

# INTERSTENO Newsletter 63



June 2014

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## From the President's desk

On May 22nd, being in Moscow, I met the Russian National Group leaders and a certain number of colleagues. The occasion was to awards those who competed a year ago (2013) in the Internet Keyboard competition organised by Intersteno. A report on this will be published in a later e-news. The conversation that followed the awards, and the taking of photographs was quite interesting. Nora Berezina, Irina Potyagova, Olga Makarchuk, and Olga Kotenko, known to some of you for their participation in some Congresses, referred to the worries over the reduced interest in shorthand and typewriting. This seriously threatens even the survival of the Group itself. Further, they wondered - a survey will be produced in the near future - about the direction in which the professions that once used those techniques as main tools for their daily work, such as secretaries and professional reporters, will move. I am sure that the questions put by our Russian friends are similar to those of many Intersteno members.



We know that techniques are born, live and one day progressively fade away or profoundly change, but the intellectual competences of the “experts of text” remain the imperishable and unaltered profile of our professions. It is an important fact that we should consider when thinking of education and training and when imagining the Intersteno future. Furthermore, we must focus on the evidence suggesting that, in the next few decades, due to the enormous increase in digitisation, which indubitably achieves a higher degree of efficiency, nearly all jobs and work flows will be likely to contain less human work and more machine work; that will imply a lower employment rate. So we will be called upon to improve our knowledge and those competencies that cannot be governed by a machine or a computer; we will be required to demonstrate different skills compared to those we have been accustomed to use. But this is not an obstacle for us in Intersteno; on the contrary it is a main reason for the Intersteno aim to be part of the progress that is made in technology and the upgrading of techniques, rather than being overcome by them.

One example is subtitling for deaf or hearing-impaired people. By the way, in this issue of e-news you can read about the exciting events in Rome where the Pope's speeches were captioned real-time in four different languages - Italian, English, Spanish and Polish - with the cooperation of respeakers and three software house. You can also read the interesting survey on the quality of subtitling in British TV reproduced here.

The 12th Intersteno Internet Keyboard Competition has just ended. You will find a detailed report in the following pages. A total of 1776 students and 243 teachers from 19 countries were involved. I congratulate those who won. They deserve their success which is the result of years of training and study. Let me congratulate in particular Ahmet Yasin Akmeşe, 9 years old, from Turkey, who successfully typed in 15 languages, and Carlo Parisi (Italy) whose record (969 characters per minutes) is another remarkable goal for our Federation and an example for the youngest. I want to thank those who did not win: their participation in this feast of friendship confirmed how challenging and exciting it is to have an international competition with results in real-time. We are grateful to Georgette Sante, helped by Helena Zaviačičová and Gian Paolo Trivulzio for the perfect organization ... and, as we Romans say in welcoming successful jobs "ad maiora!" (up to higher heights!)

Let me mention also the start up of a new and - as far as I know - unique project carried on by two friends of the Argentine National Group, Jorge Bravo and Sergio Salinas, parliamentary reporters at the Argentinian Senate. "Palabras Dibujadas" (Drawn Words) is the title of a radio programme launched by the Radio del Congreso de la Nación in Buenos Aires ([www.bcnradiocom.ar](http://www.bcnradiocom.ar)) every Thursday, 14.30-15.00), with the cooperation of the Department of Special Collections, an historical archive of documents at the Parliament Library. The programme will focus on the meaning of shorthand and reporting for a larger public and illustrate historic documents, including some of the first Intersteno Congress reports.

I draw attention to the Council and IPRS meetings that will be held in Shanghai on October 22nd-24th (register at [www.intersteno.org](http://www.intersteno.org)), thanks to the generous hospitality and cooperation of the Chinese National Group and the Education Committee. It is a most important opportunity for discovering the beating economic heart of China as well as its authentic traditions. We will deal with strategic topics for Intersteno and for our professions, in the light of the Jubilee 50th Congress of July 2015.

On May 20th Nel Tjong A Tjoe, Dutch competitor and former member of the Jury, passed away. Older and younger Intersteno friends will not only keep in mind her unique shining smile, but in addition the strength and the enthusiasm that Nel use to dispense around her, including within the Intersteno community. She wanted to take part to the 49th Congress in Gent: I met her down a corridor of the Congress venue. She hugged me. In that hug I felt that she wanted to leave us a message of hope: *keep cheerful, keep up with growing Intersteno*. Thank you Nel!

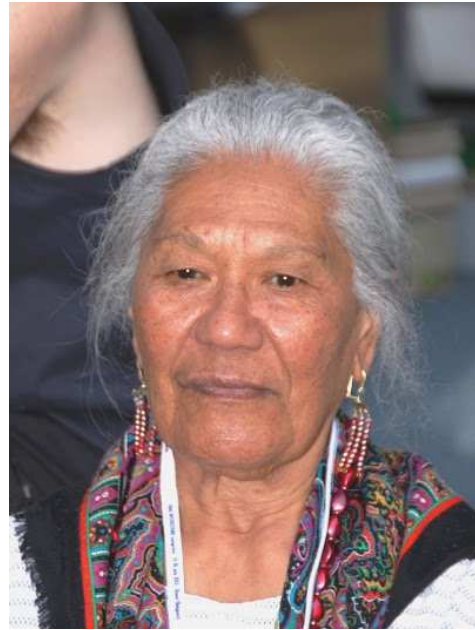
Happy reading!

*Fausto Ramondelli*

## Nel Tjong A Tjoe passed away

I met Ms. Tjong A Tjoe for the first time end 1976. Both we were selected for a test competition in the Energiehallen in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. This competition was seen as a rehearsal for the world championships at the occasion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> INTERSTENO congress in Rotterdam 1977. For both of us, Rotterdam was our first INTERSTENO congress and many congresses would follow.

