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Veronika Votípková

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**Presidential election in the USA. Description
of the voting system and translation of some se-
lected texts linked with the theme.**

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**Presidential election in the USA. Description
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Veronika Votípková

Vedoucí práce:

PhDr. Eva Raisová

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Fakulta filozofická Západočeské univerzity v Plzni

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

Plzeň, duben 2014

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I would like to thank PhDr. Eva Raisová, my supervisor, for her professional guidance and patience.

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Introduction

This Bachelor Thesis deals with the presidential election in the United States of America, with the issue of electing not only the president himself, but also with the events that precede and follow it. As this topic is very complex and extensive, it is given a general idea of how it practically works, what actually happens in the Union before and after the election and the whole explanation is followed by a translation of one of Barack Obama's speeches – The 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington speech which was given in August, 2013 in Washington D.C.

The presidential election has a very long tradition in the United States of America and dates back to the year 1788-1789, when the first election under the new United States Constitution took place. George Washington was the one who won this election and thereby a long-time tradition was started and the presidential election has been the most watched, competitive and important joust in the United States ever since.

The first (theoretical) part, of my Bachelor thesis deals with the theoretical explanation of the elections and with the theory of translation. That is followed by the second (practical) part, by the actual translation with a commentary.

The first chapter encompasses information about the elections according to the US Constitution. It explains what is the Electoral College, who can become the president and it also deals with the general explanation of the election process.

The second chapter is focused on so called "swing and safe states". It deals with what it means and why the candidates spend a lot of time with campaigning in such states.

The third chapter gives the reader an idea of what are the primaries, when they start and what they entail.

The fourth chapter explains the issue of national nominating conventions. There is no such thing in the Czech Republic, therefore, the author tried to explain when the national conventions take place, what actually happens and the reader will also get to know something interesting about how the main figures are encrypted to prevent from wiretapping.

The fifth chapter of this Bachelor Thesis encompasses with presidential campaigns and how they are run. It explains its main strategies and different targets to focus them on.

The sixth chapter shortly comments on the Election Day, also called the general election. Since the Bachelor thesis explains quite in detail all of the election procedures, it is not necessary to minutely elaborate about the altogether simple process.

The seventh chapter is focused on the introduction into the theory of translation. It deals with the ambit of translation, explaining its types and methods.

The eighth chapter, which consists of the translation of president Obama's speech, follows that.

The ninth chapter consists of a commentary on the translation, which is based on macro and micro approach.

The tenth chapter is the conclusion, evaluating the Bachelor thesis and the results of the Bachelor thesis are there summarized.

The eleventh and twelfth chapters contain endnotes and bibliography where all sources can be found.

In the fourteenth chapter there is an abstract, i.e. a summary of the Bachelor thesis in English.

The fifteenth chapter is a resumé written in Czech.

The sixteenth chapter contains appendix. The original of the translated speech is there to be found.

The aim of this Bachelor Thesis is to examine the issue of the presidential elections in the USA, to explain all the phases and to give the reader a clear explanation of the process. The very important aim of the Bachelor Thesis is also a quality translation of the selected presidential speech, which indicates that the ability of presidential rhetoric is an important feature. Finally, this Thesis aims to enrich the author's and reader's awareness of the presidential election.

1 DESCRIPTION OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM (According to the US Constitution)

The President and the Vice President are elected for 4 years and are not elected directly by the voters. They are elected by “electors” who are chosen to vote them by vote on state-by-state basis.

1.1 ELECTORAL COLLEGE

“The electors are divided to each state. Every state has to determine a number of electors that must be equal to the number of Senators and members of the House of Representatives, who are being sent to the Congress. In total, there are 538 electors, based on there being 435 representatives and 100 senators, plus the three electors from the District of Columbia.”¹

The Twenty-third Amendment has granted the District of Columbia with the minimum number of electors, which are currently three. That is based also on the number of citizens in the state.

The electors are elected on a winner-take-all basis, which means that if the candidate won more than a half of the votes, he won them all.

That applies on each state of the federation, except from Maine and Nebraska where the state winner receives two Electors and the winner of each congressional district receives one Elector. This system permits the Electors from Nebraska and Maine to be awarded to more than one candidate.

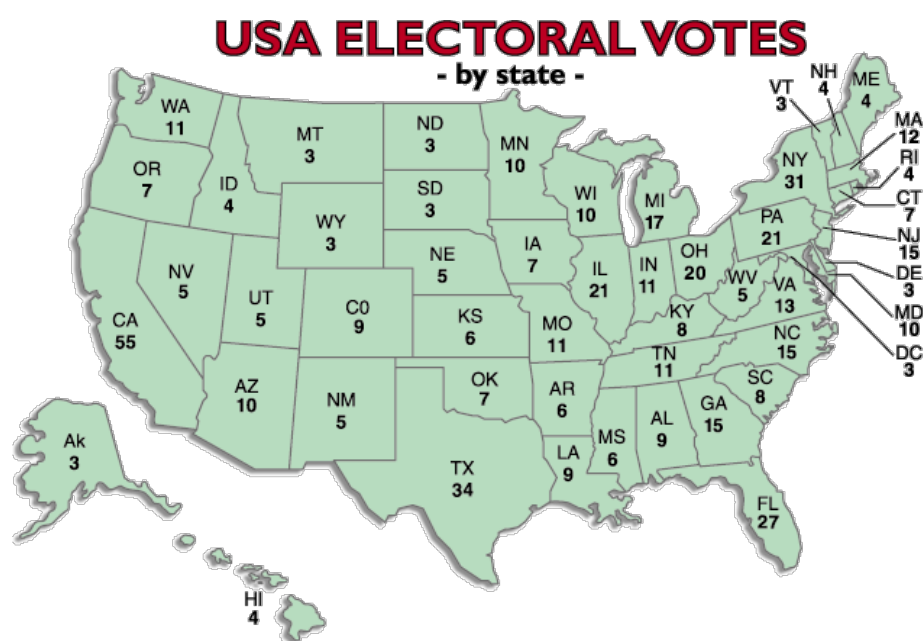
A person may not be appointed an elector if being a Senator, or a Representative, or person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States.

Generally, the political parties nominate Electors at their State party conventions or by a vote of the party’s central committee in each State.

As stated in publication *Výzva demokracie – Systém vlády v USA*², voters vote for a group of unknown electors (whose names are not usually even written on ballots) who pledged to vote for a certain candidate. However, it might happen that, when filling out the ballot, they violate their promises. Such a person may be sometimes called a “faithless elector”³.

A similar situation occurred, for example, when Republican elector Doctor Lloyd W. Bailey of North Carolina decided to vote for Wallace after the 1968 election rather than for his pledged candidate Nixon⁴.

1.2 ELECTORAL MAP



5

1.3 ELECTION PROCESS

”Electors gather in their States and each elector casts two votes – one for President and one for Vice President. One of these two people, who is he voting for, must not be a citizen of the same state as is the elector.”⁶

“A list of candidates is compiled after the election and the votes are counted, then shall be this list signed and certified, and transmitted sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of

the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted.

The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President.”⁷

1.4 WHO CAN BE A PRESIDENT

”No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the adoption of this constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.”⁸

This system leads to a fact that even a candidate with fewer votes can win, if the voters are conveniently apportioned in the States of the Union. In order to give an example, we will have a look at the election in 2000 – Albert Gore vs. George W. Bush. Gore was ahead by 539 947 votes, but lost in a ratio of 266:271.

