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**The Czech Translatology of 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

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**The Czech Translatology of 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

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*Vedoucí práce:*

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval(a) samostatně a použil(a) jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

*Plzeň, duben 2018*

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# Introduction

The topic of this bachelor thesis is the Czech Translatology of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The theme was selected due to author's interest and attempt to describe Czech history from a different than purely political point of view.

The bachelor thesis is theoretical and is divided into two main parts, which are subsequently divided into other subchapters.

In the first part of the thesis, the author will describe translatology as a science discipline, according to an interview with a Deputy Director of the Institute of Translatology J. Králová; as well as the theory of translation according to Jiří Levý (2012), who dealt in depth with who is the translator and with phases of his/her work. The author will describe also the most common translation problems such as Reproduction accuracy of translated text (*Jiří Levý, 2012*), Interference (*Zlata Kufnerová, 1994*) and Equivalency (*Dagmar Knittlová, 2000*). Merely some of the most important points for understanding the general theory of translatology, according to the author's opinion, have been selected.

The second part will consist of a brief description of the translation history on the territory of the Czech Republic from the Middle Ages to the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further, the thesis will cover the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century. The development of translation will be chronological, focusing on Bohemia and exclusively on English and American translations.

The author assumes that a large number of sources can be explored and that the Czech translatology and its history are well scientifically processed. Furthermore, the author would like to prove from the available sources that after the Second World War there was a considerable development of the translation activity and, on the other hand, during the period of normalization and the communist regime there was a significant restriction of this activity.



The bachelor thesis will mention, based on subjective opinion, the best known and most important representatives of Czech translation and interpreting and examples of translated works. The thesis will also deal with the establishment of the Institute of Translatology and the development of a study branch of translation and interpreting at Czech universities.

Due to the limited scope, the evolution of translatology will end in the 1990s and only the core works and authors of the particular phases will be mentioned.

# **1 Translatology as a science discipline**

This chapter deals with translatology as a science discipline. An explanation of the term translatology and the discipline is necessary for understanding what translatology is applied with.

In further part of this chapter the thesis applies with the Etymology of the translatology and its modifications in use in practise.

Translatology is at present more frequently used science discipline, which is probably due to the continuous interconnection of foreign countries of the world. [1]

Translatology generally deals with translations of various kinds of texts. These are necessary to remove the language barrier between two or more languages. Translatology is a science discipline, which makes an effort to describe, analyse and explain the various processes of translating using sundry of variety of expertise and methods of different disciplines. [2]

According to an interview with J. Králová (Deputy Director of the Institute of Translatology) it is explained, what translatology as science discipline is concerned with. “This science discipline arose 1970s and 1980s and is divided into theoretical translatology, which deals with general theoretical problems of translation and interpretation; descriptive translatology, the subject of which is a description of translation and interpretation as a matter for theoretical studies; and applied translatology, which includes practical translation, but also methodology of translation, criticism of translation and so forth.” [3]

Králová also explains why translatology became a separate science discipline, even though it is closely related to philology and linguistics. For philology and linguistics dealing with the appropriate language is final, but for translatology exploration of the appropriate language is a means of comprehension of understanding of translation as a type of intercultural communication. And that is the reason why translatology collaborates closely not only with the philological disciplines (linguistics, philology, morphology, etc.), but also with non-philological disciplines (sociology, political science, etc.) [4]

It is undoubtedly worth mentioning the function of a translated work in national culture. The translation of the original work becomes part of the literature written in the Czech language. This translated work then performs a similar function to the works written originally in the Czech language. Another value of this work is that the reader is able to learn about the culture of other countries. [5]

## 2 Theory of Translation

Theory of Translation is a discipline, which began to emerge since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first studies on the theory of translation began to appear in the 1930s. This field is interdisciplinary and makes efforts to assemble translation methods. [6]

Jiří Levý (1926-1967; Czech literary theorist, historian and translation theorist; his life and work were mapped by Zuzana Jettmarová in *Translation Mosaics* [7]) defines translation in his book *Umění překladu*: “*Translation is communication. Precisely, the translator decrypts the message, which is contained in the text of the original author and rewrites (encrypts) it into his language.*” [8]

Jiří Levý also believes, that the theory of translation is inconsistent between the specialization, which deals with the researching of the aspects in depth, and the categorization of these aspects in the broader cultural context. [9]

### 2.1 The origin of literary work and translation

An overview of the problems to which the translator is exposed to, will be obtained through the formation of a theoretical process of creating work and the further translation process from the source text.

Zdeněk Fišer (1930-2007) calls translating communication. It implies that the translator is attempting to decode the message that contains the original text and is rephrasing this message into his/her own language. This message is then encoded by the reader. A slightly more complicated situation occurs when translating a theatrical work. The theatrical ensemble decrypts the text of the translation and creates a new message that subsequently the audience receives. [10]

Fišer approaches two aspects of the analysis of the meaning of the work of art: a) communication, which examines the operations occurring when the author communicates the message to the recipient, b) representative, which discusses in what relationship the content of a work is with the creator and the factors surrounding him. [11]

*“The original work comes into existence through a reflexion and a subjective transformation of an objective reality;”* [12]

The translation process does not end with the translation text being created. The translation text does not fulfil the function until it is read. First, there is a transformation of the objective material by the reader, who creates a subjective view of the translation. The reader creates the third concept of the work. The first concept is the author’s approach to reality, the second concept is the interpretation of the original by the translator and the final concept is the concept of the translation by the reader. [13]

*“The starting point of the translator should not be the text of the original. But the ideological and aesthetic values contained in the text, furthermore his/her aim should not be the text, but the certain content, which the text will convey to the reader. This signifies that the author of the translation should count with the reader for whom they translate.”* [14]

This simply means that if the translators translate for children, they have to choose appropriate and comprehensible words. Unlike translation of demanding literature, in which the translator endeavours to preserve all the details of the original.

