

Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* in Translation

Filip Vašek

Bachelor's Thesis
2025



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Humanities

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
Fakulta humanitních studií
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Akademický rok: 2024/2025

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení:	Filip Vašek
Osobní číslo:	H21866
Studijní program:	B0231P090005 Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi
Forma studia:	Prezenční
Téma práce:	<i>Sandman</i> Neila Gaimana v překladu

Zásady pro vypracování

Shromáždění odborné literatury se zaměřením na překlad
Shromáždění výzkumného materiálu
Formulace cílů práce
Analýza rozdílů mezi originálem a českým překladem části díla
Vyvození a shrnutí závěrů

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Baker, Mona. 2011. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
Levý, Jiří. 2012. *Umění překladu*. 4th ed. Prague: Apostrof.
Munday, Jeremy. 2016. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. 4th ed. London: Routledge.
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Vilíkovský, Ján. 2002. *Překlad jako tvorba*. Translated by Emil Charous. Prague: Ivo Železný.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **PhDr. Katarína Nemčoková, Ph.D.**
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **2. ledna 2025**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **6. května 2025**

L.S.

Mgr. Libor Marek, Ph.D.
děkan

doc. Mgr. Roman Trušík, Ph.D.
ředitel ústavu

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ABSTRAKT

Tato práce se zabývá analýzou překladu série *The Sandman* autora Neila Gaimana, specificky knih *Údobí mlh*, *Krátké životy* a *Blahovolné*. Představuje tuto sérii a jejího autora, zabývá se překladatelskou teorií která je v překladu použita. Následovně představuje metodu použitou při sběru dat, a analyzuje získaná data podle kategorií vytvořených pro potřeby této analýzy. Těmito kategoriemi jsou získaný význam, ztracený význam, identita postav, obskurní pojmy a slang. Hlavním cílem této práce je zjištění a popsání postupů a strategií, které byly při překladu analyzovaných děl použity.

Klíčová slova: Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman*, překlad, analýza překladu

ABSTRACT

This work focuses on the analysis of Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* series, specifically the books *Season of Mists*, *Brief Lives*, and *Kindly Ones*. It introduces the series and its author and discusses the translation theory used during the translation of these works. Then it introduces the method used for data collection and analyzes gathered data by categories created specifically for the needs of this analysis. These categories are Added meaning, Lost meaning, Identity of characters, Obscure terms, and Slang. The main goal of this thesis is to examine and describe the methods that were used during the translation of the analyzed works.

Keywords: Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman*, translation, translation analysis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my friends and family for supporting me, PhDr. Nemčoková for providing advice and feedback, and Filip from 3 years ago – for not giving up when he really wanted to.

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INTRODUCTION

The topic of this bachelor thesis is an analysis of Neil Gaiman's famous comic book series, *The Sandman*. This analysis specifically focuses on the Czech translation of this work. For start, the focus is introducing *The Sandman* overall, justifying the reason for why I picked it as the topic for my bachelor thesis, and then introducing the method that was applied while choosing what exactly to analyze from this series.

The Sandman is a work of particular personal importance to me. It is a series that not only introduced me to the fact that comics do not necessarily have to be stories of superheroes saving the day, but also one that reawakened my passion for stories and in a certain sense, art in general. *The Sandman* is a series spanning 75 issues collected into 10 books, releasing in the years 1988 to 1996. The main qualities and short overview of the plot of this series will be covered later on in the thesis, specifically in the series introduction in the Theory section. For now, the focus will be on the defining factor that makes this thesis possible – the quality of its translation. This was crucial for two reasons – the first one is that anything else but excellence would not be enough to cover the wide spectrum of obscure terms or even neologisms that Neil Gaiman loves to use, which means that the translator must essentially become a writer on their own if they want to properly convey the meaning contained in this work. The second reason is much simpler – my first experience with this series took place when I was around 15 years old, back when my level of English was simply not good enough for me to properly enjoy it. And while I do not doubt that I would be able to understand the story, I almost certainly would not be able to appreciate its true qualities, meaning the Czech translation was crucial. Thankfully, the translation of *The Sandman* is of a very high standard, managing to match and at certain points even improve the quality of the experience.

The focus will now shift towards the methodology applied during the analysis within this thesis. The first aspect of it that was necessary to consider was establishing its scope. As was mentioned before, *The Sandman* is an extensive series, and thus it is important to decide on what parts will be covered. Trying to analyze its entirety would be impossible within the boundaries of the bachelor's thesis. There is simply too much to properly cover, especially when considering that *The Sandman* contains more text than an average comic book series does, with extensive monologues and occasionally paragraphs of exposition. It would be

possible to pick only a few translations worthy of analysis from each book and focus on those, but the result would not be thorough enough, possibly missing the large majority of the most interesting examples. On the other hand, focusing on only one book from the series may result in an analysis that is not as rich as it could be. This is why I decided to find a middle ground between these options, a compromise. I picked 3 books from the series – one from the beginning, one from the middle, and one from the end of the series.

But even this proved to be more difficult than I initially imagined, as I had issues when it came to selecting the 3 books to focus on. I was not sure which of them would suit the needs of this bachelor thesis the best. I ended up picking *Season of Mists*, released in 1990, *Brief Lives*, released in 1992, and *The Kindly Ones*, released in 1993. My main priorities during this selection process ended up being the overall length of the individual books, as well as my overall familiarity with them. Length was important because I wanted all of the selected books to be presented properly and evenly. And while I do not dislike any of the *The Sandman* volumes, I am personally more familiar with some of them depending on how much I reread them, making the analysis slightly easier.

The selection method of translation examples will be further introduced in the thesis itself, together with the amount of data collected. This data is divided into the following categories:

1. Added meaning – choice of words that adds new meaning that was not present in the original
2. Lost meaning – lost meaning, mostly because of a pun or play on words that is impossible to translate
3. Identity of characters – the way the translator kept the dialogue and personality of a character consistent, specifically by the choice of words, style, or even typography
4. Obscure term – use of an archaic or rarely used term, either in the original or the translation
5. Slang – usage of a slang and the way it was handled by the translator

These main categories are the main chapters of the thesis itself and are further explained in the analysis section of the thesis. The main overall goal of the thesis is to overview and describe various methods which were used during the translation of *The Sandman*.

I. THEORY

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORY SECTION

This section is divided into two major parts – the introduction of *The Sandman* series and the translation theory relevant to this analysis. The introduction of *The Sandman* series will then be divided into the introduction of its author, Neil Gaiman, the introduction of the series itself (including the structure of the series and introduction of the story) and concluding with the introduction of its main characters. Theory will then be collected from the main bibliography and will focus on core concepts of translation and concepts important for the translation of this series specifically.

1.1 Introduction of the *The Sandman* series

This section will focus on introducing the *The Sandman* series and its author, Neil Gaiman.

1.1.1 Neil Gaiman

Neil Gaiman (full name Neil Richard MacKinnon Gaiman, born on 10 November 1960) is a British writer, screenwriter, and comic book author. Apart from *The Sandman*, his other works are fantasy novels *American Gods* and *Neverwhere*, or dark children's books such as *Coraline* or *The Graveyard Book*. He won the Hugo, Nebula, and Bram Stoker awards, and he is also the first writer to win both the Newbery and the Carnegie medals, both of which were for the same work – the already mentioned *The Graveyard Book*.

