

English non-finite participial clauses as seen through their Czech counterparts

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Abstract

Based on the data from a parallel English-Czech corpus, the present study offers an analysis of 600 English *V-ing* participial clauses through their Czech translation correspondences, divisible into less and more explicit types. The less explicit Czech counterparts highlight the analytic character of English either in cases where the translation counterpart is synthetic (i.e. merging the meaning of the finite verb and the participle into one verb) or where the participle resembles, in its function, a preposition. The more explicit (i.e. finite-clause) Czech counterparts attest to the backgrounded information status and semantic indeterminacy of the English participial clause. Instead of an expected tendency to render their meaning in Czech by a similar, syntactically subordinated, structure, namely dependent clauses, it is the simple coordination that appears to represent best the semantic indeterminacy of the relation of the English participial clause to its superordinate element.

1. Introduction

Participial forms as a means of condensation are employed to a different extent in English and in Czech. In English the nonfinite *V-ing* forms appear both in an adverbial and a postmodifying function frequently, and they are not marked stylistically (e.g. *I lay on my bed, tossing restlessly* and *We passed a sign pointing to the village*, respectively). In Czech, non-finite transgressive forms can be used for the adverbial function. Transgressives have properties similar to participles (*dívka zamávala usmívajíc se na něho* - *the girl waved at him smiling*) but, unlike participles, cannot function as modifiers of nouns. They are archaic and highly formal. The postmodifying function can be expressed by deverbal adjectives (*dívka usmívající se na něho* - *the girl smiling at him*).

The comparison of participial forms in English and Czech as two typologically distinct languages (one of which uses participles as condensers systematically, while in the latter a corresponding form has become obsolete, almost non-existent) consequently invites a twofold corpus analysis: first, a systematic overview of the translation correspondences, and second, observations as to whether any potential additional lexico-grammatical and functional aspects of the English

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participles may be pointed out when contrasted with their Czech counterparts. The first step in the analysis catalogues the means (forms and syntactic structures), while the second draws attention to some more general aspects that are usually not attributed explicitly to English participial clauses.

2. *English and Czech*

The long tradition of applying the synchronic contrastive functional approach in Czech English linguistics (since the late 1920s, cf. Dušková 2012: 21-26)¹ highlights the differences between what may be called nominal (or, verbo-nominal) as opposed to verbal ways of expression, in English and Czech, respectively (*He gave a squeak.* (NP+VP+NP) as opposed to Czech *Zapištěl.* (VP)) (cf. Mathesius 1975, Renský 1964a,b, etc.). The description of these differences is concerned e.g. with the question of the noun-verb quotient (i.e. the frequency of the respective word-classes) in the two languages (Renský 1965), with changes in the word-class in translation (Poláčková 1988) or with syntactic constancy in translation (Dušková 2012). Such studies show that the verbo-nominal ways of expression can be seen as a feature concomitant with an analytic type of language, i.e. they are typical of English as compared to Czech, which is dominantly a synthetic language with rich inflection. From this perspective the tendencies in the use of nonfinite forms, as items with

¹ In 1928, in his article in the *Theses of the Prague Linguistic Circle* Mathesius, drawing a distinction between linguistic characterology (i.e. synchronic comparison of languages) and descriptive grammar, claimed that “[F]or further advancement of linguistic research work it is of vital importance that detailed linguistic characterology of single languages at different stages of their development should be worked up on a purely synchronic basis. [...] Comparison of languages of different types without any regard to their genetic relations is of the greatest value for any work in concrete linguistics characterology” (Mathesius 1928, in Vachek 1964: 60). Mathesius further points out that “the only way of approach to different languages as strictly comparable systems is the functional point of view, since general needs of expression and communication, common to all mankind, are the only common denominators to which means of expression and communication, varying from language to language, can reasonably be brought” (Mathesius 1936: 95).

nominal properties,² can be expected to differ in the two languages as well.

Drawing on extensive previous research, Dušková (2012: 27) distinguishes three types of verbo-nominal means of expression: “(i) nominal tendencies in primary denomination [...], and two types in the sphere of syntax: (ii) total suppression of the finite verb (as a component of a more general tendency to condensation, also called grammatical nominalization), and (iii) verbo-nominal constructions with semantically empty verbs (dissociation of verbal predication into the categorial and notional components, also called semantic nominalization)”.

Contrasting English and Czech, the first type (i) can be exemplified by *have influence – působit* (‘to-influence’), *feel the need – potřebovat* (‘to-need’); the third (iii) by *She gave the chair a gentle turn. – Po-otočila křeslo.* (‘gently-turned-she the chair’). The second (ii) type of verbo-nominal ways of expression, which is of interest in this study, includes English participial condensers.