## **2.2 Translator**

The person who works with the texts and then translates them is called a translator. The work of translators, professional and literary translators combines, in particular, the difference between two languages (source and target languages). Further differences are technical, psychological and other problems with decrypting the source text and transferring information to another language. [15]

One of the key requirements for a translator's personality is, according to Fišer, creativity, which is understood as a complex of psychophysical features that enable individuals to act creatively. Inventiveness and creativity lead to the creation of new product that are progressive, valuable and useful. Another role in creative activity play, for instance, over-average intelligence, criticality and redefinition ability (i.e. ability re-interpret the problem), initiative, strictness, need for spontaneity, self-realization and stability, assertiveness, courage, persistence or ability to create alternatives. [16]

According to Kohoutka, talent is a prerequisite for creative activity. For its development training, learning and exercises are needed. The author of the translation should ideally have linguistic and literary talent. Translation creative activity is also influenced by external factors such as acquired skills, expertise, motivation, environmental influences. [17]

In connection with the translation creative activity, Fišer writes about the requirement of expertise. Experts organize their work better, choose the right sequence of steps. The translation author should have his/her knowledge arranged in the system, in the schema. Experience and perseverance differ highly creative people from less creative ones. [18]

The author is not just individual, he is fairly historically influenced. For instance, the way the author of the historical novel selects and transforms historical facts depends on his contemporary view of the historical world and on his political conviction. The environment, which is often reflected in the action, also has an impact on the author. [19]

### **2.2.1 Phases of the translator's work**

To understand the work of translators, it is necessary to mention what process this work involves. If we take into account that the translator works with the original as a material, it is possible to summarize this process in three phases. Jiří Levý calls these phases of translator's work as follows: [20]

1. Understanding of the source text
2. Interpretation of the source text
3. Rewording of the source text

#### **2.2.1.1 Understanding of the source text**

In order to identify the difference between the author's understanding of the original and the understanding of the original by the translator, it is noteworthy that the author of the original has to understand the facts that he writes about, but for the translator it is necessary to understand only the original. [21]

Furthermore, Jiří Levý names three levels in understanding the meaning of the original.

A) The first so-called degree of understanding the original is the understanding of the philological. [22]

B) The next degree involves the correct reading of the text and the understanding of the so-called ideological aesthetic values of the text. These values mean moody text debugging, irony, emotional colouring, common statement and so forth. It is imperative to translate correctly the meaning of the source text in order to achieve correct interpretation. [23]

C) After these two stages, the third and final stage comes to the fore and that is the understanding of the artistic elements of the text. The translator has to penetrate into the storyline environment, between the characters of the work, the relationships between the characters and ultimately the author's overall intent. This degree is simultaneously the most difficult degree, since it is imperative that the translator comprehensively understands the whole text. Thus, the translator cannot penetrate the meaning of the work without a sense of imagination. [24]

#### 2.2.1.2 Interpreting of the source text

Interpreting of the source text is integral part of the translator's work precisely because it is not possible to have the equal meaning in the source text and the target text and it is therefore not possible to translate correctly certain phenomena in the target language. [25]

An example may be that there is no meaning or ambiguity (polysemy) in the target language, and therefore a specification of meaning is necessary, and the translator has to decide for another meaning of the word that does not change the meaning of the source text. This problem is related to a thorough understanding of the meaning of the whole text, which was discussed in the previous chapter. [26]



As an example, Jiří Levý presents the translation of the English word *foppish*, which was taken from the Galsworthy's book *The Forsyte Saga*. Levý believes that it is not possible to translate the word *foppish* into the Czech language, so the translator is forced to make a narrowing of meaning and, therefore, interpretation. However, the translator can do this only if he has a clear idea of the entire novel. [27]

### 2.2.1.3 Rewording of the source text

The third and final phase of the translator's work is called rewording of the source text. In this point, the translator can apply his stylistic talent.

It is important to note that the source text and target language are not equivalent, so they cannot be translated mechanically.

An important part of translation is so-called compensation. Compensation is one of the forms of substitution. In the course of the work, the translator can compensate the lexical and stylistic preferences of the foreign language for preferences of the target text. [28]

On the topic of compensation Horálek writes that it is possible to allow the use of such expressions without direct counterparts in the original on the grounds of compensation if it is within the overall focus of the text. [29]

The translator mainly deals with the incommensurability of two languages (source and target languages).

The translation of, for example, poetry, requires a great deal of intervention in the content of the work in order to keep the rhyme. Intervention in the content of the work is called formal incommensurability. [30]

The semantic aspect of incommensurability of two different languages is frequently very obvious in translation. Each language is different in terms of the same facts. This refers to naming the time slots of the day, consanguine naming, or for example in case of grammar. West European languages have different tempus. The Czech language is poorer in this respect and has to compensate this with vivid prefixes. [31]

There is often a situation in which so-called compromise language instruments appear. These instruments are used if the language barrier between two languages cannot be overcome. The translator therefore creates his/her own stylistic structures. These constructions are usually the relative clauses, prepositional phrases, lack of poetics. Frequent use of these constructions in translation proves a lack of creativity. [32]

## **3 Translation difficulties**

### **3.1 Reproduction accuracy of translated text**

One of the key difficulties of translation theory and practice is the question of the reproduction accuracy of the translated text. This contradiction between the literal translation (faithful translation) and the translation, which is primarily about beauty and appeal (loose translation), extends throughout the development of translation methods. [33]

Now each of them will be briefly characterized.

