

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA**

**FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES**

Registration number: 106007/B/2023/36122167769326596

**SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING IN THE LIGHT OF  
EVENTS OF 21. CENTURY**

**Bachelor thesis**

**2023**

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**SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING IN THE LIGHT OF  
EVENTS OF 21. CENTURY**

**Bachelor thesis**

**Study programme:** Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication

**Field of study:** Philology

**Consultation centre:** Department of Linguistics and Translatology

**Thesis supervisor:** Mgr. Dominika Vargová, PhD.

**Bratislava 2023**

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## Abstrakt

LUKÁČOVÁ, Zuzana: Simultaneous interpreting in the light of events of 21. century. Bakalárska práca. Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislave. Fakulta aplikovaných jazykov; Katedra jazykovedy a translatológie. Vedúci záverečnej práce: Mgr. Dominika Vargová, PhD. Stupeň odbornej kvalifikácie: Bakalár. Bratislava: FAJ, 2023, 30 s.

V bakalárskej práci s názvom Simultaneous interpreting in the light of events of 21. century (Simultánne tlmočenie vo svetle udalostí 21. storočia) sme sa zaoberali výzvami, ktorým museli simultánni tlmočníci v posledných rokoch čeliť a ich dopad na túto profesiu. Práca pozostáva zo štyroch kapitol. Prvá kapitola sa zaoberá základnými poznatkami o tlmočnickom procese, úlohou tlmočníka a tlmočnickými nástrojmi. Druhá kapitola zachytáva zmeny, ktoré v 21. storočí ovplyvnili simultánne tlmočenie. V poslednej kapitole sme analyzovali ako sa kompetencie tlmočníka v priebehu pandémie covidu-19 a vojny na Ukrajine zmenili. Cieľom nášho výskumu bolo vypracovať návrh kompetenčného profilu simultánneho tlmočníka, ktorý bude zodpovedať potrebám súčasnej doby.

**Kľúčové slová:** simultánne tlmočenie, tlmočnicke kompetencie, humanitárna kríza, technologický pokrok, covid-19, výučba tlmočenia

## **Abstract**

LUKÁČOVÁ, Zuzana: Simultaneous interpreting in the light of events of 21. century. Bachelor thesis. University of Economics in Bratislava. Faculty of Applied Languages; Department of Linguistics and Translation. Supervisor: Mgr. Dominika Vargová, PhD. Degree of qualification: Bachelor. Bratislava: FAJ, 2023, 30 s.

In the bachelor thesis entitled Simultaneous interpreting in the light of events of 21. century, we dealt with the challenges that simultaneous interpreters have had to face in recent years and their impact on the profession. The thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter depicts general knowledge of the interpreting process, interpreter's role and interpreting tools. The second chapter captures the changes that have affected simultaneous interpreting in the 21. century. In the last chapter, we analysed how the interpreter's competences have changed in the course of the covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. The aim of our research was to develop a proposal for a competency profile of a simultaneous interpreter that would meet the needs of the present time.

**Key words:** simultaneous interpreting, interpreter's competence, humanitarian crisis, technological development, covid-19, teaching interpreting

**Declaration**

I hereby affirm that this thesis represents my own original research that I have referenced all appropriate source materials.

Bratislava, 12.5. 2023 .....

*(student's signature)*

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank my parents for their valuable advice, ideas and support at a time when I needed it most while writing this bachelor thesis. I would also like to thank my thesis supervisor Mgr. Dominika Vargová, PhD. for her help and professional guidance.

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## **Introduction**

Simultaneous interpreting is a very demanding process that has proven to be indispensable, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is important to observe the interpreting process and its development over the years in order to track an overall evolution of the profession. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought many innovations that have gradually been applied to the field of professional interpreting and are markedly different from its beginnings. Although overall demand has been constantly changing and evolving over the past few years, the situation has especially changed even more in the year 2020.

The aim of the thesis is to analyse the impact of the technological progress, the humanitarian crisis and the covid-19 pandemic on the work of a simultaneous interpreter. It is divided into theoretical and research part and consist of four chapters. In the first chapter we discussed in general some familiar terms such as interpreting. This part also includes the types of interpreting, interpreters role and special tools frequently used in the process. Second chapter focuses more concretely on the simultaneous interpreting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – events that shifted the form of simultaneous interpreting and how it reflected on the interpreters.

From the third up to fourth chapter stretches practical research part of our thesis. Aside from the elaboration on the methodology we have then concentrated on the remote and in-person necessary competences of simultaneous interpreter. We collected relevant foreign literature and in contrast with the work of Slovak author Koželová, who worked with several competence models, we abstracted the competencies that we think are the most important for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We wanted to find out whether are the pre-covid competences actual and applicable even after the pandemic and war in Ukraine or if they should be enriched with special competences or new soft skills.

# 1 Current situation in Slovakia and abroad

To better understand the bigger picture of the topic presented, we must firstly observe the information gathered in the domestic or foreign professional literature. Authors focusing on the given field of study tend to agree upon each other definitions concerning the language interpreting. In relation to the practical part of the thesis, their theoretical contribution, including general information about the profession, remains mainly in the introductory chapters.

First and foremost, it is essential to deduct information from the work of Keníž, *Úvod do komunikačnej teórie tlmočenia* (1980), where he stated that social communication is a prerequisite for the existence of society, and this also applies at the international level. He sees the interpreting process as a bilingual activity, further describing it as the transmission of information through human speech.

Russian translator Alexander Kozin adds that *"among many forms of interlingual communication, face-to-face communication stands out as the most effective tool of building an immediate bridge between different language communities."* (Kozin, 2018, p. 2) Non-verbal cues including body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions are used in communication in addition to verbal cues. These non-verbal cues offer crucial context information that improves comprehension of the material being communicated. Face-to-face communication also gives people the chance to immediately clear up any misunderstandings or request additional clarity. This fast feedback loop contributes to a decrease in ambiguity and an increase in communication accuracy.

In order to create the so-called communication link in the communication situation, which is the basic unit of social communication, one more member of this communication chain is needed, namely the mediator, who presents himself with the knowledge of both occurring codes and through whom the communication takes place (translated from Slovak, Keníž, 1980, p. 32).

Franz Pöchhacker points out, that we can conceive of interpreting as a conceptual spectrum extending from international (conference) to intra-social (community) interpreting (2004, p. 16).

We are familiar with different bilingual mediators, i.e. interpreters. This demonstrates the versatility of interpreters' work, which ranges from direct communication between two parties (such as business representatives) to accompanying a group of foreign

visitors (such as tourists, etc.) to official social events (such as international meetings and other high-level circumstances) at the political level (political speeches, conferences, etc.).

*"Interpretation can be defined in a nutshell as conveying understanding. Its usefulness stems from the fact that a speaker's meaning is best expressed in his or her native tongue but is best understood in the languages of the listeners."*

(Nolan, 2005, p. 2)

Nolan further proceeds to explain the difference between interpretation and translation stating that translator studies written material in one language and reproduces it in written form in another language. An interpreter listens to a spoken message in the source language and renders it orally, either in consecutive or simultaneous manner (2005, p. 2).

On the other hand, Slovak author Müglová also dealt with overview of the history of translating and interpreting and the nature of these two activities. She provided four main differences between interpreting and translation – realization, personalities of interpreter and translator, conditions in proceedings and psycholinguistics, and work conditions (translated from Slovak, Müglová, 2009).

Both authors highlighted the importance of the preparation phase in interpreting process. Nolan mentioned reasons why an interpreter should gain familiarity with the subject matter that is about to be discussed at an upcoming assignment and presented reasonings why an interpreter should achieve public speaking skills through training.

## **1.1 Interpreting**

Interpreting as an activity and process arose long time ago. In the course of time, it served a great number of purposes and evolved steadily until it has reached the form we know today. As the interpreting profession rapidly developed, there was a need for a theoretical approach to explain its different aspects. However, the emergence of such an approach was delayed and came much later than the practice of interpreting itself. Theoretical research in this field has had the task to establish certain rules that would not only guide education but would also facilitate its functioning and improvement.

Majority of the scholars dealing with the process of language interpreting agree on the fact that this field is relatively new, with its origins dating back to the 1950s. At that time, various publications were authored by professional interpreters and educators,

primarily serving as practical and instructional guides for students. These resources primarily concentrated on the consecutive mode of interpreting, which emerged earlier due to its reliance on the sequence of events.

*"The source language text is presented only once and thus cannot be reviewed or replayed, and the target language text is produced under time pressure, with little chance for correction and revision."* (Pöchhäcker, 2004, p. 10) In other words interpreting is a translational activity that involves transfer of message from one language to another by generating a single target-language output after being exposed to source language expression just once.

Modes of interpreting evolved gradually, which were conditioned by the more occurring need to facilitate communication between people representing different speech communities. The requirements on the interpreters, working conditions and interpreting tools have considerably changed and improved in the course of time. To a large extent it is due to the rapid development of technologies that were introduced mainly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to the effort of performing a high quality interpreting and to the active attitude of interpreters and organizations that have constantly tried to strengthen the status of the interpreter. Despite the various challenges and transformations within the field, two primary forms of interpreting - consecutive and simultaneous – have remained prominent and continue to be widely utilized.

During the process of consecutive mode of interpretation, interpreter listens to the speaker before translating what they have to say into the target language. After the speaker pauses or finishes speaking, the interpreter reads their own notes that he or she has written while listening to the speaker and then offers a translation of the message. Strong listening, memory, and note-taking abilities are necessary for this type of interpretation.

Since both consecutive and simultaneous facilitate communication between the sender and the recipient representing various speech communities by translating a message from the source language into the target language, one can argue that the two activities are essentially interchangeable. However, that is not true.

