

## 6

# CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING

*Debra Russell and Kayoko Takeda*

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the cognitive models that have shaped the teaching of interpreters, including models that specifically address consecutive interpreting, and discusses the practice of consecutive interpreting, beginning with a historical overview and moving to contemporary use. We also argue for a review of how consecutive interpreting, cognitive models, note-taking and decision-making are taught in order to prepare interpreters for conference and non-conference interpreting.

Consecutive interpreting (CI) is defined as the process of interpreting after the speaker or signer has completed one or more ideas in the source language and then pauses while the interpreter transmits that information (Russell 2005). Gonzalez *et al.* (1991/2012) states that when using CI in the court setting, the duration of the source language can be anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes. “Long consec” is a phrase used to describe consecutively interpreting a lengthy passage (over several minutes) or possibly an entire speech at a time, usually with the aid of notes, while “short consec” refers to consecutively interpreting a short passage, possibly a word to a few sentences, with or without the aid of notes.

### ***Cognitive aspects***

Models of interpreting have developed over the years as a way to conceptualize the ways in which interpreters perform their work. Pöchhacker (2004, and Chapter 4, this volume) provides an excellent review of the theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary perspectives that have shaped interpreting research and interpreting models. While Pöchhacker (2004) reports on models that reflect many levels of analysis within interpreting studies, we have chosen to examine here some of the cognitive and interactional models that have impacted both spoken and signed language interpretation and have particular relevance for CI.

Some of the earliest models from the 1970s focused on the cognitive processes involved in CI. Seleskovitch (1978) was one of the first to introduce a more cognitive based analysis of interpreting (consecutive as well as simultaneous), cognitive model of interpreting which focused on the interpreter’s understanding and expression of “sense” as opposed to linguistic transcoding. In the field of signed language interpreting specifically,

Colonomos (1987) also described three stages of cognitive processing, each with its own cognitive tasks. Her model focuses on some of the tasks associated with accessing short-term and long-term memory for knowledge, and making the target language switch based on linguistic and cultural knowledge, including awareness of discourse frames in both ASL (American Sign Language) and English, thus introducing communication norms into the discussion.

During this same period, Cokely (1992) also offered a sociolinguistic model of interpreting, based on a detailed breakdown of the mental processes that occur during linguistic analysis and reconstruction. His model highlights seven main processing stages, and many more sub-processes which reflect top-down processing, such as message reception, preliminary processing, short-term message retention, semantic intent realized, semantic equivalent determined, syntactic message formulation, and message production.

Each of the cognitive models mentioned above has made contributions to the field of interpreting by articulating some of the processes involved, thereby helping interpreters to find strategies to improve their work, and offering tools to interpreter educators for teaching interpreting. However, the models have also invited further debate about the complexity of interpreting, which has led to further research into communication processes and the ways in which interpreting affects communication among participants who do not share the same language. For example, in the late 1980s we saw an increase in the discussion of the nature of text and discourse in interpreted interactions (Pöchhacker, 2004). Pöchhacker's (1992) own model of interpreted interaction brings attention to the "perspective" of the individuals in the event, moving us away from a sole focus on text and content. Alexieva (2002) emphasizes seven parameters that influence the interpreted event: distance vs. proximity between participants, equality/solidarity vs. non-equality/power, formal settings vs. informal setting dynamics, the shared or conflicting goals of participants, and cooperativeness/directness vs. non-cooperativeness/indirectness.

Some other dominant theories that have found a place in interpretation practices and in the education of interpreters include Vermeer's *skopos* theory of translational action (see Vermeer, 1989/2000) and Gile's (1995/2009) set of models referred to as the Effort Models in interpreting. As research in interpreting has become more established as a field of inquiry, it has led to increased recognition of interpreter-mediated interactions, in which the interpreter's decisions influence all participants and potential outcomes, and to greater awareness of discourse-based interactions in which the interpreter is seen as an active third participant in a three-party conversation (Roy, 2000; Wadensjö, 1998). Wadensjö (1998) distinguishes between "interpreting as text" and "interpreting as activity"; two orientations that interpreters hold when they are working, and she introduces the phrase "interactionally oriented" (1998: 24) to describe interpreters who coordinate interpreting both at the textual level and at the level of situated activity within the interpreted event.

Napier (2002) stresses that interpreters must adopt a sociolinguistic and sociocultural approach to their work, in order to recognize the contextual factors that will influence each interpretation. Similarly, Wilcox and Shaffer (2005) argue that although the field of interpretation has moved away from viewing the interpreter as a passive participant, merely passing along information, to more dialogic and interactional models, the conduit view of our work often remains an unchallenged assumption about how human communication works (p. 27).

