Interpreting in Virtual Reality: overview of the IVY project

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About IVY

Project partners:
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University of Cyprus (Cyprus)
Steinbeis-Transferzentrum Sprachlernmedien (Germany)
University of Bangor (UK – Wales)
Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen (Germany)
Bar-Ilan University (Israel)
This presentation

Aim

• Introduce and contextualise Project IVY
• Set the scene for subsequent presentations

Outline

❖ Background and rationale – where we started, and why
❖ Our solution – the IVY virtual environment
❖ Assessment – solutions, illusions and future prospects
Where we started – and why

Globalisation, inter-social

Business interpreting

Smaller languages – working across fields – diversification of skills – new methods of interpreting

Available resources

• Lack of teaching resources (for some language combinations and types of interpreting)
• Lack of qualified tutors

Public Service Interpreting

Interpreting landscape

• Insufficient number of training programmes
• Reduced teaching hours in existing programmes

Education and training

Need for clients to understand how to work effectively through an interpreter

Migration, intra-social

Client side
Where we started – and why

**Recommendations**

- Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings:
  
  Those who train judges, prosecutors and judicial staff shall...
  
  “pay special attention to the particularities of communicating with the assistance of an interpreter.“ (Art. 6)

- Corsellis (2008):
  
  interpreters should participate in the training of public service staff – training together

- Ozolins & Hale (2009):
  
  interpreting quality (in public service contexts) is a shared responsibility
Where we started – and why

Recommendations

• SIGTIPS (European Language Council Special Interest Group on Translation and Interpreting for Public Services):

  The staff of Public Service Providers...

  “should be trained to work with interpreters” (2011: 22)

  The lack of tutors and resources...

  “may be addressed by resorting to new technologies allowing for the creation of a virtual learning environment” to “make training possible irrespective of location or geographical distance between trainers and trainees” (2011: 18)

  Whenever appropriate...

  “remote teaching and learning facilities should be put in place” (2011: 22)
Where we started – and why

**Scope of current ICT solutions**

Uses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in interpreter training:

- **Digital audiovisual content**: material collections, spoken language corpora (e.g. Bendazzoli & Sandrelli 2005, Braun 2010, Hansen & Shlesinger 2007, Seeber 2006; EU Speech Repository)

- **Content and bespoke functionality**: computer-assisted interpreter training packages – CAIT (e.g. Sandrelli 2007, Sandrelli & de Manuel Jerez 2007)

- **Content + functionality + remote interaction facilities**: online learning platforms/environments (e.g. Tymczyńska 2009; Virtual Classes)

→ Mostly geared towards ‘conference interpreting’

→ Mostly addressing interpreting students only
Where we started – and why

‘New’ generation ICTs

• New generation ICTs such as 3D virtual environments offer:
  ➢ Dynamic and comprehensive support for learning and teaching
  ➢ Immersion, situated and experiential learning, autonomous learning, collaboration
  ➢ Media-rich and user-created content
  ➢ ‘Augmented’ capabilities (for reflection and exploration from different user perspectives)
  ➢ Preparation for future professional practice (digital literacy)

→ Project IVY uses an avatar-based multi-user 3D virtual environment to simulate professional practice in interpreting

→ based on successful prior uses in different educational contexts (e.g. Calongne 2008, Collins 2008, Peachey et al. 2010, Savin-Baden et al. 2010)
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### Project IVY: Interpreting in Virtual Reality

#### Aims

1. Develop an **adaptive, avatar-based 3D virtual environment** for interpreting students and future users of interpreters.

2. Create a range of **virtual interpreting scenarios** (e.g. ‘business meeting’) that can be run in different modes: simulation, exploration, activity and live interaction.

3. Populate the environment with **multilingual digital content** for the interpreting scenarios, adapting video corpora from the LLP project BACKBONE and the ELISA project.

4. Create sets of **learning activities** for interpreter students and future users of interpreters.

5. Evaluate the environment with regard to its **functional and pedagogical appropriateness**.
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The virtual world

- An island on the ‘grid’: the virtual space
- Avatars and robots: user representation
- Reception and tutorials: the way in
- Scenarios and tools: simulation and practice
- How real is virtual: ‘sense of presence’
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- Reflective exercises (non-language specific)
- Reflective exercises (language specific)
- Monologue
- Dialogue
- Skills-based exercises
- Preparatory exercises
- Learning activity mode
- Interpreting practice mode
- Exploration mode
- Live interaction mode

Enter IVY environment – IVY tutorial

Enter – SL tutorial

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Interpreting practice mode

- Role-play practice based on prepared monologues and bilingual dialogues, with briefings
- Embedded in virtual scenarios, with robots as ‘speakers’
- Audio player, user-controlled

→ Situated and experiential learning
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Content – the concept:

- Monologues and dialogues based on BACKBONE and ELISA corpora
- I.e. small monolingual corpora
- New monolingual video corpora (GR, HE, RU)
- ‘Authentic’ content
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Current content:
- Approx. 350 monologues and dialogues
- Covering 10 languages (EN, FR, GE, GR, HE, IT, PL, RU, SP, ZH)

Available scenarios:
- Meeting room
- Presentation area
- Seminar room
- Factory workshop
- Classroom
- Tourist office
- Museum/exhibition
- Sports ground
- Outdoor spaces
- Court room
- Police station
- Medical centre
- Community centre
- Shop
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Learning activity mode

- Thematic and linguistic preparation, with links back to original BACKBONE/ELISA corpora
- Skills-based training (e.g. note-taking)
- Reflection and self-assessment
  → Autonomous learning
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Exploration mode

- Information for clients and beginning interpreters
- Integrated awareness-raising and reflective activities
  → Autonomous learning
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**Live interaction mode**
- Interaction with others
- Embedded in virtual scenarios
- Simulation of interpreter-mediated events

→ Collaborative learning
Subsequent presentations

13.45 Virtual worlds and the IVY 3D environment

IVY aims 1 and 2: ... develop an adaptive 3D virtual environment for interpreting students and ‘clients’ ...create a range of virtual interpreting scenarios

14:30 Creating the IVY learning content

IVY aims 3 and 4: ... populate the environment with multilingual digital content for the interpreting scenarios, adapting existing corpora ...create sets of learning activities for interpreter students and ‘clients’

16:15 Evaluation

IVY aim 5: ... evaluate the environment with regard to its functional and pedagogical appropriateness

17:00 Discussion panel

Beyond IVY
Solutions, illusions and future prospects

Are we there yet? Are we done yet?

- **Innovation of IVY** – an environment that provides situated learning in situationally realistic scenarios, but...
  - From virtual reality to ‘being there’
  - From proof of concept to ready-made product
  - From Second Life to...

- **Theoretically unprecedented opportunities for simulation, autonomous and collaborative learning, but...**
  - From ‘being there’ to student ‘buy-in’
  - From being overwhelmed to being autonomous
  - From trainee interpreters to clients
Solutions, illusions and future prospects

Beyond IVY

3D virtual environment technology is moving on
→ Migration to better suited environments

Future technological prospects

Future settings

Future content

Future professional practice

Changing landscape of interpreting
→ From remote learning & teaching to remote interpreting

Changing training requirements everywhere
→ IVY for multi-lingual situations, simultaneous interpreting

Future content

From working with legacy material to new content
→ Use of ‘dynamic extension’ approach

Future professional practice

Link to other platforms

Outcomes of IVY

Integrating further client groups

Researching learning processes

Integrating further client groups