

## Hybrid and Remote Interpreting: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You with Aimee Benavides

Summary by Andrea Recinos

California based Aimee Benavides is a certified federal court interpreter. During her presentation titled "Hybrid and Remote Interpreting: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You," she reviewed different aspects of remote and hybrid interpreting and how not being prepared can make your job more difficult and stressful. Luckily for us, she also explained how to avoid these situations and what is the proper, or at least the most recommended, equipment for remote interpreting.

When video conferencing, there are certain aspects that can compromise interpretation, such as sound quality, poor technical equipment, and lack of preparation. Aimee explained that as a hybrid or remote interpreter, there are certain things to keep in mind, specifically regarding technical equipment. For instance, devices like high-quality headphones, soundboards, and a virtual card sound will significantly improve your work. It's also important to choose, if possible, a microphone that has a built-in mute button. Why? It's simple: it will be more convenient for situations where you quickly need to sneeze, cough, or simply take a deep breath. Getting to know the main aspects of the equipment used when interpreting remotely will help the interpreter be better prepared, and in consequence, they will be ready to fix potential technical issues. Also, it will help with liability concerns, because the more you know, the more you'll be able to tell if something is your responsibility or not. Remember, you can't be responsible for things out of your control, and most of the time, remote interpreters have little to no tech support in their work environment.

Besides knowing your work tools, a remote or hybrid interpreter should also know about the special planning required for certain events, such as conferences that have both in-person and virtual guests. To make sure everything goes smoothly, ask beforehand for video and audio access, and if guests will use their own devices or if they will be provided during the event. Keep in mind that if it's a bring-your-own device type of situation you need to consider potential issues regarding the user's access to the interpretation. How do you avoid this? By establishing good communication with the hosts; simply ask them all of these details in advance and let them know about how it might affect their event and your work. All of these aspects of hybrid and remote interpreting might overwhelm you, but as Aimee said, if you understand what the pitfalls are, you can know how to avoid them. Therefore, knowing your technical equipment and asking all of the details of the event should help you prevent most, if not all, of potential issues that can arise in the remote interpreting field.