

**МЕЖДИСЦИПЛИНАРНЫЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ ЯЗЫКА/INTERDISCIPLINARY LANGUAGE STUDIES**DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60797/IRJ.2026.165.80> EDN: EDNGFN**COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF INFORMATION RETENTION IN CONSECUTIVE TRANSLATION**

Research article

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Abstract

A special place within the human cognitive apparatus is occupied by the ability to perceive incoming information during verbal communication and to process it. In the course of text perception while performing consecutive interpreting, the interpreter identifies key information and records it using signs and symbols. The system of note-taking in consecutive translation is fundamentally based on the cognitive processes of interpretation and association. On the one hand, the use of concise interpreter's notes enables the rapid and efficient encoding and decoding of perceived information, and subsequently, the reconstruction of the original meaning in the target language. On the other hand, in the process of note-taking, the interpreter creates new symbols for the graphical fixation of information, which allows for the modeling of mental processes such as attention concentration and information retention.

Keywords: cognition, interpretation, association, consecutive translation.

КОГНИТИВНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ ФИКСАЦИИ ИНФОРМАЦИИ ПРИ ПОСЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬНОМ ПЕРЕВОДЕ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Особое место в когнитивном аппарате человека занимает способность воспринимать поступающую к нему информацию в речевой коммуникации и перерабатывать ее. В процессе восприятия текста при осуществлении последовательного перевода переводчик выделяет ключевую информацию и фиксирует ее с помощью знаков и символов. В основе системы краткой записи в последовательном переводе лежат когнитивные процессы интерпретации и ассоциации. Во-первых, использование краткой переводческой записи помогает быстро и эффективно кодировать/декодировать воспринятую информацию, а затем воссоздать смысл оригинального текста средствами языка перевода. Во-вторых, в процессе записи переводчик создает новые символы для графической фиксации информации. Изучение системы переводческой записи позволяет моделировать ментальные процессы концентрации внимания и запоминания информации.

Ключевые слова: когниция, интерпретация, ассоциация, последовательный перевод.

Introduction

The study of the cognitive mechanisms underlying translation activity continues to attract the attention of specialists engaged in exploring the capabilities of the human mind, particularly the processes of perception and processing of incoming information, which are embedded within the system of human cognitive abilities as modules of cognitive architecture. This term refers to “the structure, arrangement, and system of a person’s cognitive abilities, the cognitive apparatus of their psyche” [1, P. 12–13]. With the spread of the idea of the “modular” structure of cognition, a basis has emerged for distinguishing separate modules, or stages, of cognitive activity, which, while possessing unique features, nevertheless serve as “building blocks” for the overall edifice of the mind [1, P. 166].

A special place within the human cognitive apparatus is occupied by the ability to perceive and process incoming information in verbal communication. The mental processes of interpretation and association of linguistic signs lie at the core of this cognitive module. According to the Concise Dictionary of Cognitive Terms, the term “interpretation” is defined as a purposeful activity aimed at establishing the meaning of verbal and/or non-verbal actions: “As a result of interpretation, the current utterance acquires a verbal meaning, actualized as sense, and supplements, narrows, or even fundamentally transforms the established inner world of the interpreter” [1, P. 31]. For the analysis of the cognitive aspects of consecutive interpreting, it is essential to assume the existence of “reference points” of interpretation, so-called “milestones” (words, structures, ideas) on which interpreters rely during the perception and semantic processing of the text.

V.Z. Demyankov identifies three types of interpretative tools:

1) features of specific speech (sentences or texts in their constituent parts and relations);



- 2) knowledge about the properties of speech in a given language or in human language in general;
- 3) global knowledge of conventions, rules of communication, and facts that go beyond language and communication itself [2], [3], [4].

In addition, interpretive strategies can be distinguished, which organize the actual process of interpretation and connect the aims and means of working with the perceived text. This is a theoretical basis for the system of note-taking in consecutive interpreting, the principles of which have been profoundly elaborated by R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev.

Research methods and principles

Objective. To analyze the functioning of the cognitive mechanisms of interpretation and association in the process of information fixation during consecutive interpreting using note-taking symbols.

Procedure and Methods. The research is based on the application of the method of linguocognitive analysis to the practice of consecutive interpreting of socio-political texts. Examples were selected using the continuous sampling method. The research procedure involved comparing the meaning of a text fragment with the symbol or sign employed by the interpreter to record the main content during consecutive interpreting. The analysis assessed the associative links between the symbol or abbreviation and the original text, the appropriateness of the abbreviation/symbol used, its applicability in other contexts, and its interpretative range.

Main results

Interpreter's note-taking is defined as a system of auxiliary tools — external memory stimuli — that assist in the interpreting process. It should be emphasized that note-taking is not an end in itself, but merely a tool in the interpreter's arsenal. On the one hand, the use of concise interpreter's notes enables the rapid and efficient encoding and decoding of perceived information, followed by the reconstruction of the original meaning in the target language. On the other hand, in the process of note-taking, the interpreter creates new symbols for the graphic fixation of information, which allows for the modeling of mental processes such as attention concentration and memory retention.

The implementation of the principle of verticality in interpreter's note-taking makes it possible to group ideas according to their logical connections, thus ensuring a more complete reproduction of the source text and avoiding the inclusion of numerous connecting elements in the notes, which would otherwise be necessary for understanding the text. In practice, the use of abbreviated letter-based notes is highly prevalent (almost 87% of cases).

As a result of the analysis of empirical data obtained in the practice of consecutive interpreting, as well as a synthesis of theoretical principles from contemporary cognitive linguistics and translation studies, the feasibility of further developing the note-taking system in consecutive interpreting has been confirmed, and a set of relevant symbols has been proposed.

