

Undergraduate Thesis Assessment Rubric
 Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia

Thesis Author: Jitka Štěpánová
 Title: *Cultural Issues in Translating Informative Texts*
 Length: 43 pages
 Text Length: 38 pages

<i>Assessment Criteria</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Introduction is well written, brief, interesting, and compelling. It motivates the work and provides a clear statement of the examined issue. It presents and overview of the thesis.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
2. The thesis shows the author's appropriate knowledge of the subject matter through the background/review of literature. The author presents information from a variety of quality electronic and print sources. Sources are relevant, balanced and include critical readings relating to the thesis or problem. Primary sources are included (if appropriate).	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
3. The author carefully analyzed the information collected and drew appropriate and inventive conclusions supported by evidence. Ideas are richly supported with accurate details that develop the main point. The author's voice is evident.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
4. The thesis displays critical thinking and avoids simplistic description or summary of information.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
5. Conclusion effectively restates the argument. It summarizes the main findings and follows logically from the analysis presented.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
6. The text is organized in a logical manner. It flows naturally and is easy to follow. Transitions, summaries and conclusions exist as appropriate. The author uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
7. The language use is precise. The student makes proficient use of language in a way that is appropriate for the discipline and/or genre in which the student is writing.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
8. The thesis meets the general requirements (formatting, chapters, length, division into sections, etc.). References are cited properly within the text and a complete reference list is provided.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	

Final Comments & Questions

The author provides a sound theoretical background with copious references and also supplies a wealth of practical examples from her own research in order to illustrate the points being made: the description of the various senses of *rock* (p. 24) and the *Parts of the City* section starting on p. 31 are especially well done. One of the problems, however, is that some sections of the text appear to have been cobbled together in something of a hurry, with insufficient regard paid to logical transitions – none more so than on p. 28 with the jump from temperatures in Fahrenheit to prices being stated in Czech crowns. (Incidentally, with flexible exchange rates operating, it is hard to see how these could accurately be catered for in tourist guides.)

Another problem is the occasional sentence whose meaning is hard to fathom, such as *Yet there are odds ought to be mentioned* (p. 21) or *Because there is no unit rule, there are many options in translating the name of well known Pilsen singer 'Radka Fišerová' firstly without the feminine ending 'Randka [sic] Fiser', secondly with an English smelling [sic] to preserve the pronunciation 'Radka Fisher' and so on* (p. 35). In the latter example one is left wondering, amongst other things, whether there really are so many other variations concealed behind that *and so on*. Overall, it must be said, the work would have benefitted from a more diligent proof-reading.

In terms of theoretical debate, one might take issue with the assertion (p. 37) that informative texts are easier to translate than fiction (poetry will be left out of the discussion since it is too complex an issue to discuss here). Fictional texts in themselves surely provide various levels of difficulty and so one might assume translating a Martin Amis novel would be more demanding than something from Mills & Boon, though the question may be more one of style than culture. Either way, fiction would seem to allow the translator rather more leeway in terms of artistic licence than, say, operating instructions, rules and regulations or, indeed, almost any text which is fact-based and whose accuracy or veracity may be called into question by an expert in the field.

In the Conclusion the author calls for consistency in translation. While a laudable aim in itself, this is not always easy to achieve on a larger scale even in one semantic field (such as tourist information leaflets for a particular city) if teams of external translators – most likely working from home – are involved. In theory the party commissioning the translation would need to issue a style guide in advance, but this in itself would necessitate prior discussion amongst translation specialists – a process likely to prove both too lengthy and too costly. Moreover, it is difficult to see how a one-size-fits-all approach could work in practice since there may be perfectly legitimate reasons why certain names of institutions and geographical landmarks reveal inconsistencies: for example, both *Charles Bridge* and *Charles University* are standard translations of *Karlův most* and *Univerzita Karlova* respectively; however, it is debatable whether rendering *Karlovo náměstí* as *Charles Square* in guidebooks would assist an English-speaking tourist trying to negotiate Line B on the Prague Metro.

Recommended grade: **velmi dobře**

Supervisor: Andrew Tollet

Date: 25th August 2016

Signature:

