



# Literary Style and Its Transfer in Translation: Bohumil Hrabal in English

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## **Abstract:**

The paper discusses the topic of authorial style and its transfer in translation against the backdrop of Levý's concepts of *function* and *style* while arguing that Levý's thinking about these concepts was strongly influenced by Czech structuralism, anticipated later developments in translation studies, and links up with current research. The topic is narrowed down to two research areas: (1) the transfer of orality stylised in narrative texts as realised by two translators, discussed in terms of Levý's notion of the *translator's decision making* and Mukařovský's and Lefever's concepts of the *apperception frame* and *acculturation* respectively, as well as related notions developed in contemporary translation studies; (2) contextualisation of the texts selected for analysis. The empirical part draws on a model of translation-related semiotic text analysis developed in previous studies. Underlying the model is the idea that for translation purposes, an approach is needed that is capable of providing a comprehensive account of a wide spectrum of factors on the one hand and a way of singling out relevant aspects of a phenomenon of interest on the other. The data that is analysed is two texts by the prominent Czech author Bohumil Hrabal (1914-1997), *Postřižiny* (1970) and *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále* (1971), and their translations into English, *Cutting It Short*, translated by James Naughton, and *I Served the King of England*, translated by Paul Wilson.

**Keywords:** authorial style, literary translation, Jiří Levý, semiotic model, Bohumil Hrabal in English translations.

## **Estilo literario y su transferencia en traducción: Bohumil Hrabal en inglés**

### **Resumen:**

Este artículo discute el tema del estilo de un autor y su transferencia en traducción teniendo como referente los conceptos de *función* y *estilo* de Levý, pero con el argumento de que las ideas de Levý sobre estos conceptos se vieron fuertemente influenciadas por el estructuralismo checo, al mismo tiempo que se adelantaron a desarrollos posteriores en los estudios de traducción y se articulan con investigaciones actuales. El tema central se restringe a dos áreas de investigación: (1) la transferencia de la oralidad estilizada en textos narrativos como aparece en la obra de dos traductores, fenómeno que se discute en términos de la noción de Levý de la *toma de decisiones del traductor* y los conceptos desarrollados por Mukařovský y Lefever de *marco de apercepción* y *aculturación*, respectivamente, al igual que de conceptos desarrollados en los estudios de traducción contemporáneos; (2) contextualización de los textos analizados. La sección empírica se basa en un modelo de análisis textual semiótico orientado a la traducción desarrollado en investigaciones anteriores. Detrás del modelo se encuentra la idea de que para fines de traducción se necesita un

enfoque que permita, por una parte, dar cuenta de manera comprensiva de una amplia gama de factores y, por otra, identificar aspectos importantes de un fenómeno de interés. Los datos que son objeto de análisis son dos textos del notable autor checo Bohumil Hrabal (1914-1997), *Postřižiny* (1970) y *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále* (1971), y sus traducciones al inglés, *Cutting It Short*, traducido por James Naughton, y *I Served the King of England*, traducido por Paul Wilson.

**Palabras clave:** estilo de un autor, traducción literaria, Jiří Levý, modelo semiótico, traducciones al inglés de Bohumil Hrabal.

### **Le style littéraire et son transfert en traduction : Bohumil Hrabal en anglais**

#### **Résumé :**

En tenant compte des concepts de *fonction* et de *style* de Levý, cet article a pour but d'aborder le sujet du style d'auteur et son transfert en traduction. On met l'accent sur le fait que la pensée de Levý à propos de ces concepts a été influencée fortement par le structuralisme tchèque et, en même temps, ces concepts ont précédé les développements postérieurs de la traductologie puisqu'ils représentent des sujets de recherche courants dans le domaine. On délimite le sujet à deux domaines de recherche. En premier lieu, le transfert de l'oralité stylisée dans les textes narratifs réalisé par deux traducteurs. Ce phénomène s'examine d'après le concept de Levý de la *traduction comme une prise de décision* et les concepts de Mukařovský et de Lefever le *cadre d'aperception* et *l'acculturation* respectivement. En deuxième lieu, on se penche sur les concepts de la traductologie contemporaine tel que la mise en contexte des textes analysés. La partie empirique s'appuie sur un modèle d'analyse textuel sémiotique de traductions développé dans des études antérieures. Ce modèle démontre que dans la traduction, on a besoin d'une approche qui, d'une part, permet de rendre de façon compréhensive un large éventail de facteurs, et d'autre part, identifier des aspects pertinents d'un phénomène d'intérêt. Les données analysées sont les deux textes de l'éminent auteur tchèque Bohumil Hrabal (1914-1997), *Postřižiny* (1970) et *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále* (1971) et les traductions vers l'anglais, *Cutting It Short*, traduit par James Naughton et *I Served the King of England*, traduit par Paul Wilson.

**Mots clés :** style d'auteur, traduction littéraire, Jiří Levý, modèle sémiotique, traductions vers l'anglais de Bohumil Hrabal.

## **1. Introduction**

The aim of the study is to explore the transfer of authorial style in translation against the backdrop of Levý's concepts of *function* and *style* while arguing that his thinking about these concepts was strongly influenced by Czech structuralism, anticipates later developments in translation studies, and links up with current research. Levý's propositions and the links with later approaches are presented in Section 2. Section 3 introduces the semiotic model used in the empirical part of the study. It fits into the overall framework as it is based on the tenets of the Czech tradition, similarly to the works of Levý and also of the Czech scholars who are quoted in Section 4 in order to delineate the major features of Hrabal's authorial style. One of them, the segmentation of the oral stream, is singled out for the comparative source text (ST)/target text (TT) analyses conducted in Section 5. For the purposes of this particular type of analysis, a methodology was developed involving the use of Memsource Cloud and enabling the results to be reported via Excel charts.

## 2. Levý on style and its transfer in translation

As a follower of the Czech structuralism/functionalism of the Prague Linguistic Circle, Levý takes a distinctively functionalist approach to translation, both in terms of the intratextual functions of particular language units and in terms of the functions/motivations/purposes of all the complex extratextual factors influencing the process of translation that takes place in the dynamic context of historically conditioned and ever-changing social environments. He pays close attention to stylistic matters, exploring them against the specifically Czech functional and semiotic background as developed by Mukařovský, Vodička, Jakobson, and other members of the Prague School. Jettmarová<sup>1</sup> explains that

... he was a functionalist, not a formalist, and he was both a literary scholar and a linguist because the two branches of Czech structuralism – the aesthetic or semiotic branch and the linguistic branch – were integrated by functional stylistics, another specific Czech phenomenon. Dynamism, historicity, mild epistemological relativism and sociology (its concepts such as norm, function, value, collective and individual agency) ... were the building blocks of the Czech method (Jettmarová, 2011, p. xviii).

Concerning style and its transfer in translation, Levý (2011) is well aware of the fact that the “preservation of style is a very problematical issue; it is a requirement which can never be totally satisfied” (p. 61), but at the same time he highlights the importance of authorial style and the necessity “to preserve it, but in an aesthetically acceptable manner” (p. 62). That is why he introduces the concept of *value*, which is to be created by the translator for the reader: according to Levý, a translation is to be an “original, creative re-stylisation” (p. 59) and the translator “must take into account the recipient’s perspective” (p. 61). He thus argues that “[t]he translator has to preserve not the formal pattern of the text but its *semantic and aesthetic values*, by employing means which are capable of conveying these values to the reader” (p. 61, italics added). Drawing on the functionally- and semiotically-oriented tradition, Levý viewed style (a) as a unity of form and meaning and (b) in systemic and semiotic terms as a holistic principle, i.e. as a sum of lower-order units which form higher-order units; these higher-order units are more than a mere sum of the individual parts because style, by achieving and securing coherence, creates a unified whole. To put all this in Jettmarová’s words:

The Czech artistic sign combines form and content in a dynamic integral whole embedded in its social context. This is also why Levý speaks of the *ideo-aesthetic* function of the sign as a work of art rather than of its aesthetic function only. Dynamism comes from within the sign (dialectic oppositions or forces) and from its external environment (human agency and autonomous systems). Meaning, sense and aesthetic function are not stable essentialist entities but social and phenomenological variables... In Czech structuralism poetics is the artistic style conceived as a combination of content and form, i.e. of thematic and formal elements, in functional-systemic and functional-contextual perspectives (Jettmarová, 2011, p. xviii-xix).

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<sup>1</sup> In Czech academia, Jettmarová is the scholar who pays consistent attention to the influence of the Prague School on translation studies; internationally, this topic is covered by Hermans (1999).

Levý's idea that "...the style of the source is an objective fact, subjectively transformed by the translator" (2011, p. 62) is pertinent for the purposes of this study: specific features of Hrabal's authorial style, commented on by Hrabal himself, as well as identified and agreed upon by relevant theoretical sources (and in this sense objective), are analysed in order to compare the way they were subjectively transformed by the two translators, Naughton and Wilson. These specific features of authorial style are thus used as a kind of *tercium comparationis*, a benchmark for comparing the differing ways in which different translators deal with them.

Here, this raises the question of whether the specific way a translator handles a feature of an authorial style can be called the translator's style. Comparing the methodologies of Malmkjær (2003), Boase-Beier (2006), and Baker (2000), Saldanha (2011) makes a distinction between *translation style* and the *style of the translator*.

The key difference between Malmkjær and Boase-Beier on the one hand, and Baker on the other, is that Malmkjær and Boase-Beier see style as a way of *responding* to the source text, while Baker sees it as stylistic idiosyncrasies that remain consistent across several translations *despite* differences among their source texts. In other words, we could say that Malmkjær and Boase-Beier are concerned with the style of the *text* (translation style), and Baker with the style of the *translator* (Saldanha, 2011, p. 27).

Consequently, Saldanha (2011) defines translator style as "a 'way of translating' which distinguishes one translator's work from that of others, and is felt to be recognisable across a range of translations by the same translator" (p. 28). Following this definition, the present exploratory study would be an investigation of translation style, being limited to just one translation by each translator. It may well be, however, that further research would show that the differences identified here are part of the translators' style. Interestingly, Levý associates even one translation with translator style<sup>2</sup>: "It is possible to consider a translation as the expression of the translator's creative individuality and accordingly to identify the contribution of the translator's personal style and interpretation to the resultant structure of the work" (2011, p. 14). Important as these considerations are from the point of view of research methodologies, in the context of this study, the above-cited idea of Levý's provides a framework: the aim of the study is to investigate just how substantial the subjective transformation of the authorial style by the translators, and thus their contribution to the structuring of the work, is.

Apart from this product-oriented approach, interested in "the resultant structure of the [translated] work", Levý (1967; 2011) considers the processual translator's decision making, which is based on his/her interpretation of the ST and his/her translation conception and includes the re-stylisation of the ST. The point worth underlining here is that whether deliberating translation as a product or as a process, he constantly draws attention to the TT reader as a member of the target culture: "Like the translator's interpretation of the source, his translation conception, that is to say the ideological basis underlying his creative method, rests on a particular view

<sup>2</sup> And uses the term *translation style* derogatively, as a synonym for *translationese*.

of the work, with a particular category of consumer in mind” (2011, p. 44). This line of Levý’s thinking can be traced back to Mukařovský’s notion of the *apperception frame*<sup>3</sup> as well as forward (as one example out of the many that could be given of Levý’s pioneering way of thinking about translation), to Lefevere’s concepts of *acculturation* and *rewriting*. Lefevere and Bassnett view acculturation as a process of “symbiotic working together of different kinds of rewritings [...] in which translation, together with criticism, anthologisation, historiography, and the production of reference works, constructs the image of writers and/or their works, and watches those images become reality” (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998, p. 10).

However, this focus on the TT readers, the need to comply with their apperception frame, and the efforts to foster acculturation have their negative sides (Lefevere and Bassnett are quite dramatic in this respect and write about “the kiss of death bestowed by acculturation” (1998, p. 11)) and have been the subject of heated debates throughout the history of translating. The negative sides were formulated most famously by Venuti in his notion of fluent translation resulting in the translator’s invisibility:

A translated text... is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent... The illusion of transparency is an effect of fluent discourse, of the translator’s effort to insure easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining continuous syntax, fixing a precise meaning... [...] The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and, presumably, the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text (Venuti, 1995, pp. 1-2).

In the context of Czech literature translated into other languages, the translation of Kundera’s *The Joke* is a telling example (see Hatim, 2014; Hatim & Munday, 2004; Kuhlaczak, 1990; Sabatos, 2011; Woods, 2006). Concerning Hrabal’s *I Served the King of England*, the criticism of its translation into French would be a point in question (see Cosset & Grafnetterová, 2009). But what needs to be stressed are the facts that in the ’60s (Levý’s *The Art of Translation* was first published in 1963) (a) the focus on the TT reader was a pioneering idea, (b) Levý was promoting translating “in an aesthetically acceptable manner” (2011, p. 62), which is not necessarily the same as translating fluently, and (c) he was mostly concerned with translations into Czech. Translations from Czech into English in the contemporary globalised world are a very different, and in many ways more complicated, matter. The decision making of the translators investigated in the present study is to be related to this context, for which the reasoning of Bielsa (2013) is relevant. Despite all the difficulties involved in translating from a “small” language, she is inclined to consider translation

as a gain, rather than a loss, in two main respects. Firstly... translation is a form of capital acquisition... [as] an author from a more peripheral literary space acquires central capital through translation. Secondly, translation is also a form of rewriting (Lefevere, 1992) through which works are endowed with new qualities and meanings that allow them to function effectively in new

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<sup>3</sup> “readers, when exposed to a text identified or presented as belonging to a specific sub/genre, anticipate a certain frame of reference to the world, a specific textual/message structure, its typical ‘language’ or style and function, which are activated in memory at the point of encounter” (Jettmarová, 2015, p. 93).

cultural contexts. This second sense of translation as a gain... is a key aspect of the international circulation of literature (Bielsa, 2013, p. 160).

She nevertheless acknowledges the less positive aspects as well, namely globalisation as westernisation or McDonaldisation and

alternative notions of globalization as hybridization or creolization..., which stress the degree of mixture and cross-fertilization between cultures... [...] And while the cross-fertilization of cultures is certainly a major element of an approach that puts translation at the centre of global cultural flows, this approach also calls attention to the degree of violence that characterizes the appropriation of foreign works and to translation as a fundamentally ethnocentric act (Venuti 1998, 10) (Bielsa, 2013, p. 160).

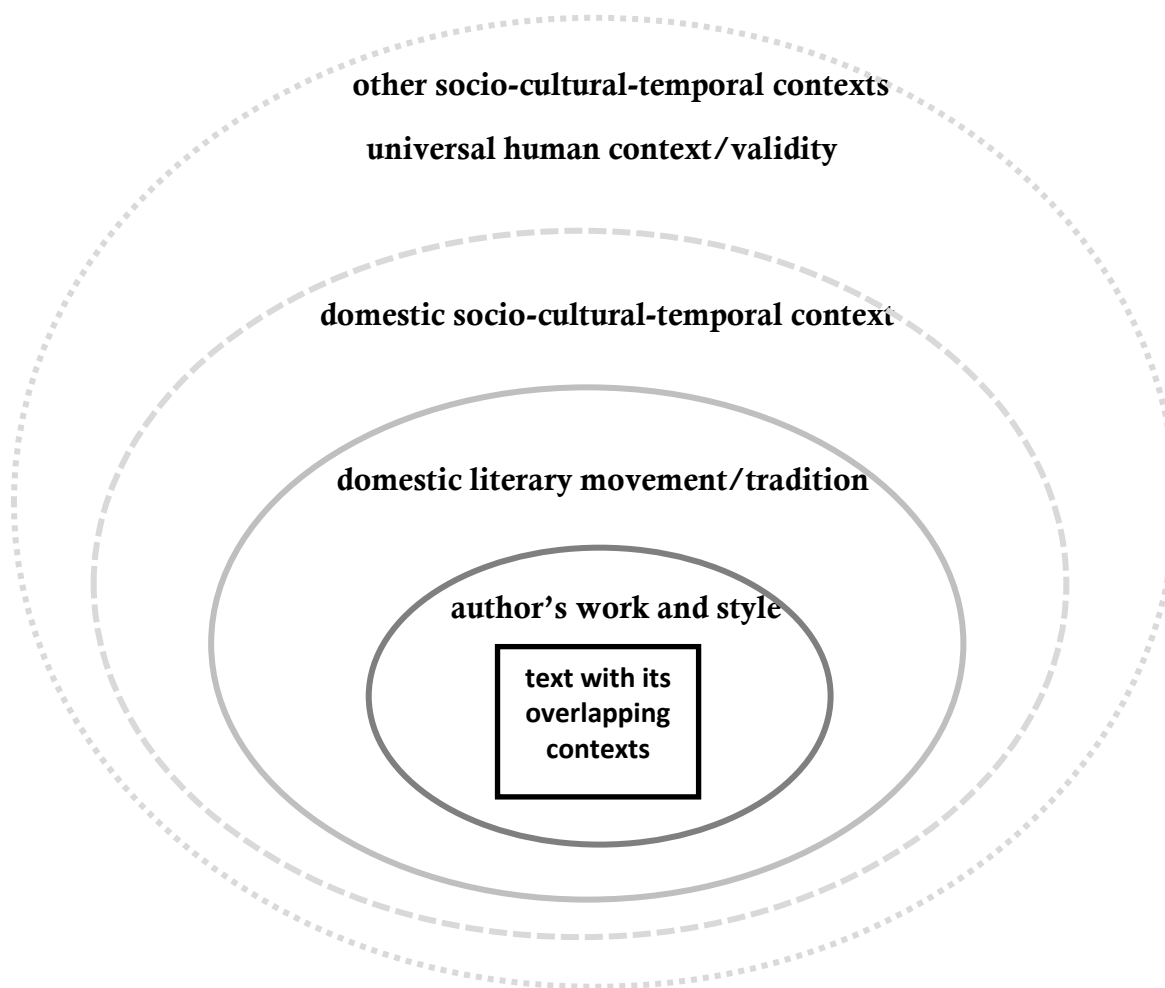
This, briefly sketched, is the background of the decision making of contemporary literary translators. And notwithstanding all the sophisticated scholarly concepts mentioned above, it is ultimately the translator who makes (most of) the choices on the transfer of a particular authorial style. He or she is in the position of a cultural mediator standing at the point of the intersection of competing influences, internalising them, and transforming them into specific decisions and choices. The aim of the empirical part of the study is to establish just how different these choices, concerning the same issue and made under similar conditions, can be.

### **3. The semiotic model**

The semiotic model used in this study is grounded in the Czech functionalist/semiotic tradition described above, more specifically in Červenka (1992). It was developed in a previous study (Zehnalová, 2015); its purpose is to serve as an analytical tool for translation-relevant ST/TT analyses and here it is employed to demonstrate the interrelatedness and extraordinary dynamism of all the levels of the literary text's existence and to test the model's ability to span different levels of semiosis in order first to contextualise the features under analysis and then to "zoom in" on some of them. The model consists of two parts: the first one describes the process of semiosis at both the intratextual (the contexts within the text) and extratextual (the text as an open structure interacting with its environment) levels; the second part covers the intratextual level in a detailed way by identifying six meaning contexts. Hrabal is a highly original author; his texts are complex and multidimensional and feature a very specific authorial style. This richness provides a rewarding testing ground for the efficacy of the model.

#### **3.1. Semiosis**

In Zehnalová (2015), the process of semiosis was represented by a scheme reproduced in a slightly adjusted version below:



**Scheme 1:** The process of semiosis.

At the intratextual level, introduced in the scheme graphically as a black square, the process of semiosis begins with the individual signs forming overlapping higher-order signs/context of different types; this is detailed in Section 3.2. At the extratextual level, the process of semiosis continues, crossing the borders of the particular text: the text becomes a sign (and along with other signs constitutes the author's oeuvre and authorial style, with their distinctive features occurring in the particular text and in other texts by the same author); the author's oeuvre becomes a sign (and along with other signs constitutes a domestic literary movement and/or tradition); the domestic literature becomes a sign (and along with other signs constitutes the cultural/social/temporal context, in this case, the Czech context with its values and conventions; the specific cultural/social/temporal context becomes a sign (and along with other contexts constitutes a universal human context encompassing basic human values). The extratextual contexts, growing ever broader, are captured by grey ellipses in the scheme;

this extratextual level is included only marginally in the present study by mentioning in the contextualisation tables (Table 1 and Table 2 in Section 4) what forms Hrabal's original works took once the process of semiosis crossed their borders. These texts, conceived of as signs, were transformed into other signs: the screen, drama, and audiobook adaptations in the Czech cultural environment and translations into other languages, which became a part of other cultural environments. The adaptations and translations are thus only hinted at, though it would certainly be rewarding to explore them further, e.g. from the point of view of the differences in oral stream stylisation or from the point of view of the semantic and aesthetic values shifting under the influence of different political and historical contexts. Examples in the source Czech culture would include the foregrounding of different values as a result of auto-censorship and censorship in the Cold War era or the suppression of the meditative and mystical experience motifs in the 2006 screen adaptation of *I Served the King of England*. In the various target cultures, there might be shifts in preferred and possibly linguistically foregrounded values attributable to the fact that Hrabal, for a long time primarily a writer from the "exotic" East behind the Iron Curtain, has become an author with unconditioned recognition: "In the decade since his mysterious death... in 1997, Hrabal's reputation as a world-class author has only deepened" (Sternstein, 2008, p. 625). Since the politically motivated interest lost its topicality, the universal human values, captured by Hrabal in an artistically unique way, have been growing more and more obvious.

### 3.2. Meaning contexts

In the semiotic model, six types of meaning contexts are distinguished, depending on the way lower-order signs form higher-order signs/meaning contexts: metonymical (including synecdoche, 'model', and associative contexts), metaphorical, the form activation context, the metalinguistic/intertextual context, mythical, and the context of montage. Hrabal, who revelled in an unbound creative exploitation of language resources, would provide rich material for exploring all of them. They are all present in his texts, and some of them (the associative, intertextual, and montage contexts) are the hallmarks of his authorial style. As exploring them all would be way beyond the scope of the study, out of the six meaning contexts included in the model, the context of form activation is used because it enables to analytically access the most striking and most critically acclaimed feature of Hrabal's authorial style –the oral stream. Even this particular feature is a complex phenomenon allowing for extensive analyses. Out of the aspects associated with this narrative technique (repetitions, the use of colloquial and poetic vocabulary, regional dialect, German borrowings, vulgarisms, professional jargons, marked word order, paratactic syntax, and combinations of direct, free direct, indirect, and free indirect speech), the present study focuses on the segmentation of the oral stream. This aspect is focalised to conduct comparative analyses of two STs and TTs with the aim of discussing the output in terms of the subjective re-stylisation of this feature by the translators.



The context of form activation emerges in a text when the signifiers of the lower-order signs create the signified of a higher-order sign/meaning context/meaning complex. In other words, the individual signifiers merge to form a context that becomes the signified of a meaning; the set of “material” signals (e.g. stylistically marked words such as colloquial or poetic words or their clashes, sentence length and complexity, rhythmical structures, composition schemes, genre conventions, etc.) represent a choice, and as with any choice, it has its meaning equivalent. These “material” signals might hint at an already-existing system, e.g. the meaning equivalent of direct speech tinted with dialect words is the regional origin and/or social standing of a character, this meaning context possibly entering the contexts of stylisation of the speech of different characters or the same character in a different situation in order to create a higher-order context of portrayal of the speech of all characters, which might have its meaning equivalent in depicting, for example, social struggles in a narrative text. A similar example (ellipsis, contracted forms, italics conveying emphasis, and other signals of spoken communication as signifiers merging to create the meaning context *mode of discourse*) was given in Zehnalová (2015, p. 165) and it was argued that the context of form activation is highly relevant to thinking about translation. An understanding of a particular ST meaning context, consisting of the individual signifiers/forms, is the basis of *functional equivalence*: the translator aims at conveying the meaning (function) of the ST forms, using forms that are conventional in the target language community (i.e. they are conventionally used to elicit the same or a similar effect and are thus interpretable in the intended way). By making a selection (and arranging the selected forms within the TT) from the repertoire of forms available in the target language, the translator signals the meaning to the target reader. In the present analyses, the signifiers/forms are the sentence lengths; the meaning context they create is the *oral stream*. What is at issue here is not the change of the signifiers (in both the STs and the TTs, the oral stream is signalled by the sentence lengths), but what might be called “the tolerable sentence length”, i.e. tolerable for the target reader, ideally translated in such a way as to preserve this key feature of the authorial style, but “in an aesthetically acceptable manner” (Levý, 2011, p. 62).