1.5 TIME OF APPOINTING ELECTORS

“The electors of President and Vice President shall be appointed, in each State, on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in every fourth year succeeding every election of a President and Vice President.”⁹

1.6 MEETING AND VOTE OF ELECTORS

“The electors of President and Vice President of each State shall meet and give their votes on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December next following their appointment at such place in each State as the legislature of such State shall direct.”¹⁰

1.7 COUNTING ELECTORAL VOTES IN CONGRESS

“Congress shall be in session on the sixth day of January succeeding every meeting of the electors. The Senate and House of Representatives shall meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives at the hour of 1 o'clock in the afternoon on that day.”¹¹

2 “SWING” AND “SAFE” STATES

*“A swing state is a state in which both candidates have a reasonable chance of winning, because support is almost evenly divided. The opposite of a swing state is a “safe state,” in which one candidate has a demonstrably clear majority, ensuring that the state will go to him or her. As one might imagine, swing states tend to receive a great deal of attention during election years, because they can make or break the outcome of an election.”*¹²

*“Since a national campaign is interested in electoral votes, rather than the national popular vote, it tends to ignore states that it believes it will win easily; since it will win these without significant campaigning, any effort put into them is essentially wasted. A similar logic dictates that the campaign avoid putting any effort into states that it knows it will lose.”*¹³

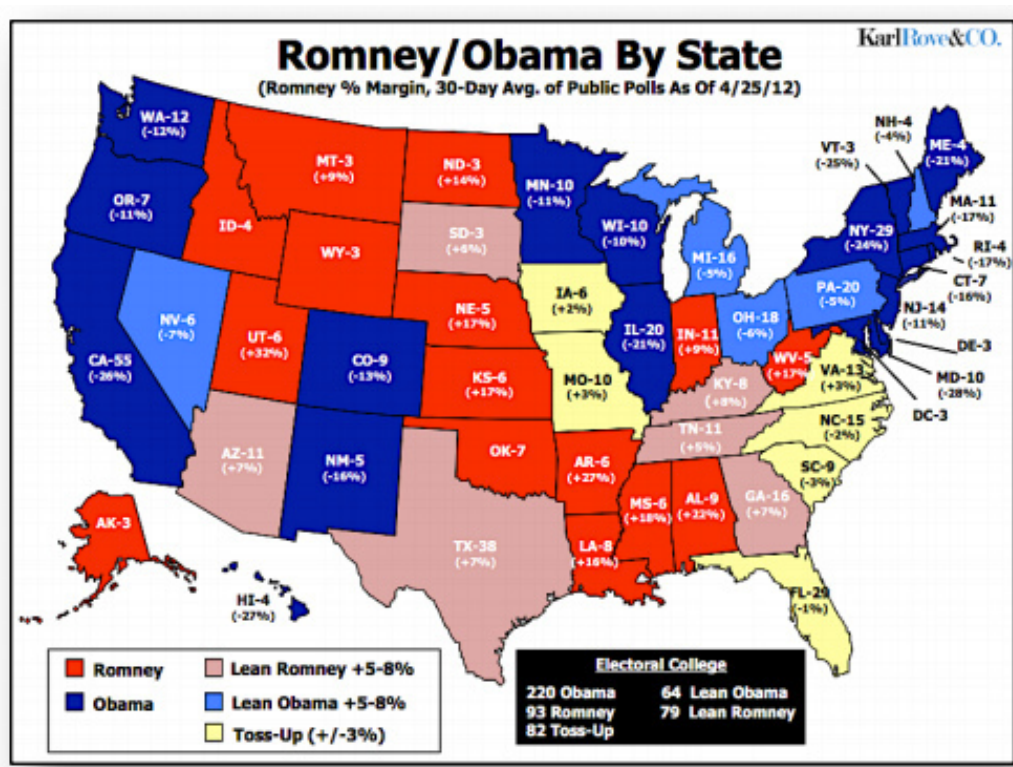
“For instance, a Republican candidate (the more conservative of the two major parties) can expect to easily win many of the Southern states like Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and South Carolina, which historically have a very conservative culture, very

religious, and a more recent history of voting for Republican candidates.

They could also expect to win states like Wyoming, Utah, Idaho and Nebraska, which share conservative values but have had a longer history of voting Republican. Similarly, the same candidate can expect to lose California, Vermont, Massachusetts, Oregon, Hawaii, Connecticut, Illinois, Rhode Island, and New York, traditionally liberal states, no matter how much campaigning is done in those states. ¹⁴

“The only states which the campaign would target to spend time, money and energy in, are those that could be won by either candidate. These are the swing states.”¹⁵

2.1 SWING STATES MAP – ELECTION 2012



3 PRIMARY ELECTION

Even though the presidential election takes place on Tuesday after the first Monday in November, the primaries begin as early as in January of that year. Nevertheless, it has not always been as it is nowadays.

Until the late 19th or early 20th centuries, the presidential candidate of the Republican and the Democratic parties were picked at a nominating convention made up of political leaders from each state. These were influential men, who, as it was assumed, knew better than the masses who a good leader would be. Sometimes it happened that in a “smoke filled back room” of a bar, the most powerful leaders (called Party “bosses”) would get together and purely select who the nominee was and then tried to arrange support among the people who were loyal to those leaders at the official convention. The nominee was, in theory, selected by a democratic convention, although in practice, it was usually a back-room deal. The problem was that the masses of voting citizens had no say on the nominee.

Around the turn of the 20th century, people agitated for reform in social, economic and political systems. The states began, therefore, a system of primary elections, which came before the general election on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

These primaries meant that there could be a greater variety of interests or candidates available to choose from. This decreased the power of the “party bosses” and the conventions. Anyone registered as a member of either the Republican or Democratic parties could vote for Republican or Democratic candidates in the primary. Also, secret ballots that enabled free voting for party nominees were introduced.

The first presidential primary election was held in 1901 in Florida and more than forty of the fifty states held the primary election by 2005. The

winner of each state primary received delegates at the convention in the summer who were bound by law to vote for that winner.

There are more types of the primary election. Concerning the presidential primary election, it should be mentioned about two main types – **open** and **closed primary**.

Most primaries are meant to be party-sponsored contests where the party members elect the nominee for their party to run against the nominee of the other party. The original idea was that these were “closed” primaries, which meant they were closed to everyone except for the registered members of one particular party. Most commonly only registered Republicans could select the nominee for the Republican Party and only Democratic registered voters can vote for Democratic candidates in a primary.

However, a number of states (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin)¹⁷ have “open” primaries, which means that any registered voter can choose which primary he or she wants to vote in that day.

It may be thought that primary election is a matter of one day, however, the opposite is true. It is a matter of months and there are primary schedules that are well planned ahead. In practice, this means that the primary schedule for elections in 2016 is already being made. The first state to have a primary is New Hampshire. New Hampshire has held the first primary every year since 1952. Although there are only a few candidates chosen in the New Hampshire primary, its importance consists in the massive media coverage it receives (along with the Iowa caucus). These two states received in the last twenty years as much media attention as all other states combined. This, in practice, means that primaries

start in January of the election year and last throughout the year, usually until July.

The purpose of primary elections is to provide an opportunity for more voters to have a say about who the nominee is going to be and to meet and listen to the candidates in advance of the votes. This system is meant to be more democratic than the old 19th century system.

4 NATIONAL NOMINATING CONVENTS

The national convents meet in July and August and their mission is to nominate candidates for the position of the President and the Vice-president, to adopt the program of the party, to elect, to approve the highest authorities of the party and to prepare the election campaign.

As mentioned before, the winner of each state primary receives delegates at the convention, who are bound by law to vote for that winner. The conventions, therefore, became large celebrations because everybody basically knew who the nominee would be long before the convention was held.

As stated in the publication “Jak se dělá prezident Spojených států Amerických”, the national convents are periods of various promises and demagogic slogans.¹⁸ There is usually a very intense struggle and haggling about the adoption of the program of the party, which also carries the meaning of the convention. This platform is, nevertheless, not binding and the president is usually not blamed, after winning, for not entirely keeping it. The program remains to be a capture of how the party wanted to look at that moment in the eyes of the public. The programs of the main political parties are subjects of discussion for several days. Both sides spend a great amount of time with preparations.¹⁹

There are organizers, who are responsible for maintaining party discipline and for regulating the action. They also control the course of the convention and they are called “whips”. There is a “Chief whip” that is superior to other whips from several areas, on which is the convention hall divided. Whips can be distinguished by, for example, red caps. Except from the whips, there is a network of organizers who are ready for radical situations and they are all connected by phone.