Within any of these cognitive models of interpreting is an understanding that communication, whether direct or mediated through interpreters, requires all participants to actively work at constructing meaning based on evidence provided by speakers. Wilcox and Shaffer (2005) identify the crucial factors in this active process as the nature of language (especially semantics), production (how thought and meanings are expressed), and comprehension processes that shape the ways in which we understand what the other person means (p. 27). Further, they suggest

that when interpreters acknowledge they are actively constructing meaning they can be then become more aware of their own influence on an interaction, thus challenging the notion of neutrality, which is so prevalent in the field of interpretation.

With so many models and orientations of studies in the field of interpreting, how might these models support the development of effective CI skills? The value of models to interpreting is that they offer guidance in understanding the nature of how communicators structure messages and how interpreters try to access and construct that meaning in order to recreate it in a second language. They also offer us insight into how interpreters can practice the cognitive sub-tasks of interpreting so as to develop the short- and long-term memory and analysis skills needed to produce accurate target texts. Shlesinger (2000) suggests that simultaneous interpreting (SI) is such a complex task that we may never fully understand all of the components of the process and how they interact, but that interpreting may actually be a combination of cognitive processes and proceduralized strategies (see Chapter 5 on simultaneous interpreting). We argue this is true for CI as well. It is also helpful for us to have models of interpreting as an activity in which interpreters focus on the participants' understanding of various parts of the interaction and the progression of that interaction, drawing on the context that participants bring and the meaning that is created during the interaction (Wadensjö 1998).

Two models, one proposed by Daniel Gile (1995/2009) and a second offered by Debra Russell (2002a, 2005), have specific application to CI.

### ***Gile's Effort Models in interpreting***

Gile (1995/2009) set out a series of models that are designed to explain the cognitive challenges of interpreting in order to highlight an interpreter's available choices, and the strategies that could be employed in order to increase the likelihood of successful interpreting performance. Gile's model has two basic principles: interpreting requires mental energy that is available in limited supply, and interpreting takes up almost all of this mental energy, sometimes requiring more than is available, at which times performance deteriorates (p. 161). Further, Gile notes that some mental operations are non-automatic and require attention, which takes cognitive processing capacity from a limited available supply, while automatic operations do not. Gile's Model of Consecutive Interpretation (2001/2009) is a two-phase model, involving a Listening Phase and a Reformulation Phase.

The Listening and Analysis Effort refers to all comprehension-oriented operations, from analysis of the sound waves carrying the speech to the interpreter's ear, to identifying the linguistic elements of the language, to the final decisions made about the "meaning" of the utterance (1995: 162). Leeson (2005) suggests that the corresponding task for signed language interpreters is to "comprehend a visual-spatial language based on identification of the visually received linguistic messages, followed by the identification of signed lexical items and phrases co-occurring with non-manual cues, through to decisions regarding the meaning of these items in context" (p. 54). Comprehension is a non-automatic process for interpreters, as Wilcox and Shaffer (2005) remind us, and hence is subject to attention capacity restrictions and saturation.

Gile next introduces the Production Effort, where the interpreter creates notes to support her memory of the message. Note-taking techniques need to be developed in order to provide a consistent advantage for the interpreter by reducing memory load constraints.

Short-term Memory Effort recognizes the important role of short-term memory and long-term memory in interpretation. Gile posits that both of the cognitive operations that address short- and long-term memory occur continuously during interpreting and are non-automatic. Gile states, "In consecutive interpreting the Memory Effort is similar to that used in simultaneous

interpreting. However in consecutive, it is associated with the time between the moment information is heard and the moment the interpreter decides not to write it down, or between the moment it is heard and the moment it disappears from memory” (p. 179).

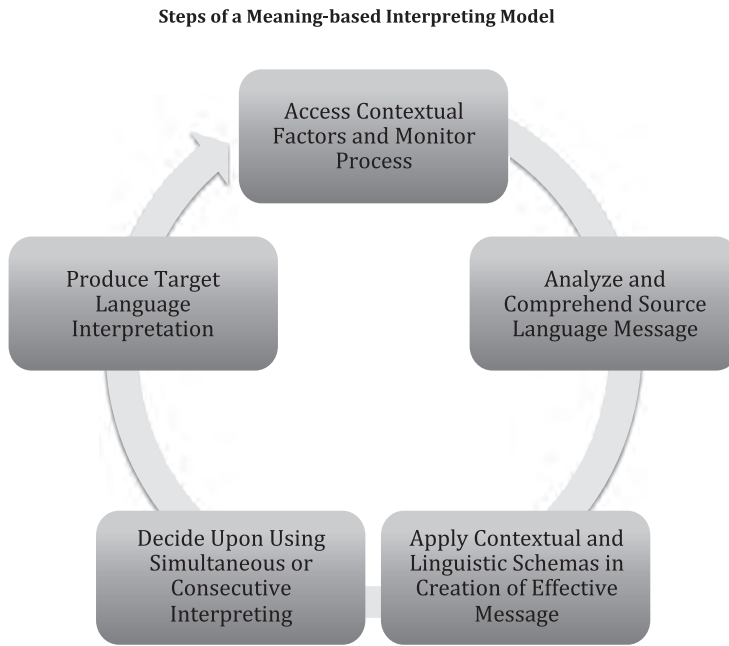
The Reformulation Phase of the model involves three efforts, where the interpreter does not have to share processing capacity between the tasks of listening, analysis and note-taking. The Note-Reading Effort is the first, where interpreters require some processing capacity to decipher their own notes, which again stresses the need for them to practice note-taking and working from notes so that those processes are effective in supporting the interpretation. This stage draws on Long-term Memory Effort, which allows the interpreter to retrieve information about the original utterance. Patrie (2004) explains that interpreters often rely on visual memory for this aspect of the task, by looking at the arrangement of their notes to represent aspects of the source message, or by accessing visual memory storage mechanisms to help them sequence the order of events in a speech. Patrie stresses this is especially applicable to signed language interpreters who receive a signed message via visual mechanisms.