Neil Gaiman's writing is one of the main reasons I initially became interested in the series. Its main strength is how it manages to mix and switch between moods and atmospheres. *The Sandman* is frequently comedic, whether that means the grim humor of the biblical Abel and Cain and their cycle of repeated casual brutal murders, or the clashing personalities of Death and Dream. Two beings that hold deep respect and platonic love for each other, but one of them is constantly, perhaps even overly energetic and the other is a silent, reserved introvert. On the other hand, many of *The Sandman*'s beings are dreadful creatures, whether that means a serial killer collecting the eyes of his victims, creatures that slightly tap into Lovecraftian space horror, or even one of the main characters, Despair. A strange, constantly depressed entity living in its grey, silent realm, collecting hundreds of stories of hopeless people in hopeless situations. This style of switching moods and atmospheres is rather similar to Gaiman's other works, specifically *Neverwhere* and *Coraline*. Both also tend to often shift between moods and even genres. *Coraline* specifically has this concept integrated directly

into its story, as it focuses on the contrast between the fun and whimsical world Coraline first enters and the horrifying nightmare it eventually becomes.

1.1.2 The Sandman

The Sandman is a comic series which released from 1988 to 1996 in 75 issues. These issues were then collected into the following books -

1. *Preludes and Nocturnes*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 1–8 released in the years 1988–1989
2. *The Doll's House*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 9–16 released in the years 1989–1990
3. *Dream Country*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 17–20 released in the year 1990
4. *Season of Mists*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 21–28 released in the years 1990–1991
5. *A Game of You*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 32–37 released in the years 1991–1992
6. *Fables and Reflections*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 29–31, 38–40, 50; *The Sandman Special* 1; and *Vertigo Preview* No. 1, released in the years 1991–1993
7. *Brief Lives*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 41–49 released in the years 1992–1993
8. *Worlds' End*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 51–56 released in the year 1993
9. *The Kindly Ones*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 57–69 and *Vertigo Jam* No. 1 released in the years 1993–1995
10. *The Wake*, which includes issues *The Sandman* 70–75 released in the years 1995–1996

As was already mentioned prior, this thesis and analysis will cover three of these issues, namely *Season of Mists*, *Brief Lives*, and *The Kindly Ones*.

The main plot of *The Sandman* focuses on a family of entities called the Endless. Each of them represents a basic aspect of human life – Dream, who is also the main character, and his siblings - Destiny, Delirium, Desire, Despair, Death, and Destruction. These beings do not only represent these aspects, they are also their physical embodiments. What makes the plot of *The Sandman* more difficult to describe is the shifting format of the stories it is telling. Some books tell one story, others are a collection of them. Some focus only on Dream, others create new protagonists to temporarily follow. Some books are sequels, some are prequels, some are both. Thanks to this the series is considered to be more engaging, as the world-

building is always growing in several directions at once. There are always new places and characters to explore, new plots and stories being introduced. *The Sandman* also makes use of intertextuality for further worldbuilding – a large amount of its background characters are entities from various mythologies and folklore, whether that means an appearance of Lucifer, the Norse god Odin, or Bastet, the Egyptian god of cats.

1.1.3 Main characters

The following chapter will briefly focus on the main cast of characters of *The Sandman*. As was mentioned prior, certain books in the series may have different protagonists and there are dozens of side characters, but it is important to introduce the most frequently occurring ones. That is because the identity of the characters, and the way that identity was transferred during the translation from English to Czech, will be a frequently discussed topic within the analysis in the second part of this thesis.

Dream is the main protagonist (and in a certain sense, also the titular character) of *The Sandman* series. He is quiet and reserved, preferring to keep to himself in his realm, creating dreams and nightmares for humans to encounter. He is a flawed character, many of the stories of the series focus on him dealing with his past mistakes and faults, primarily his pride and coldness towards people who care about him.

Death is Dream's sister. As her name implies, she is present at the end of every life, leading the recently deceased to the great beyond. Usually she looks like a black haired woman in her twenties dressed in the goth style, but she also frequently changes form according to her current needs – whether that means changing into a little Chinese girl or a fox. From the Endless, she has the closest relationship with Dream, being able to understand his struggles, as well as comfort him or directly confront him about something he did wrong.

Delirium is a chaotic and unpredictable character. She used to be Delight, but after an unspecified event, she voluntarily let go of her sanity and became the person she is today. Similar to Death, she looks like a woman in her 20s, but her appearance is constantly changing and shifting. For example, there are scenes in which her haircut or colors of her outfit change every panel. She can change reality around her, creating things at her whim or making people see things that are not real. Her realm is an abstract void of colors and random objects flying around, matching its chaotic ruler. There is also an aspect of her that will be

directly relevant in the translation analysis itself – she often misunderstands what is being said to her. She understands sentences in their most literal sense possible, completely missing social cues or implications. She also speaks in a chaotic and often ungrammatical way, using imaginary words, saying words incorrectly, or using the wrong syntax – all of which is addressed (or in some cases, not addressed enough) in the Czech translation.

Desire is an interesting character of *The Sandman* for two major reasons – their shifting morality and gender. Desire is generally a neutral character, but in a few stories, they serve as an antagonistic force, standing in opposition to their brother, Dream. As far as their gender goes, it is fluid. In some stories, they appear in their male form, in some in their female form, most of the time they are a mixture of both. Dream often calls them Brothersister. Compared to the other Endless, they prefer direct interaction with humans instead of just observing and fulfilling their duties, seeing them as toys to be played with, even as something underneath the Endless.

The last few characters on this list are not as frequently appearing, but they are still important in their individual stories. Despair is a strange, sad creature, spending all of her time in her shadowy realm. An endless grey gallery of paintings, every one of them showing a different story of human suffering and – fitting her role – desperation. This might be everything from a student finding out he is severely underprepared for an exam, to someone being fired from their job to a man being exposed as a child sex predator. These paintings do not care about the morality of the people in question, only about their despair. And Despair herself is just silently observing and collecting them, usually while occasionally eating a rat or cutting herself with her hook ring. She looks like a short, obese, naked woman with grey skin.

Destiny does not frequently interact with humanity or even the other Endless, most of his time just is just spent in his garden, reading from a large book chained to his wrist. This book contains everything that ever happened and everything that ever will, a psychical manifestation of its owner role. Destiny only observes, not confronting any of the events laid out in front of him directly. He looks like an elderly man in a long coat, his face covered as he looks down into the book.

Destruction is an Endless who left his duties and hides on an unnamed small island, trying his best to live a quiet life in privacy. The exact reason for his leaving is never discussed in

greater detail, but it is implied that he got tired of his duties and of overseeing the suffering of humanity, which he cared about deeply. After being rediscovered by Dream and Delirium by the end of *Brief Lives*, he decided to leave and hide once again. His current location is still unknown. He looks like a middle-aged man with bright red hair and a beard.

1.2 Translation theory

This section will focus on the translation theory relevant to the translation of the analyzed books, focusing on the relevant translation theory from the bibliography. It will overview types of translation and which one is the focus of this analysis, it will describe the concepts of non-equivalence and intertextual coherence. It will also explain the importance of maintaining style in translation and the difference between word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation, as well as its relevance to this thesis.

