International Conference

**European Conference of Speech-to-Text Interpreters (ECOS) Vienna 2022: PostPandemicPerspectives**

# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

# European Conference of Speech-to-Text Interpreters Vienna 2022: PostPandemicPerspectives

The **Centre for Translation Studies at the University of Vienna** in cooperation with the **Board of ÖSDV – Austrian Association of Speech-to-text Interpreters** is delighted to welcome you to the *European Conference of Speech-to-Text Interpreters (ECOS)* on *PostPandemicPerspectives* in Vienna, Austria from 26 to 28 August 2022.

The aim of the conference is to bring together researchers, practitioners, language service providers and other stakeholders within the field of speech-to-text interpreting (STTI). At the ECOS Vienna 2022, we focus on the working conditions and how they have changed because of mainly working online due to the pandemic: what are best practises within the community for the different techniques and how to charge for remote services? Have user requirements and preferences changed as well and are there new scientific studies on that matter? And, what about interlingual STTI and further training possibilities (intra- and interlingual STTI) once you completed your formal education – so, how to stay relevant to new skills and technology?

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**Agnes Tauscher**, ÖSDV – Austrian Association of Speech-to-text Interpreters, University of Innsbruck

**Maria Bernadette Zwischenberger**, University of Vienna

# Key notes

## List of key notes

**STTI in dialogic settings: Managing the communication in face-to-face and remote-interpreted encounters**

Ursula Stachl-Peier and Ulf Norberg



**STTI quality: A practitioner's perspective into what's possible in a real-life setting.**

Nancy Guevara

# STTI in dialogic settings: Managing the communication in face-to-face and remote-interpreted encounters

## Ursula Stachl-Peier

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There now exists a substantial body of research into live subtitling and also speech-to-text (STT) interpreting in monologic settings (lectures) is increasingly being investigated. Less attention has been paid to STT interpreting in dialogic settings and to interpreters' (self-perceived) role in interactions. Based on recorded extracts we explore how users and STT interpreters interact in face-to-face and remote-interpreted encounters. Drawing on theoretical concepts employed for the study of interpreter-mediated settings involving spoken languages, such as triad, role/role perceptions and conversation management, we examine how the presence, or absence, of the STT interpreter in the 'shared communicative radius' (WADENSJÖ 2001:83) affects the interpreter's ability to coordinate the interaction. We will also ask what theoretical frameworks could be used to integrate the role of the screen (used for the display of the interpreted text) into our investigations of the communication process.

## Keywords

Speech-to-text interpreting (STTI) in PSI settings | remote STTI vs. on-site STTI | users' views on remote STTI | STT interpreters' views on remote STTI

## References

WADENSJÖ, Cecilia. 2001. Interpreting in Crisis: The interpreter's position in therapeutic encounters. In: Mason, I. (ed.) *Triadic Exchanges. Studies in dialogue interpreting*, Manchester: St. Jerome, 71–85.

## Bio

Ursula Stachl-Peier holds a PhD in Translation Studies from the University of Graz. She has taught translation and interpreting at the School of Translation Studies at Graz University and at Stockholm University and supervised research in Translation Studies at MA level. Her research

interests include translation and interpreting education and curriculum design, Public Service Interpreting, speech-to-text interpreting, genre and discourse analysis, and ethnology.

Ulf Norberg holds a PhD in German linguistics from Uppsala University, Sweden. He now lectures in translation theory and practice at the Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies, Stockholm University. He has been involved in research into speech-to-text interpreting since 2011, primarily in cooperation with Ursula Stachl-Peier. His publications consider, e.g., quality issues and the impact of prosodic features of speech on the resulting STTI text. During last years, he has been working on a booklength study of speech-to-text interpreting in research and practice together with some colleages; it will soon be published in Swedish. His current research interests into speech-to-text interpreting comprise relay interpreting and abbreviation use.

# STTI quality: A practitioner's perspective into what's possible in a real-life setting.

## Nancy Guevara

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Speech-to-Text Interpreting is rapidly becoming a well-established area of professional practice, which has attracted a lot of interest from academia, industry, and language professionals. One of the main elements concerning the delivery of speech-to-text interpreting services is quality. This crucial element has been the central topic of current research and discussion amongst academia, service providers and practitioners. Recent studies suggest that different levels of quality can be achieved depending on the mode of delivery used (fully interlingual STTI, with the use of interpreters in the process, or variations using machine intervention). Further to the outcome of these studies, there are practical elements that practitioners encounter in real-life settings, which can affect the quality of the final output, some more controllable and others. These elements include things such as the captioning platform used, the amount and quality of preparation material provided, the client's requirements and expectations, technological barriers, software and hardware used, coping strategies and skills developed by the speech-to-text interpreter.

In this presentation, I will share my experience providing remote intralingual and interlingual speech-to-text interpreting, focusing on my journey of discovery in terms of quality, what I have found possible (or not), how my strategies and workstation have evolved in my quest to provide a high-quality product, ideas to maximise output quality and other insights into the topic from a professional practice perspective.

