An empirical study on the use of note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting in the teaching of written translation

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I argue that the teaching of note-taking as used in consecutive interpreting can form an effective component of the teaching of written translation, specifically for understanding the clause relations within an English text and reproducing them in a Japanese translation. The present study aims to test the validity of this claim and to discuss its implications. The study includes an account of an experiment designed to investigate whether knowledge and experience of note-taking influences students' translation products and processes. The outcome of the experiment suggests that the use of note-taking can possibly have a positive effect on the teaching of translation, especially in relation to understanding and reproducing clause relations within the text.

KEYWORDS

note-taking, translation pedagogy, sensitisation, discourse analysis, clause relation, explicitation

1. Introduction

'The translation is correct on the sentence level, but it does not make sense on the text level.' In assessing translations by Japanese translation students from English into Japanese I find myself repeating this comment time and time again. The problem very often arises from a student's failure to explicitate cohesive relationships between sentences. The following is a typical case:

Text 1: Source Text (ST)

[1] Over the past decade, safeguarding financial stability has become an increasingly dominant objective in economic policymaking. [2] More than a dozen central banks and several financial institutions (including the IMF, the World Bank, and the Bank for International Settlements) issue periodic financial stability reports and have made the study and pursuit of financial stability an important part of their activities.

Text 2: Japanese Target Text (TT)

[1] 過去 10 年にわたり金融安定を図るセーフガードは、経済政策の主要目標としてその重要性を増してきている。[2] 各国中央銀行をはじめ国際通貨基金(IMF)、世界銀行、国際決算銀行のほか多くの金融機関は、金融安定に関する定期報告書を発行しており、金融安定を模索する研究はこうした機関の重要な業務活動の一環となっている。

(My data 2009)

The English ST (Text 1) consists of two sentences (sentences [1] and [2]) which are not linked together with a sentence connective. Yet, between the two sentences there exists a cohesive relation of, following Hoey's (1983) framework, Generalisation–Example (the detail of this analysis will be provided in the Section 3.1) and any competent English reader naturally infers this implicit cohesive relation between the sentences.

The Japanese translation (Text 2) does not use any sentence connective between the two sentences either. If the student who produced this translation is asked why that is, she would most likely say, 'Because there is no such expression in the source text'. And this is exactly where the problem arises.

It is one of the characteristics of English that junctive relationships between sentences do not have to be explicitly signalled whenever they occur (Malmkjær 2005:139), but the Japanese language prefers to use explicit conjunctive markers between chunks of information (Baker 1992:192). Thus, in Text 2, it would be preferable to use a strategy of explicitation of the relation between sentences [1] and [2] by inserting an explicit marker of this relationship (in the present study this kind of device will be called a 'cohesive marker'). Without a cohesive marker, Text 2 gives the impression of consisting of two loosely connected sentences, whose cohesive relation is not easily inferable by the TT readers. This kind of deficient text, or non-text, can be described as "a random collection of sentences" (Baker 1992:112). In order to avoid producing non-texts, translators need to give the TT some "features of organization" (*ibid.*), but those features are language-specific and the appropriate use of them is vital to make the TT "hang[s] together" (Hatim and Mason 1990:192). A failure to do so will cause TT readers to be perplexed and frustrated.

This issue is not unique to translation from English into Japanese. Similar issues have been reported regarding translation from French into English or German (Mason 1998), from Russian into Swedish (Englund Dimitrova 2005), from Persian into English (Baleghizadeh and Sharifi 2010), from Chinese into English and from Korean into English (Saville-Troike 2006). The fact that text-level signposting in translation is desirable is documented in the Chartered Institute of Linguists' *Moderator's Report* (2006) for the Diploma in Translation, which states that Diploma examination candidates are expected to demonstrate in the examination "the ability to select conjunctions that signal the intended relationship between text parts" (quoted from web page: accessed on 01/11/2009).