The next effort of the second phase is the Production Effort, which relates to producing the message in the target language. (This is the second “production” in the Consecutive Model, with the first production being the creation of notes in the first phase of the model.) Unlike simultaneous interpretation, where comprehension and full production are not separated (see Chapter 5 on simultaneous interpretation), the interpreter delivering in a consecutive mode is spared short-term memory pressures and the demands associated with delivery of the message immediately in the target language. In this second phase the interpreter produces the target message, and monitors the output. It is at this stage that interpreters employ “problem solving” strategies, for example, in finding the most accurate word for a particular linguistic context, or determining the most effective syntactic structure. Leeson (2005) suggests that such problems are common not only among spoken language interpreters, but they are also significant for signed language interpreters. She identifies the fact that signed language interpreters must additionally deal with a shift in language modality (i.e., from spoken to signed discourse or vice versa), which in turn brings further production issues relative to the differences in how spoken and signed languages structure and maintain discourse (p. 56).

Patrie (2004) emphasizes the value of drawing upon models such as Gile’s Effort Models, as they break down the subskills required by interpreters. When the subskills of CI become more routinized, the interpreter can then devote more attention to aspects of the interpreting process that cannot be routinized, such as attending to contextual clues and rendering accurate and effective meaning.

### ***Meaning-based model of interpreting***

The model developed in Russell (2000, 2002a, 2005) specifically identifies the need for the interpreter to assess and apply contextual factors impacting the interpretation by actively using background knowledge about language, culture, conventional ways of communication in both languages, and to determine whether to use consecutive or simultaneous interpreting within a given interaction. While the mode may be pre-determined in some settings, when working in one-to-one contexts or with small groups providing whispered spoken interpretation, this decision is often made on the basis of the discourse requirements. This model (shown in Figure 6.1) acknowledges differences in linguistic and cultural meanings between two languages, and also the need for meaning-based work, as the desired interpretation product is created throughout the interaction and with active co-construction of meaning wherein the interpreter is an active participant. The steps of the Meaning-Based Interpreting Model include:



From: Russell, D. (2005). Consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. In T. Janzen (Ed.), *Topics in signed language interpreting* (p. 144). John Benjamins: Amsterdam.  
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Revised June 21, 2010

Figure 6.1 Meaning-based model of interpreting.

#### 1 Assess Contextual Factors and Monitor the Process:

As the interpreter approaches the interpreting task, contextual factors need to be considered, but this activity does not stop prior to the task. Throughout the interaction, the interpreter constantly assesses contextual factors and their impact upon communication. Context helps the interpreter determine the speaker's or signer's particular meaning within the specific interpreted interaction. This includes assessing factors such as the relationship between the parties in the interaction, the formal and informal power structures represented, the similarities and differences in backgrounds and experiences of the participants, the emotional overlay of the interaction, and the impact of the interpreter's presence on the way the speaker and signer construct their messages. In addition, throughout all phases of the interpreted interaction, the interpreter monitors the communication process because the participants are creating additional context and experience through their dialogue. At times, the interpreter finds herself surrounded by topics, specific lexicon and jargon, and descriptions of events that the participants have shared knowledge of, whereas the interpreter lacks that content and contextual information. While being the first step in the model, it importantly overlays each subsequent step represented.

#### 2 Comprehend Source Language Message:

During this stage, the interpreter must draw upon skills related to linguistic and cultural awareness, as well as discourse analysis, in order to support comprehension of the original message. The interpreter draws upon her fluency in both languages in the following areas:

- a Syntactic knowledge;
- b Semantic knowledge;
- c Associated knowledge and background experience;
- d Cultural awareness; and
- e Contextual knowledge.

It is at this stage that the interpreter is required to process information at lexical, phrasal, sentential, and discourse levels to determine the characteristics of the discourse frame that the speaker or signer is using. For example, this could include identifying register and style features such as the use of politeness markers, and structural items such as syntactic forms needed to convey particular question or answer styles, for example, in a courtroom setting. At this stage the interpreter needs to verify comprehension and seek clarification when needed and when appropriate. This also includes negotiating movement between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting as required. Lastly, this stage also includes checking for and correcting errors as appropriate. Errors may be created when the interpreter lacks sufficient contextual knowledge about the content or the situation in which she is interpreting.

