Videoconference and remote interpreting in criminal proceedings

Module for interpreting students

AVIDICUS
Assessment of Videoconference Interpreting in the Criminal Justice Services

EU Criminal Justice Programme, Project JLS/2008/JPEN/037, 2008-2011

With financial support from the Criminal Justice Programme - European Commission - Directorate-General Justice

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Sections in this module

1. Introduction
2. Videoconferencing and interpreting
3. Current practice
4. From practice to research
5. Implications for future research
6. Wrap-up
1 Introduction

- The current situation
- Current EU legislation relating to the use of videoconferencing in legal proceedings
- Videoconferencing: definitions and key terms
1 Introduction

The current situation: two strands of development

- Mobility/migration increases demand for Public Service Interpreting:
  - develop cost-efficient interpreting solutions
  - reduce interpreter travel time/cost
  - overcome local shortages of qualified interpreters

- Public Services strive to become more efficient/sustainable:
  - eliminate delays in legal proceedings, healthcare etc.
  - reduce travel time/cost e.g. in cross-border legal proceedings
  - respond to security concerns, e.g. avoid transport of prisoners

Required:
  cost-efficient, timely access to qualified interpreters

⇒ Use of videoconference technologies as a potential solution
1 Introduction

EU legislation in relation to the use of videoconferencing

- EU legislation allowing the use of videoconferences in legal proceedings, especially for hearing witnesses or experts, e.g.


  - Council Regulation (EC) on cooperation between the courts of the Member States in the taking of evidence in civil and commercial matters (No 1206/2001 of 28 May 2001, Article 10(4))

1 Introduction

EU legislation in relation to the use of videoconferencing

- EU legislation to strengthen the procedural rights of suspected or accused persons in criminal proceedings:
  - Council Roadmap for strengthening procedural rights of suspected and accused persons in criminal proceedings ('Procedural Rights Roadmap', adopted in Council in Nov 2009). The Roadmap calls for the adoption of measures regarding the right to translation and interpretation (measure A), the right to information on rights and information about the charges (measure B), the right to legal advice and legal aid (measure C), the right to communication with relatives, employers and consular authorities (measure D), and regarding special safeguards for suspected or accused persons who are vulnerable (measure E).

1 Introduction

EU legislation in relation to the use of videoconferencing: updates

- EU legislation to strengthen the procedural rights of suspected or accused persons in criminal proceedings:

  This Directive lays down common minimum standards to be applied in the fields of interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings with a view to enhancing mutual trust among Member States. It includes the possibility of remote access to interpretation by telephone and videoconference.

1 Introduction

EU legislation in relation to the use of videoconferencing: updates

- EU legislation to strengthen the procedural rights of suspected or accused persons in criminal proceedings:

  This Directive lays down rules concerning the right of suspected and accused persons to information about their rights and about the charge in criminal proceedings against them. Second step in the Procedural Rights Roadmap; should be considered as part of a comprehensive package of legislation to be presented over the next few years to provide a minimum set of procedural rights in criminal proceedings in the EU.

1 Introduction

EU legislation in relation to the use of videoconferencing: updates

- Focus on cross-border proceedings, mutual assistance and recognition, e.g.
  - Green Paper on obtaining evidence in criminal matters from one Member State to another and securing its admissibility – refers to the possibility of hearings by videoconference (COM(2009) 624, 11 November 2009)

1 Introduction

EU legislation in relation to the use of videoconferencing: updates

- In 2007 the European Council also confirmed that one of the priorities for future work in e-justice should be to "improve the use of VC technology for communication in cross-border proceedings, in particular concerning the taking of evidence, and interpretation"

10509/07 JURINFO 23 JAI 301 JUSTCIV 163 COPEN 89


- A 2008 survey by the working group on e-Justice shows that VC is used in legal proceedings to speed up cross-border cooperation, reduce costs and increase security

15641/07 JURINFO 75 JUSTCIV 315 COPEN 176
1 Introduction

Definitions and key concepts

- **Videoconferencing (VC)**
  - *Synchronous* communication across a distance
  - Video, audio, document sharing
  - Peer-to-peer or multipoint connection

- **Technological basis**
  - Transmission: Satellite, ISDN, Broadband Internet, Skype
  - Hardware: VC studio, 'roll-about' units, desktop PC, laptop, ...

