INTERPRETER'S NOTE-TAKING: UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE VS EUROPEAN TRADITION

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Abstract. The article is dedicated to analyzing the Ukrainian experience of teaching note-taking for consecutive interpreting, based on the course "Introduction to the Interpreter's Note-Taking" designed at the Mykola Lukash Translation and Interpreting Studies Department of the School of Foreign Languages at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. The material for the research is provided by the textbook "Basics of the Interpreter's Note-Taking" that was written to accompany the above course. The relevance of the research is determined by the importance of note-taking as an essential part of the interpreters' training curriculum and the necessity to propose an efficient model of its teaching suitable for the Ukrainian market of educational services. Thus, the research pursues the double aim: (1) to define the concept of note-taking in regard to its history and modern state; (2) to compare our course in note-taking with foreign analogues in a broader framework of interpreters' training models. To achieve this aim, the study employs several qualitative analytical methods: (1) analysis and synthesis; (2) descriptive method; (3) comparative method. Note-taking is taught as an organic combination of four elements: (1) content analysis; (2) shortenings; (3) verticality; (4) symbols. The conducted research makes it possible to formulate the main differences in the Ukrainian and European approaches to teaching note-taking: (1) the students' level and (2) the degree of material detailing. It offers a new vision of note-taking as a didactic instrument that can be designed and utilized independently with respect to the specifics of a particular educational program.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1990s, our department, which at that time was called the Department of Translation and the English Language, has launched a large-scale program of building up the curriculum for translation/interpreting-related disciplines of both theoretical and practical character. Although this Department was founded in 1972 as one of the five departments in the former USSR for training military translators/interpreters, for quite a long period of time, it was more concerned with teaching students a foreign language rather than translation/interpreting itself. Another important decision was to use Ukrainian as the A language (the interpreter's native or target language) in all our courses and textbooks. The concept of training future translators/interpreters was elaborated in relation to the specifics of the Ukrainian labor market, stipulating the development of both translation and interpreting skills (which is not typical in the European tradition, which is oriented toward training either translators or interpreters at the master's rather than bachelor's level). Having no opportunity to teach simultaneous interpreting (we received our first cabins some fifteen years later), we concentrated our efforts on consecutive interpreting and sight translation.

Our primary task was to develop a course that would serve as an introduction to the field of interpreting. It was then that the decision was made to build it around note-taking, as this is presumably an essential component of teaching consecutive interpreting. Without access to foreign manuals or research projects dealing with note-taking, we had to rely on the available materials from the Soviet era, which, after a thorough examination, looked rather logical though heavily ideologically biased. No wonder, as translation/interpreting in the Soviet Union was literally the ideological battleground, and to become a translator/interpreter, one needed to get through all kinds of reliability filters. That is why it was essential for us to remove all the Soviet ideologemes from our own teaching materials.

As it became evident years later, those Soviet-era manuals were not original at all, and, as we will see further in this article, they proposed an approach to the interpreter's note-taking based solely on the principles of Rozan (1956) without mentioning his name or any reference to his works. Anyway, our intention was not to copy but to adapt the existing method of note-taking to our own experience and vision, as well as to the new realities of the independent Ukrainian state. After meticulous consideration, we opted for the socio-political orientation of the course, which, as we thought, would help our students build their vocabulary and background knowledge essential for both conference and community interpreting.

Due to the specifics of the Ukrainian higher education system (which is still in place today), the development of a new course should go hand in hand with writing a textbook to be used by both the teacher and students. In its first 60-page variant, the textbook was published in 1999 under the title "Interlingua Interpreter's Shorthand Course" (Rebrii, 1999) and consisted of two parts: Part 1, "Content analysis," and Part 2, "Exercises". In its second variant, the textbook was published in 2002 under the title "Interpreter's Shorthand" as part of the popular "Dictum Factum Translation Course" series (Rebrii, 2002). It had a layout similar to the previous variant, but both parts were considerably expanded and together

reached 110 pages. The third variant was published in 2006 by the major Ukrainian publishing house "Nova Knyha" ("New Book") under the title "Basics of the Interpreter's Note-Taking," with a volume of 152 pages (Rebrii, 2006). This is the last variant of the textbook, which was republished twice more – in 2012 (Rebrii, 2012) and in 2020 (Rebrii, 2020)- without any significant changes. In 2002, the textbook was recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine as an educational tool for training future interpreters (Letter No. 14/18.2–1012 of May 13, 2002).

In light of the above information, the aim of this research is twofold: (1) to describe note-taking as the essential and efficient element of consecutive interpreting; (2) to compare our course in note-taking with foreign analogues in a broader framework of interpreters' training concepts. We hope that sharing our experience will be helpful for better interpreters' training in both national and international contexts, as "while there is consensus on most of the general principles, there is also controversy over some. The amount of note-taking needed, the balance between symbols and words, the language in which the notes are taken, the best way and the best time to teach note-taking in training programs, are some of the issues that continue to be debated" (Ahrens & Orlando, 2022; see also: Hale et al., 2023; Wang, 2023; Stativka, 2025; Lukianova & Olkhovska, 2025).