How can we, then, teach translation students about this issue efficiently? Teaching related theories is one possibility. Indeed, most translation students at the MA level in UK universities are taught theories such as discourse analysis. The teaching of theories is claimed by many translation scholars to be an effective and necessary element of teaching translation (e.g. Schäffner 2004, Mackenzie 2004, Rahab 2001). However, teaching theories does not guarantee that the students become sensitive enough to translation problems in real-life translational situations: having knowledge and using the knowledge are two different things. Gile (1995) suggests that theories are ideally taught after the students are made aware of, or sensitive to, translation problems, but this ideal situation does not always occur due to existing course structures. The fact that I have to repeat the same comment to my students, who have been taught theories of discourse analysis already, is probably one of the examples of such a reality. As Margaret Rogers says in a debate about text and genre analysis for translators (in Schäffner 2002: 65), "coordinating between the theory and the practice is a very common problem."

In this article I argue that hands-on exercises will form an effective method to sensitise students to the problem, and that note-taking for consecutive interpreting is a fitting tool to realise such sensitisation. To support my argument, I report on an empirical study which compared four students' translation behaviour and translation output before and after they had learnt and practised a note-taking technique. (The students' profiles will be provided in Section 4.)

2. What is note-taking?

Note-taking is a technique used by consecutive interpreters to assist their memory. Although many interpreting courses offer training in one note-taking technique or another, in the real professional world interpreters develop their own method of taking notes with regard to, for instance, what symbols and abbreviations to use, in which language to take notes, how much information to jot down, etc., so there is no one 'right' way of note-taking. In the present study, Gillies' "*Note-taking for consecutive interpreting: a short course*" (2005) was used. The crucial points of this well-organised, step-by-step course can be summarised as below:

> (1) A speech is a group of 'ideas' which are placed in a certain order connected by 'links'. 'Links' can be either explicit or implicit. The interpreter takes down the 'ideas' expressed in the speech (using symbols and abbreviations) on the right side of the notepad and the 'link' between the ideas on the left side margin (*ibid.*: 6, 56-68, 147)
> (2) It is important to analyse the ST *before* taking down any notes. Learning the note-taking technique is learning to analyse the ST. (*ibid.*: 8)
> (3) Note-taking is a mechanical activity which can be automatic. The technique must be learnt by doing. (I.: 7-9)

Following this method, Text 1 in the Introduction can be noted down as follows:
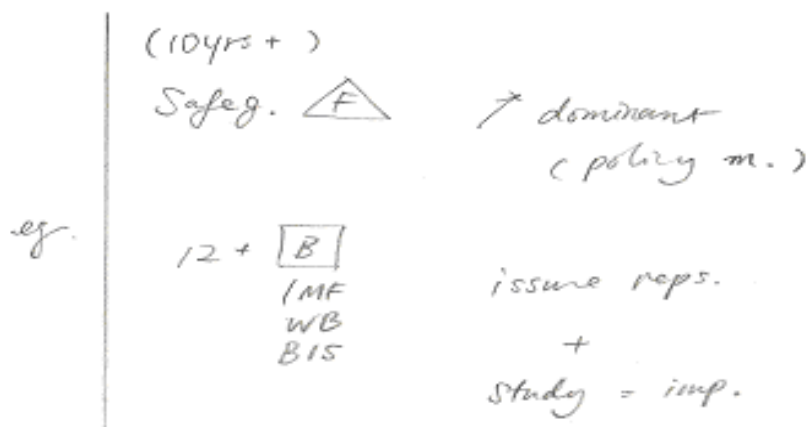

Figure 1. An example of note-taking of Text 1

In the example above, the propositions of the two sentences are noted down using abbreviations and symbols on the right side. We should note that the

cohesive relation (or what Gillies calls 'the link') connecting the two propositions realised by "for example" is noted down in the left margin. Gillies (I.:147) encourages this kind of explicitation of implicit links saying "[t]his clear notation will give you the choice" of rendering the link using, for example, correct intonation, or "*rendering the link explicitly* if you feel it is appropriate" (my emphasis).

Hatim and Mason (1990:206) point out the association between the text-level translation issue and consecutive interpreters' note-taking, saying "whereas in natural discourse the relations [between propositions] may not be explicitly signalled, they are inferable and have to be made explicit in note-taking." They also note that "[t]raining in this particular interpreting skill almost inevitably involves a form of discourse analysis and heightens awareness of inter-propositional coherence and the need to preserve it in translation" although they do not mention direct usage of note-taking in the training of written translation.