- **VC communication**
  - Interpersonal communication:
    - **bidirectional** (or multidirectional): small-group settings
    - **unidirectional**: lectures, conferences
  - Mass communication (webcast)
1 Introduction

Exercises
1 Introduction

Exercise 1

Videoconferencing and legislation

Study the different pieces of legislation that were introduced in this section.

- Find out what exactly the documents say about the use of videoconferencing in legal proceedings and make a summary of all the situations in which the use of videoconference is allowed and recommended.

- Find out whether this legislation is applicable in your country and to what extent it is actually applied, i.e. whether videoconference technology is used in legal proceedings.
1 Introduction

Exercise 2

Videoconference interpreting in the public eye

Study the reports about videoconference interpreting on handout 1.

- Look at the reports from Global Watchover (a news agency) and Global Voices (an interpreting agency). What reasons do they give for the use of videoconference interpreting?

- Look at the reports from PR Newswire and California Healthline. What uses of videoconference interpreting do they describe? Do these uses match any of the uses that are described in the European documents?

- How would you characterise the way in which the reports talk about VC interpreting? To what extent do you agree with the reports?
2 Videoconferencing and Interpreting

- Emerging settings and their motivations
- Definitions
- Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses (in legal proceedings and other fields)
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Emerging settings and their motivations

New ways of communicating:
- Use of VC technology for distance communication
- If bi-/multilingual, how to integrate the interpreter?

"VIDEOCONFERENCE INTERPRETING" (VCI)

Compare also:
TELEPHONE INTERPRETING

Traditional ways of communicating, but:
- Use of VC technology to integrate an interpreter from a distant location

"REMOTE INTERPRETING" (RI)

Compare also:
RI VIA AUDIO LINK
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Definitions: Videoconference interpreting

- The primary participants are at two (or more) different locations (e.g. court room and prison)

- **Variant A:** The interpreter is at the main site (e.g. in the court room), the non-native speaker is at the other site (e.g. in prison)
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Definitions: Videoconference interpreting

- The primary participants are at two (or more) different locations (e.g. court room and prison)

- **Variant B:** The interpreter is at the site of the non-native speaker (e.g. in prison)
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Definitions: Remote interpreting

- All primary participants are together at a single location (e.g. in a police station)
- The interpreter is in a different location (e.g. in another police station)
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Definitions: Videoconference + Remote interpreting

- The primary participants are at two (or more) locations (e.g. in a court room and in prison)
- The interpreter is at a separate location (e.g. in another court room)
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Definitions

**Videoconference interpreting (VCI)**
- The communication takes place at two (or more) different locations
- The interpreter is situated at either location

**Remote interpreting (RI)**
- All primary participants are in a single location
- The interpreter is linked to them via VC from a remote location

**VCI and RI combined**
- Primary participants at different locations
- Interpreter at a further location
### Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses

**Videoconference interpreting**

- Internationalisation of crime: witnesses or defendants abroad (cross-border legal proceedings)
- Security: avoiding transport of prisoners to courts and police

**Remote interpreting**

- Increased need for interpreting through migration – reduction of interpreting cost (travel)
- Overcoming local shortages of qualified interpreters, esp. for rare languages
- Ensuring timeliness of communication in unpredictable situations (accidents, crime)
## 2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

### Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Videoconference interpreting</th>
<th>Remote interpreting</th>
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### In healthcare, e.g.