#### **3.1.1 Faithful translation**

Levý defines the faithful or literal translation as follows: *“The faithful translation admits only the exchange of the linguistic material and other elements, which are heading to uniqueness as a part of atmosphere, often at the expense of comprehensibility, i.e. at the expense of general meaning.”* [34]

Such a translation primarily aims to mechanically reproduce the original. Translator’s creativity is often lacking in faithful translation. For this type of translation the bond with the original is characteristic and there is often adherence to individual details. [35]

### 3.1.2 Free translation

The free translation<sup>1</sup>, on the other hand, emphasizes the general. Jiří Levý states on the subject of the free translation that such a procedure: “*retains the general content and form and introduces a substitution throughout the area.*” [36] This means that free translation uses update and localization.

A great difficulty for a translator are the facts that were or still are commonly known in the area where the original came into existence. On the other hand, such facts may be completely foreign to the reader of the translation. [37]

The free translation, in other words the adaptation translation, strives for a creative translation of the source text into the target language. While working with the text, the translator uses his creativity, and therefore there is a very different degree of freeness of the translation. [38]

## 3.2 Interference

Interference can be found in translations in various forms.

Zlata Kufnerová (linguistics, translation linguistics; 1935- ) divides these mistakes into two groups:

1. Quantitative mistakes
2. Quality mistakes

By quantitative mistakes is meant the assumption of phrases and expressions that exist in the target language but have different stylistic use. This interference is poorly recognizable and is not taken as a mistake as such. [39]

Quality mistakes are on second thought very well recognizable. These mistakes are predominantly represented by a morphological, lexical and phraseological level. [40]

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<sup>1</sup> Jiří Levý uses the term “loose translation”. The author has chosen to use the term “free translation”.

### 3.3 Equivalency (Knittlová)

When translating individual meaning units, the translator often encounters numerous differences. These differences are included in the denotational and pragmatic meaning components and result from different naming of individual parts in source and target language (translational equivalents)<sup>2</sup>. [41]

In her book D. Knittlová (university pedagogue, translator from English; 1929- ) divides the translational equivalents into three categories:

- 1) Full or absolute equivalents
- 2) Partial equivalents (most of them)
- 3) Zero equivalents

Full or absolute equivalents include basic words, mainly nouns that have an anthropocentric meaning. By this are meant people, body parts, animals, time data, and human abstracts. [42]

Due to the fact that the Czech and English languages are historically, socially and geographically distinct, the partial equivalents in translations predominate. Partial equivalence is observable in formal, semantically denotative, semantically connotative and pragmatic differences. [43]

Formal differences mean one-word/multi-word expressions. The English language includes more multi-word expressions than the Czech language. The use of one-word (explicit) expressions is limited by the fact that there is no direct word expression in the Czech language. [44]

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<sup>2</sup> The author has decided to keep the term “translational equivalents” according to Knittlová – K teorii i praxi překladu

The semantic difference concerning the denotative meaning components results, as has already been said, from different naming of words in both languages. This tagged fact is the same or meets at least one same function in the text, so the denotative information remains unchanged. The most common semantic difference between English and Czech language is called the specification, with other words substitution by hyponym. This is mainly due to the fact that English is a nominal language and Czech is a verbal language. For example, the English verb of movement “arrive” does not include the semantic agent of movement and is compared to Czech language ambivalent. On the contrary, in Czech, the specificity of the verb *jít* is typical. This verb can be used as *přijít* and is therefore hierarchically, in terms of directionality, over the English verbs come and arrive. [45]

Knittlová also lists the connotative differences and divides them into two categories: expressive and stylistic. Expressivity is understood as a highlighting of statement. Selected language means depend on the situation and characteristics of the speaker. Stylistic connotative components are often characterized by the distribution of language strata and formations. Since Czech and English are greatly different in terms of language, the translator has to choose means of language that are adequate to the target language. The translator uses many common Czech, slang, vulgar and rough expressions. And Stylistic connotative differences include expressive, colloquial, slang, student expressions. [46]

Translator creates semantically pragmatic differences with his or her approach to the readers. Translator gives information in the text to extend the meaning and make the text easy to understand. [47]

Zero equivalents are those terms for which there is no proper translation in the target language. This problem is most often solved by borrowing or, for example, a functional analogy, in which case a partial equivalent is created again. [48]

## **4 History of Translatology**

For the topic of the bachelor thesis ‘Czech Translatology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century’ is important to mention the history of translation. The following phases of interpreting will be chronologically and briefly described. The author focused mainly on Europe and the Czech Republic.

### **4.1 The Middle Ages and modern history**

The evolution of interpreting varies between countries. The beginnings of translation are characterized by the translation of only isolated words. Thus, the translations were similar to dictionaries. Later, terminology dictionaries created new names for the given things (e.g. herbarium) in the target language. [49]

The great development of translation was mainly due to Christianity, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the focus was on Latin originals. Latin became a church, sacral and cultural language. [50]

The term Translation was used for the first time in the Renaissance. The mention of the author of the original and the translation was already common. Czech translators (the so-called Czech humanists) have tried to prove that the Czech language is able to compare to foreign languages. [51]

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Protestant translations came to the fore. Characteristic of this time was the invention of book printing. This resulted in large increase in publishing activity. The most important were translations of the Bible for the public, so that everyone could read it in their own language. It is possible to say, that the translations at this point was more a religious discipline. Probably the best known translator of the Bible was Martin Luther (1483-1546). He also attempted to translate humanist theoretical considerations into religious terms. [52]



However, some translations were taken as heresy, for instance, Ettiene Dolet (a French humanist, writer, translator, poet and printer; 1509-1546) was condemned for heresy and subsequently hanged due to a poor translation of the Socrates dialogue. [53]

Translating in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was very limited by the Church. Translations were made only orally and were not allowed to be written down. [54]

They were re-established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The translators of this period were not afraid of reworking the source work (extension, variation or deleting certain passages of source texts). [55] In this way two different types of translation were created – free translation and faithful translation. [56]

#### **4.1.1 National revival**

The period of national revival played a major role in the development of the Czech translation. It is possible to divide it into two periods.