Typological differences between English and Czech verbs can schematically be summarized as follows: English finite verb phrase is typically compounded (analytic), aspect is not grammaticalized, predicates display a tendency to semantic nominalizations (*to have a chat*). These features contribute to what has been described as reduced dynamism of the verb. The reduced dynamism of the English verb is evident also in the use of sentence condensers, i.e. the participial forms, which express only relative temporal meaning and voice, and syntactically operate as non-finite (participial) adverbial and postmodifying clauses providing supplementary background information (Biber et al. (1999), but cf. also Fuhre (2010) for a detailed discussion).

Czech, on the contrary, as a synthetic type of language, is characterized by rich inflection, contributing to the strong dynamism of the verb as the categories are expressed in the lexical finite verb form and include aspect. Non-finite transgressive forms (comparable to English participial adverbial clause but not to a postmodifying clause, e.g. *dívka, umývající nádobí,...* (‘the girl, washing up, ...’) are highly obsolete; de-verbal adjectives with a similar condensing function express

² “The difference in the verbal and nominal expression between Czech and English is manifested in English syntax by the fact that English employs indefinite, i.e. nominal, forms to a much larger extent and in its own way.” (Mathesius 2001[1936]: 64, translation is ours)

gender, number and case concord: *dívka umývající nádobí, ...* ('the girl washing up ...').

As pointed out by Dušková (2012: 25) “[Mathesius] does not deny the English verb its basic function to express predication – English naturally expresses predication primarily by the verb – but as compared with other languages, it often displays verbo-nominal constructions where other languages have verbal forms of expression.” Moreover, “as shown by contrastive studies examining other points and aimed at other goals, differences in verbal and verbo-nominal means of expression between English and Czech keep manifesting themselves as a major, non-negligible feature conducive to various types of divergence.” (ibid: 27) Participial condensers, displaying a high ratio of divergent translation counterparts (over 90 per cent, cf. Table 2), seem to represent this tendency par excellence.

3. Material and scope of the study

This study focuses on adverbial and postmodifying V-*ing* participial clauses, comprising present and perfect participles, both subjectless and with an overt subject (i.e. absolute constructions). Adverbial participial clauses introduced by conjunctions (i.e. augmented participial clauses) were also included in the data (see Table 1). De-participial secondary prepositions and conjunctions, such as *according to*, *assuming that*, *concerning*, *including*, *regarding*, were noted but not included in the data set since they can no longer be considered adverbials or modifiers.

Table 1: *V-ing* participial clauses included in the data

present participial clause	adverbial	Harry went back to the kitchen, still staring at his letter .
	postmodifying	If the motorcycle was huge, it was nothing to the man sitting astride it .
	absolute construction	Dudley won, so Harry, his glasses dangling from one ear , lay flat on his stomach to listen at the crack between door and floor.
augmented present participial clause	adverbial	He took a look at me, said nothing, yelled again for Abraham while sauntering across the creaking floor .
	absolute construction	And with the present negotiations going so well , I was just thinking the other day, what a pity it would be if Jiro Miyake was still brooding over last year.
perfect participial clause	adverbial	Having handed the rosewood box to Langdon , she could feel herself momentarily forgetting all about the Holy Grail, the Priory of Sion, and all the mysteries of the past day.

The data were drawn from the synchronic multilingual parallel corpus *InterCorp*, which is being compiled at Charles University in Prague (Čermák and Rosen 2012). The corpus comprises 31 languages, with Czech as the pivot language, i.e. it contains bidirectional translations between each of the languages and Czech. Where the same text has been translated between Czech and several languages, multilingual comparisons of the translation counterparts are possible. The texts include fiction, whose alignment is checked manually, and the so-called ‘collections’ of journalistic and legal texts aligned automatically. The current size of the corpus (March 2013) is 138.8 million tokens in the foreign language texts in the core fiction part, and 728.5 million tokens in the ‘collections’.

The present study relies on the fiction texts of the English-Czech section of the corpus.³ The analysis is based on 600 translation pairs of

³ This section of *InterCorp* comprises 6.9 million tokens in English texts.

English V-*ing* participial clauses and their Czech counterparts. A sub-corpus of six English novels, three British and three American, and their translations was used (see Sources). From each novel, 100 participial clauses and their Czech counterparts⁴ were included in the data set. The overall quantitative results are presented in Table 2.