- **Care for the elderly:** patient care at home, links between home and GP
- **Increased need for interpreting through migration – reduction of interpreting cost (travel)**
- **Overcoming local/regional shortages of qualified interpreters**
- **Ensuring timeliness of communication in unpredictable situations (medical emergencies)**
# 2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

**Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses**

<table>
<thead>
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## In the EU institutions, e.g.

- EU wants to reach out to EU citizens via webcast
- Increased need for interpreting (language combinations) through EU expansion
- Shortfall of interpreting booths in conference rooms
## 2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

### Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Remote interpreting</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>In business and academia, e.g.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Global business: business meetings via VC</td>
<td>• Increased need for interpreting through globalization</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Distance learning: seminars and lectures via VC</td>
<td>• Reduction of interpreting cost (travel) through use of VC technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>• International conferences: overseas guest speakers via VC</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Global business: global annual meetings via webcast</td>
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</table>
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses

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<th>Remote interpreting</th>
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</table>

In military operations and humanitarian crises, e.g.

- Communication with delegates in crisis areas
- Ensuring timeliness of communication
- Avoiding life-threatening situations for interpreters
2 Videoconferencing and interpreting

Settings in detail: rationale and potential uses

| Videoconference interpreting | Remote interpreting |

In principle, each setting can be used for:

- Unidirectional or bi-/multidirectional communication
- Conference Interpreting or bilateral Interpreting (Business, PSI)
- Spoken-language or sign-language interpreting
- Simultaneous or consecutive interpreting

New interpreting settings
New challenges for the interpreter
New opportunities?
2  Videoconferencing and interpreting

Exercises
Exercise 1

Settings and their uses

Choose one of the settings that were introduced in this section, i.e. videoconference interpreting variant A or B, remote interpreting or a combination of the two.

• Find out whether this setting is used in your country and in what area(s).
• Discuss the advantages of this setting from the point of view of the legal institutions/proceedings.
• Based on your own experience of interpreting, identify potential advantages and problems for an interpreter working in this setting.
Exercise 2

Videoconference interpreting variant A and B

Consider the two variants of videoconference interpreting for the hearing of a remote witness in court. Discuss the advantages and drawbacks of the interpreter being in court vs. being with the remote witness from the point of view of

- the judge and other primary participants in the court room
- the remote witness
- the interpreter

Do you think it is possible to identify an ‘ideal solution’, or what would the solution depend on? Justify your point of view.
3 Current practice

- Examples of current uses of videoconference interpreting (VCI) and remote interpreting (RI) in legal proceedings

- The information in this part of the module is based on two surveys among legal practitioners and legal interpreters conducted in the EU project AVIDICUS in 2009.

- First hands-on practice session: VCI and RI
3 Current practice

Overview

- In many countries videoconference technology can currently be used as a substitute for physical presence under the following circumstances:
  - **In criminal cases:**
    - for remote witnesses or for prisoners in remand extension hearings
    - less frequently, for the defendants
    - for interpreters (remote interpreting)
  - **In asylum/immigration hearings:** normally for the asylum seeker
  - **In civil cases:** normally for anyone who takes part in the proceedings except the judge

- This leads to a range of videoconference and remote interpreting settings. Examples from different countries will be given on the subsequent slides.
3 Current practice

Examples of videoconference interpreting (Criminal Justice)

- **Pre-trial investigations (first hearings):** Different practices have begun to emerge for pre-trial hearings of defendants and witnesses. The mode of interpreting is consecutive.
  
  
  - Similarly, in the *Netherlands*, videoconferencing has been used in pre-trial hearings since 2007. The prosecutor is normally at one police station and communicates with the defendant in custody at another police station. The interpreter can choose the location, but is normally at the location of the defendant. [http://www.justitie.nl/onderwerpen/recht_en_rechtsbijstand/videoconferentie/](http://www.justitie.nl/onderwerpen/recht_en_rechtsbijstand/videoconferentie/)
3 Current practice

Examples of videoconference interpreting (Criminal Justice)

- **Pre-trial investigations (first hearings):** Different practices have begun to emerge for pre-trial hearings of defendants and witnesses. The mode of interpreting is consecutive.