I would like to show a short, pre-recorded collection of interviews with academics and colleagues to bring other perspectives and ideas into my presentation and provide further insights into STTI quality in practical terms.

## Keywords

STTI quality | STTI professional practice | STTI practical insights

## References

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ALONSO-BACIGALUPE, Luis & ROMERO-FRESCO, Pablo. Forthcoming. Speech-To-Text-Interpreting: The crossroads between translation, interpreting and accessibility. Universal access in the Information Society.

## Bio

Nancy Guevara is a speech-to-text interpreter based in Australia, with a background in respeaking, translation and subtitling. Having completed specialised training with the University of Vigo, Spain, in 2019, she is one of the world's first qualified interlingual speech-to-text interpreters (English<>Spanish). She started her STTI journey in 2017, when she completed an intralingual respeaking (English) in-house training program at Macquarie University in Sydney, and subsequently worked as an intralingual respeaker and subtitler for the same university. Nancy currently works as a freelancer for clients located in the US, Latin America, Europe, and Australia, and has accumulated valuable experience providing remote speech-to-text interpreting services for global high profile clients and public institutions.

# Presentations

## List of presentations

**Captioning and speech to text interpreting for the undeclared audience – some knowns and unknowns**
Alina Secară

**This Is How We Write It – Best Practices in STTI or How Standards Can Help Us Deliver Better Value to Our Users**
Anja Rau

**Interpreting into the Future – Digitality of Interpreter Education and Work – The Project in Finland: How to stay relevant to new skills and technology?**
Ulla Niittyinperä

**Accessibility through translation. A study on the reception of speech-to-text interpreting in Austria**
Markus Firnkranz

**Hear the voice of the users. User's perspective as the "quality standard" for speech-to-text interpreting (STTI)**
Antje Baukhage and Gudrun Brendel

**Word frequency in Czech live texts**
Tomáš Portych

**Interlingual Live Subtitles: Direct vs. Relay-Based (Based on Theodoros Sakalidis' Master's Thesis with the same title)**
Theodoros Sakalidis

**Challenges of STTI for Accessibility in Concerts and the Theatre**
Emmanouela Patiniotaki

**France: A speech-to-text interpreting pandemic**
Florie Lefebvre

**STTInterpreting on a global level**
Daniela Eichmeyer-Hell

# Captioning and speech to text interpreting for the undeclared audience – some knowns and unknowns

## Alina Secară

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There is wide agreement in the broadcasting world that captioning, traditionally an access service created primarily for audiences with hearing loss, is consumed by a much wider audience than that for which the service is originally intended for. Captioning can be prepared in advance (in such cases the term pre-prepared intralingual subtitling is also used), delivered live (usually using speech recognition technology in a process called respeaking when used in broadcasting, or speech to text interpreting particularly in live face-to-face settings) or it can be hybrid, prepared in advance and synchronised live (frequently in theatre settings). A study commissioned by the British broadcast regulator OFCOM (2006), revealed that approximately 80% of viewers who accessed captions from Ofcom regulated broadcasters, did so for reasons other than hearing loss or accessibility. In the commercial world, studies showed that the presence of captions on videos enhance processes such as search engine optimisation and lead to increased access times. Providing captions for Discovery YouTube videos led to 13.48% more views in the first two weeks and 7.32% more lifetime views, compared to videos without captions (3PLAY MEDIA, 2015). In the arts world, theatre captions were shown to be used and enjoyed by a wide range of members of the audience (SECARĂ & ALLUM, 2010). Moreover, theatre captions are progressively being creatively integrated in plays, as an artistic device which supports and enhances them, rather than as a mere access service built on top of an existing performance (SECARĂ & PEREZ, forthcoming). This is part of a movement called integrated access (ROMERO-FRESCO, 2019) which refers to techniques and strategies used to embed access provision in the creative process, from the beginning. This is in opposition with the traditional methods where access is not woven into the fabric of a production but starts at the end of the creative process. This presentation will discuss if and how captioning, irrespective of methods or settings in which is used, can benefit people outside the classic accessibility context. To do this, examples from two separate spheres will be discussed: first, two theatre captioning projects the presenter took part in as an accredited Stagetext theatre captioner working with a British theatre; secondly, an educational project where the presence of live captions produced via speech recognition went beyond the provision of access for one deaf student to benefit a much wider variety of students. This session will start a dialogue with the conference audience about relevant and possible strategies for enhancing the visibility of captioning, in its many forms and contexts, and for as wide an audience as possible.

