

NOTE TAKING FOR CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING: CHALLENGE OF TEACHING, SUCCESS OF PERFORMING

Afonina I. Yu.

More often than not, the “greats” will tell you that consecutive interpretation cannot be learnt and that note-taking depends upon the personality of the interpreter. I am afraid my own experience shows otherwise. If the fundamentals ... are in place then note-taking can easily be learnt.

Rozan, 2003:11 [1956:9]¹

INTRODUCTION

Interpreting has been practiced throughout history in different settings, maybe never more so than today with globalization. In the past sixty years, the worldwide market for interpreting has naturally been shaped by shifts in the emphasis of international discourse, between military, commercial, scientific, or ecological concerns, but also by shifts in cultural and linguistic influence, notably the spread of English.

Consecutive interpreting is one of the two working modes in conference interpreting. One of the most necessary parts of true consecutive interpreting is note-taking. Albl-Mikasa states that “Consecutive interpreting is typically used for press conferences, after-dinner speeches and similar occasions. The statements to be interpreted can be as long as 20minutes. As the capacity of the human memory is insufficient to provide a consecutive of longer statements, the interpreters make notes to support their memory and thus to facilitate the rendition in the target language”².

The importance of note-taking as an integral portion of the process of consecutive interpreting is acknowledged by all professional interpreters

¹ Rozan, Jean-François (1956) *La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive*, Geneva: Georg; trans. by Andrew Gillies as *Note-taking in Consecutive Interpreting*. Cracow : Tertium, 2003. P. 11.

² Albl-Mikasa, M. (Non-) Sense in note-taking for consecutive interpreting. *Interpreting*. 2008. No. 10(2). P. 203.

and specialists in interpreting studies. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the when and the how to get notes is something in fixed necessity of emphasizing given the abundant bibliography on the subject, whose starting point can be considered to be Rozan's famous classic of 1956, and at present complemented by a no of books and articles specifically devoted to note-taking – Alexieva, Lung, Gilles, Heimerl-Moggan and John, Valencia – plus several books dealing with conference interpreting which also contain chapters devoted to note-taking – Jones, Iliescu Gheorghiu, Nolan, Gillies, Downie³.

The research interest in cognitive processing in translation and interpreting is increasing, but the focus on consecutive interpreting is very limited to date. Note-taking is a distinctive feature of consecutive interpreting and provides a unique opportunity to inquire into the interpreting process. The debate about the development of note-taking skills in the training of interpreters has always occupied an essential place in the academic and education field. Moreover, as the technique remains highly personal and individual, some instructors and practitioners are doubtful or neutral about the necessity to learn note-taking while others tend to promote its systematic instruction as a kind of code superimposed on language.

Sometimes, interpreters don't have the necessity to get notes due to their excellent memory. However, in some cases, the original speaker could hold on speaking for about fifteen minutes so notes will probably be the key to retaining all the main ideas. According to Gerard I and Sylvie L., "teaching note-taking in a systematic manner should be highly individual but based on common sense rules of efficiency and economy"⁴. The information in an efficient note therefore should be restricted to which is easily stored in and retrieved from memory. Otherwise, note-taking is also regarded as "evil" because it may split the power of attention and interfere in one's listening.

Hence, this study will give insights into the role of notes, basic principles when taking notes. The study attempts to highlight that note-taking plays a key role in consecutive interpreting, being an indispensable aid to the interpreter. Firstly, this is one of the basic skills that help students a lot to memorize and retrieve information efficiently.

³ Maria T. Sanchez. (Over) Note-Taking in Consecutive Interpreting. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies*. 2018. Vol. 06, issue 03. P. 151.

⁴ Gerard, I., Sylvie, L. Teaching consecutive interpreting. *Interpreting*. 1996. Vol. 1, no. 1. P. 82.

Furthermore, an excellent memory is a prerequisite of excellent interpreting. Effective note-taking is a grand tool for interpreters who work with the consecutive mode, regardless of their professional field of practice. The relationship between note-taking and interpreting performance is a key concern in the teaching of interpreting.

1. A brief review of note-taking in consecutive interpreting: the linguistic nature of a notation

The large volume of literature generated by scholars' sustained interest in note taking can be roughly divided into two streams: a prescriptive stream and a descriptive stream. At the earliest stage, a number of prescriptive works have introduced some well-known note taking systems and principles. Later on, noticing the challenges brought by the teaching and learning of note taking in classrooms, some scholars begin to observe how notes are actually taken by student interpreters⁵. These studies represent the beginning of a shift in note taking literature from being prescriptive to becoming descriptive. Some researchers have also investigated the cognitive and linguistic aspects of note taking, pointing out a concurrent storage of information in memory and in notes and that note-taking operates on a micro-level that stays close to the source text⁶. The more recent studies in the descriptive stream usually target specific note-taking choices, collecting data in simulated interpreting tasks and contributing valuable empirical evidence⁷. In all these studies, three variables have received the majority of the attention: the choice of form, the choice of language, and the relationship between note taking and interpreting performance.

Interpreters make choices (although not always consciously) on the form of notes: whether to take notes in symbol or language, and if in language, whether to write the word in full or to abbreviate it. Many prescriptive publications introducing note taking systems put the use of symbols and abbreviations at a prominent position. Compared to language, symbols are easy to write and read, and can help avoid source language influence because they represent concepts rather than specific

⁵ Alexieva, B. On teaching note-taking in consecutive interpreting. In C. Dollerup & A. Lindegaard (Eds.), *Teaching translation and interpreting 2: Insights, aims, visions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 1994. P. 203.

⁶ Dam, H.V. Interpreters' notes: On the choice of language. *Interpreting*. 2004a. Vol. 6, no. 1. P. 9.

