Simultaneous Interpreting

- Definition of Simultaneous Interpreting
- Development of S.I. in the 1920ies
- Nuremberg Trials
- Development of S.I. in the 1950ies
- New Technologies and Simultaneous Interpreting

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Definition of Simultaneous interpreting

  In simultaneous mode, the interpreter sits in a booth with a clear view of the meeting room and the speaker and listens to and simultaneously interprets the speech into a target language. Simultaneous interpreting requires a booth (fixed or mobile) that meets ISO standards of acoustic isolation, dimensions, air quality and accessibility as well as appropriate equipment (headphones, microphones). (AIIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- **Interpreting while the delegate is speaking**

The interpreter works in a <u>soundproofed booth</u> with at least one colleague. The speaker in the meeting room speaks into a microphone, the interpreter receives the sound through a headset and renders the message into a microphone almost simultaneously. The delegate in the meeting room selects the relevant channel to hear the interpretation in the language of his/her choice. There are many different possible configurations of languages or <u>language regimes</u>.
(SCIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Simultaneous Interpreting means to listen and to speak at the same time.
- That also means high requirements concerning the active and passive mastering of the working languages.
- Studies show that the *décalage* i.e. the lapse of time after which the interpreter starts rendering his version is about two to three seconds.
- The ideal speaking velocity of the orator means about 100 to 120 English words for the interpreter.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- As simultaneous interpreting requires a very high concentration normally at least two interpreters are working in a booth who will take their turn every ten to thirty minutes according to the difficulty of the speeches, language combination and velocity of the speaker.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The work of the interpreter may become more difficult through external factors:
- Small booth without sufficient air
- Poor light in the booth

- Poor or no sight on the conference room
- Poor microphone discipline of the speaker
- Reading out of texts not available to the interpreter

Simultaneous Interpreting

The simultaneous interpreter must not succomb to the lexical, syntactical and stylistic influence of the source language. The same is true for metaphers, sayings etc. In general these interferences are less important in the mother tongue than in the B-language.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Definition of Whispering

  Whispering is an interpreting mode whereby the interpreter is seated next to one or two meeting participants and whispers the interpretation of the speech. This mode is used mainly when only very few people need interpretation. Whispering is not recommended when there are more than two listeners or when several interpreters need to work at the same time in the same room (since this could create too much noise and is as unpleasant for the interpreters as for the audience). A team working in this mode requires at least two interpreters. Since this technique is hard on the vocal chords, it is only appropriate for very short meetings. (AIIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- **Whispered simultaneous Interpreting**

  The interpreter is seated or standing among the delegates and interprets simultaneously directly into the ear of the delegates.
- Whispered interpretation can be used only for very few delegates sitting or standing close together. It is used mainly in bilateral meetings or in groups where only a few delegates do not share a common language.
- Whispering is often used instead of consecutive in order to save time. Sometimes, the whispering interpreter will use a headphone in order to get the best possible sound from the original speaker. (SCIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- A first simultaneous installation was invented in the 1920ies by Edward Filene. His patent was later on acquired by IBM. The system correspondend to a portable telephone equipment. The audience had headsets, the orator and the interpreters in addition microphones. The first installation had quite a few problems and asked for well trained technicians.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- IBM wanted the League of Nations to use their equipment. In 1927 the ILO as the only organisation made use of it. The organisers also took care of the training of the interpreters. At the beginning the installation was only used for prepared speeches but not for open disucussions.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- A great many interpreters were not yet ready for the new technology. As consecutive interpreters they stood more in the flash light than the simultaneous interpreters in the booth. That is probably the reason why not a single interpreter of the League of Nations wanted to participate in the training for the ILO conference. The delegates on their side were suspicious as they could not check the interpreted version against the source text.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The quality of the interpretation was satisfactory though. In the different meetings up to seven languages were spoken.

- But on the whole is was too early for the new technology really having its breakthrough during the Nuremberg trials.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- In the meantime there were several tentatives to work in simultaneous mode:
- Hitler and Mussolini were interpreted by Hans Jacob in the Post Ministery in Paris
- Andre Kaminker interpreted Hitler`s speech at the party congress in Nuremberg.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The definitive breakthrough for simultaneous interpreting were the Nuremberg trials from 1945 to 1946. Lawyers from the US, UK, France and Russia participated in them.
The legal representatives and most of the witnesses and accused spoke German.

