

Abstract

The master's thesis, divided into theoretical and empirical parts, deals with court interpreting for children and minors. After a short introduction to history, it describes the characteristic of court interpreting with the emphasis on children and minors involved in judicial proceedings. Following chapters focus on court interpreting in the Czech republic, expanding on its description, the related legal framework, required qualification and training of court interpreters. Subsequently, the thesis draws a comparison with training and education of other professionals taking part in proceedings with minors. Furthermore, the state of the art in the Czech republic is also compared to the situation in Belgium where the project CO–Minor–IN/QUEST was launched and carried out. To our knowledge, it is the first international project on cooperation among major professionals involved in interpreted criminal proceedings with minor participants. The thesis presents a summary of findings concerning communication with children and minors, laying stress on particular patterns of behaviour and conduct that are likely to occur in little and school-age children. The information provided is considered in the context of court interpreting. The thesis puts emphasis on the most significant differences between court interpreting for adult and minor participants. The last theoretical chapter presents a summary of recommendations on interpreting for children.

The empirical part of the thesis consists of both quantitative and qualitative research with the aim to describe the common practice of court interpreting for children and minors in the Czech Republic. The study is based on findings of Heidi Salaets and Katalin Balogh, Belgian researchers and leading figures of the CO–Minor–IN/QUEST project. Nevertheless, our research is not limited only to criminal law. Questionnaires and interviews were used as research tools in order to find out what do experts – interpreters, judges, public prosecutors, social workers, lawyers and the police – think of court interpreting for minors in the Czech Republic. Within the scope of research, we focus mainly on following issues: overall description of interpreted judicial hearings with children, training of professionals involved in the proceedings and the roles they assume. The first part of the survey deals with the common practice of court interpreting with minor participants while the second part aims to find out what is the experts' opinion on it and how could it be improved. Results are analysed in broader context and compared according to professions of respondents.

Keywords: minor, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies, family law, court interpreting, judicial proceedings, criminal law, interrogation, Act on experts and interpreters