2. NOTE-TAKING IN CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Note-taking is a special writing technique designed for the consecutive mode of interpreting. Consecutive interpreting, in its turn, "involves listening to what someone has to say and then, when they have finished speaking, reproducing the same message in another language" (Gillies, 2017, p. 5). The speech may vary significantly in length, which has a substantial impact on the interpreter's actions. That is why the question arises whether note-taking is suitable for all instances of consecutive interpreting (Bartłomiejczyk & Stachowiak-Szymczak, 2022). To answer this question, we turn back to the first half of the 20th century when due to the intensified international contacts "this skill was crucial in international settings in particular, before the advent of simultaneous interpreting equipment, when all interpreting was conducted in the consecutive mode" and "to avoid constant interruptions, interpreters waited for the whole speech or long segments of it to end before commencing their interpreting" (Hale et al., 2023, p. 1). Thus, "consecutive interpreting with the use of systematic note-taking is sometimes referred to as 'classic' consecutive, in contrast to 'short' consecutive without notes, which usually implies a bidirectional mode in a dialogue interpreting constellation" (Pöchhacker, 2016, p. 19).

Today, despite technological advances and the increasing use of simultaneous interpreting, which is often taking place online (the so-called 'RSI – remote simultaneous interpreting'), the consecutive mode remains very important in the overall interpretation landscape. According to the popular and principally correct idea, note-taking is not essential for short consecutive because "the segments used in dialogic bi-directional exchanges are relatively short, and … because the interpreter has more control over the management of the turns" (Hale et al., 2023, p. 2). Yet, we believe that even in such surroundings as court, business, or community interpreting, where the consecutive mode is still very popular, quite a lot of interpreters tend to use note-taking, albeit not as extensively as in classical

consecutive, especially if they have been trained to do so. Feedback from our graduates confirms this belief (see, for instance, Lukianova & Olkhovska, 2025; Stativka, 2025).

Obviously, the interpreter's memory is one of the crucial elements of their successful performance. However, with relatively long speeches, especially those abundant with proper names, numbers, formulas, dates, and other possible interpretation difficulties, even a well-established interpreter with an extensive network of background information cannot entirely rely on their memory and guarantee flawless and smooth reproduction of the source speeches. According to Ahrens and Orlando (2022), "consecutive interpreting challenges the interpreter's cognitive resources. During the first phase of the consecutive interpreting process – analysis and comprehension – the source text content is stored in the interpreter's memory. To avoid overburdening, the interpreter uses notes, which serve as triggers for information retrieval. Notes are not a substitute for the interpreter's memory; they are an auxiliary means, a so-called 'material storage'" (p.37). Importantly, the notes not only trigger the interpreter's long-term memory, but also prompt their 'visual' memory: "Interpreters occasionally mention the role visual memory plays in recalling the speech: indeed, when notes are taken according to a few simple layout rules, the layout itself can be hypothesized to act as a visual stimulator of memory regarding the logical structure of the speech" (Gile, 2009, p. 176).

The speaker factor should also be taken into account, as many speakers are unaware of how to interact with interpreters correctly, including when to pause or whether to pause at all. Some may forget about their interpreter (a proper case of the 'interpreter's invisibility') while others, on the contrary, tend to make pauses literally after each word, not realizing that by doing so they complicate the interpreter's task rather than making it easier. Thus, the interpreter's performance can be seriously influenced by the speaker's experience/inexperience, their ability to express thoughts clearly, to divide a text logically, and, finally, to understand the specifics of the interpreter's work.

Note-taking is not intended to reproduce speech; its function is to help the interpreter retrieve it from their long-term memory, and thus "note-taking is not governed by rules of linguistic acceptability – lexical, syntactic, stylistic, or otherwise" (Ibid.).

Another important element of note-taking is that it teaches students to analyze the information they comprehend and to make a distinction between what is important (and thus should be noted) and what is not (and thus can be retrieved from the memory together with the key information elements). This idea correlates with the main postulate of the Interpretive Theory by Seleskovitch and Lederer that interpreting is the same as comprehension and that we (should) interpret ideas rather than their linguistic embodiment (Seleskovitch & Lederer, 1984). According to their position, interpreting is an 'intellectual task,' and if the interpreter has mastered both languages well, they simply transcend them: "Once a speaker's meaning is understood by the interpreter, as it is by any other listener in the same circumstances, it loses its verbal shape and is remembered as an idea. That speaker's meaning is not relayed into the target language through a rendering of the lexical and grammatical meanings of the source language but through the spontaneous enunciation of ideas by the interpreter" (Seleskovitch, 1999, p.60).

Technically, note-taking has nothing in common with a compendium, protocol, or stenography. It is only efficient for the consecutive mode and is not intended to be

deciphered after a relatively lengthy period of time. Apart from orientation towards meaning rather than form, note-taking's another advantage is that it allows the interpreter to pace with the speaker. The speed of oral speech exceeds that of written speech, and so far, note-taking seems to be the only reliable way of memorizing information capable of coping with this problem.