## Key words

users of access services | theatre captioning | speech to text interpreting

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## Bio

Dr Alina Secară is a Senior Scientist at the Centre for Translation Studies, University of Vienna, where she investigates accessibility practices and technologies, and teaches subtitling, captioning and multimedia localization processes and technologies. She is also a freelance UK Stagetext accredited theatre captioner and worked with theatres across the UK to create captions for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. She co-managed the University of Leeds contribution to the EU-funded DigiLing Project (2016–2019) to create multilingual, multimedia e-learning resources for digital linguists. For further details: https://tinyurl.com/368bdt33

# This Is How We Write It – Best Practices in STTI or How Standards Can Help Us Deliver Better Value to Our Users

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Throughout the German-speaking STTI communities of practice, there are little or no standards for text presentation beyond basic rules of spelling and punctuation. The resulting variety and ambiguity negatively impacts not only our own work routines, but also the level of readability of our text product, in effect negatively impacting our clients (or users). Over the course of several workshops, the Quality in STTI working group (AG Qualität) at the German Professional Association of STT-Interpreters (Berufsverband der Schriftdolmetscher*innen Deutschlands – BSD) developed a set of STTI standards that were launched in late 2021. We would like to take an ECOS workshop as an opportunity to put our standards up for discussion among a wider, international group of colleagues.

STTI is both a young and a small profession in German speaking countries. Communities of practice first formed around the few existing centers of training and certification as well as in urban hubs, with smaller clusters or even just teams or two or three sprinkled in between. STT-Interpreters adopted the styles of interpretation and target text delivery from their trainers and evolved them in their own micro-communities, resulting in at times very distinct cultures.

A lack of supra-regional standards may not have been problematic for slow-growing teams working on-site with a set of regular clients. However, STT-Interpreter who do a lot of online work noticed early on that in a profession like ours, variety comes at a cost: We had to start every assignment by negotiating a common ground for everything beyond spelling and grammar – how to mark a new speaker, how do indicate gaps in the target text, how to highlight ambiguities and so on – and by editing our short codes and macros accordingly.

With the rise of online assignments during the pandemic, this turned from a minor inconvenience to a considerable nuisance; so much so, that some practitioners started wondering what things look like on the other side. After all, if even I don't know if my partner uses "…" to indicate a gap or an ellipsis or a speech pause – how should my user? And when users encounter errors and inconsistencies in the text product, can we simply assume that their brains will correct for such deviations from written text standards?

Faced with a pronounced lack of user research in our profession, the BSD AG Qualität conducted some guerilla field research and self-observation to conclude that, indeed, deviations from expected patterns increase the cognitive load of the user and detract from the mental capacities needed to engage with the content of a communicative situation rather than with its presentation. For example, when an unfamiliar marker for ambiguity [such as "(?)"] appears in the live text, this may have the same effect on the user as low-quality audio has on the interpreter.

Global standards may mitigate this issue. By subscribing to such standards, interpreters can cooperate with their colleagues more seamlessly. More importantly, users may learn one set of

standards, and, by booking subscribing STT-Interpreters, be sure they will receive a consistent product without confusing mark-up that distracts from the content.

At ECOS 2022, the BSD Working Group on Quality in STTI invites practitioners from all participating countries to a discussion of the merits of standardization in STTI and the concrete remit and scope of such standards. We will kick off the hour with a brief presentation of the BSD Standards Document and then open the floor to feedback, best practice examples and discussion.

## Keywords

quality | best practice | standards | target text | readability

## References

Berufsverband der Schriftdolmetscher*innen Deutschlands (BSD). 2022. Referate. https://bsd-ev.org/ueber-uns/referate/ (accessed: 30/07/2022).

## Bio

Anja Rau, a certified STTInterpreter, studied English, German Languages, and Literature at Mainz University (GER), Southampton (UK) and Middlebury (VT/USA). Her PhD on the influence of new media on our concept of *literature* was completed in 2000. She has been a practicing freelance STTInterpreter working betweeen English <> German (intra-and interlingual) since 2014. Anja is based in Frankfurt (GER) but works online and on site in different locations covering a wide range of settings. Additionally, she acts as an Organizing and Coordinating Interpreter and is lecturing courses, e.g. *DSB Schriftdolmetscher-Ausbildung* or *Englisch für Schwerhörige*. Anja is a member of the Advisory Board of Communication aids, BSD (Berufsverband der Schriftdolmetscher*innen Deutschlands), and ÖSDV (Österreichischer SchriftdolmetscherInnen-Verband). She serves on the board of BSD and is also active as the 2$^{nd}$ chair of BSD Südwestdeutschland. She spends most of her free time ordering, testing, and returning keyboards which are never fast or quiet enough.

# Interpreting into the Future – Digitality of Interpreter Education and Work – The Project in Finland: How to stay relevant to new skills and technology?

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The **Interpreting into the Future-project** has just started, and it is led by Diaconia University of Applied Sciences (Diak), and it partners with the interest organisations of interpreters and of clients, the businesses providing interpreting services in Helsinki-Uusimaa Region.

In ECOS2022 we would like to present results about the information we have gathered in Finland about STTI training, future learning environment and interpreting during first six months period of the project (01.01.–30.06.2022). Project continues until 31.08.2023.