⁷ Downe, J. *Being a Successful Interpreter*. London and New York : Routledge. 2016. P. 65.

words⁸. But the prescriptive suggestion on how many symbols should be used varies from system to system. At the minimalist end was Rozan, who recommended a total of 20 symbols, of which “only 10 were indispensable”⁹. At the maximalist end was Matyssek, who used a whole book volume to introduce a detailed code of drawings and symbols¹⁰. As to the use of abbreviations, it is generally suggested that long words (more than 4 to 5 letters according to Rozan) should be abbreviated to save time and effort spent on writing the notes.

The choice of form has also been empirically investigated in such studies as Andres (2002), Dam (2004a, 2004b), Lung (2003), Dai and Xu (2007), Liu (2010), and Wang, Zhou, and Wang (2010)¹¹. The results pointed to a preference for language over symbol, whereas findings on the choice between abbreviation and full word were inconsistent.

The relationship between note taking and interpreting performance is a key concern in the teaching of interpreting. Scholars have looked at the relationship between interpreting performance and such variables as the quality and quantity of notes, but no consistent conclusions have been reached. It would seem that the interactions between note taking and interpreting performance are more complex than imagined. A pilot study by Orlando¹² compared the performances of interpreters in traditional consecutive interpreting and a new hybrid mode using digital pen. Results showed that in the new mode, which he called “consecutive with notes”, the accuracy was higher, and the number of disfluencies or hesitation phenomena was lesser. The digital pen technology was, as a result, recommended for use in consecutive interpreting training and practice.

Through this brief review of literature on note taking in consecutive interpretation, it is not difficult to find that although some general trends could be detected, such as a dominance of language over symbol, there are also vast inconsistencies. The collected empirical evidence is very limited to date. More importantly, the studies are largely product-

⁸ Gillies, A. Note taking for Consecutive Interpreting. A Short Course. Manchester & Kinderhook (NY): St. Jerome Publishing. 2005. P. 135.

⁹ Ilg, G., Lambert, S. Teaching consecutive interpreting. Interpreting. 1996. Vol. 1, no. 1. P. 72.

¹⁰ Matyssek, H. Handbuch der Notizentechnik für Dolmetscher. Heidelberg : Julius Groos. 1989. P. 237.

¹¹ Sijia, Chen. Note-taking in consecutive interpreting: New data from pen recording. The International Journal for Translation & Interpreting Research. 2017. Vol. 9, no.1. P. 9.

¹² Orlando, M. Training 21st century translators and interpreters: At the crossroads of practice, research and pedagogy. Berlin : Frank & Timme. 2016. P. 54.

oriented. That is, they only look at the product (i.e., the notes produced) without an in-depth analysis of the note-taking process.

What could then be a promising avenue for future research? Interpreting is deemed a cognitively demanding task by many. As Gile points out, “note-taking is an area in which the concept of processing capacity can be useful.”¹³ If cognitive load can be measured during the process of note-taking, some underlying principles might be unveiled. Considering that discussions on measuring cognitive load in interpreting, especially consecutive interpreting, are very limited for a review and a proposal for potential measurement techniques including pen recording), investigating the cognitive load in note-taking seems important.

What is the linguistic nature of a notation?

Note-taking is commonly regarded as some kind of supporting technique, developed by practitioners for practitioners to help them retrieve part of their source text understanding from memory. In order to fulfill this function, note-taking aims at keeping the processing effort as low as possible. Three basic principles can be identified that are largely undisputed in specialist literature:

Economy: to minimize the processing effort any notation should be as scarce and brief as possible.

Instantaneous seizability: the strain on the memory can be effectively relieved only if the interpreter can read the notes at a glance.

Individuality: note-taking is not governed by any obligatory rules or regulations. Generally speaking, anything that supports its function or that is subjectively felt to do so is admissible¹⁴.

What is most controversially discussed, however, is the relationship between notation and natural languages. The controversy, which is rooted in the translanguing dimension of the consecutive interpreting task, revolves around the alleged language-independent nature of notation. The discussion is dominated by two prominent (yet not always clearly distinguished) claims. The first claim makes a semantic point and argues that successful interpreting involves a deep and comprehensive understanding of the source text and thus requires a notation that is able

¹³ Gile, D. Basic concepts and models for interpreter and translator training (Benjamins Translation Library). 1st Edition. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 1995. P. 41.

¹⁴ Kurt, Kohn, Michaela Albl-Mikasa. Note-taking in consecutive interpreting. On the reconstruction of an individualised language. URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265999951_2002_Note-taking_in_consecutive_interpreting_On_the_reconstruction_of_an_individualised_language_Linguistica_Antverpiensia_1 (date of access: 24.01.2022).

to grasp the source text's meaning as a deverbaised entity (Seleskovitch)¹⁵. (Note that this is a text-as-object approach, which incorporates the assumption of one text having one meaning.)

The second claim concerns the nature of note-taking signs and emphasizes the need for an approach that makes them as language-neutral as possible (Matyssek)¹⁶. The underlying idea is that the interpreter's detachment from the source text surface structures can only be achieved with the help of a notation system that stays clear of any of the languages involved. In addition, it is also seen as a considerable advantage if notation systems are applicable to all of the interpreter's working languages (see Rozan). In practice, however, notation systems show clear evidence of source or target language influences – without detrimental effects on the interpreter's performance.

Ilg¹⁷ is the only author to stress not only the importance of a deep analysis and understanding of the source text's sense but to emphasize also the major role played in interpreting by the source text's expression side. He points to the fact that especially on the level of international gatherings, a main field for interpreting, an extremely codified, ritualized and formalized language prevails which, in many cases, has to be retained or at least taken into consideration.