The theoretical and practical significance of the present analysis lies in the extension of the cognitive paradigm of knowledge to the study of the practical needs of professional communication, in particular, translation activity.

Discussion

At the heart of the note-taking system in consecutive interpreting there is the cognitive process of linking two phenomena, two representations, two objects, two signs, and so on — in other words, the formation of network relationships based on association. As noted by the authors of the Concise Dictionary of Cognitive Terms, the establishment of associations between units is regarded as a general principle underpinning the operation of various modules in the architecture of cognition: "The concept of association is the basis of many network models of the mind, which essentially consist of chains of units (nodes) connected by associative relationships of various types" [1, P. 14].

In the process of perceiving a text during consecutive interpreting, the interpreter typically identifies key information and records it using signs and symbols. Interpreter's note-taking is based on the principles of economy, clarity, and universality.

As a rule, official speech represents a purposeful, systematically organized linguistic construct, in which signs representing thoughts are arranged in a specific order to achieve communicative goals, including exerting a persuasive effect. All elements of speech are connected logically, chronologically, and intonationally. It is important for the interpreter to learn to recognize the intrinsic linguistic relationships and structures characteristic of official speech style, and to record, in the course of note-taking, the main information centers and the relationships between them. In this respect, interpreter's notes become a visual embodiment of the interpreter's analysis of the source speech [5].

Interpreting with note-taking differs from other types of consecutive interpreting because the interpreter records the speaker's address using a special system of symbols, and then interprets these notes. This form of interpreting is common at various types of conferences (medical, legal, linguistic, etc.), as well as business meetings and seminars. In real-life situations, the uninterrupted stretches of the speaker's speech are, in fact, not limited in length. Therefore, in such cases, the use of specialized interpreter's note-taking is often indispensable.

It is important to bear in mind that a text is a product of speech activity: what is conceived in thought as a whole, upon materialization, assumes a discrete form. A thought as an integral cognitive entity is represented in speech by both linguistic and non-linguistic means. The linear unfolding of thought [6, P. 59] in speech inevitably leads to the fact that the informativeness of various segments of speech is not equivalent: some contain highly valuable information, while others refer to already known facts. From the point of view of communicative value, the information contained in a text may be key, additional, clarifying, or repetitive. For the interpreter, without a doubt, the most important is the key information, since any distortion of such information can have serious consequences. The result may be a lack of understanding between parties, and thus, the act of communication will not take place. Consequently, the interpreter's task will not be fulfilled.

As R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev noted, the distribution of information [7, P. 61] in texts follows certain patterns, among which it is important to note the concentration of key information at the beginning of the text and the alternation of segments containing unique information with those containing other types of information. The task of the interpreter, as a link between communicants, is to "capture" the key and unique information and convey it to the recipient in an adequate form. This is



precisely why the category of text informativeness is of the greatest interest from the perspective of translation. In interpreting, key information must be transmitted accurately, while the form and structure of the message may vary according to the purpose and context of communication, as well as the features of the target language. According to R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev, the skill of note-taking belongs to the “professional secrets of the great masters of consecutive interpreting” [7, P. 56].

It should be noted that the scholar literature offers a variety of terms to denote the professional notes of an interpreter. For example, V.N. Komissarov refers to them as “brief note-taking” [8, P. 7], S.A. Burlyai as “interpreter’s notes” [9, P. 12], R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev as “shorthand” [7, P. 9], and A.P. Chuzhakin as “universal interpreter’s shorthand” [10, P. 4]. In English, the term “brief note-taking” is used to denote the interpreter’s recording of the main “milestones” during the listening process in the source language, in order to relieve the operational memory, accompanied by the concentration of necessary psychocognitive mechanisms [11].

The Manual on Interpreting (Note-taking in Consecutive Interpreting) [6], published in 1969, became the first book in Russia in which R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev presented a system of interpreter’s note-taking based on the Russian language. He formulated the principles of abbreviated letter-based note-taking, as well as its vertical arrangement.

Modern researchers emphasize both the importance of using concise interpreter’s notes and the necessity to update the system of sense-encoding symbols in consecutive interpreting.

R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev also developed a note-taking method in which he employed his own functional classification of symbols. This classification is based on dividing symbols, according to the way they denote concepts, into associative, literal, and derivative, and, according to their main function, into modal, predicative, quality, and temporal symbols. The symbols proposed by the scholar meet three key criteria: economy, clarity, and universality. According to experts, R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev succeeded in providing the most comprehensive theoretical rationale for note-taking, which is grounded in the methodology of teaching note-taking as well as in the data of phonology and syntax. Many of the symbols proposed by R.K. Minyar-Beloruchev remain relevant today. Among these symbols are:

«С» stands for “discussion, conference, meeting, round table”

«?» - “question, problem, issue”

«□» means “country, state, nation”

Conclusion

Concise note-taking is one of the key aspects of consecutive interpreting. This is due to the fact that brief notes save time, and the more time is economized, the more opportunities the interpreter has to find the necessary equivalent. For this reason, only information that is difficult to remember should be recorded. Such information includes dates, names, numbers, structural aspects of the text, as well as certain nuances. In a sense, notes in consecutive interpreting may be likened to the “skeleton” of speech.

To conclude, interpreter’s notes are based on the principles of economy, clarity, and universality. Although there is a general system of symbols for encoding individual words and expressions that has been developed over time, interpreters are free to use their own symbols—those which are clear and convenient for them personally.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

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Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

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