



Table of contents

■ Presidents message	3
■ In Memoriam Dale Biggers	4
■ Intersteno Internet Contest: diacritics in Romanian – modern and legacy Romanian keyboard layouts	8
■ Key takeaways from the congress on live subtitling through respeaking and velotype.....	13
■ A report about the MARS speech-to-text test-competition	15
■ The British Institute of Verbatim Reporters (BIVR) 6 – 8 August 2021	16
■ International meeting of the parliamentary administration and management, “The role of the stenographer in parliaments”	18
■ Asociación de Administración Legislativa de la República Argentina (AALR) - an excellent conference.....	20
■ Franjo Magdić – the father of Croatian shorthand and founder of the Croatian Shorthand Association.....	23
■ Jaroslav Zviačič, Life of adventure thanks to Typing with All Ten Fingers	24
■ Nerds per Minute: A History of Competitive Typing written by Sean Wrona	29
■ Interesting book of the history of shorthand in Australia, written by Carmel Taylor	31
■ A friendly meeting	33
■ Death of the Argentina stenographer Héctor Cataldo.....	34

Presidents message



My dear Intersteno Friends,

Not without pride I present you the e-news of October. Much has changed since the start of the COVID pandemic. We were unable to meet, but the contributions to this e-news show that many activities have continued in the past period. So there is much to read. Many thanks to all who contributed to this e-news.

Cautiously we start to look ahead again. All signals are green for our 53rd conference in Maastricht, from Saturday 6 to Thursday 11 August. More information about this will be posted on the Intersteno website in the coming months.

The upcoming (online) council meeting will take place on November 4 at 2 p.m. The agenda and accompanying documents will be sent in time to the members of the council.

The next e-news will appear in December. The deadline for submitting articles and activities for the Event Calendar for the December e-news is the 26th of November, to be sent to marlenerijkse@intersteno.org.

Rian Schwarz van Poppel
Intersteno president

In Memoriam Dale Biggers

JULY 4, 1944 – OCTOBER 7, 2021

Obituary

DALE CLYDE BIGGERS passed away peacefully after a short but valiant siege with cancer on October 7, 2021. He was surrounded by his beloved wife of 48 years, Virgene Koehler Biggers, and his daughter, Eva Erickson Biggers. Dale was preceded in death by his parents, Hazel Erickson and Captain Clyde Eugene Biggers; his Biggers uncles Norton Homan, Dale Hampton, Earl Gordon, Clele Henry, and his aunt, Eula (Biggers) Long; and his Erickson uncles and aunts, Walter Russell, Wallace Leroy, Frances, and Lucille (Erickson) Smith. Also, he was preceded in death by his cousins Averil (Biggers) Smith, Don E. Biggers, and Jerry L. Biggers. Dale's Biggers cousins who lived in Ohio, Texas, and Pennsylvania were very dear to him. A graduate of Newman High School, he held Bachelor's degrees in mathematics and civil engineering from Tulane University. Dale was also a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Officer Candidate School.



A Registered Professional Engineer, he had been a member of the Boh Bros. Construction Co. team for the past 53 years. From August 1968 to June 2001, Dale served as an Office Project Manager/Estimator of the Piling and Marine Department. During those years, his projects included 35-foot timber piles for light poles at Metairie Playground and 240-foot steel pipe piles at the Aquarium.

In July of 2001, Dale became the department manager, serving in this capacity until 2009. One of his more notable projects was the recovery work done in New Orleans after the catastrophic flooding from Hurricane Katrina. On September 1, 2005, Dale led the first seven trucks of sheet piles into a totally black city at 4 a.m. Boh Bros. worked with the Army Corps of Engineers in removing water and stabilizing the levee systems in canals across New Orleans.

A Vice President since 2003, Dale devoted much time to the industry's associations. He was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers; the Deep Foundations Institute Driven Pile Committee and chaired the 2017 national convention in New Orleans; the American Concrete Institute 543 Concrete Pile Committee; Chairman of the Pile Driving Contractors of America Technical Committee; Chairman of the GeoCoalition Code Committee; and a member of the Louisiana Code Council.

In 2008, Dale was the only contractor named to serve on the Louisiana Transportation Research Center's Committee to update the Louisiana Department of Transportation policy on Pile Driving Management. Again, in 2016, he was the only contractor named to serve on the committee to revise the Louisiana Department of Transportation Specification Pile Section. During the school year, he served as a mentor to the Capstone teams at the University of New Orleans.

Recognized for his contributions to the industry, Dale received the 2006 American Society of Civil Engineering Outstanding Civil Engineer Award in New Orleans, the 2008 Pile Driving Contractors of America Outstanding Technical Committee Chairman award as well as its first Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017. Posthumously, Dale is the recipient of the 2021 Deep Foundations Institute Distinguished Service Award that will be given in Las Vegas.

As members of the Citizen Diplomacy Council, Dale and his family were armchair diplomats, entertaining International Visitors from all over the world. He and his family also hosted twelve German youth fourteen times and one French youth; namely, Martin Berger, Ines Beyer, Thomas Ferrand, Tobias Frenzel, Jannik Hartmann, Johanna Lennart, Henny Muechler, Jana Nieschalk, Sven Nothnick, Ines Schicht, Pauline Wallossek, Kiri Westphal, and Silke Westphal. A member of the Deutsches Haus, he always looked forward to assisting with the Oktoberfest. Dale served as a member of the Rayne Memorial Methodist Church Board of Trustees.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, October 16, 2021, at the Rayne Memorial Methodist Church, 3900 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans. The visitation will be held from 9:00 a.m. –11 a.m., and the service will follow at 11 a.m. A private interment will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to the Rayne Memorial Methodist Church or to the Deutsches Haus.

(Message taken from the website <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries>).

Memory of Dale Biggers by Rian Schwarz

A sweet, generous and thoughtful man has passed away from us; Dale Biggers. Dale was highly respected in New Orleans and surroundings, but also within Intersteno. Together with his wife Virgene he attended all Intersteno events; congresses, council meetings and IPRS meetings. During congresses he always helped his wife with jury activities but he also helped other Intersteno friends. Whenever you ran into Dale, he took the time for a chat. And he was always positive, with a smile on his face. That really characterizes Dale.

My son Rolf is still talking about Dale; the nice man from Intersteno who took him a whole day to Roland Garros, years ago during the congress in Paris. They had such fun together.

It is hard to imagine that he will no longer be with us at future Intersteno events. We will miss him very much. I wish Virgene and Eva a lot of strength in the coming difficult period.

Memory of Dale Biggers by Anita Dobos

God be with you, Dale Biggers!

Intersteno congress, Prague, council dinner in the film factory. There was only one empty seat at one of the tables next to the Biggers couple. Dale and Virgene were very kind to the young 'novice' Hungarian colleague (that was me). This is how we got to know each other. We had a really good conversation. Then later we continued the acquaintance online and we nurtured the friendship.

No matter where in the world we met (e.g. Paris, Ghent, Budapest, Zagreb, Berlin, Vienna, Cagliari), we always found time for a friendly meeting, a nice program, lunch or dinner etc. Dale's lovely gesture in Zagreb was unforgettable and truly touching for my Hungarian colleague and me! We also found time for a lunch together at the Vienna International Conference (about shorthand). We also have really nice memories with my colleague Detti (Bernadett Berencsi)! He was always very kind to us! It was nice to



meet and talk to him! He was incredibly kind and helpful! He always helped in congresses and competitions where his help was needed!

We met again in Cagliari, but... we didn't think this was our last meeting... Then came the terrible news that Dale Biggers passed away on October 7th... The message that he was no longer with us shocked us all... Unfortunately, the murderous disease took him very quickly, not two months have passed since the diagnosis... It is incredible and very sad that he is no longer with us...

His wife, Virgene and his daughter, Eva lost a great husband and excellent father. There are no words...

We, in Intersteno, have lost a really great and really good person, an always friendly and warm-hearted colleague / friend.

To his wife Virgene, his daughter Eva, his family, relatives, friends and colleagues on behalf of Intersteno we express our deep condolences.

We are sure that he stays in our hearts and memories and we will always remember Dale.

Rest in peace our beloved friend.

