

Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého

**Pre-Translation Analysis of
Hamilton: An American Musical
with Emphasis on Singability**

(Bakalářská práce)

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**Analýza pro překlad muzikálu *Hamilton* s důrazem na zpívatelnost
Pre-Translation Analysis of *Hamilton: An American Musical* with
Emphasis on Singability**

(Bakalářská práce)

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne 5. 5. 2021

.....
vlastnoruční podpis

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List of Abbreviations

SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TT	Target Text
RQ	Research Question
OBC	Original Broadway Cast
<i>Hamilton</i>	<i>Hamilton: An American Musical</i>

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1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to provide an analysis for a future singable and performable Czech translation of *Hamilton*. The goal is to pinpoint what aspects the translator should consider when construing the most effective translation and what can aid them during the process.

Hamilton is a rap musical written by Lin-Manuel Miranda and it follows the story of Alexander Hamilton, the first US Treasury Secretary, until his sudden death. Miranda works with the fact that Hamilton was an immigrant (DeConde 2020)¹, and that is applied to the overall philosophy of the play where he, as one may notice, is finding links between the history of the United States and the current situation. In Miranda's words: "*This is a story about America then, told by America now,*" (Weinert-Kendt 2015)². His philosophy is reflected in the casting as well; as one can see, each cast in each production is made up of minorities. This highly intertextual fusion of real historical letters, colloquial English, classical show tunes and modern hip-hop earned Miranda a *Pulitzer Prize* in 2016 after being nominated for *In the Heights*, his first musical, in 2009 (The Pulitzer Prizes n.d.)³. Its popularity with the younger generation and its distinctness from other successful musicals is the reason I selected it for my thesis, and, if it were translated into Czech, it could make music theatre more popular with the local younger generation.

In terms of methodology, in order to choose the best translation approach for *Hamilton*, I begin with the evolution of music theatre and establish a line between the two most popular types of music theatre, opera and musical. Then I focus on historical approaches towards music theatre translation and compare them to our current possibilities. My supposed ideal approach is based on Kaindl (see Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012), i.e., a singable translation that is construed with consideration of the accompanying music and a staging, and if it proves to be the right approach, I will elaborate on singability in more detail.

¹ Available online at: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Alexander-Hamilton-United-States-statesman>

² Available online at: www.nytimes.com/2015/02/08/theater/lin-manuel-miranda-and-others-from-hamilton-talk-history.html

³ Available online at: <https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/lin-manuel-miranda>

Consideration of the pre-existing music seemingly does not impose any problems on the translation process, apart from the expected prosodic and rhythmic constraints, but consideration of an exact staging may be problematic, as not all musicals have a universal staging. In the case of *Hamilton*, the staging is universal, which can be seen in the Broadway, West End, Australian, and touring productions, and it can be best observed in the filmed version of the OBC from 2016 available on *Disney+*.⁴ This, along with the edited libretto, official sheet music selections, and the OBC recording available on *Spotify*⁵ will aid me throughout the analysis.

The scope of this thesis does not allow me to cover all songs, therefore, I will elaborate on a selection of the ones that may appear as the biggest challenge during the translation process and provide Czech TT suggestions and recommended rhythmic or musical changes in the form of sheet music. The translator may then feel free to draw on my remarks and findings during their translation process when it comes to the rest of the songs, as they can be very rhythmically and prosodically similar to the ones I touch on at times. Based on the aim of the thesis, I set up the following RQs:

RQ 1: What aspects should the translator consider in terms of an effective singable translation of *Hamilton* from English to Czech?

RQ 2: Can individual translations of *Hamilton* differ globally? If so, how?

⁴ Available online at: <https://disneyplusoriginals.disney.com/movie/hamilton>

⁵ Available online at:

https://open.spotify.com/album/1kCHru7uhxBUdzkm4gzRQc?si=nVeqE2qWTK240_HCBzvBlg

2 Definition of “A Musical”

According to Christopher Balme, a theatre studies expert, such form of art is a specific type of music theatre, a discipline that also covers opera and operetta. It differs from “regular” theatre by adding another degree of complexity to the play, and that is the music it is accompanied by (Balme 2008, 147).

2.1 Musical or Opera

At first, it may appear that addressing the listed types of theatre only as “music theatre” should be sufficient, after all, they have accompanying music, singing actors, and a plot, but experts from the field of theatre and music do, in fact, differentiate between musicals and opera, although it is a struggle to find a clear distinction between them. Some say the distinction lies in the amount of sung and spoken word – opera contains more singing and musicals contain more spoken word (see Parr 2020; Roberts 2018)⁶, while others stress the difference between music and acting – opera prioritizes music, musicals prioritize acting and the overall story (Hobbs 2019)⁷.

Both examples are true to some extent, but if we were to make a decision about *Hamilton* based on the first differentiation, as Hobbs also mentions in her article, it would be deemed an opera (Hobbs 2019) despite its literal name. As a translation student, I looked for a distinction that was more of value to me and more text-related. While Hobbs’ distinction comes close to the desired one, the one made by *The New York Times*’ Anthony Tommasini proved to be the most sufficient. He states:

Here’s the difference: Both genres seek to combine words and music in dynamic, felicitous and, to invoke that all-purpose term, artistic ways. But in opera, music is the driving force; in musical theater, words come first. (Tommasini 2011)⁸

⁶ Available online at: www.classical-music.com/features/articles/what-is-the-difference-between-a-musical-and-an-opera and www.classicfm.com/discover-music/periods-genres/opera/difference-between-opera-and-musical

⁷ Available online at: michiganopera.org/opera-v-musical-theater-the-case-for-sweeney-todd

⁸ Available online at: www.nytimes.com/2011/07/10/theater/musical-or-opera-the-fine-line-that-divides-them.html

And I agree. Opera is sometimes considered more of a music genre (Mateo 2012) rather than a theatre genre, and Tommasini's distinction is also in line with the theatre studies approaches towards music theatre translation (see Apter & Herman 2016; Low 2005). Yet again, I should state that this distinction may not be applicable to all musicals and operas, because, as Denise Gallo remarks, even opera librettists and composers in the 18th century could not agree on the significance of the text. Ranieri de' Calzabigi, a librettist, emphasized the text, while Mozart was a strong defender of music having the upper hand (Gallo 2006, 37), and that was before the rise of musicals. With that in mind, one can assume that a person's approach towards music-text importance depends on their field of expertise.

3 Music Theatre Translation

Music theatre translation, despite being a part of audiovisual translation, is not a topic as broadly researched (Susam-Sarajeva 2008, 187) as other parts of the genre, although its popularity is growing; Ronnie Apter and Mark Herman mention that even an actual university program focused on the translation of music can be enrolled in at the University of Edinburgh (Apter & Herman 2016, 3). That means most of the findings on this type of translation are relatively new, although various general translation studies experts, such as Eugene Nida or Katharina Reiss, touched on the subject of song translation, but not in great detail (see Nida 1964, 177, cited in Apter & Herman 2016, 16; Reiss 1971, 49-52, cited in Franzon 2008, 375).

The lack of research in translation studies may be surprising, considering the fact that opera, the oldest form of relevant music theatre, has been around since the Renaissance (Gallo 2006), and also the fact that at the beginning of the 18th century, Abbé François Ragueneau, a historian and musicologist, published a discourse contrasting French and Italian opera (*ibid*). This means that some linguistic analysis of music theatre could have been carried out even in that time. Nevertheless, it is clear from the discourse that he focused primarily on how the music sounds; however, he states that Italian opera has more advantage regarding higher notes than French opera (Ragueneau & Galliard 1709, 26)⁹, and one may assume such advantage could have been assessed not only on the basis of the instrumental music structure, but also in parts with

⁹ Available online at: <https://www.loc.gov/item/10010077/>

sung word. That would mean he analyzed the languages on a phonetic level, which could have sparked more interest in music theatre translation.

But there is one point that adds some clarity to the lack of research in the field of translation studies that should be mentioned; Gallo says that up until the 19th century, sung opera translation was highly unpopular with the audience because performance translations were deemed distortions, therefore the SL versions were much more preferred (Gallo 2006, 51). If an opera was to be translated to be sung in the TL, it was most likely done so with respect to what Tomassini states in his distinction, meaning the TT was construed to be accompanying the music. Another point as to why sung opera translation was so unfavored can be seen in Joseph Addison's entry in *The Spectator* – the TT sometimes had no semantic correlation to the ST (Addison 1711, cited in Apter & Herman 2016). Regardless, audiences still wanted to understand the libretto, and this was done with the help of printed versions of the TT (Desblache 2007, cited in Mateo 2012).