In addition, the staff has someone who is called a “Center forward” or sometimes a “Head hunter”. These pay attention to delegates who still

hesitate with their votes, they can take them to the massage parlor to give them a treat. Every candidate for nomination has such an organization. Main figures of the convent are encrypted, so that their phones cannot be wiretapped. To give an example, President Gerald Ford was encoded as a “Tarzan” on the Republican nominating convention in 1976, Vice President Nelson Rockefeller as a “Superman” and one of the leaders of the staff – Senator John Tower from Texas was encrypted as a “Cowboy”.

5 CAMPAIGN

The election campaign is a very complex process with a difficult strategy that is being prepared ahead, usually long before the first primaries and after that, it is being adjusted at the national convents.

As stated in publication *Jak se vládne v USA*²⁰, a presidential candidate has to work out a plan that will correspond with specific law, political and financial realities of the US politics. In most of the democratic countries, the campaigns are battles between parties as organizations. However, when influencing the results of American elections, the parties carry only a small certain role – they behave more as labels with which the voters usually associate the candidates.

As a presidential candidate you must make a lot of effort and spend a great amount of money because many voters take part in these presidential elections, and also there is a much sharper competition (than in the congressional elections, for example).

5.1 HOW TO BECOME A “PRESIDENTIAL PERSONALITY FORMAT”

The very first thing that every potential candidate needs is a media attention and to be said to be appearing as a “presidential personality format”. There are more ways how to achieve that. One of the ways is to let the pressmen know that you are considering the candidacy. Another way is to travel around the United States and give speeches (when still working for the General Electric, Ronald Reagan used to speak at least ten times a day in various American states). Also, there is a way of already appearing as a presidential personality format by being previously well known (former astronaut, John Glenn was widely known long before he appeared on the scene as a presidential candidate in 1984). Another way of making a person visible is to identify them with some significant law, or it is also very instrumental to be a governor of one of the larger

states. People very often see potential presidents in the New York governors, partly perhaps because New York is home to major television networks and publishing. The whole campaigning process takes a lot of time and some candidates, such as Ronal Reagan to whom it took almost six years, spend years by preparations.²¹

One of the reasons why the effort to break through takes so much time is because collecting money and building the organization of followers is a time consuming affair.

5.2 ORGANIZATION

In order to be able to raise the funds and to manage to do the appropriate accounting, it is necessary to have an organization. That is a group of people, such as lawyers and accountants who are called the fund-raisers. It is also necessary to have a press secretary who will organize your travels, and a polls specialist. Those all should be paid. A number of voluntary (unpaid) staffers are needed as well, at least in those states where primaries or caucuses are held at the earliest. These staffers will inform you of what is happening in each state, they will try to gain the support of local politicians and will go door to door, handle thousands of phone calls, organize receptions and watch over the candidate in order not to accidentally make a mistake when pronouncing the name of the place, where he or she is speaking. Last but not least, it is necessary to put together an advisor on individual problem areas. These advisors will help prepare position papers on various issues about which, as expected, should be the candidate well informed.²²

5.3 STRATEGY AND THE CAMPAIGN SLOGAN

Candidates shall choose a theme for their campaign. It much depends on whether they already are in the office or not. Those who are in it must defend all the acts they did during that time. A new candidate is

usually attacking the person in the office, i.e. his or her rival. If the person holding the office cannot be re-elected, each of the candidates may come up with their own new program.

The basis for creating the strategy is to answer several questions. *What tone of the campaign will be chosen?* Candidates may choose either a positive or a negative campaign. The candidate who chooses to make a positive campaign will present himself, whereas the negative campaign is used rather for attacking the opponent. Second important question is *what slogan to choose?* The slogan is usually a simple and an attractive idea. In 1980, Ronald Reagan's slogan was "Competence", George W. Bush chose in 1988 to go with "Stay the course", and Obama's slogan in 2012 was "Forward". *Who to focus on* would be another important question. Only a small portion of the electorate votes in one election differently than in the other one. The question is, who will vote differently at the particular time. ²³

5.4 BROADCASTING AND TV DEBATES

Earlier in the time, campaigns were limited only to parades, large gatherings, speeches delivered from railway carriages (the so-called "whistle stops"), and to shaking hands at a shopping mall. That all still exists; however, candidates are increasingly starting to use the television broadcasting. Television can be used in two ways. The candidate may choose paid advertising spots, or he or she will want to get on the evening news (visuals). Visuals in the news are an important part of the campaign, because it is a part of the news, which seems very credible in the eyes of the viewer.

A special kind of television campaigns is a television debate. Nonetheless, candidates who are already holding the office or are widely known have no incentive to take part in such a debate, because it would most likely do an advertisement to their rivals. For example, Richard Nix-

on participated in a television debate in 1960 with John Kennedy who, at that time, was not well known. Nixon ended up defeated. The risk of television debates also lies in the possibility of letting something unintentionally slip. Television is the most striking example of how modern technology affects the campaigns.

6 ELECTION DAY (GENERAL ELECTION)

General election occurs every four years on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Every fourth year in which is the president elected is called the year of presidential elections. The earliest possible date is November 2nd and the latest possible date is November 8th. For federal offices (President, Vice President and United States Congress), Election Day occurs only in even-numbered years.

“Election Day is a civic holiday in some states, including Delaware, Hawaii, Kentucky, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and West Virginia. It is largely discussed about establishing it a federal holiday or allowing voters to cast their votes over two or more days.”²⁴

“A uniform date for choosing presidential electors was instituted by the Congress in 1845. An election date in November was seen as convenient because the harvest would have been completed and the harsh winter storms would not yet have begun. In 1845, the United States of America was largely an agrarian society. Farmers often needed a full day to travel by horse-drawn vehicles to the county seat to vote. Tuesday was established as election day, because it did not interfere with the Biblical Sabbath or with market day, which was held in many towns on Wednesday.”²⁵

Nevertheless, holding important national elections on a weekday is said to be anachronistic in the modern world. Tuesday voting tends to create obstacles and discourages in participation.²⁶

7 TRANSLATION THEORY

As stated in publication “Translation – An advanced resource book”²⁷, translation is a phenomenon that has a large effect on everyday life. This phenomenon can be variously defined. In a general dictionary it would be described as either ‘the act or an instance of translating’, or ‘a written or spoken expression of the meaning of a word, speech, book, etc. in another language’. “The first of these two senses relates to translation as a process, the second to the product. This means that the term translation encompasses very distinct perspectives.”²⁸

When speaking about translation, it is necessary to mention that the translator deals with two types of texts - the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). There are many approaches to translation theory. For a long time, equivalence had been considered as a fundamental translation problem. It had been emphasized about the possibility of transferring the whole information from the ST into the TT, even despite the diversity of grammatical systems of the two languages. The first linguist, who found out that the language means of the source and the target language do not have to be necessarily the same, was **John Cannison Catford**. According to his theory, it is essential for the language means of the source and the target language to perform the same function. This is considered to be the functional approach – the basic translating principal and the first folder of contents.

One of the very beneficial theories is Malinowski’s contextual theory that emerged from the problem of how to interpret Melanesian culture to British readers. Literal translation would be unintelligible, free translation would be understandable, but without any knowledge of the culture, therefore, the best solution is a translation with commentary, which takes into account the situational context and the overall culture of the source language. Malinowski’s colleague Firth, who also sees significance in the

context of functionality of utterance, followed Malinowski with offering the translator a range of levels (phonological, grammatical, collocation and situational). Under the influence of these claims, the description of communicative events is recognized today as a major objective of the linguistic analysis.²⁹

7.1 THE AMBIT OF TRANSLATION

According to the publication “Translation – An advanced resource book”³⁰, the threefold definition of the ambit of translation is:

1. “*The **process** of transferring a written text from SL to TL, conducted by a translator in a specific socio-cultural context.*”
2. “*The written **product** (target text), which results from that process and which functions in the socio-cultural context of the TL.*”
3. “*The **cognitive, linguistic, visual, cultural and ideological phenomena, which are an integral part of 1 and 2.***”³¹

7.2 TYPES OF TRANSLATION

Russian linguist Roman Jakobson makes a distinction between three types of translation: intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation.

