

## 92. Examining Translator Candidate Students' Strengths and Weaknesses in Note-taking System While Interpreting Consecutively<sup>1</sup>

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**APA:** Okatan, S. (2023) Examining Translator Candidate Students' Strengths and Weaknesses in Note-taking System While Interpreting Consecutively. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (37), 1432-1446. DOI: 10.29000/rumelide.1406033.

### Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine translator candidate students' strengths and weaknesses while taking notes in consecutive interpreting based on oral performance and to explore the challenges they face in the process. The present study used a case study research design in which the data were collected qualitatively. The instructional design used in the study was planned in such a way that the students would identify the challenges they experienced in consecutive interpreting, interpret the listening texts consecutively through note-taking technique, identify their strengths and weaknesses through self-assessment, and bridge the gap between their existing knowledge determined in line with their strengths and weaknesses and the knowledge intended to be acquired. Pre- and post-interviews, observation, think-aloud protocol, student diaries, portfolios, and listening texts were used to collect the data in the study. The findings obtained from the study revealed that the students could identify their strengths and weaknesses through self-assessment, bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and the knowledge intended to be acquired in the process, visualize the listening texts in their memories, and make progress in note-taking. The findings were discussed in the research context, and pedagogical implications were recommended in view of a constructivist approach to enrich the content of the note-taking training process in consecutive interpreting.

**Keywords:** Consecutive interpreting, constructivist approach, note-taking, translation education

<sup>1</sup> Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.

**Çıkar Çatışması:** Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.

**Finansman:** Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.

**Telif Hakkı & Lisans:** Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve çalışmalarını CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır.

**Etik İzni:** Kafkas Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulu tarafından 17.11.2022 tarihli, 39 sayılı kararla etik izni verilmiştir.

**Kaynak:** Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.

**Benzerlik Raporu:** Alındı - Turnitin, Oran: %18

**Etik Şikayeti:** editor@rumelide.com

**Makale Türü:** Araştırma makalesi, **Makale Kayıt Tarihi:** 03.11.2023-**Kabul Tarihi:** 20.12.2023-**Yayın Tarihi:** 21.12.2023; **DOI:** 10.29000/rumelide.1406033

**Hakem Değerlendirmesi:** İki Dış Hakem / Çift Taraflı Körleme

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## Çevirmen Adayı Öğrencilerinin Ardıl Çeviri Yaparken Not Alma Sistemindeki Güçlü ve Zayıf yönlerinin İncelenmesi<sup>3</sup>

### Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, çevirmen aday öğrencilerin sözlü performansa dayalı ardıl çeviri dersinde not alırken güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini incelemek ve süreç içerisinde karşılaştıkları zorlukları tespit etmektir. Mevcut çalışma, verilerin nitel olarak toplandığı örnek olay araştırma desenini kullanmıştır. Çalışmada kullanılan öğretim tasarımı, çeviri öğrencilerinin ardıl çeviride yaşadıkları zorlukları tespit edebilecekleri, not alma tekniği ile dinleme metinlerini ardıl olarak çevirebilecekleri, öz değerlendirme ile güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini tespit edebilecekleri, güçlü ve zayıf yönleri doğrultusunda tespit edilen mevcut bilgileri ile edinimi hedeflenen bilgi arasındaki boşluğu kapatabilecekleri şekilde planlanmıştır. Çalışmada verilen toplanması için ön ve son görüşmeler, gözlem, sesli düşünme protokolü, öğrenci günlükleri, öğrenci portfolyoları ve dinleme metinleri kullanılmıştır. Çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular, öğrencilerin öz-değerlendirme ile güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini tespit edebildiklerini, mevcut bilgileri ile süreç içerisinde edinimi hedeflenen bilgi arasındaki boşluğu doldurabildiklerini, dinleme metinlerini belleklerinde görselleştirebildiklerini ve not almada gelişme gösterdiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Elde edilen bulgular araştırma bağlamı içerisinde tartışılmış ve ardıl çeviride not alma eğitim sürecinin içeriğini zenginleştirecek pedagojik uygulamalar yapılandırma bir bakış açısıyla önerilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ardıl çeviri, yapılandırma yaklaşım, not alma, çeviri eğitimi

### 1. Introduction

Consecutive interpreting (CI) is defined as a process of interpreting in which a speaker speaks and completes his/her idea in the source language (SL) and then an interpreter transfers the information stated by the speaker into the target language (TL) (Russell, 2005). In this process, “note-taking” is one of the key features of consecutive interpreting, which is “one of the two working modes in conference interpreting” (Afonina, 2022, p. 84).