3. Why note-taking?

This section will discuss the possible causes of the kind of insufficient translations being discussed in the present study from three different angles: clause relation analysis, translation process and students' tendencies, followed by an argument of why practising note-taking can bring benefits to address these issues.

3.1 Analysis of clause relation

Building on the work by Eugene Winter (e.g. 1971), Hoey (1983:18) defines a clause relation as "the cognitive process whereby we interpret the meaning of a sentence or group of sentences in the light of its adjoining sentence or group of sentences."

Hoey maintains that in English the relationship between sentences can be signalled in three ways: by means of subordinators, conjuncts (also known as sentence conjunctions) and lexical signals. Amongst lexical signals, one of the most common phenomena in English is "repetition" accompanied by "replacement" (*ibid*.:25). This phenomenon is evident in Text 1: by repeating the phrase "financial stability" twice and replacing related

contents before and after the repeated phrase (e.g. safeguarding – financial stability; to issue reports on – financial stability; study and pursuit of – financial stability) the text is providing a cue for readers to interpret the relation between the two sentences, i.e. the second sentence is giving two examples of specific measures those institutions have been taking in order to fulfil the proposition presented in the first sentence (i.e. to safeguard financial stability), thus the relation of Generalisation–Example (as termed by Hoey 1983) becomes established. However, very possibly because no explicit linguistic marker such as a conjunctive phrase "for example" is present in the source text, the student who produced Text 2 did not notice this relation in Text 1 and as a result failed to include any linguistic marker in the Japanese translation to present the relation between the two sentences explicitly.

Now, let us go back to Gillies' point (1) about note-taking: A speech is a group of 'ideas' which are placed in a certain order connected by 'links'. 'Links' can be either explicit or implicit. Whether the 'link' in the ST is presented in a form of a conjunct (in that case, the translator will most certainly notice it and acknowledge its meaning) or a repetition of a lexical item (which may be less obvious to the translator), it is the translator's job to detect it. If the translator is required to physically write down the link on a notepad, this will most likely ensure that the translator be constantly alert to detecting such links in the ST. In this way, note-taking may benefit the translator in understanding and translating the clause relations within the ST.

3.2 Process of translation

Gile (1995) presents a Sequential Model of Translation as an ideal process model of translation to be used in a pedagogical situation. The model divides the translation process into two parts: 'the comprehension phase' and 'the reformulation phase.' In processing a unit of translation, the translator initially establishes a "meaning hypothesis" (*ibid.*:103) for the unit and checks it for plausibility (i.e. if the hypothesised translation is acceptable or not), using her knowledge of the source language, her world knowledge, external information etc. If this meaning hypothesis for the translation unit is not plausible, she tries the same process with a different meaning hypothesis. This process will be repeated until a meaning hypothesis passes

the plausibility test and only then does the translator (ideally) move on to the reformulation phase.

Now, let us remind ourselves of Gillies' point (2): It is important to analyse the ST *before* taking down any notes. Learning the note-taking technique is learning to analyse the ST.

Though Gile and Gillie use different terms ("comprehension" and "analysis" respectively), they are fundamentally emphasising the same point, i.e. the translator has to understand the ST completely before starting to translate. Now, by introducing note-taking, this requirement may be implemented more rigorously and on a lager unit of the text (i.e. on a text level rather than on a sentence or word level) because without understanding the ST, and most importantly the clause relations of the text, completely, it is impossible to note down 'ideas' and 'links' on a notepad. In other words, the requirement of physically writing down the ideas and links will most likely encourage the translator to implement Gile's Sequential Model and this may become another strong benefit note-taking can bring to translation training.

3.3 Translation students' undesirable tendencies

In her empirical study with translation students with regard to translation of unique items of the target language, Kujamäki (2004) reports three tendencies her translation students reveal: an inclination to prefer practical work over theory; overconfidence in their TT competence; and adherence to a concept of translation on the word or, at best, the sentence level rather than on the text level. Kujamäki alleges that the students' insufficient translations in relation to translation of unique items partly stem from those tendencies.