1. *Intralingual translation*, according to Jakobson, is a translation within the same language, which can involve rewording or paraphrase;
2. *Interlingual translation* deals with translation from one language to another, and
3. *Intersemiotic translation* is concerned with the translation of the verbal sign by a non-verbal sign, for example music or image.³²

7.3 TRANSLATION METHODS (Based on the book by Dagmar Knittlová)

The translation process uses a variety of methods and procedures. Earlier translation theorists such as Fjodorov, Levý, Catford, etc. did not always use accurate distinguishing terms for these various translating operations, and they usually called them general changes or procedures. Contemporary linguists work on the presumption of the theory of cardinal authors Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet. They have defined seven core methods with which is solved the shortage of equivalency in the target language. These seven procedures include:

1. **Transcription** deals with transcription of the language units of the SL into the TL.
2. **Calque** means word-for-word translation. (*potflower* : *hrnková květina*)
3. **Substitution** is concerned with a replacement of one language means by another equivalent one.
4. **Transposition** introduces the necessary grammatical changes due to a different language system.
5. **Modulation** deals with the change of the viewpoint.
6. **Equivalency** uses stylistic and structural resources that are different from the original. (*my sweet girl* : *děvenka*)
7. **Adaptation** is described as a substitution of the situation described in the original – with another, adequate situation. (*Every cloud has a silver lining* : *Všechno zlé je k něčemu dobré*)

8 TRANSLATION

Postřehy prezidenta na ceremoniálu „Nechme svobodu znít“, připomínající 50. výročí „Pochodu na Washington“

Lincolnův památník

Prezident:

Kingově rodině, jež hodně obětovala a inspirovala; prezidentu Clintonovi; prezidentu Carterovi; více prezidentu Bidenovi a Jill; americkým spoluobčanům.

Před pěti desetiletími v tento den, přišli Američané na toto vznešené místo, aby uplatnili nárok na slib, který byl složen při našem založení: „Pokládáme za samozřejmé pravdy, že všichni lidé jsou stvořeni sobě rovni, že jsou obdařeni svým stvořitelem určitými nezcizitelnými právy, že mezi tato práva náleží život, svoboda a sledování osobního štěstí.“

V roce 1963, téměř 200 let potom, co byla tato slova sepsána na papír, celé století po tom, co byla dobojována občanská válka a bylo veřejně vyhlášeno zrušení otroctví – ty sliby, ty pravdy zůstaly ne- naplněny. A tak lidé přišli po tisících z každého kouta naší země, muži a ženy, mladí a staří, černí, kteří toužili po svobodě a bílí, kteří již nemohli akceptovat svou svobodu a zároveň být svědky toho, jak jsou jiní zotročováni.

Po celé zemi je kongregace vyslaly s jídlem a modlitbou. Celé bloky Harlemu vyšly o půlnoci ven, aby jim popřály hodně štěstí. S těmi pár dolary, co si našetřili z práce, si někteří koupili lístky a nastoupili do autobusů, i když nemohli vždycky sedět tam, kde by si přáli. Ti s méně penězi, stopovali nebo šli pěšky. Byli to švadleny a hutníci, studenti a učitelé, služebné a portýři lůžkových vozů. Dělili se společně o jednoduchá jídla a lůžka na zemi. A pak se v horký letní den shromáždili zde, v hlavním městě našeho národa, ve stínu našeho Velkého Osvo-

boditele – aby nabídli svědectví o bezpráví, aby zažádali vládu o nápravu a aby probudili americké, dlouho spící svědomí.

Náležitě a s úctou si připomínáme Kingův triumfální projev, který dodal milionům lidí s nevyslovenými nadějemi sílu promluvit, který nabídl cestu spásy pro utlačované a stejně tak pro utlačovatele. Jeho slova patřila do doby, která vlastnila moc a prorocství, jimž v naší době není rovno.

Ale uděláme také dobře, když si připomeneme, že onen samotný den patřil i obyčejným lidem, jejichž jména se nikdy neobjevila v učebnicích historie, nebo se nikdy nedostala do televize. Spousta z nich šla do segregačních škol a seděla za oddělenými stoly. Žili v městečcích, kde nesměli volit a ve městech, kde na jejich hlasech nezáleželo. Byly to zamilované páry, které nemohly být sezdány, vojáci, co bojovali v cizině za svobodu, která jim byla doma upřena. Viděli jejich milované zbité, děti rozháněné vodou z hadic a měli tak všechny důvody, aby vypěnili či rezignovali na hořký osud.

A přesto si vybrali jinou cestu. Tváří v tvář nenávisti, modlili se za své trýznilce. Tváří v tvář násilí, obstáli díky morální síle nenásilí. Šli dobrovolně do vězení na protest proti nespravedlivým zákonům a celami zněly písně o svobodě. Celý život v pokoření je naučil, že nikdo nemůže sebrat důstojnost a milost udělenou Bohem. Díky tvrdé zkušenosti se naučili tomu, co kdysi učil Frederick Douglass – že svoboda nemůže být dána, musí být získána úsilím a disciplínou, vytrvalostí a vírou.

A tohoto ducha sem v onen den přinesli. A to byl duch, kterého mladí lidé jako byl John Lewis, vnesli do tohoto dne. Byl to duch, kterého si s sebou nesli zpátky do svých měst a čtvrtí. Byl to vytrvalý plamen svědomí a odvahy, který jim pomohl přežít v nadcházejících kampaních, v bojkotech, byl to podnět k registraci voličů a menších pochodů, tak vzdálených od světelných reflektorů. Pomohl jim přežít ztrátu čtyř malých holčiček v Birminghamu, krveprolití na mostě Edmunda Pettuse a utrpení

Dallasu, Kalifornie a Memphisu. I přes nezdary, zlomená srdce a hlodající pochybosti, se plamínek stále mihotal a nikdy nevyhasl.

A díky tomu, že nepřestali protestovat, se Amerika změnila. Protože protestovali, byl přijat Zákon o občanských právech. Protože protestovali, byl podepsán Zákon o volebním právu. Protože protestovali, otevřely se jim dveře možností a vzdělání, a tak si jejich dcery a synové mohli konečně představit svůj život bez toho, aniž by prali nebo leštili boty jiným. Protože protestovali, změnila se městská rada, změnila se státní legislativa, změnil se kongres a, ano, nakonec se změnil I Bílý dům.

Protože protestovali, stala se Amerika svobodnější a férovější – a nejen pro Afroameričany, ale také pro ženy, Hispánce, Asiaty a domorodé Američany; pro katolíky, židy a muslimy; pro gaye, pro postižené Američany. Amerika se změnila pro vás i pro mě, a celý svět z toho čerpal sílu, ať už to byli mladí lidé sledující dění za železnou oponou, kterou nakonec svrhli, nebo mladí lidé v jižní Africe, kteří nakonec ukončili apartheid.

A to jsou ta vítězství, která vyhráli s železnou vůlí a nadějí ve svých srdcích. To je ta proměna, kterou vytepalí každým krokem svých obnošených bot. A to je dluh, který já a miliony Američanů dlužíme těm služebným, dělníkům, portýrům a těm sekretářkám; lidem, kteří možná mohli vést podnik kdyby bývali měli někdy šanci; bílým studentům, kteří se vystavili nebezpečí, i když nemuseli; Američanům japonského původu, kteří si připomněli vlastní internaci; Američanům židovského původu, kteří přežili holocaust; lidem, kteří se mohli vzdát a podlehnout, ale oni se drželi a pokračovali, vědíc, že po každé bouři zase vyjde slunce.

Na bitevním poli spravedlnosti nás tak, muži a ženy bez postavení, peněz nebo titulu či slávy, osvobodili způsobem, který dnes naše děti berou za samozřejmý, jelikož lidé všech ras a vyznání žijí v tomto nejbáječnějším národě na Zemi pohromadě a učí se a kráčí pohromadě,

bojují bok po boku, a milují jeden druhého a soudí jeden druhého pouze podle charakteru.