### 3 Apply Contextual and Linguistic Schemas and Select Simultaneous or Consecutive Interpreting:

This stage involves the application of the interpreter's on-going assessment of contextual factors influencing the interaction, such as linguistic competence, the experiential and cultural frames of the participants who are interacting, and their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experience. At this stage the interpreter also determines whether to use consecutive or simultaneous interpreting for the message in order to support genuine communication for all participants and to maintain strategies that support successful interpretation. The decision to use CI is made based on the discourse and interaction demands, which can include the complexity and density of the information, the setting, working with a child as a consumer, the unfamiliarity of the information to the interpreter, and/or grave consequences of interpreter error.

### 4 Formulate Equivalent/Effective Message:

After processing the information (drawing on lexical, phrasal, sentential, and discourse knowledge) and applying cultural and linguistic frames in order to realize the goals of the speaker or signer, the interpreter then makes cultural and linguistic choices – planning, formulating, and reviewing the elements to be used to express an effective message in the target language. Elements of the target message may be silently rehearsed at this stage. Assessing contextual factors and monitoring the process continue to apply.

### 5 Produce Target Language Interpretation:

At this stage the interpreter produces the target message, based on the previous stages. Once again, at this step, the interpreter continues to assess contextual factors and monitors the process to ensure the effectiveness of the interpretation among the parties.

This model brings together the roles of context, linguistic and cultural schemas, and the decision-making processes that involve choosing consecutive or simultaneous interpreting. The Meaning-based Model presented above offers both the interpreter and the interpreter educator a window into the tasks to be accomplished when analyzing interpreted interactions. The process of interpreting is clearly very complex, but by identifying and practicing some of the tasks of

each stage, students learning to interpret can develop the linguistic and interactional skills necessary to perform the work, while recognizing their role as an active participant in the co-construction of meaning (practitioners also need to reinforce their awareness of this approach periodically).

## **Practice**

### ***Historical overview***

Interpreting has facilitated communication across languages and cultures throughout the history of humanity. Presumably, what is now called consecutive interpreting and whisper interpreting in the simultaneous mode were the predominant forms carried out in spoken language before the invention of special equipment for SI and subsequent development of SI practice in the middle of the 20th century. In fact, CI for bilateral dialogues can be considered the prototypical act by an interpreter as a mediator of communication between parties who do not share a common language. This model of a bilingual person enabling communication between monolinguals must have existed in all instances of language contact, whether through trade, diplomacy, exploration, governance, colonization, or war (see Chapter 1 on the history of interpreting). Stone (2009) reports that for the deaf community there is a long tradition of family members interpreting so that deaf people can have access to mainstream institutional activities. (See Chapter 7 for more information on the history of sign language interpreting.)

Due to the ephemerality of interpreting, it is rather difficult for researchers to locate details of how interpreting was actually performed in spoken language before the invention of sound recording devices. Some studies, however, indicate that CI in diplomatic settings prior to the end of World War I was performed in a sentence-by-sentence manner (e.g. Delisle and Woodsworth (2012: 251); Gaiba (1998: 28)) (see Chapter 1 for more historical information.)

It is generally agreed that the professionalization of conference interpreting as we know it today originated in the Paris Peace Conference in 1918, where English and French were spoken (e.g. Baigorri-Jalón 2004; Pöchhacker 2004). The CI performed then and in newly established organizations, such as the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization, had a distinct feature: interpreting a whole speech in length (or in long segments). One session of interpreting could be as long as an hour or more (e.g. Herbert 1978: 8; Gaiba 1998: 29). The main reason for this new mode of CI is said to be that speakers did not want their remarks to be interrupted by the interpreter for fear of losing their illocutionary force (Ito-Bergerot 2005). Also, it is said that the audience, especially one that understood the language used by the speaker, wanted to listen to speeches in their entirety instead of having them broken down into short segments (*ibid.*). In delivering the interpretation, interpreters generally relied on notes they took while listening to the source speech. They also had to have a good memory and analytical skills to process the information contained in a long speech. Good public speaking skills were important as well, since interpreters rendered their interpretation on the dais just like the source speakers. The visibility of interpreters made it easy for the audience to take notice of the special skills the interpreters exhibited. This period in the European context is called the Golden Age of CI (*ibid.*).

After the feasibility and efficiency of SI was demonstrated during the Nuremberg Trial (1945–1946), the United Nations started introducing SI. There was a brief period when consecutive interpreters resisted SI, claiming that it would be a parroting act and thus less accurate, and would make interpreters invisible in booths, degrading their job (Baigorri-Jalón 2004). However, such opposition was overcome and SI has spread across different regions very quickly,

replacing CI in most international organizations and conferences (see Chapters 5 and 11 for discussions of simultaneous interpreting and conference interpreting).