1.2.1 Types of translation

The first section of the translation theory section will determine what type of translation this analysis focuses on. According to Roman Jakobson, there are three major types of translation - intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic. (in Vilikovský 2002, 24). The main difference is the intention of the TT. Intralingual is a translation within a language. An example of this can be translating older texts into their modern variant, for example translating a Shakespeare play, written in 16th century English, into contemporary English, in order to be easily understood and appreciated by current audiences. (Vilikovský 2002, 25) It can also mean translating within dialects, or styles. An example would be translating a professional, academic text so it is more easily understood by a general audience. Interlingual is then translating text from one language into a different one, and it is also the type of translation that is focused on in this thesis and analysis. It is important to note that both intralingual and interlingual translation ultimately deal with translating verbal signs into different verbal signs, whether of the same language and a different dialect/historical period/style, or a different language entirely. Meanwhile the last type of translation according to Jakobson – intersemiotic – is a translation of verbal signs into non-verbal ones. (Vilikovský 2002, 25) The meaning of this can be potentially vague, some examples of this type of translation could lead to discussions about what can even be considered as a language and what not. Some examples could be formulas relating to various laws of physics (translating them into written form) or adapting a story from one artistic form into a different one – whether that means making a movie adaptation of a book or writing a book based on a movie. Discussing the

accuracy of this category would take too much time considering the length of this essay, the simple conclusion of this chapter is that the translation this thesis and analysis is working with is interlingual.

1.2.2 Equivalence, non-equivalence, and strategies for dealing with it

This section discusses a concept highly relevant for two categories of translation in this thesis, specifically Obscure terms and Slang – equivalence. Equivalence in translation means that for a word in one language (in ST) exists a word in another language (in TT) that has the same meaning, and thus can be utilized as a translation. Of course, the opposite and the main topic of this section is non-equivalence, which is a word in one language not having a word with a matching meaning in the other. (Baker 2011, 18) There is a wide spectrum of potential reasons for this. The most common one is a difference in culture – a custom, a type of food, or maybe differences in political systems that are not present in different cultures or countries. A culture develops new words according to its needs, the things and concepts it needs to frequently address and describe, relevant topics and themes. This is why the Inuit have a wide range of words describing snow and seals, but English (and with that most other languages) are limited in this sense. (Baker 2011, 18) This also means there are words in the Inuit lexicon that simply do not have a direct translation in other languages, causing the non-equivalence. Another potential reason for non-equivalence is another variation of cultural difference – non-lexicalization. This means there is a concept that is commonly known and understood, but some languages simply lack a word that could define and describe it. An example would be the English word *standard*, describing something normal and ordinary, which Arabic does not have a direct equivalence for (Baker 2011, 19). There are other potential reasons for non-equivalence that could be discussed in this section. An opposite issue of lexicalization can occur, a word can be too semantically complex and its definition is too specific for equivalence to occur. There can be also different minor distinctions in the meaning (similar to the Inuit example mentioned prior). There can also be differences with the expressive meanings of words – they can mean the same thing, but one of them can have a more negative connotation, which can potentially make it inappropriate to use. (Baker 2011, 21)

Non-equivalence in this thesis will be mainly discussed in the context of slang and obscure terms, as those are the cases in which a direct equivalent usually does not exist, and the translator has to create a solution. Obscure terms are in their nature words and phrases that

are not commonly used, and with that do not have matching equivalence in other languages. Slang is then directly tied to its language, whether that means to a region or a group of people, either from an ethnic or a social perspective. This also means they lack equivalence in other languages.

As with the potential reasons for the occurrence of non-equivalency, there are dozens of potential ways to deal with it, but only a few will be discussed more thoroughly (Baker 2011, 23). The translator can use a word that is more specific and related to a field the ST world originates from, for example using *area* instead of *stronghold*. They can also use loan words, carrying the word with no equivalency over directly and if necessary, explain the meaning in brackets or notes. They can also use a related word or paraphrase the intended meaning with words that are not related. Those are some of the methods without looking into the process behind them more thoroughly, but one method is more relevant considering the categories of translation discussed in this thesis – cultural substitution. That can mean completely removing any cultural elements from the ST and replacing them with elements of the TT culture, but in this case, it specifically means using a matching obscure term and slang. (Baker 2011, 29) As was stated before, matching slang and obscure terms do not exist in this case, so the translators need to use slang that is the closest to the one in ST. In the case of obscure terms, this means using ones that are similarly bizarre in the TT language, while also being related to the ST word or phrase in some way. Examples of this are covered in the analysis part of the essay.

1.2.3 Maintaining style in translation and intertextual coherence

An important concept for all of the categories discussed within this analysis is the style of the ST and maintaining it in the TT. This also relates to equivalence, but not all cases of maintaining style require the use of any of the discussed non-equivalency strategies. This is because certain cases of translating style do not have the issue of non-equivalency to begin with, but rather the issue of choosing a term of a matching style – whether that means levels of formality, translating references, or replicating an incorrect form of a word a character intentionally made. As is discussed in *Úmění překladu*, translation of a style can be either done by directly translating it, or by replacing it with a matching style of the TT (Levý 2012, 83). The second method specifically is relevant for the Obscure Terms and Slang categories, as many of the examples shown cover finding a matching term to replace the in ST. This is related to the concept of intertextual coherence (Nord 2018, 31), an expectation that the style

and meaning of text will be maintained in the TT, and will correspond to the style and meaning of the ST. This is relevant to the categories to all of the categories discussed in some way. Examples from the Added Meaning category expand on the meaning of the ST without disrupting the readers experience, being a coherent part of the text. Lost Meaning then shows examples in which this coherence was not possible, it was unsuccessfully attempted, or was not attempted at all. Identity of Characters discusses maintaining a style in which a character was portrayed, and both Obscure Term and Slang categories discuss using a term of a matching style, connecting it back to the concepts of equivalency and non-equivalency.

1.2.4 Identity of characters – word for word vs. sense for sense

The next concept discussed in this section is relevant to the portrayal of characters, and it is the difference between using a sense-for-sense and a word-for-word translation. As their names suggest, sense-for-sense is not trying to replicate the ST literally, but rather portray the main meaning of the text as accurately as possible – portray its sense, carry it over from ST into TT. In contrast, word-for-word translation translates each word individually removed from the intended sense. This method is historically criticized for failing to provide accurate translations, as it does not effectively transfer the meaning of the sentences (Munday 2016, 32). But this translation method is also occasionally used in TT to maintain a character and their character attributes, and it can be seen in the examples discussed in the Identity of Characters category.

1.2.5 The process of translation

This last section will focus on the activity of translating itself. Understanding this process is crucial, as it helps with analyzing the selected translation examples, and with that understanding the decisions made by the translator, whether the examples are positive or negative. Both *Vilíkovský* and *Levý* describe the translation process as a 3 stage one, and while they are similar, they are not identical – *Vilíkovský* even mentions the *Levý's* interpretation directly. (Vilíkovský 2002, 96).

1. Interpretace (Interpretation)
2. Koncepce (Conception)
3. Reprodukce originálu (Reproduction of the original text)

Meanwhile *Levý* describes the translation process as follows (Levý 2012, 50).