  - In *Belgium*, investigating judges/prosecutors use videoconferencing to communicate with **witness or defendant abroad**.
    The interpreter is at the location of the judge/prosecutor.
  
  - In *Poland*, prosecutors, police officers or investigating judges use videoconferences to communicate with **witnesses at a remote site**.
    The location of interpreter is not regulated.
The Virtual court in England/Wales

Source: Ministry of Justice, UK
Courtroom in Maastricht

The Bench and videoconference equipment in the room

Source: Ministry of Justice, The Netherlands
Courtroom in Maastricht

The Bench’s view of the remote location

Source: Ministry of Justice, The Netherlands
Courtroom in Maastricht

Defendant, lawyer and interpreter in the remote location

Source: Ministry of Justice, The Netherlands
3 Current practice

Examples of videoconference interpreting (Criminal Justice)

- **Remand hearings**: Videoconference links between courts and prisons have been implemented in many countries to conduct remand extension hearings, which are normally of short duration.

  - In *England and Wales*, these links are known as ‘court-prison video links’. **All legal practitioners** and **the interpreter** are **normally in court**. The links are also used for consultations between prisoners and their lawyers. In this case, the lawyer and the interpreter are together in a consultation room at the court. The mode of interpreting is consecutive.


  - In *France*, similar practices are reported to become increasingly frequent:

3 Current practice

Examples of videoconference interpreting (Immigration)


  - The immigration Judge, Home Office representative and legal representative were in court; **the interpreter was in court** as well; the bail applicant was located at a detention centre. The mode of interpreting was consecutive.
3 Current practice

Examples of remote interpreting (Criminal Justice)

- Remote interpreting is currently used in some European courts, but it is more common in other parts of the world, especially in the United States.
  - In Denmark, remote interpreting is used in District Courts all stages of the proceedings. All primary participants are in the court house. The interpreter is in another court house. The mode of interpreting depends on interpreter’s skills; simultaneous interpreting is used if possible.

- The introduction of remote interpreting is also considered by police forces in Europe to provide interpreters for interviews with witnesses and suspect. The two new EU Directives on strengthening the rights of accused or suspected persons to information, interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings is likely to increase the demand for remote interpreting especially in the initial stages of criminal proceedings.
3 Current practice

An example of videoconference+remote interpreting (Immigration)

- **Interpreters’ Pool Project:** In 2007, the General Directors’ Immigration Services Conference (GDISC) started a European project aimed at sharing interpreters by the immigration services of European countries.
  
  http://www.gdisc.org/index.php?id=548

- Member countries use the pool for ‘relay interpreting’ (via a pivot language) when an interpreter with a required language combination is not available. The mode of interpreting is consecutive.

- The asylum applicant and the case worker are located at the main site, together with **interpreter 1** who interprets between the language of case worker and the chosen pivot language.

- **Interpreter 2 is at the remote site** and interprets between the pivot language and the language of the asylum seeker.
The diagram illustrates the GDISC project, which involves a caseworker speaking language A to an applicant speaking language C through an interpreter. The interpretation occurs in two sites: the main site and the remote site.

- **Main site**:
  - Interpreter 1: lang A<>B
  - Caseworker: speaks lang A
  - Applicant: speaks lang C

- **Remote site**: Interpreter 2: lang B<>C

Source: GDISC 2007
3 Current practice

Frequency of use

- According to the AVIDICUS survey among legal practitioners (2009), the use of videoconference and remote interpreting in legal proceedings currently varies from “not used” to “used regularly” but can generally be said to be increasing.

- All of the 32 respondents (legal institutions) from 14 EU countries stated that the use of videoconferencing and/or remote interpreting was planned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used regularly</th>
<th>Used occasionally</th>
<th>Used rarely so far</th>
<th>Used with varying frequency</th>
<th>Not (yet) used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Czech Rep.</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>France</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3 Current practice

Policy and guidance

- According to the AVIDICUS survey, there is not much guidance yet on VCI and/or RI in the respondents’ countries. Here is what some of the respondents said:

  » There is a global policy on the use of VC, but no special policy on the inclusion of interpreters within a VC link «

  » There is no specific policy on the use of VCI/RI «

Control over equipment

- The interpreters have little control over the VC equipment. They are able to control the volume control in some cases but not camera movement.

- The VC equipment is mostly tested before use or as a matter of routine, but not specifically with the interpreter.
3 Current practice

Reasons for use

- Asked about the reasons for using videoconference and/or remote interpreting, the respondents said the following:
  - witness or expert has difficulty travelling «
  - cost of travel would be disproportionate «
  - to speed up legal proceedings «
  - convenient for prisoners «
  - more efficient use of resources «
  - reduced interpreter travel and waiting time «
  - to overcome interpreter shortages «
  - timely conclusion of cases «
  - reduce costs «
3 Current practice

Exercises
3 Current practice

Hands-on interpreting exercise

At this point of the module, it is time for your own hands-on practice. You will need a group of at least 3 students, scripts of legal proceedings and a VC connection. The following are examples of what you can practise.

**VCI:** One student takes on the role of a prosecutor or judge and is in room 1. Another student takes on the role of a remote witness and is in room 2. The third student is the interpreter and interpreting for approx 10 minutes at either side. Then swap roles and repeat the exercise.

**RI:** One student takes the role of a police officer and another student the role of a suspect. They are in one room. The third student is the interpreter and is in another room. Practise for approx. 10 minutes, then swap roles and repeat the exercise.

Discuss your experience in your group. Compare the two settings with each other and with face-to-face interpreting. What problems did you encounter? What would be required to resolve them?
3 Current practice

Exercise 1

Immigration Bail hearings

The following comment was made by a bail applicant whose case was heard via videoconference (quoted in BID 2008). The bail applicant was in a detention centre, whilst everyone else including the interpreter was in a court room. What do you think the comment shows? What could be done to improve the situation?

» Only questions and answers [were interpreted] for me – the rest of the time I was ignored or told to be quiet when I asked question. «
Exercise 2

Court-prison video link

Study the following comment by an interpreter who worked in a remand hearing (quoted in Fowler 2007:11). The interpreter was in the court room. What do you think this comment shows about videoconference interpreting in this situation? What would be required to improve the situation?

» It was a nightmare. I didn’t know where to sit, so I was put next to the defence solicitor. I soon realised that I couldn’t interpret simultaneously. [...] I had to raise my voice so that I could be heard. This resulted in my speaking loudly right into the solicitor’s ear, and I was concerned that he would find this distracting. The prisoner intervened several times, and I didn’t know whether that was because he hadn’t heard or he hadn’t understood. [...] It took a lot longer because of the consecutive interpreting. I was only able to focus on the video screen, so I was not able to look at any of the speakers as I interpreted to the prisoner. The dynamics of this sort of interpreting are different because I’m used to sitting next to the prisoner in the dock and whispering into his ear. «
Exercise 3

Evaluating current practice

Choose two of the project initiatives introduced in this section of the module and discuss their chances of success.

- Start by making a list of criteria that you would use to evaluate the chosen projects.
- Assess the projects against your criteria, summarise the outcome and identify possible problems.
- Think of recommendations for resolving the problems that you have identified.
3 Current practice

Exercise 4

Seating arrangements in court

Explore the seating arrangement in a Magistrates’ Court in England. Find out whether there are any differences to the typical seating arrangements in the courts of your country.

Where would you locate the video screen in the case of a videoconference between the court room and:

- a remote witness
- a remote defendant/prisoner
- a remote interpreter

How should the seating arrangements in the court room change to accommodate the video link to the remote participant/interpreter and why? Make sure you consider the needs of all parties involved.