Unlike consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting takes place almost at the same time as speaker's speech meaning that simultaneous interpreter keeps pace with the speaker throughout the whole speech. This method of interpretation has the benefit of taking less time, which makes it possible to communicate almost without any speech interruptions. Simultaneous interpreting is typically used in case when there is a large audience or where time is of the essence, such as at international conferences, negotiations, or other events

where multiple languages are spoken. Simultaneous interpreting is given a greater priority in situations where the speaker is talking continuously, such as a lecture or presentation, as it allows the audience to listen to the speaker in real time without the need for breaks for interpretation. On the contrary, this kind of interpreting is generally not used in one-on-one conversations or small group discussions, as it can be disruptive and may not provide the same level of accuracy as other modes of interpretation. In these situations, it is more appropriate to use consecutive interpreting, where interpreter narrates after the speaker has finished speaking. Eventually, the choice of interpretation mode depends on the specific needs and preferences of the parties involved, as well as the nature and purpose of the event or communication.

Daniela Müglová depicted concrete genres of interpreting that have in the 21<sup>st</sup> century quickly gained ground.

- Conference interpreting – According to Müglová it is often an umbrella term for both simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, meaning that it comes in both forms. It possesses the name conference interpreting because it typically takes place in a formal setting with delegates and representatives of numerous countries and organizations.
- Media interpreting - It is a form of language transmission in the media, also known as broadcast interpreting, that is mainly used for live transmission in the mass media (mostly in television). In general, it comes mainly in the simultaneous form.
- Court interpreting - That is a prime illustration of intra-social institutional interpretation. Its commissioning authority is a state authority. A certificate (court stamp) allowing the court interpreter to take part in court proceedings and perform interpreting duties is required. In many countries it comprises duties like certified document translations as well as interpreting in judicial and administrative hearings. In majority of cases interpreting is carried out consecutively.
- Diplomatic interpreting – This is interpreting in more or less formal communication contexts, e.g. political or business negotiations. Each of these communication occasions differs greatly from the others in the demands placed on the interpreter. Here, consecutive technique is primarily employed.

- Sign interpreting - Unlike all the other genres, it does not use verbal but non-verbal means of expression. This genre can be defined as the use of sign language to communicate with deaf viewers, for whom sign language is their mother tongue, about the information present in the audio portion of the program.
- Community interpreting - The youngest interpreting genre, as until recently it was considered part of court interpreting. It is interpreting exclusively for individuals or small groups of people who find themselves in a crisis situation. This may be an existential crisis (migrants, refugees) who have left their country and are seeking asylum, or health problems (affecting citizens of another nationality living in the territory of the country and requiring hospitalization). The topic of community interpreting is elaborated further in the chapter 2.1 Situations of interpreting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### *1.1.1 Simultaneous Interpreting*

Simultaneous interpreting is an oral translation of message from the source language to target language, delivered in real time. The time gap between the speaker and the interpreter is on average 4 seconds and in the professional field is this time difference called a phase shift (translated from Slovak, Müglová, 2018, p. 297).

Moreover, it is worth to mention contribution of scholar Lina Anderson (1994), who also dealt with concrete definition of simultaneous interpreting and time lag that is being created in this process.

*"The characteristic time lag interpreters show is, in information processing terms, considered to be due to the accumulation of source language items in some sort of buffer storage while the central processor is working on previously received information."*  
(Anderson, 1994, p. 102)

This suggests that interpreters experience a delay in their interpretation because their cognitive processes require time to process the information they have received, and the buffer storage allows them to temporarily store and organize the information while they work on previously received information. The accumulation of source language items in the buffer storage is a normal part of the information processing involved in interpretation, and it is the reason for the characteristic time lag observed by many authors.

Daniela Müglová, as well as Francesca Gaiba described the notion of the term "time lag" in a very similar manner, both defining this phenomenon as the lag between the original and the interpreted version of the speech. *"Its length varies according to the interpreters. It is usually no longer than seven or eight seconds."* (Gaiba, 1998, p. 16) Müglová, on the other hand proposes that this speech gap can take approximately up to maximum 10 seconds.

Time is a major constraint for the interpreter because of the continuous data that is processed in a very short time. He may struggle with two time-dependent phenomena: excessive speed of the speaker's output may lead to semantic compression, implication, or omission, and conversely, enough time leads to explication. This makes the process of simultaneous interpreting dependent on the interpreter's memory or linguistic vocabulary. The more attentive and experienced is the interpreter, the less time is consumed in the process of transmitting a message in two languages simultaneously.

The interpreter's expertise depends on two types of factors – subjective and objective. Subjective factors include interpreter's experience with the simultaneous technique, knowledge of the interpreted issue, the interpreter's current physical and psychological state. Objective factors are determined by the level of complexity of the language expression of the presented topic, the type of speaker and source language (translated from Slovak, Keníž, 1980, p. 52).

Simultaneous interpreting has constantly been connected with couple of different situations which required the work of the interpreter as the mediator of successful communication. Based on this fact, have many scholars classified types of interpreting according to different criteria. One of them was Franz Pöchhacker (2004), who divided and described them based on the sphere in which they took place. In his work Pöchhacker included very first known type of interpreting, that is business interpreting, then dealt with community-based military, healthcare interpreting etc. up to its recent forms such as media and sign language interpreting.

On the other hand, it is possible to distinguish types of interpreting according to the use of technical devices. In this case, we may extract the idea presented in the work of Gaiba (1998) and Müglová (2018). Gaiba differentiates simultaneous interpreting with and without the support of technical equipment and describes them briefly both. She then, however, names and describes just the types of simultaneous interpreting without the use of technical equipment. The same division scheme was proposed and expanded in the thesis of Müglová (2018). She mentioned chuchotage (whispering), sight translation, booth simultaneous interpreting, booth simultaneous translating and pilotage.

In whispered interpreting, the simultaneous interpreter stands or sits with the recipients and translates what the speaker says directly to them. Whispered interpreting is advantageous when there are only a few recipients at the meeting and they are in close proximity with each other in small groups or bilateral meetings where the participants do not speak the same language. *"In today's court cases, it is used mainly at the defendant's table for the use of the defendant."* (Gaiba, 1998, p. 16)

Sight translation comes in the form of translation and interpreting at the same time. Interpreter works with the text visually, because he reads it e. g. letter and he interprets it orally. As sight translation has a particularly interesting modality due to its use of written and oral expression, it is considered *"a hybrid between written translation and interpreting"* (Dragsted, Hansen, 2009, p. 589). Sight translation can be defined as interpreting of a text from the source language into the target language simultaneously and in a manner in which the content of the document can be easily comprehended by the audience and meaning isn't lost. Both whispered and sight interpreting are used without technical equipment.

If there is a large conference, it is preferred to use technical equipment - interpreting booth. This equipment will ensure that the interpreters have complete silence during the meeting. Therefore, the booths must be soundproof and spacious enough to accommodate a table as well as two to four interpreters.

Interpreters take turns while interpreting simultaneously. They switch at intervals ranging from 30 minutes, though it can be longer depending on the complexity of the topic being interpreted. Other interpreting participants in booth pay attention to what has been already said, watch and listen to speakers and take notes. For their convenience and good performance they also need a good preparation that occurs mostly before the interpretation itself.

In the booth also takes place booth simultaneous translating. This interpreting technique is of the similar nature as sight translation. In this case interpreter reads and interprets the text from the cabin. The speaker is present and both speaker and interpreter have the same text before them.

The last type of simultaneous interpreting that is combined with technical equipment is pilotage. It is mostly used in situation where a message from less-known language (e.g. Czech) needs to be interpreted into some other language (e.g. Chinese). In such case the English language is selected as a main pilot language as the majority of people from various countries can understand it. Then can interpreters further interpret this English version of message into other less-known languages (translated from Slovak, Múglová, 2018, p. 302).

### *1.1.2 Interpreting tools*

Except for the remote interpreting, that takes place e. g. via telephone or through online platform, the most interpreting services take place in person, meaning that the clients are in the same place where the interpreters do the service. Nowadays, in order to provide the most reliable interpretations services, the use of various tools are required to create a "real-time" communication experience.

Simultaneous interpreting tools are used for a variety of purposes such as business meetings, conferences, exhibitions, court hearings, parades, group meetings and many more. In all of these activities, simultaneous interpreting can be used in combination with either portable or stationary equipment.

Example of stationary tool is interpreting booth that is in overall very frequently engaged. Simultaneous interpreters work mostly in soundproof booths, which are either built-in or mobile depending on the venue. Mobile ones can be found under the name tabletop booth, their size is smaller and can be handled by just one person. Since the booth space is not entirely closed, it is not fully sound-proof (translated from Slovak, Múglová, 2018, p. 302). Interpreters or technicians need to carefully select the location where the booth will be eventually placed, due to the fact that disturbance of simultaneous interpreters is ineligible. It is advised that the booth should be put in the corner of the room, against the wall or in the place where recipients of interpretation wouldn't go to.

Full-size booth is a standalone unit entered through the door, and often has its own ventilation. Unlike the tabletop booth, the full-size booth is completely sound-proof, however it is not all just positives. Installation and handling is more on the expensive side, it is time as well as space-consuming. On top of that, it is mostly non-movable meaning that its position can't be adjusted.

One of the main elements of booth installation is to ensure an interpreter has a good view of the speaking area and sees the audience. In addition, projected presentation, if there is any, needs to be visible too. There is a possibility that screens are installed in the booths, so that the interpreter is able to watch the slides, but the view on the big screen makes their job much easier. In case the speaker refers to something specific in the presentation, demonstrates something – the interpreter can simply lose context without the view. The same applies for graphic content e. g. graphs, charts, pictures or other optical references. Their visibility is vital for interpreters as well.

Each booth contains table and chairs as well as a tabletop interpreting unit consisting of a console with a headset and a microphone.