Interestingly, those tendencies all seem to apply to the Japanese students I have observed in my own teaching, especially when they fail to explicitate clause relations of the ST in their translations, and in this regard, the use of note-taking may alleviate those tendencies. For the first tendency (aversion to theory), the automated nature of note-taking may compensate for the lack of understanding of relevant theories. In other words, if students resist theories, it may be a wise choice to let them learn in a more hands-on way instead. For the second tendency (overconfidence of their TT competence), the requirement of jotting down links on the notepad and the fact that those

links may be implicit in the ST may keep the translator alert in detecting all cohesive signs in the ST text, which will subsequently prevent the translator from becoming overconfident with the quality of their TT . And for the third tendency (adherence to word- or sentence-level translation), the same argument discussed in the previous section of the Sequential Model applies, which I will not repeat here.

4. The study

An experiment was carried out with four Japanese MA students (Subjects A, B, C and D) studying at two different UK universities. Two of them (Subjects C and D) were, at the time of the experiment, studying translation, one (Subject B) interpreting and one (Subject A) bi-lingual education. They all had some prior professional translation experience. No subjects except Subject B knew about note-taking before the experiment. The experiment was designed to achieve the following three objectives.

Objective 1: To investigate if the subject uses an explicit cohesive marker more frequently to illustrate clause relations in the text after a practice session of note-taking compared to before the session.

Objective 2: If the subject uses a cohesive marker between sentences, to establish at what stage of the translation process she generates the marker.

Objective 3: To investigate if the subject's perceptions about translation processes change before and after learning and practising note-taking.

The tasks

The experiment consisted of four stages: translation of Text A-1 and A-2; a practice session of note-taking; translation of Texts B-1 and B-2 and a post-study interview.

Task 1. Translation of Text A-1 and A-2

The subjects were asked to translate Text A-1 and A-2 on a PC (for the texts, see Appendix). The brief was that the texts would be used for a general magazine targeting educated readers in Japan. A piece of screen recorder software called BB Flashback Express was run behind the word-processing software in order to record movements on the screen (e.g. what the subject was typing, deleting, etc.). The screen recorder software also

video-recorded the subject's behaviour and their voice during the experiment. The subjects were asked to read the ST and TT out loud for comprehension and revision so that the software could record which part of the texts the subject was reading at specific moments. (This worked as a substitute for the use of eye-tracking equipment.)

All the source texts in this study were created using newspaper and magazine articles, but were purposely modified so that they did not include unnecessarily difficult vocabulary. A glossary for relatively difficult words was also provided and the subjects were allowed to ask the investigator the meaning of any unknown words. This was not only because the purpose of the experiment was not to observe the subjects' lexical knowledge, but also because unnecessarily difficult texts would create the risk of the subjects becoming easily frustrated and tired by spending a great deal of effort on ST processing alone (Kujamäki 2004).

Text A-1 consisted of three sentences S1, S2 and S3, which were linked in the following cohesive structure according to the categorisation by Hoey (1983):

[S1] – Matching-Contrast – [S2] – Cause-Consequence – [S3].

Text A-2 consisted of four sentences S1, S2, S3 and S4. S1 and S2 were linked with a clause relation as below:

[S1] – Generalisation-Example – [S2]

Subjects' translations and translation processes with regard to those three clause relations were observed. In Text A-2, the section comprising S3 and S4 plays the role of indicating the development of the whole text, but there are no implicit cohesive markers which are particularly needed to be explicitated in the Japanese translation so the clause relations between S2-S3 and S3-S4 were not included as observational points. S3 and S4 were, however, included in Text A-2 because without those two sentences the text would become a mere collection of just two sentences, which would not provide much context to the text, consequently making it more difficult for the subject to translate. Admittedly, the texts of the test material are short, giving only a small number of observational points, but the argument of how

long the text pieces should be is a difficult matter. Investigating a topic related to discourse structure means that the test materials should not be very short. A longer text, however, would increase the time necessary for the experiment as well as the fatigue effects on the subject's performance. We also need to take into consideration that the experiment includes a note-taking practice session too. To strike a balance between those points, Texts A-1 and A-2 were kept relatively short while including a minimum observational points necessary for the study.

