

Book review

Interpretation, techniques and exercises, **by James Nolan.**

The book, the author tells us, is "meant to serve as a practical guide for interpreters and as a complement to interpreter training programmes".

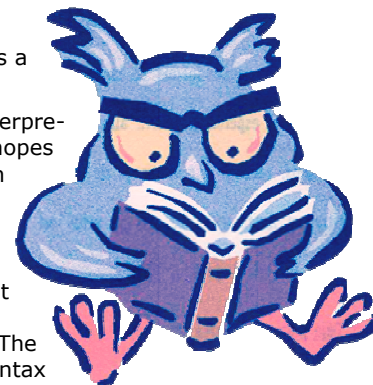
James Nolan is a former UN Senior Interpreter, is a graduate of Geneva and has taught interpretation in higher education institutes in the US, so I began reading with high hopes. These hopes were sustained as the Introduction addressed competently and clearly basic questions such as: what is interpretation? what is the difference between consecutive and simultaneous? and so on.

However, I began to be puzzled when I looked at the bibliography. The only books *on interpreting* consulted are Herbert, 1952, and Rozan, 1956. There is no treatment of different interpreting techniques or how to acquire them. There is barely any separate treatment of consecutive and simultaneous, and a woefully inadequate final (!) chapter on note-taking. The only chapter which really addresses interpreting techniques is chapter three on complex syntax and suppression. Unfortunately, even this is superficial and incomplete, and fails to explain why the techniques are useful and relevant to simultaneous interpreting.

Finally, my puzzlement turned into dismay as I followed the string of chapters and plethoric examples and exercises which deal with rhetoric and linguistic subtleties. Chapter headings are, for example, "Figures of speech", "Formal style", "A Policy Address", "Political Discourse", "Latinisms". Under "Figures of speech", for example, the author includes fifty pages of exercises where the student is asked to match idiomatic expressions such as "raining cats and dogs", or "when the penny dropped", with their French equivalent, or matching Chinese and English proverbs. Under "Formal style" he devotes five pages to analysing a speech by Abraham Lincoln from 1838 and provides the highly practical advice to interpreters, "To preserve at least some of the flavour of French or Spanish formal oratory, it is useful to draw on the rhetorical devices used by the great orators of ancient Greece and Rome (e.g. English translations of the speeches of Cicero) or English speaker of the 19th century and earlier times."

Precious little room is left for anything of interest or use for the practising conference interpreter or student of interpreting, and even that room is barely furnished.

A journey embarked upon in hope, accompanied by ever-deepening puzzlement and ending in dismay. I've made that journey. You needn't bother.



Source: Roderick Jones (A/1 CS)
Author of *Conference Interpreting Explained*, Manchester, 2002

New rotateurs for Programming

Following the call for expression of interest via SCICNEWS flash of 14 June 2005,

four colleagues have been selected to be added to the list of programming rotateurs, with assignments starting from September 2005.

They are:

- **Eva Bertin (A4 SV)**
- **Maria Carduck (A5 DE)**
- **Lisbeth Zoeffting (A13 DA)**
- **Gemma Santasusana (A18 ES)**

The selection panel would like to thank all the candidates for their interest in working in programming.

Source: Wolter Witteveen (C 2 Programming)