In the next years Nel joined the training seminars in keyboarding of the Belgian team and so we had regularly contact. In 1983 she invited us, with some friends, in The Hague in her house in the city center. A friendship for almost 40 years had started...



As young lady Nel left Paramaribo (Suriname) where she was born and came to the Netherlands. She integrated very well in her new country and started as teacher in typewriting and shorthand for the famous Schoevers private school group.

Notwithstanding the differences in age, background, color... we had a lot of common things. From competitors we evolved to organizers of keyboarding competitions in our countries. Both we were members of teacher associations in Belgium and The Netherlands.

After her retirement she trained a group of new parliamentary reporters for the Dutch Parliament. When a biography of Mr. Willem Drees, prime minister of the Netherlands in 1948-1958, was prepared to be published, she was involved in teaching shorthand to the authors of that biography, since Mr. Drees always took down his notes in shorthand.

Besides the typewriter/computer keyboard, Nel loved the piano keyboard. Every day she played and on several occasions she participated in small performances.

Nel was always optimistic and stimulated especially young people to persist in their duties and to enjoy their results, to see the positive sides of daily things, small and big.

Nel passed away on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2014 at the age of 81 years. At the funeral many keyboarding friends said goodbye, among them INTERSTENO jury leader Jan den Holder and INTERSTENO Board members Rian Schwarz-van Poppel, Georgette Sante and Danny Devriendt.

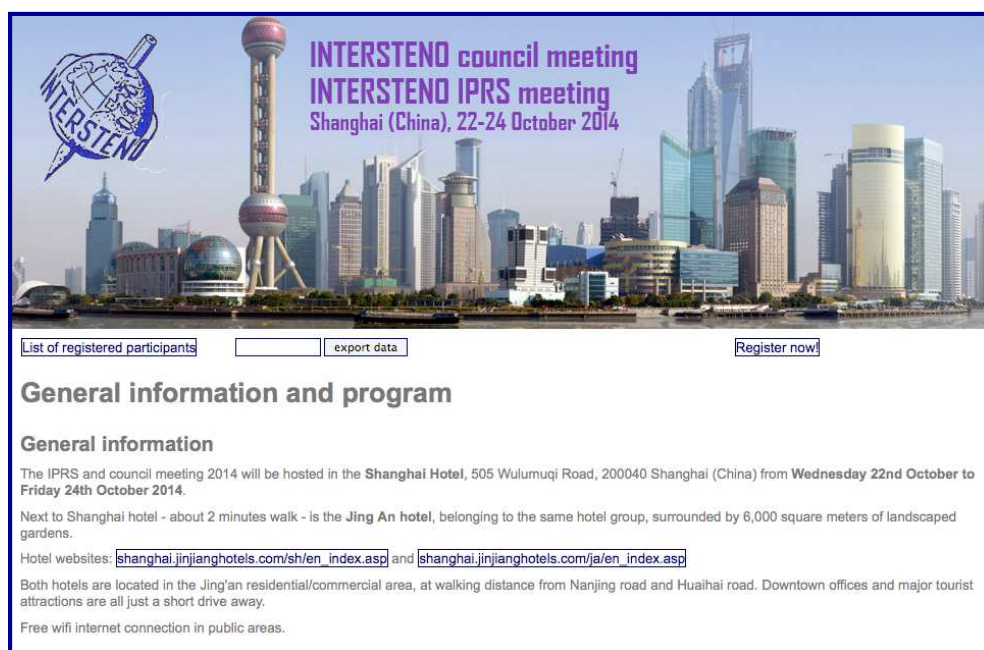
I'm so thankful to have shared so many precious moments with her. She continues to live in our memories for always.

*Danny Devriendt*

*Photo: Georgette Sante*



## Council and IPRS meeting 22-24 October 2014 in Shanghai



The screenshot shows the INTERSTENO website for the 2014 Council and IPRS meeting in Shanghai. At the top, there is a banner with the Shanghai skyline and the text: "INTERSTENO council meeting INTERSTENO IPRS meeting Shanghai (China), 22-24 October 2014". Below the banner, there are links for "List of registered participants", "export data", and "Register now!". The main heading is "General information and program". Under "General information", it states: "The IPRS and council meeting 2014 will be hosted in the Shanghai Hotel, 505 Wulumuqi Road, 200040 Shanghai (China) from Wednesday 22nd October to Friday 24th October 2014." It also mentions the Jing An hotel and provides hotel websites: [shanghai.jinjianghotels.com/sh/en\\_index.asp](http://shanghai.jinjianghotels.com/sh/en_index.asp) and [shanghai.jinjianghotels.com/ja/en\\_index.asp](http://shanghai.jinjianghotels.com/ja/en_index.asp). It notes that both hotels are in the Jing'an residential/commercial area, near Nanjing road and Huaihai road, and offer free wifi internet connection in public areas.

The meetings will take place at the Shanghai Hotel, where accommodation is booked.

Full information about the programme and how to send the remittances for the hotel rooms is available at [www.intersteno.info](http://www.intersteno.info), where final registration is needed not later than 30th June.

