Challenges of Notetaking for Arab Consecutive Interpreting Trainees

تحديات تدوين الطلاب للملاحظات في الترجمة الشفهية التعاقبية بين الانجليزية والعربية

Asst. Prof. Saleem Khlaif Mutair (PhD)   **Asst. Prof. Rafid Abdulamir Gaib (PhD)**

RMIT University, Australia   **Al-Mansour University College**

أ.م.د. سليم خليف الفهد   أ.م.د. رافد عبدالامير غائب

جامعة آر أم آي تي، استراليا   كلية المنصور الجامعة

saleem.al-fahad@rmit.edu.au   rafid.ghaeb@muc.edu.iq

المستخلص :

يعد تدوين الملاحظات جزءًا مهمًا من الترجمة الشفهية التعاقبية. فخلال مرحلة إعادة الصياغة، يمكن أن توفر ملاحظات المترجم الشفهي أدوات أساسية لاستذكار المعلومات. ومن الأهمية بمكان التعرف على أهمية الملاحظات عند تصميم منهج تدريب الترجمة الشفهية التعاقبية وتنفيذه. وقد يكون من الصعب على المعلمين والطلاب على حد سواء تدريس تدوين الملاحظات في الترجمة التعاقبية. ومع ذلك، يواجه الطلاب في صفوف تدريس الترجمة التعاقبية بالعربية نوعين من الصعوبات: تلك التي تشترك فيها جميع ثنائيات لغات الترجمة الشفوية تقريبًا، وتلك التي تتفرد بها اللغة العربية. ومن خلال تقصي ثلاث عينات متتالية من صفوف اللغة العربية في جامعة عراقية وأخرى أسترالية على مدى عامين، تلقي الدراسة الضوء على كلا النوعين من التحديات. وأظهرت النتائج أنه في حين أن هناك بعض الصعوبات العامة في تدوين الملاحظات المشتركة بين ثنائيات اللغات في الترجمة الشفهية التعاقبية، إلا أن هناك صعوبات أكثر تفصيلاً ودقة خاصة باللغة العربية يجب معالجتها من أجل ضمان الترجمة الشفوية الناجحة في صفوف الترجمة التعاقبية.

ABSTRACT

Taking notes is a significant part in the overall session of training consecutive interpreting (CI). During the reformulation phase, the interpreter's notes can provide essential tools for recalling the information. It is vital to recognize the significance of notes when designing and delivering consecutive interpreting training. It can be challenging for trainers and trainees alike to teach notetaking in CI. In CI classes for Arabs, however, students face two types of difficulties: those that are common to almost all interpreting language pairs, and there are those that are unique to Arabic-speaking trainees. By examining three samples of consecutive interpreting classes for Arabs in Iraqi and Australian universities over two years, the study sheds light on both types of challenges. The findings showed that while there are some general struggles with notetaking shared across language pairs, there are more detailed and nuanced difficulties specific to Arab students that must be addressed in order to ensure successful interpreting in CI classrooms.

Introduction

In consecutive interpreting (CI), notetaking is an integral part of the process. When names, numbers, and dates are involved in a speech or a talk that is supposed to be consecutively interpreted, interpreters cannot remember all the information mentioned. The interpreter's notes can provide the interpreter with essential tools to help recall the information during reformulation.

While notes themselves are not what interpreters seek CI, they are the means for reaching the desired interpreting outcome, i.e., the translation of the source message into the target language. It is argued (Chmiel, 2010, p. 134) that notetaking is not an end in itself, but rather a prop that assists interpreters in rendering source messages effectively.

In designing and delivering CI training, it is essential to recognize the role of notes in the process. Several studies have examined and established that notes play a central role in CI, but all have stressed that they are only a tool for understanding, analysing, and re-expressing (Jones, R., 2002, pp. 39-65)

CI should be taught in a way that considers when and how notes are taken. Additionally, trainers and teachers must always keep in mind that notes need to be taken in conjunction with memory and retention skills (K. & V. I., 2007, p. 13) Nonetheless, CI training packages would be able to make more informed decisions if notetaking was understood as a part of the interpreting process.