A photo selection, made by Georgette Sante



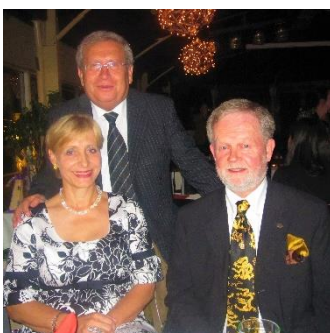
Council meeting Budapest



Vienna



2003 Rome



2010 Budapest



2019 Cagliari



2013 Ghent



2016 Zagreb



2019 Cagliari



Intersteno Internet Contest: diacritics in Romanian – modern and legacy Romanian keyboard layouts

By Geert Bonte

The problem with Romanian

Romanian is one of the less popular languages in Intersteno's annual Internet Keyboarding Competition, also known as the Internet Contest. In 2021, only 45 participants competed in Romanian, and none of those participants came from Romania. For comparison: 325 participants typed in English, the contest's most popular language in 2021.

In the entire history of the Internet Keyboarding Competition, which had its first-ever edition in 2003, there has only been a single participant from Romania. His name is Andrei Cristescu. Mr. Cristescu participated a total of five times (most recently in 2020), but only once in Romanian (in 2011). Over the years, he competed in English, Dutch, Italian and Spanish.

Perhaps this lack of native Romanian typists explains why it took so long to discover that there was a problem with the Romanian language in the Internet Keyboarding Competition organized by Intersteno.

The problem I'm referring to has to do with the language's accented characters. In Romanian texts you can encounter the characters with diacritical marks (accents) given in Table 1. The table lists five different accented letters, both in lowercase and uppercase forms. Most accents or diacritics that we're all familiar with from other languages are placed *on top of* the letter, but that isn't always the case. Some diacritics, like the comma accent in Romanian, are placed *below* the letter.

Table 1. Diacritical marks in modern Romanian

Lowercase		Uppercase		
Character	Unicode	Character	Unicode	Description
â	U+00E2	Â	U+00C2	A with circumflex
î	U+00EE	Î	U+00CE	I with circumflex
ă	U+0103	Ă	U+0102	A with breve
ș	U+0219	Ș	U+0218	S with comma below
ț	U+021B	Ț	U+021A	T with comma below

Let's ignore the Romanian letters with circumflex and breve and focus on the ones with the "comma below" accent. The letter S-comma is pronounced like the "sh" in "shoe"; the letter T-comma is pronounced like the "ts" in "bolts").

History

First, a little history lesson. The letters S-comma and T-comma were added to the Romanian language in the 19th century. Both letters were proposed in the *Buda Lexicon*, a book published in 1825, in two texts about Romanian orthography written by Petru Maior, a Romanian writer considered to be one of the most influential personalities of his age in Transylvania. In this book, the diacritic didn't have its comma shape yet. It was shaped like a crescent moon with the open side facing to the right. In Maior's Latin text, the diacritic was described as "signo mediae lunulae" ("a small half moon sign"). In 1895, the Romanian Academy published a document entitled *Ortografia limbei române* (Orthography of the

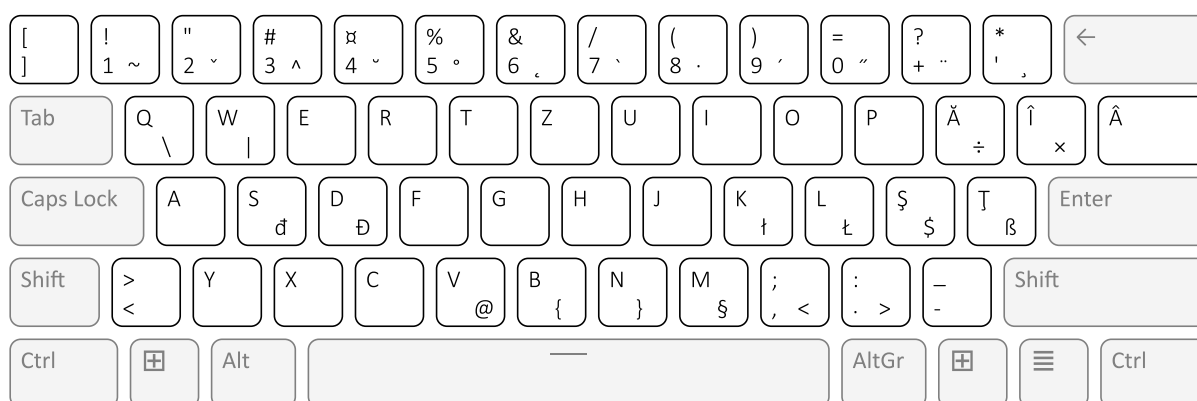
Romanian language). In that document, the diacritic had a shape similar to the modern cedilla that we know from languages like French, Portuguese and Turkish.

Indeed: the diacritic below the letters S and T was originally not written as a comma, but as a cedilla. Early Romanian computer keyboards also feature the letters S and T with cedilla, as shown in Figure 1.

In time, commas became commonplace. Dictionaries like The Romanian Language Dictionary (1910), The Orthographic and Orthoepic Guidebook (1965) and DOOM (not the popular computer game, but the abbreviation for Dicționarul ortografic, ortoepic și morfologic al limbii române) (1982) are all using ș and ț with commas. In handwriting, there was never any confusion between cedilla and comma; both ș and ț were always handwritten using commas.

On Romanian typewriter and computer keyboards, all five accented characters used in the language have their own keys. The legacy Romanian typewriter keyboard has a QWERTZ layout, adapted from German. QWERTZ is like QWERTY, but with the Y and Z keys swapped. The three rightmost keys on the top letter row of the legacy Romanian keyboard are distinct keys for the A-breve, the I-circumflex and the A-circumflex, respectively. The two rightmost keys on the next row are for the letters S-cedilla and T-cedilla (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Legacy Romanian QWERTZ keyboard



Romanian keyboard layout (legacy)

Unicode

In the early years of personal computers, Unicode did not yet exist. The Unicode character set is a huge character set containing almost all characters that are used in almost all the world's languages, including different scripts (alphabets) and a large collection of mathematical, technical and other special symbols. Unicode is still a work in progress. The Unicode Consortium, a non-profit organization maintaining the Unicode Standard, is constantly looking to improve and expand Unicode, closely working together with national standardization organizations.

At the time I write this, the latest version of Unicode (version 13, published in March 2020) contains an impressive number of 143,859 different characters! All modern computer operating systems are using Unicode to represent characters, but that doesn't mean, of course, that you can use all 143,859 on your average laptop or desktop computer. When a new version of Unicode is published (which happens on average once a year), it takes a while before any additional characters will be supported by operating systems and will be available in fonts. Also, the fonts that your computer uses contain only a tiny subset of the complete Unicode character set. Many modern fonts contain a large selection of commonly used characters, and there are special fonts for special needs. If you look hard enough,

you shouldn't have too much trouble finding a font that contains that one special character that you need on occasion.

Before the introduction of Unicode, computer operating systems used their own standardized or proprietary character sets, like ISO/IEC 8859-1 or Windows-1252. The latter is a so-called "code page" used by Microsoft Windows to represent Western European languages that use the Latin script. It's the character set that many of us used before the arrival of Unicode.

Early versions of Unicode did not contain the Romanian S and T with comma below. Even more, the Windows-1250 code page (used for Central and Eastern European languages, including Romanian), did not contain these characters. Instead, computers used the S and T with cedilla, which have been part of Unicode since version 1.1.0 (published in 1993) and which were available in Windows-1250. At the time, many screen and print outputs were quite low-resolution, and the distinction between the "comma below" diacritic and the cedilla was minimal. Most people didn't notice any difference at all. Or if they did, they didn't care.

Table 2. Legacy diacritical marks in Romanian

<i>Lowercase</i>		<i>Uppercase</i>		<i>Description</i>
<i>Character</i>	<i>Unicode</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Unicode</i>	
ș	U+015F	Ș	U+015E	S with cedilla
ț	U+0163	Ț	U+0162	T with cedilla

In late 1999, however, at the request of ASRO (Asociația de Standardizare din România – the Romanian national standardization body), code points for the S-comma and T-comma were introduced in Unicode version 3.0. But of course that didn't mean that everyone immediately began to use the newly added Unicode characters. In retail versions of Windows XP, one of the most popular and long-lived versions of Microsoft's operating system, released in late 2001, the S-comma and T-comma still remained unsupported. The earliest support for these characters in Windows was provided by an update called the European Union Expansion Font Update. This free update, released in 2006, contained updated versions of popular fonts (Times New Roman, Arial, Trebuchet and Verdana) that included the four additional Romanian characters as well as two Bulgarian characters not available in the original Windows XP versions of these fonts. The update was released thanks to the European Union's need for writing documents in Romanian and Bulgarian when those two countries joined the EU in 2007. But even after the S- and T-comma became widely available, the S- and T-cedilla continued to be widely used, sometimes even in mixed configurations like S-cedilla combined with T-comma in the same document.