Zapomenout na tento obrovský pokrok – naznačit, jako to někteří občas dělají, že se toho moc nezměnilo – by bylo zneuctěním odvahy a obětí těch, kteří zaplatili za pochod v těch letech. Medgar Evers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, Martin Luther King Jr. – ti nezemřeli nadarmo. Jejich vítězství bylo velké.

Zneuctít tyto hrdiny bychom ale mohli také tím, že bychom naznačili, že práce tohoto národa je hotová. Oblouk morálního světa se možná přiklání směrem ke spravedlnosti, ale nepřikloní se sám. Zajištění zisků, kterých tato země dosáhla, to si žádá stálou bdělost, a ne pocit, že už se udělalo dost. Ať už vyzýváním těch, kteří staví nové překážky v hlasování, nebo zajištěním, že váhy spravedlnosti fungují stejně pro všechny a že systém trestního soudnictví není prostě jen potrubím z nedostatečně financovaných škol do přeplněných vězení, to vyžaduje bdělost.

A občas utrpíme porážku, ale tyto boje vyhrájeme. Tahle země se příliš změnila. Lidí dobré vůle, bez ohledu na politické vyznání, je totiž mnohem více, než těch se záští, kteří by změnili fakt, že dobro nakonec vždy zvítězilo nad zlem.

V některých ohledech ale - zajištění občanských práv, hlasovacích práv, vymýcení legalizované diskriminace – skrývala důležitost těchto vítězství i jiný cíl onoho pochodu. Neboť ženy a muži, kteří se zde shromáždili před padesáti lety, tu nehledali nějaký abstraktní ideál. Hledali pracovní místa stejně tak jako spravedlnost – ne jen nepřítomnost útisku, ale přítomnost ekonomické příležitosti.

Dr. King by se zeptal, k čemu prospěje člověku sedět u jednoho stolu, když samotné jídlo si nemůže dovolit? Tato myšlenka – že svoboda jednotlivce je spojena s jeho živobytím; že dosažení štěstí vyžaduje důstojnou práci, schopnost najít si takovou práci, slušnou mzdu, určitou

míru materiálního zabezpečení – tato myšlenka nebyla nová. Samotný Lincoln se z tohoto hlediska díval na Deklaraci nezávislosti – jako na slib, že v pravý čas by měla být zdvižena břemena z ramen všech lidí a že by všichni měli mít stejnou šanci.

A Dr. King vysvětlil, že cíle Afroameričanů jsou identické s cíli pracujícího lidu všech ras: „Slušné mzdy, spravedlivé pracovní podmínky, cenově dostupné bydlení, zabezpečení ve stáří, zdravotní a sociální opatření, podmínky, za nichž se rodiny mohou rozvíjet, zajistit vzdělání svým dětem a mít úctu ve společnosti.”

To, co King popisoval, bylo snem každého Američana. To, co po celá staletí lákalo nově příjíždějící k našim břehům. A to je ta druhá dimenze - ekonomické příležitosti, šance vylepšit své životní postavení přes povětivou dřinu – kde cíle stanovené před 50 lety stále zaostávají.

Ano, existují příklady úspěchů černošské Ameriky, které by byly před půl stoletím nepředstavitelné. Ale jak už bylo řečeno, nezaměstnanost černochoů zůstala téměř dvakrát vyšší než nezaměstnanost bělochů, nemluvě o nezaměstnanosti Hispánců, která je jí v patách. Rozdíl v bohatství mezi rasami se nesnížil, naopak se rozrostl. A jak uvedl prezident Clinton, postavení všech pracujících Američanů, nezávisle na barvě pleti, je narušené, což činí sen Dr. Kinga ještě prchavějším.

V průběhu více než deseti let viděli pracující Američané všech ras stagnovat své platy i příjmy, a to i když firemní zisky stoupaly, i když platy těch pár šťastnějších prudce rostly. Nerovnost se v průběhu desetiletí trvale zvyšovala. Vzestupná mobilita se stala těžší. V příliš mnoha komunitách po celé této zemi, ve městech a na předměstích, ve venkovských osadách, hází stín chudoby závoj na naší mládež. Jejich život je omezen nevyhovujícími školami a zmenšujícími se vyhlídkami, nedostatečnou zdravotní péčí a neustálým násilím.

A tak když si připomínáme toto výročí, musíme si také připomenout, že míra pokroku pro ty, co zde pochodovali před padesáti lety, nespočívala pouze v tom, kolik černochoů vstoupí do řad milionářů. Spočívalo to v tom, zda tato země připustí všechny lidi, ochotné tvrdě pracovat, nehledě na rasu, vstoupit do řad života střední třídy.

Zkouškou nebylo, a není, mít otevřené dveře příležitosti jen pro pár lidí. Zkouška spočívala v tom, zda náš ekonomický systém poskytuje férovou šanci pro všechny lidi – pro černošského dozorce a oceláře bělocha, pro přistěhovalého umývače nádobí a pro rodilého amerického veterána. Vyhrát tuto bitvu, odpovědět na tuto výzvu – to zůstává naším velkým nedokončeným úkolem.

Nebudeme si nic nalhávat. Tento úkol nebude lehký. Ekonomika se od roku 1963 hodně změnila. Dvojice sil – technologie a celosvětová konkurence odečítají ty pracovní pozice, které kdysi tvořily vstupní základnu do střední třídy – snížily vyjednávací sílu amerických dělníků. Také naše politika utrpěla. Pevně zakotveným zájmům těch, kteří těží z nespravedlivého statusu quo, bránily jakékoliv snahy vlády o slušné jednání s pracujícími rodinami – lobbisté a tvůrci veřejného mínění, kteří mluvili o zvyšování minimální mzdy, tvrdších pracovních zákonech, daních vybíraných od bohatších, kteří si to mohou dovolit, aby se financovaly rozpadající se školy – všechny tyto věci porušují ekonomické principy. Bylo by nám řečeno, že rostoucí nerovnost byla cenou za rostoucí ekonomiku, opatřením volného trhu; že chamtivost je dobrá a soucit neefektivní, a ti bez práce či zdravotní péče si za to můžou vlastně sami.

A pak tu byli zvolení úředníci, kteří považovali za užitečné praktikovat starou politiku rozdělování a dělali co mohli, aby přesvědčili střední třídu Američanů o obrovské nepravdě – že vláda nějak mohla za jejich stoupající ekonomické nejistoty, že vzdálení byrokraté vkládali jejich těžce vydělané dolary na podporu sociálních podvodů a nelegálního přistěhovalectví.

A pak, budeme-li k sobě upřímní, přiznáme, že v průběhu padesáti let byly časy, kdy někteří z nás, ve snaze zasadit se o změnu, zabloudili. Zármutek z atentátů odstartoval sebedestruktivní výtržnosti. Legitimní stížnosti proti policejní brutalitě vedly k omlouvání kriminálního chování. Rasová politika mohla zamezit obojímu, jakmile bylo přeměňující se poselství jednoty a bratrství přehlušeno řečí vzájemného obviňování. A co bylo kdysi voláním o rovnost příležitosti, šancí pro všechny Američany tvrdě pracovat a posunout se vpřed, bylo příliš často falešně formulováno jako pouhá touha po vládní podpoře – jako kdybychom neměli žádný podíl na vlastním osvobození, jako kdyby byla chudoba omluvou pro nevychovu svého vlastního dítěte, a jako kdyby zaslepenost ostatních byly důvodem k zanevření sám na sebe.

Všechny tyto události vedly k tomu, že se zastavil pokrok. K tomu, že se víra odklonila a že naše země zůstala rozdělena. Dobrá zpráva ale je, stejně jako byla v roce 1963, že teď máme na výběr. Můžeme jít dál po současné cestě, na které se tato skvělá demokracie zasekne a naše děti přijmou život s nižším očekáváním; na které je politika nevyváženou hrou, ve které se pár lidem daří velmi dobře, zatímco rodiny všech ras bojují o kousek ubývajícího ekonomického koláče – to je jedna možnost. Nebo můžeme mít odvahu na změnu.