*"The speaker in the meeting room speaks into a microphone, the interpreter receives the sound through a headset and renders the message into the microphone simultaneously. The delegate in the meeting room selects the relevant channel to hear the interpretation in the language of his/her choice."*

(Šavelová, Melicherčíková, 2013, p. 54)

Aside from booths, a key element of successful interpretation might be a system with compatible loudspeakers, projector or microphone for the original speaker. However, quality of equipment can cause problems unless it is set up and operated by well-trained interpretation-equipment technicians. Selection of the right microphone should be based on the form and duration of the speakers speech, whether they will be sitting or standing on the stage or how many speakers will alternate each other.

The usage of classical handheld microphone may diminish speakers output. Their voice often becomes hardly audible as the speaker can't keep the microphone at the right distance from their mouth all the time. This can make the interpreter's work difficult, so the head microphone or a flap microphone are more appropriate, because it transfers less noises. The listeners are given a multi-channel pocket receivers which enable the listeners to select the required language channel.

Another two main technologies used in the field of simultaneous interpreting are radio frequency equipment and IR (i.e. infrared radiation). Purpose of this technology is to transmit the signal to the bodypack receivers - central unit interconnecting the interpreter booth with speaker microphones, loudspeakers, and sound systems for larger spaces. Radio frequency equipment is a technology similar to the one used by radio stations. It can cover long distances and penetrate through walls. IR on the other hand, is commonly used in smaller indoor environments for secure communication less prone to interference.

Professional must take into consideration that the devices provided might not be compatible with each other. In order to prevent some technical failures that definitely might occur even at the last minute, authorized expert shall check the functioning of interpreting aids in advance.

Vast amount of technological tools are being used by interpreters in the preparatory phase prior to any interpretation. In order to get themselves prepared for their work, once

they are familiar with the setting and topic of discussion that is yet to be translated, interpreters need to acquire as much information and specialized knowledge as possible. So they can furthermore begin to prepare terminological resources such as dictionaries, professional documents, etc. (translated from Slovak, Müglová, 2018, p. 314).

The interpreting process cannot be interrupted, therefore interpreters need to gain additional linguistic and specialized knowledge mainly before the interpreting process. Some interpreters tend to store information and terminology on scraps of paper or excel spreadsheets, even when several tools have been developed to ease the process of interpreting. They usually use glossaries, which are lists of terms in alphabetical order used in a particular field with their definitions. Glossary traditionally contains terms that are either newly introduced, uncommon, or specialized and bilingual glossary is a list of terms in one language that are defined in a second language. Bilingual glossary may contain synonyms from the target language.

## **1.2 Role of interpreter**

Speaking, listening and comprehending in the mother tongue or in a very well-known language are spontaneous processes requiring very low effort. However, people tend to forget how long it has taken them to become fluent. We are hardly ever aware of the complex mechanisms that talking itself is based on.

*"Only when the speech is disturbed, when we misunderstand something, or suitable word and expression seems impossible to find, we become aware of the construction and deconstruction of meaning operations on which we rely while carrying them out. These processes become more and more apparent in case of simultaneous interpreter whose learning and training is based on the same processes. They reproduce the speech pronounced in the source language in the target language keeping the distance from the speaker as short as possible."*

(Riccardi, 2005, p. 756).

The simultaneous interpreter can be viewed as a complex information processing device that is "equipped" with various cognitive abilities. Their job is to fulfill fast, auditory, tracking tasks. Trapped in the interpreting booth, they must successfully analyze and comprehend a continuous stream of speech that has its own shape and persuading character.

Role of interpreter is to reshape the speaker's message as it is perceived into the form of its output language, and then utter it. In the meantime, they break down the incoming stream of new data bits into comprehensible information and monitor their own speech to make sure it is properly paced, understandable to listeners, and conveys the original meaning as they understand it. Interpreter is concurrently fully aware of the fact that there is no opportunity to ask the speaker to repeat themselves or clarify any point. It doesn't matter if the interpreter conveys the speech consecutively or simultaneously, there is in either way not enough time to ask questions nor would it be professional.

Nevertheless, this profession faces especially in the recent years numerous challenges in terms of what kinds of new clients there are. The question that needs to be answered is what kind of demands are on the market. Which languages are increasingly being used at national and the international levels and which cultural communities are more and more involved when public service interpreting is being provided (Biagini, Boyd, Monacelli, 2017, p. 1).

High priority is placed on the fact, that interpreters must stay neutral and accurate because their role in a cross-cultural encounter is highly complex. We know that cross-cultural communication deals with context, form, gist, gesture, tone, and so on, but what we don't know are interpreters' intentions during a communicative process. They are all human beings influenced by interplay of social factors and standards, institutional constraints, and societal beliefs.

*"The potential for misunderstanding always exists between people trying to communicate with one another, even if they are speakers of the same language who share a cultural background. That potential becomes even greater when people assume that they can understand each other because of either a shared language or the presence of an interpreter. Sometimes the interpreter bridges the linguistic gap but not the cultural one. Other times, the interpreter is not even aware that such a gap exists."*  
(Angelelli, 2004, p. 47).

Frequently happens that interpreter decides not to deal with the cultural aspect of the message, even though the parties involved in the interpreted event expect them to. Some experts believe that they should pay attention to this "common knowledge" and be aware of the way these misunderstandings can alter the original utterance. Other interpreters acknowledge that cross-cultural awareness is not something they have been initially trained

for. Attention is also paid to the burden of expectations placed on the interpreters role based on the assumption that he or she can bridge cultural differences.

Creation of misunderstandings during interpreting doesn't apply just in case of cultural differences of the speakers and receivers. Interpreters must be cautious learning ethics, political correctness and general politeness. In order to gain a praxis in this field of study, the understanding of how one type of interpreting (e.g. community) differs from others (e.g. court or conference) is crucial. It should impact the implementation of education and certification programs that are designed to prepare competent bilingual individuals who can bridge communication gaps that go beyond linguistic barriers (Angelelli, 2004, p. 49).

The differences and commonalties among conference, court, and community interpreting and the correlation between face-to-face and remote interpreting have recently become an area of special interest to trainers of interpreting and other experts from the field.

## **2 Simultaneous interpreting in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Even though the basic principles of simultaneous and consecutive interpreting have remained consistent throughout the decades, teaching methods have evolved incorporating results and insight from other disciplines adapting them to the changing working environment.

Nowadays, not only are all interpreting forms rapidly gaining ground, but also requested language combinations differ from the past. The growing importance of all types of interpreting may be partially caused by the migration waves that are of a larger scale brought by 21<sup>st</sup> century. The process of internationalization in connection with ongoing intercultural communications has also influenced the training of interpreters, an area where there is a marked trend towards international cooperation, not only within the European Union, but also elsewhere in Europe.

In the past, sudden dramatic rise of simultaneous language was primarily due to the establishment of several important organizations that allowed the use of many official languages. Considering these trends which emerged more significantly in 20<sup>th</sup> century, the training of community interpreters becomes more and more crucial (Obst, 1993, p. 8). Harry Obst, in his work, proposes that nowadays are budgets of national and international organizations shrinking and the enormous cost of providing simultaneous interpretation in

so many languages brings uncertainty and questions asking whether the role of interpreter is in many cases even essential.

English is increasingly becoming an international lingua franca and it is highly possible, that we could notice in the near future large number of international meetings being held in English as the only official language.

In a seemingly unstoppable progression, the world is becoming more complex and differentiated resulting often in the misunderstandings. Even the most experienced interpreters find it increasingly difficult to analyze the meaning of the spoken utterances of educated people on complex topics, or sometimes the meaning is even lost (Obst, 1993, p. 8).

*"The greatest weakness of the simultaneous technique is its lack of analysis time. Without a pre-printed text, many interpreters are afraid to step into the interpretation booth on topics they are not very familiar with."*

(Harry Obst, 1993, p. 8)

That's the reason why preparation time plays a huge role in the success of interpreter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Simultaneous interpreters get to make a research in advance before they step into interpreting environment. It will ensure, that the interpreter omits possible mistakes and will expand their general knowledge.

## **2.1 Situations of interpreting in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Interpreting is a vital profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as it enables communication between individuals and groups who speak different languages. It makes effective communication and understanding between individuals and groups with different linguistic backgrounds in a variety of settings possible.

In the current century we live in, tourism plays a big role in the lives of people. Due to globalization, each society is enriched with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. People often commute either for work or seek leisure e. g. in the neighboring country. In order to enable communication between travelers and local populations, as well as to provide translation services for tour groups and individuals, is the inclusion of interpreters in the tourism and travel industry very common.

Interpreters are further often used at international conferences and meetings to facilitate communication between attendees whose nationalities and language fluency differ. The work may be done in a booth, simultaneously, as well as consecutively, interpreting spoken statements one at a time. *"Most conference interpreters are freelancers and a minority among them are international civil servants working for international organisations."* (Gile, 2004, p. 14)

International conferences go hand in hand with business meetings, diplomacy and their importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Communication between companies or individuals who speak different languages is especially vital when negotiation of contracts or conducting other important business negotiations is in the game. Any additional error or misunderstanding represents for the whole company a fail that is unwanted and may result in profit losses. In the modern times this can create a bad name for the brand.

In the process of interpreting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, particularly in connection with ongoing conflict in Ukraine, interpreters play a fundamental role in facilitating communication between parties helping to bridge linguistic and cultural divides. One of the key situations in which interpreting is needed in the context of the conflict in Ukraine is during negotiations, diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict and lastly humanitarian efforts.

Interpreters make the translation of communication between aid workers and local populations happen, as well as interpret information about available services and assistance. In such cases is helpful integration of community interpreters.