The main objectives for the project are:

(1) The aim is to bring the digital learning environments of interpreting in sign language and alternative and augmentative communication (ACC) up to date to meet the development needs of remote teaching caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Because of the use of dual and simultaneous audio and visual feeds, the remote teaching in the field of interpretation presents more challenges than in other fields.

(2) Remote interpreting is trending due to the coronavirus pandemic, thus second aim is to develop further the functioning practices of the remote interpreting. The remote interpreting promotes the social inclusion of clients and the equality for people with disabilities.

(3) The third aim of the project is also to deepen the senior lecturers' competencies in remote teaching and remote interpreting.

(4) The fourth aim is to enhance the remote interpreting competence of the sign language, STTI and AAC interpreters that work in Helsinki-Uusimaa Region.

The project surveys which ones of the due to the pandemic quickly introduced digital learning environment solutions for interpreting have proven to be functional in the everyday use of higher education institutes. During the project, educational material is produced to support the remote teaching of sign language, STTI and AAC. The project develops and surveys similarly the solutions of remote interpreting, compiles guidelines of implementing the remote interpreting and produces educational material on the subject.

As results, the project produces:

(1) an up-to-date **digital learning environment** in the field of interpretation. The learning environment includes an audio-visual language lab programme as well as instructions for carrying out remote simulations and partly remote work placements.

(2) **guidelines** to implement remote interpreting

(3) **educational material** for the remote teaching of interpreting sign language and ACC and best

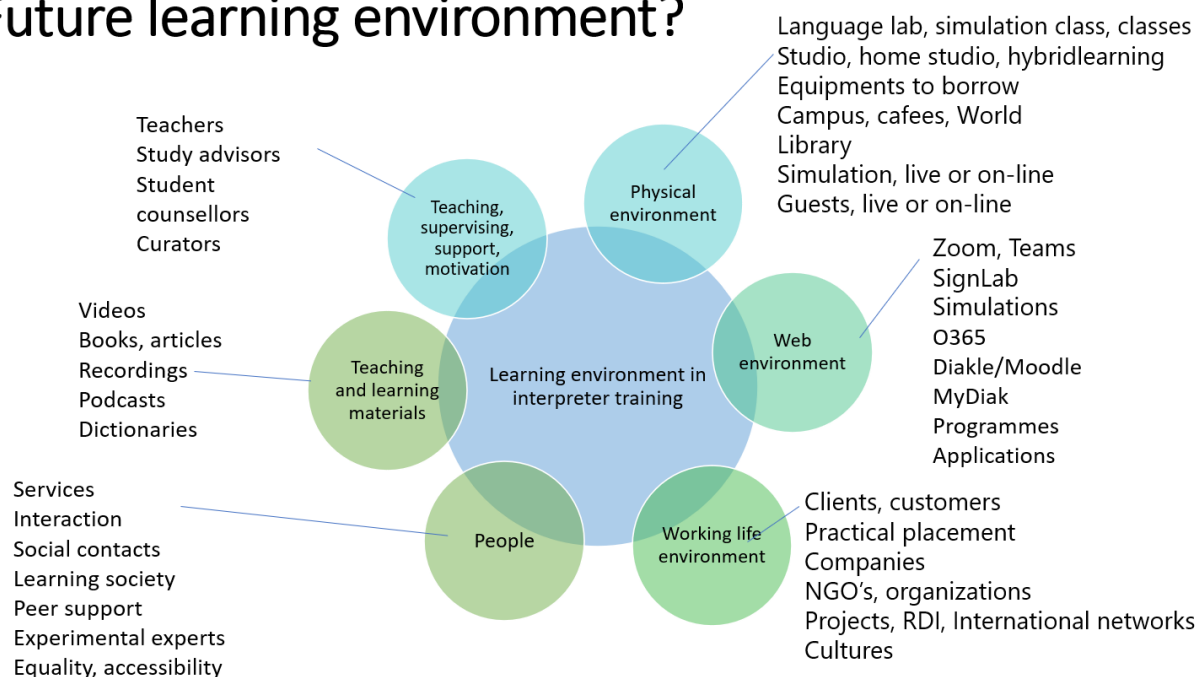practices to teach different STTI techniques to STTI's

(4) a training course of remote interpreting for beginners and advanced interpreters

In the working life, the competence in the remote interpreting promotes the employment of interpreters. Also, the consumers have the option for quality remote services. The project is important to the competence and competitiveness in the field of interpretation both within the public and the private sector.

**The digital learning environment**

The digital learning environment in the field of interpretation is complex and has changed during COVID-19 pandemic partly to on-line.

