Ms. Natálie Horká´s M.A. thesis – review written by the opponent

Ms. Natálie Horká´s M.A. thesis, **Lost in Translation: Challenges of Translating the African American Vernacular into the Czech Space**, is a study that certainly started with a clear plan. The individual chapters are neatly designed and manage to keep a focus, but the actual content, unfortunately, ended up short of the promise. Partly because of the passages that tend to be too descriptive, partly because of the repetitious nature of the argument, I think.

To start with, there seems to be a certain amount of confusion when it comes to the introduction, summary (in English), resumé (in Czech) and conclusion. Neither of these parts quite meets the expectations, as they do not introduce the methods and justify the sources used, sum up the merit of the thesis or persuasively arrive at the points Ms. Horká wanted to make. The language is also from time to time rather clumsy, and the whole work would for sure benefit from a more careful proofreading. For example, there are way too many „howevers" (see e.g. p. 13 at the bottom, p. 64 at the bottom, p. 66 or p. 67) – I believe Ms. Horká should have established more persuasive connections between the individual words, sentences, and thoughts. Also, I am not at all sure what the phrase „more heart felled" means, and on p. 79 at the bottom, I do not understand (logic) why she has Celie.

When it comes to the actual argument, I find it quite amazing that Jiří Levý is still such a huge figure in the theory of translation, and that Jan Zábrana´s job (*Prezydent krokadýlů*) from 1963 still seems to be the most adequate one in the given area. In comparison, then, there are indeed a few minor problems in Michael Žantovský´s *Nejmodřejší oči*. Ms. Horká is probably right stressing that „čmoud" might be better than „umouněnec", but „odvar" instead of „vývar" might imply witchcraft, and to naturalize names in a consistent

fashion is, I am afraid, a dream (see p.59). As to the very title of the novel, she could have developed the complexity of it even further, and could have explained why she opted for the analysis of translation from 1983. And she could have even interviewed Mr. Žantovský in order to clarify some of the issues she is raising, I believe.

Her own attempt at translation, then, is occasionally marked by the remnants of English syntax (a frequent problem all the translators-beginners face), too many possessive pronouns that are neither used nor needed in Czech, errors in commas, and even some very basic mistakes („nohy vysely" instead of „visely", „dobil Atlantu" instead of „dobyl Atlantu", etc.). And I do not think that it is wise to use both „neboť" and „akorát" in such a proximity (see p. 85).

This being the case, I am suggesting the following grade(s): velmi dobře/very good, or dobře/good. The final result will, as always, depend very much on the review written by the supervisor, as well as on Ms. Horká´s performance during the oral exam.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

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