As in all forms of interpreting in which the interpreter tries to comprehend the sense in the source text (ST) “by processing its conceptual content rather than the words as such” (Albl-Mikasa, 2008, p. 197), the interpreter aims at understanding the conceptual content of the speech in consecutive interpreting and follows some tasks. Here, the interpreter goes through the process of “listening and analysis, note-taking, short-term memory operations, and coordination of these tasks” when the speaker speaks; and while transferring the information in the speaker’s speech, the interpreter completes the tasks of “note-reading, remembering, production” (Gile, 2009, p. 9). From this aspect, the key factors affecting the

<sup>3</sup> It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation process of this study and all the studies utilised are indicated in the bibliography.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest is declared.

**Funding:** No external funding was used to support this research.

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**Ethics Statement:** Ethics permission was granted by Kafkas University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee with the decision dated 17.11.2022 and numbered 39.

**Source:** It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation of this study and all the studies used are stated in the bibliography.

**Similarity Report:** Received - Turnitin, Rate: 18

**Ethics Complaint:** editor@rumelide.com

**Article Type:** Research article, Article Registration Date: 03.11.2023-Acceptance Date: 20.12.2023-Publication Date: 21.12.2023; DOI: 10.29000/rumelide.1406033

**Peer Review:** Two External Referees / Double Blind

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interpreter's performance in the process of consecutive interpreting are "the interpreter's interpreting competence, the cognitive conditions on-site, and the norms of interpreting" (Wang, 2012, p. 199). In addition, "the length of the source utterance to be interpreted at a time, the physical constraints of where the interpreter is situated, and the interpreter's memory" (Russell & Takeda, 2015, p. 105) affect the process of interpreting.

In line with the above-mentioned features of consecutive interpreting, which may be regarded as "a highly complex discourse interchange" (Russell, 2005, p.136); a student interpreter is required to acquire the combination of some significant skills such as "knowledge of the language, listening, memory, concentration, understanding, note-taking" (Lu, 2013, p. 73) and the principles such as "taking note of meaning, subjective note-taking, economic note-taking, clear note-taking, and efficient use of time" (Durukan, 2017, p. 111) in the training process of consecutive interpreting. On this basis, the previous studies in the research context identified the common challenges that the student interpreters experienced in the training process. In this context, the study conducted by Arumi Ribas (2012, p. 821) showed that the challenges generally stemmed from the lack of some skills in "listening and understanding, note-taking, decoding notes and expressing and reformulating". Another study conducted by Chen (2017) revealed that the rate of language use was higher than the use of symbols, and full word use was higher than the abbreviations in consecutive interpreting. Likewise, the study conducted by Wu and Liao (2018) indicated that interpreting strategies were sometimes incompatible and confusing in the process of teaching. In addition, the study carried out by Sanchez (2018, p. 155) showed that the students were "more reliant on their memory and less dependent on notes".

To overcome the challenges mentioned above, the findings of the previous studies in the research context revealed that a long-term training process involving professional practices was required to develop the note-taking system (Chmiel, 2010), the use of understandable and utilizable interpreting strategies exerted positive affect on the learners in the training process (Li, 2013; Wu & Liao, 2018), "more frequent, periodically arranged lessons" were effective to enhance students' skills in consecutive interpreting (Yamada, 2018, p. 1395), and the convenient design and selection of the strategies to be used in consecutive interpreting enhanced the students' interpreting performance (Dong, Li, & Zhao, 2019). In this respect, the training process in consecutive interpreting must be "gradual and progressive and organically combine the various aspects of interpreting to enhance comprehension, memory, and expressiveness, and to constantly expand knowledge" (Afonina, 2022, p. 107). Notably, although note-taking in consecutive interpreting was challenging for the student interpreters, its benefit was not deniable as it made contribution to them in terms of "reducing their memory burden, ensuring accuracy, minimizing their effort, avoiding missing essential information, and enhancing the overall quality of the CI performance" (Phuong, Lam, & Le, 2023, p 19).

