

What Is Consecutive Interpretation?

Consecutive interpretation can be regarded as the classic form of interpreting, with the discourse being interpreted into the desired language as soon as the speaker has concluded, or at the end of passages within the speech, i.e. consecutively. When interpreting consecutively, interpreters use a system of abbreviations and symbols to take detailed notes during the speech. These systems are developed over time through a combination of training and experience, making for as many unique note-taking systems as there are individual interpreters.

The interpreting thus lasts approximately as long as the original speech, quite possibly doubling the length of the proceedings. As a result, consecutive interpreting has gradually given way to simultaneous interpreting.

Benefits:

- No simultaneous interpreting equipment required.
- Usually, there is only one interpreter.

Drawbacks:

- Such interpreting doubles the time required, and the scheduled program should take this into account.

Fields of use:

- After-dinner speeches.
- Addresses on festive occasions.
- Events of political significance (state visits).