1. Pochopení předlohy (Understanding of the original)
2. Interpretace předlohy (Interpretation of the original)

3. Přestylizování předlohy (Restyling of the original)

These 3 stages can then be divided further – in both interpretations of the process, the first two focus on the understanding of the ST and overall preparation, meanwhile the third stage focuses on the translation itself.

The first stage of both interpretations emphasize the importance of understanding the ST from 2 different perspectives – philological (Levý 2012, 50) and stylistic (Vilíkovský 2002, 97). Which means that it is important to have good enough understanding of the ST language to provide a direct translation (to avoid mistranslations and mistakes), and also to identify the writing style of the ST's author. In Neil Gaiman's case, this could mean a focus on obscure terms and neologisms, which are covered in the following analysis. This can also cover the historical and intertextual context of the work, and overall knowledge of the translator. (Vilíkovský 2002, 99). The potential lack of this knowledge and its result will also be covered in the analysis, specifically a mistranslation of a biblical reference.

Second stage is then understanding the ST as a whole in its context – whether that means an understanding of the core meaning and message the work has (Vilíkovský 2002, 104) or a more thorough understanding of its characters, which allows the translator to better convey their actions, style of talking or descriptions used on them (Levý 2012, 56), which then also allows a better understanding for the reader of the TT. While the analysis does not cover *Sandman* from the perspective of symbolism, meaning, ideology or story analysis, it does focus on the translation of its characters, which this stage focuses on specifically.

As was already mentioned, the third, final stage is focusing on the act of translation itself. The already mentioned issue of equivalence is a part of this stage (Vilíkovský 2002, 128), but its also considered from the opposite perspective as well – language features that are present in the language of the TT, but not in the ST, which means they can be used to add meaning not present in the ST. (Levý 2012, 66). Diminutives are a clear example of this in the Czech language, as almost every word can be flexibly turned into one. An example of this is covered in the analysis as well.

II. ANALYSIS

2 INTRODUCTION OF THE ANALYSIS

This part of the thesis will focus on the analysis of the translation itself. It will start by introducing the method used for the collection of the necessary data, followed by explaining the individual categories of translation discussed in this analysis. Then it will move on to the analysis itself, which focuses on examples of the selected cases of translation.

2.1 Methodology of the data collection

Data was collected by a simple method – simultaneous reading. Both the English original and the Czech translated volumes of *The Sandman* were read at the same time, switching after each panel to immediately compare them. I took note of anything interesting and after the analysis was finished, inserted those notes into an Excel sheet, where they were separated into categories created according to the most frequently occurring types of translation examples. These categories will be discussed in the following section. This became the corpus I am using to archive and overview all examples of translation used within this thesis. Every corpus entry includes a short description of the given example, usually consisting of a key word or short phrase both from the TT and ST, making them easy to quickly recognize. Every entry also includes the category it belongs to and the name of the book the example originates from, as well as the exact page and chapter, in case the example needs to be analyzed again in its full context. An alternative method of analysis was considered, specifically reading the series in a normal way, starting with the three selected issues in their original and then in Czech translation. This would give me more time to familiarize myself with the series again, but simultaneous reading was chosen because of its time efficiency, as well as the option to immediately compare the original and its translation.

2.2 Introduction of the categories

2.2.1 Added meaning

Choice of words that add new meaning that was not present in the original, whether that means a slang term, a localization, a term with a different level of formality or even a term better fitting the character. Overall, 78 cases of this category were found.

2.2.2 Lost meaning

Lost meaning in the translation, mostly because of a pun or play on words that is impossible to translate, and no attempt was made at replacing it with a pun/play on words in Czech.

There are also several cases of lost historical and mythological references. Overall, 88 cases of this category were found.

2.2.3 Identity of characters

The way the translator kept the dialogue of a character consistent, specifically by the choice of words, style or even typography, spelling of words, word order, and grammar. Overall, 63 cases of this category were found.

2.2.4 Obscure term

Use of an archaic or rarely used term, either in the original or the translation. Overall, 48 cases of this category were found.

2.2.5 Slang

Usage of a region-specific slang and the way it was handled by the translator, whether it was replaced by a similar slang term in Czech or removed entirely. Overall, 50 cases of this category were found.

When being sorted according to the books, the statistics are following - 122 were found in *Season of Mists*, 121 were found in *Brief Lives* and 168 were found in *The Kindly Ones*. The final amount of collected data was 411, which is very close to my initial pre-analysis prediction of 400. This also includes data that did not fit into any of the main categories and was ultimately not used.

3 ANALYSIS

The analysis will be sorted by the individual categories. Each category will be analyzed and analyses exemplified by excerpts from the ST and TT. This enabled me to describe each of them in greater detail, as well as better display the effects of the chosen examples.

3.1 Added meaning

The first example from the Added Meaning category it further develops on a reference in the original version, making it more thorough and demanding of the reader. In the scene this example originates from, Destiny is describing a recent meeting with a group of witches.

(1) (ST) Their pronouncements were, unsurprisingly, oracular and ambiguous.

(TT) Jejich výroky byly, jak jinak, pythické and dvojznačné.

[Their statements were, obviously, pythic and double-meaning.]

The noteworthy part is the way he describes their speech. It is described as *oracular*, an adjective derived from the word *oracle* – a person capable of telling the future. *Oracular* then describes something as having the attribute of foretelling the future. There is a simple direct translation of these words into the Czech language. *Oracle* is directly translated to *věštkyně*, the translation of the adjective would then be *věštecké*. Instead of using this simple, straightforward translation, the translator decided to expand on the meaning and include a reference that tests the reader's knowledge of ancient history and mythology. *Oracular* was translated as *pythické*, which is an adjective derived from the word *Pythia*. This is a direct reference to one of the most famous historical oracles, Pythia, known as the Oracle of Delphi. The meaning remains the same then – Destiny describes the manner the witches speak as one foretelling the future, but it also expects a larger amount of historical/mythological knowledge from the reader, it is more demanding of them. This potentially means the reference can also be lost or misunderstood, but the Czech translations still adds meaning not present in the ST.

The second example uses one of the advantages the Czech language has – its ability to easily create emotionally charged, flexible diminutives.

(2) (ST) One half-hearted apology, and you've somehow kissed it all better?

(TT) Jedna polovičatá omluva a bebíčko je jaksí pofoukáno?

[One half-apology and the little injury is blown on?]

This is used in a scene at the end of *Season of Mists*, in which Dream is confronted by his ex-lover whom he rescued from Hell. He is also the direct reason she was placed there to begin with, so her attitude towards him is cold and sarcastic. This is best shown in the sentence this example is focusing on. The ex-lover is directly mocking Dream, specifically his assumption that this will make their relationship better. That is why the more emotionally charged diminutive of *bebíčko* (directly translated as little injury or little bruise) works better in this scene and portrays her feelings better in the TT than in the ST. It carries over her mocking attitude in a unambiguous way, and that is by using a unique advantage of the Czech language. This is why this was chosen as another example of the TT adding meaning not present in the ST.

The next example comes from *Brief Lives*, and it manages to translate a meaning that would be lost in the case of a direct, literal translation.

(3) (ST) Spare a little change, love? – Change. That was always kind of the problem, kind of... Change. Change. Change. Change. Change. Change. Chaaaange.