When the process of education is taken into consideration, the design of the teaching process based on a constructivist approach is beneficial as it helps instructors to define learners' "natural learning capacities" (Fox, 2001, p.33). With the help of the constructivist approach, "a significant contribution to student learning" (Hyslop-Margison & Strobel, 2007, p. 84) may be made, and the students may construct new information on their existing knowledge (Cooperstein & Kocevar-Weidinger, 2004). This is because, constructivism focuses on a "student-centered learning" process (Bada, 2015, p. 70), in which the students are oriented to take an active role in regulating the learning process. Here, they are encouraged to go through a *self-regulation* process. According to Bandura (1986), Kanfer and Gaelick (1986), and Karoly (1982), "self-regulation has been conceptualized as involving three key subprocesses: self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction" (as cited in Schunk and Zimmerman, 2012, p. 67). As for the learning and teaching process in a translation classroom, the use of the constructivist approach

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is effective to enhance learners' skills in creativity, thinking strategies, analytical thinking, and decision-making process (Varney, 2009).

In conclusion, "although CI can be performed with or without notes, note-taking has been one of the primary topics in the teaching of and research on CI" (Russell & Takeda, 2015, p. 105). On this basis, exploring the challenges in teaching note-taking process and recommending new pedagogical implications will make a great contribution to the teaching process of consecutive interpreting as the research context is open to be discussed to enrich the translator training process through various pedagogical facets. In this sense, the trajectory of each competence intended to be achieved in the training process of consecutive interpreting should be identified in advance. In addition, the taxonomy of the methods to be used in the process of education must be redesigned to carry out an efficient training program and to overcome the challenges that learners may face in the process. From this aspect, the purpose of the present study is to examine the challenges that translation students might experience in the consecutive interpreting, to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the process, and to recommend pedagogical implications to shed light on the teaching process of note-taking in consecutive interpreting. To this end, the following research questions were generated.

1. What are the challenges that translation students face when they take notes in consecutive interpreting?
2. How does the awareness of translation students about their strengths and weaknesses affect their improvements in note-taking system?
3. What are the stages in note-taking system that student translators use to transfer the information flow in the speech while interpreting consecutively?

## 2. Method

The present study used a qualitative research design based on a case study method (Creswell, 2009), in which data are collected systematically in participants' setting over a certain period conducted under the control of the researcher to explore the challenges and to examine the participants' strengths and weaknesses in consecutive interpreting.

### 2.1. Research Design

The research design of the study was formed according to the qualitative research method, and hence the following data collection procedure was used:

1. Face-to-face pre-interviews to explore the problems or issues that the translation students experienced in consecutive interpreting.
2. Planning the teaching and learning process based on the theoretical construction in consecutive interpreting, which was designed according to the coursebook *Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Short Course* (Gillies, 2017).
3. Defining the data collection tools.
4. Using Focus-group interviews to define
  - a. the strengths of the students,
  - b. the weaknesses of the students,
  - c. the challenges that the students might experience in the process,
  - d. the students' own solutions to the challenges.

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5. Face-to-face post-interviews to evaluate the changes in the teaching and learning process.
6. Qualitative data analysis.
7. Discussion of the findings to recommend pedagogical implications.

## 2.2. Procedure and Participants

The process of the study covered the fall term of the 2022-2023 Academic year, and it was conducted in the Department of Translation and Interpreting at a state university in Türkiye. Ethics Committee Approval Document of this research was received on 01.11.2022 with the number E-39098. The participants in the study were third-year translation students (n: 40). They were informed about the content of the study, and their consent was received. While analysing the data obtained from the participants, a code was given to each participant instead of using their names.

## 2.3. Data Collection Tools

### 2.3.1. Interviews

The research design of the present study was based on face-to-face interviews involving unstructured and open-ended questions (Creswell, 2009). In this respect, three types of interview protocols were used: a) pre-interview, the aim of which was to define the problems or challenges at the beginning of the teaching and learning process, b) focus-group interview, which was applied to the participants consisting of 6 or 8 student groups after each application and which aimed at determining the students' strengths, weaknesses, and challenges emerging after each session; and c) post-interview, which was used to evaluate the output of the teaching process at the end of the study. During the interviews, the participants used their native language Turkish to express their ideas clearly, and then the researcher translated their statements from Turkish to English.

### 2.3.2. Observation

The researcher observed the whole process of the study to examine how the students improved in the mapping system. The researcher, as the instructor of the class, was a "complete participant" (Creswell, 2009, p. 179) to decrease the negative effect of observation on the participants. In addition, the researcher used "field notes" (Creswell, 2009, p. 181) to record the participants' acts of translation, which they performed in the research process.

