Face to Face

With Two Or More Machines In-Between

by

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Though I cannot name the author of this art piece I wanted to use it as an inspirational start for this presentation. A reminder that our reflection on Technology should never be missing from our reflections on The Humanities.

Microperceptive/Microperspective

❖ Interpreters deal daily with:

barriers separating the groups identifying with the old categories of nation and national identities

in a world taken over by a multifaceted and micro diverse reality seized by what seems to be a growing number of local and fragmented identities.

❖ And to complicate things even more, the technology that elicits that reality changes from day to day leaving us with the sense that nothing lasts more than one school year, at best.

❖ **As in many other professions, people are asking**

Will Intepreters be replaced by Technology?

How many gadgets and electronic devices do you have with you right now?

Common Devices

❖ smart phones

❖ ipads and other tablets

❖ laptop computers

❖ watches

❖ ipods

❖ earphones

Common Devices

❖ fitbits

❖ e-readers

❖ bluetooth earpieces

❖ digital cameras

❖ digital recording devices

❖ digital locks

On Average:

❖ I once asked my students from an AP Literature Class to place all their devices on a table.

❖ 4 to 5 devices on average, per person

❖ In a room of 46 students, over 200 devices.

From Books and Boards to iPads

❖ Tablets were adopted in classrooms in the US as early as 2011.

❖ In the year 2013 it was already expected to have access to tablets in schools.

❖ In 2016 schools are no longer interested in textbooks that do not come with an electronic version, and a number of schools are already eliminating books in favor of e-readers or tablets.

Smart Phones and Mobile Technology

Many activities that take human effort have become oddities.

- ❖ Walking to meet with someone.

- ❖ Running to urgently transmit a message.

- ❖ Talking over an issue or giving instructions to a person or a group.

- ❖ Writing by hand.

- ❖ Flipping through pages.

- ❖ Memorizing information.

Smart Phones and Mobile Technology

❖ Now students communicate with each other primarily through:

❖ Calls

❖ Text Messages

❖ Posts

Smart Phones and Mobile Technology

❖ Socialization takes place virtually through FACEBOOK, TWITTER and INSTAGRAM (and other social networks).

❖ To keep a record of lessons students use their phone's built-in Camera, a gadget that also has replaced photocopying, copying, scanning, taking notes, doing presentations, reporting on basically any subject and enhancing their presentations with music, video, high quality pictures, etc…

Interconnectivity

❖ How this world of interconnectivity and very complex machines is affecting our perception and "human" interactions should not only be the subject of new courses in the Humanities and Critical Thinking, but declared as a new age as impacting as The Renaissance.

Our Prehistory

- ❖ I once wrote with a mechanic typewriter.

- ❖ I exited the mechanic world through a monitor/terminal linked to UCSD's computer, way before current Macs…

- ❖ I travelled through Eudora, and its many sisters and brothers.

- ❖ Hearing about hypertext, virtual reality or cybernetics was fiction when I started school.

- ❖ Mobile Technology did not exist for most of my life. Smart Phones were an item of cartoons like The Jetsons.

- ❖ Operating things remotely only happened to imaginary Super Heroes like Ninja Turtles or Transformers.

Interpretation and Technology, Inseparable

❖ The history of interpretation since Hernan Cortes and Malinche, in 1521, has undergone a few changes, but most of them have happened in the past 13 years.

Dead? Not just yet

❖ Will 500 hundred years of the paradigm of the human interpreter end the year 2021?

❖ No! Computer Scientists know well that <u>artificially producing an original thought, like the human mind does, is far from true.</u>

Where Are We?

❖ We have great platforms to provide speech to speech translation

❖ Speech recognition is done very efficiently by computers

❖ We have advanced speech to text processing

❖ Machine translation engines are able to match up speech renditions, operating with great accuracy.

❖ We have sophisticated dictionaries that operate quickly and effectively in updating and expanding terms.

❖ We even have speech production through speech synthesis.

❖ The newest might be the use of algorithm to prompt machine recognition, selection and emotional response, mostly done with image, but more recently with speech.

Wow!

❖ A lot of it can be achieved with machines, except <u>reasoning</u> and <u>the emotional selection of ideas and thoughts.</u>

"Interpreters will never be replaced by technology.

They will be replaced by interpreters who use technology." *

*This quote comes from a segment on the topic by Barry Slaughter Olsen (Professor of Translation and Interpretation at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey.)

Using Dill in teaching Consecutive Interpretation.

❖ It is always nice to discover tools that can allow us to work in the difficult task of assessing speech rendition.

❖ In this activity the goal is to let the students reflect on the topic of recording voice and exploring all the possibilities at hand.

❖ So here is a three part activity to conduct in groups of three:

The Icebreaker

Task No. 1

❖ Match the following inventions with a date. Use this activity to get to know your team members.

Task No. 1

Match the inventions on the following list as per the timeline provided. Use this activity/discussion to get to know your team members.

Writing	The Color Television	The Printing Press
The Photocopier	The Encyclopedia	The Sign Language
The Cinematograph	The Laptop Computer	The Smart Card
The Compact Disc	The Newspaper	The Telephone
The Computer Mouse	The Pencil	The Typewriter

The Timeline		
3044 bc	1751	1938
1437	1795	1963
1593	1876	1974
1605	1895	1979
1714	1938	1981

Assessing

Using Dill lets you:

❖ You can monitor the icebreaker

❖ Interject to guide or to expand on a point

❖ Observe students strategies and later comment/propose new strategies.

Recording

Task No. 2:

❖ The following passage is part of a speech recorded by Porfirio Díaz, President of Mexico, at the turn of the 19th and the 20th Century, as per the request of Thomas Alba Edison. One of you will read it in English and others in your group might interpret it, consecutively, in one or more languages.

❖ (After recording, or after this class, you may research this item and listen to the actual recording, accessible online, to assess the quality of recording done in 1909.)

*"I saw in you the talented hero, a hard working winner seeking to eternalize the charming voice of loved ones here on earth in your wonderful phonographic equipment, reproducing every rhythm, every accent and every modulation of the human language. **

❖ *Using Dill lets you monitor accuracy, voice, complete rendition, and to make sure participants understand how this with the topic of inventions and the use of new technologies, ties in with the task of recording and achieving good quality results.

❖ Both of this tasks would have exposed the student to the vocabulary employed in the languages used.

Wrap-Up

❖ Task No. 3:

❖ To wrap up you will discuss with your team members the most recent experience at which an interpreter helped you understand what was said.

   o   focus on the quality of sound

   o   the accuracy of renditions

   o   the use of technology

❖ Ideally this wrap up activity lets students reflect and continue on to research and connect more dots on their own.

After Completion of the three tasks (in class)

❖ Students might want to research more on recording and recording quality needed for interpreters.

❖ Students might want to research on the overall topic of Language Technologies.

❖ Students might get interesting on viewing and assessing recent interpretations appearing in the Media or in the Internet… Or the discussion might facilitate more connections with styles and practices in the field of Interpretation they need to train themselves to see.