According to Gile's Effort Model (Gile, 2009), notes play two different roles: notetaking during the listening phase and note reading during the production phase. The following formulation shows these two functions:

Phase One: *Interpretation= L+N+M+C*
L=Listening and analysis
N=Notetaking
M=Short-term memory operations
C=Coordination
Phase Two: *Interpretation=Rem+Read+P*
Rem=Remembering
Read= Note-reading
P= Production

Notetaking process, according to Gile's model, requires more time than speech production because it involves slow hand movements, which result in lags, and hence greater stress on short-term memory (Gile, 2009, p. 178). Interpreters may spend less time in listening and analysing by taking good notes, which would lead to a better rendition since good notes could assist interpreters when recalling information in Phase 2. It is Gile's contention that when better notes are taken, there will be a reduction in the requirement for remembering capacity (Gile, 2009: 176).

It is therefore challenging for trainers as well as trainees to teach notetaking for student interpreters. The aim of the present study is to investigate potential notetaking challenges encountered by Arab students during their CI training. Three groups of Arabic interpreting students were closely examined over the course of two academic years. A total of eight undergraduates from a university in Iraq and sixteen diploma students from an Australian university participated in this study. Students from two different academic levels and from two different university systems are selected to validate the findings. A large portion of interpreting courses in Iraqi universities is focused on international interaction, while interpreting courses in Australia rely heavily on community interpreting topics.

Literature Review

In the last fifty years, notetaking has become increasingly popular among scholars and researchers across disciplines. Researchers have utilized various methods and branches of knowledge to explain notetaking challenges and how learners can develop relevant skills. In spite of this, research on notetaking has not been conclusive. In terms of improving the notetaking process, CI has had very limited results in the past. As Chen ((2016 :644) points out, most notetaking studies from a CI perspective are

"product-oriented" and show only a little about the process. Recently, the focus has shifted to the notetaking process, resulting in a new stream of studies examining how student interpreters take notes.

Taking notes is considered to be a valuable memory aid for consecutive interpreters. In both the interpreting industry and academic institutions, notetaking skills have been debated for some time in CI training. CI trainers/teachers often receive questions about how to develop a perfect notetaking system for student interpreters as their first point of contact for learning. But neither trainees nor trainers seem to find a system that is perfect.

Despite the fact that notetaking has been studied for more than half a century now, most of the early research focused on showing what the systems and principles of notetaking are and how they are used. The researchers tended to concentrate their efforts on the notetaking system rather than the process itself at this stage, and so their contributions can be labelled as "product-oriented." Rozan's book was among the first to attempt to account for the notetaking system ((1956). Rozan introduced one of the earliest notetaking systems in that book. It offered suggestions on how interpreters, trainee interpreters, and interpreting teachers should take notes. Based on the author's experience as an interpreter, the author suggested ways to take notes. It is the result of Rozan's ten years as a practicing interpreter and his 4 years of teaching the profession (Rozan, 1956, p. 11).

Several studies have been published on notetaking in CI following Rozan's example. (Becker, 1972), (Kirshhof, 1979), (Gran, 1982), and (Ilg, 1988) were among the outstanding publications. As a result of these studies, notetaking principles and systems in CI have been laid down, representing a perspective stream of study (Chen S. , 2016, p. 155).

There was, however, a debate among instructors and practitioners at this early stage regarding whether or not student interpreters should be taught notetaking systems. Researchers, such as Christopher Thiery (1981), have argued that systematic notetaking cannot be taught, and that teaching notetaking should be limited to the essentials only. His reasoning is that notetaking is creative and individual. Others, including (Nicholson, 1990), (Giles, 1991), and Bistra Alexieva (1994), agreed that notetaking should be instructed systematically to students and trainees. As a result, a new stream of study was sparked by their studies on notetaking teaching.

The main shift from perspective studies happened after scholars began to notice the challenges faced by students and teachers during notetaking lessons in the classroom. In studies such as (Giles, 1991) and (Alexiva, 1994), the focus was diverted to how

trainees and students took notes. It is in this context that Chen ((2017) argues that the latter studies are descriptive rather than perspective-based.

There was a strong sentiment among scholars that notetaking must be taught systematically to CI students. The major concern was that notetaking systems could be viewed as too personal and that learners should be able to develop their own based on common-sense rules (Ilg, G.; Lambert, S., 1996, p. 78). A second issue that scholars have explored is what elements of the curriculum should be included in a CI class that teaches notetaking. According to Orlando ((2010), CI students need to be advised that developing personal notetaking is a crucial part of their training, but it is only one of the skills proper to this mode of training.