## 9th May - Internet2014 is over!

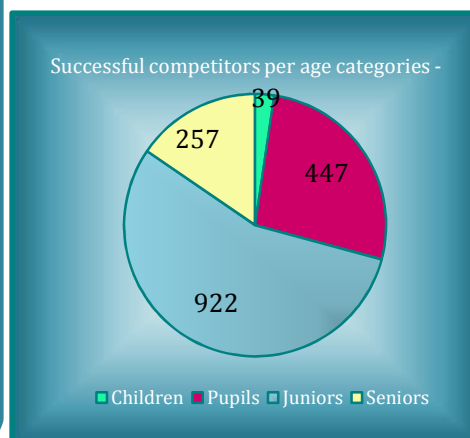
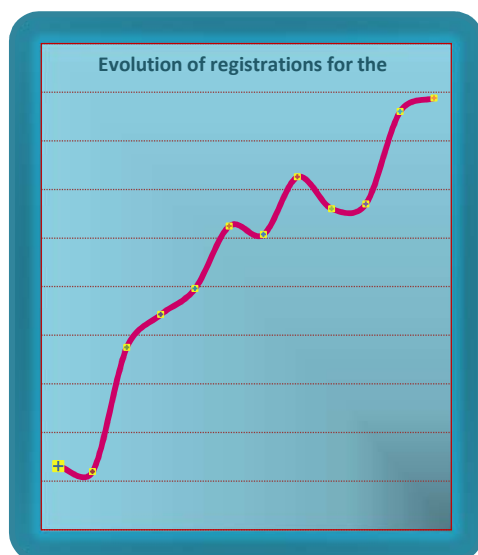


The banner features a fiery orange and yellow background with the text "2014 INTERSTENO KEYBOARDING CHAMPIONSHIP" in large, bold, blue letters. To the right is the INTERSTENO logo. Below the main text, it says: "2014 Intersteno Keyboarding Contest NCRA is proud to support the 2014 Intersteno Keyboarding Championship. In this 12th edition of the contest, Intersteno hosts their online keyboarding championship with competitors from all over the world. Visit [Intersteno.org](http://Intersteno.org) to learn more about this". At the bottom right, there are five small squares, with the fourth one from the left being yellow.

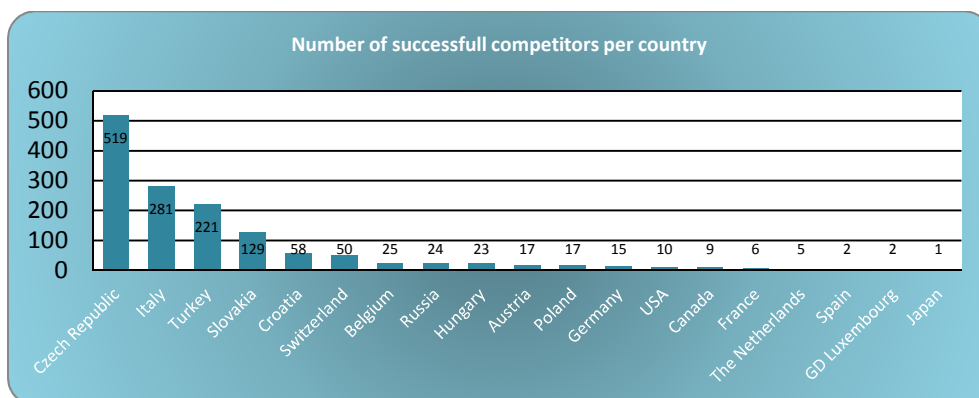
The 12th edition of the Keyboarding Championship by Internet closed on 9th May 2014.

The success of this international competition does not decline: in all 19 countries, 209 schools, 243 teachers and 1776 students were registered.

Looking at the statistics for the age categories we can state that most of the competitors were in the Junior category (17-20 years old). The youngest were 9 years old and the oldest ...75! As we say in French "chapeau bas"!



The average success rate is about 85% but in the Junior category this rate is more than 91%.



Motivated by Matt Riley, Education Programme Manager, several members of the NCRA (National Court Reporters Association - USA) have competed for the first time, one of them (Jerry Lefler) being placed fifth in the Senior, mother tongue, category, with a speed of 854 cpm using a stenotype.

Mr. Takahiro Sumino from the association "All Japan typists" also took the test in English despite the fact that English is for him a foreign language. He was placed 28th with a speed of 534 cpm. He intends to seek to motivate many more Japanese typists to take part in the next Internet contest.

Most of participants compete in their mother tongue but for some of them being successful in all the 16 languages is a yearly challenge. In the children category, Ahmet Yasin Akmeşe - Turkey - (9 years old), almost succeeded in this difficult performance: he was successful in 15 languages, but not in Russian. All our congratulations.

However, the biggest event of this 12th edition is that the World Record (for 10 minutes - via Internet) has been beaten!

**The world-beater is Carlo Parisi - Italy - with a speed of 969 cpm and a 100 % accuracy rate**

In 2012 Carlo had already outstripped the score of Mikula Václav (CZ), who held the record since 2007; he has now beaten his own result and with perfect accuracy! We applaud him!

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
CPM	828	809	872	807	745	775	839	896	801	969
Accuracy	0,109	0,049	0,089	0,124	0,067	0,000	0,060	0,011	0,050	0,000
Name	Mikula Václav	Mikula Václav	Mikula Václav	Hakan Kurt	Petr Hais	Sean Wrona	Sean Wrona	Carlo Parisi	Sean Wrona	Carlo Parisi
Country	Czech Rep.	Czech Rep.	Czech Rep.	Turkey	Czech Rep.	USA	USA	Italy	USA	Italy

Now, the question is: will Carlo be able to smash our World Championship record, held by Helena Zaviačičová (alias Matoušková) since 2013, typing for 30 minutes on a paper base? Let's wait and see. Unhappily, due to her work (for free!) as jury leader in Text Production, our friend Helena will not be able to accept the challenge.

Please find hereunder the names and performances of the three best competitors in each age category.