### 2.3.3. Think-Aloud Protocol (TAP)

"In the 'think aloud' method of data collection a translator is asked to translate a text while concurrently verbalizing as much as s/he can of his/her thoughts" (Palumbo, 2009, p.119). In the present study, the researcher used the Think-Aloud Protocols (TAPs) to explore how the students could construct the consecutive interpreting and note-taking system in their mental processes, to define their strengths and weaknesses in note-taking, to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and the intended knowledge in the training process, and to redesign the teaching process to achieve the learning targets.

### 2.3.4. Student Diaries

Student Dairy is used as a tool of inquiry as it enables the researcher to monitor the student's improvement in line with his/her viewpoints (Alterman, 1965). In the process of the study, the participants kept a diary involving their opinions related to their strengths and weaknesses, the challenges that they faced, and their own solutions to overcome the identified challenges.

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### 2.3.5. Portfolio

“A portfolio is essentially a collection of samples of an individual’s work put together as evidence of her/his capabilities and achievements in a particular area” (Fernández Polo & Cal Varela, 2011, p. 46). From this aspect, the use of a portfolio provides data for a researcher to monitor the progress of learners and to assess learners’ achievements in the process of learning and teaching. In this sense, the portfolio, which each student regularly kept during the whole study, was used as a research tool to evaluate their performance, improvements, and achievements in note-taking.

### 2.3.6. Texts

Informative text type, in which “the language dimension used to transmit the information is logical and referential, the content or ‘topic’ is the focus of communication” (Munday, 2008, p. 72), was used in the study. The texts used in the study were retrieved from <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/>.

### 2.4. Data Analysis

The researcher used the qualitative data analysis method, in which the findings were discussed and concluded in line with the recurring themes in the study. While analysing the qualitative data in the study, the following analysis process was used (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Creswell, 2009):

- a. Organization and preparation of data,
- b. Reading through all data,
- c. Coding data,
- d. Interrelating themes and descriptions,
- e. Interrelating theories and descriptions,
- f. Interpretation of data.

### 3. Findings

In this phase of the study, the data collected qualitatively were analysed to explore the student translators’ strengths and weaknesses and the challenges that they faced while taking notes in consecutive interpreting. While analysing the qualitative data, the recurring themes were used to identify the students’ weaknesses and to determine how they bridged the gap between their strengths and weaknesses while mapping the listening texts in consecutive interpreting.

#### 3.1. Pre-interview Analyses

The first step of the study involved the phase of the identification of the challenges which the students had previously faced while taking notes in consecutive interpreting. The qualitative data obtained from pre-interviews were analysed according to the recurring themes, which the students regarded as their weaknesses. The following statements quoted from the participants illustrate the highlighted weaknesses.

*“I have difficulty in concentrating on the text due to anxiety while listening. To this end, I generally have hesitations in taking note of the text for fear of making mistakes.” (Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17)*

*“In consecutive interpreting, I cannot understand the whole content of the text while listening. This is because I generally focus on the denotative meanings of the words more than the contextual meanings.” (Students 1, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 32, 35)*

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*“Even though I understand the text, I cannot design the information flow as I cannot symbolize it in my mental process. Moreover, while trying to symbolize a sentence, I can miss the next one.” (Students 2, 9, 10, 20, 21, 28, 33, 34, 36)*

*“I have difficulty making sense of the sentences as I cannot form the semantic relations among the words, linking words, and phrases. Furthermore, while mapping the text, I have difficulty in forming logical relationships among the sentences I heard.” (Students 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19)*

Following pre-interviews, the following key factors were highlighted as the challenges referring to the students' weaknesses related to note-taking system in consecutive interpreting at the beginning of the study. They had weaknesses at:

- a) the level of lexical units as they had difficulty understanding the contextual meanings of the words or phrases in the text.
- b) the level of the clause because they deemed themselves insufficient in forming coherence among the sentences in the text as they interpreted some sentences out of context.
- c) the level of the note-taking system because of anxiety, lacking background knowledge, and insufficient practice about it.

In line with the weaknesses given above, the teaching process was based on a constructivist approach to help the students to overcome their weaknesses in the process, and the following data-collecting tools were applied to evaluate their improvements in note-taking system within the learning process.