- A) The period of Jungmann – this period is characterized by the renewal of the damped Czech language.
- B) The period of Vrchlický – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when translators were trying to keep up with European translations. [57]

Jaroslav Vrchlický (Czech writer, poet, playwright and translator; 1853-1912) met for his translations with a number of critics. For example, T.G. Masaryk criticized Vrchlický for not respecting the original and for a non-individualized poetic style. [58]

The criticism of Jaroslav Vrchlický was the reason for the emergence of a new literary group called Czech modern. This translation group criticizes Vrchlický's translation method and Vrchlický as a translator in general. The subject of criticism was mainly the Vrchlický's free translation. [59]

C) Otokar Fischer also calls the third epoch of the development of translation as a Revision period. [60]

The 19<sup>th</sup> century started the large wave in translation. A larger part of major works have been translated, so the next generation of translator has added only the missing works. The third epoch in the development of translating comes to the fore when translators have already had to take into account some translational traditions. [61]

During this period, mainly the translations of German, English and French literature prevailed. Translations of Russian literature, on the contrary, have fallen sharply. [62] However, German works still dominated. [63]

## 5 Translatology of 20<sup>th</sup> century

### 5.1 The beginning of the century

The turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century was mainly characterized by a certain “struggle” for the accuracy of the translation.

This period was particularly unfavourable to the translations of poetry. On the contrary, it is possible to describe this period as a prosaic period. There are a number of prosaic translations and volumes. For instance, 24 volumes by Tolstoy (1909-1924), 7 volumes by Dickens (1910-1912), 30 volumes by Zola (1908-1927). [64]

The main representatives of this period include František Xaver Šalda (Czech literary critic, journalist and writer; 1867-1937). Together with T.G. Masaryk F.X. Šalda was the main critic of the Vrchlický's translations. Despite the fact that F.X. Šalda criticized J. Vrchlický for not respecting the meaning of the original text in his translations, a few years later he admired Otokar Fischer for freedom in translating. He claimed that for the poet the source text is only a model for creation of the new original work. [65]

In Šalda's attitude certain change in opinion is visible. It is therefore possible to divide his development of opinions into two periods.

In the first period until 1900, Šalda strictly criticized authors of the translations for not following the original texts. He declared against the transformation of the Czech literature to resemble foreign literature and fought for its individuality. “*The aim of the translation is not to draw us the foreign literature nearer, but also to convey to us its characteristic foreign features and thus contribute to the cultural individualization of our own nation.*” [66]

After 1922 Šalda accepted the Otokar Fischer's theory of the free and unique translation. He defended the idea that the translated work is a unique work. There is, therefore, a decline of the faithful translation. [67]

In both of these periods Šalda constantly emphasized that translation was a creative act. [68]

F.X. Šalda also expressed his opinion on the translation situation in general. After Czech translation began to deal with interpreting of the foreign literature rather than criticism in general, there have appeared fundamental contradictions. For example, when the decadent edition of the Book of Good authors and the realistic Laichter's Collection of Beautiful literature were published in 1905, Šalda reacted to them as on a summary of two different views of life and the world. On the one hand, it was an art that renounced the ideological and educative mission of literature and, on the other hand, the art, which moralistically promoted "material" values. These are the two most distinctive poles among the interpretations of foreign cultural values. Šalda belongs to the first group of translators and promotes French literature (Balzac, Flaubert) above English literature. [69] [70]

## **5.2 The period between wars**

The need for a new approach to translation has begun to be felt in our country several years before the First World War. After twenty years of translation activities of authors who depended methodically on theories of Czech Modern, the translational literalism became unbearable for, for instance, language reasons. [71]

The first attempts to reform the Czech translation were directed against the non-Czech language of translations. On May 14, 1911, began J.V. Sterzinger's campaign against the bad language of translated literature, in the newspaper *Národní listy*. Sterzinger (Czech secondary school professor,

philologist, lexicographer, author of German-Czech dictionaries and translator from German and French; 1866-1939) also suggested how to resolve this situation, namely to set up an association of translators and readers who would promote the quality of translations. At the initiative of this proposal, the Association of Translation was founded in June 1911. One of the main functions was to promote all good translations and to suppress the bad ones. Another very important function was that each member of this association had to submit his/her translations and the commission of this association had to approve the translations. [72]

This association has created a great interest in enhancing the translation tradition and educating the new generation of translators, however, the new translation method has not been developed yet. [73]

### **5.2.1 New translation method**

A new generation of translators had to create a new translation method. In 1914, Otokar Fischer (Czech literary historian and professor of German studies at Charles University; 1883-1938) published his first major translation. A year later, translators of this period were working on translations of French poetry (Karel Čapek, Hanuš Jelínek or Viktor Dyk). The period of the First Republic belongs to one of the most important periods of Czech translation. For instance, these following works have been published – Čapek's French poetry (1920) or Jelínek's From the contemporary poetry of French (1925). [74]

Around O. Fischer a group of translators was formed, who shared his views and followed his theory of translation. It can be argued that O. Fischer has created a new generation of translators. Jiří Levý described this generation as "Fischer's School", even though that not everyone in this group of translator has sympathized with O. Fischer. [75]