According to musicologist Philip Gossett, sung music theatre translation became popular for a brief period in the 19th century (Gosset 2006, cited in Apter & Herman 2016, 11), however, cases of unacceptance of sung translation in opera can be observed to this day, but this may not necessarily be the case with musicals. Since theatre studies experts differentiate between opera and musicals, translation studies experts should too, and this is exactly what Marta Mateo, a contemporary music translation theoretician, has done in her research. She states that there is, indeed, a difference between opera and musical translation, and it can be attributed to tradition – most Western opera houses resort to subtitles or surtitles, but musicals have singable translations (Mateo 2008, cited in Mateo 2012), or as I would clarify, performable, since that seems to be a more fitting name, which will be explained later. But these traditions are not completely binding, of course; in the case of *Rent* in the Czech Republic, the *Divadlo Kalich* theatre production was performed in English with Czech surtitles (i-divadlo.cz n.d.)¹⁰, while the one at the *Městské divadlo Brno* theatre was performed in Czech (Městské divadlo Brno n.d.)¹¹. Although it is worth noting that based on my own experience, most musicals performed in the Czech Republic now are in line with Mateo's views on the Western tradition.

¹⁰ Available online at: www.i-divadlo.cz/divadlo/divadlo-kalich/rent

¹¹ Available online at: www.mdb.cz/inscenace/442-rent

We can easily deduce that music theatre translation has many types that are favored under various conditions, and thanks to modern technology, we now have even more possibilities when compared to the 18th and 19th century. The early 20th century brought its own specifics to translation of musicals with the rise of film, but the focus of this thesis is on stage musicals. When we consider the translation of musicals for the stage in the second half of the 20th century, the trend was noticeably different in the Eastern and Western Bloc. This is touched on by Jan Vaněk, a Czech music theatre expert, who says that the communist regime did not allow translation of musicals originally written in English, but translation of Italian musicals was allowed (Vaněk 1998, 21, cited in Švédů 2018, 13-14). However, in the Western Bloc, there was no problem with musicals being translated into English for their West End or Broadway runs, as can be seen in the case of *Les Misérables*, which was originally written in French. It premiered in English in 1985 at the Barbican Theatre, five years after its French premiere (The Guide to Musical Theatre n.d.)¹². This further proves Mateo's hypothesis about Western tradition, and that it does not have to be applied only to musicals translated *from* English. The scope and focus of this thesis do not allow me to elaborate on all current types of music theatre translation, however, I would like to focus on how and why some of the most popular approaches in the Western culture can be chosen.

4 The Choice of an Approach

The choice of an approach, according to Peter Low, depends on the given skopos of the translation, because each skopos can create a completely different TT (Low 2003, cited in Low 2005, 186). My suggestion is to continue with previous interdisciplinarity and approach translation with respect to skopos and also from the point of view of theatre studies, i.e., based on the way experts from the field analyze theatre plays. That is done on two levels: the text, meaning the libretto, and the staging (Balme 2008, 147).

The purely textual level of translation may be expected to provide information quickly and sometimes without interfering artistic properties (such as rhymes or restricting prosodic properties), and this can be deemed analogous to Johan Franzon's "*prose translation*," its purpose being to translate a song's lyrics to be semantically

¹² Available online at: www.guidetomusicaltheatre.com/shows_m/miserables.htm

close to the ST (Franzon 2008, 374). It may be used, e.g., in CD inserts or as subtitles (Mateo 2012), specifically during interviews with the creator(s) of the play, as it is the case with the Czech translation of the *Lin-Manuel Miranda: Wait for It* episode of *Song Exploder* on *Netflix*,¹³ where both, the song titles and the lyrics, were translated purely on a textual level with no respect to the original music, staging, nor Miranda's intended artistic properties. But this should not be considered a vitiation of the ST, it simply depends on the given skopos, which, in this situation, was selected correctly, as more emphasis was to be put on Miranda's commentary.

Or we can approach the play holistically, which is in line with Klaus Kaindl's theory where he proposes the translator takes into account the text, the music, and the stage performance (Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012), and this is generally done when the skopos is to construe a singable TT for the stage (ibid). Susam-Sarajeva draws on Low and proposes a series of questions regarding this particular skopos that should be answered before starting the translation process:

Who will sing the musical product? (...) Where will it appear: on a CD, TV or radio, or will it be a live performance? How many times will the audience have the chance to listen to the song, i.e. how transitory will the reception be? (...) What will be the mode of translation: a written text (e.g. a CD insert or opera surtitle) or a 'singable' target version? (...) (Susam-Sarajeva 2008, 191)

¹³ Available online at: <https://www.netflix.com/title/80992997>

5 Selected Approach

The theoretical backdrop provided me with enough information to assess the most suitable translation approach in terms of the pre-translation analysis, and it will be as follows: With respect to the findings on tradition (see Mateo 2008, cited in Mateo 2012), the TT, since the play is a musical and it would be presented in a Czech setting, should be singable and made for the stage. Therefore, it calls for a holistic approach where the translator considers the text, music, and the staging (see Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012).

It is important to note that stress should be put on the *made for the stage* part, it meaning *performable*. This insinuates that singability can be achieved on numerous levels and for different purposes. In the following table, I propose three basic levels of singability in relation to performability based on Kaindl's holistic approach (see Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012) and Franzon's *Five choices in song translation* and *Three dimensions of singability* (see Franzon 2008; 2015) with less focus on subtitling. The suggested types will be touched on in the following chapters in more detail.

Type of a singable translation	Performability
“Singable” translation	NO
Singable translation with consideration of music	YES
Singable translation with consideration of music and a staging	YES

5.1 “Singable” Translation

As can be seen in the table above, a TT being “singable” does not necessarily mean it was construed to be performed, since the translator may have focused on the song lyrics only and ignored the original accompanying music or stage directions that may be included in the libretto. In Czech, this type of translation can be called *zpěvný překlad*. Franzon touches on the various meanings of singability in English and provides an example of collaboration between Broadway lyricist Alan Jay Lerner and composer ‘Fritz’ Loewe, where *singability equaled performability* to Lerner (Franzon 2008, 374-375), but that does not mean it is the case with everyone else. In fact, it insinuates that

singability equaling performability may be the first interpretation that comes to mind of a person working in the field of music theatre, presumably, an expert. In his newer publication, Franzon argues that most dictionaries define singability as “*suitable for singing*” (Franzon 2015, 333), but when one looks up other possible definitions of singability, they find that it can also be related to writing poetry (see The Free Dictionary n.d.)¹⁴. Therefore, *singable could equal poetic* to some.

If a person based in a field other than music theatre, possibly a translator faced with the task of song translation, discovers these definitions, one may assume that the latter definition may speak to them more than the one related to performability. They would go on to construe the TT accordingly to their interpretation of singability, possibly without considering the accompanying music, and would not see any problem with it. But the result would then be considered a “*literary*” or “*prose*” translation, if we were to apply Franzon’s proposed distinctions between a “*performable*”, “*prose*”, or “*literary*” translation of a musical text to it (Franzon 2008, 374-375). This emphasizes the need to be exact in the translation brief, because, if it does not specify that the translator should work with the pre-existing accompanying music, there is a chance of a misunderstanding and the TT can result in being *unperformable while still being considered singable*.

If we consider this discrepancy in the interpretations of singability, it may reveal more information as to why sung music theatre translation was historically so unfavored. The unsuccessfully received TTs may have been a result of a misunderstanding between the commissioner and the translator where it was not clear if the TT was to be written or if it was meant to be performed, meaning “truly” singable. And if the translator deemed the word singable to be a synonym of poetic, they also may have taken some creative liberties in terms of semantics, hence the alienations mentioned in *The Spectator* (see Addison 1711, cited in Apter & Herman 2016).

¹⁴ Available online at:
www.thefreedictionary.com/singable?fbclid=IwAR3u5_bFxPkP8CK79wck9hdc1TbW0qa7IK3fILNYoyQawat14VR0z_zAOKs

5.1.1 Possible Use

Since the final form of this type of translation is written, I propose it can be used in pamphlets or *Playbills*, similarly to one of the mentioned historical approaches (see Desblache 2007, cited in Mateo 2012). Another relevant place of use is Franzon's domain, i.e., subtitles (see Franzon 2008; 2015), and another example can be surtitles, mentioned by Mateo, who defines them as a form of subtitles projected onto a screen above the proscenium while the text is sung in the SL (Mateo 2012). But, based on my personal experience, I assume this is the case mostly in opera and not musicals. Mateo further explains that surtitles are supposed to be more concise (ibid), therefore, one can deem this type of translation more literal than literary. However, Franzon adds that subtitles can follow the rhythmic structure sometimes, making them literary (Franzon 2015, 337), and this may be the case of certain surtitles as well.