- It would have been too time-consuming to interpret the trials in consecutive mode. That is why the simultaneous mode was chosen.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- In addition the victorious powers counted on the immediate effect on the public using simultaneous interpretation. Colonel Dostert, a French American born in France in 1904, with some interpreting experience during the First World War, was charged with the recruitment and training of the required interpreters.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- It was not easy to find appropriate interpreters. The experienced interpreters of the League of Nations worked in the newly established United Nations.

- The interpreters were chosen within a whole range of candidates.

- As there was only little time, the only criterium often was to understand a language and to be able to render it in another language.
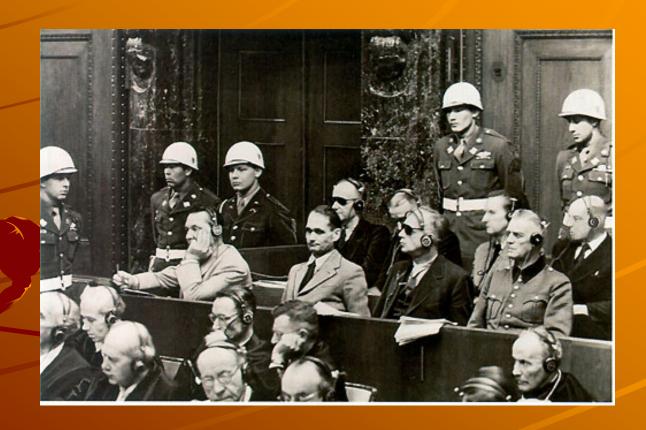
Simultaneous Interpreting

- Reports describing the Nuremberg trials indicate the IBM system. This system was already outdated at that time. It was a cabled installation where the cables laid visibly in the court room. Technical disturbances often occurred f.e. if somebody slipped over a cable.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- There were five channels, one for the original language and four for the interpretation into the four official languages – German, English, French and Russian. The audience could chose one of the channels and listen to the version in question via headsets.

- The interpreters could activate different lamps in order to signal that the orator either spoke more slowly or repeated something.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The booths were arranged in a way that the interpreters could see the defendants and the judge. The screen and the witness stand could not be seen from the booths.

Simultaneous Interpreting

Göring, Hess, von Ribbentrop und Keitel auf der Anklagebank.

Simultaneous Interpreting

Die Anklagebank: Göring, Hess, von Rippentrop, Keitel

Simultaneous Interpreting

Simultaneous Interpreting

Simultaneous Interpreting

- There were three teams of twelve interpreters each for the four languages. Three interpreters worked in one booth at a time. Each interpreter worked from one language into his mother tongue. The arrangement of the four booths was called the "Aquarium".

- One team worked in the courtroom, the second team followed the proceedings in a neighboring room. One of the duties of the third team was a quality control in the form of a comparison between the various language transcripts and the original spoken material. This arrangement was introduced in order to ensure continuity in terminology and familiarity with the material.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- From an organizational point of view the Nuremberg trials outdid everything known so far.

