

BORDERLESS DEFINED

Newsletter of Borderless Interpreting & Translation, LLC



Thoughts on On-site vs. Remote Interpreting

Newsletter No. 120 issued by Noriko Rogers (October 3, 2022)

I hope this finds you doing well! My apologies for the delayed issue.

I consider this past week somewhat of a milestone: I had a chance to interpret on-site for the first time since early 2020.

In no particular order, I would like to share my post-assignment thoughts while they are still fresh in my mind.

Value of non-verbal cues and other contextual information

As you probably know by now, I have found a lack of non-verbal cues one of the most demanding aspects of remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI). (If you are interested in exploring more on this subject, [ATA's position on Remote Interpreting](#) touches on limitations posed by communication without non-verbal cues. I briefly discussed this topic in [this newsletter](#) as well.)

Last week, I was positively overwhelmed by the continuous influx of non-verbal cues and their value in interpreting. Everything from facial expressions to hand gestures helped me stay more in tune with the speaker's message, and unsurprisingly, they helped me deliver interpreting with confidence.

Now, I feel that my next task is to improve my ability to visualize the verbal information provided during remote interpreting.

Presence of feedback

In her recent presentation on mental health and empowerment for freelance interpreters at JACI, [Mika Segawa](#), a clinical psychologist, cited reduced (or a lack of) feedback as one of the biggest stressors for interpreters working remotely.

She mentioned that interpreters used to enjoy, either consciously or subconsciously, feedback in different forms (including non-verbal) in the pre-pandemic environment and it acted as a ceremonial closure for the day. It had never occurred to me that what seemed like such a trivial detail in the course of a working day carried substantial meaning.

To cope with less or no feedback on remote platforms, she suggested coming up with a post-assignment ritual that would serve a similar purpose, such as having a wrap-up call among interpreters.

Last week, I appreciated even the most subtle nod or bow, especially after learning how we as interpreters internalize these gestures.

The next Borderless Defined will be in your inbox in the week of October 17, 2022.

Thanks for reading!

Noriko Rogers

Borderless Interpreting & Translation, LLC

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