Internet contest 2014									
Mother language					Multilingual				
			cpm	%	Points			Successful languages	Points
<b>Children</b>						<b>Children</b>			
1	Ahmet Yasin Akmeşe	Turkey	379	0.053	3696	1	Ahmet Yasin Akmeşe	Turkey	15 32 700
2	Jonáš Vala	Czech Rep.	379	0.105	3595	2	Onur Demirbaş	Turkey	14 29 795
3	Onur Demirbaş	Turkey	354	0.113	3343	3	Jonáš Vala	Czech Rep.	7 15 754
<b>Pupils</b>						<b>Pupils</b>			
1	İlyas Pamukçu	Turkey	603	0.116	5684	1	Zehra Taşkale	Turkey	16 59 585
2	Zehra Taşkale	Turkey	593	0.101	5637	2	Artem Yagunov	Russia	16 49 085
3	Klára Odehnalová	Czech Rep.	587	0.136	5474	3	Mehmet Kurt	Turkey	15 48 328
<b>Juniors</b>						<b>Juniors</b>			
1	Karolína Foukalová	Czech Rep.	639	0.172	5845	1	György Kamarás	Hungary	16 66 500
2	Kerem Yaprak	Turkey	596	0.134	5564	2	Oleg Omelchenko	Russia	16 61 818
3	Raphaël Louys	Belgium	575	0.191	5208	3	Puchala Franciszek	Poland	15 58 328
<b>Seniors</b>						<b>Seniors</b>			
1	Carlo Parisi	Italy	969	0.000	9695	1	Celal Aşkın	Turkey	16 72 377
2	Sean Wrona	USA	808	0.025	7980	2	Carki Parisi	Italy	15 71 263
3	Celal Aşkın	Turkey	740	0.108	7008	3	Vincent Navarro Maronda	Spain	16 68 500

Georgette Sante

## Subtitling the canonisation

by Francesca Marchionne (onA.I.R. President) and Valeria Pasca (onA.I.R. Vice-president)



## Foreword

On April 27th 2014 one of the greatest Christian historic events took place: four Popes virtually met for the first time. Pope Francis celebrated the canonisation of Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II in front of hundreds of thousands of believers together with the emeritus Pope, Benedict XVI, who concelebrated the Mass.

On the secular side, on April 27th 2014, one of the most important events took place in the history of respeaking, in that this technique was used for the first time to subtitle such an important event in real time in four different languages - Italian, English, Spanish and Polish - by onA.I.R., International Association on Respeaking.

For this ambitious project, implemented in collaboration with the Vatican Television Centre (CTV), onA.I.R. relied on 40 volunteers and 3 software-houses, involved at various levels and different phases. The two main characteristics of the event were “international cooperation” and “technological support”.

## International cooperation



It is important to underline that the international cooperation that characterised the event involved five different States: Italy, Spain, Poland, and the US States of Georgia and Colorado. Italy, of course, had a prominent role in the project, not just because the Holy Mass was held in Saint Peter's square, but also because both onA.I.R. and SyNTHEMA Srl are Italian. The actual subtitling process of the event was basically divided into two phases. In the first phase, previous to the event, some onA.I.R. members translated the official booklet of the event (the original version being in Latin and other languages) into Spanish and Polish (the Italian and in English versions were provided by the organisers of the event), while other members rearranged such translations into subtitles. The only parts of the Mass unknown to the respeakers were the homily and the final thanks.





These parts had to be subtitled live. That is why, on the day of the event, the Italian respeaker, Carlo Eugeni, was connected both with the CTV, that broadcast in real time audio and images, and with three interpreters (Spanish, English and Polish), who were themselves connected via Skype with the respeakers subtitled in the respective languages.



The subtitling process could then start:

- The Italian respeaker received the original audio from CTV and created the Italian subtitles in real time;
- The interpreters received the voice of the Italian respeaker and simultaneously interpreted it for respeakers;
- The respeakers received the translation in their language and created the subtitles in real time.

Specifically, this is how each language service was organised:

- **Italian:** one respeaker and two editors who interchanged, in the same location in Italy;
- **Polish:** one respeaker and one editor, both in the same location in Poland, who are shown in this image
- **English:** two respeakers who interchanged, one in Georgia and one in Colorado;
- **Spanish:** one respeaker for the homily and the final thanks in Spain and one subtitler for the subtitles to be manually cued, in Italy.

### Technological support

- onA.I.R. has been collaborating for two years with the Italian software-house SyNTHEMA Srl, which developed the respeaking interface called **SpeechTitle2**, that can broadcast real-time subtitles directly on the web, so that they can be easily accessed from all over the world.
- SpeechTitle2 works thanks to the speech-recognition engine Dragon NaturallySpeaking and allows for managing the subtitling process in different ways depending on the needs. Thanks to SpeechTitle2 an event can be subtitled in real time by one or two operators, who can work both on-site and remotely.
- If the two operators, namely the **respeaker (who produces the text by dictating it to the software program)** and the editor (who corrects the text) were to be distant it would be necessary to work on two different computers both connected to the Internet, one in the “respeaking” mode and the other one in the “editing” mode. In this case the respeaker would orally produce the text which is transcribed thanks to the speech recognition engine on his/her computer and simultaneously transferred on the editor’s PC who would verify the text and, in case of mistakes, correct it before the web broadcast.
- As far as the output is concerned the number of lines per subtitle and the number of characters per line are chosen by the respeaker upfront, while the final output layout can be entirely customised by the user, who can choose font, character dimension, colour of the text and colour of the background. The user can also choose different colours for the text that has already been displayed (and that therefore has presumably already been read) and the newly arrived text (yet to be read).
- On the occasion of the canonisation, onA.I.R. decided to use only one PC per language with a delay of 3 seconds from the automatic word-by-word broadcast of the text.
- For the languages Italian and Spanish the software program was used without further adaptations, while for English and Polish the software developer, Nicola Piccinini, had to make some changes in collaboration with the technicians of two software-houses: American Advantage Software and Polish Unikkon. The collaboration with Advantage Software was requested by the respeakers participating in the event, who were more familiar with the respeaking software Total Eclipse.