5.2 Singable Translation with Consideration of Music

This means that for a TT to be singable and performable, it should meet some requirements while conforming to certain constraints imposed by extralinguistic factors. If the translator is to construe such TT, they should take the pre-existing music into account. This type of translation may be called *zpívatelný překlad* in Czech. After carrying out an analysis of the music during the translation process, Franzon stresses the importance of a prosodic match (Franzon 2008, 390), but this was touched on before and proven to be problematic by Burton Raffel who states that no two languages are so alike to make a perfect match (Raffel 1988, 12, cited in Apter & Herman 2016, 2). Nevertheless, the TT should still fit the music and the original plot, therefore, the translator may be forced to make some adjustments, but not to an amount that would turn the TT into an adaptation.

Low is aware of this fact and proposes *The Hexathlon Principle* that aids the translator when the skopos is this complicated. According to him, the translator should consider the dynamic factors of singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm, rhyme, and in the case of music theatre, the dramatic effectiveness of the text (Low 2005, 192-211). However, it is up to the translator to decide which factor should be prioritized at any point in the TT (Apter & Herman 2016, 17).

In the case of this skopos, the translator should consider *singability equal to performability* (Low 2005, 192), and this demands the translator to be familiar with musicology. Susam-Sarajeva touches on the topic of multidisciplinary in song translation and provides examples of experts from various fields and the problems they may face when attempting such translation (see Susam-Sarajeva 2008). Regardless of their field of expertise, I propose the translator should be able to take note of musical cues that influence the TT on a phonetic level at the minimum, i.e., a long note demands the translator to place a lexical unit in its spot with properties adequate enough for it to sound natural to the audience while still being easy to sing for the performer. The aspect of the TT being easy to sing is very important to note, and Low elaborates on it himself (see Low 2005, 192-194), but I suppose it may be impossible to touch on all properties ensuring the text is easy to sing in summation, as their places of appearance always ask for individual approach within their given context and co-text. Nevertheless, I would suggest adding consideration of breath pauses to his findings.

This raises the question of whether the translator should limit themselves to adjusting only the text when they have sufficient knowledge of music theory. My hypothesis is that the translator should be able to implement minor musical and rhythmic changes if it is for the purpose of reaching a better outcome, and in an amount that does not make the TT an adaptation. However, they should always consider Kaindl's findings and discuss it with the music director if they have the chance (Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012), no matter how educated in music they are. It can be supported by Low and Apter & Herman who share a similar view, and the latter present their six "*allowable changes to the music*," including note splitting, combining, adding, deleting, and changes within syllables (see Low 2005, 197; Apter & Herman 2016, 17-18).

5.2.1 Possible Use

This type of translation may be useful at workshops in the early stages of a musical, as I assume there is not much staging to consider at that point and emphasis is put mostly on the musical properties. This leads to another example, concerts. Be it a hosting performance at *Carnegie Hall* or at your local music school, the performers are most likely expected to just sing while the music accompanies them.

Another example of possible use is productions that do not require the staging to always be the same. This can be deemed analogous to the many versions of Shakespeare's plays despite their original text being the same. In the case of musicals, this may be possible in *The Phantom of the Opera* since the only binding parts of all productions are, I assume, the chandelier and the mask, and everything else about the staging may be altered.

5.3 Singable Translation with Consideration of Music and a Staging

As was insinuated in the previous paragraph, the final and most advanced proposed level of music theatre translation with respect to singability is the one that considers the music and an exact staging alongside the text. This, however, cannot be done when the staging is not universal in all productions. Nevertheless, I noticed a trend in current popular and untranslated musicals in English, that is their productions being the same regardless of location; the Broadway production being identical to the touring or West End ones. Examples include *Hamilton*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, or *Hadestown*.

When a translator can work with a staging that is universal, there is a high chance of achieving the best possible singable and performable TT result, as they may analyze non-verbal and non-musical signs and cues that can greatly affect their translation. Švédů-Wehle offers a pragmatic outlook:

(...) a song can be fully “singable” at a rehearsal, but the lyrics can later turn out to be unpronounceable by a performer who has to focus on dancing as well.
(Švédů 2018, 23)

Had the translator only focused on the text and the music, they would have missed many key factors, which could only harm their translation process. But having the chance to go see a musical production at a theatre is not a given, especially when the ticket prices are so high as they are in the case of *Hamilton* (with reference to the price of *Hamilton* tickets in January 2020) or if theatres are closed due to a pandemic. Then the recorded stage versions may be of use. Not only is the translator able to replay the musical, allowing them to analyze it in more detail, the recorded versions may sometimes point to signs that the translator would have missed otherwise. But the translator should not be swayed by the filmed version, for they are still asked to produce a TT for a live theatre performance.

5.4 Aspects to Consider

At this point, it is possible to partially answer RQ 1 and assess what aspects should be considered in a singable and performable translation of *Hamilton*. I suggest the translator draws on *The Hexathlon Principle* (see Low 2005, 191-211), and keeps in mind the semantics, as the songs need to pass enough information for the plot to move forward, but without unnecessary alienations that would turn it into an adaptation. Regarding semantics in more detail, *Hamilton* contains a large number of intertextual phrases stemming from individual songs that should not be lexically changed based on their place of appearance. Another integral part of correct semantic transfer is semiotics, in this case, the signs the music and staging can provide that would influence the TL outcome. All this should be done while taking into account the pragmatic aspects of singability, meaning that the TT, that should have all the mentioned aspects, should be easy to sing while still sounding natural.

6 The Analysis

6.1 My Shot

This song may be considered the most complex semantics-and-singability-wise, since it is the so-called “I Want” song of the show. “I Want” songs typically revolve around a character expressing hope for a better future (TV Tropes, n.d.)¹⁵. There is little to no actual sung word, apart from Laurence’s “*Rise up! When you’re living (...)*” (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 28), and most of the song consists of very fast and structurally-complicated rapping.

In the case of such rapping, the translator should bear in mind the very limited opportunities for breath pauses in the flow of the text and try to segment the phrases in a way that allows the performer the maximal amount of breath pauses with some new added, or with a similar number to the ST. Since this song serves as proof of the musical’s unique music genre and allows the performers to truly show their rapping skills, the TT should serve the same purpose. This means the rhymes and the rhythmic structure should be rightfully reflected in the Czech TT; however, this task can be proven to be impossible due to prosodic differences (see Burton Raffel 1988, 12, cited in Apter & Herman 2016, 2). But, since this TT is meant to be singable and performable while serving an intended artistic purpose, the translator still should try to keep as many rhymes as possible. They may even add some new ones in places where there are no rhymes to compensate the loss, should an opportunity arise. The tempo does not allow many musical and rhythmic changes, and if such changes were necessary, it would be better to remove notes than to add new ones. However, the type of change that may be desirable is a semantic one.

¹⁵Available online at: tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/IWantSong

The semantic purpose of this song is to express unhappiness with the current situation and the characters' stance on the forthcoming revolution that will bring better tomorrows. Each character offers a slightly different view on the above-mentioned matters and these declarations allow the audience to find out more about their respective personalities. The translator should keep this in mind, but they are relatively allowed a lot of lexical freedom in this song otherwise. All semantic changes should be made in favor of effective rhymes and intertextuality.

This song offers the most important intertextual phrase in the whole play and the translator should approach it with extreme semantic sensibility. At first, it may not appear like it, but once the SL version makes the audience think about the word *shot* and its many meanings, it becomes evident that the word does not symbolize only *a chance* (at one's life getting better), but it can also refer to an actual *shot*, as in *a gun shot*. This certainly does allude to the Hamilton-Burr duel, but it cannot be considered foreshadowing, since Aaron Burr says: "*I'm the damn fool that shot him*" (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 17) at the end of the very first musical number, revealing how the musical is going to end. It may take a while for the SL audience to connect the dots, thanks to Miranda's effective wordplay on the various meanings of the word, and the translator should take this into account as well. This leads to the first intertextual part:

- (1) *I am not throwing away my shot!*
I am not throwing away my shot!
Hey yo, I'm just like my country,
I'm young, scrappy and hungry,
And I'm not throwing away my shot! (ibid, 26)

Even though this entire passage is intertextual, special attention should be paid mostly to the very first sentence, as it is the verbal driving force of the musical. Czech lacks a word that is semantically related to the message of the phrase and is as polysemic as the English *shot*, which leaves the translator with several choices:

1. The translator may ignore this intertextuality and disregard a part of the artistic purpose in favor of a semantically close yet still singable and performable translation.
2. The translator may choose one meaning and disregard the other ones, slightly impacting the intended intertextuality.
3. The translator may use a phrase that is polysemic but not as much as the ST. They further have the choice to alter the rest of the words that carry the rest of the meanings, e.g., make them rhyme with their phrase of choice.