By contrast, signed language interpreters do not experience the same language overlap as spoken language interpreters, in that they work with two different language modalities, a spoken and a signed language. This fact has led to the predominant use of simultaneous interpreting, as no technology is needed support SI work. However, as research has emerged about CI and SI, there has been a re-examination of when and where CI can be and should be used.

### ***Contemporary settings***

While SI has overtaken CI mainly to save time in multilingual conference settings, CI may be employed if special equipment for SI, and/or interpreters who can handle SI, are either not available or too expensive for the clients. (Although whisper interpreting for one or a few persons in the simultaneous mode can be executed without equipment, SI in spoken languages for a larger audience cannot be performed effectively without equipment such as a transmission system, microphones, and headsets.)

There remain, however, several scenarios in which CI is the preferred mode in interpreter-mediated communication in both spoken and signed language interpreting. Since the interpreter is generally in close proximity to the speakers in CI settings, CI is more flexible than SI in terms of allowing the interpreter to communicate and clarify with participants, manage the dialogical discourse, and look at the physical conditions of the participants and their surroundings. Thus, CI is generally considered suitable when the number of participants is small and face-to-face dialogues predominate, as in doctor-patient sessions. The longer time needed for CI (relative to SI) can also work to the advantage of participants who want to “buy time” to think carefully about what to say, for example in high-level bilateral negotiations.

In addition, CI may achieve greater accuracy of interpretation, presumably because the interpreter can take more time to reformulate all the elements of the source speech, including tone and nuance. Since consecutive interpreters hear the entire utterance before delivering the interpretation, they know exactly what they are interpreting and are less likely to fall victim to misguided anticipation (which can happen more easily in SI). Consecutive interpreters can also clarify with the speaker if there is something unclear about the speech. In addition, it is easier for bilinguals who are present to notice interpreting errors, since both the source speech and the interpretation are exposed in CI. Corrections can be made on the spot during the pause between the interpretation and the next utterance by the speaker. Thus, CI may be considered more desirable in settings where sensitive issues are discussed or the verbatim records of interpretation are kept for evidence, such as in legal proceedings. In fact, CI is generally associated with legal, healthcare, and other community-based interpreting. (See Chapters 12–17 for further discussion of these settings).

Empirical studies comparing CI and SI in terms of accuracy and quality have shown mixed results so far. While Gile (2001b) finds CI less accurate than SI in his exploratory experiment with English-French interpreting, Russell (2005) finds the contrary in her quasi-experimental study with signed language interpreting in courtroom events. Viezzi (2013: 383–4) argues that it cannot be generalized that CI is more accurate and reliable than SI as the quality of interpreting can be affected by the competence of the individual interpreter and various other factors.

In sum, CI is used in a wide variety of settings, both international and intra-societal. It can be observed today in diplomatic, political and business meetings, legal proceedings, doctor-patient communication, and various other face-to-face settings. Besides technical reasons, such as the unavailability of equipment, the preference of CI over SI may be attributed to the flexibility of



CI in handling dialogical communication, and the belief that CI is more suitable for achieving accurate and complete renditions in high-stakes events where the interpretation can become the record of the proceedings.

### ***Features and trends***

Although approaches to CI today vary depending on the purpose of a given communicative event, they may be roughly divided into two categories: CI for interactive, face-to-face communication between parties, and CI for monological, one-to-many communication with little interaction with the audience. In either case, the length of a segment which the interpreter interprets at a time varies between settings and even within a single discourse: it can be as short as a single word and as long as remarks lasting more than several minutes. As Viezzi (2013: 378) points out, CI for hour-long, uninterrupted speeches of the League of Nations is a thing of the past. For instance, in the CI used during the press conference of U.S. President Barack Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao in 2010, the shortest remark by any speaker was two seconds, and the longest was two minutes. Takeda (2011) reports that in ten online video samples of CI in actual settings (not for practice) she surveyed, covering diverse language combinations, topics and settings, the average length of an utterance interpreted consecutively at a time was 20 seconds and the longest was two minutes and 12 seconds. Having been exposed to the immediacy of SI, audiences seem to be impatient with long waits during remarks in a language they do not understand, perhaps leading to shorter CI utterances.

As for the directionality of interpreting, in contrast with SI in which interpreters often work unidirectionally (usually into their A language or mother tongue), consecutive interpreters predominantly work in both directions between the two languages, especially in face-to-face dialogues. A survey conducted by Takeda (2011) using graduates of an interpreting program indicates that about 80% of their CI practice is bidirectional. In a study conducted with 1995 North American signed language interpreters working in legal contexts, Roberson, Russell and Shaw (2012) found that interpreters reported using CI across a range of legal contexts, from child protection, lawyer-client meetings, police interviews, and courtroom testimony, and that all of their work involved using both American Sign Language and spoken English, emphasizing the bidirectional nature of their work. Exceptions are settings, such as state-to-state negotiations, where both sides bring their own interpreters and they interpret only from the language of their own side to the language of the other side.