- The collaboration with Unikkon was due to a practical necessity: Dragon cannot be used for the Polish language. If, on the one hand, adapting SpeechTitle2 to the English language proved to be quite easy, on the other hand adapting it to the Polish language was difficult because of some Polish characters that would not appear on the web page. Nonetheless, the Poles managed equally well to subtitle the whole event.
- As far as accessibility of the service is concerned, onA.I.R. was confronted with the problem of a huge number of simultaneous connections and the management of four different web pages, one for each language, that had to be refreshed every quarter of a second for each user, so as to enable the subtitles flow. To avoid the system crashing onA.I.R. booked five external servers, one for each language (two for English).
- The high number of simultaneous connections caused another problem: since the webpages where the subtitles appeared also hosted the video stream of the event produced by YouTube, the normal delay of about 30 seconds from the actual live coverage increased. Furthermore every Internet connection normally streams the video with a varying delay, depending on every single user. For all these reasons, the best option seemed to be allowing the users themselves to set their own delay, so that subtitles could be in synch with the video stream.



Everything was supervised in real time by the project manager, Francesca Marchionne, who was ready to solve, when possible, any technical issue, and by some collaborators who reported to the manager every streaming problem.

For more detailed information about the project team, to watch the videos and see our photo gallery, visit [www.respeakingonair.org/canonization.php](http://www.respeakingonair.org/canonization.php).

## News from countries

### Japan



46th National High School shorthand Competition in Japan.



This competition was held in Kyoto on March 30, 2014. The Nagaoka Shogyo (Niigata Prefectural Commercial High School) won the Team competition while Gifu Shogyo (Gifu Commercial High School) was second.

Competitors numbered 60 drawn from 10 high schools across the country namely: Nagaoka Commercial, Hamamatsu Commercial, Gifu Commercial, Shimada Commercial, Ogaki Commercial, Saga Commercial, Ichinomiya Commercial, Aichi Commercial, Seiryō High school, and Midorigaoka Commercial.

Miss Akane Terashima (Gifu Commercial High school) achieved the best results (pictured on the left, showing her satisfaction with the V sign) and second was Miss Rina Kato (Nagaoka Commercial High school).



Both competitors completed their transcript with 0 faults, so it was necessary to have a playoff, which led to the highest speed of 340 characters per minute. The Gifu Commercial High school sent 17 competitors for this event.

#### Lefty writer, Miss Kanae Taniguchi won the OB Shorthand contest

Miss Kanae Taniguchi is a university student, and now one of the fastest writers in Universities in Japan.

She began to learn the Nakane system three years ago in Kwansei Gakuin University. But she had great trouble in writing since she is left-handed. I obtained her shorthand notes (which are reproduced here below) of her competition test on the day of Old boy and Girls contest on 30th March 2014 in Kyoto. Her shorthand signs were written from right to left by left hand. It was good that an Old boy left the reversed text for newcomers.



Miss Taniguchi will become a shorthand reporter in a Shorthand reporting company after graduation, next April.

さて、毎年、年末にその年の新語流行語のベストテンを織り込んだ文章で、速記を練習中の方々へのメッセージを作成しています。今回は、今までの成績はしようがない、まあ、特別のミラクルもすぐに無理で、じえんじえんだめで、ジ・エンドだと、思っていたけれども、今ごともそういう内気なキャラを破り、速記文字がフラツクときはぎょうさん書けばいいと、納得して、一気にみっちり、本腰を入れる方針で、何倍も繰り返して、練習して、自信を持てば、成し遂げられると、優勝へと意図すればピーンと力が湧いてきて、ハッピー・エンドに向けて、一転、以後うまくいくでしょう。がんばってください



というもので

した。こういう文字遊びは隠し言葉という新ジャンルにしたいです。

Sate,Mainen,Nenmatsu ni sono Toshi no Shingo Ryukogo no Best Ten o orikonda  
Bunsho de ,Sokki o Renshu chu no Katagata e no Message o sakusei shite  
imasu.Konkai wa,imamadeno Seiseki wa ,shoganai,ma,Tokubetsu no Miracle mo  
suguniwa Muri de,JenJen Dame de,The End dato omotte ita keredomo,Imagoto  
mo souiu uchikina Kyara o yaburi,Sokki moji Ikkini micchiri, Hongoshi o ireru  
Houshin de,Nanbaimo,kurikaeshi Renshu shite,Jishin o moteba,nashitogerareru  
to ,Yusho e to Ito sureba,pi-nto,Chikara ga waitekite,Happy End ni  
mukete,itten,igo umaku iku desho.Ganbatte kudasai to yu mono deshita.Koiu  
Moji asobi wa Kakushi kotoba to yu Shin Genre ni shitai desu.

*Tsuguo Kaneko*

*A video showing Miss Taniguchi demonstrating her writing is included in the Latest News (May 2014) of [www.intersteno.org](http://www.intersteno.org).*

## Belgium

### 17th May - Results proclamation of ASPB annual contest.

Every spring, for about 30 years, the Belgian "Association des Professeurs de Secrétariat Bureautique" (an association of teachers in secretarial and information skills), known as APSB, organises competitions in keyboarding via the Internet, using the Taki software, as well as a word processing contest, in the schools of Wallonia.

The word processing contest had been a big success in previous years, , offering elementary practice but also "integrated" tests using Excel sheets, data merging, insertion of illustrations and so on. Now, due to a number of new requirements from the teaching authorities, teachers have difficulty in finding enough time for this additional practice: only 120 students took part in this contest.