Pochod na Washington nás učí, že nejsme uvězněni v minulých chybách; že jsme pány svého osudu. Také nás to ale učí, že slib našeho národa bude dodržen pouze za spolupráce nás všech. Budeme muset znovu nechat rozhořet uhlíky empatie a sounáležitosti a koalici svědomí, která zde byla projevna před padesáti lety.

A já věřím, že ten duch je tady, síla pravdy v každém z nás. Vidím to, když bílá matka vidí svou dceru i v chudém černošském dítěti. Vidím to, když černý mladík pozoruje jít svého dědečka hrdě a s hlavou vztyčenou stejně jako bílý starší muž. Je to zde, když rodilý Američan uznává usilovnou snahu nového přistěhovalce; když se mezirasový pár vcítí

do bolesti diskriminovaného homosexuálního páru a cítí ji jako svou vlastní.

A odtud pochází odvaha – když se neodvrátíme jeden od druhého, když na sebe nebudeme útočit, ale když se otočíme jeden k druhému čelem a zjistíme, že nekráčíme o samotě. Odtud pochází odvaha.

A s touto kuráží můžeme hájit slušná pracovní místa a spravedlivé mzdy. S touto kuráží můžeme hájit právo každého člověka na zdravotní péči, a to v nejbohatší zemi na světě. S touto kuráží můžeme hájit právo každého dítěte, od krajů Anakostie až k Apalačským horám, na vzdělání, které povzbuzuje mysl a uchvacuje ducha a připravuje je na svět, jež je očekává.

S touto kuráží můžeme nakrmit hladové a ubytovat bezdomovce, a přeměnit bezúspěšné pustiny chudoby v slibné oblasti obchodu.

Ameriko, vím, že cesta bude dlouhá, ale vím, že jí můžeme zdat. Ano, klopýtáme, ale zase se dostaneme do sedla. Tím se vytváří pohyb, tak se točí dějiny. Tak se stává, že když je jeden slabší, přijde druhý a vezme ho s sebou a řekne mu „No tak, pojď, jdeme na to!”

To je důvodem proč byly tenkrát, stejně jako dnes, řady protestujících zastoupeny mladými lidmi – protože mladí jsou nesvázáni strachem, nejsou svázáni konvencemi. Odvážili se snít o něčem jiném a představovali si něco lepšího. A já jsem přesvědčený, že ta samá představa, že ten hlad po cíli a smyslu zakotvil i v naší generaci.

Možná nečelíme stejným nebezpečím jako lidé v roce 1963, ale ta urputná naléhavost zůstává. Zřejmě nikdy nenapodobíme onu rozrůstající se masu lidí a zářivý pochod toho dne – nikdo se nemůže vyrovnat Kingově genialitě – ale ten samý plamen, který rozhořel srdce všech, kteří jsou ochotni vykročit vstříc spravedlnosti, ten já vím, že stále zůstává.

Vytrvalá učitelka, která chodí časně ráno do výuky a zůstává do pozdních hodin a loví ve vlastní kapse, aby koupila pomůcky, protože věří, že každé dítě je tak trochu i její – ta protestuje.

Úspěšný podnikatel, který nemusí, ale přece odměňuje své zaměstnance spravedlivou mzdou, a pak nabídne šanci člověku, třeba bývalému vězni, kterému se nedaří – ten protestuje.

Matka, která zahrnuje svou dceru láskou, aby vyrostla v jistotě, že je připravena projít stejnými dveřmi jako něčí syn – ta protestuje.

Otec, který si uvědomuje, že nejdůležitější práci, kterou kdy bude mít, je dobře vychovat svého syna, obzvláště pokud sám doma otce neměl – ten protestuje.

V bitvě zjizvení veteráni, kteří se nevěnují jen pomoci svým spolubojovníkům znovu se postavit, znovu chodit a běhat, ale oni stále slouží své zemi, a to i když už jsou doma – ti protestují.

Každý, kdo si uvědomujete, co ti skvělí vlastenci věděli – že změna nepřichází z Washingtonu, ale k Washingtonu; že změna byla vždy stavěna na ochotě, my lidé, jejichž posláním je občanství – vy protestujete.

A to je poučením z minulosti. To je slibem zítřka – že lidé, kteří milují svou zemi, mohou změnit nemožné. Že když se mohou miliony Američanů všech ras a regionů, všech náboženství a postavení semknout v duchu bratrství, pak se ty hory sníží, hrbolatá místa se vyhladí a všechna zakřivená místa se napřímí směrem k milosti.

Budeme hájit víru těch, co tolik obětovali a dostojíme pravému významu naší víry, a to jako jeden národ, s Boží pomocí, se svobodou a spravedlností pro všechny beze zbytku.

9 COMMENTARY

9.1 MACRO APPROACH

The translated speech is a presidential speech, delivered by the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, in Washington D.C. on August 28, 2013. The speech was given at the “Let Freedom Ring” Ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington.

The speech is positive, emotional, and has an incentive effect. Emotionally charged words (*bitter fate, heartbreaks, glorious patriots*) and formal expressions (*to lay claim, indivisible, liberty, bleak wastelands, progress stalled*) are typical for this speech. Very common are also quotations from the Bible and the Declaration of Independence (*"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"; "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."*) Oftentimes, President Obama mentions proper names and refers to people and places (*Medgar Evers, Andrew Goodman, James Chaney, Frederick Douglass, little girls in Birmingham, carnage of the Edmund Pettus Bridge...*). Another typical feature are the references to facts, life and institutions and historical events (*The Great war – občanská válka; Dr. King's dream - refers to Dr. King's most famous speech – "I have a dream"; hills of Appalachia – Apalčské pohoří*). Citizens of the United States are most likely familiar with these terms; nevertheless, they may not be clear and comprehensible for foreigners (such as Czech men). The same applies to geographical information. The author has translated these references without other explanatory notes, as it would not fit into the discourse. The speech would lose its immediacy.

9.2 MICRO APPROACH

The author aimed to translate the speech as faithfully as possible, although, not everywhere was it possible. It had to be considered about what differences there are between English and Czech, and also about how would a native speaker say certain words. The author used an inter-lingual translation, as well as equivalence and adaptation.

Some of the difficulties laid in the historical and cultural background information about which the author, as a non-native American, does not have a wide awareness.

In some cases, it was necessary to simplify the sentence or to add a subordinate clause (*“children fire-hosed”* – *“děti, které byly rozháněné vodou z požárních hadic”*; *“come on, we’re marching”* – *“no tak pojd’, jdeme na to”* – a Czech native speaker would not probably say *“no tak pojd’, protestujeme”*).

One of the difficulties, which occurred when translating, was the issue of translation of terms such as *“African American”*, *“black people”*, *“black America”*. The author aimed to translate these expressions without negative connotations and she chose to translate them as *“Afroameričan”*, *“černoši”*, *“černošská Amerika”*.

The speech was certainly comprehensible to a native speaker from the USA, however, some of the statements were, for the author (as a native Czech), unfamiliar (*entrenched interests, grind to a halt, pursuit of Happiness, the flame of justice flickered...*) and, therefore, had to further search for their meaning.

10 CONCLUSION

The key objective of the Bachelor Thesis was to examine the issue of the presidential elections in the USA, to explain all the phases, to give the reader a clear explanation of the process and to perform a high quality translation of the selected presidential speech. Finally, this thesis aimed to enrich the author's and reader's awareness of the presidential election.

The first part of the thesis is a theoretical part. It explains the overall process of the presidential elections in the United States of America. Firstly, it was given a general idea of how it practically works, what actually happens in the Union before and after the election and secondly, the whole explanation is followed by a translation of one of Barack Obama's speeches – The 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington.

The presidential election has a very long tradition in the United States of America and dates back to the year 1788-1789, when the first election under the new United States Constitution took place. George Washington was the one who won this election and thereby a long-time tradition was started and the presidential election has been the most watched, competitive and important joust in the United States ever since.