From a cognitive perspective, a language can be understood as a reservoir of linguistic means of expression – from sounds to words and phrases to grammatical structures – that are designed to help speakers create utterances that convey their meaning intentions and hearers to construct an interpretation of those utterances and intentions. Notation systems likewise provide means of expression suitable for producing notation utterances and for conveying utterance meanings. A notation system is actually a notation language offering a surprisingly wide range of notation signs with lexical, syntactic and pragmatic values. So far only few attempts have been undertaken to explore this dimension, viz. Kirchhoff (1979), Allioni (1989) and Kalina (1998)¹⁸.

¹⁵ Seleskovitch, D. *Langage, langues et mémoire: étude de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive*. Paris: Minard Lettres Modernes. 1975. P. 26.

¹⁶ Szabó, C. Language choice in note-taking for consecutive interpreting. *Interpreting*. 2006. Vol. 8, no. 2. P. 132.

¹⁷ Ilg, G., Lambert, S. Teaching consecutive interpreting. *Interpreting*. 1996. Vol. 1, no. 1. P. 71.

¹⁸ Kohn, K., S. Kalina. The strategic dimension of interpreting. *Meta*. 1996. Vol. XLI, no. 1. P. 120.

Notation signs make deliberate use of natural languages and are shaped by various reduction, adaptation and iconisation processes. It would be completely uneconomical not to have recourse to natural languages and, instead, to invent and learn new, arbitrary means of expression. At the same time, it can be shown that a notation language has its own notation-specific means and develops its own specific structures and characteristics, which, in line with functional requirements, are quite distinct from those of natural languages.

Notation languages are designed to minimize processing costs on different dimensions: they should be maximally suited for fast, economical and effective note-taking, easy to learn, and in compliance with the preferences and strengths of the individual interpreter. For this reason, notation languages typically make use of the most varied self-created or borrowed means of expression, and they do so by openly choosing them in terms of the advantages they have to offer. It is here that an explanation should be sought for the fact that studies have found the mixed character of notation language to be a common practice among professional interpreters as well as in student training.

There follows a short overview and preliminary linguistic categorisation of some of the notation signs.

2. Consecutive interpretation techniques and basic note-taking principles

There are several reasons why having a considered and consistent system for taking notes in consecutive interpreting is useful, if not essential, and these ideas follow.

Notes taken in consecutive interpreting are a representation of the skeleton structure of the speech. The original speech is a group of ideas in a certain order; it is not an arbitrary muddle of unrelated ideas. In the speaker's mind at least, the ideas that make up a speech are related to one another, be it logically, chronologically or by their relative importance. These relationships and the structures used to express them are limited in number and occur repeatedly in all sorts of speeches, so once you have learnt to recognize them, you will need a quick and consistent way of noting them. In this way, your notes become the visual representation of your analysis of the source speech. The notes must be at least as clear (to you) as the analysis preceding them; otherwise the analysis is wasted, and usually the notes will be clearer in structure than the original speech, so that the interpreter can easily transmit the same message to the audience.

Consecutive interpreting involves a number of different tasks that have to be completed at the same time with finite and competing intellectual capacities – multitasking . Gile (1995)¹⁹ outlines these tasks as follows:

Phase 1 (while the speaker is speaking): listening and analysis, note-taking, short-term memory operations, coordination of these tasks;

Phase 2 (while the interpreter is speaking): note-reading, remembering, production.

In Phase 1, the most common problem for student interpreters (but also for experienced interpreters) is that it is difficult to do all these things at the same time. We have finite intellectual capacity.

Note also that these four tasks are inextricably linked to one another in the order that Gile suggests them. Listening makes analysis possible, but good analysis in turn means quicker, clearer notes. And vice versa: a sound note-taking system helps you to analyze the source speech. And finally good analysis and note-taking will promote effective short-term memory operations. So much for Phase 1. But Phase 2 also involves a certain degree of multitasking. If your notes are unclear or illegible, for example, your production will suffer because you will put too much effort into reading them. Clear notes, on the other hand, offer something akin to stage directions.

2.1. Stages Of Consecutive Interpretation

Consecutive interpretation is not just about note taking. There is a whole process before note taking and it is as vital as that phase of the interpreting act.

Comprehension of the speech is a key step to begin with. When we talk about comprehension in consecutive interpretation, people may think that what interpreters merely do is understand words and translate them, but words should not be merely understood. In consecutive interpretation, we should interpret concepts or ideas in order to give a speech a better quality. Words can negatively chain interpreters' creativity to re-express. Consequently, one of the processes interpreters need to do is deverbalize, a phase proposed by Seleskovitch on *The Theory of Translation*²⁰ established in the 1970s, that is to say, get away

¹⁹ Gile, D. *Basic concepts and models for interpreter and translator training* (Benjamins Translation Library). 1st Edition. Amsterdam : John Benjamins. 1995. P. 178.

²⁰ Seleskovitch, D. *Langage, langues et mémoire: étude de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive*. Paris : Minard Lettres Modernes. 1975. P. 119.

from the word itself and focus on the idea, comprehend the concept and what they are listening to.

That demonstrates why the interpreter does not 'translate', they 'interpret'. Common mistakes in the comprehension of the speech are usually linguistic ones (mostly in the languages the interpreter controls less), and the solutions proposed by Bosch (2012)²¹ would be keeping in contact with the language, keep studying it or actually live in a country where that language is spoken. That is precisely why comprehending incorrectly one word is a little issue to worry about because, as was said before, interpreters do not translate word by word, they interpret the whole concept. Along with their professional training as interpreters, they develop some techniques to deal with these problems successfully.