## Future learning environment?

Teachers
Study advisors
Student counsellors
Curators

Teaching, supervising, support, motivation

Physical environment

Language lab, simulation class, classes
Studio, home studio, hybridlearning
Equipments to borrow
Campus, cafees, World
Library
Simulation, live or on-line
Guests, live or on-line

Videos
Books, articles
Recordings
Podcasts
Dictionaries

Teaching and learning materials

Learning environment in interpreter training

Web environment

Zoom, Teams
SignLab
Simulations
O365
Diakle/Moodle
MyDiak
Programmes
Applications

Services
Interaction
Social contacts
Learning society
Peer support
Experimental experts
Equality, accessibility

People

Working life environment

Clients, customers
Practical placement
Companies
NGO's, organizations
Projects, RDI, International networks
Cultures

## Keywords

speech-to-text-interpreting | digital | learning environment | remote teaching | remote interpreting | digital learning

## References

NIITTYINPERÄ, Ulla. 2022. *Interpreting into the Future – Digitality of Interpreter Education and Work*. Helsinki: Diacony University of Applied Sciences.

## Bio

Ulla Niittyinperä is a senior lecturer at Diaconia University of applied Sciences (Diak) in Finland. She is a qualified Finnish sign language interpreter, speech-to-text interpreter, interpreter for the deafened and deafblind persons and AAC interpreter (Augmentative and Alternative Communication). She has over 20 years of experience in teaching interpreter students, developing curriculums and supervising students' final theses. She has been cooperating with international

partners, trainers, and service customers. She has worked in development projects in different contexts, e.g. in the field of interpreting and education, simulation pedagogy, digital language lab developing, mobile and remote interpreting, global sustainable development and curriculum development in higher education. She has a MA in General Linguistics, and her interests are on developing training especially in remote interpreting, distance learning, multidiscipline simulations, and communication programmes with AAC methods.

# Accessibility through translation. A study on the reception of speech-to-text interpreting in Austria

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Speech-to-text interpreting as a form of accessible translation has become more relevant in translation studies and education in recent years. The profession has changed and evolved in Austria and the number of people with hearing disabilities in need of the service is rising. The focus of recent literature has been on working conditions of speech-to-text interpreters, techniques or training, but less so on the users of the service. How satisfied are users with speech-to-text interpreting, and more importantly, how aware are they that this service exists in Austria? In my thesis, I look at the user experience of speech-to-text interpreting in the form of two surveys. The first questionnaire was handed out to visitors of the IFO conference 2020 in Vienna. They were asked to answer questions based on their perception of the speech-to-text interpretation available on screens to everyone – regardless of their hearing status and use of the service. The main interest of this first survey was to find out more about the diverse target group of speech-to-text interpreting. It was assumed that hearing visitors would also make use of the service, for example when they couldn't understand a term clearly or as reference for personal notes. Additional questions asked about general awareness of speech-to-text interpreting and available services in Austria, for example in university lectures or live subtitling for TV.

The second survey will be sent out to the main target group of speech-to-text interpreting – people who are hard of hearing, deaf or deafened and use the services in Austria. It will be an online questionnaire sent out to users and user organisations using various platforms.

The results and analysis of the first survey will be presented.

## Keywords

speech-to-text interpreting | hard of hearing | accessible communication | audiovisual translation | live subtitling

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## Bio

Markus Firnkranz holds a BA in Transcultural Communication and is currently finishing his MA in Specialised Translation at the University of Vienna. During his study abroad in Belgium and Wales as part of the METS specialised translation program, he was able to gain experience in audiovisual translation. His interest in accessible communication also motivated him to learn Austrian Sign Language (ÖGS) and work as a freelance subtitler for German and Austrian TV. In his MA thesis, he focuses on speech-to-text interpreting in Austria and illustrates the user experience of speech-to-text interpreting services.

# Hear the voice of the users. User's perspective as the "quality standard" for speech-to-text interpreting (STTI)

## Antje Baukhage and Gudrun Brendel

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In Germany we have approximately 13 million moderately, severely hearing-impaired or profoundly deaf persons as by classification of WHO 4. They seem to be a big number of potential users for STTI. That´s why we want to put our focus on the user´s perspective.

This is why the "German association of the hard-of-hearing" (DSB) has established an own curriculum for vocational training of STTInterpreters based on the users' experiences and perspectives.

We understand "Schriftdolmetschen" (speech-to-text interpreting) as a mere translational process, using the term translation as an umbrella term for translation and interpreting.

Our main focus lays on the "quality" of STTI. Quality here means usability. It is not about 1:1 transcription. STTI (aka as captioning) is well-done if it hits the requirements of the particular user or user group – fulfilling the customer's expectations.

It is important to take into account the context where STTInterpreters work:

Professional environments, like

- business

- educational settings

- regulatory resp. official situations

- medical

- workplace

or in everyday life.

In the professional context we expect the STTInterpreters to know and master the topic in general, but also specially the technical terms.

Besides the professional skills the personal attitude is a relevant key factor: experience in dealing with hard of hearing people including a deep knowledge of the causes and consequences of not being able to hear properly. Non-hearing is more than the acoustic point of view, but it is about the real understanding/meaning of the spoken words.