New keyboard layout

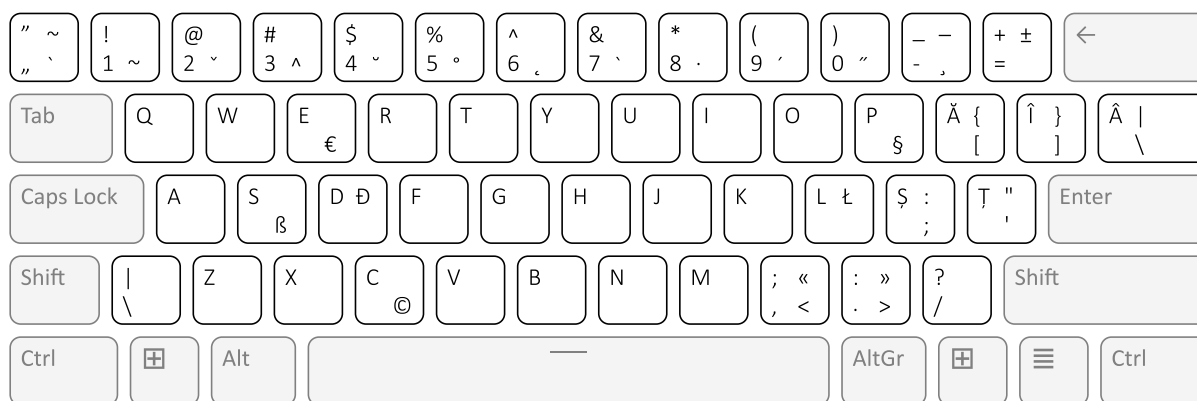
So what is the situation today? The Unicode standard now contains code points for the S and T with comma below, which are the recommended characters to use in Romanian texts. All major computer operating systems now fully support these characters. The standard also continues to contain the code points for the S and T with cedilla, which should not be used in Romanian any longer but are still used in other languages (e.g. S-cedilla in Turkish).

In the meantime, the Romanian keyboard layout has also changed. Instead of the legacy QWERTZ keyboard, the modern Romanian standard keyboard is now a QWERTY keyboard. It still has distinct keys for the five accented characters used in Romanian, but now features the S and T with comma below instead of the cedilla versions, as shown in Figure 2. This layout became the new default

Romanian keyboard in Windows Vista, released in early 2007. In earlier Windows versions, the QWERTZ keyboard was the default.

In fact, there are currently not one but two modern keyboard layouts for Romanian. The one shown in Figure 2 is the keyboard for people who use their computer mainly for typing Romanian text; the other is for programmers and other more technical users, a standard QWERTY keyboard like the one used for English, but with the Romanian accented characters accessible through combinations with the AltGr key.

Figure 2. Today's standard Romanian QWERTY keyboard



Some legacy computer systems still don't support the characters with a comma below. In printed publications, PDF documents and web pages, you can find the comma below diacritics as well as the legacy cedilla diacritics. Modern systems and publications that implement the recommendations of the Romanian Standardization Association have all switched to the modern comma below characters.

Internet Contest

Now let's return to the Internet Contest. This contest was created in 2003, at a time when a majority of Romanian publications still featured the cedilla versions and the use of the modern comma below diacritic was not yet that widely spread. So we can't hold it against the organizers of the contest or the creators of the software that they weren't prepared for this issue. Even today, I think it's safe to say that most people – even people from Romania – are not aware of the difference between the S and T with cedilla and comma below in Romanian, nor of the fact that these each are distinct Unicode characters with different Unicode code points.

But all this is not without consequences! As one Belgian participant experienced firsthand earlier this year, using an S or T with cedilla instead of the same letter with comma below, or vice versa, can result in the difference between success and failure when typing the Romanian text in Intersteno's Keyboarding Competition.

Traditionally, the Intersteno website and the Intersteno Internet Contest have used the S and T with cedilla (as a majority of websites probably did in 2003, when the first version of what is now the Taki software was released and when the first Internet Contest took place). The Romanian texts available in Intersteno's Taki software, that anyone can use for training, contained the S and T with cedilla. As a result, international participants were familiar with the cedilla versions and they rightfully expected that the text presented at the contest would also contain the S and T with cedilla, as had been the case with the training texts. Participants used either the legacy Romanian keyboard layout or a custom keyboard layout programmed to produce the cedilla versions.

That's where things went wrong this year. As the above mentioned participant from Belgium – she was the first to type in Romanian this year – painstakingly tried to copy the Romanian text, she produced S's and T's with cedillas, as she had successfully done during training and during last year's competition. But when the evaluation appeared on her monitor after 10 minutes of typing, she was unpleasantly surprised to learn that every S and T with cedilla had been marked as a mistake!

The observant reader can already guess what had happened: this year, the competition text surprisingly no longer contained S's and T's with cedilla, as had been the case in the past, but S's and T's with comma below, resulting in an error for each instance!

Once the organizers had been made aware of this problem, they promptly fixed it (by changing all comma diacritics back to cedillas in the competition text) and corrected the result of the unfortunate participant, who breathed a sigh of relief when she learned that she had succeeded after all.

After I learned of this incident, I proposed a solution to prevent this problem from occurring again in the future. I asked Marco Olivio, who created and still maintains the Taki software, to implement a recommendation from the Unicode Standard Core Specification. This specification is an elaborate document published by the Unicode Consortium containing detailed documentation on the use of the Unicode Standard. The specification recommends, due to the prevalence of legacy implementations (meaning the historical use of S and T with cedilla in lieu of S and T with comma below), implementations that process Romanian Unicode data (such as Taki and ZAV, when evaluating Romanian competition or training texts) must treat U+2019 (lowercase s with comma below) and U+015F (lowercase s with cedilla) as equivalent. Of course, the same recommendation applies not only to the lowercases, but to the lowercase t and to the uppercase forms as well.

After implementing this recommendation, the problem should be a thing of the past: regardless if the original text contains the cedilla or the comma versions, and regardless if the participant types an S or T with cedilla or the same letter with the comma diacritic, this should no longer result in unexpected errors.

To conclude, it should be noted that the problem with Romanian diacritics only occurred with the Internet Contest. It has never been an issue for the Text Production contest at the World Championships held during the Intersteno Congresses, because no Romanian competition texts were needed in recent years due to the absence of Romanian participants at the World Championships.

Key takeaways from the congress on live subtitling through respeaking and velotype

By Germ Sikma

On Friday July 9th LTA and ZDF hosted a congress on real-time intralingual subtitling. Every professional related to this field was invited, and with more than 200 attendees the congress had an impressive turnout. In essence, the congress was centered around two major subjects: the LTA-project and the broader developments in the field. From the Dutch Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, the Dutch parliament, we joined this day with four delegates. In this article we reflect on this day and present our key takeaways.

The LTA-project

An open-source certified training program with harmonized competence-based modules and quantified credits for higher educational and vocational training: that's what the LTA-project is about. LTA stands for "LiveTextAccess", and this EU-funded project has the goal to tackle the need for harmonized training in the field of real-time intralingual subtitling.

At this conference, LTA presented its recent results. We were eager to find out how far project leader Rocío Bernabé Caro and her team were. It was a pleasure to find out the project is almost ready to go live, at which point respeakers and velotypists from around the world can freely follow the LTA-course, and even get a certification!

Getting that certification is not easy, according to Wim Gerbecks (CEO Velotype), who explained that the LTA-course will take a student about 750 hours. He also told the audience the course will be available starting August 31st.

According to Gabriele Sauberer (vice-president of ECQA) the need for more accessibility is rising, due to European law. However, many respeakers in the past became respeakers without a course, but by just doing it. Therefore, the world needs this LTA-course!