It may be obvious, but active listening is the very first phase necessary for interpreters to receive all the information, and it is vital to stay concentrated every single second while listening to the speech. But that obviousness disappears when we remember that listening is not hearing. During this stage, the interpreter is able to discern principal ideas from secondary ideas, identify the typology of the speech, analyze it and sympathize with the orator so the interpreter can predict some aspects of the speech.

The next phase to address is the analysis of the speech. Contrary to what is commonly believed, this process does not take place when reading the notes, it takes place in the active listening stage. It is an unconscious process, which the interpreter learns during their training, and helps to distinguish main information from irrelevant – which eventually would be eliminated from the final restitution.

Last but not least, there is the reformulation phase. Contrary to the other three stages, it is the last phase to be carried out during the whole process of consecutive interpreting. Bosch (2012)²² explains that, if the first three points have been conducted correctly, reformulation should not be a problem as no complications will arise; it is just about reading their notes. In the learning environment it is stressed to reformulate the orator's speech, then all the hard work will have been done. However, if there are any issues from an early phase, they will be presented during reformulation, such as false meanings, contradictory information, or leaving behind some pieces of crucial information. There can also be

²¹ Xènia Fuentes Morales. *Contrastive Analysis in Note Taking for Interpreting Studies*. Barcelona, 2020. P. 17.

²² *Ibid.*

obstacles orally such as lack of fluency, failure to project the voice, etc. These kind of errors are commonly seen among beginners. That is why Bosch (2012) insists so much on the huge relevancy of a good analysis of the speech and writing down good-quality notes.

2.2. Basic note-taking principles

Structured note taking is suitable for any consecutive interpreting scenario. Although we may have an assignment where hardly any notes need to be taken, it is good practice always to have a notepad and pen available just in case we need to jot down numbers or names. In most cases, however, taking notes constitutes an inseparable part of the interpreting process. Interpreters also take notes during simultaneous interpreting, but these typically consist of short messages only, and the notes lack the structure that is necessary for interpreting larger chunks of speech during consecutive interpreting.

Do not rely solely on your notes. An interpreter should first and foremost rely on his or her memory, the capacity of which can be strengthened through the use of proper visualization techniques. Let us remember that, to a certain degree, note taking interferes with listening. Active listening, of course, is the cornerstone of proper interpreting. You must first hear and understand the message within a specific context to be able to interpret it effectively. Therefore, writing a minimum amount of notes as opposed to writing almost everything is key.

To maximize the success of your interpreting performance and to minimize the need for taking notes, request background materials from the client so you can study them ahead of time and research the topic. Aside from being able to do a better job overall, you will enjoy a boost in your confidence and the feeling of having things under control. It is also a good idea to try to have a short conversation with the speaker before the start of the event. This is an excellent way to “tune” your ear to the speaker’s accent and intonation to enhance your listening experience, while finding out more about the speaker’s message. Most interpreters prefer writing notes in the target language. Writing notes in the original language works just as well for others. Just avoid mixing the languages and using both, which, in an already stressful situation, can cause you to forget which language you are interpreting into.

There is no unified note taking system to suit everyone’s needs. Since everybody’s memory works differently, has varied capacity, and stores information using different methods, it would be impossible to come up

with a one-size-fits-all approach. Every interpreter eventually comes up with his or her own system, solidified through practice and experience, and finds out what impulses trigger retrieval of stored information from memory. Contrary to popular belief, the notes you write are not intended for use by other interpreters or clients. Notes are written in a personalized way and are often illegible to others, and that is just fine. As long as you can read and understand them, there is no need for anyone else to be able to decipher your writing.

Interpreting works best when we let the speaker deliver a meaningful chunk of speech, preferably two or more sentences. As interpreters, we need enough material to work with, to recognize context, and to be able to deliver the message properly in the target language. The longer the chunks of speech, the bigger the need for taking notes. Taking notes also helps the conversation flow with the least possible disruption. At the same time, you should not fixate on using notes. When you take notes but feel you can deliver without them, do not use them. On the other hand, take notes when you interpret about a subject that is new to you. Memory associates with prior experience and knowledge. The fewer associations there are, the more difficult it is to remember and the more notes you will need to take.

2.3. The 7 Principles of Note Taking by Jean-François Rozan

Note taking is a technique for interpreters to support their short-term memory when reformulating the original speech. It is essential to understand that the interpreter's notes are not everything, they are a support for the memory, but it is not recommendable for the interpreter to rely exclusively on their notes.

Jean-François Rozan (Rozan 1984)²³ suggested seven steps to note taking which can be summarised in the following way:

1. Noting the idea rather than the word

Words alone can be often misleading, especially for interpreters because they have to produce a new version of a speech in a new language.

2. Abbreviation

Unless the word is already short (4–5 letters), there should be a way to abbreviate words in order to make notes clearer. For example, if the interpreter wants to write “product” the word could be abbreviated as

²³ Xènia Fuentes Morales. *Contrastive Analysis in Note Taking for Interpreting Studies*. Barcelona, 2020. P. 18.

Prod., but this in itself can be confusing as it may also refer to the word “producer,” “production” or “productivity”. Consequently, it is useful to include the last two letters of the word we are abbreviating as this is also helpful when maintaining gender and number consistency.

3. Links

It is essential to keep ideas and speech connected, and that should be represented in the interpreter’s notebook. Furthermore, the register of the speech should be maintained too, and that can be done by writing down specific words of the original speech.

4. Negation

There are plenty of types of representing negation: with a cross next to the concept, with a cross on it, with a line running through a word or a symbol, among others. One thing is sure: it should be noted redundantly.

