

PREFACE

This book is a collection of speeches and exercises meant to be used as a basis for practical activities during the applied sessions of Practical Course for Simultaneous Interpretation, which the graduate students of the Master's Programme for Specialised Translation and Interpretation (MATIS) at the Faculty of Engineering in Foreign Languages of the Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest study and practice during their fourth and last semester foreseen by the curriculum.

There are eighteen chapters in the book. The first seventeen feature material for the practice of simultaneous interpretation, while the last one includes exercises to be made on the material included in the other chapters. The material which serves as a basis for practice and exercises is a range of speeches, press conferences, addresses, remarks, and communiqués which have been chosen to be included in this volume on account of their oral style, which is suitable for the development and practice of simultaneous interpretation skills, as well as various strategies and techniques, that vary according to the type of speech.

Another criterion of selection has been their context and their relevance for the geo-political and their historical relevance in terms of occasions and events where they were delivered, the topics addressed and their speakers. The events featured by the speeches in this book include the terrorists attacks on the Twin Towers in New York on 9/11, the farewell speech of President Barack Obama at the end of his second term of office, the funeral of former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the commemoration of peace after the nuclear bombardment of Hiroshima, as well as, coming closer to the present day, the COVID-19 pandemic, the COP26-UN climate change conference, the meeting of the G7 leaders in Germany this year, the

assassination of the former prime minister of Japan Shinzo Abe, in July 2022, as well as the war against Ukraine. Also, for their relevance to the university context in which this book is meant to be primarily used, two speeches have been included, which mark the beginning and the end of the university year: the former was held by the former President of the European Council Donald Tusk at the opening ceremony of the 2019/2020 academic year at the College of Europe, and the former is the commencement speech delivered by the naval admiral William McRaven in 2014 at the University of Texas in Austin - an all-time favourite among students of simultaneous interpretation at the Master's Programme for Specialised Translation and Interpretation, for which the University of Texas have graciously given the copyright.

On the topic of copyright, this is perhaps the right place to mention the fact that all the speeches have been scrupulously, actively, and individually checked for copyright availability before being featured in this book.

Besides the speakers already mentioned others have been included in the book, such as the current President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, the current Vice-President of the United States of America, Kamala Harris, the current Prime Minister of Japan, Fumio Kishida, and the former Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, former Presidents of the United States, such as George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, the current President of the European Council Charles Michel and the current President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenski, the former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, as well as the UNFCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa and the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, with her viral speech at the COP26 conference in 2021. As it is apparent, native and non-native speakers of English have been chosen, to give the students the chance to be exposed to both kinds of discourses in English. Also, the first chapter features a brief encounter with the Romanian language of the President of Romania, on the occasion of the visit by Kamala Harris, the Vice-president of the United States to Romania in March 2022, in an attempt to offer the students the opportunity to practice their return.

All the criteria involved in the selection of speeches and speakers is meant to make of this volume a versatile instrument for use in class, with a group of students, where activities such as mock conferences can be organised, for example using the material in Chapters I and VII, while not restricting it to this environment. In class, the exercises in chapter XVIII can be used by the trainer in whichever way they deem necessary according to a variety of factors that have to do with the environment, the size of the group, the level and heterogeneity of the students, etc. They can be used including as homework, activities for individual, additional practice, or recuperation of missed classes. As such, the book lends itself very well to the use by those who are not necessarily enrolled in the MATIS or any other MA programme in this field but wish and need additional practice as aspiring professionals in the field of simultaneous conference interpretation.

The exercises in Chapter XVIII cover a range of situations, skills, and strategies, while not being restricted to them. They are inspired by James Nolan's 2006 book *Interpretation. Techniques and Exercises*, which is mentioned in the bibliography, alongside other sources and include activities which can be done before the interpretation proper, as preparation exercises, as well as during the interpretation and afterwards, as tools for performance analysis. Among them there are tools for speech analysis, speaking, preparation exercises for anticipating the speaker, techniques to deal with complex syntax, such as compression, and ambivalent conjunctions, enumerations, de-verbalisation, elegant variations, anaphoric markers, and personification.

The present book is undoubtedly a child of its time, which is mainly mirrored by the topics, speeches and speakers included. Written at any other time, it would look different. However, the profession of simultaneous interpretation par excellence deals with the transient and the ephemeral; no sooner is a sentence over, than it disappeared along with its interpretation which belies all the hard work behind it. By the same token, the interpreter needs to train in the momentary, the current, the transient and the ephemeral whether it be regarding the topics of the day, the current realities, the powers that be along with their most famous speakers, as well as the professional paraphernalia

necessary to perform at top level in this field. Future realities will shape their tools, but for now, this book takes its place in the long line of "nows" of which the longstanding tradition and history of one of the oldest professions in the world is made up, in its present shape and with its present objectives.

July 2022