Since the 1990s, many studies have explored the challenges associated with CI and notetaking from a variety of perspectives and linguistic pairs. There are some studies that refer to the challenges as being the teacher's inability to observe the notes that result rather than how the students come up with their own notes see, for example, Orlando ((2010). Other studies examined the CI process altogether, devoting shorter discussions to the challenges posed by notetaking in CI training see (Al Harasheh & Al Rousan, 2020). A number of studies have also examined specific challenges posed by certain language pairs in CI notetaking see (Chen S. , 2016).

In the present study, the challenges that student interpreters and teachers face are explored while learning to take CI notes, by focusing on Arabic and English as interpreting languages.

Methodology

The researchers conducted the study over two years as CI teachers for three semesters with Arab students at the undergraduate and diploma levels. The study was conducted between 2021 and 2022 with a sample of eight students studying at Al Mamon University College, Iraq, and eight students at RMIT University, Australia, who participated in the 16-week online study due to COVID-19 restrictions. Having eased the COVID-19 restrictions in the Australian state of Victoria, where RMIT University is based, the researchers decided to choose more eight Diploma students from the Australian university undertaking face-to-face learning for validity reasons.

Throughout each semester, students go to a two-hour class of consecutive interpreting weekly, where notetaking is taught and practiced. Choosing the study sample is based on the fact that the Iraqi university's CI class uses speeches and comments from international sources worldwide as training materials, while Australian classes use examples from the local community as training materials. Nearly 200 words are included in the practice passages.

Topics covered in the undergraduate program include international politics, finance, and the environment. Table 1 shows an example.

Topic: International politics.
Summary: UK envoy to UN gives a statement on Myanmar – Security Council Media Stakeout on 5 March 2021.
The passage starts now:
Good afternoon, everybody.
We've just come out from a Security Council meeting, and I would like to make some short remarks.
We requested this morning's meeting following further deterioration of the situation in Myanmar. As of today, more than 5o people have been killed and many more injured since the coup began. Over a thousand people disappeared or unaccounted for. The economy is in a state of deterioration and up to a million people face a humanitarian crisis.
We heard from the special envoy that the Security Council and indeed the international community more broadly has a collective responsibility to safeguard the democratic inspirations of the people of Myanmar.
The United Kingdom condemns the use of violence against peaceful protesters, calls for the immediate cessation of violence and for those responsible to be held account.
Working with partners, the UK has recently sanctioned nine military officers including the Commander-in-Chief for their role in the coup. We have also, as you may know, conducted reviews to trade and aid to Myanmar.
We will be exploring further international sanctions and stand ready to consider possible measures under the UN Charter should the situation deteriorates further.
End of Passage
193 words
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSWFelNV0A4

Table 1: An example of a practice passage for consecutive interpreting for undergraduates

Conversely, students in the Australia-based diploma program were given various community interpreting passages to practice. Health, mental health, welfare, housing, courts, tribunals (legal), and education were among the topics covered. Table 2 shows an example of a practice passage for the Diploma program.

Topic: Welfare

Summary: You have been asked to interpret for the speaker who is explaining to the audience the requirements to receive the Age Pension.

The passage starts now:

A person is eligible for the age pension if they are above a certain age. Since July 2017 the age to which a person is entitled to the age pension is gradually increasing. Anybody born before 1 July 1952 is entitled at 65 years of age whilst anybody born on or after 1 January 1957 is eligible when they turn 67.

You need to have been an Australian resident for at least 10 years in total. A refugee or former refugee is exempt from the 10 year rule. There is also a test based on your income and assets.

You are an Australian resident if you live in Australia and are an Australian citizen, a Permanent Residence visa holder or a holder of a protected Special Category visa.

You may be exempt from being an Australian resident if you hold a temporary protection type visa including Bridging visa, Humanitarian stay, Temporary Protection and Safe Haven Enterprise visa. If you are outside Australia usually payment cannot be made unless there is an approved reason.

Centrelink will look at factors, including where you live, if you have family in Australia, financial ties with Australia and how often and the length of any travel outside Australia.

End of the Passage

203 words

Table 2: A practice passage for consecutive interpreting for Diploma students

To gather data from these three classes, the researchers, who were teachers of these classes, manipulated a variety of methods as a way to identify what challenges Arab students and their teachers face while taking notes during CI training. A teacher observation method was employed, which included recordings of online sessions, face-to-face class notes, examples of students' notetaking, and class discussions.