*"The term 'community interpreting' refers to interpreting which takes place in the public service sphere to facilitate communication between officials and lay people: at police departments, immigration departments, social welfare centres, medical and mental health offices, schools and other institutions. Community interpreting is typically carried out consecutively, but can also involve instances of interpreting performed simultaneously (in the form of whispering)."*

(Wadensjö, 2001, p. 43)

Cecilia Wadensjö goes on to point out that finding such professionals can be a difficult task, as many individuals remain without training and experience in the translation/interpreting field. It is related to the fact that the need for community

interpreting is changing, sometimes very rapidly, with global migration flows. This is also demonstrated by the readiness of Ukraine's neighbor, Slovakia.

Slovak scholars Pavol Šveda and Markéta Štefková share the opinion that for Slovakia, the wave of refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine was the most significant humanitarian challenge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and that the country wasn't prepared for such scenario. *"One problem was immediately quite apparent: the lack of interpreters for both Russian and Ukrainian languages."* (Šveda, Štefková, 2022, p. 44)

In her work on community interpreting, Cecilia noted that in practice the interpreter often has to suffer the dilemma of being perceived simultaneously as an advocate and as a "tool" and helping hand to the official. *"Their dilemma as mediators is further exacerbated by the prevalence of social antagonism ethnic tensions and racial prejudice in most countries."* (Wadensjö, 2001, p. 44)

Interpreting during conflict and war is challenging profession due to the high stakes and potential for misunderstanding. Interpreters may need to work under pressure and in high-stress situations. There is focus placed on ability to maintain their impartiality and accurately convey the meaning of what is being said, even in the face of disagreement or hostility.

According to Wadensjö, many simultaneous interpreters as well as community interpreters are members of minority groups in the host country, but compared to other members of these groups, they are relatively assimilated into the host society and are familiar with its institutions. Community interpreting, however, remains a low-status, low-paying profession compared to conference, court, business, and similar types of interpreting (2001, p. 44).

Overall, interpreting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and particularly in the context of the conflict in Ukraine, requires a high level of soft skill, variety of competences, professionalism, and dedication to accurately and effectively transfer the message to the target language between parties.

## **2.2 Interpreter competences in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Like the author and the recipient, the interpreter has certain prerequisites when working with language. Already at this stage, some of the interpreter's skills (e.g. interpreting, analysing the original utterance) are important, which will subsequently influence the interpreting process. The terminology used to describe the complex of

translation abilities, skills and knowledge is not uniform. What one critic calls ability, another considers talent or disposition. In this case, terminological heterogeneity should be seen as one of the signals of development in translatology (translated from Slovak, Koželová, 2018, p. 15).

Competence model can be understood as the result of the efforts of some translation theorists to identify, define and categorize individual necessary competences in form of a table. They try to distinguish them from each other, as well as draw attention to the consequences of their absence.

The interpreter uses the individual interpreting competences at the same time and combines them depending on the communication environment and the nature of the interpreted message. Since he/she works simultaneously with the semantic, syntactic, stylistic and, of course, cultural levels of the message, they should be able to use the individual competences in synergy. It follows from the above that there is several of them. Each concerns a different aspect of working with a spoken utterance. The question of which one is the most important, or which one is more significant compared to the others, is open. Translators do not completely agree on the same necessary competences and their opinions differ.

Some of the competences were dealt with by Koželová, who in her work compared in detail the translation competence skills addressed by different authors. Each of them considers different skills to be more essential and tries to rank them in order of importance. The ones that most frequently recurred in the work of various authors are linguistic competence, intercultural competence, strategic competence, discursive competence, and research or verification competence.

Specifically, the translation competences that Koželová considers necessary in mastering the translation process are: linguistic, interpretive, research and verification, cultural, strategic, technical, market and (meta)critical (translated from Slovak, 2018, p. 133). These translation competences play a significant role in the simultaneous interpreting as well.

Under the influence of foreign translational studies, translation competences are coming more and more to the fore than ever before.

Koželová points to the fact that the attention of translators in their research works follows two scenarios: some of them adopt the competence model and others define some of the competences themselves, or propose their own competence model. In the second scenario, we can find a much greater fragmentation of opinions, resulting from the desire for

individual statements on the topic, for the definition of competences or for a coherent set of competences, as well as for their definition (translated from Slovak, 2018, p. 137).

Although we have already mentioned the basic competences of the interpreter and will discuss them in more detail in the research section, it should be mentioned that in recent years the competences have been enriched by many authors with technical and market competences in the light of recent global events.

### *2.2.1 Simultaneous interpreting in the online space*

In recent years, the shift to the online space has both its benefits and drawbacks in terms of work, training, and social aspects. As international contacts increase and large numbers of refugees relocate to different countries, remote interpreting has emerged as a modern trend. *"'Virtual' mobility means that both conference and community interpreters can, to all intents and purposes, work internationally without ever actually leaving base."* (Amato, Mead, 2000, p. 296)

One of the most significant developments in simultaneous interpretation is the opportunity to use remote interpreters through the inclusion of online technology. Concept of remote interpreting is not a recent innovation, nor is it exclusive to major global organizations. Inclusion of online technology and modernization of interpreting process is replacing the need for in-person interpreters in many occurring situations.

*"In this case are interpreters no longer present in the meeting room, but work from a screen and earphones without a direct view of the meeting room or the speaker. This is different from videoconferencing where interpreters are still physically present in a booth, within the meeting room where most participants are gathered and other participants intervene remotely via a video link-up. RI should not be confused with video remote interpreting, a term used, especially in the United States, to refer to a form of person-to-person video-conferencing mostly (although not exclusively) used to convey sign language."* (Mouzourakis, 2006, p. 46)

The integration of remote simultaneous interpreting into the modern world has brought together many benefits.

Main advantage of using remote interpreters is that they are available at all times, as opposed to in-person interpreters who may have limited time and need to travel to the interpretation location. Remote interpreting can be an effective solution to address issues of

interpreter availability and cost. Large multilingual organizations often incur significant expenses related to travel and per diems for freelance interpreters, which can make up a significant portion of their overall interpretation costs. Additionally, coordinating the logistics of assembling large interpreter teams and arranging for interpreters to travel to distant locations can be challenging. By using remote interpreters who can work from their own homes, it is possible to leverage different time zones to potentially cover multiple meetings in a single workday, while also eliminating the need for interpreters to physically travel to places.

Ilan Roziner, Miriam Shlesinger (2010) and Payanotis Mouzourakis (2006) share the opinion that one of the factors that can intervene into what type of interpreting technique will be used is the physical limitations of the building or meeting location. For instance, it may not be possible to accommodate booths for all of the official EU languages due to a lack of space or the inability to fit a sufficient number of booths into a small or medium-sized meeting room without obstructing the visibility of the interpreters (Mouzourakis, 2006, p. 47).

On the top of that, there may be concerns about installing booths in historic meeting rooms or the need for security measures that require interpreters to be physically separated from conference participants. Mentioned constraints can be overcome by using remote interpreters, who can participate remotely via online technology.

From the viewpoint of simultaneous interpreter who works remotely, it is a must to be aware of several considerations in order to ensure the smooth and effective delivery of their interpretation. That includes the choice of technical setup, meaning that the interpreter has a reliable internet connection and the necessary equipment, such as a computer, microphone, and headset. Demand for technological proficiency is further accentuated by familiarity with the platform where the actual remote interpreting will take place. In case that the interpreter wants to maximize their professional success they must learn to use all of the features of the platform effectively, such as muting and unmuting, turning the camera on and off, and switching between different views. Minimizing background noise is essential for ensuring that the interpretation is clear and audible to the audience. This may involve closing windows, turning off music or other noises, and asking anyone else in the room to remain quiet during the interpretation. On the other side, interpreters must be prepared to handle interruptions, such as phone calls or notifications, and eliminate any distractions that may interfere with their interpretation.

Interpreters, like anyone else, can become tired or mentally exhausted after prolonged periods of work. This is notably true for interpreters, as the job requires a high level of concentration and mental effort. Interpreters tend to often experience physical fatigue if they are urged to stand for long periods of time or if the interpreting environment is not comfortable. This, however, does not apply during remote interpreting because the interpreter sits behind a computer in an unfamiliar place only rarely. In addition, interpreting can create a heavy emotional burden, as interpreters may be exposed to distressing or traumatic content. It can be a difficult obstacle for interpreters to detach themselves emotionally from the content they are interpreting, which can lead to long-term mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Moser-Mercer, on the other hand, argues that even under favorable conditions is remote interpreting more tiring. She has in her thesis stated that interpreters seem to be under increased psychological stress when working outside the conference room, mainly because they feel a lack of control over the situation. Interpreters tire significantly faster, as evidenced by a more rapid decline in the quality of performance over the course of a 30-minute turn (2003, p. 1).

Interpreters that work not only remotely with clients who have experienced trauma, such as refugees, victims of domestic violence, and survivors of war can also notice that it takes a toll on their mental state of mind - they are obliged to communicate distressing information while also providing support and empathy to the client. Graphic descriptions of physical or emotional abuse, accounts of serious accidents or injuries, or testimony about violent crimes can lead to vicarious trauma, which is a form of distress that occurs as a result of being exposed to the trauma of others.

Barbara Moser-Mercer further advises shortening the turn durations in remote interpreting (2003, p. 15). To prevent fatigue, interpreters should take breaks if needed and be mindful of their energy levels. It is vital for them to have access to support and resources such as counseling or debriefing sessions, so that they can process and cope with the off-putting content they may encounter on the job more effectively. Employers and organizations should also be the ones who are hyperaware of the potential for harm and work towards minimizing the exposure of their interpreters to this kind of traumatic content.

