

## **The role of technologies in the evolving contexts of dialogue interpreting: implications for interpreting research and interpreter education**

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In line with the conference theme, which emphasises context as a key concern in dialogue interpreting, this presentation focuses on an important dimension of the evolving contexts in which dialogue interpreting takes place today, namely the use of technologies. Although some way off from being the 'new normal', the use of technologies—especially communication technologies such as audio and video conferencing—is increasingly considered as a readily available option to enable dialogue interpreting in different settings (legal, health, humanitarian), leading to various modalities of technology-mediated interpreting. These modalities have created a wealth of opportunities, but they have also spawned their own challenges. For example, the command of physical distance through communication technologies has created social distance that potentially affects all aspects of interpreting. Market pressures have led interpreters to accept working with technologies where the speed of their adoption has side-stepped the safeguards introduced through training and regulation. And although the coming of age of a generation of digitally capable millennials has raised hopes that the 'tech-savvy' interpreter of the future will need little training in the use of technologies, to what degree this expectation extends to specific uses of technologies in professional interpreting contexts is a little explored question.

Research has shown that technology uses in interpreting entail difficulties for interpreters including increased fatigue, sometimes a decline in interpreting quality and a deterioration of the communicative dynamics, and an inevitable change in working conditions. Reliable knowledge about the means of mitigating these difficulties is not yet available. In practice, a full appreciation of the impacts of technology on pertinent dialogue settings is therefore currently difficult to achieve.

Arguably, an important first step towards addressing this situation is to create a better understanding of the main drivers and key stakeholders in using technologies in dialogue interpreting settings, which forms part of the wider context in which these settings are embedded. This presentation will therefore begin with an overview of current technology uses in multilingual dialogue settings and examine them in terms of who and what has motivated and encouraged these uses. An analysis of selected examples will then be used to highlight the importance of a more a comprehensive, critical and holistic approach to appraising the merits of technology in dialogue interpreting settings (and, by the same token, in other professional contexts and in everyday life). The second part of the presentation will then focus on the implications that a more comprehensive understanding of technology has on how we go about researching technology (e.g. what methods will help to capture all impacts of technology), how we teach it (e.g. whether we integrate it rather than treating it as a separate issue) and how we go about creating guidance for its future use.

The overall aim of the presentation is to raise awareness for the need for a human-centric approach to technology use which enables stakeholders to take advantage of the opportunities offered by technological innovation without compromising critical issues such as quality of service, wellbeing of all involved and sustainability of the interpreter profession.