4. *The counterparts of English participial clauses*

The Czech correspondences of English participial clauses were classified primarily into congruent and divergent counterparts (Johansson 2007: 23-26). The congruent correspondences comprise Czech constructions which display the same degree of syntactic compression as the English participial clauses, namely Czech transgressives and de-verbal adjectives. Overall, only 9.5 per cent of the counterparts can be considered congruent. This is mainly due to the low representation of congruent correspondences among the counterparts of the English absolute and adverbial constructions. There is no congruent counterpart of the English absolute construction available in Czech, and the adverbial non-finite constructions (transgressives) are obsolete and rare. English postmodifying participles, on the other hand, are frequently translated by congruent counterparts, i.e. by de-participial adjectives.

Differences in translation preferences between participial adverbials on the one hand and postmodifiers on the other can be observed throughout the whole translation paradigms of the two constructions. English postmodifying participial clauses tend to be translated by modifiers within the noun phrase: postmodifying de-verbal adjectives or relative clauses (42.1 and 40.4 per cent of counterparts, respectively); English adverbial and absolute participial constructions display a preference for coordinate finite clause counterparts (cf. Table 2).

⁴ The correspondences are mostly overt (Johansson 2007: 23-26), i.e. the target text contains some form that can be related specifically to the participle in the source text. The class referred to as 'verbless correspondences' comprises also zero correspondences of the participle, which will be shown to be indicative of the function of the English participle in these constructions.

Table 2: Translation correspondences of V-ing participial clauses (600 translation pairs)

Czech counterparts ↓		English participial constructions ↓							
		Absolute construction		Adverbial		Postmodifier		TOTAL	
		Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%
Divergent	verbless construction	3	7.0	47	10.6	14	12.3	64	10.7
	synthetic construction	1	2.3	38	8.6	0	0.0	39	6.5
	subordinate finite clause	12	27.9	68	15.3	46	40.4	126	21.0
	coordinate finite clause	27	62.8	281	63.4	6	5.3	314	52.3
Congruent	transgressive/ de-verbal adjective	0	0.0	9	2.1	48	42.1	57	9.5
TOTAL		43	100.0	443	100.0	114	100.0	600	100.0

The individual types of correspondence will be dealt with below, focussing on what the Czech counterparts can indicate about the functions of the English participial constructions.

4.1 Congruent correspondences

As mentioned above, there are two types of congruent Czech counterparts (cf. Table 2) – the transgressive and the de-verbal adjective, corresponding to the English adverbial and postmodifying participles, respectively. The Czech transgressives are markedly archaic today (example 1).⁵

⁵ Czech transgressive constructions are by definition subjectless; there are therefore no congruent counterparts of the English absolute participial constructions.

- (1) ‘No, you look,’ Eddie said, still **not understanding** that he was finding his voice.
 Ne, vy se podívejte, odsekl, stále **nechápage**, že hledá svůj hlas.
 Lit.: ... he-said, still not-understanding (TRANSGRESSIVE) that
 ...

The only transgressive forms that exceed the frequency of one per million words in the Czech synchronous corpus *SYN2010*⁶ are those which have become grammatically invariable, having changed their function to that of secondary prepositions or adverbs, such as *počínaje* (‘starting with’), *nemluvě* (‘notwithstanding’), *konče* (‘up to’). The Czech de-participial secondary prepositions can serve as counterparts of certain English participles (*počínaje* in example 2). The same process, namely the reanalysis of the participle as a preposition (“deategorialization”, cf. Hopper and Traugott 2003: 108), operates in English, as illustrated by other Czech secondary prepositions occurring among the counterparts of English *-ing* forms (*concerning* corresponds to the preposition *ohledně* in example 3).

- (2) Your four cardinals will die, one every hour **starting** at eight.
 Vaši čtyři kardinálové zemřou, každou hodinu
 jeden **počínaje** osmou.
 Lit.: ... every hour one starting (TRANSGRESSIVE) at-eight.
- (3) ... that was not the first time Setsuko had questioned me in such a way **concerning** last year and the Miyakes’ withdrawal.
 ... nebylo to poprvé, co mě Secuko **ohledně** loňského rozchodu s
 Mijakovými takhle zpovídala.
 Lit.: ... that me Secuko concerning (PREPOSITION) last-year’s
 breakup with Miyakes in-this-way questioned.

⁶ SYN2010: *Český národní korpus - SYN2010*. Ústav Českého národního korpusu FF UK, Praha 2010. Available at WWW: <<http://www.korpus.cz>>. [Last accessed 13 January 2014]

As a result of the restricted set of the archaic transgressive forms, the degree of congruence of the counterparts of adverbial participles is very low (2.1 per cent).⁷

On the contrary, the second type of Czech congruent counterparts, i.e. de-verbal adjectives, are used to render 42.1 per cent of postmodifying participles into Czech. Like English participles, the Czech de-verbal adjectives are capable of expressing the contrast of voice and (relative) tense, but they are tied to the head noun more closely than the English postmodifiers through concord in number, case and gender (the adjective *vedoucích* in example 4).