5. Emphasis

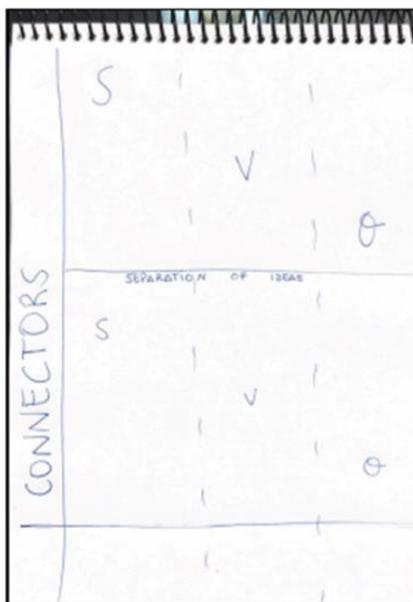
To emphasize a word, it should be underlined (if the interpreter is dealing with a superlative, for example) or with a line of dots under the word to mitigate.

6. Verticality

Verticality is one of the most important note-taking principles. It refers to taking notes from top to bottom rather than from left to right. It lets the interpreter make a quick and more comfortable reading of the notes. In addition, it is easier to group the ideas logically and read back notes – which would be helpful if further information has to be added.

7. Shift

Shifting is also crucial. It is a system which allows interpreters to divide their notes into three categories: SUBJECT, VERB and OBJECT (but not in a grammatical way). This enables the interpreter to see the “who does what?”. This is the base to shift and classify information.



2.4. Note Taking Structure

The most widely used note taking structure is based on the work of Jean Francois Rozan²⁴. His method abstracts the source-language message into a symbolic form. Very few words are written down, and the focus is on ideas, or concepts, rather than words. This way, key words are identified, which will eventually trigger the memory of the entire concept. Hana Laurenzo in her article “Note Taking for Consecutive Interpreting” points out the most important techniques used in this method are:

- To write down key concepts and words diagonally across the page, from left to right.
- To use indentation, spacing, and vertical organization of words and symbols²⁵.

Notes written this way:

- Are easier to read as our eyes move naturally from left to right.
- Have an at-a-glance, simple to follow structure.
- Place the beginning of each concept on the left, where we will see it first.
- Eliminate syntactic interference in the target language (frequently the result of horizontal notes).
- Provide space for additional notes²⁶.

There is a further point to be made here that the principle of the note-taking vertical arrangement is based on the stepped note-taking of the source text, which allows you to group thoughts in their logical connection and provides a more complete reproduction of the original text.

The vertical arrangement of notes provides a number of advantages. Firstly, making use of this arrangement of notes, a relatively narrow strip of paper is used, which, definitely gives a gain in time, as it saves hand movements. Secondly, this principle is based on a clear note-taking structure, where each sentence member has a place assigned to it. Thirdly, verticalism allows refuse to write down many grammatical forms, since logical connections and syntactic relations are expressed using a special notation of the text.

²⁴ Rozan, Jean-François. *La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive*, Geneva: Georg, 1956; trans. by Andrew Gillies as *Note-taking in Consecutive Interpreting*. Cracow : Tertium, 2003. P. 167.

²⁵ Hana Laurenzo. *Note Taking for Consecutive Interpreting*. *The ATA Chronicle*. 2008. Vol. XXXVII, no. 10. P. 26.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Moreover, the vertical note-taking is based on the direct word order in a sentence, where the grammatical probability of word alternation turns into the grammatical regularity. This word order suggests that in most cases the subject group will be written in the first place, and below, with some digression to the right, a predicate group will be placed.

Now let's consider the subject group.

The subject group includes all words that are in the subordinate position to the first main member of the sentence (subject). Usually subject consists of a noun, pronoun or group of nouns or pronouns with attributes. Various attributes can be parts of speech, participial phrases or attributive clauses.

In English, it is also possible to distinguish a subject group in a sentence, which includes the attribute expressed by:

- 1) an adjective

For example, the sentence "The Syrian operation has shown the increased capabilities of the Ukrainian Armed Forces" noted diagonally across the page, would look like Figure 1.

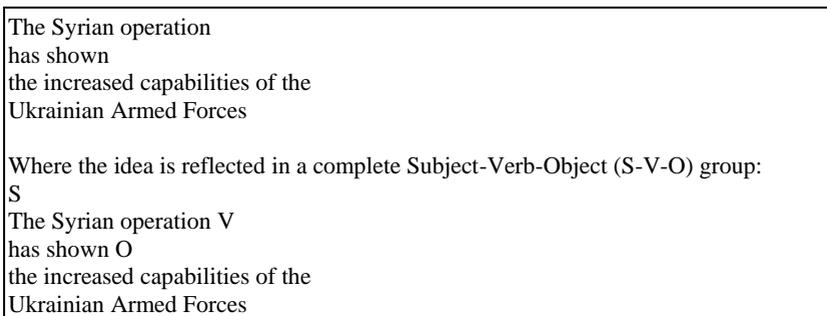


Fig. 1

- 2) participial construction

Jihadist group originated in Nigeria retook a border town.

Jihadist group originated in Nigeria

retook

a border town

- 3) possessive pronoun

His decision was not accepted by the public.

His decision

was not accepted

by the public

4) adjectives and nouns

The US global missile defence system also includes five cruisers and
30 destroyers.

The US global missile defence system
also includes
five cruisers and 30 destroyers

The predicate group encompasses the predicate with all the words in
his subordinate position. Let's consider the following example:

Ukraine and the USA
signed the New START Treaty
in Prague
in 2010

In this case, two adverbial modifiers (of place and time) and one
complement (object) are written in one column.

