

## Abstract

This qualitative exploratory study investigates interpreting between Czech Sign Language (ČZJ) and spoken English (EN) as a *lingua franca* of international meetings. Considering the constantly increasing international exchange between Deaf and hearing experts, the demand of interpreting in this language combination is expected to grow; however, training opportunities for interpreters are scarce.

Direct interpreting between ČZJ and EN is compared to and contrasted with relay interpreting via spoken Czech (CS).

A comparative analysis of the renderings of a lecture delivered by a Deaf expert paired with stimulated recall interviews revealed that interpreting between two B-languages in a combination for which interpreters have not been trained is possible despite the assumedly increased cognitive load, and in this particular case its quality wasn't significantly lower than that of relay interpreting in terms of content completeness and accuracy and the speaker's communicative intent, provided that the interpreters have sufficient source and target language skills as well as general interpreting competence. The linguistic quality of the English output is lower in ČZJ-EN interpreters than in CS-EN interpreters (taking over from ČZJ-CS; these interpreters have been trained for this combination). Not only it impacts the product but also the process is affected – in addition to synonymic and stylistic variation, a limited and insufficiently automatized repertoire of linguistic means in the target language hinders the flexibility of reactions and linguistic economy, making cognitive load management more difficult. These are the principal areas that potential training of SLIs for the ČZJ-EN combination and the enhancement of SLIs proficiency in English should be targeted at.

The study also examines the strategies used by interpreters to cope with the time constraints of simultaneous interpreting, the artificial experimental conditions (interpreting of a 2D video), the culturally specific content and the linguistics factors (interpreting between two B languages of different modalities). In addition to general strategies, the interviews revealed specific strategic behaviour relevant in particular to sign language interpreters (SLIs); this behaviour is motivated by the nature of Czech Sign Language, knowledge of the sociocultural context, professional norms and the interpreters' understanding of their role and their feeling of responsibility for the success of the interaction, and relates to preparation, interaction and cooperation with the presenter and active interaction management. While most of this strategic behaviour and its motivations is inherent to simultaneous interpreting and cannot be claimed to be unique to SLIs, differences have been observed in the type of problems SLIs face and in their attitude to these problems and to the interpreting task in general in comparison to spoken language interpreters; it cannot be excluded, however, that some of these differences are due to the data collection method.

**Key words:** Czech Sign Language, sign language interpreting, sign-to-voice interpreting, relay interpreting, B-B interpreting, interpreting strategies