Source: Magistrates Association, UK
3 Current practice

Exercise 5

Seating arrangements in interview situations

Find out about the characteristic seating arrangement in interpreted police and immigration interviews in your country and then think about the most appropriate position of the video screen in the main interview room for each of the following settings:

- The interviewee (i.e. a suspect or witness in a police interview, or the applicant in an immigration interview) is in a remote location, but the interpreter is in the main interview room (=VCI variant A)
- Interviewee and interpreter are in a remote location (=VCI variant B)
- The interpreter is in a remote location (=RI)

What would your arrangement look like and why? Make sure you take into account the needs of all parties involved.
3 Current practice

Exercise 6

Interpreters’ reactions

Some of the respondents who took part the AVIDICUS survey among legal practitioners commented on the interpreters’ reactions to VCI and/or RI. In the light of your own initial hands-on experience, what do you think about these comments?

» The respondent's view is that face-to-face interpreting is preferable to VC interpreting. However, she thinks that VC interpreting is better than telephone interpretation and in an instant world has its place as a valid means of communicating. «

» Anecdotally, interpreters who have experience in VCI/RI state that it is more tiring, needs specific training and commands higher fees. «

» Interpreters are not used to interpreting via VC, but they have been positive where they have been used. «

» The respondent is not aware of any reports of any difference in quality [between face to face and VCI]. «
4 From practice to research

- Current insights: an overview of what has been learned from the current uses of VCI/RI in legal proceedings, with a focus on the evaluation methods used

- Summary of research findings in other areas of VCI and RI
4 From practice to research

Current insights

- **Immigration bail hearings in England and Wales**
  - The monitoring exercise conducted by BID and the Refugee Council in 2008 (see section 3) examined how bail hearings via VC affect bail applicants. Of the 16 hearings analysed, 11 required an interpreter, who was located in the court with the immigration judge (VCI).
  - A questionnaire was used to gauge the views of the bail applicants.
  - Of the 11 applicants who had an interpreter, 3 said that only the questions directed towards them and their answers were interpreted; at 5 hearings, everything that was said in the courtroom was interpreted; 3 applicants did not give details about this.
  - 3 applicants had difficulty following what happened in the courtroom.

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/position/2008/bail_hearings
4 From practice to research

Current insights

- **GDISC Interpreters’ Pool Project**
  - In the GDISC project, which combines VCI and RI (see section 3), the interviewing officers and both interpreters involved were asked to complete a standard evaluation form. This was to evaluate the interpreters’ effectiveness and the appropriateness of their behaviour.
  - Six months into the project and at the end of the pilot stage (2007-08), participating countries were asked for their opinions on the viability of the project and to gauge the success of the project.
  - The interviews conducted during the pilot phase were said to be ‘very successful’ and the evaluations were ‘very positive’
  - Mainly African and Oriental languages were requested

http://www.gdisc.org/index.php?id=548
Beyond legal proceedings: contradictory findings?

- **Studies on RI in the EU and UN** point to difficulties including stress, fatigue and demotivation of interpreters, with negative effects on interpreting quality and independent of specific technical parameters (overview: Moser-Mercer 2005, Mouzourakis 2006).

- **Studies on RI in medical settings** are more encouraging, but were mainly conducted from a 'client' as opposed to an interpreter's perspective (overview: Azarmina & Wallace 2005).

- **A study on VCI+RI in business settings** reveals problems arising from this very technology but also points to the adaptability of interpreters to the VC conditions (Braun 2004, 2007).
4 From practice to research

Studies on remote interpreting (simultaneous) in the EU and UN

- The studies were based on experimental research (e.g. comparative studies).

- Mouzourakis (2006: 52) notes:

  » It has become clear that interpreter complaints were not only due to the inferior technological conditions, but also the result of a number of physiological (sore eyes, back and neck pain, headaches, nausea) and psychological complaints (loss of concentration and motivation, feeling of alienation) stemming from the remote interpreting conditions. These complaints resurfaced in subsequent experiments, conducted in a variety of technical conditions and by a number of multilingual organisations; it would thus be difficult to attribute them solely to a particular technical setup or even to the working conditions provided by a particular organisation.. «
4 From practice to research

Studies on *remote interpreting* (consecutive) in healthcare settings

- The outcomes of these studies are based on survey data, i.e. participant perceptions.