Methods of data collection:

   The researchers collected data using both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure the validity of the study. Based on previous research in the field of consecutive interpreting, it is evident that notetaking is a process that presents many challenges on

both teaching and learning levels. In the present study, the qualitative method of observation and the quantitative method of the online survey are used in order to determine what challenges the teachers and students of Arabic classes of CI face regarding notetaking.

Observations of teachers:

For researchers, observation is one of the most important tools for collecting data. It involves observing the research sample, listening, reading, and recording their acts and behaviours. Baker ((2006; 172) describes observation as a "complex research method" since it requires the researcher to assume several roles.

Using this method, the researchers observed how students took notes while listening to passages intended to be interpreted consecutively, and how the notes taken contributed to a better and up-to-standard interpreting outcome, including what they succeeded in or missed out on, why the sample encountered challenges or overcame obstacles while taking notes, and finally put down the potential challenges that could arise. As to notetaking, we asked the students what worked and what didn't when they took notes and then applied them during the reformation phase of interpreting.

To validate the results, the teachers (researchers) also asked students to provide examples of notes for analysis in order to come up with possible challenges. During class, they discussed the potential challenges with students. The comments reached were incorporated into a 24-point online survey that participant students were asked to answer privately. To give students ample time to practice notetaking during a CI class task, the survey (appendix 1) went online in week 8 of the semester.

Notetaking challenges for teachers in CI

Educators and trainers face various challenges when it comes to teaching consecutive interpretation notetaking. While choosing materials, challenges like observing, correcting, and deciding on the scope of teaching are clearly evident.

In this regard, many studies indicate that interpreting teachers should carefully plan a course plan regarding whether to teach the whole notetaking system or its basics see (Bouladon, 2018).

Another challenge is the teacher's selection of teaching materials suitable for developing students' notetaking skills. According to Lee & Buzo ((2009: 4), the selected materials should allow students to practice abbreviations, symbols, and other notetaking practices.

Observing and correcting students' notetaking practices is a third challenge. At this stage, the interpreting teacher should pay attention to how the students use symbols. Although some symbols used by interpreters in notetaking seem personal to a large extent, they have become more commonplace. As well, teachers should also be aware of how frequently symbols are used, since too many notes are a sign of poor listening skills (Gilles, 2005).

Also, too many notes can indicate that the student is not able to focus on the important details of the speech, talk, or conversation. Furthermore, when symbols are used too frequently, they can become difficult to interpret and can lead to confusion.

Notetaking challenges for Arab students in CI

Even though notetaking is an essential component of CI, it poses serious challenges both at the teaching and learning levels. This implies that planning is necessary on both levels for this task to be successful. At the teaching level, teachers need to make sure that there is enough time allocated for the task, and that it is planned in such a way that the notes taken are accurate and comprehensive. At the learning level, students need to be aware of the importance of taking notes and should be given the proper tools to do so efficiently and effectively.

Our discussion of trainee interpreter challenges is based on observations made by scholars in the field, as well as the researchers' own experience as tutors for CI courses, and matched with the results of the online survey the sample students responded to in week eight of each of the three study semesters. In the online survey, students were asked to rate 24 statements using the Linkert scale (5- strongly disagree, 4 - disagree, 3 - undecided, 4 - agree, 5 - strongly agree). The challenges found include the following:

- Trainees face the greatest challenge in developing the ability to listen and take notes simultaneously. Despite the fact that many scholars have acknowledged this challenge (Gilles, 2005), the researchers have clearly seen its impact on trainees. Trainees generally complained that the most difficult task they had to perform was learning to do two things at once (also expressed in another way, namely thinking simultaneously in two directions). This is due to the fact that human brain is not designed to focus on two tasks at the same time. Therefore, it becomes increasingly difficult for trainees to focus on listening to a speech or talk while also taking notes. Furthermore, the more complex the speech and talk are, the more challenging it is for trainees to multitask and be effective. However, the online survey, which is conducted in week eight of each semester, shows a different result as students differently responded to statement 7: "It is

hard for me to listen, concentrate and take notes in interpreting." Among the 24 sample students, four responded "strongly disagree", eight returned "disagree", six responded "undecided", five responded "agree," and only one replied, "strongly agree." From this survey, it is evident that the majority of sample students feel that interpreting tasks are not too hard to listen to, concentrate on, and take notes. This suggests that students may not be finding taking notes while listening to be as difficult as initially assumed.