Broader developments

The congress was also about the broader developments that are happening in the field of real-time subtitling. From Nicola Foltys (head of the department for accessibility at ZDF) we learned that accessibility is a universal need, for every human: we all need help in certain contexts. She also reflected in-depth on how human subtitling will always be needed, even when automatic subtitling will take a leap.

Anja Rau explained to the crowd what design is and how speech-to-text interpreting should be viewed with regard to user experience design. She told us that design is driven by users, is process- and context-oriented and based on experience.

Later, Italians Carlo Eugeni (university lecturer for respeaking/SSML) and Alessio Popoli (onA.I.R. - Intersteno Italia) took the attendees to MARS ... No, not the planet, but the "Most Accurate and Rapid Speech-to-text-rate". With a competition and training tool on ReachMars.EU they challenged the visitors to test themselves to find out their own MARS. In the future this tool will come in handy to evaluate your live subtitling-skills.

To conclude the day, Pablo Romero Fresco from the Universidade de Vigo explored future research pathways in live subtitling. He explained how the field needs more elaborate research on, for example, user experience. "We need to recruit more scientists", he said. After this remark the attendees had an open discussion, and then this conference came to an end.

We thoroughly enjoyed the congress and are excited to test and probably use the LTA-course for the subtitlers at the Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal. And of course, we hope to reach MARS!

A report about the MARS speech-to-text test-competition

By Tamás Tanai

On the 9th of July this year, the Live Text Access, LTA's conference on the topic of live subtitling through respeaking and velotype: training, certification and technology was held. The meeting was hosted by ZDF Digital Medienproduktion GmbH. and was moderated by Marcel Ehrlich and Dr. Rocío Bernabé Caro in an online meeting environment. There were many interesting topics at the conference, which were all neatly presented by all the speakers, and I feel very grateful for having been able to listen to them. Thank you very much!

The most interesting of all the topics that were mentioned for me was the MARS speech-to-text test-competition, which was held during the conference. As for me, who is a competitor and who works in live subtitling, this test-competition presented itself as a great opportunity to test, not just myself, but the possible future of online typing competitions. The competition consisted of a continuous audio dictation with increasing speed, which we all had to record in text as accurately as possible. We had no means of stopping or playing back any part of the audio, just like a real-time dictation, and it was available in the following languages: US English, Italian, Argentine Spanish, German, French, Dutch, Turkish, Hungarian, Polish, Czech, Slovak and Finnish.

I found the idea of this type of competition fascinating, and I am really hoping to see this in the future on the list of available competitions in the Intersteno Internet Contest. Although I think that we will have to wait some time for this to be reality and not just an idea, because as it stands, I have experienced some flaws in the auto-correction of the software, and some minor hiccups (freezing audio, etc.), but I am sure that the developers of MARS can fix it! I wish them very good luck on this project!



The British Institute of Verbatim Reporters (BIVR) 6 – 8 August 2021

By Georgina Ford

The British Institute of Verbatim Reporters recently held a weekend event of fun, training and networking (including the Annual General Meeting for BIVR members). Following the success of last year's virtual event, and given the ongoing restrictions/safety measures due to coronavirus, the decision was made to hold the event once again over Zoom.

A small number of BIVR Council members gathered together to host, with participants and guest speakers attending remotely from all parts of the UK, including Europe, Australia and the US.

We started on Friday evening with a meet and greet happy hour (which is always two hours!) followed by a group session discussing and swapping steno/palan briefs. These sessions are always invaluable and great fun, especially when someone comes up with a genius solution to a particular word or phrase.

Saturday was the start of presentations and seminars, the first of which was from Orla Pearson introducing AccessLOOP, a new platform which makes it easier to add captioners and sign language interpreters to streaming events. Attendees were taken through how to use AccessLOOP, including the various settings they would use as captioners and how to hand over from one captioner to another. A demonstration of how the sign language interpreter function works was also given. Orla's session wrapped up with a Q&A and a brief outline of upcoming improvements to the next version of AccessLOOP. For more information, visit www.accessloop.com.

This led nicely into the main training session for the day: captioning with Zoom and other platforms, led by BIVR members Claire Hill (Eclipse) and Sheryll Holley (CaseCatalyst). With the number of hours of remote captioning increasing during the pandemic lockdown and the various platforms used to deliver captions, it was great to have two extremely experienced and technically adept reporters guiding us through an absolute wealth of information for both aspiring and seasoned captioners.

Turning from the professional to the personal, we set aside time to discuss how we had been coping over the past year, with the continuing restrictions, constant changes we were facing, and what comes next -- an apt introduction into the first of our international speakers, Sabina Lohr from the US. Sabina is the founder of World of Freelancers (www.worldoffreelancers.com). Sabina gave us a talk about how to live our best lives no matter what the circumstances, with tips on positivity and work/life balance which, as a former court reporter, Sabina is particularly well placed to discuss. It was informative, personable, and prompted lively discussion and exchange of ideas between all participants.

During Saturday, BIVR also held the AGM, the highlight of which was the presentation of the Betty Willett Award. This year it was with the greatest of pleasure presented to BIVR Secretary and Treasurer, Mary Sorene. Seeing as Mary is usually the one who arranges everything and keeps BIVR Council on its toes, we had to resort to subterfuge to keep the award a secret until its presentation!

With Sunday came another round of training on the two main softwares used in the UK, Case Catalyst and Eclipse, focusing on the court reporting side and working with scopists. We then welcomed back Carlo Eugeni, no stranger to BIVR events, with his talk on intralingual translation -- a technical topic but always fascinating! BIVR members had taken part in a brief experiment prior to the presentation and Carlo took us through the results.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. The main window displays a presentation slide with the following content:

Recording...

CENTRE FOR
TRANSLATION STUDIES
at the University of Leeds

What does «verbatim» mean?

- in exactly the **same words** as were used originally. OED (Cambridge, Collins...)

have offered to do. I have started from the notion of what does verbatim mean? If you go to the Oxford English Dictionary or

[=]LTA LiveTextAccess

LEEDS

On the right side of the screen, there is a video feed of a participant named Carlo Eugeni, who is wearing a headset and has his hand near his face.

The next session was given over to Keith Scott and Rebecca Klein Scott of TALLsmall Productions, another BIVR favorite. They gave a lively and engaging talk about how best to present yourself on Zoom, absolutely invaluable as it's likely remote working will continue for some time to come.

We finished up another successful weekend with a magic show from the iPad magician, Noel Qualter. His fun and mind-boggling show really rounded off the occasion and he even found time for some Q&A afterwards, although he didn't divulge any magical secrets!

With that, we said our virtual goodbyes and disconnected from the meeting, having reconnected with everyone for a very enjoyable event. BIVR would like to wish all our Intersteno colleagues a bright and prosperous year ahead and we look forward to the 53rd Intersteno Congress in Maastricht.

International meeting of the parliamentary administration and management, “The role of the stenographer in parliaments”

By Jorge Bravo, from Argentina

On July 28, 29 and 30, the I INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARY ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT was held, organized by ASALRA (Association of Legislative Administration of the Argentine Republic).

Different topics were developed in various panels, including one on “The role of the Stenographer in Parliaments”.

The other topics developed in other panels were: Parliamentary Communication, Parliamentary Libraries, Parliamentary Law, Negotiation, Parliamentary Commissions, Good Legislative Practices, Training, Parliamentary Control, Gender Perspective, Economy, Environment, Parliamentary Diplomacy, Technology, Telework and Open Parliament, Current Context and future challenges for Parliaments, etc. There were 26 conference panels and there were 98 speakers from 10 countries.



The number of people registered in the Congress was 913, and the entire Congress could be seen on YouTube, where there were 5348 people connected...

Encarnación Ramos Villajos (from the Senate of Spain), Daniel Venegas (from the Senate of Chile) and Patricia López (from the Municipal Council of Escobar, Buenos Aires, Argentina) participated in the panel on "the role of stenographers in parliaments, coordinated by Jorge Bravo (Argentina). This panel was followed by colleagues from almost all Argentine provinces as well as from other countries, such as Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Spain, Paraguay, Peru, Hungary, etc.