In terms of the popular 'effort model' by Gile (2009), based on the idea that interpreting requires some sort of 'mental energy' that is only available in limited supply, note-taking is seen as a key element of both phases of the consecutive mode. Phase 1: 'Listening and Note-taking' describes interpreting in the following way: 'Interpreting = L + N + M + C' where: 'L' stands for 'Listening and Analysis', 'N' – for 'Note-taking', 'M' – for 'Short-term Memory operations' and 'C' – for 'Coordination' (p. 175). Commenting on the role of note-taking during this phase, Rassel and Takeda (2015) write that it belongs to the Production Effort, where "the interpreter creates notes to support her memory of the message" (p. 98). Hence follows the conclusion: "Note-taking techniques need to be developed in order to provide a consistent advantage for the interpreter by reducing memory load constraints" (Ibid.). Phase 2: 'Target-speech production' describes interpreting in the following way: 'Interpreting = Rem + Read + P + C, where Rem stands for 'Remembering', Read – for 'Note-reading', and 'P' – for 'Production'. According to Gile (2009), "at first sight, phase two may seem more difficult than phase one, with its long-term memory (Rem) and note-reading (Read) Efforts. However, if notes are good, they help perform Rem operations and may actually reduce Rem processing capacity requirements rather than increase them" (p. 176). This leads to yet another conclusion: in order to help the interpreter perform efficiently, the notes should be 'good'.

Before we proceed to describing our vision of 'good' note-taking, a few words must be added about its undeniable didactic value, as it contributes greatly not only to the formation of consecutive interpretation skills but also to the enhancement of the students' linguistic competence for their B language (an interpreter's foreign, or source, language). In particular, it helps with such challenging issues as topic and comment ('theme' and 'rheme') and the syntactic aspect of interpreting in general, which is traditionally given less attention compared to the lexical aspect. At the same time, students get an excellent opportunity to master different transformations (lexical, grammatical, and complex), without which interpretation is virtually impossible.

3. METHODOLOGICAL AND CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs a qualitative conceptual research design, incorporating descriptive, analytical, and comparative examinations of theoretical sources, curricular materials, and long-term pedagogical experience. It develops an interpretive understanding of note-taking pedagogy within the Ukrainian and European training contexts. The overall methodology of the research is based on the traditional combination of analysis and synthesis methods that are employed in order to resolve the following tasks: (1) to analyze foreign concepts of note-taking, approaches to interpreters' training and principles of designing teaching materials and curricula and (2) to justify and explain the appropriateness of our respective concept, approach, materials and curriculum with regard to the specifics of the Ukrainian framework of future translators/interpreters' training.

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The descriptive method is of special importance as it is applied for resolving the following tasks: (1) to provide an overview of approaches to note-taking – its mission, principles, functions and structure; (2) to explain our approach to note-taking and its teaching; (3) to describe the design of our course of note-taking with reference to the accompanying textbook.

The comparative method is employed throughout the research, in combination with analysis, synthesis, and descriptive methods, as each of the assigned tasks also requires a comparative dimension. In particular, we compare our curriculum and teaching materials with those designed by European Universities for their master's programs in conference interpreting (EMCI CC, 2025).

The research is based on the course "Introduction to the Interpreter's Note-Taking" as part of the curriculum for training translators and interpreters at the School of Foreign Languages of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. The research material is drawn from the textbook designed for the course and from similar textbooks by foreign authors (Gillies, 2013; Gillies, 2017; Matyssek, 1989; Setton & Dawrant, 2016).

This research would be impossible without a strong introspection element, since all the authors of the above textbook have been teaching the note-taking course for a number of years. Their feedback in the form of ideas, observations, and considerations makes an invaluable contribution to the validity of the obtained results and conclusions.

4. DESIGN OF THE UKRAINIAN NOTE-TAKING COURSE

Let us proceed to a more detailed explanation of the principles of note-taking. We distinguish its four main components, which are interconnected and yield the best results only when used as a complex. However, we always emphasize that any concept or system of note-taking is not a dogma and can be adjusted to suit the interpreter's personal style, preferences, likes, or idiosyncrasies.

The detailed structure of the course is laid out in the textbook (Rebrii, 2022). Here you can find all the necessary information about the order in which different topics should be taught and exercises done. The first part of the textbook is devoted to mastering the theoretical aspects of note-taking and it consists of six units: Unit 1 'Content analysis', Unit 2 'Principles of verticality; Group of subject and group of predicate; Compound sentence', Unit 3 'Separation; Function of a colon', Unit 4 'Indication of an aim; Cause-effect relations; Admissibility relations; Relations of condition', Unit 5 'Juxtaposition and comparison', Unit 6 'Questions; Exclamations; Negation; Linking lines'. In each unit, theoretical explanations are supplemented with drawings, absolutely necessary for additional visualization, and exercises. The second part of the textbook is devoted to symbols, grouped in sixteen units, with exercises aimed at training their use in different texts and building students' vocabulary.