We recognize that there are different understandings of "good quality" of interpreting from a STTInterpreter's and the user´s perspective. There are mis-fittings regarding the outcome of STTInterpreters compared to the expectations of the users. E.g. de-layed appearance of the live text or missing or incorrect information regarding dates and figures, missing meaning units, simplified language (especially in scientific and professional contexts). Do they overestimate their own abilities?

During the pandemic the online settings have increased. The use of new collaboration tools e.g. MS Teams, Zoom was a big challenge. STTInterpreters as well as the users have to tackle this challenge to make sure the translational process works out well.

In the meantime, ASR (automatic speech recognition) increased, and its use is from our point of view usable for basic, ordinary communication and not for sophisticated usages e.g. lectures at universities.

Our aim is to set the "quality standard" as users. They know what kind of translation fits to the user's needs.

Please answer upfront our survey in Whova, so, we will be able to show an over-view in our presentation, such as:

- How is the initial contact established between users and STTInterpreters?

- Are there any upfront agreements about HOW is to be "translated/interpreted" – shorten long sentences? Use of simplified language? Do typos really matter?

- How is the quality of translation evaluated? Is there any feedback?

## Keywords

hard of hearing | user´s perspective | usability | quality standard | participation

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## Bio

Gudrun Brendel studied Philosophy, Communication Science, and Business Economics at the University of Bamberg and completed a postgraduate course on Continuing Education Management at the Technical University Berlin. She is working as a freelancer in several projects in the fields of Business Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility and German-Polish Experiential Learning. In her youth, a creeping process of becoming hard of hearing set in, which went unnoticed for a long time. At the age of 16, she got her first hearing aids. Since 2007, Gudrun is a member of the Berlin Association of Hard of Hearing, and in 2009, she started working at Deutsche Schwerhörigenbund (DSB) e.V., department "training & further education". The same year, she also became a member of the DSB Advisory Board of Communication aids. She co-developed the DSB Training Course for STTInterpreters that started in 2012 and served from 2012–2019 as head of this Training Course.

Antje Baukhage, born hard of hearing on February 16th, 1968 in Lüdenscheid (GER) attended the elementary school for hard of hearing pupils in Düsseldorf (GER). She went to a secondary school for hard of hearing students in Dortmund (GER), and to a high school for "normal" students in Wuppertal (GER). After an apprenticeship as a paint laboratory technician in the chemical industry, she moved on to complete further education, becoming a state-certified business economist. As part of a quality team, she works as a quality specialist since 2008. She joined DSB as a member in 2014, and became vice-president in 2019. In 2015, Antje started planning and carrying out quality audits in the department "Training and further education" at the main office of her association in Berlin. She also serves as a representative for severely disabled employees since 2018.

Gudrun Brendel and Antje Baukhage work closely together on different projects, e.g. in the Advisory Board of Communication aids, which involves deep collaboration with STTInterpreters.

# Word frequency in Czech live texts

## Tomáš Portych

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Within our Czech organization CZSP ČUN we created word frequency list from archived live texts for deaf and hard of hearing between years 2019 and 2021. All texts were produced by typing with all ten fingers since other methods are not available in the Czech Republic. With over 15 million words it is the biggest word-frequency list of Czech live texts so far. The goal was to uncover differences in word-frequency between Czech spoken language, written language and live texts. This data allowed us to map how Czech STTIs shorten texts, if they really prefer shorter word alternatives and how effective most used Czech abbreviation systems really are. The automated system for calculating frequencies can be used for any language and can also easily compare percentual representation of words among languages. All of those findings will serve as study material for linguists. However, the most useful asset for all STTIs is the possibility to check effectivity of their abbreviations individually and search for most common typing errors.

## Keywords:

Czech Republic | word frequency | typing error | abbreviations | all ten fingers

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## Bio

Tomáš Portych is an active STTInterpreter working in the social services in the Czech Republic under the banner of the Czech Union of Deaf and Hard of Hearing since 2012. Nowadays he is a lecturer of typing with all ten fingers, advisor to beginners in STTI and tester for new technologies helping Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Tomáš is a freelancer within the field of subtitling, audiotranscriptions and a stenographer for the Senate of the Czech Republic. Current interests of research are effectivity of abbreviation systems and possible use of automated transcription within Czech social services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

# Interlingual Live Subtitles: Direct vs. Relay-Based (Based on Theodoros Sakalidis' Master's Thesis with the same title)

## Theodoros Sakalidis

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This Master's thesis aim was to compare the quality of direct and relay-based interlingual live subtitles. All were produced using respeaking: An intermediary oral interpretation served as the basis for the subsequent intralingual live subtitling for the relay-based method.

Two aspects of data were analysed for the comparative evaluation: On the one hand, a general error analysis was carried out using the NTR model. On the other hand, time lags were determined for individual parts and aspects of the event. The necessary data was collected at the ILSA conference – Interlingual Live Subtitling for Access – where both methods were applied.