(TT) Nemáte náký drobný? - Drobný. Drobný změny. To by byl tak nějak problem, tak nějak... Změna. Změna. Změna. Změna. Změna. Změna. Změnááá.

[Do you have any coins? - Coins. Small changes. That would be kind of the problem, kind of... Change. Change. Change. Change. Change. Change. Change. Changeeee.]

In a scene at the end of the first chapter, Delirium is being asked for spare coins by a beggar. Delirium's thoughts trail off after being asked this, and she starts to think about changes in her life. This is where the problem the translators had to solve occurs. While *change* in English can either mean something becoming different ("things are changing all the time") or an informal term for a small amount of coins ("here, have some change, it should be around a dollar"), Czech does not have a word that would mean both of these things at the same time. The word for *change* as in something becoming different is *změna*, while the word for *change* as in coins is *drobné*, which is a word that can also mean *small*. This is what also manages to salvage the meaning lost in the Czech translation, to create the bridge to which Delirium's mind can wander off. Instead of linking *change* (as in coins) directly to *change* (as in becoming different), it links *drobné* (as in coins) to *drobné* (as in small). In the TT,

the changes in Delirium's life are called small – *drobné změny*. This means the meaning and the train of Delirium's thought is fully preserved, by using a different homonym.

The next example from *Brief Lives* focuses on levels of formality, specifically on using a word of a more appropriate level of formality considering the character.

(4) (ST) How do we explain it to the IRS?

(TT) Jak tohle vysvětlíme bernáku?

[How do we explain this to bernák?]

The meaning is the same in both ST and TT, the only major difference is the already mentioned level of formality. Both are referencing a government institution overseeing taxes in their respective countries. *IRS* is the formal abbreviation of Internal Revenue Service, while *Bernák* is an informal slang term for the Financial Office (coming from the colloquial term *Berní úřad* - the Taxcollecting Office - shortened to *Bernák*). The reason for why this is considered as an example of added meaning is simple. The character speaking this line uses a wide range of slang and informal words to begin with. In the same scene, he calls drugs *smack* (translated as *herák*, a Czech slang term for crack), uses an informal form of the Czech word for *bring* (*donýst*, the formal form is *donést*) and an informal Czech word for an *office* (*kancl*, the formal word is *kancelář*). This means that the TT manages to add another line fitting its character by a simple change of formality.

The next example is once again coming from the second of the analyzed books. It is a localization of the children's song which Delirium sings as she waits for her brother, and the way it is subsequently referenced.

(5) (ST) Tinker... Tailor... Soldier... Sailor... Rich man... Poor man... Beggar-man... Elf-lord... Ivy... Vinegar... Toad... Virgin... Pilgrim... Kangaroo... - The cherry stones say I'm going to be a kangaroo when I grow up.

(TT) En ten týky... Dva špalíky... Čert vyletěl z elektriky... Bez klobouku bos... Natloukl si nos. Boule byla veliká... Jako celá Afrika. En ten ten... Ten musí jít z kola ven. – Podle třesňových pecek ze mě bude elektrika, až vyrostu.

[En ten týky... Two logs... The devil flew out of the electricity... Without a hat and shoes... He hit his nose. The bugle was big... As the entire Africa. En ten ten... That has to

leave the circle – According to the cherry stones I'm going to be electricity when I grow up.]

Both the original and the Czech translation use an appropriate, equivalent version of the children's counting song. In the English original, Delirium sings Tinker, Tailor, while in the Czech version, she sings Ententýky dva špalíky. The main difference comes in the second half of the song, and the reference to it later on in the chapter. In ST, Delirium starts making up lyrics not included in the original version as she goes on. But in the Czech translation, the song is finished in its original version. This is important because it makes the reference to the song clearer, making it obvious that Delirium is recalling it. TT makes a direct connection to the original song, while ST makes a connection to the made-up part of the song. While it is not uncharacteristic for Delirium to be random and unpredictable, there are still certain limits to this, and the Czech translation preserves this aspect of her better.

The last example is a translation of various insults, and the way the TT managed to carry over their meaning, even if the insult is more obscure or archaic.

- (6) (ST) Termagant. Vixen. Witch. Bitch. Shrew. Virago.
 (TT) Megera. Štěkna. Ježibaba. Mrcha, Dračice. Semetrika.
 [Cow. She barks. Witch. Bitch. She dragon. Bitch.]

Lyta, one of the main characters of *The Kindly Ones*, meets a group of witches. These witches then list the ways other people tend to call them, all of them being various insults aimed specifically at women. And while words such as *Bitch*, *Witch*, or *Vixen* are commonly used, *Termagant*, *Shrew*, or *Virago* are more obscure and could be considered as archaisms. This means Czech terms of an equivalent obscurity had to be used. *Bitch* and *Witch* were translated literally – *Bitch* as *Mrcha* and *Witch* as *Ježibaba*. Witch could also be more directly translated as *Čarodějnice*, but *Ježibaba* is more negatively emotionally charged and more insulting. *Vixen* is then translated as *Štěkna*, which might be a reference for the direct meaning of the word – a female fox. *Štěkna* comes from the word *štěknutí*, which means *barking*, meaning *štěkna* describes something of female gender that barks, which is the sound that foxes make. *Termagant*, *Shrew*, or *Virago* was then translated as *Megera*, *Dračice* and *Semetrika*. All of them are terms used to insult a woman who is considered unpleasant and

mean, and they can be used interchangeably. All are also more obscure and potentially archaic insults, and with that, they match the insults in the original.

This section overviewed several strategies the Czech translators used to add meaning not present in the English original, to maintain it in challenging circumstances or even to improve meaning already present. Example (1) displays how they expand on historical and mythological references, creating additional references for the reader to follow. Example (2) displays how the translators occasionally use unique attributes of the TT language in order to make a scene more emotionally charged, in this specific case by using diminutives. Example (3) displays a situation in which the translators had to deal with a homonym that does not exist in Czech, using a different one instead. Example (4) then shows changing the level of formality in order to better suit a character, an example of improving the portrayal of character attributes. Example (5) then makes a reference within the story itself more clear, simplifying a connection between the two scenes, making it easier to understand in the process. Finally, example (6) uses terms of matching obscurity, specifically when it comes to archaic insults, finding a suitable cultural equivalence. All of these examples ultimately help with achieving the effects intended by the ST, and using the translators' general knowledge and unique attributes of the Czech language to add to it.

3.2 Lost meaning

The first example from this category is an example of a loss of character trait.

(7) (ST) I make things want things.

(TT) Starám se, aby všichni něco chtěli.

[I take care so that everyone wants something.]

This example comes from the beginning of *Season of Mists*, in a scene where the Endless talk about their recent experiences after not seeing each other for some time. Desire says “I make things want things”. This displays their attitude towards humanity and in a certain sense, anything else that is not them – just things to manipulate and play around with for their amusement, which is an attribute they frequently display throughout the entire series. But in the TT, this line is made to be more personal and caring. By referring to humans as *všichni* (everyone), it implies they do not consider them as just things, it humanizes and to a certain degree individualizes their subjects. Another change is a use of a different verb,

implying a different attitude. *Make* sounds like they are simply directly controlling their subjects, with no care if the person in question wants to be influenced or not. TT meanwhile uses *care*, which implies a level of interest in someone's well-being, doing what is best for them instead of what Desire wants to do. This means one of the core character attributes of Desire was lost in the process and makes the line in TT worse compared to the original.