I would suggest working with the third option, as it can be used intertextually everywhere, and the translator can only benefit from its semantic closeness to its original message in the ST. I propose a Czech TT that can offer the listed properties and demonstrates one of the recommended rhythmic changes mentioned before. The change is made in favor of easier pronunciation and includes rhythmic simplification, as the text may be hard to pronounce in some passages. Therefore, the TT and the rhythmic change would be as follows:

(2) Figure 1: Suggested rhythmic change in *My Shot*

♩ = 91

(Faber Music Ltd 2016, 16)

♩ = 91

I erased the triplet that would negatively influence the TL prosody and make it too similar to the SL. However, this change may be considered too grave, but that is up for discussion with the music director, should there be a Czech production. If the translator were to work with this suggested TT, the rest of the *shot* mentions with a meaning this phrase does not include can be translated as words or syllables that rhyme or contain assonance with *vzdám* (give up). Suggestion:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>(3) <i>MULLIGAN: (...)</i>
<i>I'm gonna take a—</i></p> <p><i>HAMILTON,</i>
<i>LAURENS,</i>
<i>LAFAYETTE,</i>
<i>MULLIGAN:</i>
<i>Shot!</i>
(Miranda &
McCarter 2016, 27)</p> <p>(...)</p> <p><i>HAMILTON,</i>
<i>LAFAYETTE,</i>
<i>MULLIGAN,</i>
<i>LAURENS:</i>
<i>(...) Time to take a</i>
<i>shot!</i>
(ibid, 30)</p> | <p><i>MULLIGAN: (...)</i>
<i>A dám si paná-</i></p> <p><i>HAMILTON,</i>
<i>LAURENS,</i>
<i>LAFAYETTE,</i>
<i>MULLIGAN:</i>
<i>ka!</i></p> <p><i>HAMILTON,</i>
<i>LAFAYETTE,</i>
<i>MULLIGAN</i>
<i>LAURENS:</i>
<i>(...) Kdo se přidá</i>
<i>k nám?</i></p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Regarding semiotics and speech acts, there is another intertextual part the translator should pay attention to, one that functions as a sign-vehicle signifying Hamilton's most important moments in life, i.e., his "*I imagine death so much it feels more like a memory*" (ibid, 28) and the variation that follows right after. The lighting dims, Hamilton usually stares at no one in particular when rapping this part, and the music is considerably tuned down or absent¹⁶ two out of three times this phrase appears in the show. If the translator wants the TT to be as attention-grabbing as the ST, they should consider working with this remark in mind and analyze the following screenshots:

- (4) Figure 2: Lighting change in *My Shot* soliloquy

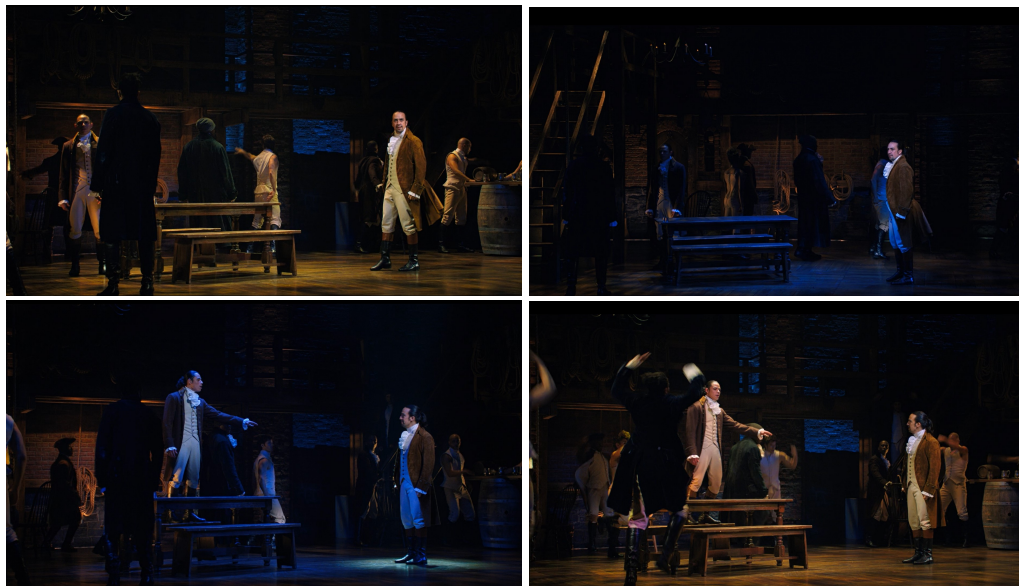


Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

¹⁶ *Hamilton*, directed by Thomas Kail (Disney+, 2020), Video on Demand, 0:11:35. Due to the importance of the timestamp, hereinafter shortened to: *Hamilton*, timestamp.

This is not the only instance of lighting being used as a sign-vehicle in the song, another example may be its abrupt change accompanied by a “swoosh” sound effect when Hamilton suddenly realizes he accidentally went on a tangent.¹⁷ In this case, the lighting signifies the change in Hamilton’s thinking process, which is also reflected in the change in the tone of his voice and the cessation of his previous rhyming and rhythmic structure. If the translator were not to consider it, they most likely would not be able to recognize this difference when focusing on the text only. The lighting remains dimmed and blue-tinged until Laurens points at Hamilton and proclaims: “*Let’s get this guy in front of a crowd,*” (ibid, 27), then everything changes to its previous state. The changes are illustrated in the following screenshots:

- (5) Figure 3: Lighting signifies Hamilton’s change in thinking and remains blue until Laurence speaks



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

Laurence’s mentioned phrase is also significant for the choreography that follows further in the song. When Hamilton finishes his soliloquy that starts with the aforementioned “*I imagine death so much (...)*” (ibid, 28), he goes to stand on a crate placed in the middle of the stage, but the lighting is still dimmed. He continues rapping but approximately around the time he says: “*And? If we win our independence?*” (ibid, 29), the audience becomes aware of the fact that he is now giving a public speech. The on-stage listeners gather around him, their movement and facial expressions signifying

¹⁷ *Hamilton*, 0:10:22–0:10:32.

the gradation in the impact of what he is rapping about.¹⁸ The translator should construe the text accordingly with this in mind; the change from a soliloquy to a public speech and the impact of Hamilton's words should also build up until the lighting dims for a second and the actors go on to sing the main motif of the song. See the following screenshots:

- (6) Figure 4: Lighting change during Hamilton's public speech, the ensemble reflects the buildup in his words



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

In conclusion, this song requires special semantic sensibility because of its importance regarding intertextuality. In order to make the translation as effective and impactful as possible, since that is how the song should appear, the translator should take into account the cues provided by the music, lighting, or choreography. Other songs from the musical may not require this much attention to detail, but this is one of the most important songs in the whole show that will most likely leave a lasting impression on the audience.

¹⁸ *Hamilton*, 0:12:00–0:12:41.

6.2 Farmer Refuted

This song, despite being the second shortest, contains some of the most complex structures in terms of rhymes and rhythm, as the translator faces a task of translating a text where there is rhythmic rapping and singing done simultaneously.

The time signature is very different when compared to the rest of the songs written in either 2/4 or 4/4, and I assume it was selected to front the period setting since 6/8 follows the rhythm of a waltz. This makes both, the singing and rapping, more singsong-like than other rapped-through *Hamilton* songs written in the above-mentioned time signatures, e.g., *Washington on Your Side* or *We Know*. The singsong-ness is reflected in Seabury's prolonged notes, however, his way of singing and choice of archaic vocabulary might be considered a sign-vehicle signifying his support of the king, apart from the textual cues. The king's songs, *You'll Be Back*, *What Comes Next?*, and *I Know Him*, appear as old school show tunes when compared to the progressive, fast rapped songs of the hopeful young revolutionaries, such as *Aaron Burr, Sir, My Shot*, and *Guns and Ships*. Therefore, it may be possible that there is a link between Seabury's singing and the king's music genre. In support of my hypothesis, Miranda admits he alters the sound of songs to fit the character singing them when introducing Thomas Jefferson in the libretto (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 152), and it only seems reasonable to employ this in the case of Seabury as well.

Long notes mean pragmatic constraints in singability. The translator should take that into account and select words that allow the actors to hold a long note on their last syllable. This, however, may cause the word segmentation to appear slightly unnatural, but I support the opinion that in this case, it does not matter, as Seabury is, assumingly, supposed to appear slightly deranged, and his way of singing may reflect that as well for more effect. However, his part is not a solo and Hamilton joins in with his rap when Seabury starts to repeat himself.¹⁹

¹⁹ Hamilton OBC, "Farmer Refuted," track 6 on *Hamilton (Original Broadway Cast Recording)*, Disc 1, Atlantic Records, 2015, *Spotify*, 0:45. Due to the importance of the timestamp, hereinafter shortened to: "Farmer Refuted," timestamp.

The moment Hamilton joins in is probably the most complicated part when translating this song, as he, in Miranda's words, "dismantles Seabury using the same vowels and cadences and talking over him" (ibid, 49). They both come to a phonetic or melodic agreement on certain syllables or words, all while Hamilton uses his own inner rhymes and assonances, as can be seen in the underlined and highlighted examples:

(7) Figure 5: Highlighted phonetic agreements in *Farmer Refuted* ST

HAMILTON:

Yo!