Error analysis revealed distinctly better results for the relay-based method. On the NTR grading scale, this method scored 6 out of 10 possible points, whereas the direct one scored only 2 out of 10. The direct live interlingual subtitles' results indicate a significant influence of speech rate on the quality of the subtitles in this mode. In the two sections with the highest speech rate, the NTR score was 0 out of 10. In relay-based live subtitling, no strong correlation between speaker and subtitle quality was found, as both the best (score 8 out of 10) and worst (score 4 out of 10) results of this mode occurred while a single speaker was subtitled. A somewhat limited relationship between speech rate and NTR score was also found in this mode. Although the two sections with higher speech rates by the previously mentioned female speaker achieved worse NTR scores, a section with a similarly high speech rate and other speakers produced a better score. Overall, the results suggest greater resilience of the relay-based method to adversities such as high speech rates, high information density, prolonged performance, and speaker accent.

Time lag assessment revealed that the directly produced live subtitles had an average time lag of 7.6 seconds, compared to 8.7 seconds for the relay-based ones. Thus, the direct ones were, on average, 1.1 seconds faster. However, five of the nine relay-based sections for which time lags were determined had lower time lags than 4 of the 11 direct sections. It was also determined that subtitle production was 0.8 seconds faster in the relay-based mode (when considering the interpretation as the actual source text of the subtitling) than in the direct method. It was also found that live subtitles were produced more steadily with the relay-based method.

All results should be taken with a grain of salt. They do not allow general conclusions to be drawn about the effectiveness of the individual methods or the general performance of the individual actors due to methodological weaknesses and the small sample size. For example, there was hardly any preparation material. The conditions for the speech-to-text interpreters were worse than those of the simultaneous interpreters, as they sat in the front row of the audience. In contrast, the simultaneous interpreters worked in separate booths, so background noise might have significantly impacted performance.

Based on the results of this Master's thesis combined with personal experience in interlingual live

subtitling, the author concludes that subtitling without a simultaneous interpreter is feasible, especially if the topic, field, and/or speaker is familiar to the subtitler and the original text is not particularly challenging. On the other hand, working with a relay can be helpful if the subtitler is ill-prepared or conditions are particularly harsh. In such cases, dividing the efforts needed to produce high-quality subtitlers could be beneficial, and the increase in time lag is acceptable – especially if both parties are fast.

## Keywords

interlingual | relay-based | Speech-to-text Interpreting | live subtitling | interpreting | time lag | décalage | NTR Model | score | comparison

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## Bio

Theodoros Sakalidis studied Transcultural Communication, Sinology, and Translation and Interpreting at the University of Vienna (AUT). He graduated with a MA from the Centre for Translation Studies, University of Vienna (AUT) in 2020. He then moved on, in 2021, to complete training on STTI and is, since then, a freelance STTInterpreter (intra- and interlingual) working for corporations, NGOs and private customers. He is a translator and interpreter (ES, EN, El > GER) and also working as a live subtitler (intra- and interlingual) for TV1 and Audio2.

# Challenges of STTI for Accessibility in Concerts and the Theatre

## Emmanouela Patiniotaki

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Concerts and theatre plays, including contemporary and other performances, are among the most difficult types of events for a surtitler, especially when the aim is to make the content accessible to as many people as possible. This paper discusses the challenges involved in terms of the preparation of the content, and the technical parameters involved at the preparatory stage and in the live context of provision, with focus on hybrid events where speech-to-text interpreting (STTI) is required in order to capture parts of an event that cannot be prepared, with cases related to both linguistic and sensory access in mind.

Similar to how GEBRON (2000) approaches Sign Language Interpreting at the theatre as a work of art, surtitling combined with STTI serve two main purposes: access to the artistic content and linear communication between the organisers or the artists and the audience. Looking at surtitling independently, it seems to fall under the category of Theatre Translation, which GRIESEL (2005: 2) defines as "the oral and written translation of foreign language theatrical productions to be shown to audiences of different languages". In this scenario, the 'source text' is seen as being the production as a whole. Based on this definition, this paper extends the 'source text' to the whole experience inside a theatre or a concert where surtitling is used for similar purposes of linguistic or sensory access.

It is within such contexts that the audience should not be isolated when the 'source mode' changes from a play or song lyrics to interaction or a discussion on the topic of a play or even within a cultural festival. However, surtitlers are not necessarily professionals in STTI, and STT interpreters may lack training in Theater Translation. These obstacles may lead to the need for a collaborative approach in hybrid events, such as festivals, whereby two professionals would need to share the same projection means, for example. In case the surtitler is also able to offer STTI, the need to quickly switch from one service to the other also poses a number of technical risks that could potentially highlight the need for a platform where both services can be managed.

