Filozofická
fakulta
Faculty
of Arts

Jihočeská univerzita
v Českých Budějovicích
University of South Bohemia
in České Budějovice

# POSUDEK VEDOUCÍHO BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)**

Název práce: **"Lost in Interpretation" – Redundancy and forward inferencing in simultaneous interpreting (SI)**

Autorka práce: **Nela Kratochvílová**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Helena Lohrová, Ph.D.**

Oponent bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Petr Kos, Ph.D.**

## Short characteristics of the thesis

The aim of the thesis is to examine the process of simultaneous interpreting (SI) and the challenges this presents to interpreters. A fundamental starting point is the work of Chernov and his theories on simultaneous interpreting; in particular, his concept of redundancy as a key factor in SI comprehension as well as his emphasis on the psychological process of 'probability' anticipation (forward inferencing). The thesis also examines the role omissions and inclusions play in SI and the impact these may have on the communication at hand.

The thesis is structured into eight chapters, including Introduction (Ch 1) and Conclusion (Ch 8), and chapters on Methodology (Ch 2) and Data (Ch 3). The Methodology and Data chapters set out the design and execution of the author's original research, which she undertook in order to collect authentic examples of theory in practice. Specifically, the author conducted a controlled experiment with three practising interpreters. The purpose of the experiment was to ascertain which strategies the interpreters employ when interpreting. A further subset of the enquiry was to find out how the interpreters deal with SI when they have prior understanding of the speaker and the context. This was subsequently compared to that when the interpreting task is completely unfamiliar to the interpreter. Chapters 4 to 7 then drawing on Chernov's theories in more detail and introduce and discuss key issues related to the process of SI; they also develop the analytical part of the author's work.

## Overall assessment

The overall structure of the thesis is clear and generally logical and individual chapters have their justification in the development of the work. The initial chapters undertake a literature review of the work of Chernov and seek to explain these in detail. To underpin this, the thesis draws on the author's original research and data to illustrate real life examples of theory in practice. These help to build an understanding of her original research and to present and discuss Chernov's theories as the body of the thesis develops. This is performed in a systematic manner.

The practical analysis is based on transcripts produced by the author herself, and I believe they are of high quality. The source data were based on a controlled experiment where three interpreters were asked to interpret two short speeches. In one speech they had no prior awareness of the speech maker or the topic of the talk and in the second

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additional information was provided in advance creating the opportunity for the interpreters to better prepare. Each interpreter was also interviewed as part of a structured interview process to elicit additional information on their experiences and thoughts of SI.

This enabled the data to be analysed in relation to Chernov's theories and to also act as a comparator of the performance of the three interpreters. It is obvious that the author has taken care in reproducing what has been actually said – which has been supported through the means of interlinear translation – and has also considered the unfolding of the interpreted text in time. This assisted greatly in exploring and discussing the ideas of redundancy, forward inferencing, omissions and inclusions. The opportunity was also taken to explore a number of other factors which impact on SI to create a more rounded picture of the environment in which simultaneous interpreters operate.

While I do have some reservations about the actual design of the experiment (specifically, my major concern was that both speeches were read to each interpreter as opposed to being played to them in an audio playback format; and the interpreters were in fact interpreting rather consecutively than simultaneously) and I would perhaps like to see some of the analyses and their presentation more refined, I consider this bachelor's thesis a major achievement on part of the candidate. The work is original, overall coherent, offering conclusions that are worth reading.

I especially value the candidate's personal motivation to pursue research in the field of her interest despite the fact that research topic selected was entirely new to her and never constituted part of her studies. The author herself took the initiative to identify relevant materials, reviewed these critically, designed her own experiment, made substantial effort to find research subjects, transcribed her data and undertook her own analysis. Throughout this process she worked independently, was responsive to critique, and exhibited an always positive attitude and considerable potential to complete her work to a good standard (with the final draft consisting of 76 pages excluding the appendices, thus substantially exceeding the minimum requirement for a bachelor's thesis). It is for these reasons I believe the candidate has demonstrated her readiness for the next phase of her studies and I would like to award her grade "excellent" (výborně). I do recommend the bachelor's thesis for defence.

Areas for discussion:

1) How do you think the fact that you read the speeches to the interpreters, rather than having played them from the audio, might have biased the data obtained? Having an opportunity to undertake the study again, how would you refine the experiment design?

2) What do you consider your major learning experience and how do you plan to capitalise on that in the future?

**Práci doporučuji k obhajobě.**

Navrhovaná klasifikace:     **výborně**

_04. 06. 2018_
Datum

Podpis