- The trials went on for 218 days. The minutes covered four million words and filled 16.000 pages. The prosecution presented 2.360 pieces of evidence, the defense 2.700. The court listened to 240 witnesses and checked 300.000 affidavits.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- With a few exceptions the interpreters working for the Nuremberg trials had no proper training and no experience in simultaneous interpreting.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Those who interpreted at Nuremberg came from a variety of national, linguistic and professional backgrounds. Some were very young, including an 18-year-old recent high-school graduate, and a fair number were still in their early twenties. Among others, the Nuremberg interpreting ranks comprised teachers, academics, lawyers, army personnel, professional conference interpreters - including graduates of the School of Interpreters in Geneva - and a future Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations (Oleg A. Troyanovsky, son of the first Soviet Ambassador to the United States). One of the longest-serving interpreters at the Nuremberg Trials, Austrian-born Peter Uiberall, had worked as a stock clerk and farm laborer in the United States after leaving Austria as a refugee in 1938. This experience provided him with a highly valuable work background for an interpreter. (Ruth Morris)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Elisabeth Heyward was literally thrown in the deep end. The day she arrived in Nuremberg she went into the visitors' gallery, where she was astonished to see and hear simultaneous interpreting. The next day in the courtroom she had to launch into simultaneous interpreting herself. She survived this "baptism by fire" most successfully, eventually being recruited by U.N. headquarters where she worked until her retirement in December 1981 - and then continuing on and off to work as a freelance interpreter. A fair number of those who worked as interpreters in Nuremberg became and remained professional interpreters. (Ruth Morris)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- For the interpreting profession, the Nuremberg Trials were an exemplary - and almost unparalleled - instance of human and technical triumph over the linguistic obstacles that can otherwise impede the implementation of the loftiest sentiments of fairness. As described by the interpretation system's manufacturer, IBM, the goal was "that all men may understand". "All men" included those involved in the trial - defendants, judges, counsel for the prosecution and defence, witnesses, guards and representatives of the media - as well as the world which had just emerged from a lengthy and bloody conflict characterized by great suffering on the part of all sectors of the population of many countries. (Ruth Morris)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- In 1946 after the founding of the United Nations the first team of interpreters was offered an intensive training program in simultaneous interpreting. Among the participants were also some interpreters having worked in Nuremberg. But the consecutive interpreters who back in 1946 constituted the majority refused the program.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The arguments brought forward against simultaneous interpreting:
- Working ineffectively repeating like a perrot what was said
- The delegates did not have the possibility to think over a proper reaction to what was said
- In reality the consecutive interpreters probably were afraid of the new technology and feared a loss of their reputationtion.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The main argument in favor of simultaneous interpreting was the enormous gain in time. Discussions could be organized with immediate reactions. In addition that meant a huge cost reduction.

- For this reason simultaneous interpretation was soon introduced for the general assembly. In 1947 the first portable equipment was introduced.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The Security Council still upheld the consecutive mode because it was thought to be more precise. But other UN organisations soon also introduced simultaneous interpreting. The resistance against this mode remained though until the end of the 1940ies

Simultaneous Interpreting

- With the beginning of the 1950ies the technical equipment got better and better. The success of the simultaneous interpreting could not be stopped any longer.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- The Interpreting Schools in Geneva and Vienna also recognized the importance of simultaneous interpretation and introduced corresponding courses into their curricula.

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Today the booth and simultaneous technology is so sophisticated that the interpreters have very good working conditions.
- With the further development of technologies additional areas opened up for interpretation:
- videoconferencing
- remote interpreting
- webchatting

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Definition of Video-Conferencing

  The term video-conference refers to any conference whose participants are located at several different venues and who communicate via telecommunications. AIIC has developed precise specifications (in particular for video monitors and sound quality) so that, despite the technical constraints, conditions are adequate to allow the interpreters to maintain high standard of work. AIIC publishes the Code for Use of New Technologies for Conference Interpretation. (AIIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- **Videoconference combined with instant messaging So far, videoconferencing standards (i.e. ITU-T H.320 used with ISDN lines, or H.323 on IP networks) have not met the technical requirements for simultaneous interpretation as specified in the <u>ISO-2603</u> standard and in the <u>Code for New Technologies</u> adopted by a wide range of professional conference interpreters.Conventional videoconferencing facilities have video quality and audio bandwidth limitations, which is why simultaneous interpretation cannot be provided for oral interventions from remote locations (i.e. where interpreters are not physically present). Some new-generation videoconference equipment, based on the standards for video (H.264) and audio (AAC-LD) now dramatically improves the overall quality but it remains far below the required level.DG interpretation can provide interpretation for an interactive videoconference when "broadcast quality" equipment and adequate communication lines (satellite or broadcast IP terrestrial with "Quality of Service" guarantee) are available.** (SCIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- In some instances, however, when only conventional facilities are available, if participants in remote locations are passive most of the time (i.e. they are following the proceedings and wish only occasionally to put questions or make comments), an "instant messaging" software tool can provide some form of interactivity. Interventions from remote locations are sent as written messages via the Internet to a workstation located where the interpreters are. In the meeting room, the questions that appear on the main computer screen are read out and interpreted. In this way, simultaneous interpretation can be provided to remote locations (provided that the necessary audio channels are available remotely).