Simultaneous remote interpreting makes real-time communication among people who speak different languages possible and enables them to participate in events and meetings from distance. Lastly, it is considerable mentioning the fact that it provides flexibility and accessibility for clients, as they can receive interpreting services from

anywhere and at any time, as well as reducing the risk of exposure to covid-19 and other civilization diseases.

### *2.2.2 Simultaneous interpreting in pandemic*

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen far more than one epidemic, the most notable of which is the ongoing covid-19 pandemic. The virus has spread to almost every corner of the world, leading to lockdowns and other measures to slow down the spread of the virus, such as social distancing and mask-wearing. The pandemic has had a significant impact on global health and economies. It has highlighted the necessity for preparedness and rapid response, as well as the importance of international cooperation in addressing global health crises.

Due to the covid-19 pandemic, in-person interactions have been kept to a minimum, leading many language service providers to shift their services online. However, the effectiveness of this transition varied. Among all services, face-to-face interpreting was hit the hardest, particularly in the travel and business sectors. Simultaneous interpreting has been impacted in many previously unimaginable ways. One major change is the shift to virtual interpreting, where interpreters work remotely and interpret for speakers through video conferencing platforms.

*"Going remote has revealed its pros and cons – work-wise, training-wise, but also socially. As with nearly every other crisis, the pandemic has highlighted the crucial role of translation and interpreting services in the public-service sector, during acute crisis situations, as well as in providing general information to all, inviting translation and interpreting professionals and volunteers to step in and help when needed."*

(Perez, Nikolić, 2021, p. 1)

Travel restrictions and social distancing measures have made in-person interpreting difficult or in some cases even impossible. However, virtual interpreting brings its own set of challenges.

Main challenges that might occur are technical issues such as bad internet connectivity and time lags that can significantly disrupt the interpreting process.

Another problem that can arise is the lack of nonverbal cues, which are vital for interpreters to understand the speaker's meaning and context. Interpreters rely heavily on facial expressions, gestures, and body language to understand the speaker's intent and convey it

accurately to the audience. In a virtual setting, these cues may be harder to detect or may be completely lost.

This pandemic has in 21<sup>st</sup> century led to an increased demand for interpreting services in various fields, such as health care and government, as well as in international organizations. This is because of the need for clear and correct communication between different languages and cultures, so that people behave respond to the pandemic in the right manner without misunderstandings.

In the health care field, for example, interpreters are invited to help patients and their families understand medical information and procedures related to covid-19, as well as to communicate with health care providers who don't speak the same language. This is particularly important for patients who cannot speak the dominant language of the country where they are receiving a treatment. Carmen Valero-Garcés points out that healthcare is a sector where access to interpretation and translation is still considered a privilege rather than a right in many EU countries (2022, p. 4).

In government and international organizations, interpreters helped facilitating communication between different countries and cultures, as well as to ensure that important information about the pandemic is translated and disseminated without any hoaxes. This is strictly important for coordinating international efforts to combat the pandemic, as well as to spread the information about health measures and regulations to the public.

As a result of this increased demand, interpreters have had to adapt to new subject matter and terminology related to the pandemic, concerning medical terms and protocols. This is challenging as the medical field is constantly evolving and requires constant updating of knowledge. Moreover, interpreting in a health care setting is a highly specialized field which requires interpreters to have a deep understanding of the cultural context as well. To meet these requirements, interpreters need to quickly adapt to the new information and terminology related to the pandemic as it emerges.

By staying informed, up-to-date and continuously learning, interpreters can help to bridge the language barrier making sure that the messages encoded in the speech in these critical fields during the pandemic get properly communicated.

### **3 Aim, methods and methodology**

The aim of the thesis is to analyse the impact of the technological progress, the humanitarian crisis and the covid-19 pandemic on the work of a simultaneous interpreter. Regarding the sub-objective, we will collect relevant materials related to both in-person and distance interpreting, and then map the statements of various authors who have dealt with impact of pandemic on the interpreter. The new competences based on the in-person interpreting in the context of war in Ukraine and remote simultaneous interpreting will be reflected in a new model of the interpreter's competence profile in the 21st century.

We described theoretical background in the first two chapters which portrayed the nature of interpreting process and obstructions an interpreter had to especially in the last years face.

The fourth chapter of the thesis focuses on the contrast of interpreting for the Ukrainian refugees and interpreting medical conference concerning the pandemic remotely. It is important to assess and objectively summarize the shift in requirements for an interpreter in connection with both forms of interpreting. In the research is the connection between direct "face-to-face" contact with the speaker and remote restricted contact observed, as remote interpreting can be a challenge without any technical literacy.

Another aim is to find out what qualities should a good simultaneous interpreter have in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to keep up with the times. In order to illustrate our proposal for a competency profile of a simultaneous interpreter, we will draw up our own table with the attributes that we think are essential for an interpreter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **Hypotheses:**

##### **H1: Interpreting remotely is less physically strenuous than in person**

First hypothesis is focused on which form of interpreting is more difficult in terms of performance. Interpreting process is highly based on the real-time practical experience that's often influenced by many factors such as stress.

##### **H2: Interpreting for the refugees is far more mentally draining than interpreting remotely during pandemic**

Second hypothesis aims at the idea that working with victims of war takes a bigger psychological toll on the interpreters since they directly come to a contact with clients.

## **4. Results and discussion**

Simultaneous interpreting has undergone significant changes over the last years due to technological advancements, changes in interpretation techniques, and evolving needs of the interpreting industry. One of the changes that has significantly affected interpreting techniques in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the involvement of technology. The use of technology has had a major impact on simultaneous interpreting. Modern interpretation systems now utilize digital technology, such as digital sound systems and headsets, to improve sound quality and increase accuracy. Remote interpreting platforms, which allow interpreters to work from anywhere in the world, have also proliferated, and were used especially when the infection rate during the covid-19 pandemic reached an all-time high. These difficult sudden and unexpected times have significantly impacted the interpreting industry.

In recent years, greater emphasis has been placed on the expertise of interpreters to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge in a variety of specialist areas. Training and education for interpreters have become more specialized, with programs tailored to specific fields such as legal, medical, and technical interpreting. This may enhance their overall competence and employability in the labor market.

The demand for interpreters has increased in recent years as a result of globalisation and the growth of international trade. There is also a growing demand for interpreters in non-traditional settings such as community interpreting and sign language interpreting.

### **4.1. In-person interpreting in the context of migration**

In the current age, interpreters are expected to exhibit a high level of expertise in order to convey the message between parties who speak different languages and come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

*"Attending a meeting in advance will be especially helpful to get a grasp of procedural rules and terms. Careful observation of speakers' gestures and demeanor, as well as the reactions of listeners, will provide additional clues to the intent behind the words. Knowing the specific themes of a conference in advance and obtaining a copy of the agenda, background documents, list of speakers, and any prepared speeches available can also be very helpful."*

(Nolan, 2005, p. 18)

However, concerning the war in Ukraine no interpreter was prepared for such scenario. Sudden migration wave of Ukrainians fleeing from the country escalated into many people finding themselves lost in the foreign country. Lost language-wise, work-wise or simply just stuck in the neighboring country seeing how everything they've lived for has crashed in front of their eyes in a few days.

These large communities, currently located mainly in Poland or Slovakia, are looking for help that goes beyond the asylum application. They are trying to build a new life, at least temporarily, which would not be possible without the basic requirements for entry and long-term residence in a foreign country. One problem arises immediately after a migrant flees the war and crosses the border - the language barrier. As almost no one was prepared for this at the beginning, people migrate without any plan, completely unaware of what awaits them tomorrow. Often they arrive sick, exhausted, with little or no money and with lost personal documents. Since every migrant has to be registered in the new country, this is where an interpreter comes in handy.

As we have already said, the inclusion of community interpreters varies, but one thing they all have in common is that they all help foreigners in need. It doesn't matter if it's medical or some administrative work, they focus entirely on the "clients" who are in need, putting in some kind of empathy and understanding.

When working with direct or indirect victims of war, a simultaneous interpreter should choose his or her words and rhetoric wisely. Even the slightest expression of an opinion regarding the war can trigger painful memories for the migrant. It has been forever known that an interpreter should always avoid inserting his/her own personal opinions or prejudices when interpreting and should try to be as objective as possible and to convey the intended message of the speaker as accurately as possible. He must also refrain from 'revising' the message or changing the content in any way. It is necessary to convey a complete and accurate message, even if the interpreter disagrees with it or finds it inappropriate.

Let us take an example. Many individuals have been forced to flee their homes due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and many have sought asylum or refugee status in other countries. First, when a Ukrainian enters the Slovak border, he should apply for asylum as soon as possible. He then may be required to undergo an interview or a hearing as part of the application process. In these situations, a community interpreter may be needed to assist with communication between the applicant and the officials processing their claim. The

interpreter can help to ensure that the applicant is able to fully understand the questions being asked and can provide accurate and detailed responses.

The key element of successful interpreting career is self-explanatory. It is the quality of language skills. Interpreters are expected to be fluent equally in both their native language and the languages they interpret between. They should be able to understand and translate the meaning and nuances of what is being said in the right manner, while being also culturally aware. This profession requires a deep understanding of the cultures and environment of the languages that are actively used in the conversation. That includes an ability to convey cultural references in right manner and customs as well. In our case, a misunderstanding can arise due to some local dialect or the Ukrainian would be simply so stressed that he may not be understood. Thus, the interpreter should approach war victims with patience, noting their rate of speech, non-verbal communication, and constantly working on expanding their informal vocabulary. On top of that, a good interpreter should pay attention to the self-preparatory, meaning that preparation of the interpreter does not consist only of information provided by the client, but also of their own. It is generally advised reading a parallel texts, writing own lexicons or glossaries and searching unfamiliar terms that are frequently reoccurring when working with these people.