In this presentation, the author will share experience from such cases, analyse the main differences between the two services in terms of their conventions and approach to the content of hybrid events, and discuss potential improvements in technology to cater for the needs of the professionals in the field.

## Keywords

accessibility | concerts | theatre | surtitling | deafness

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## Bio

Emmanouela Patiniotaki has been active in the language industry since 2004. She teaches Specialised Translation and Technology-related modules at the UCL Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS, UK) where she also developed and now runs the first online course in Cloud-based Translation Tools and the Intensive Summer Course in Translation Technology. Emmanouela is also an independent provider in Audiovisual and Specialised Translation, and Access Services and the CEO of *Atlas E.P.* She has collaborated with the Movement of Disabled Artists to bring Access Services to the Greek theatre and cinema, and she is a member of the Movement for the Emancipation of Disabled People. Furthermore, she collaborated with a variety of higher-education institutions in Europe. Her research focuses on the design of holistically accessible environments connecting to a variety of fields, including Disability Studies, Audiovisual Translation, Web Accessibility, and Assistive Technology. Other research interests involve Crisis Translation and Language Automation.

# France: A speech-to-text interpreting pandemic

## Florie Lefebvre

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On March 12, 2020, the global lockdown was about to be initiated. In France, President Emmanuel Macron was scheduled to address the nation in a televised speech to dissipate concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic and announce the first measures that would disrupt our lives.

At 8pm, the national anthem was played. Emmanuel Macron appeared, solemn. As soon as he began talking, viewers saw the spoken words displayed on their screen in real time. It was the first time the system was used on television by the Élysée. As a result, many French people read more than they listened to the speech! They were completely absorbed by what was happening at the bottom of their screen.

A total of 25 million people watched the televised speech. At this point, no one had ever heard of velotyping nor respeaking. On every social media, people wondered what made such technical achievement possible: artificial intelligence or ultra-fast human hand?

While lockdown continued, the President gave several similar speeches and the French gradually got used to reading while listening.

The COVID-19 pandemic shined a spotlight on accessibility. There had never been a more important time for speech-to-text interpreting. Hearing-impaired people asked for job adjustments to be able to work from home. At Le Messageur, we had to deal with the drastic increase of meetings requiring speech-to-text interpreting and readjust to the new normal of hybrid events. Not to mention that the profession was not (and still not is!) regulated at any point in France.

If you want to learn more about how we adapted to the specific challenges caused by the pandemic, then this presentation is for you!

## Keywords

Emmanuel Macron's televised speeches | speech-to-text interpreting boost | COVID-19 pandemic | emerging profession | French speech-to-text interpreters

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## Bio

Florie Lefebvre, based in Lille (FRA) holds a degree in Conference Interpreting and Translation (EN, SP > FR) graduating from ISTI, Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes, Brussels, in 2009. In 2010, she became a voice-captioner at ST'501, a live television broadcast company where she discovered respeaking as a method to produce live captions for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. A whole new world opened up to her! In 2018, she joined Le Messageur, a service provider for speech-to-text interpreting and accessibility. As of today, she is a speech-to-text interpreter, quality manager, and trainer for respeakers in France, leading a team of 20 speech-to-text interpreters with the benefit of her 10+ year experience as a respeaker.

# STTInterpreting on a global level

## Daniela Eichmeyer-Hell

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Converting oral communication into written text is well established as a professional service for the D/deaf and hard-of-hearing. Yet, speech-to-text interpreting (STTI) is still a young profession and as such, it has evolved rapidly over the past few years. Not least because of the recent pandemic, a lot of human communication has migrated to online and hybrid formats which come with their own set of barriers for D/deaf and hard-of-hearing persons. This session will start off with a short overview of the development of STTI on an international level and the implications for users of this service. We will then take a look at STTI in different countries asking the panelists about how they interpret their roles as STTInterpreters and if and how the pandemic has changed their professional environment. Finally, we will take a look at the possibilities of global cooperation.

## Keywords

Speech-to-text interpreting | addressee-oriented quality | live text | international cooperation on speech-to-text interpreting | professionalization

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## Bio

After graduating as Magister of Business Administration (University of Innsbruck, 1994), followed by over 20 years in international business including an in-service Masters in Quality Management (Universidad Santo Tomás, Bogotá/Colombia, 2002), Daniela Eichmeyer-Hell completed a Master's degree in Conference Interpreting (University for Applied Languages Munich, 2015). She is a certified speech-to-text interpreter since 2014 and currently working on her PhD thesis (Transcultural Communication, University of Vienna) on speech-to-text interpreting (STTI), explicitly on quality-oriented consideration of the different STTI techniques. She is a full-time

practitioner of conference and speech-to-text interpreting, deputy chair of the Austrian speech-to-text interpreters' Association, chair of the Bavarian speech-to-text interpreters' Association, a researcher and lecturer for STTI at the University of Vienna, the University of Graz, bfi Tirol and Kombia/Germany and representing the German Association of STTIs at DIN and ISO since 2021.