#### 4. Hrabal’s authorial style in *Cutting It Short* and *I Served the King of England*

Bohumil Hrabal (1914-1997) ranks among the greatest and most translated Czech authors. In Czech academia, there exists an extensive body of literary criticism on him; unfortunately, this is not the case internationally:

There has been no dearth of scholarly study of the author in Central Europe, especially, of course, in his native Czech lands, but despite such scholarly attention, and despite the growing valuation of Hrabal as one of the greatest authors of the twentieth century (Milan Kundera has called him “our very best writer today”), shamefully little has been produced on him for the Anglophone audience. Barring the translation of Radko Pytlík’s original Czech study “The Sad King of Czech Literature” (Emporium 2000), the only English-language work to date to devote itself entirely to the author is the one under review [David Short] (Sternstein, 2008 p. 625).

The Czech sources have been published from the '60s up to the present time (e.g. Frynta 1966; Jankovič 1996; Jankovič & Zumr 1990; Mazal 2004; Pelán 2015; Pytlík 1990; Rothová 1993; Zgustová 2004), “offering a view of Hrabal’s oeuvre, of its stylistic originality as well as its lasting universal validity” (Jankovič, 1996, p. 6)<sup>4</sup>. The main literary-critical source used in this study is the monograph *Kapitoly z poetiky Bohumila Hrabala* [Chapters from Bohumil Hrabal’s Poetics] as its author, Milan Jankovič, provides inspiring insights into Hrabal’s texts, exploring his poetics “not merely as the author’s narrative techniques, but as values of seeing and of perceiving the world that this poetics enables” (1996, p. 5). In accordance with other scholars, Jankovič argues that the most characteristic feature of Hrabal’s authorial style is what Hrabal himself called *palavering*<sup>5</sup>, describing it as

a certain kind of creating poetry... aiming at the forbidden, uncertain and ungraspable... I came to call a certain type of people palaverers and their doings palavering. They have usually been people capable of exaggeration; what they do they are doing with too much love, so that they are walking the tightrope of ludicrousness. [...] For literature, a palaverer is valuable because he, as a type, is a strange-maker (quoted in Jankovič, 1996, p. 27).

A well-known, in the Czech cultural environment legendary, palaverer is Uncle Pepin (Hrabal’s real-life step-uncle). Jankovič (1996) talks about his “inspiring legacy” (p. 37) and devotes serious scholarly analyses to his narrative style with its main attribute, his exuberant and overwhelming oral stream, and to the ways Hrabal continuously transformed it into an effective artistic instrument throughout many of his works. According to Jankovič (1996), the key stylistic markers of Pepin’s speech, remaining constant in all stylisations, are “perpetual switches” (p. 32) and “unexpected cuts and associative jumps” (p. 33); Hrabal introduces into the thematically luxuriant assortment of Pepin’s rolling speech... a certain order. What I mean is a distinctive segmentation into speech units, whose length is flexibly adjusted (let us not forget that Pepin’s monologue draws into itself other characters’ speeches, arguments with them, etc.) nevertheless keeping the same nature of clear and repetitive addition of individual units of a never-ending sentence...

[...] The rhythmical adding-on of quite small sentence units, even of those (or just those) that are thematically antithetic, in the stream of a long “sentence” reliably discloses... the presence of Hrabal’s style (Jankovič, 1996, pp. 33-4).

The “distinctive segmentation into speech units” is the feature of the oral stream focused upon in the empirical part of the study (Section 5). The thematic structure of the oral stream is characterised by Jankovič in this way:

Paratactic placing of things or their meanings next to each other without any preconceived value judgements... [...] unbounded imagery as well as cruel matter-of-factness, immediate juxtaposition of poetic and vulgar words, sharp switches and clashes between them, grotesque perspective shown

<sup>4</sup> Quotations from untranslated Czech sources were translated into English by the present author.

<sup>5</sup> The translation of the Czech words *pábitel* and *pábení* as *palaverer* and *palavering* follows the translation of Hrabal’s short story *Pábitelé* by Michael Henry Heim as *Palaverers*. Chitnis translates *pábitelé* as *natterers* (Chitnis, 2005, p. 36).

by the narrated mini-stories, their naturalistic factuality followed immediately by outrageous exaggeration, a play of fantasy... (Jankovič, 1996, p. 35).

Jankovič gives a detailed account of Hrabal's experimentation with the oral stream technique, of using and developing it in different texts, arguing that

Out of Hrabal's "straightening" of Pepin's chaotic speech and out of its movement toward rhythm, new possibilities of artistic prose came into being. But Hrabal fully succeeded in connecting the dynamics of thematic and semantic transmutations with the syntactic and intonational naturalness of the oral speech production as late as in the texts from the '70s, in monologues, narratives, and reminiscences of an autobiographical nature (Jankovič, 1996, p. 37).

Doležel warns that "Hrabal's first person narrative technique is not to be confused with ordinary speech production, but to be understood as a specific kind of artistic literature" and refers to Pelán's claim that by adapting the oral stream, Hrabal considerably influenced the development of Czech narrative prose (Doležel, 2014, p. 239).

The two texts selected for analysis are "mature narrative texts that were created simultaneously" (Jankovič, 1996, p. 80), *Postřižiny/Cutting It Short* from 1970, and *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále/I served the King of England* from 1971. They are loosely autobiographical narrative texts with lyrical undercurrents: melancholic memories of the author's mother in *Cutting It Short* and the "meditative ending that comes as a surprise after all the adventures and twists in the narrator's life" (ibid.) in *I Served the King of England*. Jankovič asserts that "the lyrical undertones are perceivable not only in the subject matter, but in the foregrounded rhythmical nature of the monological stream" (ibid.). As "the common principle of their structuring" he identifies "the syntactically simple, yet semantically overflowing and dynamic accumulating of speech units in the lengthened sentence" (ibid.). It is this specific feature of the oral stream that is the topic of comparative analyses of Hrabal's original texts and their translations into English.

What follows are contextualisation surveys of information on both texts, arranged for clarity's sake into tables (Table 1 and Table 2)<sup>6</sup>:

<i>Postřižiny/Cutting It Short</i>	
Written in	1970
Czech editions	in all editions as <i>Postřižiny</i> Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1976 In <i>Městečko u vody</i> [A Little Town by the Water], Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1982, 1986 Praha: Pražská imaginace, 1994 Praha: Hynek, 2000 Praha: Mladá fronta, 2004, 2005, 2009 Praha: Aulos and Mladá fronta, 2014 In <i>Spisy 3 - Novely</i> [Complete Works 3 – Novellas], Mladá fronta, 2015

<sup>6</sup> The data on Czech editions and translations is extracted from the Catalogues and Databases of the National Library of the Czech Republic and compared with data provided by the UNESCO Index Translationum (which proved to be incomplete).

	Praha: KTN, 2016
Analysed edition	Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1976
Paratextual elements <sup>7</sup> in the analysed edition	inscription by Bohumil Hrabal: <i>Paní Bovaryová jsem já</i> [Madame Bovary is me] <i>Gustav Flaubert</i>
Adaptations	film adaptation: <i>Postřižiny/Cutting It Short</i> , 1980, director Jiří Menzel several theatre adaptations, relatively frequent productions by different theatre companies, dramas based on <i>Postřižiny</i> published in Potužil (1982) and Janků (2014)
Translations into English	all editions translated by James Naughton <i>Cutting It Short and The Little Town Where Time Stood Still</i> , London: Abacus, 1993, 1994, 1997, 2002 <i>The little town where time stood still and Cutting It Short</i> , New York: Pantheon Books, 1993
Analysed edition	<i>The little town where time stood still and Cutting It Short</i> , translated by Paul Wilson, New York: Pantheon Books, 1993
Paratextual elements in the analysed edition	Introduction by Josef Škvorecký (1993) Translator's Note inscription by Bohumil Hrabal: <i>La Bovary, c'est moi GUSTAVE FLAUBERT</i>
Translations into other languages	Hungarian: 1979, 1986, 2003, 2005 German: 1983 (German Democratic Rep.), 1983, 1989, 1989, 1991 Bulgarian: 1985 Italian: 1987, 1993 Swedish: 1988 French: 1987, 1994, 1997, 2003 Spanish: 1991, 1995 Dutch: 1991 Hebrew: 1999 Polish: 2001, 2004 Croatian: 2007 modern Greek: 2007, 2014 Slovenian: 2009 Japanese: 2014 Chinese: 2014
Genre	novella, "a more or less mystifying autobiography" (Jankovič, 1996, p. 96)
Text segmentation	12 numbered chapters without titles
Narrator	first-person narrative of the main character Maryška, Hrabal's mother
Narrative technique	rhythmic oral stream with direct, free direct, and indirect speech included, similar to the oral stream used in the <i>King of England</i> text (see Table 3), "but more edited by the author" (Jankovič, 1996, p. 94) "syntactically loose, but rhythmically patterned long sentences" (p. 96)
Other expressive	rich and original imagery, "several wonderful and stylistically focused