Task 2.   A practice session of note-taking for consecutive interpreting
First, the subjects received a short lecture from the investigator on the note-taking technique for consecutive interpreting following Gillies (2005), specially focusing on Gillies point (1) i.e. be ware of the 'ideas' and 'links' of the ST and write them down. Due to time constraints, what the lecture provided had to be a cut-down version of interpreters' note-taking, so it concentrated on what Gillies (2005:56) emphasises, even manifestly stating, "A speech is all about two things: the ideas and the links between them." The subjects were also given a list of symbols to use for note-taking (e.g. ⓑ for 'but', ∵ for 'because', etc.). The list was composed using examples from Gillies (2005) and Pinkerton and Shinoda (2005).
Second, the subjects were given a notepad and a pen and asked to take notes as the investigator gave them practice texts aurally. These texts consisted of two clauses with an explicit link (often in the form of a conjunction) between them, for example:

> I won't be able to go on the trip because I have to work on that day.

The subjects heard each text three times: first to understand the meaning; second to take notes; and finally to check and correct. The subjects were then prompted to translate the text orally into Japanese using the notes. They were also encouraged to explicitly state the link between the sentences.
After practising with nine texts, the practice moved on to texts which contained no link words between the sentences, for example:

> I won't be able to go on the trip. I have to work on that day.

Because, this time, the texts did not include an explicit cohesive device

between the sentences, the subjects were encouraged to think what kind of link really existed between the sentences and to write it down on the notepad using a symbol. (In the example above, there is an implicit clause relation of Cause-Consequence between the sentences.). Once a note had been taken, the subjects were prompted to translate the text orally into Japanese using the notes whereby they were encouraged to state the clause relation between the sentences explicitly even though there was no linguistic marker representing such relation in the ST. A total of seven texts were used in this section of the practice.

This section of the study concentrated on one specific aspect of note-taking using relatively simple one-line sentences and a gentle three-stage process (understand, take notes, and check and correct). If the subjects struggled, the investigator helped them with their specific problem. In this way, the practice session was designed in such a way as to enable the subjects to 'run in' the system of note-taking without feeling under pressure. The purpose of this stage was to *sensitise* them to the notion that a text consists of 'ideas' and 'links,' but not to replicate a real interpreting situation such as creating the challenge of interpreting a long sentence at one go.

Task 3. Translation of Text B-1 and B-2
The set-up was the same as with the translation of Text A-1 and A-2.
The subjects were given Texts B-1 and B-2 to translate, which had the same cohesive structure as Text A-1 and A-2 respectively (for the texts, see Appendix).

Task 4. Interview
A retrospective interview was carried out with each subject. They were asked   the following three questions.

(1) What did you think about note-taking? Was it difficult/easy? Why?
(2) Do you think your way of translating changed after the note-taking practice compared to before? If 'yes', why do you think this is?
(3) Do you think today's note-taking exercise is going to be useful for your translation work/study in the future?

5.　Findings

5.1 Analysis of translation

The translated texts were investigated to see whether a cohesive marker existed or not at the three points in the text. Cohesive markers at those three points were coded as α (between S1 and S2 in Text A-1 and B-1), β (between S2 and S3 in Text A-1 and B-1) and γ (between S1 and S2 in Text A-2 and B-2). Aside from obvious conjunctive words such as *soshite* 'and' or *shikashi* 'but', more subtle markers were also recognised as cohesive markers such as *noda* (a sentence-ending expression which has a connotative meaning of 'because') and its conjugated forms.

Figure 2 below indicates the presence of a cohesive marker with '✓" and non-presence with '✕'. The former is awarded a score of one, and the latter a score of zero. If a cohesive marker was used but had a different meaning from the one originally intended in the ST, the symbol '△' is entered in the table and a score of 0.5 is given. It should be noted, however, that this scoring system is adopted simply for the purpose of numerically illustrating the presence or non-presence of cohesive markers in the translations, and that it does not intend to demonstrate a prescriptive judgement about the quality of translations produced by the subjects.