He'd have you all

unravel at the

Sound of screams but the

Revolution is comin'

The

Have-nots are gonna

win this, it's

Hard to listen to you

with a straight face.

Chaos and bloodshed

already haunt

Us, honestly you

shouldn't even

Talk and what about

Boston?

Look at the

Cost, 'n all that we've

lost 'n you talk

About Congress?

SEABURY:

Heed not the rabble

Who scream

Revolution, they

Have not your

interests at

heart.

Chaos and bloodshed

are not

A solution

Don't let them lead

you

Astray.

This Congress does not (...)

(ibid)

The easiest translation strategy may be to emphasize Seabury and have Hamilton chime in in the highlighted parts with disregard of his original rhythmic structure. However, I would consider this a violation of the ST, since Miranda did write a rhythmic and rhyming structure that Hamilton should ideally follow. With this in mind, I construed a Czech TT suggestion:

(8) Figure 6: Highlighted phonetic agreements in *Farmer Refuted* TT

HAMILTON:

Hej!

Nemyslete si

že by vás

nerozprášil,

naše revoluce se blíží.

O

tom ví všichni zdejší,

ale vy asi nejste

nejchytřejší.

Krveprolití

není novinka,

přestaňte s tou

strašnou

rozpravou.

Co chudáci v Bostonu?

Mají tam vojsko,

neví, co dál.

A vás zajímá Kongres?

SEABURY:

Neposlouchej-

te

tu re-

voluční chásku,

jím na vás

nezáleží.

Krveprolití

vám za

to nestojí

nenechte se

jimi

svést.

Náš Kongres za mě (...)

While one may argue that there are less phonetic agreements than in the ST, I would once again point to Raffel’s findings regarding SL and TL prosodic differences (see Raffel 1988, 12, cited in Apter & Herman 2016, 2). I also put emphasis on the semantics of their exchange, assuming that Hamilton sees it as a friendly hassle but is slightly concerned nonetheless,²⁰ and that assumption is based on his body language illustrated in the following screenshots:

(9) Figure 7: Hamilton is entertained by Seabury at first, but then displays concern



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

It is clear from the song’s lightheartedness and speech acts that it is supposed to have a humorous effect. It can be heightened when Hamilton joins Seabury on his crate and they start pushing each other off, causing Seabury to lose track of his speech.²¹ This is a great chance to employ a type of hidden misdirection in the Czech TT. Suggestion:

(10) *SEABURY: Heed—*

SEABURY: Ne-

*HAMILTON: If you
repeat yourself again
I’m gonna—*

*HAMILTON: Ano, já vás
slyším, ale už přestaň-*

*SEABURY,
HAMILTON:
Scream— (...)
(ibid)*

HAMILTON: te!

SEABURY: se...

²⁰ *Hamilton*, 0:19:00–0:19:44.

²¹ *Hamilton*, 0:19:44–0:19:53.

While an agreement on *scream* was lost, I employed a non-disruptive phonetic similarity in *te!* and *se...* in the TT that allowed me to sneak in the aforementioned misdirection to Seabury's part. In the filmed version, it is clear he becomes angry at Hamilton,²² and a concealed misdirection towards a Czech curse word synonymous with *neštví* (stop bothering me), which, as a bonus, is in line with the semantics, would only add more depth to the hilarity of the situation. But this is only a suggestion, it is up to the translator to decide what strategies and methods to employ.

Continuing with the comedic effect of the song, there is also a musical cue underlining another humorous phrase, i.e., Hamilton's "*Don't modulate the key then not debate with me!*" (ibid). Had the translator decided to consider the text only, they maybe would have ignored this remark, which could be acceptable, but the mentioned modulation is reflected in the accompanying music as well²³ and the translator should respect it, as it could then appear redundant.

In conclusion, this song calls for special attention especially in terms of its rhymes. Otherwise, the translator should be allowed relative freedom regarding semantics, as long as Hamilton and Seabury show their discontent with one another accordingly. The song's comedic effect should also be noted, as the translator then has a chance to make the TT as effective as possible, and disregard of the comicality could result in a vitiation of the ST, since the comedic effect is made obvious by the music and stage cues.

²² *Hamilton*, 0:19:47.

²³ "Farmer Refuted," 1:29.

6.3 Ten Duel Commandments

While being the shortest in this selection, this song is not much less of a challenge, especially thanks to its rhythmic structure, factual nature, and constraining speech acts. But, as we already know, Miranda is a fan of intertextuality, and this song provides intertextual parts that are significant in songs that allude to some type of danger, i.e., *Take a Break*, *Blow Us All Away*, and *The World Was Wide Enough*, therefore it rightfully deserves the translator's heightened attention.

The first rhythmic problem appears right at the beginning in the counting to nine (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 99). If the translator were to follow the original rhythm when counting in Czech, they would only arrive to seven when they need to arrive to nine. Therefore, a rhythmic adjustment may be necessary. Although it is important to note the fact that this may be one of the very few places where a non-performable singable TT and a performable singable TT would be in agreement when compared on paper, as the consideration of the music would not be visible in this case.

When I was construing my TT suggestion and counting to nine in Czech, I noticed the assonance between *pět*, *šest* (five, six) and *devět* (nine). I noted that it is not as tight, however, there is some space created by *sedm* (seven) and *osm* (eight) between these words, helping it sound more natural, so it is possible to work with it in mind. This assonance could help compensate the rhythmic change, therefore, fronting it may be of use. My suggested rhythmic change in comparison with the original rhythmic structure is as follows:

(11) Figure 8: Suggested rhythmic change in *Ten Duel Commandments*

♩ = 78

One, two, three, four, five, six, se - ven, eight, nine

♩ = 78

Jed - na, dva, tři, čty - ři, pět, šest, se - dm, o - sm, de - vět

I am aware the ST unfolds into more harmonies, but this song is not available in *Hamilton Vocal Selections*, the sheet music I am working with. I deemed illustrating the main melody, transposed an octave higher for better text visibility, as the text and its rhythm is the main focus, sufficient enough. I found that splitting eighth notes into sixteenth notes can be useful, seeing as the sung melody is accompanied by an equally fast ticking sound.²⁴ In terms of fronting the assonance, I noticed that *devět* (nine) would most likely have to appear at the final eighth note and the following quarter note. Therefore, in order to front *pět, šest* (five, six), it would be desirable to place it somewhere the notes can be equally or similarly long, and I assume that the correct spot would be on *four, five*. However, this is only a suggestion as to what adjustments can be made in terms of a Czech TT, other languages should follow assonances or agreements they can find within their counting to nine, although they may use the Czech TT for inspiration if it is a language similar to it.

Another appearance of a problematic rhythmic structure is in the numbering of the commandments. In the ST, it ranges from “*Number one!*” to “*Five!*” or “*Seven!*” (ibid) and the rhythm is not fixed. In Czech, the translator would probably be tempted to use the prefix *za*, i.e., *zaprvé, zapáté* (number one, number five), but that is not in line with the ST rhythm. However, even the SL audience would also probably intuitively expect the ST to be constant when it comes to rhythm. The translator may then notice this change and deem it artistically intentional, which can be reflected in the TT not being constant as well. Despite all that, the TT should still sound as natural as possible, and if the decision to adhere to the original rhythm proves to be disruptive, the translator may take further steps and try to alter the rhythm.

In terms of semantics, this song does not allow much freedom since the characters should factually list the dueling rules. In the libretto, Miranda points to a book on dueling, *Affairs Of Honor* by Joanne Freeman (ibid), which could aid the translator in correct transfer of the rules. I would also suggest using the *Irish Code Duello*²⁵ for inspiration, as it is clear that Miranda also must have worked with it as well.

²⁴ Hamilton OBC, “Ten Duel Commandments” track 15 on *Hamilton (Original Broadway Cast Recording)*, Disc 1, Atlantic Records, 2015, *Spotify*, 0:03–0:07.

²⁵ Available online at: <https://www.geriwalton.com/irish-dueling-code-or-irish-code-duello/>

The rules can be considered the most important semantics-wise in this song as a whole, and their importance should also be reflected in the choice of rhymes. The rest of the phrases not listing any facts should be subordinate to the factual information, meaning that their rhymes should be governed by the factual parts. An example can be seen in my suggested TT:

- (12) *LAURENS:* *LAURENS:*
If they don't, grab *Pokud ne,*
a friend, that's *sežeň si*
your second. *sekundanta.*
- HAMILTON:* *HAMILTON:*
Your lieutenant *Máš na výběr,*
when there's *vem' si třeba*
reckoning to be *svého lajtnanta.*
reckoned." (ibid)

However, there are other semantic constraints put on the text by semiotics and speech acts. The ST mentions a doctor that is needed on site (ibid), and the filmed stage version shows an ensemble member carrying a medical bag, signifying the doctor. Once Burr says: “*You have him turn around (...)*” (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 99), Hamilton does a spinning motion with his raised hand,²⁶ as one can see in the following screenshots:

- (13) Figure 9: An ensemble member carrying a medical bag, Hamilton spinning his finger



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

²⁶ *Hamilton*, 0:49:22–0:49:27.