One of the main features of CI in face-to-face dialogical interactions is the interpreter's active role as a co-constructor of discourse in interpreted communication. A number of empirical studies (e.g. Wadensjö 1998; Roy 2000) have reported on interpreters managing speakers' turns and intervening to speak for themselves in order to resolve confusion and problems that may arise from intercultural and interlingual issues. As described above, the interpreter's close proximity to the participants of a given communicative event enables her to directly communicate with them at will, sometimes raising ethical issues. For instance, the issue of interpreters acting as advocates for the less powerful (such as patients, deaf students, and defendants) has been debated against the backdrop of the canon of neutrality put forth in most codes of ethics for interpreters (see Chapter 16, for example, on mental health interpretation, and Chapter 20 on ethics).

Lastly, the recent use of technology-assisted CI should be noted here. In what Hamidi and Pöschhacker (2007) call the "simultaneous-consecutive (sim-consec)" mode of interpreting, the interpreter records the source speech with a portable recording device and simultaneously interprets its quick replay. Since the interpreter starts delivering the target language rendition after the speaker has stopped speaking, it is a form of CI procedurally. But the rendition itself is

SI, since delivery takes place as the interpreter listens to the replayed speech. The purported advantages of sim-consec include the following: the interpreter can listen to the source speech twice, which may result in a higher level of comprehension and accuracy in interpretation; the interpretation is almost the same length as the source speech, as it is rendered simultaneously; and there is no need for intensive note-taking, benefiting those who struggle with that skill. On the other hand, the extra effort to operate the recorder and the possibility of recorder failure are considered drawbacks of sim-consec.

Another example of technology-assisted CI is the use of a real-time transcription system in legal settings (see Chapter 10 on transcription). With this arrangement, everything said in the language of the court (English in the U.S. courts, for example) is recorded and transcribed by the court reporter, and its transcription is available in real time on a computer screen in front of the interpreter. As long as the language of the court is spoken and its real-time transcription is accurate, the interpreter's effort can be reduced in terms of note-taking and memorization, since she can rely on the transcription of the source speech on the screen. The interpreter can engage in sight translation from the screen (see Chapter 9 on sight translation), instead of using memory and notes. Since the interpreter's renditions into the language of the court also appear on the screen in real time, it is possible for the interpreter to monitor her own interpretation and make self-corrections, if necessary. One drawback may be that the quality of the real-time transcription depends on the competence of the court reporter, and there is always the possibility of errors in the transcriptions. Thus, some interpreters still take notes and look at the screen only to double-check numbers, proper nouns, etc.

### ***Note-taking***

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, especially in the context of so-called "long consec", which is sometimes called "classic consec" or even "true consec" by some practitioners. The degree to which interpreters resort to note-taking in CI may depend on several factors, such as 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. It is often said that there is no universal approach to note-taking (Stern 2011), and different interpreters use different note-taking methods.

Although each interpreter may ultimately develop her own note-taking system, practitioners and teachers of interpreting have published note-taking techniques for CI. The first such publication was a booklet on principles of note-taking and symbols written by Rozan (1956), who was a conference interpreter teaching at University of Geneva. The seven principles Rozan presented were: (1) note the idea rather than the word; (2) abbreviate long words; (3) show links between ideas (logical links); (4) indicate negation; (5) add emphasis (for adverbs such as "very" and "extremely"); (6) take notes vertically (from top to bottom); and (7) shift from left to right (indenting). In general, most or all of these techniques seem to be practiced by professional interpreters, regardless of the language combinations (Pöschhacker 2011), and are recommended by others as well (e.g. Jones, 2002; Gillies, 2005). The key is that the notes should be concise and easily trigger recall during delivery (Stern, 2011). Note-taking should not be a hindrance to the "effort for listening and analysis" (Gile 1995/2009). Above all, as Viezzi (2013: 380) suggests, too much emphasis on note-taking may not be wise, as note-taking is just a means, and not the end, of CI. This is supported by Russell (2000, 2002), who found that interpreters who used ineffective interpreting strategies in court unnecessarily increased the time between listening and producing the interpretation, and often had to ask for utterances to be repeated despite having the notes available.

Other note-taking techniques are often observed in the professional practice of interpreting. For instance, when notes for one idea are completed and progress to another idea, a horizontal line is drawn to separate the ideas from each other. Also, it is considered important to note numbers, proper names, technical terms, and words carefully chosen by the speaker, which seems to contradict Rozan's suggestion to note the idea rather than the word. The use of symbols is often encouraged, since they are generally concise and represent "ideas". In addition to Rozan's symbol list (1956), there are other publications which give elaborate symbol systems in Russian (Min'iar-Belorushev 1969) and German (Matyssek 1989/2006). All the proposed symbols are not necessarily universal, as what a given symbol represents may differ depending on cultural context. It may be up to individual interpreters to come up with symbols that make sense to them and learn to use those symbols consistently.