This next example is a loss of a biblical reference and is in contrast to (1), which was an extension of a mythological/historical reference.

(8) (ST) The doors to hell are legion.

(TT) Dveří do pekla je bezpočet.

[The doors to hell are countless.]

When Dream visits Hell at the start of Chapter 3, he describes the ways to enter it, specifically how many of them there are. He does this by using the term *legion*, which is a direct biblical reference. In Mark 5:9 (New Revised Standard Version) -

“For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you impure spirit!”

Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

“My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”

It uses the connection between the numerous ways of entering Hell and the way the demon mentioned in the verse calls himself. This reference is removed completely in the TT, with no attempt made to maintain it. Legion is replaced by *bezpočet* (countless), which is a technically correct translation. Both terms refer to something of a large amount, but the reference is lost in the process. This is also not a case of borrowing a Czech translation of the verse, which translates legion directly with the Czech equivalent – *legie*. In Marek 5:9 (Český ekumenický překlad) -

Ježíš mu totiž řekl: „Duchu nečistý, vyjdi z toho člověka!“

Zeptal se ho: „Jaké je tvé jméno?“

Odpověděl: „Mé jméno je ‚Legie‘, poněvadž je nás mnoho.“

[Jesus told him: “Impure spirit, come out of this human!”

He asked him: "What is your name?"

He answered: "My name is Legion, because there is many of us."]

This could imply that the reference was potentially missed by the translator as well, hence why they did not attempt to transfer it into Czech.

A frequently occurring theme within this category is the loss of a joke, in this specific case due to not translating a reference.

(9) (ST) ...When I told him the news about Freddie he said, "Oh. Another one bites the dust."

(TT) Když jsem mu řekl tu novinku o Freddie, tak povídá: "Aha. Takže další zaklepal bačkorama."

[When I told him the news about Freddie, he said: "Aha. So another one knocked the shoes.]

In this scene, a character reacts to the death of someone named Freddie, jokingly responding with a line sung by Freddie Mercury in the song Another One Bites the Dust. TT then uses an equivalent Czech euphemism for someone dying, but the reference is once again lost in the process. An official Czech cover of the referenced song does not exist, so using it is not an option. A potential solution would be to translate Freddie into the name of a Czech singer/songwriter and attempt to find a lyric of theirs that would match this situation, a line that could be used to describe someone dying. It is also possible that the translator missed the reference themselves, and thus did not attempt to properly translate it.

The next example is another lost joke, again focusing on a euphemism related to the dead.

(10) (ST) The guy, the whatisname, mortician, kept talking about "the departed". As if Dad had just had to step out in a hurry...

(TT) Majitel pohřebního ústavu pořád mluvil o "zesnulém", jako by si tata jen hodil šlofíka...

[The owner of the funeral home constantly talked about "deceased", as if dad only took a nap...]

A character from (4) is joking about of their father's death, making a connection between the actual meaning of the term *departed* and the euphemism it is often used as. The direct Czech equivalence of this euphemism was used in the TT, but unlike in the ST, this euphemism does not hold two meanings at once, which means it presents a similar challenge as in (3). TT attempted to carry this joke by using the root word of *zesnulém* – *sen*, which translates to *dream*. The joke about the dead father just going somewhere for a bit is then translated as a joke about the dead father just sleeping, but this connection is far weaker because of the already mentioned absence of the double meaning. *Departed* can be used both as an euphemism and an adjective, while *zesnulý* is used only as an euphemism, nothing else. This means the joke in TT is less clear compared to ST.

This next example is another case of a joke being lost in translation, or in this case, less clear and understandable. It comes from a scene in which a character refuses to come to a funeral in a snarky, sarcastic way.

(11) (ST) Two letters. Starts with an N, rhymes with blowjob if you lose the job at the end.

(TT) Dvě písmena. Slovo začíná na N a druhé písmeno je totožné s posledním písmenem latinského synonyma ke kuřbě.

[Two letters. The word begins with a N and the second letter is the same as the last letter of the Latin synonym for smoking.]

The joke in ST works because of the rhyming of the English words *no* and *blow*. Not only do the Czech words for *no* and the informal term for oral sex do not rhyme (*ne* and *kouření*), *kouření* also is not a compound word, meaning it cannot be deconstructed in the same way the joke in ST does. Instead of making core of the joke rhyming, TT attempts to recreate it into a joke about guessing the letters of the word. Translators also attempted to maintain the mention of oral sex (probably as an attempt to maintain a vulgar attitude of the character) by referencing the Latin word for oral sex – *fellatio*. This is why this example was also temporarily considered to be put into the previous category instead of this one, as it adds meaning not present in the original and is more demanding of the reader – not everyone knows what the word referenced might be. But in doing so, the original joke became more potentially harder to understand, and with that lost the impact present in the ST.

The last example of this category comes from the same scene, from a moment in which the character inviting him to the funeral becomes angry. It is specifically a case of making an insult less clear, making it a contrast to (6).

(12) (ST) And I can't wear black. I'm an autumn. - Asshole, Hal. The word you're looking for is asshole.

(TT) A nemůžu nosit černou. Jsem podzimní typ. - Kretén, Hale. Slovo, které hledáš je kretén.

[And I can't wear black. I'm an autumn type. - Cretin, Hale. The word you're looking for is cretin.]

Similar to the previous example, this insult works because of words *autumn* and *asshole* having a similar form, specifically in their length and initial letter. This makes the connection between someone being an autumn type and an asshole easy to understand. The obvious problem is that the Czech translations of these words do not have similar forms, even if one of them could be translated in multiple ways. *Autumn* is translated as *podzim*, and *asshole* is a generic insult that could be translated into any other insult with the same level of vulgarity, such as *idiot*, *vůl*, *blbec*, or *kretén*, which is the one that was used. Translators did not even attempt to carry over the connection between the two words, which is why this scene lost its impact in the TT.

This category overviewed the opposite of the previous category, cases in which the strategies and methods used did not do enough to carry over the meaning contained in the ST into TT, or even cases in which none were attempted. Example (7) shows a case in which character attribute was lost in contrast to (3), simply by using technically correct translation that also implies a different, mismatched personality. (8) is then in direct contrast to (1), losing a biblical reference by not attempting to translate it, using a technically correct but more generic term. (9) is then case of a lost joke, once again caused by using a correct translation that does not attempt to carry over the reference into TT. (10) is again a case of a lost joke, but this time an attempt was made to translate it into TT instead of completely replacing it with a more generic term. But it was not successful, attempting to utilize a form of the Czech euphemism for dead that is not standardly used, making the joke less clear and harder to understand. And both (11) and (12) are once again examples of lost joke, specifically because of a play on words that was impossible to carry over into the TT.

These examples then show a pattern of three major types of lost meaning – loss of a historical/biblical/mythological reference, loss of a character attribute and loss of a joke. Some of these are cases in which the loss was created simply by the meaning being erased in the TT, while some are cases in which there was an attempt made to carry it over, but was not successful.