This means that in this case, the syntax of the TT should be governed by these speech acts, and the translator should take this into account if their goal is a singable and performable translation, despite the fact that this may cause the TT to appear slightly unnatural. Another example of choreography dictating what should be in the TT is when Laurens passes Hamilton a note when Hamilton is saying: “*Leave a note for your next of kin (...)*” (ibid). When Hamilton continues with saying “*Pray that hell or heaven lets you in*” (ibid), the ensemble follows his words and starts praying,²⁷ see the following screenshots:

(14) Figure 10: Laurence passing Hamilton a note, the ensemble praying



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

In conclusion, the translator should focus on rhythmic properties of the TT while still adhering to the factual semantic transfer. If they analyze the filmed version, they will find some helpful signs that will lead them throughout the construction of the most effective TT. I pointed out only the most constraining choreography; other dance moves can be interpreted in many ways, which leaves the translator with some freedom, although they should still follow the factual nature of the ST.

²⁷ *Hamilton*, 0:49:37–0:49:40.

6.4 Non-Stop

This song closes the first act and can be counted among the most complicated in terms of semantics as well, seeing as its finale is made up of intertextual phrases taken from significant songs that previously appeared in the act. Pragmatic singability is not much of a challenge in this song, the rhythmic and rhyming structure is not as complex as it is in *My Shot* or *Satisfied*. Neither the music tempo nor structure imposes unsolvable challenges on the singability of the text, and the translator should only pay more attention to musical cues.

Nevertheless, there is a fair share of non-sung word in this song in contrast to the rest, e.g., Burr stepping into the role of the narrator and saying how *The Federalist Papers* were written.²⁸ The translator may consider the change to spoken word a sign-vehicle that should be fronted, as it may be the case with letters or direct historical quotes. Such decision would make Burr's speech more archaic or historical to highlight the period setting, but the translator may also decide to work with the semi-formal nature of the way the characters sing and do not incorporate the historicity. The spoken word in this part does not face any prosodic constraints; adhering to the SL prosodic structure would result in the TT sounding unnatural. The only constraint that should be considered is the dynamics of the music. There is a looped pulsing sound that adds an underlying rhythmic structure to Burr's words, and another significant indicator of a new and semantically important phrase is more musical instruments joining in the moment Burr says: "*John Jay got sick (...)*" (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 143). The music continues to build up until Burr says how many essays were Hamilton's,²⁹ emphasizing the most important and impactful information. This importance-stacking should be reflected in the TT similarly to *My Shot*.

²⁸ Hamilton OBC, "Non-Stop," track 23 on *Hamilton (Original Broadway Cast Recording)*, Disc 1, Atlantic Records, 2015, *Spotify*, 4:11–4:32. Due to the importance of the timestamp, hereinafter shortened to: "Non-Stop", timestamp.

²⁹ "Non-Stop," 4:32–4:42.

However, not all seemingly spoken parts are truly spoken. The translator should not disregard the cues provided by the rhythm of the song, as the beats dictate when a character should start speaking or rapping. This is especially the case during Hamilton and Burr's exchange where Hamilton tries to persuade Burr to support the constitution.³⁰ If the translator focused only on the text with no consideration of music and the staging, they could misjudge this part and alter the rhythm in unwanted ways. While Burr speaks relatively freely, only following the beats that he is supposed to start speaking on, Hamilton adheres to the rhythm and raps all his parts in this exchange. This means that the translator should analyze the time frame for Burr's recitatives and alter them accordingly, so Burr says what needs to be said while sounding as natural as possible.

Regarding semantics, the translator should pay attention especially to the aforementioned high level of intertextuality. It is done in Miranda's idiosyncratic way that can also be observed in his first musical, *In the Heights*; at the level of phrases the characters had used in previous songs that have to work anywhere they are placed without any major changes on a lexical level. This case of intertextuality is logical, since this song marks the ending of the first act, and having the characters repeat the phrases is an effective way of making the audience aware of their importance. I would like to emphasize the following phrases of Eliza and Angelica:

(15) *ANGELICA:*

*He will never be
satisfied,
He will
Never be satisfied

Satisfied,
Satisfied...*

*ELIZA:
What would be
enough
To be
Satisfied,
Satisfied,
Satisfied...
(ibid, 144)*

³⁰ *Hamilton*, 1:11:04–1:12:07.

It is clear that Miranda deliberately chose these passages that are semantically (but not verbally) related to multiply their effect and interwovenness in their original songs, *Satisfied* and *That Would Be Enough*, which is not as prominent upon the initial listening or reading. This leaves the translator to make a choice depending on how much depth they want the TT to have. My suggestion is to work on the translation of the two songs with this interwovenness in mind, which requires the translator to carefully search for even the smallest amount of intertextuality within the play. If the translator does not do so, they are risking their TT losing the effectiveness of the ST, and it can be considered downplaying of the play's intended artistic properties. See my suggested TT:

(16) *ANGELICA:*

<i>Jemu nikdy nic</i>	<i>ELIZA:</i>
<i>Nestačí</i>	<i>Co ti po-</i>
<i>Jemu</i>	<i>stačí</i>
<i>Nikdy nic nestačí</i>	<i>Co ti</i>
	<i>Postačí,</i>
<i>Nestačí,</i>	<i>Nestačí,</i>
<i>Nestačí...</i>	<i>Nestačí...</i>

I suppose that working with the word *stačí* (enough) and its affixes can be considered most effective and impactful regarding a singable translation, seeing as it is in line with the ST prosody and has a long vowel sound at the end that enables the singers to hold it for an extended period of time. Even though I considered having both sisters sing *postačí* (will be enough) and *nestačí* (not enough) simultaneously, since there seems to be only a slight phonetic difference in the first syllable, this dissonance would only be disruptive, as their unison singing is at the top of a musical buildup before a drop.³¹ I decided to use Angelica's version in my suggested TT, since Hamilton takes her more seriously, which can be observed in *Take a Break*.

³¹ "Non-Stop," 5:42–5:55.

Regarding semiotics and speech acts, the ensemble generally follows what is being sung similarly to *Ten Duel Commandments*, i.e., pretending to write at the mention of writing or Burr saying “*Hamilton, sit down*” (ibid, 137) and Hamilton, annoyed, doing so.³² See the following screenshot:

(17) Figure 11: Hamilton sitting down after Burr told him to do so



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

Therefore, the translator should analyze the staging of this concrete song to avoid discrepancies between the choreography and the text. The characters, mostly Burr, are often alluding to Hamilton’s death in the duel throughout the musical, and this song is no exception. Burr’s “*Ev’ry proclamation guarantees free ammunition for your enemies!*” (ibid, 138) then becomes a sign-vehicle alluding to the inevitable duel, and not just a phrase that was placed in the song for a more poetic effect, and that should be reflected in the TT as well in order to make the translation as effective as possible.

In conclusion, the translator should pay attention to the cues that can be found in music, as they regulate the tempo and segmentation of the spoken or seemingly spoken parts, a special property of this song. This song also offers a chance to showcase the intertextual phrases, meaning the translator has a chance to prove how effective their TT is, showing that the phrases work outside their initial context and are still semantically impactful and relevant the same as in the ST.

³² *Hamilton*, 1:09:37.

6.5 One Last Time

This song could be put in contrast with *Non-Stop* regarding the spoken, rapped, and sung parts, as it contains them in a similar amount. However, I assume this one is more difficult in terms of prosodic and rhythmic properties that are touched on below.

This time, the roles are reversed, and Hamilton is the one who does not strictly adhere to the rhythmic structure when speaking to Washington at first, although he acknowledges the beats he is supposed to start speaking on. Washington continues with rhythmic singing, his notes are long, which should not cause any additional problems during the translation process.

The first rhythm-related problem the translator may encounter is the asymmetry in the SL and TL version of Micah's 4:4 biblical quote. However, the version used in the ST is paraphrased, which allows the translator to alter the TL version as well. This is different to how the Shakespeare quotes in *Take a Break* should be approached, as Miranda uses them verbatim, but the Czech Shakespeare translator whose text would most likely be used, Martin Hilský, took some creative liberties in his TT and altered the rhythm. This means the translator should decide whether to work with Hilský's TT as it is or if they should alter it to fit the rhythm better, or if they should consider working with a TT construed by a different translator than Hilský. In the case of Micah's quote, they do not have to make such decisions and just paraphrase it.