<sup>7</sup> Genette (1997).

means	scenes... images centred around a single naming unit” (p. 95) colloquial vocabulary, German loan words, Moravian dialect, contrast between standard and substandard speeches
Characterisation of the text	“compact composition, the choice and arrangement of a limited number of basic motifs is suggestive of a musical composition” (p. 94) “harmonious presentation of the mother’s narrative of life in the past shrouded in tender memories and humour... [...] but the idyllic feel typically associated with the imagery is continually being disrupted by the dynamics of the spontaneously expanding motifs” (pp. 94-5)

**Table 1:** Basic information on *Postřižiny/ Cutting It Short*

<i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále/I Served the King of England</i>	
Written in	1971
Czech book editions	<i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále. Povídky</i> [I Served the King of England: short stories], Praha: Jazzová sekce, 1971, 1982, 2014 <i>Jak jsem obsluhoval anglického krále</i> [How I Served the King of England], Köln: Index, 1980 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> [I Served the King of England], Praha: Národní divadlo, 1998 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> In <i>Tři novely</i> [Three novellas], Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1989 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> , Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1990 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> , Praha: Pražská imaginace, 1993 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> In <i>Sebrané spisy Bohumila Hrabala, sv. 7</i> [Complete Works of Bohumil Hrabal, vol. 7 ], Praha: Pražská imaginace, 1993 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> , Praha: Mladá fronta, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2012, 2013 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále. Povídky</i> , Praha: Mladá fronta/Prostor, 2006 <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále. S fotografiemi z filmu Jiřího Menzela</i> [I Served the King of England: with photographs from the Jiří Menzel film ], 2006
Analysed edition	<i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále. Povídky</i> , Praha: Jazzová sekce, 1971
Paratextual elements in the analysed edition	endnote by Bohumil Hrabal
Other than film adaptation	<i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále/I Served the King of England</i> 2006, director Jiří Menzel several theatre adaptations, relatively frequent productions by different theatre companies, a drama based on <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i> published in Krobot 1989 audiobook <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále/I Served the King of England</i> , 2007
Translations into English	all editions translated by Paul Wilson London: Chatto & Windus, 1989 New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989 San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989 London: Picador, 1990 New York: Vintage Books, 1990 London: Vintage Books, 2006, 2009 New York: New Directions, 2007

Analysed edition	<i>I Served the King of England</i> , translated by Paul Wilson, New York: New Directions, 2007	
Paratextual elements in the analysed edition	no	
Translations into other languages	French: 1981, 1989 (2x), 1991, 1993, 1997, 2007, 2008 Swedish: 1985 Norwegian: 1986, 2002 Italian: 1986: 1988, 1994 German: 1988, 1990 (2x), 1992, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2008 (Germany), 1990 (Switzerland), 1990 (German Democratic Rep.) Portuguese: 1988, 1989 (2x) Spanish: 1989, 1996, 1997 (2x), 2003, 2008, 2011 Polish: 1989, 1990 (2x), 2001, 2003, 2007 Serbian, Serbo-Croatian: 1984, 1989, 2005 Danish: 1990 Dutch: 1990 Hungarian: 1990, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2010 Finnish: 1991 Slovenian: 1991, 2004 Lithuanian: 1993 Hebrew: 1993 Croatian: 2002 Russian: 2002 Chinese: 2003, 2012 Albanian: 2004 Latvian: 2005 Korean: 2009 Romanian: 2000, 2004 Japanese: 2010 Macedonian: 2013 Belarusian: 2013 Georgian: 2014	
Genre	novel “written during 18 days in the spontaneous ‘alla prima’ mode” (Jankovič, 1996, p. 92)	
Text segmentation	six short stories presented in chronological order	
Narrator	first person narrative of the main character (“a diligent busboy, waiter, Nazi collaborator, millionaire hotel owner, communist concentration camp prisoner – and finally a symbolic roadman” (Jankovič, 1996, p. 92) autobiographical features	
References to the readers	ST: yes formulaic sentences addressing the readers, repeated with minor modifications at the beginnings and ends of all chapters: A Glass of Grenadine: <i>Dávejte pozor, co vám teďka řeknu.</i> [Pay attention to what I’m about to tell you.] <i>Stačí vám to? Tím dneska končím.</i> [Have you had enough? That’s all from me today.] Hotel Tichota: <i>Dávejte pozor, co vám teďka řeknu.</i> [Pay attention to what I’m about to tell you.]	TT: no all left out

	<p><i>Stačí vám to? Tím dneska končím.</i> [Have you had enough? That's all from me today.]</p> <p>I Served the King of England:</p> <p><i>Dávejte pozor, co vám teďka řeknu.</i> [Pay attention to what I'm about to tell you.]</p> <p><i>Stačí vám to, tím dneska končím.</i> [You have had enough, that's all from me today.]</p> <p>And I Never Found the Head:</p> <p><i>Dávejte pozor, co vám teďka řeknu.</i> [Pay attention to what I'm about to tell you.]</p> <p><i>Stačí vám to? Tím dneska končím.</i> [Have you had enough? That's all from me today.]</p> <p>How I Became a Millionaire:</p> <p><i>Dávejte pozor, co vám teďka řeknu.</i> [Pay attention to what I'm about to tell you.]</p> <p><i>Stačí vám to? Tím ale opravdu končím.</i> [Have you had enough? That's really all from me.]</p>
Narrative technique	rhythmical oral stream with included direct, free direct, and indirect speech “free adding of speech segments uncontrolled by strictly logical syntax... but rhythmically patterned... commented on by the author in terms of ‘cosmic breathing of things’, long breathing in and out” (Jankovič, 1996, p. 94)
Other expressive means	rich and original figurativeness, chains of metaphors, frequent contrasts between “uninhibited imagery and cruel matter-of-factness, poetic and vulgar expressions... outrageous exaggeration and fantasy plays” (p. 35)
Characterisation of the text	“writing as a means of searching for the sense of life”, “breath-taking multidimensionality”, “overarching sensuality (even eroticism) and meditateness, historicity and naked humanity, sharp images of details and mystifying games” (p. 93)

**Table 2:** Basic information on *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále / I Served the King of England*

## 5. Specific features of Hrabal's oral stream in translations by Paul Wilson and James Naughton

The fact that Hrabal is extremely difficult to translate is generally acknowledged and frequently commented on by his translators. Czechs tend to believe that he is specific to Czech culture to the point of being untranslatable. Still, translations into many languages have been published, often in several editions, and other languages keep appearing on the list of Hrabal's translations. Concerning *Cutting It Short* and *I Served the King of England*, James Partridge offers this assessment of the quality of Naughton and Wilson's translations:

Both [the novels *Cutting It Short* and *The little Town Where Time Stood Still*] are written in typical Hrabal style; each chapter, in effect, is one long paragraph. James Naughton ... is the only one of Hrabal's translators who exactly reproduces this typical manner: Heim, Wilson and Pargeter all break up their respective texts, significantly altering the texture of Hrabal's prose. On the other hand, the dogged literalness and insistence on close syntactic and lexical tracking of Naughton's approach arguably has its own pitfalls, like any approach to Hrabal translation. [...] Wilson seems much less comfortable with Hrabal's narrative manner [...] and (perhaps with his publisher's

encouragement) he appears to have ended up imposing on the novel *I Served the King of England* a style slightly different from that in which it was written. The result is highly readable and enjoyable but not always as faithful to Hrabal as it might be. As usual the most serious structural change is the breaking up of the free-flowing prose into normal paragraphs and the forcing of sometimes quite drastic breaks in the sentence flow. As a result, the book reads more like a conventional narrative than the imaginative and stylistically unusual prose work it really is (Partridge, 2000, p. 669).