The course is designed for approximately 36 contact hours, which takes one semester with a weekly load of 2 contact hours. It is recommended to start working in parallel with symbols from Part 2 after mastering 3 or 4 units from Part 1. At this time, it is also recommended to begin testing the students' note-taking skills. The textbook includes two appendices – one containing the texts for testing and the other with the samples of possible testing tasks.

As we mentioned earlier, the principles of note-taking underlying our own course were first formulated by the Swiss scholar and interpreter Jean-François Rozan in his book "La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive" (1956). They are the following: (1) note the idea rather than the word; (2) abbreviate long words; (3) show links between ideas (logical links); (4) indicate negation; (5) add emphasis (for adverbs such as 'very' and 'extremely'); (6) take notes vertically (from top to bottom); and (7) shift from left to right (indenting) (Russel & Takeda, 2015, p. 105). After analyzing the structure of our course, we will be able to see which of these principles remained intact, which were modified, and which were abandoned altogether.

4.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS

Technically, content analysis is not note-taking, but in a sense, it provides the foundation for the interpreter's notes. Content analysis corresponds to Rozan's №1 principle 'note the idea rather than the word' and is aimed at the fulfillment of the following tasks: (1) to provide for meaningful rather than mechanical memorization; (2) to single out the main idea of an utterance ('utterance' is understood as a communicative term whose grammatical correspondence is roughly a sentence or a predication) that if noted can serve as a memory's supporting point; (3) to conduct a syntactic transformation if the structure of a source utterance does not correspond to the target language grammar norms.

In our opinion, content analysis is a multilayered phenomenon that covers the whole text and even extends beyond its limits, but its primary level must align with a unit of interpreting, and in this sense, it refers to an utterance or a sentence. The main idea of an utterance or sentence is usually expressed through the so-called main parts of a sentence – subject and predicate that form the predication axis and thus are prioritized for being taken down. As for the secondary parts of a sentence, content analysis enables the determination of their significance and thus their worthiness for consideration. During content analysis, the interpreter conducts lexical (lexico-semantic) and grammatical (morphological and syntactical) transformations to simplify and shorten the notes, adapting them to the specific norms of the target language.

At the initial stage of training, special attention should be paid to the exercises for different types of transformations. For instance, the transformation of word combinations into words or longer word combinations into shorter ones. Another helpful technique is reformulation – either lexical (when students are taught to substitute words by their synonyms or substitute formal (bureaucratic) Ukrainian expressions by neutral English equivalents) or grammatical (when students are taught to substitute atypical or less typical source structures by more natural target ones; or taught to split longer and more awkward structures into shorter and simpler ones, etc.). Such transformations allow students to avoid word-by-word interpreting and gradually switch from rendering words to rendering ideas.

It is well-known that the Ukrainian language has suffered much from the negative impact of the russian language and especially its bureaucratic variety known as 'kantselyarit' that gained much 'popularity' in the soviet period (Selihei, 2016; Stepuk et al., 2022). Socio-political discourse is one of the spheres where the influence of the Soviet legacy remains very strong; thus, the aforementioned exercises are supposed to contribute to making interpreting more modern and natural.

It is also important to remember the correlation between explicitly and implicitly expressed information in the Ukrainian and English languages, which means that we typically use more words in Ukrainian than in English to convey the same piece of information. Content analysis is also expected to train students on how to address this problem.

In our course, we recommend being especially careful with lexical elements such as proper names and numbers that are easily forgotten and often distorted during retrieval from memory. This recommendation is typical for most trainers. See, for instance, what Gillies (2017) writes about proper names, numbers, dates, and lists: "They are not integral to the grammar of the sentence or to the causality of the ideas and are therefore very difficult to remember and note later or to recall without notes at all, as can be done with ideas. It is helpful, then, to note them immediately, interrupting whatever you are noting to note the number, date, proper name, or list and then return to where you left off" (p. 130). If, for example, the interpreter is not sure that they can reproduce a person's name correctly, they can always opt for a generic term like 'president', 'prime minister', etc. Proper names and dates can often evoke associations connected to the interpreter's personal experience or their background knowledge. Such associations are usually regarded as a positive factor that promotes better information processing by the memory, but they can also be erroneous and thus pose a threat of potentially incorrect interpretation. Numbers are usually less associative unless they are common knowledge or have a particular meaning for the interpreter. On the other hand, numbers can easily be distorted due to poor quality or illegible notes. For instance, many mistakes occur due to the visual similarity of the digits '1', '4', and '7'.

Continuing the line of association, we should mention the so-called 'figurative word technique' that can be used for noting set expressions, proverbs, sayings, citations, etc. One such "figurative word" can evoke the entire preceding situation it is associated with.

Summing up the content analysis section we once again emphasize its main techniques: (1) prioritizing the words with the main informational load; (2) prioritizing proper names, dates, numbers that are easily forgotten or distorted; (3) resorting to different lexical, grammatical or complex transformations aimed at making the target speech more natural and norm-compatible; (4) using a 'figurative word' technique for precedent expressions or situations.