Additionally, they should adhere to ethical standards and conduct themselves professionally at all times, even in high-stress or challenging situations. Simultaneous interpreter should be familiar with the terminology used by the police or the embassy. This is a specific vocabulary that the interpreter has to know and translate in a way that even a Ukrainian layman can understand. As is clear from what we have said, this communication is two-way. The interpreter must choose the right words and turns of phrase both in relation to the migrant and to the official.

It goes without saying that in the situation in which they interpret, they cannot experiment, but can only convey what the communicative situation allows them to convey, i.e. the speaker and his speaking abilities, his own readiness and promptness in solving communicative problems, and other extra-linguistic and interfering factors (translated from Slovak, Keníž, 1980, p. 23).

The next thing an interpreter has to deal with is the capturing of the speaker's attitude, which refers to the stylistic component (the expressiveness, emotionality, and other characteristics of speech). Keníž states that yet, in the majority of cases, the communication situation itself determines the speaker's mood, which affects the entire speech, for example, in ceremonial speeches, speeches of lamentation, agitation, or speeches for promotion. The

interpreter use their understanding of the communicative context and is aware of the proper way to get ready for a certain communicative act (translated from Slovak, 1980, p. 24).

Aside from the assistance with communication during the application process, interpreters may also be asked to provide cultural mediation and support to help the applicant navigate the unfamiliar legal and bureaucratic systems they may encounter in the process of applying for asylum or refugee status.

From the migrant's point of view would be the inclusion of interpreter definitely helpful. Besides the application for asylum, interpreters can help Ukrainian migrant with medical appointments, housing applications, and other practical matters. By receiving a clear and accurate interpretation, they can access the support and services needed to establish themselves in their new country. Interpreters can also provide cultural mediation and support, helping the Ukrainian person to navigate the unfamiliar systems and cultural norms of their new country. This can be particularly important in the early stages of resettlement, when the Ukrainian person may be feeling overwhelmed and disoriented.

## **4.2 Remote interpreting in the context of pandemic**

The covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected the interpreting industry. With the limitations of travel and face-to-face meetings, many interpreting assignments have shifted to remote or virtual settings. The pandemic has led to changes in the demand for interpreting services. While some interpreting assignments have decreased, such as interpreting for in-person events or international travel, others have increased. Main example is the rise of demand for medical interpreting services due to the increased need for communication between healthcare providers and patients. The sudden inclusion of simultaneous interpreters in the medical field has proven that interpreters are essential in this field as well, and must be proficient in current medical terminology. This type of interpreting can be used in multilingual medical conferences, telemedicine consultations, and in hospitals where patients and healthcare providers speak different languages.

Remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI) has become more prevalent, as many organizations have suddenly shifted their operations online. The pandemic has also led to the increased adoption of remote interpreting technologies. Remote interpreting technologies, such as video conferencing platforms and remote interpreting software, have allowed interpreters to continue providing services while adhering to social distancing

guidelines. This kind of interpreting service also allowed for increased flexibility and convenience, as interpreters can provide services from anywhere with an internet connection.

All in all, the pandemic has had its own pros and cons for the interpreting industry. While there have been challenges related to changes in demand and the adoption of these new technologies, there have also been opportunities for innovation and growth. The situation highlighted importance of interpreting services and the need for interpreters to have specialized training in areas such as medical interpreting.

*"With the rise of remote simultaneous interpreting delivery platforms in the mid 2010s and especially the hypergrowth of remote simultaneous interpreting assignments in 2020 as a result of the world pandemic, research has shifted from remote interpreting to remote simultaneous interpreting to reanalyze its impact on the health, wellbeing and performance of conference interpreters working remotely."*

(Murgu, 2021, p. 69)

Let's look at the situation from the point of view of a simultaneous interpreter interpreting a medical conference dealing with covid-19 health restrictions. From the interpreter's perspective, RSI allows them to work from a remote location and eliminates the need for travel, which can save time and money. Interpreters can also work with cutting-edge technology that allows them to provide interpretation in real-time, even when working remotely. But since not everything is rosy, this type of interpreting also has its drawbacks.

The adoption of remote interpreting technologies brings a new set of challenges like technical issues with the software or equipment, or challenges in providing high-quality interpretation due to internet connectivity issues. This can result in the interpreter not hearing what the speaker is saying and missing the gist of the sentence. In the case of not hearing just one word, the interpreter's utterance may completely change its meaning. Another obstacles can arise in terms of building rapport with clients and interpreting nonverbal cues. They may struggle to gauge their reactions and responses to the content being presented.

Dora Murgu and Payatonys Mouzourakis both in their works mentioned that simultaneous interpreters interpreting remotely tend to be influenced by psychological factors, such as higher levels of stress and loss of motivation and concentration. Another factors playing a big role in the remote interpreting are physiological ones like sore eyes, back and neck pain, headaches or nausea.

*"Early and recent studies alike resulted in a generally negative and more stressful perception of remote interpreting when compared to in-person interpreting, however studies which included a clinical approach did not find significant changes in stress hormone values nor increases in stress level were observed. With regards to quality, independent reviews found that performance was not negatively affected by RSI despite a generally negative self-perception of performance from the interpreters themselves."*

(Murgu, 2021, p. 70)

It is known that unpredictable events are far more stressful than controllable or predictable ones. For this reason, we believe that a simultaneous interpreter interpreting remotely faces a higher risk and may be subjected to stress due to malfunctioning of devices. Therefore, it can be assumed, that actions aimed at increasing control over unpredictable situations that arise during RSI (issues with sound, network failure, unscheduled software updates) as well as problems with the use of technology, in terms of software (sound control applications, videoconferencing software), hardware (peripherals such as headsets, microphones, adapters, cables) and RSI platforms (multiple online platforms have their own particular functions, settings and dynamics) will increase the interpreters' ability to anticipate, predict and respond to the unknown and therefore will improve their self-perceived stress and performance levels.

Global events that have taken place in recent years have altered the demands that are currently placed on simultaneous interpreters. Based on this fact, we believe that the interpreter's knowledge and competences must especially now be enriched.

While community interpreting for refugees from Ukraine requires personal contact and a certain amount of humanity and empathy, remote interpreting can feel cold. Remote interpreting is as impersonal for the simultaneous interpreter as it is for the speaker, since they hardly see each other's body language at all. The verbal communication, however, differs as well, since the personal interpreting requires less professional approach, at least between the interpreter and migrant. Simultaneous interpreter interpreting remotely must be well-prepared in advance and choose his words wisely. He already knows the theme of the conference and can prepare the terminology beforehand. Interpreting for Ukrainian migrants is not as specific and interpreters often have to know and cover different terminologies at the same time.

Another thing, that has to be taken into consideration is the fact that in both interpreting scenarios are the stress levels high. As we have said above, interpreting through

online space can be a challenging and very stressful due to possible malfunction of equipment. In the reverse, working with victim of war is traumatic and stressful enough too. In a sense, we could say that it is about experiencing the trauma through the eyes of the victim.

In both instances, interpreters should therefore be given a rest. While for RSI we would recommend relaxation in the form of active movement, for community interpreting it would be relaxing at home with a book or meditation. This is because RSI is done sitting behind a computer screen, which does not have a good effect on the interpreter's physical condition (pain in the spine, eyes) and for this reason there is no harm if the interpreter takes a walk in nature in his/her free time. This can have a positive impact on both the interpreter's physical and mental health.

Interpreting for migrants, on the other hand, requires travelling from one place to another and working with multiple people, which can be very demanding socially. We estimate that it would be more appropriate for such an interpreter to relax at home with fewer people in their spare time.

What these two interpreting situations have in common is that they both work with specialist terminology only from different fields and use specific strategies to convey the message. Although they also have some fundamental differences they evoke dark times” of the 21<sup>st</sup> century for majority of people. We think it's no different for simultaneous interpreters. The covid pandemic had as bad an effect on people's mental health as the war. A person does not have to come into direct contact with either of these situations, doesn't have to fall ill or flee from war to another country to be affected psychologically.

Now in the case of simultaneous interpreters working with Ukrainian refugees and interpreters interpreting a conference on covid-19 restrictions remotely, they need to be given the opportunity to talk to a professional (psychiatrist, therapist, psychologist) about what they are experiencing. Although some may not have a problem at all with the interpreted issue, graphic descriptions or direct contact with a person who has PTSD may reflect negatively on some. In order to avoid any intrusive thoughts or general difficulties in the given profession, we believe that every simultaneous interpreter should be able to seek professional help, paid for by the employer.

### **4.3 Competence model of a simultaneous interpreter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

The role of an interpreter has become increasingly important as businesses, organizations, and governments interact with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. To ensure that interpreters are able to perform their duties effectively, we find it significantly important to develop a competence model that outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the job. In other words competence model can provide a standardized framework for evaluating interpreter performance and identifying areas for improvement. Competences are necessary not only for the actual interpreting process but also for preparation before and after the event (when previously acquired linguistic and subject knowledge needs to be combined with new knowledge), as well as for an interpreter's general attitude, flexibility, and capacity to adjust to both technical difficulties and ethical standards.

Competence model promotes consistency and quality in interpretation. By outlining the standards for interpretation, a competence model ensures that all interpreters are held to the same high level of performance. This is particularly essential in settings such as legal and medical interpretation, where accuracy and precision are of the utmost importance. In this manner interpreters are consistently providing high-quality interpretation, which leads to better outcomes for all involved. Focusing on the competences required for the job might be especially helpful for the development of interpreter training programs and certification standards. This, in turn, promotes the professionalization of the interpreting field, so that interpreters are recognized as professionals who possess a unique set of soft skills and abilities.

Finally, a competence model suggests what should the interpreters pay attention to and self-study in their free time to handle unexpected situations and opportunities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the previous chapters we have looked at two specific situations that have highlighted in our eyes some of the competencies and we are convinced that these are essential for interpreters today.