For the purposes of the present study, the analyses of the ways in which Hrabal's authorial style was transferred into English by James Naughton and Paul Wilson, the oral stream as the main principle governing the authorial style, is selected. Its semantic component is dealt with only marginally –the omissions of the repetitive formulaic sentences in *I Served the King of England* are noted (see Table 2 above), but not commented on as this was done in a precise way by Partridge:

Another silent change, for which Wilson gives no justification, is the omission of the brief formulaic sentences that open and close every chapter in the source text. These sentences [...] are clearly part of Hrabal's story-teller stance and their omission is inexplicable (Partridge, 2000, p. 669).

The formal feature that the comparative analyses cover is the lengths of sentences as signifiers that co-create the form activation context *oral stream* within the texts. This brings about the problem of delimiting sentence boundaries, which is especially thorny in the case of Hrabal's stylisation of the oral stream. Interestingly, this issue was, at a more general level, considered by Levý as well:

The written text contains only components indispensable for its realisation in sound (phonetic patterns of the words), all the rest being merely potentially present and subject to the delivery by the performer – variations in volume levels and intonation, interpretation of syntactic segmentation etc. (2011, p. 58).

What complicates the matter is the fact that the narrators' monologues include in different forms (direct, more or less free direct, and indirect) the speeches of other characters; an even greater complication is Hrabal's non-standard use of punctuation and its creative exploitation and varying functions. This particular topic, with a focus on the use and functions of three dots in Hrabal's texts, is dealt with by Jankovič in a separate study (Jankovič, 1990). After prolonged deliberations, the following methodology was set up for the comparative analyses:

- i. the STs and TTs were uploaded to Memsources Cloud and automatically segmented<sup>8</sup>. This first segmentation was then checked and manually adjusted following these rules: (a) the outset of a segment is marked by a capital letter; (b) the end of a segment is marked by punctuation, i.e. a full stop or exclamation or question mark; apart from these, three dots and a dash are used frequently by Hrabal to end a unit. These rules were applied consistently, and

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<sup>8</sup> From now on, the term *segment* is used instead of *sentence* to come to terms with the Memsources terminology and with the fact that it is more suitable for units whose segmentation follows creative rather than grammatical principles.

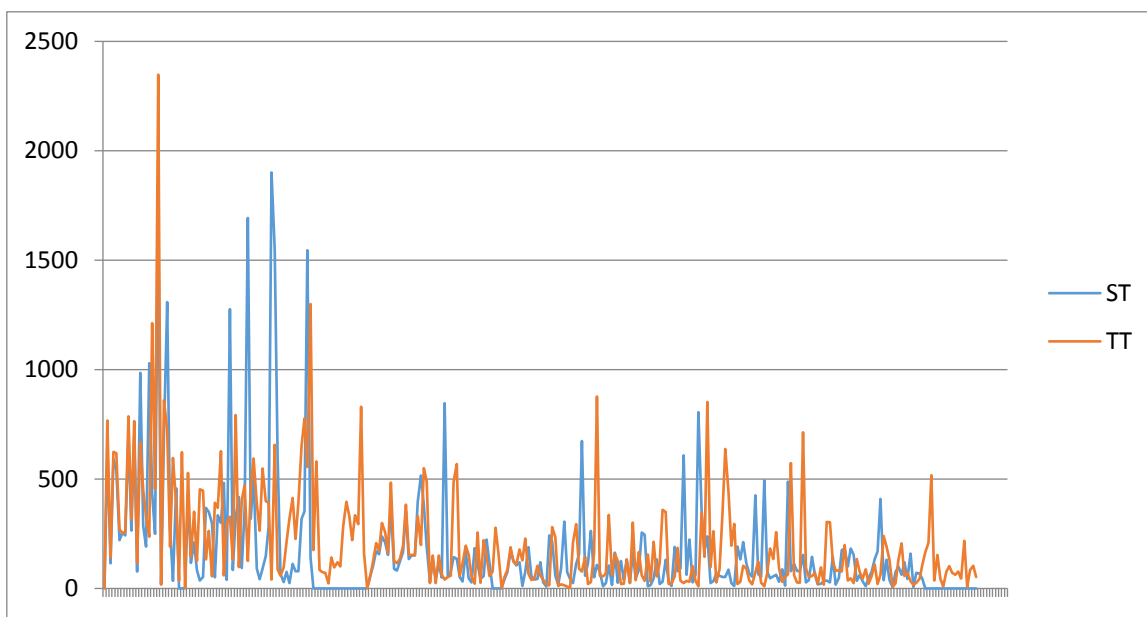


- yet in some cases they did not help (e.g. a segment ending in three dots is followed by a segment whose first capital letter is not necessarily a signal of a new segment as the first word is a proper name, e.g. *Pepin*, a capitalised form of address, e.g. *Uncle*, or the first person singular *I*). The segmentation is thus admittedly to a certain degree a matter of subjective interpretation based on perceiving the rhythmical patterning of the oral stream;
- ii. the output is presented in Table 3 and Table 4, giving the basic characteristics of the oral stream for each text and its translation;
  - iii. the numbers of characters in each segment, calculated automatically by Memsource Cloud, were logged in Excel spreadsheets;
  - iv. detailed results of the analyses are reported graphically via charts produced by Excel. The vertical axis represents the number of characters in a segment, and the horizontal axis gives the number of segments in the respective text sample (Charts 1-3 for *Postřižiny/Cutting It Short* and Charts 4-6 for three chapters from *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále/I Served the King of England*).

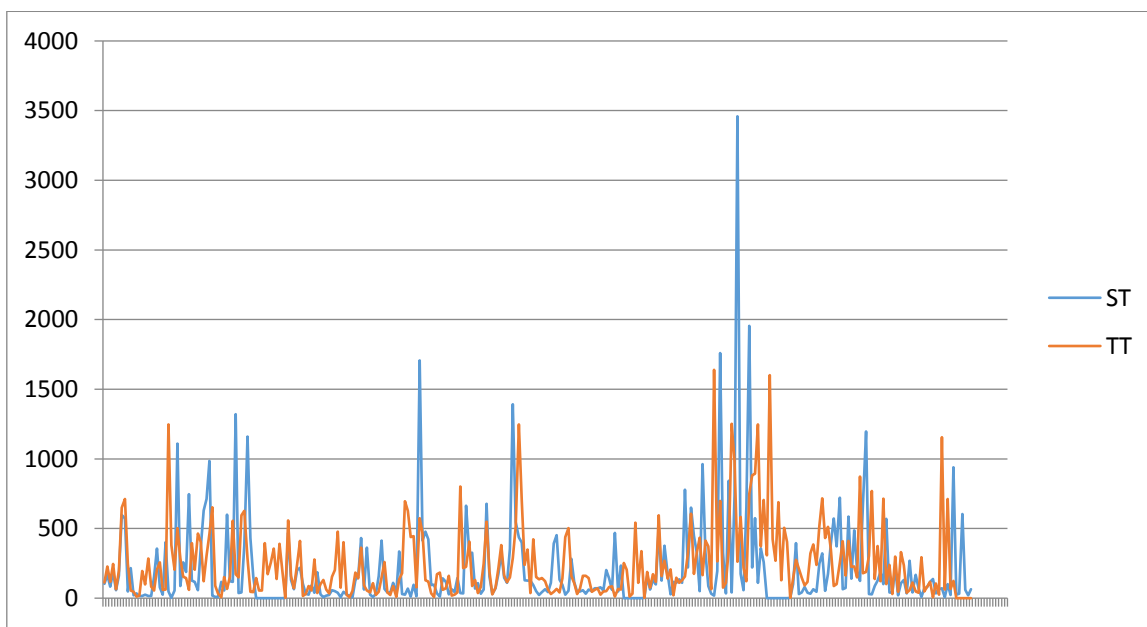
Oral stream characteristics	ST: <i>Postřižiny</i>	TT: <i>Cutting It Short</i>
Length of the text (number of words)	29,799	38,235
Length of the text (number of characters)	140,920	167,857
Length of the text (number of segments)	847	862
Average segment length (number of characters)	166.38	194.73
Three longest segments (number of characters)	3647	1814
	3511	1639
	3459	1602