- Azarmina & Wallace (2005: 44) note:
  
  » The findings of the selected studies suggest that remote interpretation is at least as acceptable as physically present interpretation to patients, doctors and (to a lesser extent) interpreters themselves. «

  » Remote interpretation appears to be associated with levels of accuracy at least as good as those found in physically present interpretation. «
4 From practice to research

Study on VCI+RI (simultaneous) in business settings

- The study was based on a qualitative analysis of recordings and transcripts, and interpreters’ comments on their own performance.

- Braun (2004, 2007) shows that
  - adaptation takes place with regard to interaction, i.e. coordinating who is speaking when – the interpreters took an (unwanted) lead role here
  - adaptation on a more limited level takes place with regard to source text comprehension and target text production, but adaptation relating to these elements is more limited (e.g. if the sound quality is poor)
4 From practice to research

Study on VCI+RI (simultaneous) in business settings

VC communication
- geographical distance: perception of interlocutors via technical channels
- reduced 'social presence' or feeling of remoteness
- problems with comprehension, speaking and interaction

Interpreted communication
- Primary participants:
  - linguistic and cultural distance
- Interpreter
  - general interpreting problems, including e.g.
  - expert distance
  - role of the interpreter

Interpreting in VC
- familiar communication and interpreting strategies are likely to fail
4 From practice to research

Study on VCI+RI (simultaneous) in business settings

Stages of adaptation

- Awareness-raising
- Reduction of performance
- Reflection on own performances

- Spontaneous adaptation
- Experimenting with strategies
- Ad hoc and local problem-solving strategies

- Long-term adaptation
- Globalisation of strategies
- (Global) avoidance and preventive strategies

(Braun 2004, 2006, 2007)
4 From practice to research

Exercises
4 From practice to research

Exercise 1

Evaluation methods – studies in legal settings

Compare and assess the methods used in the practice-based studies that were conducted in legal settings (BID monitoring exercise and GDISC project).

- Identify the aim of the evaluation in each study.
- Make a list of the elements of the evaluation (e.g. questionnaires).
- Assess the appropriateness of the method in relation to the aim, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the different methods.
- Make suggestions for improvement where you think this would be useful.

It may be useful to go to the sources of reference and read the original reports.
4 From practice to research

Exercise 2

Research methods – studies in other settings

Compare and assess the methods that were used in the research studies conducted in the EU/UN, healthcare and business settings.

- Identify the aim of the studies and analyse the research methods used.
- Assess the appropriateness of the methods in relation to the aim, and identify strengths and weaknesses
- Assess the validity of the research findings on the basis of your analysis.
- Make suggestions for improvement where you think this would be useful.

It may be useful to go to the sources of reference and read the original reports.
5 Implications for future research

- Areas and directions of future research on VCI/RI
- Questions arising from current practice for future research
5 Implications for future research

Impact of technology on interpreting performance/quality

- Influence of technical channels on the interpreter's work in different settings
- Effectiveness of technical communication channels (visual/aural perception and cognition)
- Contribution of different modes of communication (verbal and non-verbal communication)
- Impact of remoteness (social psychology: reduced 'social presence')
- Consequences of changes in the communicative behaviour of primary participants due to conditions of VC/remoteness ('knock-on effects')
5 Implications for future research

Impact of the socio-cultural environment in which VCI/RI is embedded in legal settings, e.g.