On the other hand, the participation in the keyboarding contest has increased by about 60 %. Moreover, some schools/students from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg have competed with the Walloon pupils.

The official prize-giving ceremony took place on Saturday 17 March 2014. More than 150 people joined in the festivity room of the Athénée Royal in Esneux (near Liège) to receive certificate or to congratulate the "best" students in these competences.

Jeannine Delange, the president of the association, was also pleased to welcome many other guests such as members of the congress, inspectors and some headmasters. In her speech she pointed to the very good results of many students and invited them to consider joining the Belgian Team for the 50th Intersteno Congress and the world championship in Budapest. They have officially received their contest participation card for 2015, paid by APSB.

The champion of the day was Raphaël Louys, five times multilingual champion in the APSB competitions and third in the junior age category



of the 2014 international Internet Contest. Georgette Sante awarded him his international certificate and a bronze medal.

It was also the opportunity to applaud the brave teachers who did not hesitate to compete with their students in the 12th Internet Contest. The best one was Benoit David, who was with us in Brussels 1991 as competitor and in Ghent 2013 as ... a singer.

As a "cherry on top" competitors with the best results not only received their certificate and congratulation, but various gifts principally offered by APSB and in some cases by school associations or "aficionados". On the table of gifts, you can see a tablet, a camera, keyboards for laptops, a number of printers and eight Go-USB-keys.

All of this is made possible thanks to the devotion of a small group - comprised almost exclusively of women.



## Events

### European Conference of STTs ECOS 2014 in Helsinki 22-24 August 2014.

The Conference programme includes introductions and workshops on current issues in speech-to-text interpreting, such as STT in foreign language teaching, the newest research in the field, speech recognition and ergonomics in STT.

It will be held in Hotel Pasila: Sokos Hotel Pasila

The event begins on Friday, 22 August 2014 at 13.00 and ends on Sunday, 24 August 2014 at 15.00.

The conference costs 340€ if the fee is paid by 30 April 2014. After that, the fee is 450€. The fee includes the programme and meals (from lunch on Friday to lunch on Sunday). Accommodation in Hotel Pasila costs 150€ per person for two nights in a double room and 250€ per person for two nights in a single room. The conference fee and accommodation costs will be charged after registration.



Organisation is by Kuuloliitto ry (The Finnish Federation of Hard of Hearing), Suomen kirjoitustulkit ry (The Finnish Association of Speech-to-Text Interpreters), HUMAK University of Applied Sciences and DIAK Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.

More information about the conference:  
[www.kuuloliitto.fi/fin/in\\_english/ecos\\_2014/](http://www.kuuloliitto.fi/fin/in_english/ecos_2014/)

Here you can download the preliminary programme which includes a report titled: Intersteno: tele/distance interpreting

You can also contact: [sirpa.lauren @ kuuloliitto.fi](mailto:sirpa.lauren@kuuloliitto.fi)

## What's new

### Ofcom publishes first results on quality of TV subtitles.

Ofcom is an Independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries: on 30th April 2014 it released this report, which can be fully read and downloaded at this link:

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/subtitling/statement/samplng-report.pdf>.

Below is an excerpt reproduced from the news release.

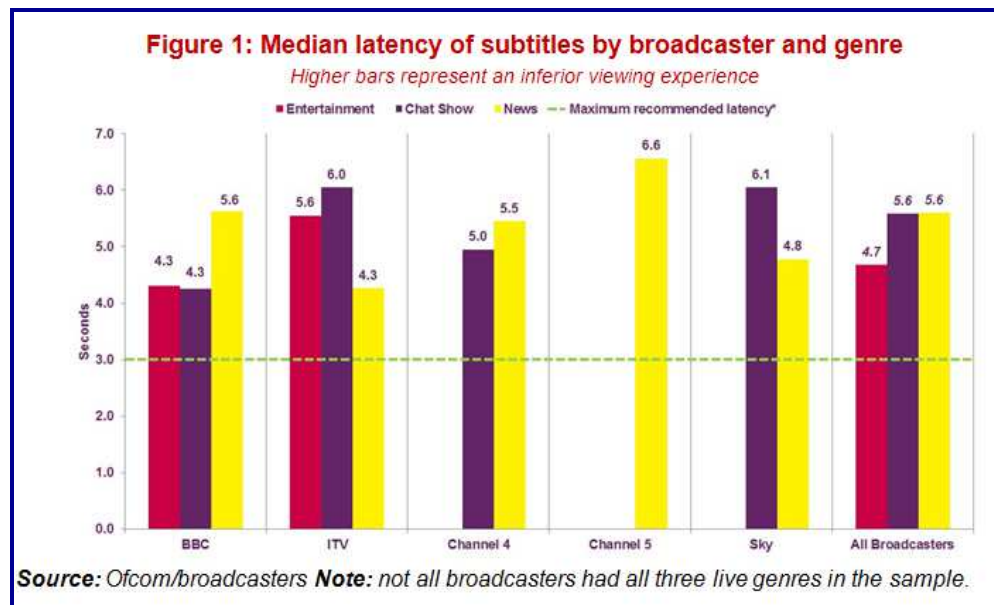
Subtitles are used by over a million people with hearing impairments to watch TV. Addressing concerns from viewers, Ofcom last year required broadcasters to start reporting on the quality of live subtitles to identify areas for improvement.

Today's report samples the accuracy, speed and latency - the delay between speech and the corresponding subtitle appearing - of live TV subtitles. It is the first of four reports on live subtitling Ofcom is producing over a two-year period.

Viewers have told Ofcom that poor latency is one of the most frustrating aspects of live subtitling, often resulting in a disjointed viewing experience.