3.3 Identity of characters

This category will discuss the characterization of two different characters – Delirium, specifically her minor appearance in *Season of Mists* and a major role in *Brief Lives*, and Daniel, one of the main characters of *Kindly Ones*. Each section will start by briefly describing the character and describe the ways their character attributes remained intact in the Czech translation.

As was briefly discussed earlier, Delirium is a character that is random, chaotic, and unpredictable. This is often portrayed by using ungrammatical forms of words, misspeaking words, or using incorrect sentence structure. She also often misunderstands what was said to her, understanding the meanings of phrases in their most literal sense. All of these aspects are maintained by intentionally replicating these mistakes in Czech, either by intentionally misspelling a translated word that is also misspelled in the original, or by using word-for-word translation instead of sense-for-sense translation. This often makes Delirium's lines sound jarring in Czech, but that also means their intended effect was successful. These aspects and the way they were handled in TT will be overviewed in the following examples.

- (13) (ST) Uh. Yesterday I did some really bad stuff. I mean real bad. You know. But today I did some good things. I don't know. You know.
- (TT) Ehm. Včera sem ud'ála něco fakt špatnýho. Myslím jako hodně špatnýho. Ale dneska sem ud'ála pár dobrejch věcí. Tak nevím. Jako.
- [Eh. Yesterday I deid something really bad. I mean like really bad. But today I deid some good stuff. So I don't know. Like.]

This first example comes from the first chapter of *Season of Mists*, and it is an example of the translators adding meaning that directly adds to the characterization, similar to (4). Delirium describes what she has been doing recently, and while she sounds confused, all of the forms of the words she uses are correct. Translators then decided to change the translation

of the verb *did* into an ungrammatical form. The correct grammatical form of the Czech translation for the verb *did* is *udělat*. The translators decided to use the incorrect, misspelled form *ud'ála*, adding to Delirium's character. It is also a clear example of a word-for-word translation.

(14) (ST) Can I have a name? – Don't you have one?

(TT) Jméno, prosím? – Vy žádné nemáte?

[Name please? – You don't have any?]

The second example comes from *Brief Lives*, and it is a case of Delirium's misunderstanding of what is being told to her or asked of her. A receptionist asks Delirium what her name is, which she misunderstands as the receptionist asking for a name for herself. The meaning of this dialogue is then directly translated with no changes into the TT, which means this is an example of the translators carrying over Delirium's character with no adjustments.

(15) (ST) We went to the fair and then we went to Destiny's guarding.

(TT) A pak jsme šli na pout' a pak do Osudovy hrazady.

[And then we went to the fair and then to Destiny's degarn.]

The last example is another case of Delirium using an incorrect form of a word, in this case, a misspelling which was also carried over into the TT. Delirium describes the gardens her brother lives in as a *guarding*. This misspelling is then replicated. The Czech word for a *garden* is *zahrada*, and the form it is been intentionally misspelled into is *hrazada*. The only difference between ST and TT in this case is the method that was used to create the misspelling. ST made several changes to the form of the word – placing the letter -u- in the middle of the first syllable, changing the letter -e- in the second syllable into -i-, and adding the letter -g at the end of the word. TT meanwhile did only one change, and that is swapping the order of the syllables, switching the positions of the syllable za- and the syllable -hra-.

The second character this category focuses on is Daniel – Dream's child who gets kidnapped in the last issue by the titular Kindly Ones. He is a toddler who is just starting to learn to speak, being able to only repeat and often misspeaks simple words and sounds. The translation method used to maintain this character is the same one as with Delirium – intentionally

matching and recreating the mistakes the character makes. But unlike Delirium, these adjustments are simpler, as Daniel is not able to produce full sentences yet. The following examples are overviewing this method.

(16) (ST) Hop wibbif.

(TT) Hop vabko.

[Hop fvogy.]

(17) (ST) Deeming.

(TT) Nění.

[Ming.]

(18) (ST) Pway.

(TT) Hvát.

[Pway.]

(19) (ST) Losted.

(TT) Potlacený

[Losteled.]

(16) shows the biggest change TT while translating Daniel's dialogue, as it changes the word being mispronounced. The interjection *ribbit* is changed into the Czech diminutive term for a frog – *žabka*, which is then mispronounced as *vabka*. (17) and (18) then do not make any changes, they simply translate a direct equivalent of the word used in ST and then replicate the mistake made by Daniel. (17) has a missing initial sound, while (18) adjusts it. (19) is of an incorrect form of past tense instead of misspelling. The correct past tense of lost is identical to its regular one, and Daniel incorrectly uses the past tense signifying morpheme -ed in an attempt to create the past tense. TT then again replicates this mistake, but by attaching the syllable po- at the beginning of the mispronounced Czech word for lost (*ztracený*) instead.

This category displays a major strategy when it comes to carrying over certain character attributes – intentionally creating mistakes the character makes in ST into the TT. This means

the mistake first has to be recognized. (13) shows an example of a semantic misunderstanding, a character not knowing a meaning of a phrase. (15) shows an example of misspelling, and (16) to (19) are different forms of mispronunciation or incorrect word form. Once the specific mistake is recognized, it has to be directly carried over into the TT according to its type. In the case of (13), a direct translation is enough, as the misunderstanding does not rely on the spelling or forms of words. In the case of (15) to (19), the incorrect word first has to be translated in its correct form, and the mistake then has to be replicated, whether that means removing, swapping or changing specific syllables. An unique example is (13), as it shows the translators intentionally adding a mistake of their own into the ST, in order to add to the characterization. These examples ultimately show that it is crucial to not only translate the meaning, but if appropriate and viable, also the form and style of the ST.

3.4 Obscure term

The first example is from the third chapter of *Season of Mists*, and it is a case of translators adding an obscure, archaic term that is not present in the ST.

(20) (ST) What trickery is this?

(TT) Co je tohle za šalbu?

[What is this falsehood?]

In this scene, Dream is wondering why Hell is seemingly abandoned upon his visit, suspecting foul play. He calls this situation *trickery*, which is translated as *klam* or *podvod* in the Czech language. Instead of using a straightforward translation, the translators used the term *šalba*, which is an archaic Czech term for deception.

The second example comes from *Brief Lives*, and it is a case of translators handling an obscure term by replacing it with its literal definition.

(21) (ST) Doggerel. Rubbishy doggerel.

(TT) Je to paskvil. Veršičky pro psa.

[It's a mess. Little verses for dogs.]

In this scene, a dog companion is criticizing the poetry of his master, Destruction, directly insulting its quality. He uses the term *doggerel*, which is an obscure term referring to bad

poetry, technically saying it is so bad it might as well be made for dogs. Czech does not have an equivalent term for bad poetry, so the translators had to find a way to transfer the meaning of this insult. Ultimately, they chose two strategies – replacing the first mention of the word with a more generic one and using its literal definition for the second. The first mention of *doggerel* is replaced with *paskvil*, which is a term referring to something of poor quality. The second mention of *doggerel* is then translated as *veršičky pro psa*, which uses a diminutive form of the Czech word for a verse (*verš*), and says that it is meant for dogs (*pro psa*), which means it is effectively using a short definition of the insult instead.

The next example comes from *The Kindly Ones*, and it is another example of using a more general term to replace the obscure one.