4.2. SHORTENINGS AND 'REDUCED-LETTER' TECHNIQUE

All kinds of shortenings are a core element of the interpreter's note-taking for an obvious reason: they allow them to reduce the production effort considerably while taking down the information. On Rozan's list of principles, shortenings go under № 2: 'abbreviate long words'. In our course, we propose several techniques connected with this principle.

All shortenings for note-taking fall under two broad categories: 'normative' (i.e., widespread, commonly used, fixed in the dictionaries, etc.) and 'individual' (i.e., developed by interpreters themselves).

Normative shortenings are represented by abbreviations (pronounced as a combination of letters, e.g., 'EU', 'UNO', or 'USA') and acronyms (pronounced as words, e.g., 'NATO', 'UNESCO', or 'OPEC'). Their knowledge is part of the interpreter's background

information and largely depends on the area in which they specialize. Such formations are typical for scientific, technical, economic, legal, and military discourses, etc. Since our course is based on socio-political discourse, we offer our students a number of exercises to train them in the abbreviations and acronyms commonly used in this field.

Individual shortenings are those developed by interpreters themselves in the course of their professional activities and are used for frequently occurring words. For instance, if you work with socio-political discourse, you may often come across such words as 'policy', 'political', 'politician', and so on. They may be shortened in different ways – starting with the reduction of a morpheme or two ('pol' or 'polit') and finishing with a single letter ('p'). The same rule applies to the Ukrainian language, which raises a widely discussed question: in what language – source or target – notes should be taken? This issue is scrutinized by Gile (2009), who collected all the pro and contra arguments. Some trainers opt for a target language because "this fosters analysis during the comprehension phase and does away with the need to 'translate' in the reformulation phase" (p. 179). On the other hand, using the target language for notes "takes up processing capacity", and may therefore "increase risk of saturation" (Ibid.).

In her overview, Dam (2004) categorizes all researchers into two groups: those who use notes in the interpreter's mother tongue and those who opt for a foreign language. The larger group of a target language proponents proceed from the two reasons: "For one thing, the target-language option logically forces the interpreter to move away from the surface form of the incoming speech and should therefore ensure better processing of the speech; for another, writing in the target language is thought to facilitate production of the target speech" (p.4). The smaller group of their opponents counter-argue that "writing notes in the target language requires language conversion during note-taking and therefore adds to the number of functions that the interpreter has to perform during the listening phase" (Ibid.).

Dam (2004) herself comes to the conclusion that "the choice of language in note-taking seems to be governed mainly by the status of the language in the interpreter's language combination, i.e. whether it is an A- or a B-language, and much less by its status in the task, i.e. whether it is the source or the target language" (Ibid, p. 12), but "writing in one's first language, i.e. A-language, is likely to be easier/faster than writing in one's B-language because of the probable differences in the levels of mastery of these languages" (Ibid.). This conclusion aligns with our vision, as we recommend that students take notes in Ukrainian, regardless of whether they are interpreting from the source or target language.

'Reduced-letter' technique is something rather different from traditional ways of shortening, as it is based on the principle of linguistic redundancy. If we consider longer words of more than 5–6 letters (which are more typical for the Ukrainian language), it turns out that some letters can be removed, and the remaining frame still provides a clear indication of the word it is. But what letters can be reduced in such a way? The main frame of the word that associates with its meaning is formed by the consonants, and thus, by taking out the vowels in the middle of the word, we can still decode its meaning quite easily. Take, for instance, the word 'political' or its Ukrainian equivalent 'політичний' that, after reduction, will look like 'pltcl' and 'плтчнй'.

In addition, the frequency of using any one consonant is 7 times less than that of any vowel in the Ukrainian language, and consequently, it is 7 times easier to anticipate the next

vowel than the other way round. All this data allows to formulate the following rules of the 'reduced-letter' technique: (1) it is recommended to apply the 'reduced-letter' technique during note-taking in Ukrainian where the difference between spelling and pronunciation is minimal; because of the quite opposite situation in English, its use there is very limited and thus inefficient; (2) linguistic redundancy allows to take out vowels in the middle of the words (initial vowel should always remain intact) longer than 5–6 letters; (3) adjectives preceding nouns can be reduced even more as they need no endings; (4) double consonants are not necessary.

Many years of teaching note-taking at the School of Foreign Languages of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University clearly demonstrated that the 'reduced-letter' technique is seldom used by students who do not have enough time and/or patience to drill it to perfection, without which its use takes more effort than it gives benefit. That is why we recommend the 'reduced-letter' technique as an optional component of the interpreter's note-taking.

4.3. VERTICALITY

Vertical placement of notes is the next component of our course, which basically corresponds to Rozan's principle № 6: 'take notes vertically (from top to bottom)'. While most trainers (see, for instance: Gillies, 2013; Gillies, 2017; Alexieva, 1993; Jones, 2002; Setton & Dawrant, 2016) prefer not to get into much detail while describing the principle of verticality (also, 'verticalism' or 'verticalization'), in our course we devoted 5 units of theory and exercises to different aspects of this important principle. Moreover, in our version, verticality also incorporates two other principles by Rozan, namely № 3 'show links between ideas (logical links)' and № 7 'shift from left to right (indenting)'. We believe verticality to be the main element of note-taking as it makes it distinct and different from regular writing or other forms of shorthand.