As it was presumed at the beginning of the thesis, the topic is very complex and it was quite difficult to explain all of the issues connected to it, so that common reader would understand it. According to author's opinion, this objective was successfully fulfilled. Another important objective of the Bachelor thesis was a high quality translation of President's Obama speech with a commentary. During the translation process, the author has extended her knowledge of the process of presidential elections in the USA and the political circumstances surrounding it. Moreover, the author has gained general awareness about translation methods and has discovered new information about the President Obama and his bril-

liant rhetorical abilities. In addition, the author has enriched her vocabulary.

This thesis could be useful for many people who are interested in politics, elections or in the United States generally. Also people who are interested in translation or in the translated speech in particular may find this thesis interesting. Another group of people, who could find this thesis attractive, are students of fields such as American studies, International relations or Political science.

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14 ABSTRACT

The Bachelor Thesis is called "Presidential election in the USA. Description of the voting system and translation of some selected texts linked with the theme. Its key objective is to describe the matter of presidential elections in the United States of America, to explain the process, to introduce the basic theory of translation and to translate the selected presidential speech.

The work is divided into a theoretical and a practical part. In the theoretical part, the author aims to explain the different phases of the presidential election. She explains that this is quite a complicated process, which doesn't take, as one might guess, just a few days, but the candidates are preparing for the election for years. The author also shows how presidential campaigns are run and how its strategies are created, on which states are most of the candidates with their campaign focused and what is discussed at the national convention that inseparably belongs to the presidential election in the USA. This is followed by a section, which is dedicated to the translation. The author is trying to outline the basic translation techniques, she is aiming to explain what the translation is, and who were the most significant linguists and what theories they came up with.

In the practical part, the reader can read the translated speech delivered by President Barack Obama in August 2013. This speech was given in the capital of the United States, in Washington D.C. and it was delivered in honour of the fiftieth anniversary of the event known as the "March on Washington". The translation is followed by a commentary that describes the strengths and weaknesses, which the author had to face and describes the typical components of a speech.

15 RESUMÉ

Bakalářská práce se nazývá “Prezidentské volby v USA. Popis volebního systému a překlad několika textů spojených s tématem.” Jejím hlavním cílem je popsat problematiku prezidentských voleb ve Spojených státech Amerických, vysvětlit celý proces, představit základní teorii překladu a přeložit vybraný prezidentský projev.

Práce je rozdělena na teoretickou a praktickou část. V teoretické části se autorka snaží vysvětlit jednotlivé fáze prezidentských voleb. Vysvětluje, že je to poměrně složitý proces, který netrvá, jak by si někdo mohl domýšlet, jen pár dní, ale kandidáti se na onu volbu připravují i roky. Autorka v práci také uvádí jak se chystají prezidentské kampaně a jejich strategie, na které státy se kandidáti nejvíce se svou kampaní soustředí a co se projednává na národních sjezdech, které k volbě prezidenta neodlučitelně patří. Toto je následováno částí, která je věnována překladu. Autorka se zde snaží nastínit základní překladatelské postupy, vysvětlit co to překlad je, jací byli nevýznamější lingvisté a s jakými teoriemi přišli.

V praktické části si čtenář může přečíst překlad projevu prezidenta Baracka Obamy ze srpna 2013. Projev byl pronesen v hlavním městě Spojených států, ve Washingtonu D.C., a to na počest padesátého výročí od události známé jako “Pochod na Washington”. Překlad je následován komentářem, který vystihuje silné i slabé stránky, se kterými se autorka potýkala a popisuje typické prvky projevu.

16 APPENDIX

16.1 Appendix 1: The original of the translated speech

Remarks by the President at the "Let Freedom Ring" Ceremony Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington

Lincoln Memorial

THE PRESIDENT:

To the King family, who have sacrificed and inspired so much; to President Clinton; President Carter; Vice President Biden and Jill; fellow Americans.

Five decades ago today, Americans came to this honored place to lay claim to a promise made at our founding: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

In 1963, almost 200 years after those words were set to paper, a full century after a great war was fought and emancipation proclaimed, that promise -- those truths -- remained unmet. And so they came by the thousands from every corner of our country, men and women, young and old, blacks who longed for freedom and whites who could no longer accept freedom for themselves while witnessing the subjugation of others.

Across the land, congregations sent them off with food and with prayer. In the middle of the night, entire blocks of Harlem came out to wish them well. With the few dollars they scrimped from their labor, some bought tickets and boarded buses, even if they couldn't always sit where they wanted to sit. Those with less money hitchhiked or walked. They were seamstresses and steelworkers, students and teachers, maids and Pullman porters. They shared simple meals and bunked together on floors. And then, on a hot summer day, they assembled here, in our nation's capital, under the shadow of the Great Emancipator -- to offer testimony of injustice, to petition their government for redress, and to awaken America's long-slumbering conscience.

We rightly and best remember Dr. King's soaring oratory that day, how he gave mighty voice to the quiet hopes of millions; how he offered a salvation path for oppressed and oppressors alike. His words belong to the ages, possessing a power and prophecy unmatched in our time.

But we would do well to recall that day itself also belonged to those ordinary people whose names never appeared in the history books, never got on TV. Many had gone to segregated schools and sat at segregated lunch counters. They lived in towns where they couldn't vote and cities where their votes didn't matter. They were couples in love who couldn't marry, soldiers who fought for freedom abroad that they found denied to them at home. They had seen loved ones beaten, and children fire-hosed, and they had every reason to lash out in anger, or resign themselves to a bitter fate.

And yet they chose a different path. In the face of hatred, they prayed for their tormentors. In the face of violence, they stood up and sat in, with the moral force of nonviolence. Willingly, they went to jail to protest unjust laws, their cells swelling with the sound of freedom songs. A lifetime of indignities had taught them that no man can take away the dignity and grace that God grants us. They had learned through hard experience what Frederick Douglass once taught -- that freedom is not given, it must be won, through struggle and discipline, persistence and faith.

That was the spirit they brought here that day. That was the spirit young people like John Lewis brought to that day. That was the spirit that they carried with them, like a torch, back to their cities and their neighborhoods. That steady flame of conscience and courage that would sustain them through the campaigns to come -- through boycotts and voter registration drives and smaller marches far from the spotlight; through the loss of four little girls in Birmingham, and the carnage of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and the agony of Dallas and California and Memphis. Through setbacks and heartbreaks and gnawing doubt, that flame of justice flickered; it never died.

And because they kept marching, America changed. Because they marched, a Civil Rights law was passed. Because they marched, a Voting Rights law was signed. Because they marched, doors of opportunity and education swung open so their daughters and sons could finally imagine a life for themselves beyond washing somebody else's laundry or shining somebody else's shoes. (Applause.) Because they marched, city councils changed and state legislatures changed, and Congress changed, and, yes, eventually, the White House changed. (Applause.)

Because they marched, America became more free and more fair -- not just for African Americans, but for women and Latinos, Asians and

Native Americans; for Catholics, Jews, and Muslims; for gays, for Americans with a disability. America changed for you and for me. and the entire world drew strength from that example, whether the young people who watched from the other side of an Iron Curtain and would eventually tear down that wall, or the young people inside South Africa who would eventually end the scourge of apartheid. (Applause.)

Those are the victories they won, with iron wills and hope in their hearts. That is the transformation that they wrought, with each step of their well-worn shoes. That's the debt that I and millions of Americans owe those maids, those laborers, those porters, those secretaries; folks who could have run a company maybe if they had ever had a chance; those white students who put themselves in harm's way, even though they didn't have; those Japanese Americans who recalled their own internment; those Jewish Americans who had survived the Holocaust; people who could have given up and given in, but kept on keeping on, knowing that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Applause.)

On the battlefield of justice, men and women without rank or wealth or title or fame would liberate us all in ways that our children now take for granted, as people of all colors and creeds live together and learn together and walk together, and fight alongside one another, and love one another, and judge one another by the content of our character in this greatest nation on Earth. (Applause.)

To dismiss the magnitude of this progress -- to suggest, as some sometimes do, that little has changed -- that dishonors the courage and the sacrifice of those who paid the price to march in those years. (Applause.) Medgar Evers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, Martin Luther King Jr. -- they did not die in vain. (Applause.) Their victory was great.