- Among the several instant messaging tools, "chatting" tools are best. Normal e-mail software cannot be used because of the delays introduced by mail server store-and-forward mechanisms. Some forms of instant messaging systems, like those compliant with T.120 also offers additional features like application sharing and white board and file transfer. (SCIC)

Simultaneous Interpreting

- Multilingual "chats" are organised by the European Commission: political figures interact with European citizens connected to the Internet using a chat facility.

- People can follow the chat discussion in any of the different languages provided. Incoming questions are translated as they come in by DG Interpretation interpreters from all languages covered.

- The Commissioner's (or other panel participant's) answer is then translated back into the language of the question. Chats are usually held in the early evening and last a couple of hours. Announcements and instructions on how to join the chat are available on the special chat announcement page on Europa. (SCIC)

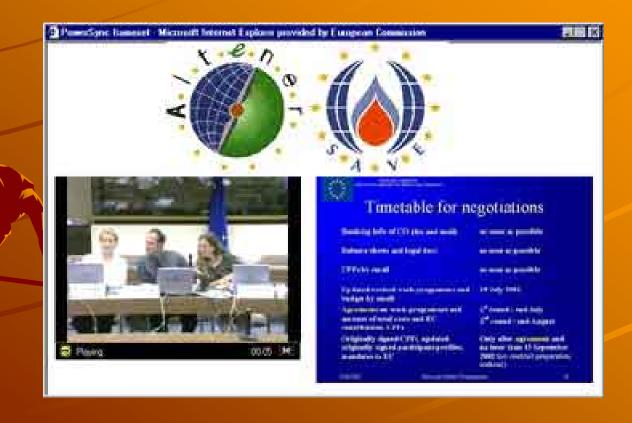# Simultaneous Interpreting

- You can join a chat in two ways:

  - With a Web-browser with Java enabled

  - With a chat application

- You can take part in the on-line discussion and ask questions or just follow the discussion without participating actively. The only information you are asked to provide in order to get the connection is:

  - your preferred language channel

  - a nickname

Simultaneous Interpreting

Multilingual chats (Commission)

Simultaneous Interpreting

Simultaneous Interpreting

- **Multilingual webcasting combined with internet chat Virtual conferences often combine several media tools. DG interpretation usually provides a combination of :**

- **Webcasting which allows people located elsewhere to follow the conference in any of the languages for which simultaneous interpretation is provided in the meeting room**

- **An interactive internet chat session. Remote participants can type questions or comments in their language. If the answer is of general interest, it is forwarded to the panel discussion during the question and answer session. It will be read out (and interpreted) in the meeting room and remote participants will get the answer through the webstreaming.**

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Simultaneous Interpreting

- **An example of a virtual conference**
- The European Commission organises a "negotiation day" for potential participants to a call for tender or a call for proposals.
- Information about how to respond is provided via web-streaming. European Commission staff in Brussels make presentations using slides to explain relevant information. Tenderers, following the streaming on their computer connected to the Internet from their own country, can ask questions via a chat line; questions (after interpretation, if provided) are answered by officials within a few minutes via the webcasting.
- Another example of a virtual conference: Scientific conference
- The European Commission organises a conference in Brussels or elsewhere in Europe in a conference centre. The conference room can fit 400 participants but many more are interested in listening to the whole conference or to a specific presentation and to ask questions.
- Participants unable to get a seat or to travel to the conference, can follow the whole event that is streamed live and can see slides as if they where in the room. They can listen in any of the languages for which simultaneous interpretation is provided in the room. "Virtual participants" can ask questions via a chat line or simply follow the chat conversation; questions from the chat are answered by European Commission staff in writing or, if of general interest, via the webcasting during the questions and answers session. (SCIC)
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Simultaneous Interpreting

- Daimler
- 3.100 Interpreting Days per year
- Most of them videoconferencing for training of mechanics in 46 countries all over the world
- One huge garage hall in Stuttgart with trainers for different car models
- Interaction with mechanics in other countries asking questions or making remarks