Each panelist described the way of working in their countries and some interesting facts about their work. For example, Encarnación Ramos said that the Corps of Editors, Stenographers and Stenotypists of the Cortes Generales (Senate and Deputies) is made up of 68 people, of which 31 are stenographers and 37 stenotypist, with 64 women and 4 men. What was said by the Spanish colleague about the way stenographers and stenographers work during the pandemic was particularly interesting.

And she mentioned a famous phrase by Francisco de Paula Martí, the inventor of Spanish shorthand: "Shorthand is the inseparable companion of the freedom of nations."

In addition, we learned that 22 stenographers work in the Chilean Senate, all with the manual system, of which 14 are men and 8 are women, and that three stenographers work in the Escobar Municipal Council (Buenos Aires, Argentina), with the Martí-Escobar-Inzaurraga system, with the particularity that they use the new digital shorthand.

Likewise, the three panelists agreed that the stenographer / stenotypist must know the rules of the language, the comprehension of texts, the correct punctuation, etc., since the final product of the stenographer's work is the publication of the Journal of Sessions.

The colleague from Chile underscored the need for the stenographer to record what was said by each speaker, always respecting the idiolect and emphasized that the stenographer must be reliable in the performance of their work.

The colleague, Patricia López, from the Escobar Municipal Council (Buenos Aires, Argentina), referred in particular to the unprecedented experience she is doing with Digital Shorthand.

With this mode, the stenographer (who must have a computer or a mobile phone) writes with a stylus on a Tablet. To know details about this new way of working, you can read the article "Stenography course with tablet and internships for shorthand students in Escobar, Argentine", written for Patricia López, at the ENEWS 88, March 2019. (<https://www.intersteno.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/enews88.pdf>).

The way of working implemented by her is very important, because as she said: " We are adjusting ourselves to current technology and we have the obligation to adapt to the new tools".

The panel ended with the answers to some questions.



Asociación de Administración Legislativa de la República Argentina (AALR) - an excellent conference

By Anita Dobos

Between 28 and 30 July an extremely well-organized, professional online consultation took place. The Argentine non-profit civil association ASALRA (Asociación de Administración Legislativa de la República Argentina), its president Mario Nitti and his colleagues have announced this international event for the first time. This was an international meeting of parliamentary administration and comprehensive management.

Our Argentine friend from Intersteno, Jorge Bravo – who was the coordinator of one of the sections – sent me a kind invitation! Of course I accepted this great opportunity!

The host was Argentina and conferences were followed live in South and Central American countries (e.g. Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay) as well as some European participants (e.g. also from Spain).

Among the topics presented were parliamentary diplomacy, parliamentary libraries, public budget, municipal sphere, control and the supervisory role of the legislative power, parliamentary law, legislative administration, cyber security or new procedures in the light of virtuality. And of course the role of the stenographers in parliaments! About the latter – with fantastic coordination by Jorge Bravo – Patricia López (Taquigrafía e Informática del Concejo Deliberante de Escobar, Buenos Aires), Daniel Venegas Palominos (Departamento de Redacción de Sesiones, Senado de Chile) and Encarnación Ramos Villajos (Taquígrafa de las Cortes Generales, Senado de España) gave a fantastic presentation!

It was also really interesting to hear about the situation of women and their problems as well! From what I have heard, I have seen that the problems are almost the same in Central and South America as here in Europe (at least with equality, education, jobs etc.)!

Congratulations to ASALRA and everyone who contributed to the success!

Very special thanks to Jorge Bravo and Mario Nitti, who always answered all my questions immediately, organized everything perfectly and had a first-class meeting!

Thank you so much for the opportunity! It was a great honor for me! I learned very much and I got to know a lot of good people (even only virtually)!

This excellent consultation gave everybody a lot of valuable moments! These 3 days were a great experience for me!

Hopefully, we will also meet personally with as many colleagues as possible in the future, e.g. at Intersteno congresses or at any other event!



Welcome



ASALRA President



She is from Argentina



Smiley colleague from Bolivia



Argentine students



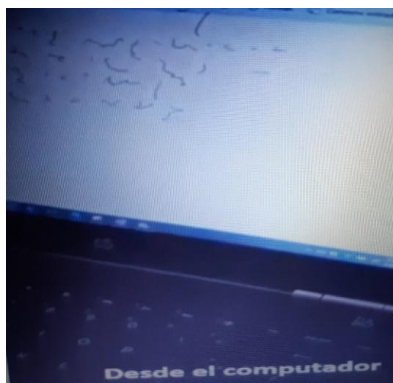
She gave a fantastic presentation



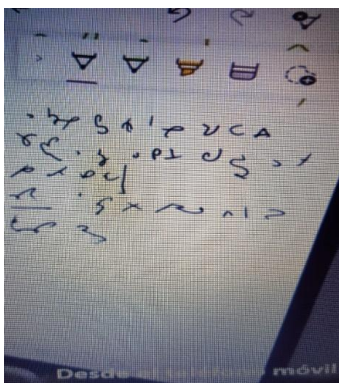
A guest speaker from Peru



An excellent coordinator



Shorthand with laptop



Shorthand with mobile phone



Thank you, Jorge!

Franjo Magdić – the father of Croatian shorthand and founder of the Croatian Shorthand Association

By Andrea Wawrzynek

Croatian Shorthand Association in 2022 will celebrate its 140th anniversary. The founder of our Association is Mr. Franjo Magdić, a great stenographer and the father of Croatian shorthand. With this article we want to bring you a small part of a great history and even greater man.

Franjo Magdić was born on November 21st, 1830 in the village of Logarovci. He began studying shorthand in Graz in the winter semester of the 1847/1848 school year under the mentorship of Ivan Vinković, and later Alois Allinger in 1849. Magdić later used the German Gabelsberger shorthand, which he learned in Graz, in his workplace and private life. In 1861, he was invited to the Croatian Parliament in Zagreb to write parliamentary debates and this was the start of Croatian shorthand.



Magdić stenographed his first speeches in Parliament with German shorthand, but his knowledge of Gabelsberger's shorthand could not fully be used to write speeches in Croatian, so Magdić struggled a lot while overcoming this difference. In order to be able to use German shorthand to write Croatian speeches, he had to change some signs of German shorthand, as well as endings and beginnings, and adapt them to the iteration of sounds and words of the Croatian language. Thus, in fact, the need forced him to adapt Gabelsberger's shorthand for the Croatian language.

After two years of teaching at the school and three years of parliamentary practice - he decided to publish his work, and in the "Tenth Annual Report of the Royal High School in Zagreb, at the end of the school year 1864" he published his Adaptation of Gabelsberger's German shorthand for Croatian entitled: "Adaptation of Gabelsberger's shorthand system to the Croatian language". This paper includes one and a half pages of printed text as an introduction and explanation and 31 lithographed pages. The lithographed part was written by Magdić with his own hand, both transcripts and interpretations.

The appearance of Magdić's Croatian shorthand created great interest in the professional world and found an echo in all professional circles. With his "Adaptation", Magdić laid a solid foundation for Croatian shorthand and gave it momentum and enthusiasm from the very beginning, inviting experts to cooperate in improving Croatian shorthand. In the year of 1882, Franjo Magdić founded the Croatian Shorthand Association, and became its first president and the father of Croatian shorthand. He died on July 26th, 1914 at the age of 84. His legacy will always be remembered and appreciated.

Jaroslav Zaviačič, Life of adventure thanks to Typing with All Ten Fingers

Text: Právo/Dana Braunová

Translation: Tomáš Portych

Below you will find the text of an article published in Právo, one of the biggest news magazines in the Czech Republic. The article was published in the Saturday's magazine (2021-08-21) and online (2021-09-01) here:

<https://www.novinky.cz/muzi/diskuze/barvity-zivot-jaroslava-zaviacice-jeho-napad-mate-na-klavesnici-pod-rukama-40370308>

In his time he was unsurpassed in the speed of typing, whether mechanical or electric. He was also great in the computer age. The F's and J's home key indicators on computer keyboards all over the world were his idea.

But his life was also much more colorful. He smuggled the text of Jan Palach's last letter to the West, won a Swedish journalism award and experienced bullying under the former regime. He has never grown bitter and, at eighty-two, he continues to promote effective writing with all ten fingers.