But we would dishonor those heroes as well to suggest that the work of this nation is somehow complete. The arc of the moral universe may bend towards justice, but it doesn't bend on its own. To secure the gains this country has made requires constant vigilance, not cy. Whether by challenging those who erect new barriers to the vote, or ensuring that the scales of justice work equally for all, and the criminal justice system is not simply a pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails, it requires vigilance. (Applause.)

And we'll suffer the occasional setback. But we will win these fights. This country has changed too much. (Applause.) People of goodwill, regardless of party, are too plentiful for those with ill will to change history's currents. (Applause.)

In some ways, though, the securing of civil rights, voting rights, the eradication of legalized discrimination -- the very significance of these victories may have obscured a second goal of the March. For the men and women who gathered 50 years ago were not there in search of some abstract ideal. They were there seeking jobs as well as justice -- (applause) -- not just the absence of oppression but the presence of economic opportunity. (Applause.)

For what does it profit a man, Dr. King would ask, to sit at an integrated lunch counter if he can't afford the meal? This idea -- that one's liberty is linked to one's livelihood; that the pursuit of happiness requires the dignity of work, the skills to find work, decent pay, some measure of material security -- this idea was not new. Lincoln himself understood the Declaration of Independence in such terms -- as a promise that in due time, "the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance."

And Dr. King explained that the goals of African Americans were identical to working people of all races: "Decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old-age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children, and respect in the community."

What King was describing has been the dream of every can. It's what's lured for centuries new arrivals to our shores. And it's along this second dimension -- of economic opportunity, the chance through honest toil to advance one's station in life -- where the goals of 50 years ago have fallen most short.

Yes, there have been examples of success within black America that would have been unimaginable a half century ago. But as has already been noted, black unemployment has remained almost twice as high as white unemployment, Latino unemployment close behind. The gap in wealth between races has not lessened, it's grown. And as President Clinton indicated, the position of all working Americans, regardless of color, has eroded, making the dream Dr. King described even more elusive.

For over a decade, working Americans of all races have seen their wages and incomes stagnate, even as corporate profits soar, even as the pay of a fortunate few explodes. Inequality has steadily risen over the decades. Upward mobility has become harder. In too many communities across this country, in cities and suburbs and rural hamlets, the shadow of poverty casts a pall over our youth, their lives a fortress of substandard schools and diminished prospects, inadequate health care and perennial violence.

And so as we mark this anniversary, we must remind ourselves that the measure of progress for those who marched 50 years ago was not merely how many blacks could join the ranks of millionaires. It was whether this country would admit all people who are willing to work hard regardless of race into the ranks of a middle-class life. (Applause.)

The test was not, and never has been, whether the doors of opportunity are cracked a bit wider for a few. It was whether our economic system provides a fair shot for the many -- for the black custodian and the white steelworker, the immigrant dishwasher and the Native American veteran. To win that battle, to answer that call -- this remains our great unfinished business.

We shouldn't fool ourselves. The task will not be easy. Since 1963, the economy has changed. The twin forces of technology and global competition have subtracted those jobs that once provided a foothold into the middle class -- reduced the bargaining power of American workers. And our politics has suffered. Entrenched interests, those who benefit from an unjust status quo, resisted any government efforts to give working families a fair deal -- marshaling an army of lobbyists and opinion makers to argue that minimum wage increases or stronger labor laws or taxes on the wealthy who could afford it just to fund crumbling schools, that all these things violated sound economic principles. We'd be told that growing inequality was a price for a growing economy, a measure of this free market; that greed was good and compassion ineffective, and those without jobs or health care had only themselves to blame.

And then, there were those elected officials who found it useful to practice the old politics of division, doing their best to convince middle-class Americans of a great untruth -- that government was somehow itself to blame for their growing economic insecurity; that distant bureaucrats were taking their hard-earned dollars to benefit the welfare cheat or the illegal immigrant.

And then, if we're honest with ourselves, we'll admit that during the course of 50 years, there were times when some of us claiming to push for change lost our way. The anguish of assassinations set off self-defeating riots. Legitimate grievances against police brutality tipped into excuse-making for criminal behavior. Racial politics could cut both ways, as the transformative message of unity and brotherhood was drowned out by the language of recrimination. And what had once been a call for equality of opportunity, the chance for all Americans to work hard and get ahead was too often framed as a mere desire for government support -- as if we had no agency in our own liberation, as if poverty was an excuse for not raising your child, and the bigotry of others was reason to give up on yourself.

All of that history is how progress stalled. That's how hope was diverted. It's how our country remained divided. But the good news is, just as was true in 1963, we now have a choice. We can continue down our current path, in which the gears of this great democracy grind to a halt and our children accept a life of lower expectations; where politics is a zero-sum game where a few do very well while struggling families of every race fight over a shrinking economic pie -- that's one path. Or we can have the courage to change.

The March on Washington teaches us that we are not trapped by the mistakes of history; that we are masters of our fate. But it also teaches us that the promise of this nation will only be kept when we work together. We'll have to reignite the embers of empathy and fellow feeling, the coalition of conscience that found expression in this place 50 years ago.

And I believe that spirit is there, that truth force inside each of us. I see it when a white mother recognizes her own daughter in the face of a poor black child. I see it when the black youth thinks of his own grandfather in the dignified steps of an elderly white man. It's there when the native-born recognizing that striving spirit of the new immigrant; when the interracial couple connects the pain of a gay couple who are discriminated against and understands it as their own.

That's where courage comes from -- when we turn not from each other, or on each other, but towards one another, and we find that we do not walk alone. That's where courage comes from. (Applause.)

And with that courage, we can stand together for good jobs and just wages. With that courage, we can stand together for the right to health care in the richest nation on Earth for every person. (Applause.) With that courage, we can stand together for the right of every child, from the corners of Anacostia to the hills of Appalachia, to get an education that stirs the mind and captures the spirit, and prepares them for the world that awaits them. (Applause.)

With that courage, we can feed the hungry, and house the homeless, and transform bleak wastelands of poverty into fields of commerce and promise.

America, I know the road will be long, but I know we can get there. Yes, we will stumble, but I know we'll get back up. That's how a movement happens. That's how history bends. That's how when somebody is faint of heart, somebody else brings them along and says, come on, we're marching. (Applause.)

There's a reason why so many who marched that day, and in the days to come, were young -- for the young are unconstrained by habits of fear, unconstrained by the conventions of what is. They dared to dream differently, to imagine something better. And I am convinced that same imagination, the same hunger of purpose stirs in this generation.

We might not face the same dangers of 1963, but the fierce urgency of now remains. We may never duplicate the swelling crowds and dazzling procession of that day so long ago -- no one can match King's brilliance -- but the same flame that lit the heart of all who are willing to take a first step for justice, I know that flame remains. (Applause.)

That tireless teacher who gets to class early and stays late and dips into her own pocket to buy supplies because she believes that every child is her charge -- she's marching. (Applause.)

That successful businessman who doesn't have to but pays his workers a fair wage and then offers a shot to a man, maybe an ex-con who is down on his luck -- he's marching. (Applause.)

The mother who pours her love into her daughter so that she grows up with the confidence to walk through the same door as anybody's son -- she's marching. (Applause.)

The father who realizes the most important job he'll ever have is raising his boy right, even if he didn't have a father -- especially if he didn't have a father at home -- he's marching. (Applause.)

The battle-scarred veterans who devote themselves not only to helping their fellow warriors stand again, and walk again, and run again, but to keep serving their country when they come home -- they are marching. (Applause.)

Everyone who realizes what those glorious patriots knew on that day -- that change does not come from Washington, but to Washington; that change has always been built on our willingness, We The People, to take on the mantle of citizenship -- you are marching. (Applause.)

And that's the lesson of our past. That's the promise of tomorrow -- that in the face of impossible odds, people who love their country can change it. That when millions of Americans of every race and every region, every faith and every station, can join together in a spirit of brotherhood, then those mountains will be made low, and those rough places will be made plain, and those crooked places, they straighten out towards grace, and we will vindicate the faith of those who sacrificed so much and

live up to the true meaning of our creed, as one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. (Applause.)