The main function of notes is not to take down as much information as possible (on the contrary, while proceeding through the course, the students' notes are expected to become sparser and sparser) but to serve as a memory support; that is why it is important not just to find and single out the main idea in each utterance (sentence) but also to lay it out in such a manner that it is visual and easy to comprehend at first sight. This effect can be achieved if the borders of each sentence are clearly marked and its parts are positioned accordingly. Such layout allows: (1) to group ideas in their logical consequence; (2) to locate parts of a sentence at certain positions regardless of their actual place in the utterance; (3) to avoid some connectors (like conjunctions or prepositions); (5) to provide for the economy of the interpreter's movement (to minimize production effort in Gile's terminology). The efficiency of verticality is also based on the principle of linguistic probability, that is, the probability of a certain linguistic form (word, word combination, or even a sentence) appearing in a certain context. In our case, this principle, together with a fixed sentence layout, allows us to reduce the number of noted words and, at the same time, to reveal the logical connections among those taken down.

The principle of verticality reflects the most common direct word order in both Ukrainian and English, which stipulates that the initial position in the sentence is taken by the subject, followed by the predicate. According to this scheme, the interpreter first puts

down what we call 'the group of subject' (i.e., subject itself with all the dependent elements – attributes and objects) and underneath it and shifted to the left – 'the group of predicate' (i.e., predicate itself with all the dependent elements – adverbial modifiers). Positions of these two groups are similar to Rozan's 'shift' (1956), defined as writing notes in the place on a lower line where they would have appeared had the text on the line above been repeated. If there are several subjects/predicates/attributes/objects/adverbial modifiers to be noted, they are located vertically one under another.
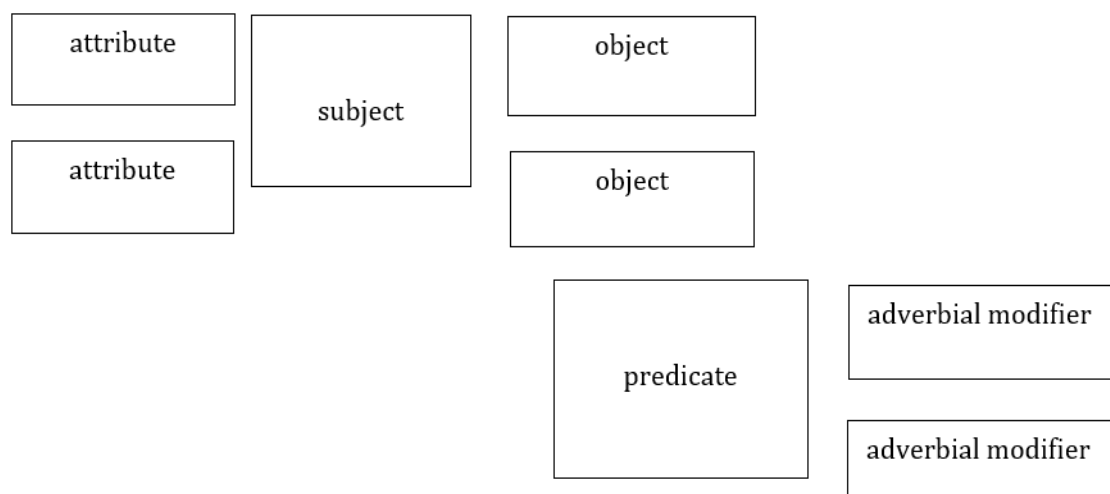
Figure 1. General layout of a sentence in verticality

Another important feature of verticality peculiar to our course is the set of rules for reflecting different types of semantic relations within a sentence or between different sentences (predications). For instance, the cause-and-effect relations are noted with the help of a diagonal line, with cause and effect placed on both sides of it. The matter is that these rules are general and common for all possible linguistic ways and means of expressing different types of semantic relations in different languages, which indeed makes them universal.

4.4. SYMBOLS

Symbols are very important for note-taking, although there is no full unanimity among researchers and trainers regarding their use. The issues mostly debated are: (1) the amount of symbols taught to the students; (2) individual vs universal symbols; (3) words vs symbols ratio in the notes (Hale et al., 2023).

