

Relay Interpreting

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- **Ciclo: Secondo Semestre**
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- **What Is Relay Interpreting?**
- **When is Relay Interpreting Necessary?**
- **How does relay interpreting work in practice?**
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What Is Relay Interpreting?

- In relay interpreting, the interpreter listens to the source language speaker and renders the message into a language common to all the other interpreters. These other interpreters then render the message to their target language groups.
- Relay interpreting is sometimes referred to as “indirect interpreting.”

When is Relay Interpreting Necessary?

- Relay interpreting is most commonly used when there are multiple target languages at an event, or when no interpreter can be found for a certain language combination.
- This technique is especially helpful when there are listeners who only speak rare languages, or languages which are uncommon to an area.
- For example, while in the US, it can be difficult to find a Mandarin-Portuguese interpreter — but it is much easier to find a Mandarin-English interpreter and an English-Portuguese interpreter. As such, the two interpreters form a sort of “relay” team.

How does relay interpreting work in practice?

- Imagine that a hypothetical technology company – Techcorp – is holding a multilingual conference that requires interpreting. The working languages at the conference are Mandarin, English and Portuguese.
- The Chinese CEO of Techcorp addresses the audience in Mandarin.
- Interpreting booth “A” interprets from Mandarin into English for all English-speaking attendees.
- The interpreter in booth “B” doesn’t listen directly to the speaker – the CEO – but instead listens to the interpreter in booth “A,” who is interpreting into English.
- The interpreter in Booth “B” interprets from English into Portuguese for Portuguese-speaking conference attendees.

The Challenges of Relay Interpreting.

- Relay interpreting is a complex process that relies upon synchronization and has its own unique challenges. Experienced conference interpreters understand these challenges.
- Conference rooms of multinational organizations may already have the requisite technology to support simultaneous relay interpreting. Otherwise, language service companies with expertise in conference interpreting can provide audio engineers to set up and monitor the necessary audio equipment.
- Conference attendees are usually unaware that they're listening to an interpretation delivered via relay.

Consecutive Relay Interpreting

- Imagine a hospital in Madrid where a patient speaks a minority language (say, Maori). The doctor makes a statement in Spanish, and the statement is simultaneously interpreted into English. Then, there is a consecutive interpretation from the English version into Maori.
- Next, the Maori speaker will speak; this is interpreted into English, which is then interpreted consecutively into Spanish.
- Relay interpreting is a valuable skill that will become increasingly valued by event organizers who need to deliver interpretations in multiple target languages.