On August 20, 1968, Jaroslav Zaviačič had a busy day: in the morning he and a colleague from the newspaper Rudé Právo took a petition for the dismissal of the then editor-in-chief Oldřich Švestka to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and then he devoted himself to his work as head of the teletype and typing department of the then largest Czechoslovak daily until eight in the evening. At home, he was interrupted by a phone call from the editorial office just before 10 p.m. asking him to return to his workplace immediately. By then, the occupying planes were already roaring over Prague.

Teletype at the point of a machine gun

"I lived close to the editorial office, I could get straight to work. The editors brought me materials from the field to copy, some I translated into German and sent to foreign editorial offices. This took all night," Jaroslav Zaviačič recalls.

In Vienna, they wrote on Siemens that could do 600 strokes per minute, which was my speed.

At eight o'clock in the morning, Russian soldiers stormed the newsroom. "The room with the teletypewriters was separated by a glass partition because of the noise, so the machine-gunners could see only the upper half of my body, not my hands on the keyboard. Thanks to the fact that I could type without having to look at the keys, I continued working in peace. They thought I was just sitting there talking to the dictating editors. But it didn't last long. I packed up my cyclostyle and papers with a few colleagues and went to the apartment of the editor Vladimír Pošvic. There we published the first post-acquisition edition of Rudé právo, about 200 copies, which the Russians promptly confiscated and destroyed," he recounts the turbulent moments.

The editorial office of Rudé právo, which at that time was dominated by supporters of the Prague Spring, was paralyzed by the occupiers for several days. "We were located in the same block as the

Triola lingerie shop. So we penetrated through the bra shop into the building next door, which housed the Czech Woodworking Company. There they set up a secret teletype workstation for me. There, reliable editors dictated information to me over the phone or came to dictate the materials, I wrote them down in shorthand and then sent them abroad or to our embassies," Jaroslav Zaviačič recalls. At that time, he was sending texts in Czech and German daily in the range of 250,000 letters. He was left alone in his secret workplace for five whole days.

When he met Jiří Hájek (Foreign Minister in 1968) in 1990, he told him, "I finally recognize you, without your typing skills I would have had nothing to say in the Security Council that August." The Minister was visiting Yugoslavia at the time and was able to go from there to New York and speak at the UN calling for a condemnation of the occupation.

Cause for sacking unpublishable

"Jiří Sekera, who was then in charge of the editorial office, urged me to contact Dagens Nyheter in Sweden, the most important Scandinavian newspaper. From that little cubbyhole I was able to get in touch with a friend from the Post Office headquarters who came to correct our telegrams. He told me that they were busy too, but at least he gave me the area code to Sweden. I managed to send a teletype text saying that I was from Prague, but at first they didn't believe me. Until I got hold of a librarian who spoke German and he gave me a teletype link to the Dagens Nyheter editorial office. I then sent translations of documents and my personal observations there every day, anonymously of course. It was only in 1990 that I was able to reveal my identity. The editor-in-chief of the newspaper came to Prague and at the Swedish embassy I received a publication for the anniversary of the newspaper, which contained a page from 1968 with the headline Our Unknown Friend from Prague.

The guerrilla style of journalism ended after five days when the Russian troops left the editorial office and we were able to return. I had the task of checking the typing room, the teletype, the stenographic department. The place looked terrible, and at first glance it was clear that someone with no habits of civilization was staying there.

I sent a long-distance notice of the situation in the newsroom to all our foreign correspondents. One was also addressed to the Bonn correspondent Miroslav Moco (later editor-in-chief of Rudé právo). "Hello Mirek, we are back in the editorial office. My task is to inform everyone that we are coming out on Monday, everyone prepare your materials. I can tell you that things are not looking good here. I just cleaned the fraternal shit off my desk..."

When he was summoned for a party review in early 1970, he was told that they needed him as a worker, he could stay, but he had to retract what he had written to Bonn at the time. "I told them I wasn't going to retract shit. So when I was asked somewhere afterwards why I was fired, the answer was obvious."

He was fired from his job and his apartment, but the trouble didn't end there. "Dagens Nyheter gave me a journalist's prize in 1968, which was leaked, so I had a twelve-hour interrogation in Ruzyně. I was interrogated by a certain Major Kohl. He said, "We don't torture anyone here. As we are saying - who tells the truth leaves without any trouble." After two hours of interrogation, I said to him: 'You say you are not torturing anyone, but you writing a protocol with two fingers is torture for me. If you would let me, I would write it myself.' He lost control of his voice a bit, but unfortunately it did not deter him from typing out seventeen pages of protocol.

It was a time of severe purges. Many of my friends were affected. Socially and politically I felt it strongly, and the Prague Spring represented a great hope for me, comparable to what we experienced in 1945."

Rapid typing as salvation

"To be thrown out of the Party at that time was both a great handicap and a great reference. I had great support abroad, the main one being the world vice-champion in typing, Franz Sager (1939-2009), who worked in the Austrian press office. When he saw that I was in trouble, he arranged for me to do an internship in their teletyping department at the end of 1968. My German was good, and I had little to no competition in typing speed.

While here we had teletypewriters from the GDR, which could only work at 420 keystrokes per minute, in Vienna they wrote on Siemens that could do 600, which was my speed," Jaroslav Zaviačič notes. "In Vienna, I met several former colleagues who were also fired. I used to get printed material from them, which I took to Czechoslovakia. I smuggled back texts written by opposition authors. Among the smuggled materials was the text of Palach's farewell letter (Jan Palach left one in his briefcase at the place of his burning, and sent three by post before that). In order not to give away my identity, Palach's letter was not published by the Austrian press office, but by the German DPA, which had offices one floor up.

I did not want to emigrate. There was a large Czech community in Vienna, but many more people I respected stayed at home. I wanted to stay with them. I also had cyclostyles stashed away on which we could reproduce materials."

A spicy meeting with the President of France

An Austrian colleague, Franz Sager, introduced him to people from IBM, which had its Eastern European headquarters in Vienna. They managed to conclude an employment contract in which the company had to commit not to send Mr Zaviačič to countries outside the Soviet bloc. He was thus able to represent IBM at trade fairs in Brno, Košice and Leipzig. He also wrote Czech instruction manuals, provided training and suggested improvements.

The speed of his typing on IBM machines, which he demonstrated at the Brno fair, impressed the head of the company's design department, who came from the USA: "He told me to learn better English and then come to him to implement my ideas. I suggested that the typewriter should have a memory, some output, a printer, etc. I ended up not getting an exit clause and was not allowed to come to the US. My ideas were not implemented until much later."

Among them were the marking of the letters J and F with small protrusions. "To write well blind, they have to be tactilely recognizable. When typing with all ten, these letters fall to the index fingers, which are easier to navigate left and right," he explains the innovation that guides the fingers of all computer keyboard users worldwide.

He also once trained secretaries from the Army General Staff on IBM's partial-memory machines. He was then invited to see General Palenik, who was also a native of Hodonín. "It is a great honor, but you are not the first general I have shaken hands with," he told him. He asked who was the first. "Charles de Gaulle," was the reply.

That was in 1965, when he won the title of world runner-up at the World Championships in Paris, becoming one of only three people in the world to achieve more than 18,000 strokes in 30 minutes on a mechanical typewriter in an official competition.

"At the ceremony after the results were announced, I started a chit-chat with an attractive French woman. After a few drinks, she told me she would like me to show her how fast I could type. She said she knew where and took me to the Elysee Palace. Now, Mrs. Editor, put three dots right here...

At five o'clock in the morning she became alert, and I understood her to say something like: look out, it's the boss. And in walked Charles de Gaulle - she was his secretary. He was very early for work. Somehow she explained the situation to him. I even showed him how I write. I understood that he was telling her to learn it that fast too. That is where we shook hands."

Wife and pupil world record holder

The first machine he got his hands on was his dad's briefcase typewriter. He had it by virtue of his title as chief of the Sokol county of Slovakia. In 1958, Jaroslav became the Czechoslovak school typing champion and in the following years he won one competition after another. He was soon approached by the design department of the Brno Ammunition Factory, where the famous Czech consuls were produced, and became the author of many of their improvements.

He wrote manuals and textbooks on how to correctly and efficiently type or operate typesetting machines. "The basic principle was taught to me by my teacher Jaroslav Robek at the business academy in Hodonín: to type well on the keyboard is a matter of the head, then the fingers," he pays tribute to his teacher. "I want to type 'Hi!', I look at the keyboard and tap the letter H - that's the first mistake. I didn't type the letter, I just searched it out. And it has to be connected to the left pinky. When that finger-letter connection works, it creates dynamic stereotypes."

