Master's thesis assessment statement

Supervisor: Dr Prof. Raquel Fernández
Student: Štěpán Lars Laichter

The thesis in consideration concerns the role of silence in machine dialogue. In the first half of the thesis, the student provides an overview of various theories of dialogue and their relevance to understanding silence. The overview covers the development of the study of dialogue as a field, as well as some of the most popular theories of dialogue of the past century. The student shows that he has a good understanding of the field and is able to provide a systematic and critical overview.

In the second half of the thesis, the student conducted an experiment on the performance of a transformer-based language model, called GPT-3. The experiment tests the performance of a fine-tuned GPT-3 model to infer silence between dialogue turns. Fine-tuning of the model is conducted based on movie subtitle data processed to allow for the encoding of the inter-turn gaps. The student demonstrates substantial levels of creativity in the design of the experiment and shows that he is able to effectively use automatic techniques to process large language datasets. The methodology is clearly explained and the results are reported adequately. While the evaluation of the model's performance could have been more thorough, the discussion and future work sections offer a very good overview of strengths and weaknesses.

Overall, the presented work does not contain major mistakes, it is written in a professional, scholarly manner, includes new experiments using a state-of-the-art language model, and contributes valuable reflections. Therefore, I evaluate this work with a grade of 1.5.

_____   12 May 2023
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Signature   Date

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