- Another challenge observed by the researchers with Arab CI students is deciding which language to use when taking notes: the source language (language A) or the target language (language B). In the literature, there is disagreement over the language that should be used to take notes among scholars. Some scholars like (Herbert, 1952), (Rozan, 1956)and others prefer to take notes in the target language (language B), while others like (Ilg, 1988), (Alexiva, 1994) and (Giles, 1991) advocate using the language of the source text as it is a safer option due to the various activities that need to be carried out simultaneously. However, in recent empirical studies, the majority of the researchers chose to leave it up to the students to decide which language they prefer to take notes in (Szabo, 2021). The present study researchers raised this point in their online survey. Participants preferred to take notes using the source language. In response to statement 3 in the questionnaire (I prefer to take notes in the source language), ten students strongly agreed with using the source language, five students chose "agree," three students chose "undecided", and only five responded "strongly disagree" or "disagree." Participant students also confirmed this finding in their responses to statements 4, 5, and 6, which asked them whether they preferred to take notes in the target language, in English only, or in Arabic only. To take notes in the target language, 14 students chose "strongly disagree" or "disagree". Further four students chose "undecided." In response to statement 5 regarding taking notes only in English, 13 students either disagreed or strongly disagreed and four others chose "undecided." It was also reported that 15 students strongly disagreed or disagreed with the idea of taking notes only in Arabic, while four others chose "undecided." This indicates that the majority of participants felt that taking notes in the source language was beneficial and that it could help them to better understand and remember the material. Furthermore, the "undecided" responses could indicate that some students are still unsure of the best approach and need more information or guidance on the topic.

- A third challenge is what and how to record as notes for interpreting students. It is extremely difficult, and even sometimes impossible for students to write every

single word from the speech they hear. Rather than focusing on isolated words, scholars stress that student interpreters should focus on ideas (Jones, 2002, p.28). It is also critical for students to know how to write down speech ideas. The notes should be organized in a way that is easily readable during the reformulation phase. The diagonal arrangement is a method introduced by (Rozan, 1956) that can be used for this purpose. This arrangement was based on the principle that subject, verb, and object carry the most significant information in each sentence, requiring clear representation in notes. It is recommended that interpreters write subject, verb, and object diagonally on paper from left to right and top to bottom based on this method. Other details can, however, be added by the interpreter if necessary. This arrangement helps to prioritize significant information and makes it easier for the interpreter to quickly scan and understand the content. Arab student interpreters, however, should arrange their notes from right to left in line with Arabic writing format with which they are well acquainted. As there are verbless sentences, the subject, verb, and object might not always be possible. Therefore, it is important for interpreters to remember that the linguistic structure of Arabic is often different from other languages, and to ensure accuracy they must arrange their notes according to the correct writing style.

As part of this study, sample students were taught how to take notes and put them on paper from the very beginning. Researchers observed, however, that most students wrote the majority of the sentences. Instead of focusing on ideas, they wrote almost every word. The box below shows an example of a student's notes while interpreting an Arabic passage into English during week 6 of the semester.

بدأت فكرة مشروع تختمر ٢٠١٦ عندما عدت و بقيت في syd

Syd جميلة و فيها اكبر تجمع لبناني في العالم

ذهبت للجمعية في سيدني و انتهت لحائط (ابيض كبير بالخارج)

حائط مصدر الهام + تمسك روحي (لي شكل ركبني)

بقيت فكرة شهور حتى تكلمت لاصدقاء

٢٠١٨ زارني شبيبة عملت معهم من اكثر من ١٥ سنة

الشبيبة و عائلاتهم تكلموا بمواضيع مهمة (مهاجرين)(لجوء، انتماء، وطن بعيد، حب و تنوير) و تشاركت بقصصهم التي تختلف و تلتقي هنا و هناك.

الشبيبة تحمسو و رحبوا بالفكرة ، شاركو ، نظمو بشكل عظيم المرحلة ١ و تتضمن دعوة ١٠٠ شخص (اعمارو من جنسين) للمشاركة بصنع الواح طينية و نقل قصص متل ما فعل الاجداد و الجدات قبل عشرات السنين.

Table 3: An example of an Arab student's notes in the CI task

This approach to notetaking can be counterproductive, as it focuses on rote memorization rather than the comprehension of ideas. It can also lead to students being overwhelmed by the amount of information they have to process and retain, and it can lead them to be unable to recall the passage information in the reformulation phase.