"You say you are not torturing anyone, but you writing a protocol with two fingers is torture for me."

Jaroslav Zaviačič has been involved in the world federation for information processing Intersteno for many years. He was its president for two years and on the occasion of his 80th birthday last year he was awarded the title of honorary president. After 1989, he became coach of the Czech national team, which in this millennium has won more than half of all medals at international competitions, leaving far larger countries such as the USA, Russia and Germany behind.

When you ask Jaroslav Zaviačič about his greatest achievement, he looks at his wife Helena: "I saw her for the first time in 1988. She was already achieving great results then. Her writing style, her expression got me. I told myself that I had to work with such an extraordinary talent. At that time IBM offered me the opportunity to invite my competitors to a fancy dinner. That's where we first met and bonded. I got her an IBM typewriter and she has won almost every competition she has entered since."

Ms. Helena has held the unsurpassed world record of 928 keystrokes per minute since 2003. By comparison, the second chart performance is 805. Her skills are still used by the organizers of many world conferences, because no one else could manage to translate the simultaneous translation of the interpreter into Czech online subtitles.

No looking at your hands!

Jaroslav Zaviačič is the author of the world-renowned effective teaching of writing with all ten called ZAV. It was co-authored by Helena (then still Matoušková) and Austrian Franz Sager, who died in 2009.

They did not look for a new team member for long: "Already among the pupils in the primary school in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, the then ten-year-old Jonáš Vala shone while writing in ZAV. (His younger sister Johana became the most successful student participant in the World Recording and Word Processing Championships in Sardinia two years ago.) I consider Jonáš to be my successor, and I would love for him and Helena to continue my lifelong endeavor."

Last year they organized the ZAV-100 world competition over the Internet and already have next school year's competition ready for mainstream teaching, with 50,000 students in several language groups.

"Those who learned to type well on a typewriter were able to switch to a flatter electric machine, then an electronic one, and the current keyboards suit them perfectly," he says when asked if the typing champions had any problem switching to computer keyboards.

According to the Zaviačičs, the teaching of typing should start in primary schools. "In Austria, they did a survey on the appropriate age to start learning to play individual musical instruments and included keyboarding. The result was clear: around ten years old. In our country, this is completely neglected. Yet at the age of six we teach children something much more difficult and less used in practice: writing with pencil on paper," they point out.

Their pupils are far from just students. "We get a lot of applications from doctors. They say that when they examine a patient, they want to look into his eyes, not look for letters on the keyboard," says Jaroslav, adding that they have also taught many criminologists to write properly. Before he tapped it out with two fingers, the interrogated person changed his mind. Now he doesn't have the time and the interrogation progresses much better. It is therefore surprising that the police academy teaches computer science but not typing with all ten fingers."

The basic lesson from an experienced methodologist and trainer is that the key to effective typing is not typing fast, but typing without the need to look at your hands. "Those who look for letters on the keyboard by sight will eventually acquire a routine and will also type at a considerable speed. However, he is so occupied with this searching and then checking the typed text on the screen with the necessary corrections that he forgets about two-thirds of what he has already thought out. The art of writing, not of searching for letters by sight, really pays off."



Photographer: Milan Maliček

Fig. 1: After 1968, he wrote educational booklets under someone else's name or in German. In 1991, his complete textbook was published with a picture of the predecessor of IBM personal computers.

Fig. 2: He and his wife Helena teaching thousands of students to type efficiently on a modern computer keyboard.

Fig. 3: In 1990, he took over the anniversary publication of Dagens Nyheter, which included his reports from August 1968 and an interview with him.

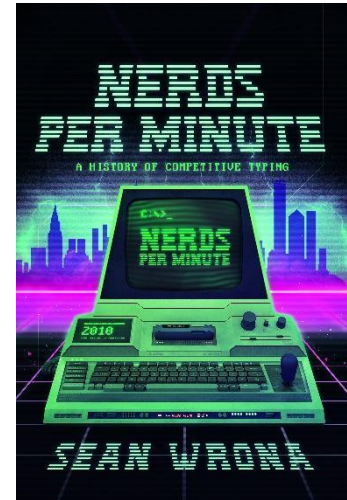
Nerds per Minute: A History of Competitive Typing written by Sean Wrona

On Smashwords, the world's largest distributor of indie ebooks, you can find the information below about the book of Sean Wrona, well known as one of our most successful competitors.

Smashwords – Nerds per Minute: A History of Competitive Typing – a book by Sean Wrona

About Sean Wrona

Sean Wrona is an author, historian, archivist, statistician, competitive typist, tournament Scrabble expert, programmer, and YouTuber from Syracuse, New York. He earned a BA in economics and MPS in applied statistics from Cornell University. He has won nineteen typing championships from 2010 to 2021, most notably the Ultimate Typing Championship at the SXSW Interactive Conference in Austin, Texas. He has won the mother tongue championship in Intersteno's internet contest seven times, more than any other typist, and was the only typist to win the multilingual and mother tongue championships in the same year in 2011.



He held the records on three of the most popular competitive typing websites simultaneously, holding the TypeRacer record from 2010 to 2016, the Nitro Type record from 2012 to 2018, and the 10FastFingers record from 2015 to 2019. He was the youngest-ever member of the Mensa Scrabble-by-Mail Special Interest Group though never a Mensa member himself, serving as the group's statistician in both his teenage years and adulthood and later on becoming the group's ratings compiler.

He has also been published in Cornell University's Visible Hand economics journal and several auto racing websites: Stock Car Review, HK's Raceday, and Motorsports Analytics. In 2007, he launched the auto racing statistical archive race-database.com and in 2015, he launched his own advanced auto racing statistics website Racermetrics. He also entered the complete box scores for the 1979-80 through 1984-85 NBA seasons for basketball-reference.com. He recently launched The Maladroit Millennial, a YouTube series on millennial culture as reflected through his life.

In *Nerds Per Minute*, 2010 Ultimate Typing Championship winner Sean Wrona discusses the history of competitive typing from the invention of the mechanical typewriter to the modern Internet scene.

Typing competitions are a forgotten but surprisingly influential aspect of industrial society. Originally introduced in the 1880s to test the durability of various brands of mechanical typewriters, they became a major institution during the first half of the 20th century. The top typists of that era competed at marquee venues like Madison Square Garden and Carnegie Hall, toured the nation like rock stars, made prominent appearances on radio and TV shows, were referenced in newspaper comic strips, gave performances in front of government officials and the United Nations, and even met royalty. The contests were especially noteworthy as they represented one of the first instances of men and women being allowed to compete together on a level playing field in American history - several women won international typing championships before they were even allowed to vote.

In addition to playing an unheralded role in women's liberation, the typewriter also helped African-Americans to make inroads into commercial offices thanks to the efforts of Cortez Peters, the first great African-American typist, who successfully integrated typing contests over a decade before Jackie

Robinson integrated major league baseball; Peters was also one of the very first African-Americans to establish a chain of business schools in the 1930s. However, because the classic international typewriting championships were never held after 1946, most of the great history of typing competitions has been forgotten by the society at large.

In the 21st century, typing competitions made an unexpected comeback. Shortly after the Internet became mainstream in the late '90s, a wide variety of competitive typing sites were introduced in the 2000s and 2010s such as 10FastFingers, TypeRacer, and Nitro Type, which all attained mass popularity and broke into the gaming mainstream by the late 2010s. Competitive typing became more popular as a participatory pursuit than it had ever been before even as the career prospects for typists plummeted markedly.

