain the information they cannot see, to ask for concrete repetitions when necessary, etc.

4. Conclusions

In a famous speech delivered in 1946, when Emily Greene Balch won the Nobel Prize, she stated that: "Technology gives us the facilities that lessen the barriers of time and distance – the telegraph and cable, the telephone, radio, and the rest. But technology is a tool, not a virtue" (Balch 1946). Technology helps the people, but it is not a virtue. Thus, today, because of this technology, distance can be an advantage, a way of approaching different worlds and cultures. In the case of interpretation, technology has even promoted new techniques. It has led to a state-of-the-art development of the profession, simply using some easy and frequent tools for communicating. These devices allow intercultural dialogue even when the callers do not share the same physical space, but can get in contact through an interpreter faster than ever when it is required.

Everyone knows that interpretation is a complex discipline, hard to be performed and vocational, regardless of the technique or tools used for it. Technological devices have greatly evolved in the last decades. However, some more improvements must be achieved when it comes to quality and working conditions. That was the reason for some professionals to complain, especially in the first stages of remote interpreting professional implementation. It has always happened, from the surge of simultaneous interpretation, thanks to the booths (first used in the ILO, then in Nuremberg, where the interpreters called them an "aquarium", with no soundproofing), dual telephones, portable radio equipment, infrared devices, apps, tablets… to the most rudimentary notebook where interpreters take notes to recall the original speech that they are about to translate.

On the other hand, higher education centres must install these technologies trying to follow the rhythm of professional interpretation markets for students, everyday more interconnected. Interpreters are now able to work from their homes (something that was previously unthinkable) as long as they have suitably appropriate equipment.

Precisely, one of the most important disadvantages attributed to remote interpreting is the good functioning of these tools. It is not a particular inconvenience of this technique, there are some others that rely on equipment, such as simultaneous interpretation. Nevertheless, it has been proved that remote interpretation is a valid way of interpreting that saves time and money in some settings. Obviously, any professional service must be well regulated and must comply with quality standards for all the participants: clients, customers and interpreters. Maybe in this sense, simultaneous interpretation still is one step ahead.

In any case, more studies and research are needed to establish the optimal parameters and to solve any type of problems derived from the use of technologies in RI for interpreters.

Without a doubt, for a quality interpretation we need the appropriate devices, but, overall, we need to hire a competent interpreter, well trained in languages, cultures and tools, a person who can fluently communicate in the context she/he is working, and someone passionate for the profession.

Interpretation technology must be an ally to professionals. It should be at their disposal to facilitate their job, to reduce their efforts and to help in obtaining the best from the people who are using them. This is why remote interpreting poses a challenge today: a technological, professional and teaching challenge, but it is also a reality that both professionals and teachers might dare to explore.

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AURORA RUIZ MEZCUA studied Translation and Interpreting at the University of Málaga (Spain), where she completed her Ph.D. in Specialized Translation and Interpreting Studies with a dissertation called *Simultaneous Interpreting Equipment and its Didactic Implications*. This was the first step to the publication of most of her books, like *Approaches to Telephone Interpretation. Research, innovation, Teaching and Transference* and *Apuntes sobre la interpretación simultánea: nacimiento y primeros pasos,* or her main papers, such as "Interpretación y Formación para los Centros Sanitarios Españoles", "La enseñanza de la interpretación social en el contexto biosanitario: la preparación psicológica del intérprete médico" or "Aplicación práctica de la interpretación judicial a las aulas universitarias". She taught Spanish in York College (UK) for a school-year. She has also worked as a translator for *Hermes Traducciones y Servicios Linguísticos* and as a freelance translator and interpreter for two years. Since 2008/09 she has been working as a lecturer at Córdoba University (Spain), where she now teaches Simultaneous and Consecutive Interpretation French-Spanish, English-Spanish. She also teaches in the Master degree at the same university and ISTRAD (Seville, Spain). Dr. Ruiz's main lines of research are Conference Interpreting, Community Interpreting and the impact of IT in the teaching and training of interpretation.

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