In order to validate their observation, the study authors developed several statements regarding what and how to take notes of and placed them for ratings by students as part of the online survey. Rating statement 8 indicates that most respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that taking notes in CI requires writing whole sentences. Among the 24 students, four strongly disagreed with the statement, ten disagreed, and five were undecided. Only four agreed with writing the sentence down as notes in interpreting, and one strongly agreed.

This suggests that most students feel that taking notes in CI should focus on jotting down key ideas rather than writing out full sentences. This is likely because writing full sentences during interpretation can be time-consuming and can also slow down the process. This is supported by 80% of sample students agreeing that it is time-consuming and stressful to write whole sentences as notes for interpretation as ratings of statement 9 show. In the survey, ten students chose "strongly agree", ten more chose "agree", three students were undecided, and one student disagreed. This highlights the overwhelming consensus among students that writing whole sentences is a tedious task, further emphasizing the need for better notetaking techniques that are less time-consuming and more productive.

Responses to survey statement 13 revealed another interesting finding. Eleven students were undecided about the statement "I focus on each word when taking notes during a CI task." Nine respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, but three agreed and one strongly agreed.

It suggests that while some students pay close attention to each word, others remain sceptical of taking a broader perspective and focusing on the main ideas rather than single words.

Another revealing finding can be found in responses to statement 16. According to the survey, 15 respondents were undecided or disagreed with the idea of paying attention to the textual level (i.e. links between sentences) when taking notes. There were only nine students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This suggests that most students do not appreciate the importance of paying close attention to the relationships between sentences when taking notes. This could lead to distorting the target message in the interpreting process.

- Choosing the right symbols and abbreviations to be used in a notetaking system is one of the most challenging aspects of the process for students. The researchers noticed that overusing symbols is misleading for many students in their classes because the student interpreter has to spend too much time reading and understanding them, resulting in the interpreter losing focus on the main idea because he/she has to spend longer time than allowed reading and understanding the symbols. This means that the student interpreter should be able to quickly recognize the symbols used in the system, making it easier to interpret the note without spending too much time understanding the symbols. This way, the student can focus on the main idea and quickly understand the notes. Based on the study researchers' observations in class regarding students taking notes using symbols, the researchers were able to translate those observations into statements within the online survey. A total of five different statements related to symbols were formulated by the researchers so that students could rate them using the Linkert scale. The results showed that students had a variety of experiences based on their ratings. In contrast to what the researchers expected, only 10 students responded "agree" or "strongly agree" to statement 21 which states "I struggle every time I review my notes because I can't remember the symbols." A total of 12 students out of the 24 responded either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. Two study subjects chose the option "undecided". This suggests that the majority of the students had a positive experience when reading their notes and felt like they were able to remember the symbols. The two students who chose the option "undecided" may have had varying levels of success when it came to remembering the symbols. The respondents also generally objected to the use of a single standardized symbol system when rating statement 19. Twelve of the 24 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, five said they were undecided, and only seven agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. In fact, this is in line with the answers given by the students to statement 22. This statement states that developing symbols that are easy to remember, such as emojis and social media symbols, will simplify the process when reviewing notes taken during the course. There were only four students who disagreed with that statement, while 16 students agreed or strongly agreed with it. However, out of the 24 respondents, four selected the option of "undecided." This indicates that, even though the majority of students agreed with the statement, there was still some hesitancy amongst them, suggesting that additional thought and

review should be put into making symbols more easily memorable for more effective note taking. It is worth noting, however, that none of the respondents objected to statement 23 when it stated that using symbols that are easy to remember when taking notes can help to improve the quality of interpreting. There were twenty respondents who agreed with the statement, while four said they were unsure.

- During the notetaking process, however, abbreviations should be used cautiously. As early as 1956, Jean-François Rozan suggested abbreviating words over five letters immediately in CI notes in an unambiguous manner. Abbreviations can be used to indicate different words, but they are not standard. Continuously, new abbreviations are being coined. Due to this, trainees have to be careful when using abbreviations. While it is sometimes helpful to allow abbreviations in notetaking, you should always proceed with caution because of the lack of standardization and visibility over their use.

  In Arabic, abbreviations are even less common, making the situation even worse. According to the researchers, most sample students do not use abbreviations when interpreting Arabic passages into English. This is likely because Arabic is a language known for its verbosity, and so it is more difficult to use abbreviations without losing the meaning of the text. Additionally, Arabic is a language with a long-written tradition, hence there is a greater emphasis on preserving the original text in its entirety. In addition, the sample students used the English abbreviation even though the source language was Arabic. As an example, they use the UN, US, and UK even in the Arabic passage. This is done to save time and space and make the note easier to read and understand.