Samples of BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and Sky programmes showed that the median latency was 5.6 seconds (see Figure 1), which exceeds the recommended guideline of a maximum 3 seconds delay.

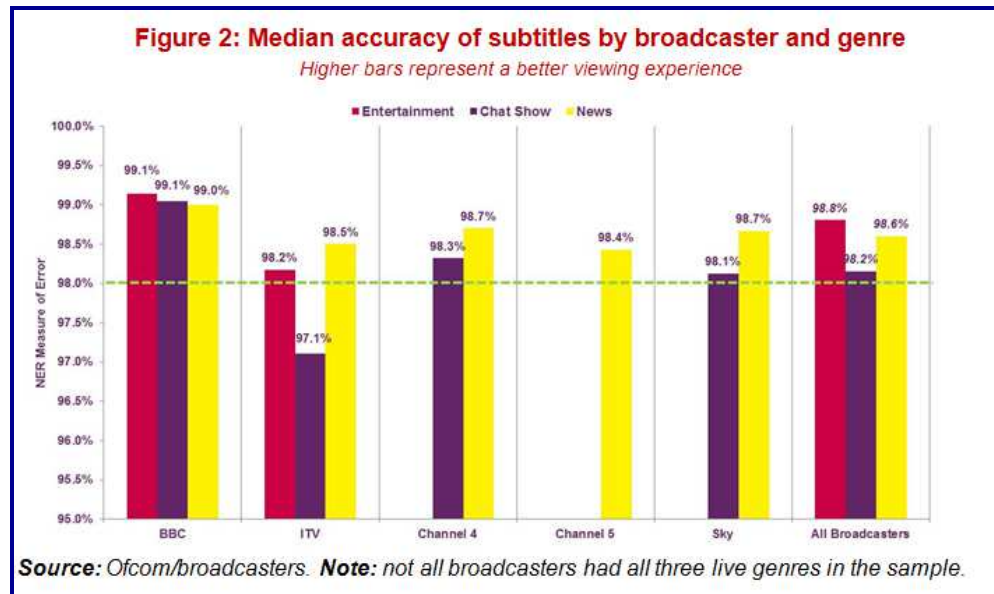
Ofcom will ask broadcasters to consider how latency can be reduced and whether, for example, they can take advantage of any small delays in the transmission of live programmes to improve latency.



The speed of subtitling (words per minute displayed on screen) can also impact the viewing experience.

The subtitles sampled met the current guidelines for a maximum speed of 160-180 words per minute. Ofcom will review these guidelines in light of the data gathered over the four reports to see whether they are appropriate for viewers.

Accuracy, another key measure, was rated as generally good by researchers that audited the data on behalf of Ofcom. They consider that 98% of subtitled words being accurate on live programmes is an acceptable standard (see Figure 2). However, accuracy did fall below 98% on some occasions.



These measurements will be used with future samples to build a better understanding of the quality of live subtitling provided by the major broadcasters.

By requiring broadcasters to measure quality of subtitles regularly, Ofcom expects them to identify and act upon opportunities to improve live subtitling to benefit viewers.



## Further improvements to subtitles

Today's report also examines new approaches that broadcasters could take to tackle poor subtitling.

Ofcom is encouraged that broadcasters are making greater efforts to increase the amount of block subtitles used in live programmes. Block subtitles, where several words appear at once as a single block, are easier and quicker for viewers to read than scrolling subtitles.

However, Ofcom remains concerned that a significant number of pre-recorded programmes are provided to broadcasters too close to transmission to allow subtitles to be prepared in advance. This results in lower quality subtitles for viewers.

For this reason, Ofcom is asking broadcasters for a further report on how they produce subtitles for pre-recorded programmes during the second half of 2014, and will publish the findings next year.

## Subtitled programmes double in a decade

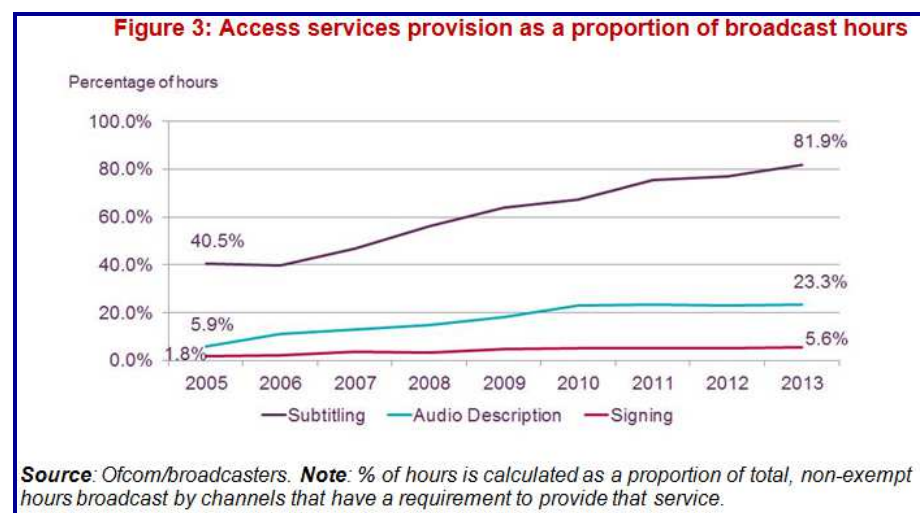
Ofcom has also today published a [report on the development of TV 'access services'](#). These are the subtitling, signing and audio description of programmes, which benefit viewers with hearing and sight impairments.

The number of channels required to provide TV access services increased from 22 in 2004 to 73 in 2005, after Ofcom published strengthened requirements for broadcasters. Today, these services are provided by 76 channels, which account for over 90% of total TV viewing.

