



RSI Solution SmarTerp: Bye Bye Frustration, Hello Boothpartner

On 19 April 2021, the European Commission's Knowledge Centre on Interpretation published the [initial results](#) of the survey conducted within the [ESIT](#) Research Project on Remote Simultaneous Interpreting. 83% of the 946 conference interpreters from 7 regions and 19 countries who responded found remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI) more difficult than in-person interpreting. 80% provided their services exclusively in-person before the pandemic. This high percentage dropped to a mere 3% after it.

Almost **three quarters of the 947** interpreters surveyed use Zoom for more than 50% of the services they provide. Zoom requires the interpreters to operate two different devices and headphones while interpreting. **A nightmare come true.**

On Monday 14 June 2021 I got to test SmarTerp, the complete Remote Simultaneous Interpreting (**RSI**) solution conceived by Susana Rodríguez (AICE), expert in the management and promotion of international R&D&i projects at UPM, and member of the ISO/TC 37/SC 5 Technical Committee "Translation, interpretation and related technology services". It is SO interpreter-friendly!

Interpreting booth equipped with private audio and videolink

Neither the high sound quality nor the comfort of invisible and silent interaction between booth partners facilitated by the [SmarTerp](#) private interpreting booth come as a surprise. The remote classroom developed by Susana to teach a Master's degree in conference interpreting for UCAM as early as 2016 was an **auditory, visual and interactive pleasure.**

According to the aforementioned ESIT survey 74% of interpreters use makeshift solutions to listen to their booth partners by entering the Zoom conference as a participant using a second device. The resulting profusion of keys, screens and headphones the interpreter has to cope with makes them wish they had octopus tentacles. SmarTerp, however, enables the active interpreter, with just one click, to mute their microphone for the audience in order to speak to their partner with just a single click. For instance, to ask for a term, or to release a sigh that the audience is not supposed to hear.

Speech intelligibility: SmarTerp will be compliant with ISO/PAS 24019:2020

Once completed, the open source LaaS (Language-as-a-Service) solution for multilingual events will meet the requirements of the ISO/PAS 24019:2020 standard *Simultaneous interpreting delivery platforms - Requirements and recommendations*, which is expected to be published by the end of this year. Interpreters suffer from fluctuations not only in volume but also in sound quality **making speech intelligibility less immediate.** The sound check does not always include testing the connection with each of the speakers who connect remotely, some of them possibly without a headset.

Bye-bye frustration, hello legible presentation

[SmarTerp](#) provides the interpreter with the option to **enlarge either the speaker's video or the speaker's presentation.** Both will be displayed "picture in picture" in the same window with the option of moving one of the 2 videos to a second screen. Not all currently available platforms allow you to enlarge the speaker's presentation without losing sight of the speaker. Of course, Zoom does not; **This makes it very difficult for the interpreter to read figures, names or, in the worst case, the entire content of specially "loaded" slides.**



Natural Language Processing (NLP)

SmarTerp will support the human interpreter in the efficient management of specific terminology by integrating artificial intelligence (AI), and will cover, among others, medical specialities. The natural language processing (NLP) architecture is based on multilingual knowledge graphs and detects entity names, specific terms and figures in real time, thereby compensating, to a certain degree, the lack of physical presence and active support from the partner. I found it highly interesting to contribute to the creation of the German Benchmark for SmarTerp in the field of a medical speciality.

Proposals for scientific, academic and professional collaboration with SmarTerp

At the moment, the project serves as a test bed for a PhD thesis and a research Master's Project, among others. Further pilot tests and cooperations are planned with professional associations. SmarTerp was conceived in collaboration with the State Confederation for the Deaf ([Confederación Estatal de Personas Sordas](#) CNSE) together with sign language interpreters, which makes the solution inclusive as well as complete from an interpreter's point of view.

A toast to interpreters

Interpreters need to be able to choose from among solutions led by colleagues whose interest is to uphold professional standards which in turn is inextricably **linked to the quality of interpretation offered to end clients**. I propose a toast to **interpreters who develop their own ISR solutions**, such as [Green Terp](#), [cAPPisco](#), [RSI X](#) or [AUDIX](#), not forgetting [Olyusei](#), with its own hub in the centre of Madrid, already fully operational long before the pandemic. It is encouraging to see how colleagues are taking the step from freelance interpreter to "virtual conference producer". For instance, Cyril Belange with his [French Riviera Hub in Nice](#). Both GreenTerp and SmarTerp focus their business model on providing the technology, not the interpreter, thus respecting the independence and self-regulation of the sector and its professionals. In addition, **GreenTerp develops a whole range of products designed to cover all the needs of the interpreting practitioner, student or teacher.**

"We are not an industry"

While 66% of interpreters surveyed by the ESIT project say that they are paid the same for RSI, 67% of interpreters say they have experienced a worsening of their working conditions. Personally, I am experiencing increased pricing pressures in various segments of the private market. This is in clear contradiction **of increased cognitive, haptic, physical, technological, and economic burdens**. I have just received another piece of equipment in the interpreter's tireless struggle for adequate sound at all times.

Open beta version, demos for interpreters, when?

SmarTerp is planning to release its open beta version to the general public **this November, 2021**. After that, it will propose programmed **demos for interpreters** as soon as there is a **stable release version**.

Please feel free to share this piece where you see fit to spread the good news, thanks a lot!

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