The common goal was to revise already written works. Otokar Fischer revises in 1916 the drama *Cyrano* and again criticizes Jaroslav Vrchlický for the loss of dramatic character of translation. [76]

After the First World War, the need for nature and simplicity in the poetry and prose works has grown. Karel Čapek is admired for the simplicity and meaningfulness of his translations. At the drama the requirement was similar, the translators were trying to observe the continuity of language. In 1920, Otokar Fischer began working with Karel Čapek and they have formed jointly a translation for Molière's *Sganarella* play. This work was an absolute revolution in translating of drama, because the language of the translation was very comprehensible and it was intended for the general public. [77]

The attributes of folk language are used not only in drama, despite a great development of the theatre, after 1918, but they are getting also into poetry. Translators of poems try to give every single word the richest possibilities for imagination. [78]

The disadvantage of exaggerated word substitution with more colourful expressions is that language was often vulgarized. The aesthetic form of Czechoslovak translating between the two world wars was very difficult for these reasons. However, the common goal was to find new distinctive language expressions. Every translator has found his own methods for creating new language expressions. Fischer, for example, constantly feels the need to update is already created translations. O. Fischer claimed: "*The update is related to the contemporary situation of other reproductive arts, for example, with a director at our theatre.*" [79]

On the one hand, O. Fischer sought to update the translations, but on the other hand he did not allow the update to be violent. Fischer's artistic taste and theoretical attitude prevented him from the violent updating. This translator, though he is translating for the present, does not see a foreign

artwork from the point of view of the present but from a broader developmental perspective. Thus, Fischer tried to combine the present and historical aspects, trying to convey what was in the work at the time of its creation penetrative and new, and then to express it with a new and penetrative way also in the translation. It was about preserving the historical significance of the source texts, although in the period between the two wars there was a typical general enthusiasm of everything new and original. [80]

In 1920s and 1930s, the situation in the translation changed slightly. Translators sought metaphysical connections and the mystique of numbers rather than life and its problems in their translations. This resulted in not correct interpretation of the foreign literature. Numerous works have come down in a bad interpretation, which distorted the original meaning (for instance, Whitman's Leaves of grass has been translated as Straws of grass.) [81]

Another problem was "the theory of literal faithfulness". Authors have often followed the syntax of the original too excessively. Translations are filled with foreign words, which are subsequently explained below the line. [82]

It ought to be mentioned, that the translators of this period had the translation as a job. But this job was limited by the fact that the official critique and editors of the collections approved and supported literal translation. [83]

### **5.2.2 Translations of English and American literature between the wars**

In the period after the First World War, interest in English and American literature grew enormously. These were mainly prosaic literature, mostly novels. [84]

The great development of the book industry had resulted in greater social impact of translations and greater readers' interest. New publishing houses were founded. Among these publishing houses held a strong position J. Otto, who restored the Anglo-American Library<sup>3</sup>, continued with the editions of the World Library and the Proceedings of World Poetry. New publishers included Aventinum, Václav Petr, Odeon (J. Fromek) or Sfinx. [85]

A large volume of translations of English prose published between the wars are the works of authors considered the most prestigious. Arnold Bennett (the traditionalist of social novel; 1867-1931) passed through his crowning era in Czechoslovakia, although this author was paradoxically criticized in England for example by modernist criticism. However, the largest volume of translations were published in the 1920s and 1930s of the well-known English writer John Galsworthy, the Forsyte Saga (1906-1922) and Modern comedy (1924-1928). [86]

Another major translated author was H. G. Wells (1866-1946). Almost all of his works were translated before the beginning of the Second World War. His works include a wide range of prose, including science fiction novels (The Island of Doctor Moreau (1896)), realistic prose (Kipps (1905), The History of Mr Polly (1910)), and humanistic work (A Modern Utopia (1905)). [87]

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<sup>3</sup> This library was suspended in 1913



This overview of the authors, who have been translated into Czech, is a clear proof that Czech culture no longer lags behind foreign cultures but selects on its own from English and American literature. In the 1920s and 1930s, it was typical for the Czech culture to communicate with foreign culture<sup>4</sup> and gradually engage in Poetism. Unfortunately it cannot be said that Czech literature would have a particular influence on English literature. Although, individual exceptions, such as Milada Součková (1899-1983), can be found. [88]

On the contrary, the Czech response to English modernism was greatly quick and the British and some American modernist scene fascinated and attracted some Czech translators. The most prominent authors of modernism include James Joyce (1882-1941), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), or Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923). [89]

A great number of Czech translators also expressed their views on the link between modernist literature and the post-war crisis in line with the concept of literature. Therefore, according to these certain connections, one of the manifestations of literary modernism in Bohemia was its discovery by translation. [90]

This discovery can be considered as one of the possible directions of translational exploration of the history of translation as part of literature and culture. An interesting field of the analysis of the modernist translation is represented by the translations of the translator of the period between wars Staša Jílovská (1898-1955). Jílovská is a representative of the social and cultural phenomenon, which was constantly evolving from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1940s, and contributed a significant share of women in literary translation. Jílovská adjusted the magazine *Vest Pocket Revue*,

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<sup>4</sup> Probably led by French culture

was active as a publishing worker and was in close contact with members of left-wing avant-garde. Examples of the works she translated are *The House of Mirths* (1905), which is considered to be a very successful translation due to the fact that the author managed to keep the complicated syntax of the original, or *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). [91]

### **5.3 1950s and 1960s**

During the Second World War, translation and publishing activities were suspended. Their activity was restored only after the end of the Second World War, new publishing companies were also being created, and translation literature also introduced many novelties from foreign literature. [92]