It is interesting that using symbols in note-taking was not mentioned by Rozan among his 7 principles, though he himself admitted their usefulness, albeit in a minimalist way: "Rozan… in his *Prise de notes* states that one can make do with 20 symbols and that of these in fact only ten are indispensable" (Jones, 2002, p. 49). The maximalist approach to symbols is represented by Heinz Matyssek (1989), the author of probably the most elaborate system of note-taking that was often criticized for "being too scrupulous (and therefore likened to shorthand) as well as being too enormous an investment to master to a point when it becomes effortless" (Szabó, 2022, p. 114). In this context, we should position our

course somewhere between these two extremes and acknowledge that a significant portion of the textbook is dedicated to the use of symbols. We also offer a list of 107 symbols developed for the socio-political discourse that partially overlap with economic, legal, military, and other discourses. All our symbols are accompanied by exercises specifically crafted to pursue a double goal: (1) to practice the use of symbols and thus to minimize the use of words and consequently the interpreter's production effort; (2) to expand the students' vocabulary and their linguistic competence altogether.

Symbols in note-taking serve as a fast, effortless, visual, and, more importantly, generalized means of information recording. The economy in using symbols is provided by their graphical simplicity and the ability to cover a number of related notions. Symbols are easier to perceive as compared to words that can be written illegibly due to the lack of time; they are also easier to find on the page. Their universality is evident in three aspects: (1) each symbol can be used instead of a string of related words and corresponding notions; (2) most symbols can be used in a nominative as well as a predicative function; (3) symbols are not associated with any particular language and thus can be used in any possible combination of languages and directions of interpreting.

In our course, we provide different classifications of symbols and methods of their design. For instance, according to the method of design, the symbols are divided into associative, letter-based, and modified. An example of an associative symbol is the circle that is associated with the notion of a 'round table' and can be used as a substitute for such words as 'a meeting, 'a conference', 'a gathering', 'a session', 'a rally', 'an assembly', 'a congress', 'a forum', 'a council', etc.

We will use the same example to describe the concept of a modified symbol. If you put a dot inside a circle, you will get a symbol to denote anything that takes place during a meeting; and thus it can be used as a substitute for 'negotiations', 'talks', 'discussion', 'consideration', etc. But if you put an arrow on top of a circle, you will get a symbol to denote 'a summit' or 'a high-level meeting'.

Despite Rozan's skepticism towards symbols, we associate two more of his rules with them: № 4 'indicate negation' and № 5 'add emphasis'. The rule of negation is very simple: striking a symbol (or a word) through or crisscrossing it (whichever you find more convenient), you not only negate it, but in some cases, form a new symbol with an opposite meaning. For instance, by putting an exclamation mark (the symbol for 'decision') inside a circle, you can get the symbol for 'a law', but by crisscrossing it, you get the symbol for such words as 'unlawful(ness)', 'arbitrariness', 'illegitimacy', 'invalid(ity)', etc. According to the rule of emphasis, in our interpretation, you can add it by underlying a symbol or word once or twice, depending on the degree, or you can decrease the emphasis by underlying a symbol or word with a dotted line.

5. UKRAINIAN BACHELOR'S COURSE IN THE EUROPEAN TRAINING LANDSCAPE

In this section, we would like to give some considerations concerning the use of note-taking in the educational process. In European Universities, note-taking is part of interpreters' training at the master's level. In an attempt to coordinate efforts in this field, a consortium of universities was created under the auspices of EMCI – European Masters

(Program) in Conference Interpreting (Kalina & Barranco-Droege, 2022). Unlike Ukraine, interpreting, as well as translation, is not taught at the bachelor's level, and this fact explains to a large extent the difference in our approaches toward teaching note-taking. Quite often, note-taking explanation within EMCI takes no more than a few contact hours. Another widespread European practice is to begin training students with consecutive interpreting without notes and switch to note-taking at a later stage, when they have sufficiently trained their memory and mastered some of the basic transformation techniques (see Core Curriculum developed and adopted by 16 European Universities, EMCI members (EMCI CC, 2025)). The same principles of teaching note-taking are also adhered to by independent European trainers (Llewellyn Smith, 2025).

Interpreting students at the master's level are characterized by a much higher level of students' linguistic competence and motivation, and that is why an abridged course in note-taking is usually more than enough. The primary objective of such a course is to provide students with a general understanding of what it entails and to enable them to practice independently.

When we began the 'Introduction into Note-Taking' course at the turn of the millennium, the situation on the Ukrainian market of educational services, as well as on the Ukrainian labor market, was quite different from the European one, and it still remains so today. Currently, Ukrainian universities offer a wide range of bachelor's degree programs that train students to become translators and interpreters. Because the Ukrainian language has a single word for both modes, these programs often prefer not to specify exactly what they offer their students.

Our concept was different from the outset. In our bachelor's program, we lay the foundations of both translation and interpreting skills. Accordingly, the first courses offered to our students in this field are 'Basics of Translation' and 'Introduction to Note-Taking'. As the first element in the curriculum for training future interpreters at the bachelor's level, our course in note-taking pursues a double goal: (1) to develop the skills of consecutive interpreting and (2) to increase the level of the students' linguistic competence (which involves listening comprehension skills, vocabulary expansion, grammar improvement, etc.).

Trying to remain on descriptive rather than prescriptive grounds, we will not argue in favor of our approach over the European tradition, as they are designed on similar principles, differing only in the level of detail determined by the course recipients and their educational level. It can be clearly seen from Rozan's seven principles, all of which are present in our version of note-taking, though some of them in a slightly modified variant.