Signed language interpreters have frequently relied on techniques used in creating mind maps in order to support their interpretations and translations (see Ford 1988), building on visual memory techniques and combining the maps with some written words and symbols. However, interpreters working to and from signed languages, for example, from British Sign Language to American Sign Language in a conference setting, will likely have little use for note-taking. Patrie (2004) explains that if the signed language interpreter is working from a spoken to a signed language, it is physically possible for an interpreter to take notes and refer to the notes when rendering the consecutive interpretation, whereas it is less common when working from a signed to a spoken language due to the physical constraint of simultaneously watching the signed message and taking notes. Ultimately, each interpreter will develop her own strategies to support effective consecutive interpreting.

As for the choice of language in note-taking, different approaches have been suggested by interpreting practitioners and researchers. The use of the target language forces interpreters to translate as they take notes, which should reduce the effort required during the production stage. In contrast, the use of the source language may require less effort with note-taking, but more effort during the production stage. Use of the A language or a more "economical" language as the source or target language may also contribute to efficient and consistent note-taking. Empirical studies on language preferences in note-taking indicate mixed results. In studying the preferred language(s) used in note-taking by interpreters, Dam (2004) found the use of the A language and Szabo (2006) found the use of English (over Hungarian) to be more prevalent. These results suggest the diverse and ultimately personal nature of note-taking methods.

## **CI in interpreter education**

### ***The role of CI in conference interpreter training***

In the context of conference interpreter training in higher education, CI usually means "long consec" with systematic note-taking and is taught accordingly, with a focus on monological communication. SI has replaced CI in many international conferences; and even when CI is used, this mode of CI ("long consec") is rarely practiced in the real world. However, the use of long CI in training is considered effective in building a foundation for students preparing for SI training (e.g. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1995; Gile 2005). Exercises in CI foster students' analytical listening and content-based interpreting, rather than the "transcoding" that might happen if SI were introduced before acquiring the skills for CI (Gile *ibid*:133). CI is also often used to screen candidates for SI study (i.e. passing CI tests is a prerequisite for SI training).

There is a belief that if students are trained in long CI, they will be prepared to deal with speeches of any length (Jones 2002). Jones (*ibid*: 5) argues that if interpreters can cope with a

five-minute speech in CI, they should be able to handle any length of speech. Thus, according to this school of thought, training exercises in CI should mainly focus on interpreting monological speeches of around five minutes or longer (for instance, Seleskovitch and Lederer (ibid: 104) suggest four to seven minutes), with separate unidirectional classes usually taught by a native speaker of the target language. In this practice, note-taking is an essential part of the exercises. Public speaking skills are also emphasized. Another belief associated with using CI in conference interpreter training is that renditions by the interpreter should not be longer than the source utterances. Jones (ibid: 35), for instance, suggests that the duration of a rendition should be about two-thirds to three-quarters of the speaker's delivery time, which can be achieved by eliminating hesitations and unnecessary repetitions in the source speech. With the emphasis on long speeches, note-taking, public speaking, and "efficient" renditions, these methods of teaching CI in conference interpreter training seem to be greatly influenced by the tradition of CI practice from the post-WWI era in Europe, and may not prepare students for how CI is practiced currently and in other parts of the world. In Japan, for example, conference interpreters are trained in "short consec", reflecting the market needs for Japanese interpreters.

### ***The role of CI in interpreter training for non-conference settings***

In training for legal and healthcare interpreters in spoken languages, CI is taught on the basis of how it is practiced in the real world. Since dialogical CI is the predominant mode in the actual practice of legal and healthcare interpreting, realistic exchanges in courtroom and hospital settings are often used for exercises. In short-term programs, however, the time spent acquiring basic skills (analytical listening, note-taking, etc.) may be limited, as instruction on domain-specific knowledge, terminology and professional ethics is often prioritized in training public service interpreters (e.g. Ertl and Pöllabauer 2010).

In some countries, such as the United States and Australia, where interpreter certification exams exist, training programs are generally designed to prepare students for those exams. The exams for CI in court and healthcare interpreter certification are usually based on dialogical scenarios such as a prosecutor examining a defendant or a doctor asking a patient about symptoms. The length of the utterances to be interpreted varies, but tends to be short: from one word to a few sentences (e.g. National Center for State Courts 2011; National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters 2013). For the professional interpreting category, NAATI (the national standard and accreditation body for translators and interpreters in Australia) includes two types of CI in its exams: CI for dialogues and CI for unidirectional passages. The utterance to be interpreted does not normally exceed 60 words in dialogue interpreting; and the length of a passage to interpret at a time is about 130–170 words in monologue interpreting (NAATI 2013). If the recommendation of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) regarding speech speed (100 words per minute in English) was applied, the longest segment to interpret at a time in the NAATI tests for CI would be less than two minutes, which is probably a reflection of the actual practice in the market.