### 3.2. Focus-group Interview Analyses

This step of the study covered the analyses of the qualitative data obtained from the focus-group interviews applied after each of the classes. The following data analyses were presented in a sort of way of illustrating the students' self-assessments to identify the gap between their strengths and weaknesses in all stages of the study. The following extracts, involving the recurring themes, show the strengths and weaknesses defined by the students at intervals.

#### Focus-group interview 1

Strengths: *“I have begun to decode the mapping system step by step, and now I can symbolize the expressions, but it is not at a sufficient level.” (Students 15, 18, 20, 27, 28, 30)*

Weaknesses: *“Although symbolizing the expressions, I think that I am still not good at symbolizing the text.” (Students 15,18, 20, 27, 28, 30)*

#### Focus-group interview 2

Strengths: *“I feel that I have made progress in mapping the text because I can translate the text through my mapping system.” (Students 9, 13, 14, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27)*

Weaknesses: *“Despite the progress in the mapping system, I still have difficulty in mapping the statistical values and proper names in the clauses, especially when there is more than one.” (Students 9, 13, 14, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27)*

#### Focus-group interview 3

Strengths: *“I can classify the key points in a text through my mapping system, and I am more economic in my mapping system than I was.” (Students 15, 19, 21, 27, 28, 30)*

Weaknesses: *“I am not fast enough to grasp the contextual meanings of the words, and I can forget what I have heard and how it has been said. I think that my note-taking speed is not at the same level as the speaker's reading speed.” (Students 15, 19, 21, 27, 28, 30)*

#### Focus-group interview 4

Strengths: *“I can understand the content of the text and translate the text through a mapping system, especially using word-for-word strategy.” (Students 3, 7, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24)*

Weaknesses: *“Although I understand the content of the text and can symbolize the information, I still have difficulty drawing the whole picture by mapping the information flow at the textual level in my mind.” (Students 3, 7, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24)*

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Although the students stated that they were able to improve gradually in the mapping system, referring to their strengths in this sampling; the findings related to their weaknesses indicated that most of the students had difficulty understanding the statistical values and proper names in the clauses, inferring the contextual meanings of the words, and drawing the whole information stated in the ST. When the statement "I still have difficulty drawing the whole picture by mapping the information flow at the textual level in my mind" is taken into consideration, it was observed that the reason why they had difficulty drawing the picture of the information in ST was related to their weaknesses in coding and decoding the information in their memories in the process of note-taking.

### 3.3. Post-Interview Analyses

In this step of the study, the qualitative data obtained from the face-to-face post-interviews, involving unstructured and open-ended questions, were analysed to explore how the students achieved the intended level in the mapping system in comparison to the level at the beginning of the study. The following extracts illustrate the extent to which the students achieved at the end of the process.

*"I did not have enough knowledge and skill to symbolize the text, which I listened to, in my mind. Grasping the theme and rheme in the text used to be quite difficult for me. But now, I can form a visual image of the text in my mind and draw up the outline of the information flow in the text."* (Student 2)

*"At the beginning of this term, I could grasp the meanings of some words to make sense of the sentences I heard. However, I could not interpret the text as I forgot what I had heard. At the end of the term, I can succeed to symbolize words, phrases, or sentences; but it still requires more practice."* (Student 7)

*"I did not know how to map a text I listened to, and I generally skipped most of the words and sentences in the text as I tried to write down all the sentences. In addition, the symbols first looked confusing and unnecessary to me. However, as I have learned how to symbolize what I heard, symbolizing the text enabled me to grasp more and more sentences in each step, compared to my previous performance."* (Student 10)

*"While listening, I used to focus on the denotative meanings of the words rather than the meanings which they referred to in context, so I could not form unity among the sentences in terms of meaning. Now, I can understand the meanings of the words which they gain in the context of the text. In addition, as I learn the basic symbols in the mapping system, I feel the improvement in my interpreting."* (Student 16)

*"At first, I used to have difficulty in symbolizing the text at word or clause level for fear of making a mistake; or I used to hesitate that the mapping system, which I used, would not be enough for my interpretation at all. But now, I can do it as I can easily match the content of the text with my mapping system. That is to say, I can transfer a high level of information from the source text by looking at my mapping system."* (Student 30)

The findings, obtained from the post-interviews, revealed that nearly all the students, at the beginning of the study, were weak in terms of perceiving the denotative and connotative meanings of the words to infer the contextual meanings, symbolizing the information in the text, making sense of the sentences in mental process, and keeping the information in mind. In addition, they stated that they were weak in the knowledge and practice of mapping system. However, the findings obtained at the end of the study showed that the students made a gradual and steady improvement in mapping the texts interpreted consecutively as they were able to internalize the mapping system through practice. The findings also revealed that student translators could manage to create their own mapping system in the learning process.