(22) (ST) Renders a perfectly decent word *hors de combat*.

(TT) Jedno naprosto nevinné slovo tím bylo úplně vyřazeno z boje.

[One completely innocent word was removed from combat by that.]

In this scene, a character is talking about how he is unable to use a certain word because of cultural context, calling it *hors de combat*. This French term translates to *out of combat*, and it is a term used in international war law, defining someone who is not capable of fighting. As this is a French borrowing and an internationally recognized phrase, the Czech translators could have just carried it over into TT. Potentially out of fears of confusing the reader, they instead again decided to replace it with a short definition of what this term means – removed from combat.

The last example of this category again comes from *The Kindly Ones*, and it is another case of translators adding an obscure term, this time in the form of an intertextual reference.

(23) (ST) Matthew? What has befallen our lord, eh? How croaks the raven?

(TT) Matouši? Co potkalo našeho pána? Co dí havran?

[Matthew? What met our lord? What says the raven?]

Matthew, Dream's raven, is being asked about the well-being of his master. He is asked about what he has to say with the line *How croaks the raven?* This could already potentially be seen as a reference to Edgar Allan Poe's *Nevermore*, but the translation only makes this

connection stronger. *Croaks* is translated as *Dí*, which is an archaic Czech word for the verb *talk*. It is also the word which is used in several Czech translations of the line *quothe the Raven – však havran dí*.

This category showed a primary strategy the translators used to deal with obscure terms, as well as several cases in which the translators added a Czech obscure term. This happened in the examples (20) and (23), replacing a more generic English term in order to add to the mood and atmosphere of its individual scenes. (21) and (22) then display the same strategy of replacing an obscure term with its literal, simplified definition instead, avoiding the usage of a generic term. These examples then show a similar effect as the previous category – the style and form must be maintained if possible, even when certain words or phrases do not have a direct equivalent.

3.5 Slang

The first example is from the fifth chapter of *Season of Mists*.

(24) (ST) I'll make you a cup of tea, and we can have a bit of natter.

(TT) Udělám ti čaj a můžeme si trochu poklábosit.

[I will make you tea and we can have a chat.]

In this scene, a British teacher is inviting one of her pupils to some tea. She uses the British slang term for having a chat about something – *having a natter*. This is translated into the Czech informal term for talking with someone – *klábosit*, matching the level of formality as well as the type of slang used.

This example comes from *Brief Lives*, and it is a case of not attempting to find a matching slang or informal term, but rather removing it and replacing it with a more general one.

(25) (ST) What the Sam Hill's the idea? I've been trying to get you to pull over for five miles, now.

(TT) Co jste tu sakra předváděla? Snažil jsem se vás předjet snad pět mil.

[What the hell were you doing? I was trying to take you over for like 5 miles.]

In this scene, Delirium is being scolded for driving recklessly by an American police officer. She is asked *What in the Sam Hill's is happening*, which is an US slang term and euphemism for the devil. This basically means the police officer uses an euphemism for the statement *what the hell is going on*. The Czech translators decided to remove any mention of devil or hell (they could have translated this sentence as *co jste u k čertu předváděla*, which translates as *what in the devil were you doing*), and replace *Sam Hill* with *sakra*, which is a generic Czech vulgarism.

The next example comes from the same scene of Delirium being scolded for reckless driving.

(26) (ST) You better have a good attorney, kid, because your ass is green and glowing.

(TT) Doufám, že máte dobrého právníka, protože jste si to parádně pohnojila.

[I hope you have a good attorney, because you fertilized this.]

The police officer uses the term *green and glowing* to describe her situation, a slang term for being caught with no chance of escaping. TT then translates this term as *pohnojit*, which in its literal translation means *to fertilize*. But it is also used as a Czech informal slang for getting into a bad situation or creating that situation yourself. This means this is also another example of replacing a slang term with a Czech informal term.

The last example of this category (and the last example overall) comes from the first chapter of *Kindly Ones*, from a scene of the witches from (6) talking to each other.

(27) (ST) Exciting my Aunt Banana! What's so exciting about it?

(TT) Strhující? Ani omylem! Co je na tom tak strhujícího?

[Exciting? No way! What's so exciting about it?]

One of the witches uses the term *Aunt Banana*, which is a British slang term meaning that something is not true. TT then again translates this term into a more general term that also serves as its definition – *ani omylem*, which directly translates to *no way*.

This category overviewed strategies the translators used for dealing with slang used in the ST. (24) and (26) are an example of using a matching slang or informal term, which examples (25) and (27) are an example of using a more generic, universally used term. This means

there is an overlap with the method used in the Obscure Terms category, as these more generic terms are also basically the definitions of the slang terms used.

CONCLUSION

The main goal of this thesis was to find out different translating strategies and methods used while translating *The Sandman* into the Czech language. This was done by analyzing different types of translation examples, each of which present different challenges the translators have to overcome. In every category, a number of translating methods were discovered, and this conclusion will serve as their complete overview.

1. Using diminutives in emotionally charged scenes
2. Expanding onto historical and mythological references
3. Using terms of a different level of formality in order to match character attributes
4. Intentionally replicating grammatical mistakes a character makes in order to carry over their attributes
5. Using an equivalent obscure term
6. Using a short definition in a place of an obscure term
7. Similar strategies are applied with slang - it is either replaced by slang term of a matching formality and meaning

Apart from these methods, it also displays several cases in which the translators did not successfully carry over meaning from TT into ST. Examples covered in this thesis (specifically from (8) to (12), covered in the Lost Meaning category) showcased loss of a biblical references and several case of a lost joke, which were in most cases caused by the translators not attempting to carry over this additional meaning in the first place.

These are the main methods and strategies I discovered while analyzing *The Sandman* books *Season of Mists*, *Brief Lives*, and *Kindly Ones*. Of course, this is not a definitive list covering every translation method used in *The Sandman* series. Not only did I cover only around third of the issues of the series, I also had to be selective with the translation examples presented in this thesis. Roughly 400 cases which were considered interesting enough to be potentially discussed in this thesis were discovered, and the final number of presented examples is 27. Even that limited amount was enough to observe a number of translation methods, used both to solve difficult translation cases and improve onto the ST in various ways, clarifying or further expending meaning in the individual translation examples.

This thesis also briefly overviewed Neil Gaiman and his previous works, which also introduced the world of *The Sandman*, providing a reference for the translation examples discussed within this thesis. Examining the translation methods used gave me more insight into translation and its theory in general, as well as the strategies used to maintain the high quality of *The Sandman*'s writing and storytelling intact as it transitioned from its English original into the Czech translation discussed in this thesis. The strategies were varied and even though not all were used successfully (as an entire section of this thesis focuses on such cases), the quality of the translation remains of a high standard throughout the entire series. It can maintain and occasionally add new meaning for the Czech readers, giving them additional opportunities and reasons to get fully immersed in *The Sandman*'s story, universe, and characters. Without the quality of this translation, I would not be able to appreciate *The Sandman* at a time when my level of English was not sufficient enough for its original version, and it is only because of the hard work and skill of the Czech translators that I was able to. And because of the closer examination and analysis of their methods, I now also have a closer idea of why the translation of *The Sandman* is of such a high quality.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TT Target text

ST Source text