- According to the study researchers, the final challenge when teaching Arabic sample classes is that students must develop their skills in reading notes before they can give the interpreting output. Some sample students were unable to read their notes, resulting in gaps in their output. Even though this is highly felt at the beginning of the semester, it continues for some time afterward. Meanwhile, the responses given by students to the online survey statement may shed light on why they kept facing this. Students' responses to the online survey statement may shed light on why they kept facing this problem. In response to statement 18, students differed on the size of the notes taken from the passage to be consecutively interpreted. According to the statement, "the less information I take note of, the better my interpretation will be." Twelve respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. There were ten students who said they agreed or strongly agreed. Two were undecided. Students were still unable to accurately decide whether to take more or fewer notes to give a quality

interpretation, even in week 8 of the semester. This suggests that there are other factors at play when it comes to giving a quality interpretation. It could be that the quality of the notes taken is more important than their quantity. It could also be that the student's ability to interpret the information is more important than the amount of information they take note of. In the sample class, however, several students added more information to the notes to make them easier to read during the notes review. The students' responses to statement 21 also support this conclusion. Despite 12 students disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement that they struggle to remember the symbols when reviewing notes, ten students agreed or strongly agreed with it, and two others were unsure. The sample shows that almost half of the students find it difficult to read their own notes halfway through the semester. This indicates that the students are not retaining the information they have written in their notes, which is likely due to the fact that they are not reviewing their notes in a consistent manner. In contrast, most respondents (statement 22) agreed that easily remembered symbols would make reviewing notes easier for them. In their responses, seven students strongly agreed, nine agreed, four said "undecided", and only four responded "disagree" or "strongly disagree". Twenty students also agreed or strongly agreed that using easily remembered symbols would assist in reaching quality interpretation. The survey outcome confirms the researchers' observation that students still have difficulty reading their notes prior to interpreting the passage, although four students chose to say they were "undecided." It is the only statement that receives no disagreement from the students. There will be a need for the Arabic class students to focus more on finding easily remembered symbols, deciding the size of notes, and reviewing notes quickly. The data from the survey can be used as a starting point to show that students need more guidance and instruction on how to effectively take notes. This will help them remember their notes better and be able to interpret passages more quickly.

Conclusion and recommendation

Based on the researchers' class observation along with the results of the online survey and the scholars' views, the present study has shown that Arab consecutive student interpreters face similar challenges in taking notes in CI as students in classes with other interpreting language pairs. It is important to note, however, that Arab CI students face some unique challenges. For example, the Arabic language has a complex writing system and a large set of characters. This means that taking notes in Arabic can be more difficult and time-consuming than in other language pairs.

Additionally, Arabic has certain verb conjugations and other linguistic features that can make taking notes even more challenging. Because CI students can't use abbreviations in Arabic, for example, they are forced to use English in taking notes, regardless of the passage's source language. Furthermore, Arabic is written from right to left, which can further complicate the process of taking notes if they choose to write mostly in Arabic but still include some English abbreviations.

To master CI notetaking, interpreting trainees need to practice in and outside classes, regardless of whether the challenges are general to almost all interpreting language pairs or unique to Arabic. To hone their skills, student interpreters must also dedicate time to self-practice to become proficient in notetaking for CI, which will enable them to effectively tackle any situation, no matter the language pairs or any special requirements for Arabic

