



**ALMALUNA**  
Language Services

## Interpreting FAQs

### **Q. What is interpretation? Isn't it the same as "translation"?**

A. Interpretation is spoken, and translation is written. While it is common for media outlets to erroneously refer to interpreters as "translators," the process of converting spoken speech from one language into another language is called "interpreting."

### **Q. What kind of interpreting is there? What is an interpreting "mode" and why does it matter?**

A. Professional interpreters must master different styles or "modes" of interpreting in order to fit the context of their assignment. A conference requires a different mode than a medical appointment (simultaneous vs. consecutive). A judge may ask an interpreter to read a charging document aloud in another language (sight interpreting). A community forum may require an interpreter to use a combination of modes (simultaneous for the main presentation, then consecutive for a question-and-answer session). And a group of guests visiting a tech company from another country may need an interpreter that can not only interpret what they say, but also answer questions about broader cultural differences or remind them of currency conversions when they go to lunch in the company cafeteria (liaison interpreting). Here is a broader explanation of the different modes:

[Simultaneous interpretation](#) is when the interpreter simultaneously listens and interprets a message, typically into a microphone that transmits to listeners. If you have ever seen people wearing headphones or someone with an interpreter badge whispering into a participant's ear during a conference presentation or legal proceeding, the participant is likely listening to simultaneous interpretation of the event. Other examples of when simultaneous interpreting can be useful include community meetings, forums, or any event where it would be more beneficial to leave no pauses and let the words flow. Interpreters must perform [many mental tasks at once](#) to interpret simultaneously.



[Consecutive Interpreting](#) is where one speaker says something, pauses, allows the interpreter to interpret, then continues. You might have seen consecutive interpreting in action when athletes are interviewed after a sporting event or during witness testimony in court cases. Other examples of when consecutive interpreting may be appropriate include medical appointments, attorney-client meetings, or even as a “hybrid” mode with simultaneous interpreting, in which a participant’s question would be interpreted in consecutive mode to a presenter who had been interpreted using simultaneous mode.

[Sight Interpreting](#) (also called Sight Translation) is the oral rendition of a text from one language into another. This happens when an interpreter simultaneously reads a document and interprets its contents into another language out loud. This is often used in court proceedings in the context of charging instruments or exhibits.

[Liaison Interpretation](#) (also known as Escort Interpretation) is when the interpreter follows a group of participants during the entirety of a specific event, be it for a day, a week, or even longer. In this mode, the interpreter would provide other services, such as cultural bridging.

#### **Q. How do I know which mode I will need for my event?**

A. A professional interpreter will ask you for details about your event, discuss the different modes with you, and answer any questions you have. For simultaneous interpreting assignments, AlmaLuna, LLC can provide a set of up to ten, wireless devices with headsets for participants for a rental fee and can provide referrals for equipment companies, or even community-based solutions, should you need more units based on the number of attendees.

#### **Q. How can I find out more?**

Contact Jessica Dover, owner of AlmaLuna, LLC by [email](#), by calling +1503-421-1137, or visit the [AlmaLuna website!](#)