	Marker α				Marker β				Marker γ				Score
Subject	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	
Before the practice session	✕	✕	✕	✕	✓	✓	✕	✕	✓	✓	△	✕	4.5
After the practice session	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	△	✓	✓	✓	✓	11.5

Figure 2. Use of cohesive markers

Figure 2 demonstrates that, after the note-taking practice session, all four subjects generated an explicit cohesive marker at all three instances in the texts, producing a score of 11.5 out of 12 (or 96% of the possible full score). This compares to 4.5 (or 38% of the full score) before the practice session. The outcome reveals that all subjects used the strategy of explicitation of

clause relations more frequently (or in this case, always) after learning and practising note-taking.

It should probably be emphasised here again that Japanese is a language which prefers to use explicit cohesive markers between chunks of information (Baker 1992:192). In addition, the cohesive markers employed by the subjects after the note-taking practice session were not all in the form of a conjunction: six instances out of all twelve were presented in the form of a conjunction and others in alternative forms such as *noda* (a sentence-ending expression which has a connotative meaning of 'because') or *nado* (a word suffixed to a noun roughly meaning 'etc.' which implies that the listed items present examples of the previous statement). It is true, as Mason (1998) rightly warns in the cases of French-into-English translation, that a systematic use of conjunctions could lead to a compromise in the stylistic quality, but the translations presented in this experiment revealed that this was not the case.

5.2 Changes in the process of cohesive marker generation before and after the note-taking practice

The audio, visual and screen-movement data were analysed to find out whether the cohesive markers were generated in the translation generation stage or in the revision stage.
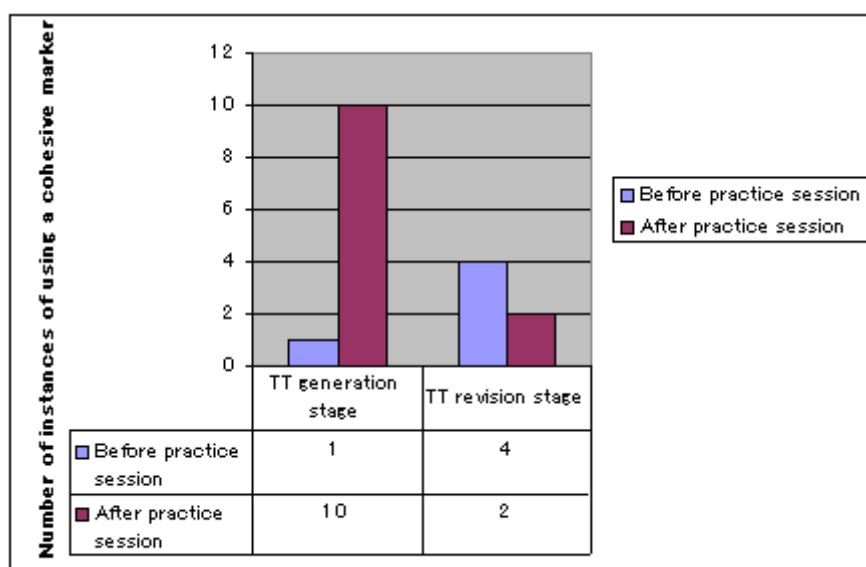

Figure 3. Changes in the use of cohesive markers

The data shows that, before the note-taking practice session, out of the five instances where the subjects explicitated a cohesive marker in the TT, four instances occurred at the TT revision stage while only one instance happened at the TT generation stage. In contrast, after they practised note-taking, the number of such instances increased to twelve between them, of which those that occurred at the TT generation stage increased to ten while those that occurred at the revision stage decreased to just two.

Although the number of samples is admittedly small, the outcome may suggest that the note-taking practice session for consecutive interpreting did influence the way the subjects generated cohesive markers, i.e. the subjects tended to generate cohesive markers more at a translation generation stage rather than at a revision stage. In other words, the subjects detected and understood the discourse structure of the ST more quickly, or they followed Gile's Sequential Model more rigorously, after the note-taking practice session.