 References
1. Alexieva, B. (1994). Types of texts and intertextuality in simultaneous interpreting. *Translation studies: An interdiscipline*, 179-187.
2. Al-Harahsheh A., Shehab E., & Al-Rousan R. (2020). Consecutive Interpretation Training: Challenges and Solutions. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies*, 5(1),85-102.
3. Baker, M. (2006).Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account. London: Routledge.
4. Becker, W. (1972). *Notizentechnik* [Notetaking]. Germer-sheim: BBK.
5. Chen, S. (2016). Notetaking in cvonsecutive interpreting: A review with special focus on Chinese-English literature. The Journal of Specialised Translation, 26, 151-171.
6. Chen, S. (2017). Notetaking in consecutive interpreting: New data from pen recording. Translation and Interpreting, 9(1), 4–23. doi:10.12807/ti.109201.2017.a02
7. Chmiel, A. (2010). Interpreting Studies and psycholinguistics. *Gile, Daniel–Hanse*.
8. Gile, D. (1991). Methodological aspects of interpretation (and translation) research. *Target. International Journal of Translation Studies*, *3*(2), 153-174.
9. Gile, D. 2009. *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training* (Revised edition). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
10. Gillies, Andrew (2005). *Notetaking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
11. Gran, L. (1982). L'annotazione grafica nell'interpretazione consecutiva [Notetaking in consecutive interpreting]. Trieste: Università degli Studi di Trieste.
12. Heimerl-Moggan, K. and John, V.I. (2007). *Notetaking for Public Service Interpreters*. Altrincham: Interp-Right Training Consultancy.
13. Herbert, M. (1952). Classics in Translation : Greek Literature, Volume I. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.
14. Ilg, G. (1988). La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive. Une orientation générale [Notetaking in consecutive interpretation: A general approach]. Parallèles, 9, 9–13.

15. Ilg, G., & Lambert, S. (1996). Teaching consecutive interpreting. *Interpreting*, *1*(1), 69-99.

16. Jones, R. (2002). *Conference Interpreting Explained*.St. Jerome Publishing.

17. Kirchhoff, H. (1979). Die notationssprache als hilfsmittel des konferenzdolmetschers im konsekutivvorgang [The language of notetaking as a tool for the conference interpreter in consecutive interpreting]. In W. Mair & E. Sallager (Eds.), Sprachtheorie und sprachpraxis [Language theory and language practice] (pp. 121-133). Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

18. Lee, J., & Buzo, A. (2009). *Community language interpreting: A workbook*. Federation Press.

19. Nicholson, N. S. (1990). Consecutive notetaking for community interpretation. *Interpreting: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow*, *4*, 136.

20. Orlando, M. (2010). Digital pen technology and consecutive interpreting: another dimension in notetaking training and assessment.

21. Rozan, Jean Francois. *La prise de notes en interprétation consécutive* (Geneva: Georg, 1956).

22. Szabó, C. (2021). Revisiting Consecutive Notetaking: What, How, and in What Language?. *ELOPE: English Language Overseas Perspectives and Enquiries*, *18*(1), 107-124.

23. Taylor-Bouladon, V. (2018). Conference Interpreting. *An Encyclopedia of Practical Translation and Interpreting*, 443-470.

24. Thiéry C. (1981) "L'enseignement de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive: un faux problème?", in J. Delisle (ed.) *L'Enseignement de la Traduction et de l'Interprétation. De la Théorie à la Pédagogie*, Ottawa, Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa, Cahiers de Traductologie 4, 99-112.

Appendix 1
Online Survey Statements

Note-taking options and Consecutive Interpreting Quality Survey

Please rate the following statements about the Consecutive Interpreting (CI) tasks using a five-point scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree to the far left and 5 = Strongly Agree to the far right:

1. It is easy for me to interpret relying on my short memory without taking notes.

2. It is essential for me to take notes in order to interpret.

3. I prefer to take notes in the source language.

4. I prefer to take notes in the target language.

5. I prefer to take notes in English no matter the source language is because I can use the abbreviation.

6. I prefer to take notes in Arabic no matter the source language is because it is my first language (L 1).

7. It is hard for me to listen, concentrate and to take notes in interpreting.

8. It is easier for me to write the whole sentence as notes for interpreting.

9. It is time-consuming and stressful to write whole sentences as notes for interpreting.

10. It is important for me to be taught how to take notes.

11. It is equally essential for me to be taught both note-taking principles and symbols.

12. It is crucial and time-saving to be taught the principles only and I can develop my own symbols.

13. I focus on each word when taking notes during a Consecutive Interpreting task.

14. I focus on the idea rather than the word.

15. I struggle with putting down numbers and names in notes.

16. I pay attention to the links between the sentences when I take notes.

17. I feel confused as to what information in the segment I shall take notes of.

18. I feel that the less information I take note of, the better the interpreting quality will be

19. I use one standardized symbol system for taking my notes.

20. I use new symbols every time I do CI task.

21. I struggle every time I review my notes as I can't remember the symbols.

22. I think developing easily remembered symbols like emojis, and social media symbols will make my task easier when reviewing the notes.

23. I think using easily remembered symbols in taking notes helps interpreting quality.

24. I think using symbols makes me burdened with remembering them rather than focusing on interpreting quality.