



ILEA

Guidelines for Working with Interpreters

Training classes at ILEA-Bangkok are conducted in five languages with the assistance of ILEA-Bangkok interpreters. The interpretation is conducted simultaneously in the lecture setting and consecutively in breakout or field training exercises. Most Asian languages are structured differently than English and require most of an English sentence to be stated before any of the sentence can be translated. For this reason, instructors need to pace themselves when lecturing. Because of the differences in Asian languages from English, it is also necessary to avoid slang, abbreviations, etc. The interpreter's job will be greatly facilitated if the instructor expresses her/himself clearly, articulately, slowly, and pauses regularly.

To increase the effectiveness of your presentations, ILEA-Bangkok Interpreters put together the following guidelines to ensure that your presentations are correctly conveyed to the students.

Guidelines for Instructors

A. Simultaneous Interpretation

1. Speak directly to the students in the first person. The instructor should speak exactly as he/she does to someone who does not require an Interpreter.

RIGHT: (Speaking to your student): "What is your name?"

WRONG: (Speaking to the Interpreter): "Ask him what his name is."

RIGHT: (Speaking to your patient): "You have some tooth decay in one of your bottom right molars. We will need to organize an appointment for you to come back and get a filling."

WRONG: (Speaking to the Interpreter): "Tell her that she has decay in one of her teeth. Ask her when she can come back again to get a filling done."

2. Use simple and clear language. Please try to avoid *jargon, idioms or proverbs, questions in the form of statements, double negatives, abbreviations, slang or colloquialisms and figures of speech*. All of these make the Interpreter's job much harder than it needs to be. If it cannot be avoided, please explain to the interpreters what the meaning of that word is either before or during the presentation, i.e., "XXX, what that means is"

WRONG: "There's no point in beating around the bush. Because our system crashed and we haven't got any data that hasn't corrupted we'll have to reinvent the wheel a bit and get your details and financial *circs* recorded again before the JSA team will do the business on your claim. Do you see where I'm coming from? Nightmare!"



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RIGHT: “I’m sorry but because our computers stopped working properly, we lost our personal and financial details. We need you to provide this information for us again. Then the people who deal with your benefit will process your claim. We realize this is frustrating for you. We feel the same way.”

3. Pause frequently and do not speak too quickly to allow for the interpretation of manageable segments of speech. The above paragraph might be broken down like this:

“I’m sorry but because our computers stopped working properly, we lost your personal and financial details. *[Pause]* We need you to provide this information for us again. Then the people who deal with your benefit will process your claim. *[Pause]* We realize this is frustrating for you. We feel the same way.”

B. Consecutive Interpretation

Your student may not pause or speak slowly for the interpreter. When this happens the interpreter may be forced to summarize what has been said. Where a summary is not enough, you could ask your student to slow down or repeat what was said.

- 1. Actively listen** to the Interpreter and your student.
- 2. Ask the Interpreter to keep you informed about what is being said** if you feel the Interpreter and the student are speaking to each other rather than interpreting your conversation with the student.
- 3. Encourage the Interpreter to interrupt the meeting if:**
 - They do not understand words or meaning
 - The language used does not have a parallel expression in the other language
 - The student or the Interpreter needs a break.
 - They have noticed a cultural reference likely to cause misunderstanding
 - It is clear that there has been a misunderstanding on either side
 - They need to clarify something that has been said

C. General Rules

- 1. Interpreters will give a sign (waving their hands or turn on and turn off the light) if the instructor speaks too fast, or there is a technical problem with equipment**



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2. Interpreting demands a high degree of concentration, therefore regular break periods should be planned if an interpreter is expected to remain efficient for a long interpreting session. Allow a break of 10-15 minutes for every hour of interpreting time

3. To ensure that interpreters can properly prepare themselves (e.g. with respect to terminology & cultural issues), it would be appreciated if interpreters are given the subject matter material and, where possible, be supplied with relevant literature before the assignment.

Checklist for Working with Interpreters

Before seeking the services of interpreters, instructors are asked to consider the following:

- a. Have you provided the interpreters with the subject matter and relevant background material?
- b. Have you given the interpreters enough time for preparation and/or have you allowed time for regular breaks during a long interpreting session?
- c. Have you understood the need to speak articulately and clearly during a lecture/session?

Additional Note

In case that the translation of books or documents are needed, please provide the translators with the name and email of contact person or designated person who is familiar with the document and capable of answering or clarifying any queries the translators may have.

Also, please realize that it takes approximately one hour to translate one page of text. That translates to eight pages of text per day. It is difficult to translate voluminous documents in a timely manner. We will attempt to translate all materials sent to us, but will do so on a prioritized basis.

Date : November 1, 2005