In the area of signed language interpreter training, Russell (2000b) conducted a pilot study of 15 interpreter education programs in the United States and Canada. The purpose of the study was to examine the ways in which CI is taught in programs, and the perceptions of educators about the use of CI. This was followed by interviews of fifteen interpreters who had graduated from interpreter programs during 2000 and 2002. The results showed that ten out of the 15 programs emphasize the need for students to gain a solid understanding of the cognitive processes needed for effective interpreting by acquiring text analysis skills and then use these to begin consecutive interpreting practice. After CI has been mastered, the students progress to simultaneous work.

By comparison, other programs choose to teach cognitive models and CI through an informational approach, providing theory but little time for acquiring the necessary foundational skills. The approach used and the length of time spent teaching CI varies among programs, from a few weeks within a semester, to one or two full semesters, to three semesters.

Russell, Shaw, and Malcolm (2010) describe a progression of skill development used in their teaching that incorporates discourse analysis, translation skills, consecutive and then simultaneous interpreting skills, with the goal of helping students to make effective discourse and interactional decisions about how to blend both simultaneous and consecutive interpreting within a given interaction. This approach is consistent with the work of Cokely (2005), who argued for curriculum changes in interpreter programs that would ensure that all interpreting skill classes would include aspects of translation, consecutive interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting, with the amount of time and focus dependent on the stage of learning. These approaches ultimately address the problem identified in Russell (2002b), which suggests that some educators and recent graduates of interpreter education programs see consecutive interpreting only as a stepping stone in the development of SI, not as a mode to be used throughout an interpreter's career. Such preparation offers students insight into the variety of opportunities and demands that may be made of them in the market.

### ***Future directions in CI training***

As discussed above, CI is an integral part of interpreter training for both practical and pedagogical reasons. Notwithstanding the great diversity within each category, CI training for conference interpreters generally focuses on monological, long consec as a preparatory stage for SI, while CI training for non-conference settings aims to reflect professional environment through dialogic scenario-based exercises. Although financial and human resources may be limiting factors, each training approach would benefit from adopting certain practices of the other. Without compelling theoretical grounding or empirical evidence to support the belief that students trained in monological, long CI will be able to handle any type of CI, teachers of conference interpreting should be encouraged to pay more attention to the diverse range of CI their students may engage in after graduation. It would be worthwhile to consider the benefits of incorporating in conference interpreter training shorter, more precise (not condensed) CI that requires agility and flexibility in handling bidirectional interpreting and managing the interactive aspects of dialogue settings.

On the other hand, more foundational exercises for basic CI skills may be needed for training interpreters in non-conference settings. Jacobsen (2012) discusses the issues of accuracy and verbatim records with the use of whisper interpreting in the Danish courtroom. The avoidance of CI by interpreters derives from their reluctance to take notes, which is linked to a lack of formal training in CI with note-taking. Exercises in systematic note-taking should also benefit interpreters who primarily work in settings where short CI prevails.

Finally, educators and students have opportunities to examine ways to integrate research and practice, resulting in authentic classroom learning. There is a need to continue exploring the role of cognitive models of interpreting and of CI as part of the crucial skill set that interpreters require in order to work in a variety of settings, at all stages of their career.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the nature and process of CI by examining some of the cognitive models of CI. Such models are useful for both spoken and signed language interpreting, especially when examining what defines successful practices regarding the relationship between processing

time and the ability of the interpreter to realize and co-construct meaning based on the interaction and context that all participants bring to the communication event.

This chapter has also provided a historical overview of CI, its current practice in various settings, featuring note-taking and other attributes, and recent trends in the practice CI, driven by technology and expectations of the users of CI services. Lastly, the role of CI training in interpreter education for conference and non-conference settings was discussed, along with issues and challenges in meeting the needs and requirements of CI in the real world. Drawing on literature from spoken and signed language interpreting, we suggest that there is ample evidence upon which to create solid training opportunities for interpreters in the use of CI, including the use of cognitive models, note-taking strategies, decision-making schemas, and problem solving strategies, supporting by a solid foundation of text and discourse analysis skills.

### Further reading

Gile, D., 1995/2009. *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins

An excellent overview of the task of interpreting and the theories that support effective interpretation.

Jones, R., 2002. *Conference Interpreting Explained*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

A practical guide to how consecutive interpreting with systematic note-taking is performed in conference settings.

Russell, D., 2005. Consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. In: T. Janzen, ed. *Topics in Signed Language Interpreting*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. pp. 135–64.

A seminal study that demonstrated the effectiveness of consecutive interpreting with legal discourse and the importance of discourse events shaping the decision to use consecutive or simultaneous interpreting.

Russell, D., Shaw, R. and Malcolm, K., 2010. Effective strategies for teaching consecutive interpreting. *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, 2 (1).

A description of teaching approaches that lead to the use of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting in dialogic events.

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A seminal study that demonstrated interpreting as both a text-based act and an interaction event.

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