- (4) ... Eddie had only begun his arrangement of the pink cashmere cardigan on the bed ... when he heard Marion's exaggerated clomping on the stairs **leading** up from the garage.
... Eddie právě začal aranžovat na postel růžový kašmírový svetr
... když na schodech **vedoucích** z garáže uslyšel Marionino přehnané dupání.
Lit.: ... on stairs (loc. case, pl.) leading (ADJECTIVE, loc. case, pl.) from the garage ...

The possibility to employ a Czech congruent translation counterpart of the English participial construction is limited largely due to the restricted use of non-finite transgressive verb forms in Czech. The finite verb predicate, as a carrier of the verbal categories (expressed by inflectional affixes), is quite indispensable to the Czech clause. Within the noun phrase, on the other hand, the use of a Czech de-participial postmodifying adjective (with its nominal categories tying it through grammatical concord to the head noun of the phrase) is a frequent translation option.

⁷ Since congruence is understood as formal correspondence here, disregarding the syntactic function, the congruent counterparts of the adverbial participles include also six instances where the adverbial was translated by a postmodifying de-verbal adjective, e.g. 'Three needles,' *Ruth reminded him, counting the stitches.* - *Tři jehly, připomněla mu Rút počítající stehy.* (Lit.: ... Ruth counting (ADJECTIVE) stitches.). There were only three transgressives among the Czech counterparts of the English participial constructions in our data.

4.2 Divergent correspondences

The congruent translation choices being highly restricted, other types of Czech counterparts have to be sought, especially for the English participles in adverbial function.

4.2.1 Verbless counterparts

A relatively infrequent option (10.7 per cent of counterparts overall with a similar representation among adverbial and postmodifying participles, 10.6 and 12.3 per cent, respectively), consists in employing a verbless construction in Czech. The English participle either disappears in the Czech translation or is translated by non-verbal means, namely prepositional, adjective, adverb or noun phrases. As a result, the Czech sentence displays a higher degree of condensation than the source one, at the cost of becoming less explicit due to the absence of the verb – both lexically and grammatically – since the verbless construction cannot express tense and voice contrasts.

One of the verbless translation options consists in using an elliptical construction in Czech (cf. Karlík et al. 2012: 467): in example (5) the unexpressed verb can be recovered as the transgressive *maje / majíc / majíce* ('having'), expressing 'possession' or 'belonging' in general (cf. the Czech verbo-nominal expression *mít oči upřené na něco* ('have one's eyes fixed on something') and its English verbal equivalent *stare at something*) (Malá and Šaldová 2012).

(5) Harry went back to the kitchen, still **staring** at his letter.

Harry se vrátil do kuchyně, **oči** ještě pořád **upřené** na svůj dopis.

Lit.: Harry returned to kitchen, eyes still fixed on his letter.

The Czech phrasal counterparts can be illustrated by examples (6) to (8). The group comprises zero correspondences of the participle (e.g. *sounding half exasperated* corresponding to *napůl podrážděně* ('half exasperatedly') in example 6). The English participial adverbial clause is rendered into Czech as an adverbial expressed by an adverb phrase; the Czech adverb mirrors the complement of the participle lexically.

(6) "I know you haven't," said Professor McGonagall, **sounding** half exasperated, half **admiring**.

“Já vím, že vy ho nemáte,” řekla profesorka McGonagallová napůl **podrážděně**, napůl **s obdivem**.

Lit.: ... said Professor McGonagall half exasperatedly, half with admiration.

- (7) In another sub-type of the verbless correspondence the English participle is paralleled by a preposition in the translation (the adverbial *s obdivem* – ‘(said) with admiration’ in example 6, and postmodifier *o technikách či stylu* – ‘(questions) about technique or style’ – in example 7).⁸ Sometimes he will even ask me questions **relating to** technique or style with all the eagerness of a young apprentice ...

Někdy mi dokonce se západem mladého tovaryše klade otázky **o** technikách či stylu ...

Lit.: ... he-asks questions about technique or style ...

The participles with this type of correspondence are typically relational and copular verbs, such as *relating to*, *comprising*, *wearing*, *using*, *leading to*, *looking*, *sounding*. The zero and prepositional correspondences attest to the semantically weak nature of the English participle in these constructions. The participle appears to constitute a mere linking element here, ascribing some quality to the noun or introducing some adverbial specification.

Participles with more specific meaning, on the other hand, invite Czech verbless counterparts which correspond lexically to the participle (example 8).