Recent years have been proof that demand is changing, whether on the basis of events or the evolution of humanity as a whole. In today's globalized world, interpreters have to be able to adapt to the forever-changing environment and that they possess the necessary skills to navigate complex linguistic and cultural landscapes. For this reason, we have drawn up a table which we believe corresponds to the requirements for interpreters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Linguistic competence	Active listening
Terminological competence	Multitasking
Strategic competence	Adaptability
Cultural competence	Empathy
Technical/digital competence	Stress management

The individual competences in the table do not necessarily have a set order, given that they are, in our view, all almost equally important. We believe that the success of simultaneous interpreters also depends to some extent on soft skills, which interpreters should pay attention to. Some may confuse the concepts of competence and soft skills and think they are the same thing. Unfortunately that's not true.

Competences refer to the specific knowledge, abilities, and expertise required to perform a particular job or task effectively. They are typically specific to a particular job or industry and are often learned through formal education, training, or experience, in our case it is through degree in applied language studies or interpreting courses. On the other hand, soft skills are personal attributes that enable individuals to interact effectively and harmoniously with others in a work environment.

*"Soft skills encompass personal, social, communication, and self-management behaviors. They cover a wide spectrum of abilities and traits: being self-aware, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, critical thinking, attitude, initiative, empathy, confidence, integrity, self-control, organizational awareness, likability, influence, risk taking, problem solving, leadership, time management, and then some."*

(Klaus, 2008, p. 2)

Soft skills are typically developed through personal experience, training, or mentorship, and are often considered more difficult to teach or quantify than competences. On the positive side, once an interpreter learns to use soft skills, they can transfer them between different jobs and sectors, which means that they are not tied to a specific profession as a competence. *"You can have all the technical expertise in the world, but if you can't sell your ideas, get along with others, or turn your work in on time, you'll be going nowhere fast."* (Klaus, 2008, p. 2)

Now that the difference between these two concepts is familiar, we can focus on the individual competences from the table.

Simultaneous interpreting is in itself a multitasking activity, because the interpreter has to listen to the speaker and at the same time automatically interpret what has been said. The quality of the interpreted output is mainly influenced by the interpreter's competences and soft skills, which, if the interpreter can combine them appropriately, lead to success.

It has been in the previous chapters covered, that linguistic competence consists of mastering the rules of the source and target language of translation - vocabulary, word formation, sentence structure, as well as pronunciation and spelling. We consider it to be one of the most important competences, because for many professionals this competence is among the first to be mentioned in their works and is one of the basic prerequisites that every future interpreter should have. It is vital for every simultaneous interpreter to have a command of the grammatical and lexical systems of the source and target languages, and to be able to evaluate and correctly use the language and terminology of the field on the basis of the nature and expertise of the interpreting situation. In other words, each interpreter should possess the knowledge of not only general or conversational languages but also more specialized ones like those used in banking, medicine, or data processing, as well as variations in usage, style, register, cultural conventions and quirks, etc. what brings us to the next fundamental subcategory of a linguistic competence – terminological competence.

Interpreters should learn to use terminology aimed at accurately conveying the message in the target language without any omissions, regardless of their level of complexity. Through their work, they can get in touch with both ungrammatical and highly technical expressions. Interpreters with strong terminological competence have a deep understanding of the concepts and technical vocabulary that are commonly used in their working languages. They are familiar with the jargon, acronyms, and other specialized terms that are unique to specific fields.

When a sick Ukrainian migrant who has worked all his life in a local factory flees to another country, the interpreter cannot expect the Ukrainian to understand the medical terminology, so he has to choose a different vocabulary to accommodate the "client". Interpreters must also be able to handle difficult situations well, such as technical jargon, complex ideas, or emotional or sensitive topics. In the interpreting process, the interpreter must choose the right terminology, handle complex topics professionally and use interpreting strategies, among other things.

As we have already outlined, strategic competence is related to the interpreter's ability to choose an appropriate interpreting strategy in order to achieve an adequate and as accurate as possible transmission. We won't go into details, but we find it important to

mention at least a few strategies, since we didn't focus on them in the practical part of the work.

*"The most common categorization distinguishes between comprehension, production, overall and emergency strategies. Comprehension strategies generally include, anticipation, segmentation, selection of information, stalling or waiting, while production strategies consist of compression, expansion, approximation strategies, generalization, use of linguistic open-end forms, morphosyntactic transformation and the use of prosody elements, such as pauses and intonation."*

(Riccardi, 2005, p. 765)

Simultaneous interpreting requires the interpreter to listen, process and translate information in real time. The amount of information can be overwhelming, and strategies such as chunking and note-taking can help the interpreter manage the information overload, so they can work faster and more fluidly, allowing the interpreter to keep up with the pace of the speaker with little to no mistakes. General adaptability to changes in tone, and pace of the speaker, as well as the specific context of interpreting is another soft skill that we believe might play a huge role in the success of interpreter. Interpreters must be able to relevantly translate the intended meaning of the speaker's words, even though the language or phrase used may not be immediately familiar to the audience. Including strategies such as paraphrasing and reformulating can help interpreters to compensate for language and cultural differences.

Being culturally aware of the dos and don'ts leads us to another aspect of competence model – intercultural/cultural competence. The interpreter moves in the space of at least two cultures, that is, in the space of the source and target cultures, but it is not uncommon to encounter an interpreting situation that, although based in a particular cultural setting, contains several different cultural codes that refer to another or different cultures. In such a case, interpreter is dealing with multiculturalism, which is by no means uncommon today. Interpreters are obliged to observe ethical standards and protect the rights of their clients. They should always avoid bringing their own cultural biases or assumptions into the interpreting process and only facilitate respectful communication between parties from different cultural backgrounds.

Speaking of war in Ukraine, empathy allows the interpreter to connect with the Ukrainian migrant on a human level, demonstrating an understanding of their experiences,

emotions, and needs. This can help to build trust, making it easier for the Ukrainian migrant to communicate their needs and concerns. Interpreting in the context of war can be emotionally taxing and requires great emotional intelligence and resilience. By demonstrating empathy and providing emotional support, the interpreter can help to alleviate some of the emotional burden on the Ukrainian migrant.

Overall, interpreters can help identify and navigate cultural differences, prevent misunderstandings, and promote understanding and respect. Chances are that they will eventually build a rapport and good trust with the client as a result of this behavior. Empathy is an important soft skill in simultaneous interpreting because it allows the interpreter to understand the speaker's perspective. By recognizing the speaker's emotions and intentions, the interpreter can better convey their message in a way that resonates with the audience and choose the right vocabulary. This can lead to greater engagement and understanding on the part of the audience. By recognizing and respecting cultural norms and values, the interpreter avoids misunderstandings and it helps the interpreter to navigate complex cultural differences.

In the context of the war in Ukraine, the use of empathy should mean that the interpreter avoids addressing topics related to the war until the situation calls for it (e.g. an embassy official asks about it), does not express his/her own opinion about the war, and chooses more appropriate words that will not affect the victim of the war as much.

Building cultural competence is a lifelong process and that even an experienced interpreter has to be cautious about, or rather the opposite - the more experience an interpreter has, the more he/she is aware of the treachery of transferring cultural realities to the target language.

The last place in our table is occupied by last but not least competence - technical/digital competence. The technical or digital competence of a translator has been discussed especially in recent years, because in addition to the competences related to the mastery of the language, the source and target cultures, as well as other cultures, besides the ability to handle information or to adequately use and apply translation tools, a translator is currently exposed to additional requirements. He/she is expected to be digitally literate (translated from Slovak, Koželová, 2018, p. 78).

The requirement for computer proficiency of the interpreter is also undoubtedly a reflection of the changing external conditions of human existence. This profession is one of those which, at a minimum, requires the use of a personal computer and its basic software. Interpreters must be familiar with the equipment used in simultaneous interpreting, such as

headsets, microphones and interpreting booths. Interpreting technology also involves the use of specialized software such as simultaneous interpreting platforms, translation memory software and glossing tools. They must have technological knowledge to operate the equipment effectively and to solve technical problems that may arise during interpretation.

The advent of information and communication technologies has gradually evolved from the infrequent use of the computer, which was seen as more of a convenience, to its almost constant use as an essential tool of interpreting. Later in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, after the introduction of the internet in the previous decade, remote interpreting, which requires the use of the computer itself, online platforms in combination with their specific functions, came to be used. Simultaneous interpreting often involves working with remote or distributed teams, which impacts interpreters to be proficient in using communication technology such as video conferencing software and messaging platforms as well.

As technology continues to evolve in the 21<sup>st</sup> century more quickly than ever before, interpreters need to be opened to new tools and platforms and just simply try to adapt. Technological competence allows interpreters to stay up-to-date with the latest developments and inventions in the field and to use new technology to improve the quality and efficiency of their work.

Finally, we would like to highlight the soft skill, which we think belongs equally to the whole model and not just to one competence from the table. Stress management is a critical soft skill for this kind of profession since it can be incredibly demanding both physically and mentally. Interpreting requires the interpreter to listen, process, and transmit information in real-time, which can have negative effect on his mental well-being. Effective stress management creates space for maintaining their focus and concentration over long periods of time. When an interpreter is stressed, they may be more prone to making errors or missing important details, which can negatively influence the quality of interpretation. In addition, interpreters often work in fast-paced environments where technical difficulties, sensitive content, or other unexpected challenges may arise. Examples include recent years when interpreters have increasingly had to switch to remote interpreting due to health measures during covid-19, or interpreters have had to work with victims of the war in Ukraine. Both of these sudden and unexpected interventions changed the interpreting process and the psychological state of the interpreters, at least somewhat. By effectively managing their stress, interpreters are better equipped to handle these challenges and remain calm and focused in the face of adversity.