### 3.4. Analyses of the Data in Think-aloud Protocols, Student Diaries, and Portfolios

In this phase of the study, the following data were obtained from the portfolios revealing the students' improvement, the student diaries involving the students' viewpoints about their performance, and the

think-aloud protocols applied to observe what the students thought about their own performance and what reactions they showed while mapping the listening texts. The following extracts illustrate the students' improvements, viewpoints, and reactions in the process of note-taking.

*"I will try to use the symbols which are familiar to me or which I designed by myself. In addition, I must practise more to internalize the mapping system" (Student 1)*

*"I think I must study linking words and how they are symbolized. By doing so, I can make sense of the sentences better next time." (Student 5)*

*"I prepared a sheet of paper involving common symbols and their meanings, and I stuck it on my desk. From now on, I try to grasp the content of the text as if I listened to lyrics." (Student 10)*

*"After the lesson, I generally tried to remap the texts, which I was weak in symbolizing. I must do more practice on symbolizing the texts which are similar to those that we listened to in the classroom setting." (Student 15)*

*"I think that I must accept the symbols as a language, and I should decipher its system by listening to more podcasts." (Student 25)*

*"I have downloaded an application program from the internet to do lexical study. I feel that this program has improved me at word level in listening." (Student 33)*

*"I am trying to create my own mapping system to code and then decode the sentences in my mind, which I hear" (Student 34)*

*"I can symbolize the text but sometimes I am afraid of making mistakes when I interpret the symbols I create. To overcome this fear, I must do more practise and listen to more podcasts on the internet. In addition, I should focus on deictic expressions next time." (Student 35)*

*"I must study conjunctions and tense agreement for the next session." (Student 36)*

The findings given above showed that nearly all the students could define their strengths and weaknesses related to the mapping systems they created, determine the strategies to find solutions to the challenges they faced, and overcome their weaknesses in the process. In addition, it was also found that they made decisions for the next step to overcome their weaknesses. By doing so, they were able to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and the level of knowledge they intended to acquire. With the help of Think-aloud protocols, it was observed that while mapping the information flow in the source text, the students respectively designed the symbols in their mental processes, then transferred the symbols to paper, and finally deciphered the symbols to make interpretation. In addition, it was observed that the students took notes by abbreviating the words or phrases they could not symbolize. Here, it was determined that while abbreviating or symbolizing the expressions in the sentences; they grouped the words, phrases, or expressions in ST in two groups, namely as primary or secondary position which referred to the importance level of the key words, phrases, or expressions for his/her translation. To illustrate this, the figures given below were selected from the portfolio of one of the participants to show the mapping system in which he/she used the diagonal note-taking technique at different intervals.

**Figure 1:** The mapping system of text 1 retrieved from the portfolio of Student 18

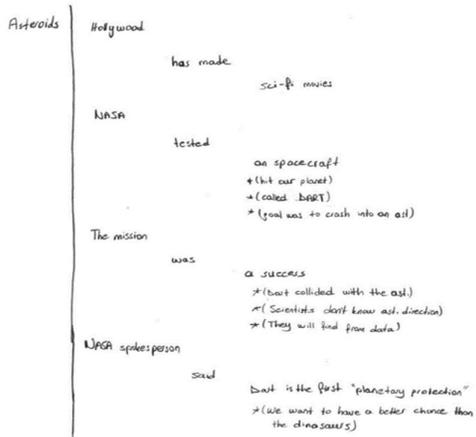
03.10.2022

The CEO Larry Page → // EU gov. ⇒ need to be more like Silicon Valley

- ↳ He said "Europe leaders don't support enough"
- + Silicon Valley greatest  $\Delta$  ⇒ to tech.  
(Google, Apple, Face.)
- + Britain's news ⇒ "Valley investing in science"  
↳ making money ⇒ tech comp.
- + EU  $\pi$  needed = to start investing //