Since 2005, the new rules mean the access services targets that each broadcaster is required to meet rise each year from the launch of the service. For subtitling, this rises from 10% of programmes in the first year to at least 80% in the tenth year a channel is on air; for signing from 1% to 5%; and for audio description from 2% to 10%.

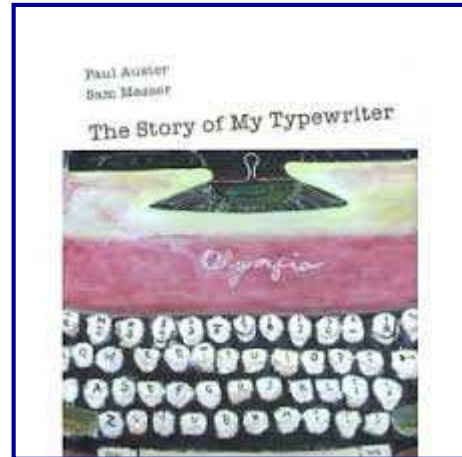
As a result, the availability of access services has increased substantially as a proportion of total broadcast hours for those channels required to provide them.

Between 2005 and 2013, subtitled hours doubled from 40.5% to 81.9% of hours of programming broadcast, audio description increased four-fold (from 5.9 % to 23.3%), and signing rose from 1.8% to 5.6% for channels required to provide access services.



## The story of my typewriter

This is the story of Paul Auster's typewriter. The typewriter is a manual Olympia, more than 25 years old, and has been the agent of transmission for the novels, stories, collaborations, and other writings Auster has produced since the 1970s, a body of work that stands as one of the most varied, creative, and critically acclaimed in recent American letters. It is also the story of a relationship, a relationship between Auster, his typewriter, and the artist Sam Messer, who, as Auster writes, "has turned an inanimate object into a being with a personality and a presence in the world." This is also a collaboration: Auster's story of his typewriter, and of Messer's welcome, though somewhat unsettling, intervention into that story, illustrated with Messer's muscular, obsessive drawings and paintings of both author and machine. This is, finally, a beautiful object; one that will be irresistible to lovers of Auster's writing, Messer's painting, and fine books in general.



## TechEd: Microsoft reveals new Office features available only in the cloud



Microsoft displayed new Office features at TechEd 2014, but some of them will never be available to customers who do not embrace the cloud version of the software suite, Office 365, and the company will take its time bringing others to market for Office Server users.

During the keynote speech at the annual conference, attendees saw a demo of Office Graph, a feature that monitors users' behaviors and makes it possible to intelligently sort available data so that the most relevant is presented.

That sorting requires machine learning, which in turn requires massive CPU power available only in the Office 365 cloud.

Office Graph is the keystone of OSLO, the back end that allows Office 365 to comprehend the work relationships that create the social network that propels collaborative productivity.

## Shorthand writing against dementia - cognitive training and healthy ageing



### Combatting dementia through shorthand

Under the above heading a meeting with experts took place on March, 29, 2014, in Schwalmstadt-Treysa, Germany. Ralf Gross, representing the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft deutscher Stenographiesysteme" (Working Group for German Shorthand Systems) as organiser of the meeting and the vice-mayor of the town were able to welcome two top-class experts in the medical field of clinical geriatrics and an audience of about 40 interested persons.

The impulse for the successful meeting goes back to 2009. Gunda Steinmetz of the Shorthand Association of Minden and president Norbert Haake had ever been convinced that shorthand writing combines physical, mental and intellectual training in a perfectly harmonious way. Such a training, they thought, could certainly have positive effects on cognitive performance with increasing age. Still - there was no scientific proof.

What can be achieved by initiative, conviction and personal engagement is sometimes amazing. Against all odds, the two stenographers succeeded in launching a long-term study on shorthand as a cognitive training. In the presence of press and radio the first results of the study were made public in the "Stenografenhaus" of Treysa.

Dr. Jens Zemke, head of the geriatrics department of two clinics in the region, gave an overview on the comprehensive complex of dementia, 50 % of which is represented by Alzheimer disease. In Germany today not less than 1.3 million people are affected, with a projected doubling until 2050.

Dr. Zemke explained the different stages of the disease, from the first symptoms and the methods of therapy. There is a number of protective factors - such as regular physical activity, a balanced diet, hobbies like music or dancing, or, very important, social contacts - and it now seems from the study that practising shorthand writing is a further most valuable factor.

Head of the study is Dr. Manfred Gogol, past president of DGGG Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gerontologie und Geriatrie and Senior Physician of the Clinic for Geriatrics in Coppenbrügge. He explained the interaction of the medical and neuropsychological tests in combination with procedures of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) which are required in the context of such a study. A group of 16 brave ladies between 63 and 78 years of age who are learning shorthand or refreshing their skills have been regularly undergoing those procedures for nearly three years now, in addition to their regular stenographic training. And they have decided to continue. And what about the results? They are remarkable, says Dr. Gogol.

Over a period of nearly three years persons in a higher age bracket learning or practising shorthand writing showed no, or significantly reduced, signs of mental degeneration. In certain aspects the doctors noted a trend to mental improvement of performance which could even be significant. Dr. Gogol says that stable mental performance in higher age groups resulting from shorthand training demonstrates enormous success. The study will be continued, with the intention of creating a broader base of participants.

*Erich Werner*

***Beneficial elements of practising shorthand writing at a higher age - some findings of the Minden study:***

- memory performance, conversion into language
- combination of both language and thinking by speech capturing and literal rendition
- training of attention, concentration and endurance
- performance requirements can be controlled
- increase of general and language knowledge
- movement training by writing training
- group activity by interaction in a social group

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