The interpreter has no control over the pace of speech, nor over the type of speech (spontaneous or written), nor over such factors as the speaker's accent. This inexperience with the subject matter might potentially be for an interpreter stressful factor. The physical conditions of interpreters' work environment (poor booth conditions) in combination with poor technical equipment may also induce feelings of stress and discomfort (Roziner, 2010, p. 219).

By prioritizing stress management through mindful exercises or seeking a support, interpreters can ensure that they are able to sustain their performance over the long term and avoid the negative consequences like burnout. All in all, staying organized and effective time management can help reduce stress. By using tools such as calendars, reminders and to-do lists, a simultaneous interpreter can stay on top of their workload as well as take time for themselves, learn to say no to projects that may be too demanding or unrealistic, and prioritize their time effectively. Not only in the case of interpreters, it is important to take regular breaks to recharge in order to avoid mental fatigue.

## Conclusion

The bachelor thesis *Simultaneous interpreting in the light of events of the 21. century* includes overview of changes and new conditions to which the profession has had to adapt.

In the first chapters we have tried to clarify the basic information regarding simultaneous language transfer in order to be able to build on this knowledge in the research section. As it was mentioned in the introductory part of the thesis, we have based our research on the different competences in the context of current demand. We managed to compare the interpreting for the Ukrainian refugees and remote simultaneous interpreting of medical conference.

It was achieved to find suitable literature, which we worked with throughout the thesis. We were inspired by different competence models that has Slovak author Adriána Koželová depicted in her work *Prekladateľské kompetencie v kontexte domácej translatológie*. She elaborated on her own proposal but also included suggestions from various other authors who have dealt with competence profiles and competences as such in the past. It provided us with suitable insight, various options and generally bigger perspective on the topic of general applicable competences. We applied the given abstracted information to the current circumstances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which we mentioned in the previous two chapters (the war in Ukraine, the pandemic), that changed the role of the simultaneous interpreter, in order to create our own relevant model of interpreting competences in the form of a table.

Furthermore, it was necessary to elaborate on the competences required for remote simultaneous interpreting of medical conference, in-person interpreting for migrants and to incorporate them into already retrieved competences from the mentioned literature. We then selected the 5 most relevant competences that we believe meet the demands of modern times. We think that the competences have changed only slightly compared to the past.

The result of our work consists of four competences on which several authors have agreed in the past and now. The only change that has occurred is that the digital competences are increasingly represented in different literatures and articles, which is why they have earned the fifth place in our table.

In addition to competences, we have also focused our work on soft skills, which are increasingly being emphasized. The interpreter should ideally work on them throughout his or her life, as they will be useful whether at work or at home. Their importance reflected

especially in connection with in-person interpreting for Ukrainian refugees. Our bachelor thesis reflects the fact that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is not enough to focus on interpreting competences, but one also needs to focus on aptitudes and soft skills.

Let us have a look at hypotheses, which we covered. One of them was partially confirmed and the second one wasn't.

**H1:** Interpreting remotely is less physically strenuous than in person. According to authors who have looked into this issue, the level of stress between remote and in-person interpreting does not seem to differ much. What exacerbates simultaneous interpreters' view of remote interpreting, however, is the fear of equipment malfunctioning. Naturally, this fear can bring tension and thus stress to some interpreters working remotely. In addition remote interpreters often feel more physical pain, as they are constantly sitting at the computer, and some complain of pain in the spine, eyes and fatigue. Therefore, this hypothesis was not confirmed.

**H2:** Interpreting for the refugees is far more mentally draining than interpreting remotely during pandemic. Working directly with people who are fleeing a war that is still ongoing is mentally demanding. Since the interpreter in this case must also involve certain soft skills such as empathy, it can often happen that he puts himself in the shoes of a migrant and experiences the situation with him. On the other hand, the covid pandemic also affected some people mentally, which could cause disbelief or pessimism in people. This may also apply to some interpreters, but the pandemic has already ended and it no longer has a long-term effect on this profession. Although the pandemic has brought new innovations in interpreting technology and remote interpreting is taking place more than ever before, we do not believe that interpreters face more mental pressure than those who work directly with Ukrainian refugees. So this hypothesis was partially confirmed.

We hope that our proposal for a competency model for the simultaneous interpreter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will contribute to broaden the perspective on this topic and provide future simultaneous interpreters with an overview of what they can expect and what they should prepare for in order to operate more flexibly.

Our main aim was to analyse the impact of the technological progress, the humanitarian crisis and the covid-19 pandemic on the work of a simultaneous interpreter. This analysis was made effectively and all the goals were fulfilled.

## Resumé

To, že simultánne tlmočenie predstavuje namáhavú činnosť s relatívne mladou históriou, je mnohým známe. Na druhú stranu je zároveň nevyhnutné poukázať na simultánne tlmočenie z iného pohľadu tak, aby sa šírilo povedomie o možných zmenách a alternáciách, ktorým sa tlmočníci vzhľadom na okolnosti musia neustále prispôsobovať. Ich činnosť si vyžaduje vysokú odbornosť s istou dávkou pružnosti.

V prvých kapitolách sme sa snažili objasniť základné informácie týkajúce sa simultánneho jazykového transferu, aby sme na týchto poznatkoch mohli stavať vo výskumnej časti v kontexte požiadaviek na simultánneho tlmočníka v 21. storočí. Zmapovali sme relevantnú literatúru, ktorá sa venovala prekladateľským kompetenciám a dané vyabstrahované informácie sme aplikovali na súčasné okolnosti, ktoré zmenili úlohu simultánneho tlmočníka, tak aby sme vytvorili vlastný model tlmočnických kompetencií vo forme tabuľky.

Okrem iného bolo nevyhnutné rozpracovať tlmočenie na diaľku počas pandémie v súvislosti s tlmočením pre migrantov z Ukrajiny, ktoré má v 21. storočí stále väčšie zastúpenie. Tieto dve špecifické tlmočnicke situácie sme porovnali a následne sme s pomocou literatúry vybrali 5 najvhodnejších kompetencií, ktoré podľa nášho názoru spĺňajú požiadavky modernej doby. Myslíme si, že tieto kompetencie sa v porovnaní s minulosťou zmenili len nepatrne. Výsledok našej práce tvoria štyri kompetencie, ktoré sú v cudzích odborných prácach zväčša stálicou a mení sa len ich poradie. Jediná zmena, ktorá s príchodom 21. storočia nastala, je, že digitálne kompetencie sú čoraz viac využívané v praxi, keďže sa tlmočí podstatne viac dištančne, preto si v našej tabuľke vyslúžili piate miesto.

Ďalej sme sa zamerali aj na mäkké zručnosti, na ktoré si myslíme, že sa kladie čoraz väčší dôraz. Tlmočník by na nich mal v ideálnom prípade pracovať po celý život, keďže sa mu môžu hodiť aj v rôznych mimopracovných situáciách. Naša bakalárska práca odráža skutočnosť, že v 21. storočí nestačí zamerať sa na tlmočnicke kompetencie, ale človek potrebuje mať v sebe aj istú ľudskosť.

Čo sa týka hypotéz, tak jedna z nich sa potvrdila čiastočne a druhá nie.

Prvá hypotéza tvrdí, že tlmočiť dištančne je menej fyzicky namáhavé ako prezenčne. Výskum poukazuje na fakt, že úroveň stresu, ktorú zažívali tlmočníci tlmočiaci dištančne a osobne, sa veľmi nelíši. Čo si však myslíme, že negatívne ovplyvňuje názor simultánnych

tlmočníkov na tlmočenie na diaľku, je strach z poruchy zariadenia. Je prirodzené, že tento strach môže niektorým tlmočníkom pracujúcim na diaľku priniesť napätie, a tým aj stres. Okrem iného tlmočníci tlmočiaci dištančne často pociťujú väčšiu fyzickú bolesť, pretože neustále sedia za počítačom, čo vedie k bolestiam chrbtice, očí a únave. Preto sa nám táto hypotéza nepotvrdila.

Druhá hypotéza popisuje, že tlmočenie pre migrantov je oveľa viac psychicky vyčerpávajúce ako diaľkové tlmočenie počas pandémie. Pracovať priamo s ľuďmi, ktorí utekajú pred vojnou, ktorá stále pretrváva, je psychicky náročné. Keďže tlmočník v tomto prípade musí zapojiť aj určité mäkké zručnosti ako je empatia, často sa môže stať, že sa vžije do kože migranta a začne postupne prežívať situáciu s ním. Na druhej strane aj pandémia covidu zasiahla niektorých ľudí psychicky, čo mohlo u ľudí vyvolať nedôveru či pesimizmus. Toto môže byť prípad aj niektorých tlmočníkov, no myslíme si, že keďže sa pandémia už skončila, tak to na túto profesiu už nemá nejaký dlhodobý vplyv. Aj keď pandémia priniesla nové inovácie v tlmočnickej technike a tlmočenie na diaľku prebieha viac ako kedykoľvek predtým, neveríme, že tlmočníci čelia väčšiemu psychickému tlaku ako tí, ktorí priamo pracujú s ukrajinskými utečencami. Táto hypotéza sa teda čiastočne potvrdila.

Naším hlavným cieľom bolo analyzovať vplyv technologického pokroku, humanitárnej krízy a pandémie covidu-19 na prácu simultánneho tlmočníka. Táto analýza bola vykonaná efektívne a všetky ciele vrátane tých čiastočných boli splnené.

Dúfame, že náš návrh kompetenčného modelu pre simultánneho tlmočníka v 21. storočí prispeje k rozšíreniu pohľadu na túto tému a poskytne budúcim simultánnym tlmočníkom prehľad o tom, čo môžu očakávať a na čo by sa mali pripraviť, aby mohli pracovať efektívne a flexibilnejšie.

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