World classical literature was newly discovered as part of education and efforts to make cultural heritage accessible. New conceived editions like *World Reading* or *Classics Library* were emerging. Classical literature had also been represented in readers' clubs with many readers, such as the *Odeon Reading Club*. [93]

It is considered to be new that ideological questions were increasingly getting into the translation literature. The so-called social rebuilding tool was clearly evident in the literature. In the theoretical considerations of translation literature, therefore, more space was devoted to the question of selection from the translation literature. In general, translation work was poorly appreciated and the overall level of translation literature was low and the preference and financial support turned to translators who were in the service of political conservatism. [94]

### 5.3.1 Political regime

The Ministry of Culture, which was currently directing the publishing activity, specified publishing activities in 1953. The translation of beautiful literature was distributed mainly among the State Publishers of Beautiful Literature, Music and Art (later Odeon), Mladá fronta and other publishing houses. [95]

Even during this period Czech translation met with other political limitations. All plans for translation of works and their publication had to be approved by the Ministry. Nevertheless, some of the American and English works have gradually been published by translators and editors. Some purism<sup>5</sup>, endeavour to educate, and political opinions on the selection of so-called “good and progressive” authors for translation were also overcome. The situation has worsened and complicated considerably after 1968 and for the period of “normalization”<sup>6</sup>, where cooperation with some translators and experts was forbidden (predominantly those who opposed the Soviet Union and those who signed a protest petition against the occupation of Czechoslovakia), editorial projects were stopped, also Czech surrealism, existentialism, absurd theatre, a new novel were forbidden, and the government tried to control the translation as much as possible. [96]

This type of policy has resulted in reduction in all translations in general. It was possible to publish only socialist writers. The Russian artworks about the war and the works of classic critical realists Gogol (1809-1852) and Chekhov (1860-1904) were coming to the forefront. [97]

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<sup>5</sup> Purism = an effort for stylish purity in creation

<sup>6</sup> Normalization in Czechoslovak history is the period from the violent suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968 by the Warsaw Pact armies to the Velvet Revolution at the end of 1989.

Still, the development of the translation has never been completely stopped and in the autumn of 1968 interpreters and translators founded the Czech Association of Interpreters and Translators and later published a magazine called *Ad Notam*. This journal dealt with terminology and glossaries issues and also with translational aspects of language. [98]

### **5.3.2 Translating of English and American literature in 1950s and 1960s**

Translation often encountered a number of difficulties, whether financial support or translation success or failure. This was manifested especially during the Cold War period, when the cultures on both sides of the Iron Curtain became interested in each other. In the East, Anglophone writers were preferred, probably because they criticized the West. In the West, many critics, especially those who dealt with poetry, claimed that their point of interest is merely the aesthetic value of work of art, regardless of its political. The reader can learn more from Jan Zábřana's poetry translations how the Cold War period influenced the writing of literature. [99]

In 1959, Jan Zábřana (Czech poet, prose writer, essayist and translator from Russian and English; 1931-1984) translated the poems of several radical poets, organized the *Annual Fifth: The Anthology of American Radical Poetry* and wrote a commentary to this book. The reason why Zábřana started to do this translation is certainly not known. From the available sources, the author thinks that the reason could have been that even though Zábřana in his life never stood against the Communist regime, a few years before the translation of these poems Zábřana's mother was imprisoned and sentenced for friendly relations with Milada Horáková (the victim of judicial murder during communist political processes in 1950s for a plot and treason; 1901-1950) and, at the very least, this could be the reason for criticism of the political regime. [100]

Other writers dealing with problems similar to Jan Zábřana include Vítězslav Nezval, Christa Wolf, Seamus Heaney and Miroslav Holub. [101]

### 5.3.2.1 Prose and poetry

Although the world classical literature was published in large numbers and was the cynosure, many works, such as Dickens or Twain, were issued for the first time in the 1950s. The choice of contemporary Anglo-American translation literature has been politically greatly restricted to the creation of so-called “progressive” writers. Hence, the worsening of the awareness about war period and the literature connected with the war. At the end of the 1950s, and especially in the 1960s, the political situation began to gradually release and other artworks began to be accepted than so-called “progressive” writers’ artworks. A number of authors have been translated in Czech for the first time in this period (e. g. Fitzgerald, Faulkner, and Steinbeck). [102]

Even though some works began to be translated for the first time, and the number of translated books was increasing (but still quite slowly), the libraries did not manage to add the new translations. The Prague Library had considerable gaps in translations of classic literature, for example. Some older translations could even be found in libraries. It was a shame, therefore, that translations of the world literature weren’t been published at a faster pace to be possible to fill in these empty spaces in the libraries. [103]

Czech translation also faced economic problems. By this printer capacities, paper rations, or expensive prints are meant. Nevertheless, the number of translated works and the number of authors have gradually increased. For example, the English post-war novels were published in this period in abundant numbers (K. Amis, A. Wilson, or S. P. Snow). Not even the American war novels were left behind (N. Mailer, J. Heller, W. Eastlake, or J. H. Burns). [104]

The poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was published relatively in abundance. Different situation was, for example, in the earlier English classical poetry, when there were only a small number of good translations. Among the exceptions were translations of H. Žantovská or Shakespeare's Sonnets performed by Jan Vladislav. In the 1950s and mainly in the 1960s, the number of poetry translations grew considerably. Odeon, the Květy magazine or the club Klub přátel poezie (Poetry Friends Club) tried to bring modern poetry as close as possible to the readers. From the translators it was mainly Jan Zábřana, who dealt with modern American poetry, or more precisely with the Beat generation. It is necessary to mention L. Dorůžka and his very successful translations of modern folklore; Ballads and Songs of the Coalfields (1956) or an extensive volume of American Folk Poetry (1961). [105]

