

Simultaneous interpreting

In simultaneous interpreting, the interpreter will speak while the source-speech speaker is still speaking.

Normally, in simultaneous interpreting the interpreter sits in a sound-proof booth, usually with a clear view of the speaker, at a microphone, listening through headphones to the incoming message in the source language; the interpreter translates the message in the target language into the microphone to whoever is listening. Simultaneous interpreting is sometimes referred to as "simultaneous translation" and the interpreter referred to as the "translator". These terms are incorrect, as there is a clear distinction between interpreting and translation. In fact, simultaneous interpreting is not strictly "simultaneous" either; except when the interpreter anticipates correctly, there is always a slight time lag of a few seconds.

Simultaneous interpretation can also occur as "whispered" (when done at a meeting, where only one participant requires interpretation).

For smaller meetings, simultaneous interpretation can occur using a wireless simultaneous interpretation unit. The interpreter or interpreters sit at the back of the room, they listen to the speech like all the other participants, and they interpret into a wireless microphone. The participants listen through headsets.