Recommendation for the defense of Ph.D. thesis

Ph.D. candidate: **Igor Szöke**
advisor: **Jan Černocký**

I am happy that Igor Szöke has finished his thesis under my supervision, although "supervision" must be detailed a bit: significant part of his work was directed, advised and criticized by Lukáš Burget and Igor obtained a lot of input from other Speech@FIT group members, especially from Petr Schwarz.

Igor's work aims at keyword spotting and spoken term detection (STD), with focus on hybrid word-subword models, that are able to cope with the old 'nightmare' of any speech recognition system – out of vocabulary (OOV) words. Igor's results suggest how to build a spoken term detection system using a single recognition network – a concept that is simple, relatively easy to implement, fast and with low memory and CPU footprint compared to combining the results of separate word- and subword-systems.
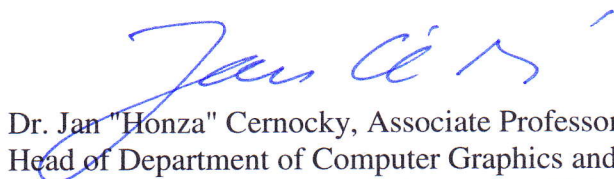
The thesis however documents only a part of Igor's activities. Although applying for PhD only now, he has been one of the Speech@FIT seniors for several years – he supervises students, participates in projects, and was the key person behind the success of our group in the first (and last) NIST STD evaluation in 2006.

I must especially highlight Igor's instrumental role in the project "Overcoming the language barrier complicating investigation into financing terrorism and serious financial crimes" sponsored by Czech Ministry of Interior, where BUT cooperates with University of West Bohemia in Pilsen and Technical University Liberec. In this project, Igor has been responsible for the whole STD and speech recognition part, leading it to successful evaluation within the consortium and with the end used from MoI. Igor is also a key player in the development of our lecture browsing system http://prednasky.com.

From the personal point of view, I appreciate his sense of responsibility, and ability to help under any circumstances. Igor is a highly organized personality which helps him to reach his and group's goals - it's really a blessing to have him in the group.

To conclude, I fully recommend Igor's Ph.D. thesis for the defense and I am looking forward to future work with him.

In Brno, June 14th 2010

Dr. Jan "Honza" Cernocky, Associate Professor
Head of Department of Computer Graphics and Multimedia
Faculty of Information Technology, Brno University of Technology
Bozetechova 2, 612 66 Brno, Czech Republic
Tel: +420 5 41141284 Fax: +420 5 41141290
mailto:cernocky@fit.vutbr.cz, http://www.fit.vutbr.cz/~cernocky