**Figure 2:** The mapping system of text 2 retrieved from the portfolio of Student 18

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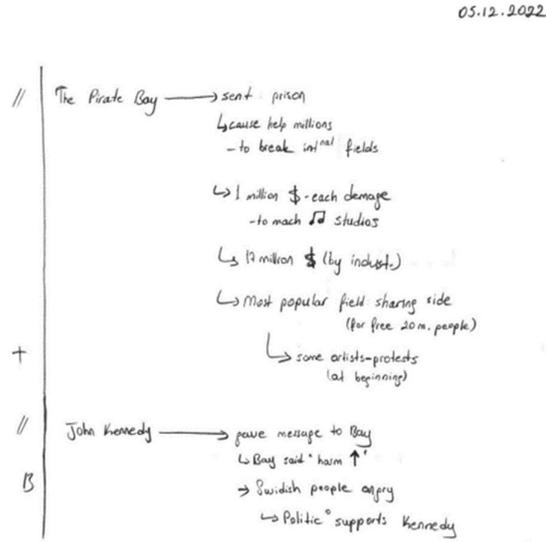
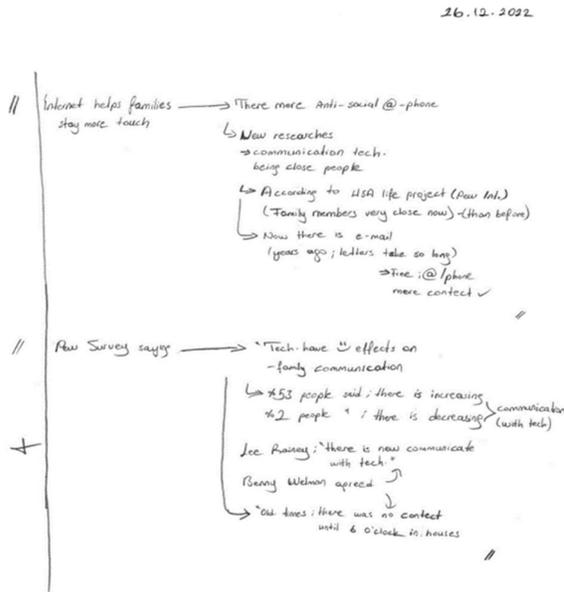
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**Figure 3:** The mapping system of text 3 retrieved from the portfolio of Student 18**Figure 4:** The mapping system of text 4 retrieved from the portfolio of Student 18

As shown in the figures, the improvement from the first mapping system to the last one shows an increasing and permanent improvement in terms of the information flow in ST. Figure 1 and Figure 2 involve insufficient information flow. However, when compared to Figures 1 and 2, Figures 3 and 4 illustrate a systematic improvement of the student as it involves symbols, abbreviated expressions, and a high level of information flow at the intended level. As seen in all figures, the student grouped the information flow in primary and secondary positions. After he/she noted the information in the primary position, he/she wrote the information in the secondary position below it or in parenthesis. In addition, he/she formed the semantic relation among the symbols or abbreviated expressions with "the recall

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lines" (Gillies, 2017, p. 143). Here, he/she began his/her interpretation using the key information given in the primary position, and then he/she used the information in the secondary position to complete the information given in the primary position.

#### 4. Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the strengths and weaknesses of Turkish translator students related to the note-taking system in the process of consecutive interpreting. The findings obtained from the study were discussed in light of the previous studies conducted in the research context to shed light on the process of note-taking training in consecutive interpreting.

The first research question in the study aimed at examining the challenges that the students faced while taking notes in consecutive interpreting. On this basis, the study indicated that the challenges, referring to the participants' weaknesses in this sampling, stemmed from the lack of competency in the note-taking system, which overlapped with the findings of the previous studies conducted by Arumí Ribas (2012), Lu (2013), Chen (2017), Wu and Liao (2018), and Sanchez (2018). In addition, the present study highlighted the importance of three specific sub-factors causing the above-mentioned challenge. These sub-factors were respectively defined at the level of lexical units which the students had difficulty in understanding and interpreting the contextual meanings of the words, phrases, and statistical values in the listening texts; at clause level which they had difficulty in forming semantic relations among the sentences and the discourse style of ST in TT as they interpreted some of the sentences out of context; and at mapping level which they had difficulty in symbolizing the information flow in their mental processes because of lack of competency and practice. In addition to the linguistic factors mentioned above, the effect of anxiety was found as a key factor affecting the students negatively in the process. In the study, the students were observed to have a high level of anxiety for fear of making incorrect translation or producing translation at a low level of quality, which showed consistency with the studies indicating a significant relationship between the high level of anxiety and the low level of performance (Jiménez Ivars & Pinazo Calatayud, 2001; Lim, 2018; Rosiers, Eyckmans, & Bauwens, 2011).