5.3 Changes in the subjects' perception of the translation processes

The retrospective interviews revealed that the note-taking practice seemed to have made the subjects aware of the possible benefits of note-taking and, as a result, they seem to have used the learning outcome in the process of their written translations consciously. Those benefits can be separated into five categories: awareness, speed, confidence, visibility, and quality control. To the first question about the difficulty of note-taking, three subjects answered that the note-taking practice was difficult in one way or another.

> It was difficult to understand the logical relations (between the sentences). (Subject A)
> It is difficult until you get used to it. (Subject C)
> Writing down the messages using symbols and codes was difficult. (Subject D)

This is precisely what Gillies point (3) emphasises, which can be overcome only by repeated practice. Only Subject B thought it was relatively easy probably because she is an interpreting student, has received note-taking training before, and has some experience as a consecutive interpreter. However, despite their comments, all the subjects handled the practice

session with no major difficulties, having completed it in between 20 to 30 minutes. This may suggest that becoming fluent at note-taking is a relatively easy task for students with a fairly high competence in translation, which may provide good justification for using note-taking in written-translation training.

With regard to the second question about their translation process, the responses can be divided into the translators' operational issues and attitudinal issues.

The operational issues can be summarised by the concepts of 'speed' and 'awareness.'

An increase in speed was remarked on by Subject C.

> … after practising note-taking, I could probably notice the links between sentences more quickly.

A notion of awareness was mentioned by all subjects.

> … in the 2nd translation, I looked for links more consciously. (Subject A)
> … because the concept of links was the main issue (of the note-taking practice session), my attention was drawn to that issue while I was translating. (Subject B)
> In translating Text B-1 and B-2, because we had talked a lot about links beforehand, I kept thinking that there might be hidden meanings between sentences and I kept looking for them. (Subject D)

Subject C clearly noticed that understanding clause relations in the text became easier after the practice and used the word 'flow' to mean the logical development of the text.

> … it was easier to understand the links (between the sentences) or the flow of the texts after the practice.

These comments may demonstrate that the subjects were more aware of the concept of links between ideas in the text after the practice session and that, in turn, facilitated the comprehension phase.

On the issues of attitude, the concept of 'confidence' surfaced in the comments of Subject B:

> I was more confident about adding linking words to my translation. It made me less worried about going away from the source text.

On the third question about the usefulness of the note-taking skill in their translational study/work, all subjects expressed positive views. Their responses covered four distinct points.
First, Subject C commented on the visibility of the text:

> … by using symbols when noting down words such as 'because' etc., the links (within the text) become more visible.

She also repeated the word 'flow':

> … you will be able see the flow of the story more clearly.

Subject C was obviously connecting the visibility of the symbols on the notepad with the understanding of the logical structure of the ST, and she felt the strong effect it had on the cognitive process of her translation. In translating a text, especially a complicated one, there is the danger of it becoming the laborious task of translating word after word. The translator can very easily get swamped by the words, loosing sight of the actual structure of the whole text. The comments by Subject C may suggest a possibility that using symbols in the process of understanding a text can give a fresh and positive visual stimulus to the translator's cognitive process.
Second, Subject B pointed out that the note-taking skill would help her speed up her translation processes:

> …you will be able to add those [linking] words in the originating stage of the translation, which will then shorten the editing time later.

This comment indicates that Subject B perceives the translation process as a two-stage operation—the generation of a text and the revision of it—and she recognised the benefit of note-taking to shorten the latter process by executing the former correctly, thus speeding up the whole operation.
Third, the issue of confidence was repeated in the answers. For example, Subject B said that she became 'more confident about adding linking words

to [her] translation' and 'less worried about going away from the source text' after the note-taking practice session.

Fourth, Subject D said that the note-taking skill would be useful in that it would make the translators consciously check their translations:

> … if you check consciously that you have not forgotten to insert a link [between ideas] anywhere, that would make a difference.

In other words, the note-taking practice session may prompt a more rigorous quality control procedure in the translation process, or in Gile's (1995) terms, more rigorous 'plausibility tests' in their translation processes. In addition, since these plausibility tests will be performed with regard to the clause relations between sentences, the translator's concept of a 'source translation unit' is very likely to change from a sentence to a unit larger than a sentence, i.e. a text. If this is realised, it would solve one of the points Kujamäki (2004) presented as a problematic tendency of translation students.