- Individual-institutional communication, different levels of expert communication
- Primary participants unfamiliar with the legal system of the host country, under stress, vulnerable
- Primary participants not used to public speaking, not used to working with interpreters, using non-standard varieties
- Emotionally loaded or conflicting-goals communication
5 Implications for future research

Impact of interpreting mode

- Traditions vs. technological opportunities
- Consecutive – Whispered – Simultaneous
- What is technologically possible
  - What is legally required
  - What is desirable
- Availability of trained interpreters for each mode
5 Implications for future research

Communication management

- Closely linked to mode of interpreting
- Coordination of communication – who controls the floor
- Technical control – who controls the equipment; options for intervention
- Interpreter's role
5 Implications for future research

Adaptation of interpreters to the technology

- Adaptation processes in different settings
- What does adaptability depend on, where are its limits
- Impact of training and familiarisation
- Quality assurance
- Working conditions of interpreters
5 Implications for future research

Methodological issues

- Validity: comparative studies face-to-face vs. VCI/RI, longitudinal studies
- Research competence (combined linguistic and interpreting studies competence for minority languages)
- Access to data

Further research requirements

- Descriptive: processes, problems, strategies, ...
- Applied: teaching methodology; conceptual solutions
- Evaluative: assessment of quality
5 Implications for future research

Exercises
5  Implications for future research

**Exercise 1**

**Methods for future research**

Choose one of the areas for future research that were introduced in this section (impact of technology, impact of socio-cultural environment, impact of interpreting mode, communication management, adaptation of interpreters) and think about how you would go about researching the questions at hand.

- Start by formulating a concrete research question, also using your own initial hands-on experience
- Identify an appropriate research method
- Describe the kind of results that you anticipate
5  Implications for future research

Exercise 2

Issues for future research

Discuss one of the following points:

- The availability of videoconference technology often goes hand in hand with the availability of equipment for simultaneous interpreting. Should the availability of technology influence future decisions regarding the mode of interpreting?
- Is VCI/RI likely to change the role of the interpreter, and if so, are these changes for better or worse, and should they be counteracted?
- How much technical control does the interpreter need? Should the interpreter operate the VC equipment?
6 Wrap-up

- Final practice session
- Concluding remarks
6 Wrap-up

Hands-on interpreting exercise

Repeat the interpreting practice exercise in module 3, using different settings and/or scripts. Upon completion, consider the following questions.

- Which of the difficulties of VCI/RI do you think could be resolved fast – through training – and which may take longer to resolve? Justify your point of view.

- If you were to design a training module on VCI/RI, which elements would you include?

- Which points would you include in initial guidelines for a) interpreters and b) legal practitioners?

- Go back to Exercise 2 in section 5 and revise the outcomes of your discussion if necessary.
6 Wrap-up

Concluding remarks

- In VCI/RI, the normal difficulties of interpreting remain

**But in addition:**

- Perception of primary participants via technical channels only
- Knock-on effects from behaviour of primary participants, location of interpreter, etc.
- Wide variety of settings to get used to
- Wide variety of technical standards (sound and image quality)
- Dependence on technology
- No clear rules/guidelines as yet
- Changing landscape of interpreting
- Wider legal and political implications and framework not clear yet
6 Wrap-up

Concluding remarks

Requirements:

- Awareness-raising among stakeholders
- Training for interpreters and legal professionals
- Frameworks for best practice (minimum standards, recommendations, guidelines)
- Descriptive, applied and evaluative research
Credits

This training module was created in the EU project AVIDICUS – ‘Assessment of Videoconference Interpreting in the Criminal Justice System’, 2008-2011.

Contact: Dr Sabine Braun, Centre for Translation Studies, University of Surrey, s.braun@surrey.ac.uk

Project partners:

University of Surrey (UK) (co-ordinator)
Lessius University (BE)
Local Police Antwerp (BE)
Dutch Ministry of Justice (NL)
Dutch Legal Aid Board (NL)
Polish Society of Sworn and Specialised Translators TEPIS (PL)
Ann Corsellis (UK)

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The best effort has been made to ensure that the material is factually correct at the time of publication. This material was produced with financial support from the Criminal Justice Programme European Commission - Directorate-General Justice.

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