A Review of a Final Thesis

submitted to the Department of English and ELT Methodology,
Faculty of Arts, Charles University

Name and titles of the reviewer: Mgr. Veronika Raušová, Ph.D.

Reviewed as: ☐ a supervisor   ☒ an opponent

Author of the thesis: Angelina Martynova

Title of the thesis: English translation counterparts of the Russian subjunctive *бы* / Anglické překladové korespondence ruského podmiňovacího *бы*

Year of submission: 2024

Submitted as: ☒ a bachelor's thesis   ☐ a master's thesis

Level of expertise:

☐ excellent ☒ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Factual errors:

☐ almost none ☒ appropriate to the scope of the thesis ☐ frequent less serious ☐ serious

Chosen methodology:

☐ original and appropriate ☒ appropriate ☐ barely adequate ☐ inadequate

Results:

☒ original ☐ original and derivative ☐ non-trivial compilation ☐ cited from sources ☐ copied

Scope of the thesis:

☐ too large ☒ appropriate to the topic ☐ adequate ☐ inadequate

Bibliography (number and selection of titles):

☐ above average (scope or rigor) ☒ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Typographical and formal level:

☐ excellent ☒ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Language:

☐ excellent ☒ very good ☐ average ☐ below average ☐ inadequate

Typos:

☐ almost none ☒ appropriate to the scope of the thesis ☐ numerous

Brief description of the thesis (by the supervisor, ca. 100-200 words):

Review, comments and notes (ca. 100-200 words)
Strong points of the thesis:

This thesis is a straightforward study of translational equivalents. The author presents the relevant theoretical background clearly and applies it to 150 examples extracted from a parallel corpus. The analysis is backed up with well-described examples, offering useful insights into how translators deal with the nuances of *бы* in English.

Weak points of the thesis:

Working with secondary sources and citation practices. Multiple passages, especially in the theoretical chapter of the thesis, lack proper references. For example, the description of modality types based on Timberlake (2004) (pp. 13-14); combinatory patterns of the particle *бы* (p.15) and other. This includes incorrectly formatted in-text citations, especially for publications with two authors, e.g. "Ruzhen, 2018" for Ruzhen, W. and Starodumova, E.A. (2018)., "Millrod, 2009" for Millrod, R.P. and Antipov, I.V. (2009).

Questions to answer during the Defence and suggested points of discussion:

Could you explain the difference between the example sentences on p.27:
ex. 34 *If it was raining, I would stay home.* vs ex. 35 *If it were raining, I would stay home.*

In Czech, the equivalent to *бы* also functions as the means express tentativeness and politeness, for example in requests. Does *бы* also have this function and did it occur in your data?

In your analysis, you identified eight examples where the authors of the English translations chose not to reflect the presumed discourse-pragmatic functions of *будто бы* and *как бы.* in their translations. Could you suggest your own translations of these sentences to English that would capture the meaning of the original Russian sentences more effectively?

Can you comment on the use of *хотя бы* in example A142? Does the English equivalent translate it accurately? Does *even* really represent a translational equivalent for *бы* and the constructions in which it appears? In the same vein, is *well* the translational counterpart to *хотя бы* in sentence A145?

Which occurrences fall under the category of "lexical translation"? Are there any idiomatic expressions involving *бы* that would justify a non-word-for-word translation?

Other comments:

The organization of the Analytical section follows the arbitrary order of potential translating equivalents presented in the Theoretical Chapter. It might be more logical to discuss the individual strategies in order of their frequency in the examined sample.

In the appendix, it would be helpful to see the classification of each analysed occurrence for the sake of clarity of the analysis.

Proposed grade:
☐ excellent ☒ very good ☐ good ☐ fail

Place, date and signature of the reviewer:
Prague, 24.8.2024