Abstract

The thesis investigates one aspect of intracultural communication among the Czech Deaf community. Namely, it surveys those themes which are considered to be taboo among Czech Deaf signers and in which ways they are discussed. This topic is explored from the pragmalinguistic perspective. The meanings of terms such as “taboo” and “euphemism” are explained on the basis of theories of politeness. Thereafter, the topics that are regarded to be taboo in the Czech (hearing) culture are presented, as the source of euphemisms in some foreign sign languages. On the basis of such knowledge, the methodology for a pilot investigation into the tabulation of how communication within the Czech Deaf community was created. Based on semi-structured interviews with five Deaf informants it is examined whether the topics of death, serious diseases, human anatomy and physiology, sexual behavior, social inequality in regards to economic status, as well as socially unacceptable behavior such as drunkenness, lying, stealing and cheating are felt to be taboo during communication among the Czech Deaf community. It was proved that the community tabooed many of these topics in a similar way as the hearing Czech. If the Deaf users of Czech Sign Language need or want to talk about them, they often use such lexemes that could be, in many cases, proposed as being euphemisms. However, further research is necessary in order to confirm the proposition. This thesis is an initial investigation into that topic.

Key words: Czech Sign Language, the Deaf, pragmalinguistic, taboo, euphemism