### **5.3.3 The beginnings of the theory of interpretation in Czechoslovakia**

A significant breakthrough in the development of the translation occurred when in this period the translation became an independent teaching course of study at many universities. These universities were located in lots of places around the world and prepared a student for the profession of conference interpreter. In 1963, a four-year study field of translation and interpreting was also set up in Prague at the University of 17<sup>th</sup> November. The same course of study opened ten years later at the university in Bratislava. These two workplaces had a significant share of research in field of interpreting in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. [106]

The first theoretical considerations date back to the late 1950s, when Alois Krušina (1861-1926), who later worked at the mentioned university in Prague, published an article on the Methods of Interpretation Training. This publication was influenced by Western and Eastern professionals

from the field of translation. The political situation also contributed to this fact when Eastern Bloc sought to draw the inspiration from the West. It was much easier to get publications written in German, French, English, but on the other hand for example a German reader could hardly get a publication written in Czech or Slovak. [107]

Perhaps this is why experts in Czechoslovakia have concentrated mainly on their homeland, creating their own publications and training new translators. Interpreters and translators were trained at universities by professional interpreters, who have had practical experience in the field and have tried to seek new methods and breakthroughs. These important professors include Alois Krušina, as well as Jiří Leksa, Nina Močalová, Zuzana Tomanová and Alena Hromasová. All these interpreters focus in their articles on the “*quality, content and aims of education of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting*”. [108] In his thesis J. Herbert (1952) focused on the findings of consecutive interpreting, and claimed the interpreter/translator should write only short notes and use his own memory when translating. [109]

## **5.4 Situation of Czech Translatology in 1970s and 1980s**

The author mentioned in chapter 5.3 the establishment of a union of Czech interpreters and translators (the Czech Association of Interpreters and Translators). This association and its, for its time, unique magazine were abolished in 1972. The staff of the universities were often forced to leave their workplace. All these interferences were caused by the period of normalization and the government's control effort. This resulted in the abolition of the University of the 17<sup>th</sup> November and the subsequent transfer of the Department of Translation and Interpreting to the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University. [110]

### **5.4.1 Theory of Translation and Interpreting in 1970s and 1980s**

The abolition of the University of 17<sup>th</sup> November and the *Ad Notam* magazine did not prevent authors (at that time teachers at Charles University: Eva Janovcová, Marine Formánková-Csiriková, Hana Kučerová, Zuzana Jettmarová, Ivana Čeňková) from publishing professional texts. They have published mainly in collections *Slavica Pragensia* and *Translatologica Pragensia*, which deal with lectures on international scientific translation and interpreting conferences. These conferences have been held at the Charles University since 1978 every two years. In their publications, the authors deal mainly with the theoretical considerations on translation and interpretation process (definition of information, didactics of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, preservation of translation style, and so forth). [111]

The author considers interesting the fact, that, according to the available sources, the few real interpreters and translators worked at the university, and showed the interest in the study of Translation and Interpreting (until 1980, there were only two defended dissertations from the field of interpreting and translation, which were a condition for obtaining PhDr. degree). [112]

Most theorists dealing with the theory of interpretation and translation work, as has been said, worked as a teacher on the university, notwithstanding this, in the 1980s there were theoreticians who dealt with this named theory and did not work at the university. These included, for instance, Ota Sofr and his countless articles on the topic of interpreting theory; he also published terminology glossaries, and took lectures about interpreting. As the only theoretician of his time, O. Sofr devoted himself very intensively and systematically to this subject and published a rigorous work on the Analysis



of the Interpretation Process. Since O. Sofr was a Germanist, he devoted himself and leans his theory of Leipzig school and its representatives (G. Jäger, A. Neubert, O. Kade). [113]

Only rarely it is possible to find a researcher from another field who would deal with interpreting and translating. I. Čeňková introduces Jana Holšánová, who in the middle 1980s was an aspirant of the Institute for the Czech Language<sup>7</sup>, and started to deal mainly with the question of interpretation and took several experiments, which served to analyse consecutive interpreting. [114]

#### **5.4.2 Translation of English and American literature in 1970s and 1980s**

The admission of post-war translations lead to the continuous development of the language culture of the translation. Translators of modern Anglo-Saxon literature have been forced to look for adequate language equivalents for expressive content and to overcome old translation traditions in order to promote colloquial and slang expressions in artistic text. [115]

This major shift in translation of literature was commented by D. Steinová in her contribution to the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Odeon: *“It’s just translations – and the language of the translations – not only influenced by the professional public, but they have helped readers to overcome considerable conservatism in relation to literature”*. [116] In other words, she pointed to the advances made by the Czech translation and how the translation came closer to the reader.