**Table 3:** Characteristics of oral stream in *Postřižiny/Cutting It Short*.

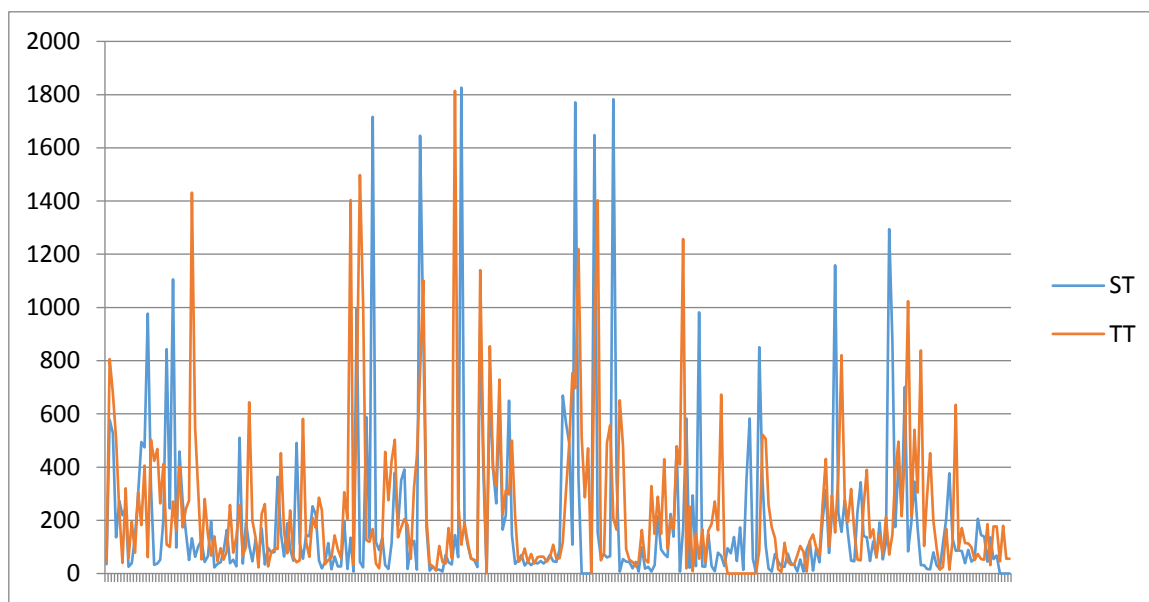
The data obtained for *Postřižiny/Cutting It Short* show that the translator manipulated sentence lengths, in some cases considerably, as indicated by the comparison of the three longest sentences in the ST and in the TT. However, the overall results prove that the shifts were not as drastic as this comparison might suggest: the number of segments is only slightly higher in the TT than in the ST, and the average segment length is even higher for the TT than for the ST. The results are presented visually in Charts 1-3.



**Chart 1:** Segment length in the ST and TT (*Cutting It Short*: Chapters 1-4).



**Chart 2:** Segment length in the ST and TT (*Cutting It Short*: Chapters 5-8).

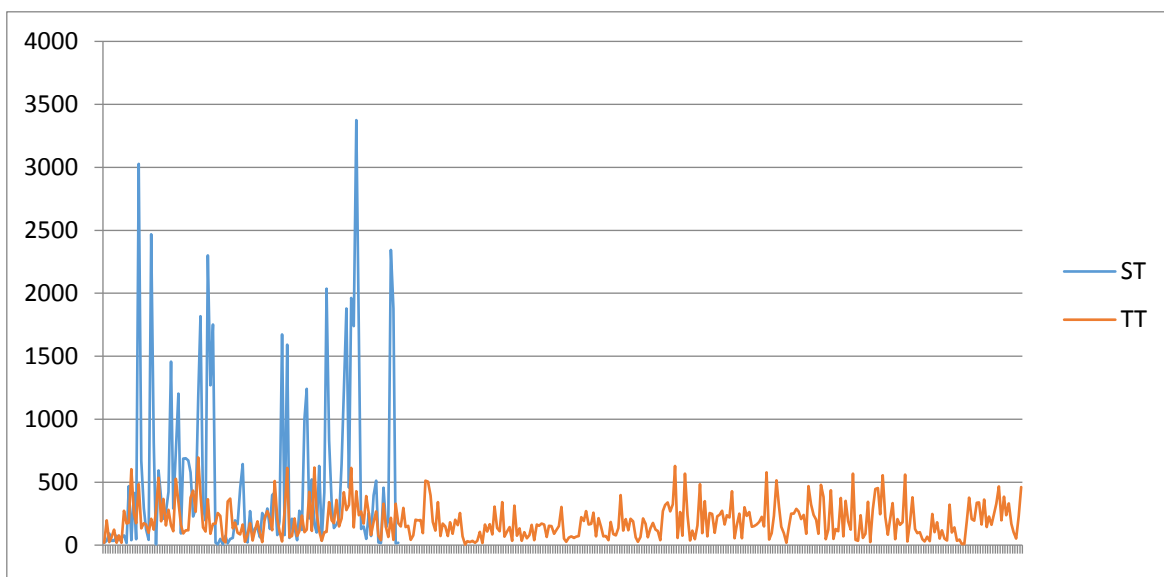


**Chart 3:** Segment length in the ST and TT (*Cutting It Short*: Chapters 9-12).

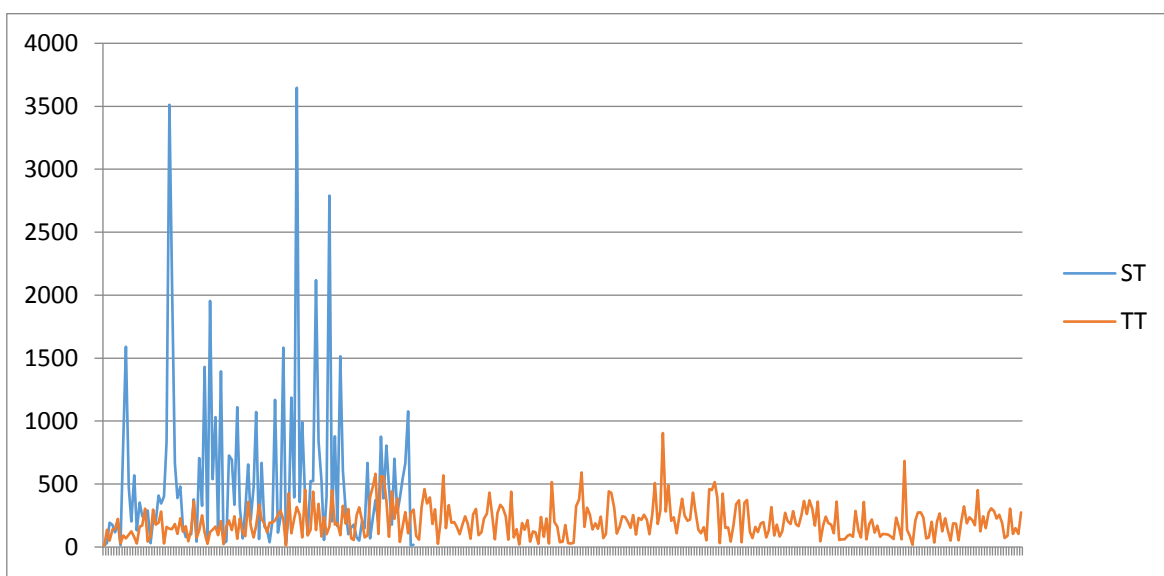
Oral stream characteristics	ST: <i>Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále</i>	TT: <i>I Served the King of England</i>
Length of the text sample analysed (number of words)	36,573	41,366
Length of the text sample analysed (number of characters)	166,500	177,733
Length of the text sample analysed (number of segments)	360	1,138
Average segment length (number of characters)	462.50	156.18
Three longest segments (number of characters)	6559 5061 3428	905 696 683

**Table 4:** Characteristics of oral stream in *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále*/*I Served the King of England* (Chapters *Sklenice grenadýny*/*A Glass of Grenadine*, *Hotel Tichota*/*Hotel Tichota* and *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále*/*I Served the King of England*)

