



AMBRÓZY, ISTVÁN

Translator and interpreter

'I'm convinced there is such a thing as interpreting talent. If one has this talent, the focus should be on developing language and literacy. The rest will follow.'

Interpreter, translator, teacher, economist...

Musician, athlete...

Father of three children... grandfather of three grandchildren...

István Ambrózy is a man of many talents. He has a fascinating life story, full of adventures. He found the way to turn his hobby into his profession and vice versa. He visited many places in the world. He once had six machine guns pointed at him while working. He once escaped from a shark. He has proved himself in many areas of life, won several awards as a musician and as an athlete. As a teacher he helps new generations of interpreters to become as devoted to their profession as he is.

BIOGRAPHY

- Born on 28 November **1947**
- **1967-1971**: studied at Marx Károly University of Economics
- **1973-1978**: studied at Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Humanities, English Studies
- **1970-1995**: worked as an assistant professor at College for Foreign Trade
- **1995-present**: manager, Alfa Lingua Language School
- **1997-2011**: worked as a freelance interpreter for European Commission and European Parliament (approx. 600 days)
- **2000-2002**: examiner for EU SCIC interpreters' exam
- **1990-2011**: interpreter at the Council of Europe (approx. 70 days)
- **2007**: examiner for the EU Concours

THE INTERPRETER



His first English words were taught to him by his father, who also had a talent for languages. In grammar school, Mr Ambrózy was mainly interested in science and wanted to be a teacher of mathematics and chemistry.

During this period he met his mentor, an English-Hungarian interpreter, who happened to be the father of one of the children in the kindergarten of his grandmother. He was 17 when he attended his mentor's first real English lesson. After 11 months of national service, he applied to the University of Economics and graduated there. At the beginning of his university studies he won the National English Competition for University Students. He was offered a job as assistant professor of English at the University. After graduation, he applied to study English at Eötvös Loránd University.

His first experience as an interpreter was at a trade union conference where his mentor shoved him in the booth without any warning to interpret from Hungarian into English. From that day on, his mentor took him to every event and helped him pick up the tricks of the trade. At that time Mr Ambrózy also worked as a freelance translator; this experience further improved his English.

Mr Ambrózy worked for the European Commission and the Parliament, as well as for the Council of Europe. Furthermore, he was an examiner for the EU SCIC interpreters' exam. His favourite topics are science, technology, and music. Politics or IT are not his cup of tea.

He has interpreted extensively abroad, including Turkey, Poland, Germany, Ethiopia, the United States, and Australia. He often works for the International Criminal Court in the Hague nowadays. One of his dangerous experiences was in Ethiopia, where six machine guns were pointed at him while he was interpreting, to prevent a possible assassination attempt against the dictator. However, during his stay in Ethiopia, he was taken aback by the capital city Addis Ababa with its incredible luxury on the one hand, and thousands of people starving to death every day on the other.

Nowadays he prefers to work in Hungary, and as for travelling, his bucket list includes China, South-America, Norway, Iceland, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Mr Ambrózy recalls one of his most awkward professional moments being the day when he was asked to provide consecutive interpreting at a company conference. The audience of 1500 people was bored by the speech of the presenter, so Mr Ambrózy decided to make the interpreted version more enjoyable. He was never called again by that company. Conclusion: never be better than the speaker.

THE MUSICIAN

His obsession with music began at the age of 16 when he started to take guitar lessons. During his university years he gave classical guitar concerts, and won several awards. He still plays it as a hobby.

Around the age of 30, he joined a rock band and spent 8-10 years in the pop industry. Interpretation faded into the background for a while.

Being a musician was quite complex and versatile job. It included writing lyrics: originals in Hungarian, translations in English, studio works, coaching English pronunciation.

He worked with almost all of the famous Hungarian bands of the time, including Neoton Família, LGT, Omega, Karthago, Edda, Bikini and East. He wrote the lyrics of the song 'Time Goes By' of Neoton Família, which won a Golden Disc Award as well as the Grand Prix in Tokyo at the International Yamaha Festival in 1983.

As a musician, his love for the profession is still paying off, and he still has concerts in several clubs.

Some of the songs with Mr Ambrózy's lyrics:

- Neoton Família: Time goes by: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCU7oP9B6W0>
- LGT – I had life: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbiWOTMB-uM>
- Omega – Morning light: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BTWLM5W9rg>
- Edda Művek – The circle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eogQ4ILRUfE>



Plaque for the 25th jubilee (International Yamaha Festival, Tokyo - Grand Prix; Golden Disc Award) of 'Times Goes By' song, written for the Neoton Família in 1983

THE ATHLETE



Tennis and table tennis trophies

Mr Ambrózy has always paid attention to finding a balance between mental and physical health. He still plays a variety of sports from tennis and table tennis to trail running, skiing and rowing. He is a regular participant at sport competitions, and he the senior table tennis senior champion of Budakeszi.

His most impressive performance as a swimmer was to outswim a shark in a life-and-death contest off the coast of Australia. He had not noticed the shark-alarm until he glimpsed the shark's fin. Fortunately the shark was not in a hungry mood, so the competition did not get too tense. ☺

THE FATHER AND GRANDFATHER

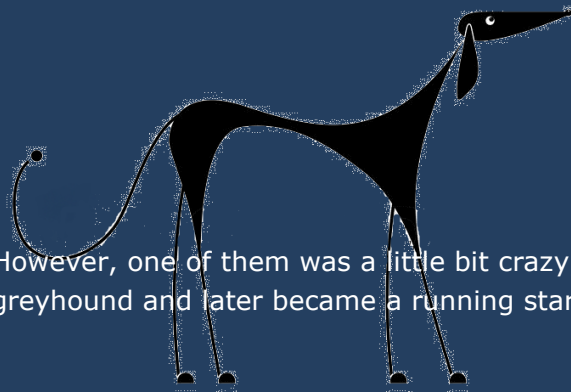
Mr Ambrózy is a proud father of three children and grandfather of three grandchildren. All of them speak English, having been taught by him. His daughter also works as an English teacher and interpreter.

His attempt to speak only in English to his first son is a nice story. When the little boy heard his father speaking in Hungarian to everyone except him, he refused to answer in English. At one point Mr Ambrózy realized that teaching his son about life would be difficult if the boy lacked the basic vocabulary. So Mr Ambrózy decided to stop speaking English to his son, and told him. The boy's face lightened up, and, grinning, he explained to his father the names of the birds, clouds and houses... 😊

OTHER...

- Animal...

He had two dogs. However, one of them was a little bit crazy, so they had to give it back. It was a beautiful greyhound and later became a running star.



- Food...

Steak, king prawn... actually everything if nicely cooked. But mostly domestic cuisine. He has become bored by French cuisine in Brussels: one gram of food on a big plate, like in a painting.



- Languages...

Beside the working languages he has basic skills in Italian and German and understands a bit of Russian and French.