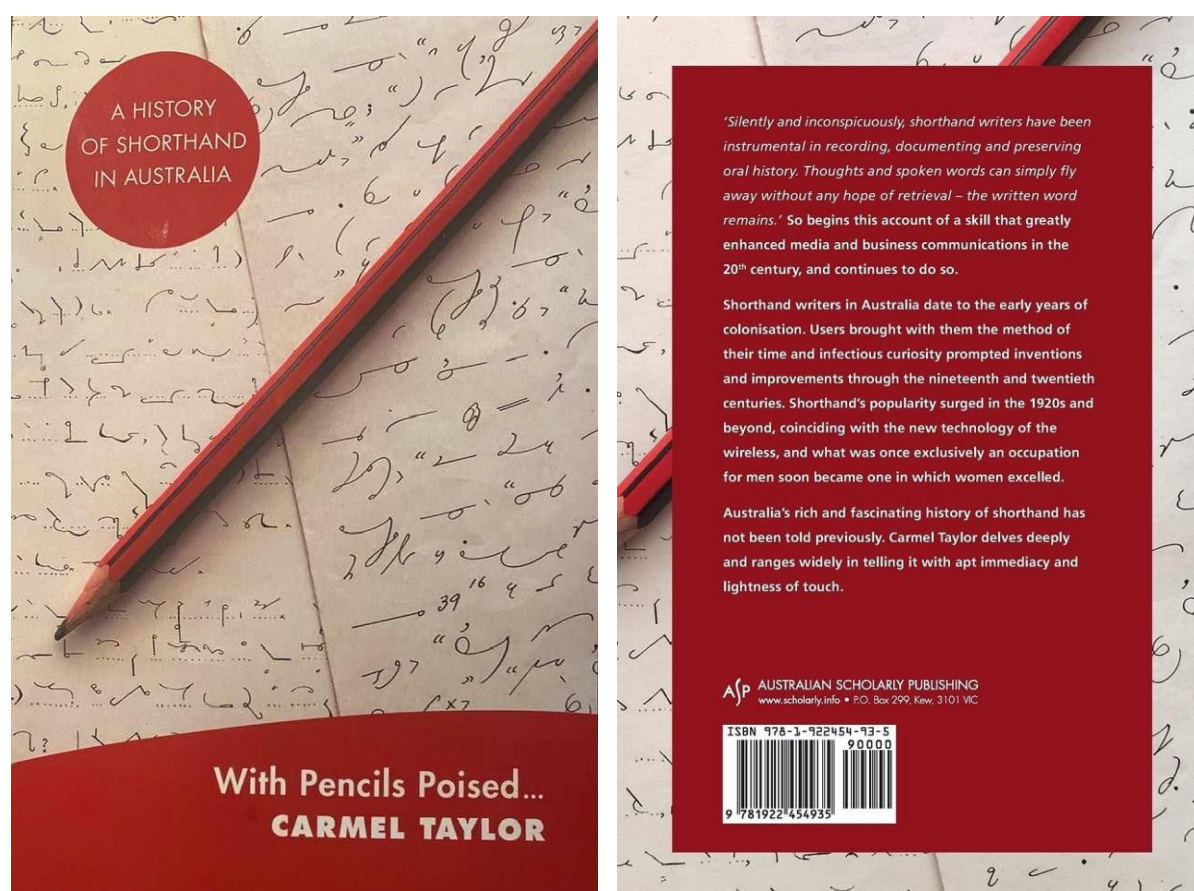
When Sean Wrona won the inaugural Ultimate Typing Championship in 2010 and much to his horror and chagrin the videos from that contest went semi-viral, he accidentally helped popularize typing competitions to a myriad of millennial and zoomer gamers in the 2010s. In *Nerds per Minute*, Wrona traces the history of typing from Christopher Latham Sholes's invention of the first mass-produced typewriter to the modern Internet scene. He discusses the history of Sholes's typewriter as well as many other typewriter models that were invented before and after him, how Sholes and his collaborator James Densmore decided upon the QWERTY keyboard layout, the life and history of each of the important typists from Frank McGurrian to Chak. He also covers August Dvorak's research and the history of his keyboard layout, the history of European and Japanese typing competitions, how typing competitions connected to historical social trends as a whole, the history of typing games from Typing Tutor, the first mass-produced typing instructional program, to the recent Monkeytype, as well as his own personal memoirs and reflections on the growth of the typing scene, the connection of typing games to the gaming mainstream via gaming celebrities like the late Reckful, along with Wrona's own original research on the fastest and slowest keys, words, and regions of the QWERTY keyboard, indicating why the conventional home row wisdom is wrong. He concludes with an in-depth description of how he types each key of the keyboard as well as a recap of the second Ultimate Typing Championship in 2020.

Interesting book of the history of shorthand in Australia, written by Carmel Taylor

By Jorge Bravo, Azat Ambartsoumian and Diana Campi

This year the book "A History of Shorthand in Australia - With Pencils Poised" has just been published in Australia, written by Carmel Taylor, whom we met when he visited Argentina and, specifically, the Miguel Palant Shorthand Collection at the National Library of Congress Argentina.

Today he surprises us with this wonderful book to learn about the history of shorthand in Australia. We had many conversations with Carmel Taylor and we wanted to know aspects of stenographic history in Australia.



Therefore, we would like to quote a part of the Introduction of the book:

"The weekly Argentinian radio programme "Palabras Dibujadas" (Drawn Words") is devoted to the art of shorthand, historically and current, across the world. When the programme's presenters asked me to share aspects of Australian shorthand history, the realisation became clear that no one has assembled these stories into a meaningful narrative. This is puzzling, as we do have an abundance of meaningful and entertaining stories to tell. Our nation's social culture, historia and economy have been impacted by the presence and practice of shorthand."

And let's see what the back cover of the book says:

"‘Silently and inconspicuously, shorthand writers have been instrumental in recording, documenting and preserving oral history. Thoughts and spoken words can simply fly away without any hope of retrieval – the written Word remains.’"

“So begins this account of a skill that greatly enhanced media and business communications in the 20th century, and continues to do so.

“Shorthand writers in Australia date to the early years of colonisation. Users brought with them the method of their time, and infectious curiosity prompted inventions and improvements through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Shorthand’s popularity surged in the 1920s and beyond, coinciding with the new technology of the wireless, and what was once exclusively an occupation for men soon became one in which women excelled.

“Australia’s rich and fascinating history of shorthand has not been told previously. Carmel Taylor delves deeply and ranges widely in telling it with apt immediacy and lightness of touch.”

A friendly meeting

By Anita Dobos

This summer some members of two Intersteno country had an 'informal' meeting in the Hungarian capital.

Our Czech Intersteno friend, Štěpán Kratochvíl, was in transit in Hungary, so we had an opportunity, even only for a short time, for a personal get-together.

I immediately said yes to a possible face-to-face conversation with this excellent Czech competitor! Fortunately, thanks to the improvement of the pandemic situation at that time, we were delighted to know that we could meet after a long time! Moreover, as a 'hostess' I felt obligated to fulfill such a kind request!



Cheerful Intersteno friends

On a sunny summer day, after a sightseeing tour of Budapest, together with some other Czech and Hungarian friends, a meeting took place in a very good mood. We all were really happy to meet and see each other again! The great pleasure was really mutual! On this fantastic evening, also with delicious food, not just for friendly moments, we had the opportunity to discuss some professional topics too, both as a competitor and as a representative of the 'other side'. It was very interesting to talk about the same themes from different points of view (as a contestant and also as a 'worker')! We also agreed that the interests of the competitors were most important! And we all were of the same opinion: There is no substitute for a face-to-face communication!

This day was really great!

On the way to the airport late at night, we said goodbye to each other. Hopefully, we will meet in Maastricht at the next Intersteno congress (or maybe sooner than that, who knows... 😊)!

Death of the Argentina stenographer Héctor Cataldo

By Jorge Bravo, Azat Ambartsoumian and Diana Campi

At the age of 97 years, the stenographer and professor Héctor Cataldo died in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

In addition to being a stenographer, Cataldo was also a professor of History and Literature and a journalist. He wrote many articles about the art of shorthand and he was always an advocate for shorthand across the board. He also learned the Stenital system (one of the Italian shorthand systems), a system that he tried to spread in Argentina, for which he was appointed “general delegate of Stenital shorthand in Argentina”, as reported in the Italian magazine “Notiziario Sténital”, published in Rome (year XX, N° 2, March-April 1973).

Professor Héctor Roque Cataldo was a member of the Argentine Association of Parliamentary Stenographers and the Ibero-American Association of Stenographers. He was also the founder of the Argentine Society of Shorthand Studies (SAETA).

His passion for shorthand made him well known in the stenographic field, for which he had contacts with stenographers not only from Argentina but also from other countries, who always valued his passion for the profession and for teaching.

Without a doubt, a great loss for Argentina’s shorthand.

We will always remember him!