Another example:

The President
appealed to the nation
with a statement
this Friday

The column contains indirect objects and the adverbial modifier of
time. Note-taking still follows the rule within the main member's group:
each word should take place next to and to the right of the word which it
refers to.

One more example:

The treaty
was signed by the EU-states
in 2015
promoted consolidation of partnership
strengthening of alliance

There are two groups of predicates here. Both predicates (was signed,
promoted) as homogeneous members of a sentence are written one under
the other, below and to the right of a subject (contract) which they are
equally subordinate to. The first predicate (was signed) has an object and
an adverbial modifier of time. Both are subordinated to one word and are
written accordingly in a column, to the right of the word which they
relate to. The second predicate also has two complements (objects).
Note-taking of a group of the second predicate is subordinated to the
same rule.

Consideration of full, not concised (for greater evidence) records of
groups of the predicate allows us to formulate the following conclusion:

a group (or groups) of the predicate is written, as a rule, in the second place, i.e. below and some to the right of the subject. Subordinate parts of the sentence, with the exception of agreed attributes, are located to the right of the word which they belong to. If the same word has more than one member sentence, they are written one below the other, regardless of whether they are homogeneous or heterogeneous.

Use Symbols

As for symbols, they are a way of quickly noting information that can easily be read back. When used as part of a consistent and structured note-taking system, they can help make notes clearer and more efficient. Symbols can be pictorial, or just letters (from any alphabet), and they should represent the underlying meaning of what

the interpreter hear rather than only the word he/she hears. Andrew Gillies who trains students, interpreters and interpreter-trainers worldwide on behalf of universities, international institutions and the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) points out that symbols are quicker and easier to write than words, are quicker and easier to read on the page than words, they represent concepts, not words and they can save space on the page, so the structure of your notes is clearer²⁷.

Gillies also emphasizes that symbols must be: “a) clear and unambiguous, b) quick and simple to draw, c) prepared in advance, and instantly familiar to you (not needed to improvise mid-speech), d) consistent; if E is energy today, make sure it stays energy always and find yourself another symbol for environment and economy, e) organic. “Organic” means that one symbol should be the starting point for other related symbols. A group or family of symbols will grow from a common root, f) symbols must mean something to you. Copying symbols from other people can be a good idea, but symbols work because they create associations in your mind, not anyone else’s²⁸”.

A great example of a symbol meeting all these rules is the arrow. It’s quick, versatile and represents an underlying meaning. Here’s what Jean Francois Rozan (1956) in his work “Note-taking in Consecutive Interpreting” showed was possible with just one arrow (Figure 2)²⁹.

A striking example of using symbols for consecutive interpreting is political topics.

²⁷ Gillies, A. *Consecutive Interpreting. A Short Course*. London, New York: Routledge. 2019. P. 107.

²⁸ *Ibid.* P. 108.

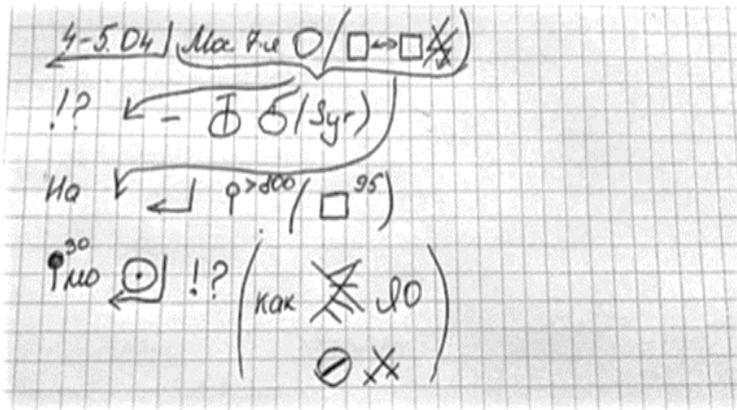
²⁹ *Ibid.* P. 109.

Country	☐	a country's development
	↗	duties an increase in duties
science	☐	scientific progress
patient	☐	the patient's recovery
	↗	salaries a rise in salaries
	↗	living start on improvement in the standard of living
	↗	prices inflated prices

Fig. 2

Svetlana Kurbakova in her work “Development of the Symbol System in Consecutive Interpreting”³⁰ makes the case that more active international contacts, broader areas of discussion call for further development of the system of note-taking in consecutive translation. As times are changing, new phenomena and concepts need new corresponding symbols for note-taking. A number of symbols to be used to interpret communication in the political spheres are presented below (Figure 3).

Let's consider the text, on the basis of which the symbols have been used to make a short note:



³⁰ Kurbakova S.N. Development of the Symbol System in Consecutive Interpreting. Professional Discourse & Communication. 2019. Vol. 1, issue 3. Professional Discourse & Communication. Vol. 1, issue 3, 2019. P. 50.

	to come into force, to go into force, to become effective
	to undermine, to blow down, to blast, to destroy, to bomb
	to resist, to oppose
	confrontation, struggle, battle, disputes
	authorities, government, administration, leader, head, chief, politician, diplomat, attaché
	threat, menace, danger, challenge attack, strike, hit, offensive
	former, ex-, past, late
	terrorism acts of violence
	decision, resolution verdict
	to restore, to renew, to revive
	atrocities, barbarity, ferocity, villainy
	information, data
	to make concessions, to compromise, to reach an agreement
	to limit, to restrict
	claim, demand immediate, urgent, prompt, instant
	halt, pause, ceasefire regime
	to vote, to poll, to choose, to make a choice
	nation, people, public, citizens
	rival, contestant, opponent, adversary
	peaceful, peaceable
	to fail, to miscarry
	target, objective
	control, supervision, inspection, lookout, monitoring

Figure 3

The conference brought together 144 participants, both government officials and members of the research community, from 13 nations to discuss international terrorism. The main objective of the conference was to exchange information on counter-terrorism measures³¹.