The second research question aimed at examining how the awareness of translation students about their strengths and weaknesses affected their improvements in note-taking system. On this basis, the study highlighted the importance of the awareness of translation students about their strengths and weaknesses in the training process. This is because, it was observed that after having the awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, the students could manage to take the responsibility to regulate the learning process in consideration of their lacking knowledge which they had identified. Here, the students went through the process of *self-regulation* to internalize what they had learned. On this basis, it was observed that the students firstly monitored their own performance to identify where they were in the learning process, secondly self-assessed to define the gap between their existing knowledge and the knowledge they must acquire, and finally showed a reaction to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and the intended knowledge. To this end, they could determine new learning targets for the next step by focusing on the issues which they esteemed themselves insufficient while taking notes. However, when the students failed to identify their weaknesses or/and bridge the gap, the teaching process was intervened by the instructor for *scaffolding*. This is because "if what has been developed fails to match trainees' competence and needs, changes are necessary" (Li, 2019, p. 37). In the present study, when the students needed the instructor's *scaffolding* to achieve the intended goals; the instructor guided them to be able to acquire the knowledge and to put it into practice instead of presenting the information to them directly. Here, the findings of the study emphasized the significance of the activities and practices designed according to the constructivist approach in the training process of note-taking. In addition, the study stressed the importance of the constructivist process in which the students could

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take active roles in decision-making, goal setting, planning, and evaluating to raise awareness towards their strengths and weaknesses in note-taking.

The third research question aimed at determining the stages in the note-taking system that the student translators used to transfer the information flow in SL while interpreting consecutively. It was observed that the students noted the information flow in four stages: a) visualizing the information flow in SL through symbols in their mental process, b) transferring the symbols created in their mental processes onto the paper, c) deciphering the symbols on the paper to make a consecutive interpretation, and d) transferring the information from SL into TL through the symbols. Here, It was observed that all of these stages occurred in their memories as consecutive interpreting required a set of processing activities in the mental process such as coding, transferring, decoding, and reconstructing the information flow between ST and TT, as similarly stated in the studies conducted by Afonina (2022), Albl-Mikasa (2008), Russell (2005), Russell and Takeda (2015), Sanchez (2018), and Wang (2012). Here, the students went through the process of coding and decoding the information in SL. However, lack of concentration or distraction was found to be a negative key factor affecting the students in this process. The findings of the present study revealed that while the students were symbolizing the information in their mental processes, they could not concentrate concurrently on both the speech and the mapping system, which caused shifts in their interpreting. Likewise, Yemenici (2019) also stated that shifting attention from speaker to note-taking might cause a loss in interpreting.

## 5. Conclusion

Among the many issues discussed under the discipline of translation studies, the present study focused on the translation students' strengths and weaknesses while they were taking notes in consecutive interpreting.

Based on the findings obtained from the study, it was highlighted that the mapping system must be taught respectively at the levels of word, clause, and text. Accordingly, the study suggested a training process designed in line with the constructivist approach in which the students improved step by step to explore their strengths and weaknesses in the process. With the help of the constructivist teaching method used in the present study, the students were encouraged to go through the process of *self-observation*, *self-judgment*, and *self-reaction* to become *self-regulated* learners. As a consequence of this process, they were able to take an active role in the learning process and identify new learning targets to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and the knowledge intended to be acquired. Thus, it might be assessed to what extent the predetermined goals have been achieved in the learning process. In this sense, the study underlined the importance of using formative assessment in teaching note-taking in consecutive interpreting, because the improvement in consecutive interpreting may also exert a positive effect on the progress of simultaneous interpreting. This is because “many interpreting teachers see training in consecutive as a good way of preparing students for simultaneous interpreting” (Dam, 2010, p. 77).

In conclusion, the present study has some limitations as it involves the learners who receive translator training at higher education in Türkiye. From this aspect, it is limited in terms of the scope and the number of participants. To this end, the findings of the study cannot be extrapolated to all spheres of education. However, the research context of the present study may be examined in different groups of sampling through a longitudinal design to make the findings generalizable.

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