The biggest challenge in terms of rhythm and prosody will most likely be Washington's farewell letter. Miranda works with the actual historic letter almost verbatim, only omitting some passages.³³ A question of whether its historicity and formalness should be fronted arises. I suggest the translator analyzes the play for other letters used verbatim and unifies their approach towards them, because such sudden change from the selected register, when it has not been done before, would most likely be considered disruptive.

³³ Available online at:

https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/Washingtons_Farewell_Address.pdf

Hamilton starts reading the address independently, but as he continues, Washington joins in, Hamilton's speech becomes rhythmic and eventually, when they arrive at "*I anticipate with pleasing expectation (...)*," (Miranda & McCarter 2016, 210) they start harmonizing.³⁴ This transition should be made as smoothly as it is in the SL while also sounding natural. It may call for a rhythmic and musical adjustment, and while the translator can consider the OBC recording, since it is more reliable in terms of rhythmic exactness, as it could have been done in more takes, it is best to take Kaindl's advice and consult it with the music director (Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012), because the change may require more complexity.

Then a question of semantics arises, and it should arise when translating other songs such as *Yorktown (The World Turned Upside Down)*, *Cabinet Battle #1* and *#2*, and *Washington on Your Side* as well. It correlates to detail importance in the transfer of history-related information, because, I assume, the Czech audience does not care about historic details that are significant in the USA as much as the SL audience does. I propose that the translator should find balance in the importance of historic details in terms of correct semantic transfer and not overload the TL audience with unnecessary information. Despite this relative freedom, they should still respect that *Hamilton* is a period piece based on true events, and that one of its original purposes, as one may notice, is to introduce chapters from US history in an entertaining way.

In conclusion, it may be possible to approach this song similarly to *Non-Stop*, however, special attention needs to be paid to historicity and the naturalness of "reading" a text that is supposed to be written, as it is the case of Washington's farewell address. This should also provoke some thoughts on detail importance in terms of the audience's interest in US history when they are not from the USA, since one of the purposes is to present US history to a broader audience. The translator should respect this and present it accordingly, so it is entertaining for the TL audience as well. It may be advisable to do some previews before the public performances begin and test how the approach towards US history is perceived by a smaller audience, and if the attendees show more interest in it, it may be of use to provide some additional explanatory information about US history in *Playbills* or pamphlets.

³⁴ Hamilton OBC, "One Last Time," track 9 on *Hamilton (Original Broadway Cast Recording)*, Disc 2, Atlantic Records, 2015, *Spotify*, 2:54–4:02.

6.6 The World Was Wide Enough

This song ties the whole musical together, as it covers the Burr-Hamilton duel where Hamilton dies, and provides the resolution for the *not throwing away my shot* line. The first half appears to be easier in terms of translation, since it follows and utilizes a large number of phrases from *Ten Duel Commandments* and is mostly factual as well. The second half, however, allows the translator more semantic freedom, especially in Hamilton's final monologue, but they still should respect musical (or sound effect, in this case) cues the same way as in *Non-Stop* or *One Last Time*.

However, in this song, it is advisable to approach the historic detail importance differently to the way I propose in *One Last Time*, as the audience should know about every detail that led to Burr shooting Hamilton, meaning it calls for a tight semantic transfer. And that, I presume, could be done without any problems, since the translator is likely going to be familiar with the factual, rhythmic, and rhyme structure from *Ten Duel Commandments*, as was mentioned earlier. However, if the TT were construed with consideration of the music only, the translator would have missed or, presumably, ignored one of Burr's reasons for shooting his opponent. In the OBC recording, Burr says:

- (18) *BURR:*
They won't teach you this in your
classes,
But look it up, Hamilton was
wearing his glasses.
Why? If not to take deadly aim? (...)
(Miranda & McCarter 2016, 272)

This is the first time the OBC recording listeners hear of Hamilton having to wear glasses, and no one could blame the translator if they decided to ignore it, in their support, the glasses seemingly did not need to be mentioned before, they could be deemed insignificant. But if the translator considers the filmed version, they can see Hamilton casually wearing the glasses on numerous occasions, meaning that they would be more likely to keep them in the TT. Nevertheless, this seems to be the problem of only using the OBC recording – in support of working with the text, Miranda points out the glasses himself in the edited libretto (ibid). See the following screenshot of Hamilton:

(19) Figure 12: Hamilton wearing glasses during the duel



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

Therefore, it can be highly undesirable for the translator to ignore the glasses. But after the ensemble counts to ten and says “*Number ten paces! Fire—*” (ibid, 273) and Hamilton starts his final soliloquy, the translator may be allowed semantic freedom, as long as the TT follows the intertextual phrases this part contains and does not erase the tension that can be felt in the SL. Another piece of information they can take into account is that at this point, the audience knows the character of Hamilton the best they can, so any sudden change in characterization may be unwelcome.

The impact of Hamilton’s words is heightened by the music stopping with the sound of the gunshot,³⁵ presumably so the audience pays attention to every word. Hamilton breaks the fourth wall and acknowledges this shift himself, “*there is no beat, no melody,*” (ibid), which can serve as an indicator of its significance. The translator may deem it a sign-vehicle analogous to the one in *My Shot* when Hamilton starts expressing his thoughts, and, to support this, even the lighting changes in an identical

³⁵ Hamilton OBC, “The World Was Wide Enough,” track 22 on *Hamilton (Original Broadway Cast Recording)*, Disc 2, Atlantic Records, 2015, *Spotify*, 1:40.

way from purple to blue once he stops addressing Burr and starts talking to himself,³⁶ as can be seen in the following screenshots:

(20) Figure 13: The lighting dims as in *My Shot* when Hamilton starts his final words



Source: *Hamilton* on Disney+.

This soliloquy provides the translator one last chance to showcase the complex rhymes that can be found in the SL, and they should build up Hamilton's speech accordingly to its desired impact. Its impact is, as one may notice, immense, since Hamilton arrives to the final variation of the most significant intertextual phrase in it, i.e., "*If I throw away my shot, (...)*" (ibid), finally revealing its true meaning. This further proves that the translator should carry out a thorough analysis of intertextuality in the musical, as ignoring this appearance of the phrase and only taking into account its appearances in *My Shot* or *Yorktown (The World Turned Upside Down)* could result in an unwanted semantic shift that would lessen the effect of the TT.

In conclusion, this song serves as proof that the translator should consider the staging, as it contains vital information that can significantly influence the TT result. It is also important to note the role of intertextuality since it ties a whole together in this song the same way it does in *Non-Stop*. Although the intertextuality can be considered more attention-deserving this time, seeing as it does not only signal the ending of an act, but it also explains the verbal driving force of the musical, and surrounds the death of the main character.

³⁶ *Hamilton*, 2:24:08.

Conclusion

When construing an effective singable and performable translation of *Hamilton*, I highly recommend the translator employs all materials available, i.e., the libretto, the sheet music selections, the OBC recording, and the filmed stage version, as there may be cues that would make the TT even more effective hidden in any part of the listed materials. If the translator has the chance to consult their translation process with the stage or musical director of their production as Kaindl suggests (see Kaindl 1995, cited in Mateo 2012), or even Miranda himself, they, presumably, can achieve even better results.

However, some aspects that should be considered when construing a TT with this skopos can be assessed without consultation with music theatre professionals working on the production. Continuing with the answer to RQ 1, the first being the actual pragmatic singability that requires the text to be easy to sing for the performers with allowed musical, rhythmical, and rhyme changes while still conveying the ST message in a way the audience can easily understand, corresponding to Low's *Hexathlon Principle* (see Low 2005, 191-211) and to the final proposed level of singable translation, i.e., with added consideration of semiotics and speech acts observable on the stage. The second being the semantics, as the singable text, in the case of a sung-through musical that is *Hamilton*, should convey information in a way that allows the plot to move forward. This may differ in musicals that contain a larger amount of spoken word where the songs do not need to be as semantically heavy, opening an opportunity for further research.

Hamilton, with all its specific properties, e.g., its dominant music genre, intertextuality, or combination of colloquial speech and real historical letters, imposes even more constraints on the translation than the mentioned non-sung-through musicals, and provokes thought about how its historicity may appear to audiences outside English-speaking countries. In terms of a Czech audience and as an answer to RQ 2, I assume that the translator dwelling on all historic details that are significant only in the USA or in other English-speaking countries would be undesirable. However, in places where the details are key to the message of the song, as it is in *The World Was Wide Enough*, it may be more than desirable to include them without any being glossed over.

But if *Hamilton* were hypothetically translated into Latin American Spanish and played in Mexico, then the translator would not necessarily have to gloss over the historic details, as this country is closer to the USA and its history is more interwoven with US history in some respects. I support the idea that such altering due to location or culture does not rid the musical of some its original properties, quite the contrary, it makes the musical more enjoyable for broader audiences in various countries and cultures, giving it global success if done right.