Thus, the note-taking is based on the principles of economy, visibility and universality. Despite the fact that there is a common, developed over time, a specific symbol system for encoding individual words and turns of speech, the interpreter can use his own symbols, which are understandable and convenient to him.

3. Teaching consecutive note-taking

In the field of teaching and training, consecutive interpreting is as vital as ever. As recommended by the International Association of Conference Interpreters³², consecutive remains a curricular component in most interpreter training programmes.

The relevance of the purposeful formation of students' skills in consecutive interpreting is caused, on the one hand, by increased requirements for professional training of an interpreter in the context of reforming the teaching of foreign languages at universities and, on the other hand, insufficiently systematic teaching this important type of interpreting activity to students. In order to increase the effectiveness of teaching students of a language university consecutive interpreting, it is necessary to use various exercises that take into account the psychological characteristics of undertaking interpreting activities. As the practitioners of interpreting claim, the specifics of an interpreter's work is that (s)he often has to deal with subject areas that (s)he is far from due to his/her humanitarian linguistic education. That is why specialists in the field of interpretation training recommend constant expanding their horizons, trying to learn as much as possible special terminology associated with various industries and scientific knowledge³³.

The skill of oral consecutive translation is the ability to carry out the operations of perception and analysis of the source messages, memorization, fixation and extraction from memory of its meaning, as

³¹ Kubrakova S.N. Development of the Symbol System in Consecutive Interpreting. Professional Discourse & Communication. 2019. Vol. 1, issue 3. Professional Discourse & Communication. Vol. 1, issue 3, 2019. P. 50. P. 64.

³² International Association of Conference Interpreters. URL: <https://aiic.org/>

³³ Abduganieva, D. Some Methods of Teaching Consecutive Interpreting in the Situational Conditions. Philology Matters. 2019. Vol. 31, no. 4. P. 145.

well as formulating statements in the target language. The qualities of a skill can be considered its automation (high speed of operations, fast association perceived meanings with the methods of note-taking, equivalents in the target language, and vice versa), stability (immunity to interference in perception), flexibility (independence of the translation situation, subject plan), consciousness (in the process of interpreting, the attention of the translator is not directed to the means of transmission, and for the implementation of translation functions). Thanks to the qualities, the skill becomes a condition for the successful implementation of translation activities.

Consecutive interpreting skills can be divided into four groups, namely:

Interpretive skills – skills related to analysis of an original statement (skills of highlighting key words, semantic milestones; collapsing known information; highlighting the main, accurate information);

Cognitive skills – skills related to mental operations (skills for distributing attention resources depending on the complexity of the translation situation; skills for retention of information in a short term memory and its urgent retrieval; mental state management skills, stress resistance);

Technical skills – skills related to the implementation of technical methods of interpreting (lexical, grammatical and structural-compositional skills in the organisation of a note-taking process; skill of switching from one code/language to another; skills of synchronization of different types of activity; phonation skills of making an oral statement);

Generating Skills – skills for formulating oral statements into the translated language (lexical and grammatical compression skills, transformation, generalization; phonetic skills of the rhythmic alternation of fluent and hesitation periods, pausing, intonation highlighting the main information; non-verbal communication skills).

Taking into consideration the abovementioned skills it is an obvious fact that without properly organized exercises, it is impossible to master educational and practical skills.

In the organization of interpreting training, the following stages can be distinguished based on the author's training experience:

Exercises of the first stage of training

The formation of skills and abilities of public speaking can be carried out in the course of the following series of exercises:

a time-limited (from 30 to 120 seconds) prepared speech with a message on a given, personally significant topic (in a native language);

a time-limited prepared presentation with a message on a given, popular science topic (in a native language);

a time limited prepared speech on a given socio-political topic (in a native language);

a time limited unprepared speech on a given topic (in a native language);

a time limited prepared speech with a message on a given, personally significant topic (in a foreign language);

a time limited unprepared speech with a report on a given, popular science topic (in a foreign language);

a time limited unprepared speech with a message on a given socio-political topic (in a foreign language).

It should be noted that the choice of speech topics should be determined by the general pedagogical task of developing translation erudition and competence, which should include awareness of current events, on the one hand, and extensive knowledge from many fields, on the other.

Exercises of the second stage of training

The exercises of this stage can be divided into two blocks. The first block

includes exercises using note-taking and retelling in the source language visually perceived text. Firstly the text should be written down using note-taking in a native language, secondly – in a foreign language. When retelling, the original text must be closed.

The second block combines exercises in taking notes and retelling the text with audio perception in the original language, namely: note-taking of an oral text in the native language and its retelling in the source language; taking notes of an oral text in a foreign language and its retelling in the original language.

The subject of the texts can be correlated with the previously selected objects of translation erudition. It is advisable to choose such texts that would be of interest to students: contained amazing facts, previously unknown information about the well-known subject, etc.

Exercises of the third stage of training

The third stage is aimed at improving the skills and abilities of public speaking based on a pre-compiled translation text. It includes a series of the following exercises:

A time limited (120–180 seconds) prepared presentation with a message on a given topic (scientific and technical, economic, socio-political problems) in their native language.

A time limited (120–180 seconds) prepared presentation with a message on a given topic (scientific and technical, economic, socio-political problems) in a foreign language.

It is desirable to accompany the speech with messages based on illustrative expression, for example, a PowerPoint presentation, which meets modern requirements for public speaking. In this case, not only the text with note-taking, but also the slides of the presentation will serve as a support.