6. Conclusion

The present study aimed to test my claim that note-taking as used in consecutive interpreting can be effectively used as a teaching tool of text-level problems in written translation, specifically to teach the strategy of explicitation of cohesive markers in English-into-Japanese translation. The outcome of product- and process-based studies indicated that the claim may possibly be verified. In addition, the post-study interviews provided a degree of confirmation that the method can have a positive effect on the translators' cognition and translational behaviours. The interview protocols suggested that the issues such as the difficulty in understanding discourse structure in the ST, the inability of applying related theories to practice, and students' overconfidence in their target language use may all be addressed by using the note-taking technique.

Admittedly, the present study has its limitations. First, the sample size is small. This is mainly because the study was originally carried out as an MA dissertation project with no external resources within a limited time scale. The outcome presented in this report can, therefore, be seen as work in

progress and gathering more samples will make the study more robust. Conducting the study in different language combinations will also be a way to make the study stronger. Second, two of the four subjects in this study were my students who I supervised with their translation projects. This relationship may have affected the outcome, especially the interview results.

Despite those limitations, it may be safe to say that the outcome of the study can possibly validate my claim to a promising degree. In addition, from my experience of teaching translation and working as a professional translator, I have a strong conviction that learning note-taking has some other benefits too, which were not covered directly in the study, but are probably worth mentioning here. First, the hands-on nature of the practice (in this case, taking notes) can give translation students a sense of satisfaction about their translation training. Students tend to become frustrated and bored if their learning is provided only in a form of abstract theories. Learning the otherwise complicated topic of discourse analysis through the hands-on experience of note-taking can possibly be very effective not only in sensitising the students to translation problems but also in giving them a sense of satisfaction about the learning process. Feeling satisfied will not necessarily result in an improvement in translation quality, but it is likely to enhance students' morale and, as a result, improve their attitude towards translation training on the whole.

Second, in the experiment in this study the subjects were asked to produce the translation orally although the whole method was presented as a way of teaching written translation. This mixture of modalities should not be understood as a drawback. Some scholars value the power of orality in translation training, such as Pym (2006), who acknowledges the great value of providing oral work prior to training in written translation. Orality can act as a strong support for written translation training, not an unwelcome addition.

Third, in the real professional environment, translators are often asked to work as an interpreter too. Being trained in note-taking is, therefore, not a waste of time for translators, but can become a very useful asset, which broadens their future job opportunities.

The fact that I can present those (at least) three extra benefits, though not empirically tested, may suggest that note-taking practice can potentially become a powerful training instrument with manifold benefits for future translators. The present study examined its effect on one specific aspect, but it may be worthwhile to further investigate more possible applications of note-taking in other aspects of translator training.

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APPENDIX

Texts used in the study (Numbering is added to each sentence here for convenience, but the subject's texts did not include these numberings.)

Text A-1

[S1]The recent recovery in the Japanese economy has helped put a smile back the faces of the speculators. [S2]"Too big a smile," some economists would say. [S3]There may have been hikes in share prices, but it does not mean that the real economy is actually recovering.

Text A-2

[S1]Religion is a mighty force which could bring down a most stable political regime: [S2]the Iranian government collapsed in 1979. [S3]What can we learn from this kind of historical events? [S4]The answer may lie in politicians' diaries.

Text B-1

[S1]Previous financial crises reined in moral hazard by inflicting grievous losses on key investors. [S2]The latest crisis was different – [S3]it showed that the US government would spend trillions of dollars to sustain the biggest financial groups.

Text B-2

[S1]Technological advancements have realised a variety of alternative sources of electricity: [S2]wind power, wave power, solar power and tidal power. [S3]How are these new types of electricity sources going to change our lifestyle? [S4]Here is a possible scenario.

Biography

Akiko Sakamoto is a professional translator working in the fields of finance and subtitling. She also works as a language supervisor at MA Applied Translation Studies, London Metropolitan University. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Leicester. Her research is primarily concerned with translation theories and translation pedagogy.

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