Nevertheless, there is one aspect that will most likely be inevitably lost in any TT, and that is the allusions to old school hip-hop artists and songs that Miranda points out in the libretto footnotes (see Miranda & McCarter 2016). He even goes on to call the play “*a love letter to hip-hop,*” (Mamo 2020)³⁷ but since the allusions can be observed only by an English-speaking audience and understood by an even smaller crowd, the translator construing the TT in any language will most likely not be able to reflect them accordingly. That is the main reason why I have not covered them in the analysis, but it may open an opportunity for further research.

Regarding the future, this analysis may serve any translator wishing to construe a TT of *Hamilton* who needs some theoretical guidance during their translation process. While it does not cover all songs, it touches on some of the most problematic ones and offers TT proposals in places that may appear troublesome, and the translator may then approach the remaining songs accordingly if they are similar in terms of structures related to performability and singability.

³⁷ Available online at: www.billboard.com/articles/columns/hip-hop/9414834/lin-manuel-miranda-apple-music-interview

Summary

Podstatou bakalářské práce je sestavit analýzu pro budoucí zpívatelný překlad muzikálu *Hamilton* a zjistit, který přístup je při překladu nejvhodnější a jaké aspekty by překladatel měl zohlednit. Další úlohou je odhalit, jestli se mohou překlady globálně lišit, a pokud ano, tak jak a v čem. Analýza textů se tudíž nemusí vázat pouze na překlad do češtiny, poznatky lze aplikovat i na práci v jiných jazycích.

Teoretický základ se odvíjí od stanovení rozdílu mezi dvěma hlavními žánry hudebního divadla, operou a muzikálem, a poté stručně sleduje historický vývoj přístupu k důležitosti textu v porovnání s hudbou v oblasti hudebního divadla, což je následně aplikováno i na přiblížení historického pokroku co se týče hudebního překladu.

Tato oblast ale není zcela tak prozkoumaná jako ostatní poddruhy audiovizuálního překladu (Susam-Sarajeva 2008, 187). Shrnutí vývoje napovídá tomu, že publikum většinou zpívanými překlady pohrdalo, jelikož se od textů výchozích odchylovaly v nechtěných aspektech (viz Gallo 2006, 51; Addison 1711, v Apter & Herman 2016), což se muselo projevit i v poptávce. Co se týče poptávky, překlady mohly být „špatné“ i kvůli tomu, že si zadavatel s překladatelem nemuseli vždy jasně rozumět ohledně toho, co v angličtině, popřípadě i v jiných jazycích, znamená polysémnní výraz zpívatelnost. Čeština dle mého takový problém nemá, protože je možné pozorovat rozdíl mezi překladem zpěvným a zpívatelným, což odpovídá rozlišení teoretika Johana Franzona na *literary* a *singable translation* (viz Franzon 2008), tj. literární, v mém případě zpěvný, a zpívatelný překlad. To znamená, že zpívatelnost má několik úrovní, každá z nich vhodná pro jiný skopos. Na základě toho jsem za použití poznatků Franzona a Klause Kaindla stanovila tři hlavní úrovně zpívatelného překladu s ohledem na praktické použití.

První z nich se týká překladu zpěvného či literárního, jehož specifika spočívají v tom, že jeho finální podoba je většinou psaná. To znamená, že může být více doslovný, nebo se v opačném případě může až příliš odcizovat od výchozího textu. Jeho doslovná podoba může být použita v situacích, kdy je zásadní přesný sémantický převod (Franzon 2008, 374), tj. při rozhovorech. Volnější varianta literárního překladu,

poetická, se od výchozího textu může odlišovat kvůli posunům v rámci zachování efektu uměleckých prvků na úkor věrnosti.

Pokročilejší typ překladu, tentokrát už zpívatelného, zohledňuje předem psanou doprovodnou hudbu, čímž se na něj váže mnohem více omezení. Text se tudíž potřebuje podříditi původním rytmickým a melodickým pravidlům. Tomuto se věnuje teoretik Peter Low, který představuje tzv. *Hexathlon Principle*, tj. šest pouček o aspektech, které by se měl překladatel při tvorbě zpívatelného překladu snažit zohlednit. Týkají se věrnosti, smyslu, rytmu, rýmu, praktické zpívatelnosti a dramatičnosti (viz Low 2005). Tento typ překladu může být použit na koncertech nebo při divadelních zkouškách, jelikož se v těchto situacích dává důraz na hudbu a text.

Nejpokročilejší úroveň zpívatelného překladu zohledňuje, kromě hudby, i danou inscenaci. Toto ale není snadno dosažitelné, protože se inscenace mohou výrazně lišit, ale současný trend anglických muzikálů ukazuje, že tomu tak přestává být, jako příklad lze uvést díla *Hamilton*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, či *Hadestown*. Pokud překladatel vezme v potaz i inscenaci, může to znamenat, že jeho výsledek bude nejefektivnější, jelikož měl možnost zohlednit i faktory a znaky, které lze pozorovat pouze na pódiu.

Analýza se už zaměřuje na výběr konkrétních skladeb, které mohou být v ohledu zpívatelnosti problematické. U každé z nich jsou podrobně rozebrány části, jenž vyžadují zvýšenou pozornost kvůli rytmickým, zpívatelným (z praktického hlediska, tj. délka not a adekvátní doporučené lexikální jednotky, které na ně spadají), sémantickým, či sémiotickým specifikám. Pokud si to daná pasáž vyžaduje, jsou u ní poskytnuty návrhy překladatelského řešení s komentářem nebo doporučená rytmická změna ve formě notového zápisu. V zájmu lepší orientace v záznamu muzikálu, se kterým je doporučeno pracovat, jsou obsaženy i snímky obrazovky ilustrující znaky či mluvní akty pozorovatelné na pódiu.

Jelikož je *Hamilton*, navzdory svému hybridnímu a převážně modernímu hudebnímu žánru, historický muzikál, který obsahuje i citace ze skutečných historických dokumentů, vznáší se zde otázka zachování faktických informací, které mohou být významné pouze pro americké či britské publikum. Jedním z účelů díla je, jak lze pozorovat, představit americké dějiny širšímu publiku zábavnou cestou, a tomu by tak mělo být i v přeložené verzi. Český překladatel by tak měl zvážit významnost jednotlivých historických faktů, které *Hamilton* pokrývá, např. politické důvody hádek ve skladbách *Cabinet Battle #1* a *#2* nebo Washingtonovu motivaci k rezignaci v písni *One Last Time*. Ale jsou tu i takové, které historickou přesnost přímo vyžadují,

konkrétně lze uvést *The World Was Wide Enough*, jenž pokryje osudný duel mezi Alexanderem Hamiltonem a Aaronem Burrem. Ale toto nemusí platit pro všechny jazyky, jelikož jejich kultura může být s tou americkou více propletená, a proto by mohly být takové změny i nežádoucí. A právě z tohoto důvodu má být tato analýza brána více jako pomůcka než závazná pravidla, kterými by se překladatelé měli v každém případě řídit.

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Abstract

This thesis provides a pre-translation analysis of Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton: An American Musical* with emphasis on singability of the translation. In order to select the best translation approach, a concise summary of the history of music theatre translation and the evolution of its approaches was construed. Approaches corresponding to singability in relation to performability are touched on in more detail, as they provide information about what aspects to consider when construing such translation.

The analysis covers a selection of the most problematic songs from the musical in terms of singability and provides elaborate commentary regarding the problematic passages. To help the translator, it contains Czech target text suggestions, as well as visual aid in the form of sheet music and screenshots. Despite the suggestions being in Czech only, the analysis may be useful for translators working into different languages as well.

Key Words: *Hamilton*, Lin-Manuel Miranda, musical, music theatre translation, singability, performability.

Abstrakt

Úlohou této práce je poskytnout analýzu pro budoucí zpívatelný překlad muzikálu *Hamilton* od Lina-Manuela Mirandy. Aby zajistila výběr nejlepšího překladatelského přístupu, práce obsahuje shrnutí vývoje oblasti překladu hudebního divadla a jejích příslušných přístupů. Ty, které se týkají zpívatelnosti a hrátelnosti, jsou přiblíženy více, jelikož překladateli poskytují informace o tom, které aspekty by měl při takovém překladu zohlednit.

Samotná analýza se věnuje výběru nejvíce problematických skladeb, co se týče zpívatelnosti, a poskytuje propracované komentáře doprovázející místa, ve kterých může dojít k problémům. Aby překladateli pomohla, jsou v ní zahrnuty návrhy překladatelských řešení v češtině, ale obsahuje také i vizuální pomoc ve formě notového zápisu a snímků obrazovky. Přestože překladatelská řešení jsou navržena pouze v češtině, analýza může pomoci i překladatelům s jinými pracovními jazyky.

Klíčová slova: *Hamilton*, Lin-Manuel Miranda, muzikál, překlad muzikálu, hudební překlad, zpěvnost, zpívatelnost.