Exercises of the fourth stage of training

The proper translation exercises begin precisely within the framework of this stage, which includes four blocks, in each of which all components of the assessment of translation activity are subject to control: comprehension, verbal expression and non-verbal behaviour of students. As material for translation authentic messages of various genres and topics are performed in the format of written text, audio and video recordings.

The first block consists of exercises in one-way interpreting of the text perceived visually, based on the note-taking. In the process of generating the translation text, the source text must be closed. The sequence of presentation of the exercise is as follows:

- written translation of a written text (2000–3000 printed signs) in a foreign language based on a translation note;
- written translation of a written text (2000–3000 printed characters) in a native language based on a translation note;
- oral translation of a written text (1500–2000 printed signs) in a foreign language based on a translation record (note-taking);
- oral translation of a written text (1500–2000 printed signs) in the native language based on the translation record (note-taking).

The exercises of the second block include one-sided translation of a text auditively perceived, based on a recording, namely:

- written translation of an oral message (2–3 minutes of sound) in a foreign language based on a translation record (note-taking);
- written translation of an oral message (2–3 minutes of sound) in a native language based on a translation record (note-taking);
- oral concise interpreting of an oral presentation in a native language (3–5 minutes of sound) based on translation record (note-taking);

- oral concise translation of an oral presentation in a foreign language (3–5 minutes of sound) based on a translation record (note-taking);
- consecutive interpreting of an oral speech in a foreign language (fragments of 2–3 minutes of sound) with accompaniment of PowerPoint presentation based on a translation record (note-taking);
- consecutive interpreting of an oral speech in a native language (fragments of 2–3 minutes of sound) accompanied by PowerPoint presentation based on a translation record (note-taking).

The third block combines exercises in two-way translation messages perceived visually, based on the note-taking. Options for completing tasks are as follows:

- written translation of the written text of the interview with support to the translation note;
- oral translation of the written text of the interview based on the translation record (note-taking).

Finally, the fourth block includes exercises in bilateral translation of a message auditively perceived, based on the record:

- written translation of interviews based on translation record (note-taking);
- oral retelling in the native language of the content of the interview;
- oral retelling in a foreign language of the content of the interview;
- consecutive interpreting of the interview based on the translation record (note-taking).

CONCLUSIONS

The subject of the theory of interpretation training seems to be one of the most important disciplines during the work of an interpreter. In daily work, one has to deal with the question of choosing an interpretation method for adequate message transmission, stylistic coloring, and emotional features of the text. For the quality performance of their work, interpreters need both in-depth knowledge in the field of translation theory and excellent practical skills.

This study investigates note-taking in consecutive interpretation in terms of the choice of form and language, and the relationship between note-taking and interpreting performance. This paper tries to show that note taking is a very practical activity for consecutive interpretation. It is a discipline where the interpreter has to be constantly learning and

training. One of the essential features of this area is the mastery of every language the interpreter is going to work with.

What is more, the study allows to make the conclusion that in spite of having plenty of handbooks, techniques and methods, note taking is a very personal mechanism to develop. The training in this area should begin as early as possible, but with certain guidelines. Classroom activities should provide opportunities for engaging the students with issues such as conceptual tools which they need to reason critically about the implications of any decision, a range of potential strategies that may be deployed to deal with ethically difficult or compromising situations, and finally educators need to develop a set of pedagogical tools that can be used to create an environment in which students can make situated ethical decisions, rehearse the implications of such decisions, and learn from this experience.

The teaching and training of consecutive interpreting should master basic theories and practice a lot, to improve their own interpreting skills. The teaching and training of consecutive interpreting should be gradual and progressive, and organically combine the various aspects of interpreting to enhance comprehension, memory, and expressiveness, and to constantly expand knowledge.

One of the highlights of the implementation of consecutive interpreting is shorthand. This is due to the fact that a short record saves time, and the more time is saved, the more opportunities the translator has for searching the required equivalent. For this reason, only the type information that is difficult to remember should be written down. Such information encompasses dates, names, numbers, structural aspects of the text, as well as some nuances. In a certain sense, recordings in consecutive translation can be compared to “skeleton” of speech.

A detailed analysis of modern approaches to teaching consecutive interpretation, namely note-taking, provides the further research opportunities.

SUMMARY

Back in the past, a couple of legendary interpreters could reproduce speeches of twenty and thirty minutes from memory. Those of us with more modest abilities – and that includes every interpreter working today – rely on a combination of memory, general knowledge and notes to do the same. This study looks at note-taking process. Not knowing how to take notes and the detrimental effect that that will have on

interpreting performance could discourage from joining the profession before you even really get started. This paper aims to help interpreters to work progressively towards a system for note-taking in consecutive interpreting that is consistent, simple to learn, adaptable and efficient.

The importance of note-taking as an integral part of the process of consecutive interpreting is acknowledged by all professional interpreters and specialists in interpreting studies.

The review encompasses three sections. The first part is an introduction to the linguistic nature of a notation. The second part is a collection of consecutive interpretation techniques that can be tried and tested successfully by many interpreters. The third part is an overview of teaching and training in consecutive interpretation in present-day professional practice.

The presented study has demonstrated that students can and will profit from a structured conscious and systematic introduction into note-taking as a seminal skill in consecutive interpreting.

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Information about the author:

Afonina Iryna Yuriivna,

Candidate of Psychological Sciences,
Associate Professor at the Department of Germanic
and Romance Philology and Translation,
Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University
59-a, Tsentralnyi Prospect, Sievierodonetsk,
Luhansk region, 93400, Ukraine