We believe that the results of this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of note-taking and its importance for training future interpreters in Ukrainian universities. We attempted to demonstrate a variety of existing models and approaches that can be applied in the Ukrainian context. On the other hand, popularizing our own experience and its benefits, as outlined in the sections above, may open a new perspective for teaching interpreting in European universities. By introducing consecutive interpreting and note-taking as its components into educational programs of the bachelor's level, they can enhance their students' linguistic competence (in particular due to the content analysis, verticality, lexical and grammatical transformations, listening comprehension skills, etc.) and create additional opportunities for their graduates on the labor market.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of our research was twofold. Firstly, it was to substantiate note-taking as the essential and efficient element of consecutive interpreting. This assumption was proven by the following facts: (1) it allows the interpreter to concentrate on ideas rather than words and thus to avoid literal reproduction of the source speech and simultaneously to make the target speech sound more natural; (2) as memory's supporting point, it allows the interpreter to draw out of their long-term memory all the perceived information; (3) as a visual and fast way of fixating the information, it minimizes the interpreter's production effort and allows them to concentrate their available resources on reproduction; (4) as a universal method, it can be used for both A and B languages equally efficiently; (5) as a flexible method, it allows the interpreter to modify it to their own taste and regulate the amount of words, symbols, abbreviations, etc. We constantly monitor the skills of our students, who are required to use note-taking for courses that include consecutive interpreting tasks during their third and fourth years of study. Our graduates at the bachelor's level successfully use it for their professional activities both in Ukraine and abroad.

Secondly, the aim was to compare our course in note-taking with foreign analogues in the broader framework of interpreters' training models. As stated in the Discussion section of this paper, the comparative analysis demonstrated the principal compatibility of our approach with the European tradition of teaching note-taking, particularly in regard to underlying principles and applied techniques. The exposed difference in the amount of time dedicated to note-taking in different curricula is determined by different categories of recipients: European students at the master's level have a fully formed linguistic competence, are more motivated and used to individual work and thus need less guidance and contact hours for developing note-taking skills; at the same time, Ukrainian students at the bachelor's level, on the contrary, need to combine note-taking with exercises boosting their linguistic competence and need more control over their progress.

A key implication of our comparative overview is that there is no single, universal model for teaching note-taking, which means it can be individually designed and implemented according to the specific needs of a particular educational program. Factors to be taken into account for those who endeavor include the program's level (bachelor's or master's), the program's specialization (translation and interpreting vs interpreting only, "narrow" translation/interpreting program vs "broad" foreign language program with a translation/interpreting module), students' linguistic competence, number of ECTS credits and contact hours that could be allocated for the course within general curriculum, etc.

As our research was primarily limited to theoretical analysis and a comparative curriculum overview, further investigation should be of a more empirical nature. Thus, the prospect of research lies in designing a new course in note-taking for master's-level students, implementing it, and verifying its effectiveness. This intention aligns with the emerging trend at Ukrainian universities to transition translators' and interpreters' training to the second level of higher education and to align it with European requirements, as outlined in the European Master's in Conference Interpreting and the European Master's in Translation.

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ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКИЙ СКОРОПИС:
УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ ДОСВІД VS ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКА ТРАДИЦІЯ

Статтю присвячено аналізу українського досвіду викладання перекладацького скоропису для усного послідовного перекладу в Україні на основі навчальної дисципліни «Вступ до перекладацького скоропису» на кафедрі перекладознавства імені Миколи Лукаша факультету іноземних мов Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна. Матеріалом для дослідження виступає посібник «Основи перекладацького скоропису», написаний для супроводу зазначеної дисципліни. Актуальність дослідження визначається важливістю перекладацького скоропису як невід'ємної складової навчального плану підготовки усних перекладачів та необхідністю запропонувати ефективну модель його викладання, що відповідає специфіці українського ринку освітніх послуг. Таким чином, дослідження має подвійну мету: (1) окреслити концепцію перекладацького скоропису відносно його історії та сучасного стану; (2) порівняти вітчизняний курс перекладацького скоропису із закордонними аналогами в загальній структурі освітньої моделі для підготовки перекладачів. Для досягнення цієї мети було застосовано декілька аналітичних методів якісного характеру: (1) аналіз та синтез; (2) описовий метод; (3) порівняльний метод. Перекладацький скоропис викладається як органічне поєднання чотирьох складників: (1) смислового аналізу; (2) скорочень; (3) вертикалізму; (4) символів. Проведене дослідження дозволило сформулювати головні відмінності між українським та європейським підходами до навчання перекладацького скоропису: (1) рівень здобувачів; (2) рівень деталізації матеріалу. Проведене дослідження пропонує нове бачення перекладацького скоропису як дидактичного інструменту, який можна незалежно розробити та використовувати з урахуванням специфіки окремої освітньої програми.

Ключові слова: вертикалізм, перекладацький скоропис, послідовний переклад, символ, скорочення, смисловий аналіз.