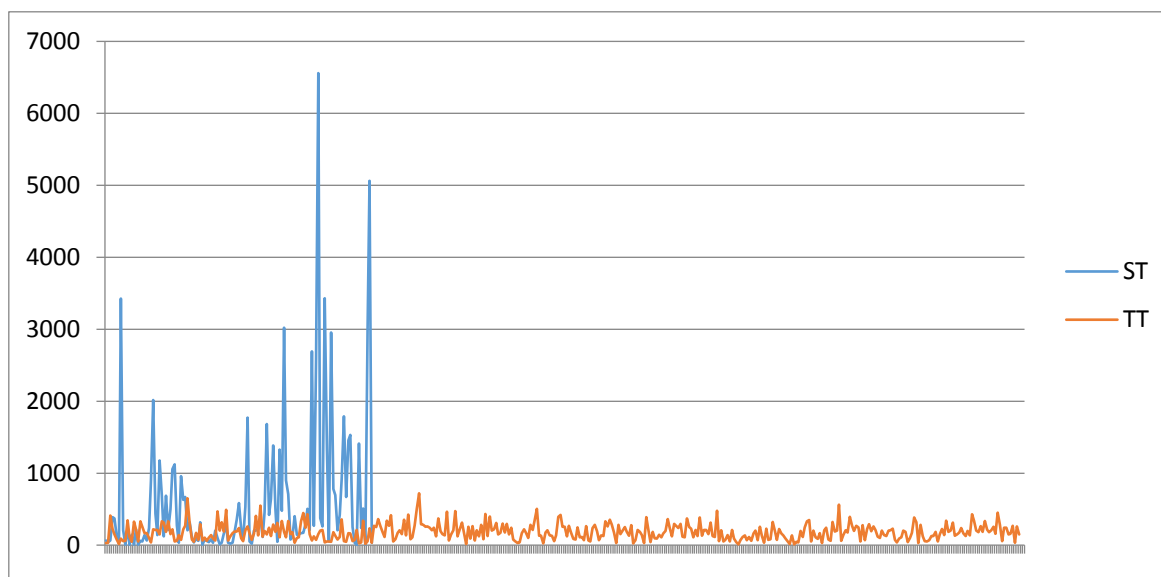
The data concerning the three chapters from *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále*/*I Served the King of England* show a strikingly different picture. All the results prove that the manipulation of sentence lengths by the translator was extreme: the number of segments is more than three times higher for the TT, the average segment length is almost three times higher for the ST, and the numbers of characters of the three longest segments show even bigger disproportions. All of them are clearly indicated by the visual representations in Charts 4-6 given below. Example 1 is a sample of the way the longest sentence of the text was translated.



**Chart 4:** Segment length in the ST and TT (*I Served the King of England: A Glass of Grenadine*).



**Chart 5:** Segment length in the ST and TT (*I Served the King of England: Hotel Tichota*).



**Chart 6:** Segment length in the ST and TT (*I Served the King of England: I Served the King of England*).

#### Example 1: A sample of the translation of the longest sentence

The whole segment has 6559 characters in the ST and was divided into 29 segments in the TT. A sample of the translation by Paul Wilson (TT) is followed by a literal translation by the present author (LT).

*TT: Then Haile Selassie himself arrived, accompanied by the Prime Minister, all our generals, and all the potentates of the Ethiopian army, every one of them covered with medals. The Emperor won us all over. He was dressed almost casually, in a kind of white uniform with no medals, while the members of his government or the atamans of his tribes wore colorful robes and some of them carried big swords, but as they took their places it was obvious that they were well behaved and natural. Tables for three hundred guests were set in the dining rooms of the Hotel Paris, and at each place was a set of sparkling gold forks and knives and spoons. Haile Selassie was given a warm welcome by the Prime Minister, and he responded in a barking voice, saying through his interpreter that he had the pleasure of welcoming his guests to an Ethiopian meal.*

*LT: ...and then Haile Selassie himself arrived, accompanied by the Prime Minister, and all our generals, and all the potentates of the Ethiopian army, all of them covered with medals, but the Emperor arrived and so he won us all over, he was dressed only in a kind of white uniform, with no medals, just lightly dressed, but the members of his government or some atamans of the tribes of his, those wore colorful robes and some of them carried big swords, but as they took their places it was obvious that they were well behaved, they were so natural, tables in all the dining rooms of the Hotel Paris were set, and at each place, gold cutlery sparkled, sets of forks and knives and little spoons, and then Haile Selassie was given a warm welcome by the Prime Minister, Haile responded in a barking voice, and the interpreter translated that the Emperor of Ethiopia had the pleasure of welcoming his guests to an Ethiopian meal...*

The analyses proved that the differences between the subjective ways in which individual translators transform (a particular feature of) an authorial style can be considerable. The charts used to report the results of the analyses show this in a visually clear manner: in Charts 1-3 (*Cutting It Short* translated by James Naughton), the orange line representing the TT segmentation follows the blue one, representing the ST segmentation, quite closely. The picture is strikingly different in Charts 4-6 (*I Served the King of England* translated by Paul Wilson), where the blue line of the ST peaks high vertically on short stretches of the horizontal axis, giving a visual image of Hrabal's style (a relatively small number of long, in some cases extremely long, segments), whereas the orange line of the TT draws low peaks on long stretches of the horizontal axis. The graphic images confirm Partridge's claims that Naughton reproduces Hrabal's typical narrative technique exactly, whereas Wilson imposes on Hrabal's text "a style slightly different from that in which it was written" (Partridge, 2000, p. 669), where the word *slightly* is an obvious understatement. His conclusion is nevertheless precise: "As a result the book reads more like a conventional narrative than the imaginative and stylistically unusual prose work it really is" (*ibid.*).

The next logical step would be to look for an answer to a question that Hermans (1999) formulates in this way:

If there is a whole swathe of decisions which translators make and which are neither fully predetermined nor totally idiosyncratic, what is it that leads translators to opt for certain choices rather than others, and do this not just once or twice but regularly? (Hermans, 1999, p. 74).

Hermans is looking for the answer, with reference to Popovič as influenced by Levý, acknowledging their Czech structuralist background and especially Mukařovský's share, in the area of norms, and develops the notion of the *translator's voice* (1996). Baker (2000) understands

style as a kind of thumb-print that is expressed in a range of linguistic – as well as non-linguistic – features. As such, it covers the notion of "voice" as defined by Hermans above, but also much more. In terms of translation, rather than original writing, the notion of style might include the (literary) translator's choice of the type of material to translate, where applicable, and his or her consistent use of specific strategies, including the use of prefaces or afterwords, footnotes, glossing in the body of the text, etc. (Baker, 2000, p. 245).

By the references to Hermans and Baker, a full circle, two full circles actually, have been drawn: the first one in the sense of the paper starting with Levý and coming back to him via current approaches and scholars, the second one in the sense of the translator being "the cultural mediator standing at the intersection point of competing influences", which is an idea prompted by Levý and confirmed anew: "... it is imperative that we begin to explore the issue of style, at least in literary translation, from the point of view of the translator rather than the author" (Baker, 2000, p. 262).

## 6. Conclusions

- a) The analyses conducted in the study demonstrated that both the semiotic model and the methodology based on Memsources Cloud and Excel charts are tools suitable for this type of exploration. The model provided a framework for dealing with the micro level of linguistic aspects as well as the macro level of cultural/social/temporal contexts and universal human values that was capable of keeping the argumentation coherent. The methodology involving Memsources Cloud and Excel produced precise results and made it possible to report on them in a clear and visually revealing way.
- b) Assessment of the quality of translation was not the aim of the study, so no evaluative judgements are passed. Instead, the aim was to demonstrate the complexities involved in the translators' decision process, both at the more abstract level of competing ideas and notions of theoreticians and at the level of the specific decisions of two individual translators. Still, if an evaluative statement were to be offered, it would be one based on "good reason": one can see, even though not necessarily agree with, reasons for a drastically different segmentation of Hrabal's sentences in English; it is difficult to see any good reason for omitting formulaic sentences that present no translational problems and are key to understanding differences in the stylisation of the oral stream in Hrabal's texts (addressing the readers in *I Served the King of England* but not in *Cutting It Short*).
- c) The results show that some translators (possibly prompted by publishers) do work with their target readers in mind, but they also suggest that the translators'/publishers' motivation has more to do with readability, conventionalisation, and fluency than with the aesthetics of the authorial style; some translators think more about the author, presenting the reader with a close rendering of the authorial style. This is neither new nor surprising, and yet it is helpful to see (in this case literally see in the charts) what exactly it means and with reference to a concrete author, particular texts, and individual translators.
- d) The result worth highlighting is the evidence, based on specific data, of just how considerable the influence of literary translators is; they are indeed cultural mediators influencing the image of one culture in the eyes of another. This brings the line of thinking back to Levý again – he was already keenly aware of this in the '60s and, unlike other translation scholars of that time, kept emphasising the human agents involved in translation, translators and readers being the key players.

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