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<sup>7</sup> Ústav pro jazyk český, ČSAV

By “conservatism” in the literature is meant the harsh rejection of slang, argot and colloquial language, and the acceptance of literature only as a means of education. In order to faithfully reproduce the source text without changing linguistic and stylistic means, it was essential to break through this barrier of conservatism. [117]

All modern literature is characterized by the penetration of the colloquial language into literature and the gradual release of language forms. Reading the works of art in the colloquial language appears to readers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century natural and innate, but in the period of 1970s it was a highly discussed topic of whether an artist, in our case, a translator, can allow to write and translate the works in to colloquial language. [118]

## **5.5 1980s 1990s**

### **5.5.1 Institute of Translatology**

The Department of Translation and Interpreting of Charles University (which in 1993 was transformed into the Institute of Translatology) was the only university institution to provide a master’s degree in translatology and to carry out research in this field. [119]

After November 1989, there have been major changes in both general and university soil. A number of teachers and professors were left the Department of Translation and Interpreting, but on the other hand some of those who had to leave university for the period of normalization returned (Jiří Leksa, Dely Serrano, and so forth). There were also new professors who provided education in a wider range of foreign languages. I. Čeňková (graduate of the field of translating and interpreting at the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University; 1954- ) noted that a good teacher of translation and interpretation can only be the one who actively interprets or translates and is in constant contact with the practice and culture of

translation and can provide students with the most relevant materials directly from practice. It is noteworthy that at that time interpreting and translation teaching was provided in a number of languages (English, French, German, Russian, Spanish). [120]

After the Velvet Revolution of 1989, representatives of Czech translation and translatology were also involved in a number of international seminars and lectures. Teachers in this field could go abroad and take part in variety of internships and courses, such as in Brussels or Geneva, and also perform at conferences in Paris, Vienna or Saarbrücken and teach their theoretical knowledge. In recent years (1989-2000), professional publications have grown considerably throughout the world. The Institute of Translatology participated in many foreign conferences and the main goal was the development of the field of interpreting and the prestige of this whole young scientific discipline. [121]

### **5.5.2 The story of Jindřich Veselý**

After 1980, the political interest in translation literature began to increase gradually. The Ministry of Culture addressed the leading Czech translators (from the Association of Czech Translators) to prepare a comprehensive analysis of Czech translation work. Jindřich Veselý (a college teacher and one of the leading Odeon editors) worked out an analysis of translation literature from French. He has written a volume of French theatre of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a volume of French classical comedy and several volumes of French poetry. [122]

It was the year 1986 and Odeon Published *Waiting for Godot* (Interestingly, Samuel Beckett, who at that time celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and was the winner of the Nobel Prize, never wrote anything antisocialist, and yet he was considered to be the representative of the forbidden “absurd theatre”). [123]

Jindřich Veselý was forced to write postscript for this book because the book could not be published otherwise. He thus faced the danger of political imprisonment. He said: *“It is great when you look at the results and you see a piece of honest service to Czech reader behind yourself.”* [124]

## Conclusion

The bachelor thesis deals with the translatology of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the territory of the Czech Republic.

After a brief translation theory and crucial points in the history of the translation, a more detailed analysis of the development of the translation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century follows.

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by translation criticism. František Xaver Šalda is considered by the author as the most significant representative of this period, who fought for the faithful translation. Later, however, his opinion changed and he accepted a freer translation.

In the period between wars, the first attempts to change the translation method appeared. J.V. Sterzinger points out this problem for the first time. Nevertheless, no new method that would generally work does not arise. As the main representatives the bachelor thesis mentions, for instance, Otokar Fischer, Karel Čapek or Viktor Dyk. The translation of American and English literature are also expanding. The translators try to translate as many works as possible, for example, artworks by H. G. Wells or John Galsworthy.

After World War II, some publishing houses (Odeon) are being renewed. More and more ideological issues appear in the translated works, and change in political regime causes lagging behind world literature. In the 1960s, the political situation was slightly relaxed and authors outside the regime started to be accepted. Nevertheless, the bachelor thesis confirmed the author's hypothesis that after 1968, during the period of normalization, the situation really deteriorated and there was a strict restriction on the translation of foreign works. In this period, the University of 17<sup>th</sup> November opened the study field of translation and interpreting. The main representative of this university Alois Krušina is mentioned by the author of the bachelor thesis.

In the 1980s, the Department of Translation and Interpreting was transformed into the Institute of Translatology, which employed a number of translators, for example I. Čeňková. After 1989, the Institute of Translatology has participated in foreign conferences and even has organized some conferences.

The bachelor thesis ends with the story of Jindřich Veselý, which describes the political situation and the difficult conditions of the Czech translator during the communist period. Finally, he notes that although it was not always easy, it is great that he could do it for Czech readers.

The author has found sufficient resources for the bachelor thesis, yet it is clear from these sources that until 1960 the theme of Czech translatology is very well developed. The author assumes that this is because of the time gap of the great interest of Jiří Levý on Czech translation. It is possible that a few years later the development of Czech translatology will be further elaborated.

## **Abstract**

The aim of the bachelor thesis was to point out the development of Czech translatology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and to name the individual stages, key works and representatives of Czech translation.

The bachelor thesis is divided into two major parts, which are further elaborated in other subchapters. The first part focuses on the problematic of translatology as a science discipline, the theory of translation, the concept of a translator and his/her work. The last subchapter in this part is concerned with the most common translation problems that can occur during the translation.

The second part deals with the history of translation focused solely on the territory of the Czech Republic. The author first briefly mentions the history of translation from Middle Ages to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further, the stages of the Czech translation from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 1990s are analysed.

## **Resumé**

Cílem bakalářské práce bylo poukázat na vývoj české translatologie ve 20. století a pojmenovat jednotlivé etapy, stěžejní díla a představitele českého překladu.

Bakalářská práce je rozdělena na dvě velké části, které jsou dále rozvedeny v dalších podkapitolách. První část se zaměřuje na problematiku translatologie jako vědní disciplíny, teorie překladu, pojmu překladatel a co obnáší jeho práce. Poslední podkapitolou jsou nejčastější překladatelské problémy, které mohou nastat při překladu.

Druhá část se zabývá historií překladatelství zaměřenou výhradně na území České republiky. Autor nejdříve stručně zmiňuje historii překladu od středověku do konce 19. století. Dále jsou rozebírány jednotlivé etapy českého překladatelství počínaje začátkem 20. století a konče v 90. letech téhož století.



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