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Kudoway v1 Platform Trial Report: KUDO Streaming of Translation Commons @LocWorldTokyo April 5th 2018: a joint trial report from the interpreters' view

During **LocWorld36 Tokyo April 5th 2018** the Translation Commons Interpreting Think Tank Team became involved in the live streaming and remote interpretation of Jeannette Stewart's presentation 'A Digital Collaboration Platform Transforming the Language Industry', that had been kindly permitted by the organisers of LocWorld. We, the interpreters, worked on Version 1 of the Interpreting Delivery Platform (IDP) _kudoway.com_ (KUDO) from our homes in Manchester, Madrid and London, providing remote simultaneous interpretation (RSI) into German and Spanish. **This is a joint report of our experience.**

Preparation of 'The Booth in the Cloud'

While KUDO strongly recommends that interpreters work out of KUDO's own interpreting studios with booths in a number of locations, it is also possible to interpret via the platform from one's home office provided certain requirements are met. This is the option used during our trial on the occasion of the streaming of the Translation Commons session @LocWorld36 Tokyo.

Your home office will obviously have to be a quiet location where you cannot be disturbed. Make sure you work from a chair that does not creak. There will be a remote soundcheck prior to the event, for which you need sufficient time in order to iron out any sound issue that might be detected.

In terms of the actual hardware the computer or laptop used for interpreting must meet certain requirements (8GB RAM, Intel i7 Core Processor) as one cannot afford to be working with a device that is slow or even freezes. **Having a second device to look up terminology or consult reference material in addition to your interpreting PC or laptop is highly recommended.** By the same token, a reliable Internet connection with at least 5 Mbps upload and download speed is required, and it has to be Ethernet rather than Wi-Fi. The other obvious requirement is a **professional USB headset/mic.** No specific software is required but Google Chrome is the recommended browser for accessing the virtual console.

This console is referred to as the 'Interpreter Interface' within Kudo and pretty straightforward and intuitive but obviously you need to familiarise yourself with it and have set it up before any assignment. The first thing to do is configuring your operational languages, outgoing and incoming (in that order), by simply clicking on drop-down menus that show all languages available for a specific job. What's also important and easily forgotten **is that you have to then activate your outgoing language, i.e. choose the channel you will interpret into, by** simply **clicking on it.** If you forget to do so, you will not be able to switch your mic on. Incidentally, it will be helpful to remember that RED means <u>Mic On</u> and GREEN <u>Mic Off.</u> And that's it, you're now all set to start interpreting.

Performance   I   Sound quality for the interpreter

The interpreters were **thrilled to participate in an event that was being held on another continent thousands of kilometres away** from their homes and that felt so real. Nevertheless, it is necessary to highlight that on this occasion the connection with the conference room and the technician took place pretty late and that sound problems had to be resolved at the very last minute with microphone changes to improve the sound, which meant a lot of stress for us. The sound from the floor remained challenging during the whole conference — borderline to undoable — **which meant still more strain for the interpreter** in addition to new uncertainty: How to ask for a better sound once the conference has started? The remote communication with the technician was not immediate **and the lack of a physical booth-mate especially showed in a situation** where the onsite interpreter completely relies on their colleague to get word to the technician if anything goes wrong sound-wise. **In situations of extreme strain** — as they are bound to happen in our stressful profession — **the booth-mate's help is of the utmost importance** and **the onsite interpreter (with the right booth-mate) does not even need to gesture, speak or write to be helped.** In sharp contrast to this, **the offsite interpreter is on their own in the virtual booth,** immersed in the task of interpreting. Therefore, immediate reliable assistance with any sound issues should be available. We should also bear in mind that the **probability of only working for 45 minutes or an hour and therefore working alone rather seems to increase with offsite assignments.**

Nevertheless, we believe that with a greater familiarity of the interpreters with the management of the system, more experience of the service provider with troubleshooting and the

improvement of the features and possibilities of the system as already available in Version 2, everything should be easier and less stressful. And for the sake of clarity, **the sound problems** experienced **were due to the AV system** used **on-site, not** at all due **to the RSI platform. This still highlights that better communication between both is required.**

We would also like to note that **back in April 2018 at LocWorld34 Tokyo we worked on KUDO Version 1.** In the meantime one of us interpreters has had the chance of working with **KUDO Version 2 in the course of an RSI assignment with immaculate sound.**

Performance   II   Sound quality for the interpreters' audience

As mentioned at the beginning, we interpreters worked from home remotely. One of us served as a backup and so had the chance to listen in to all booths**. The sound coming from the German and the Spanish booth was comparable to an onsite event, in spite of the poor quality of the sound coming from the floor.** This presented quite a challenge for the **interpreters**; they nonetheless **managed to produce a decent interpretation** for those parts of the audience not listening to the English original.

Performance   III   Other Features

KUDO features Document Sharing for text, presentation and image files, including the option to share only between interpreters. The fact that you need two tabs to see both the speaker and follow the presentation of documentation seems to be a common feature of all IDPs tested insofar: **For us interpreters following both speaker and presentation on the same screen, as possible with KUDO Version 2** since 8th May, 2018, would have been ideal.

In comparison to other KUDO events such as webinars, at which some of us have assisted, we could not follow Jeannette's Translation Commons presentation in pptx. on this occasion. This had to be surely noticed by those amongst you who assisted remotely. We are told this was not a failure of the KUDO platform technology per se but of the onsite equipment.

For the interpreters this meant having to resort to other personal means in order to be able to follow the presentation by themselves, because they had counted on following it through KUDO as usual.

Without the interpreter's or speaker's hat on, it is possible to **participate remotely in a KUDO session through your smartphone, tablet or computer,** by logging in to their platform with the given password. As a participant you can choose your language channel, raise your hand to ask a question or text your comment and participate in Live Polling.

Peer-to-peer recommendations: KUDO recording and copyright clauses

In spite of an informed discussion, we have been unable to achieve an unanimous agreement on the specific meanings of two of the clauses in the Legal Documentation required to <u>sign when finishing KUDO's onboarding course, a step-by-step online tutorial for anyone interested in working through KUDO, with a series of comments on how to proceed if adapting your home working space for RSI,</u> even though this is not the recommended option.

One of the two slightly unclear clauses refers to the copyrights of any content shared on KUDO. The second partially controversial clause states 'Contractor hereby waives all property rights over such audio or recordings'. As conference interpreters, many of us being freelancers, we DO fully understand that any company needs to protect itself, as we do. Nonetheless, **we would recommend a clearer wording that would not require consultations** within and beyond the Translation Commons Interpreting Think Tank.

The members of the Interpreting Think Tank attach great value to the generally accepted position, the same of AIIC, that interpreting is for immediate consumption and any recording of it is the interpreter's product and thereby becomes their copyright. **Interpreters may sell their copyrights for a fee.**

One of these **consultations resulted in** the following **really useful and informed possible recommendations from a veteran conference interpreter** working both onsite and remotely:

1- KUDO will not use the material for their own advertisement due to client confidentiality

2- **KUDO's client** (who hired the interpreters) **should have a clear contract** with the interpreters stating that **either no part of their performance will be recorded** (period); **or** if we agree to a recording being made, **the contract should stipulate:**

(a) **if** a recording will be made,
(b) the **purpose** of the recording
(c) **how** it will be used,
(d) **if** it will be used for promotional purposes by KUDO

In any case, we strongly recommend for all interpreters using IDPs **to read the small print very carefully and take informed decisions.**

Thank you very much, **Diana Nisterenkova-Chester, Giovanna Lester** and **Jeannette Stewart** for **your help and contributions** to this article.

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