- (8) Then I heard my mother’s voice beside me, almost **whispering**, say: ‘He’s still very young ...’

Matka vedle mě promluvila téměř **šeptem**: “Je ještě velmi mladý ...”

Lit.: Mother beside me said almost in-whisper ...

⁸ This type of correspondence involves those English participles which are not considered secondary prepositions.

The Czech verbless correspondences suggest that the function of semantically weak participles may be reduced to tying a particular modification to the syntactically superordinate verb or noun. Conversely, in synthetic counterparts, presented in section 4.2.2, it is the formally superordinate verb that serves to modify the meaning of the participle.

4.2.2 Synthetic counterparts

English constructions comprising a verb of directed motion, most frequently *come* or *go*, followed by a present participle of a verb of motion tend to be translated by what we call synthetic verbal counterparts (6.5 per cent of counterparts overall): the finite verb and the participle merge in a single lexical verb with a directional prefix (*při-* and *vy-* in examples 9 and 10). In these examples, the participle represents the semantic core of the predication (i.e. the specific mode of movement), and the formally superordinate verb is semantically weak, indicating merely the direction of the motion.

- (9) A toothless old man **came ambling** up to them, ...
 To už **se** k nim **přiloudal** bezzubý stařík ...
 Lit.: ... to them to-ambled a toothless old-man ...
- (10) ... he got to his feet and **went running** out of the room,
 through into the piano room.
 ... a **vyběhl** z jídelny do hudebního salonku.
 Lit.: ... and out-ran out of the room ...

The same type of correspondence was also attested with other verbs followed by a present participle: *run*, *emerge*, *cross (the room)*, *sit*, *stand*, *spend/pass (time)*, albeit less frequently.⁹ The English verbs of directed motion are again reflected in Czech directional prefixes, e.g. *run limping* – *dokulhat*, *emerge looming (above the city)* – *vztyčit se (nad městem)*. The other verbs do not seem to have overt Czech

⁹ The verbs of motion (e.g. *come*, *run*, *go*, *cross*) constitute 46.2 per cent of the superordinate verbs in these constructions; posture verbs (*sit*, *stand*) and the construction ‘*spend/pass time* + participle’ are less frequent (33.3 per cent). The verbs of speaking (*say*, *address*) occurred in 20.5 per cent of constructions with synthetic counterparts.

correspondences. However, their meaning is rendered in the translation by the imperfective aspect of the verb, indicating duration (examples 11 and 12).

- (11) He **sat leaning** over his breakfast, ...
Nahýbal se nad snídání ...
Lit.: He-leant (IMPERF.) over breakfast ...
- (12) Mrs. Dursley ... had nearly twice the usual amount of neck, which came in very useful as she **spent so much of her time craning** over garden fences, **spying** on the neighbours.
Paní Dursleyová ... krk měla skoro dvakrát delší než jiní lidé, což se jí velice hodilo, poněvadž ho **celé hodiny natahovala** přes plot a **slídila**, co se děje u sousedů.
Lit.: Mrs. Dursley ... craned (IMPERF.) over fence and spied (IMPERF.) ...

As suggested by the synthetic Czech correspondences, the above constructions can be seen as a manifestation of the analytic nature of English. The verbal meaning is dissociated into two components: the finite verb conveys the grammatical functions and the general categorial meanings of direction or duration, while the participle constitutes the semantic core of the construction. Czech, as a predominantly synthetic language, relies on affixes for the expression of grammatical and categorial meanings (cf. also the eventive object constructions *give it a try* - *zkusit to*, or *go and fetch st.* - *přinést něco*, *come to an end* - *skončit*, *come true* - *uskutečnit*).

We have also included in the synthetic group of correspondences sentences with direct speech, such as example 13. What they have in common with the other synthetic constructions is that the finite verb of reporting (usually *say*) has no overt counterpart, and the participle corresponds to a finite verb in Czech. The Czech translations show that the punctuation marks may be sufficient to indicate the boundaries of direct speech. In English, however, a reporting finite clause with the verb *say* – although semantically redundant – seems to be preferred to bridge the gap between the direct speech and the attendant activity expressed by

the participle. The lexical meaning of the participle and the ‘reporting’ function of *say* merge in the Czech finite verb counterpart.

- (13) ‘She probably will,’ I **said, laughing** again myself.
 “Nejspíš,” **zasmál jsem se** taky.
 Lit.: “Probably,” I-laughed myself again.

4.2.3 Finite subordinate clauses

Although adverbial participial clauses are generally thought of as expressing some type of adverbial modification, and as such can be expected to correspond to subordinate adverbial clauses systematically (Dušková 2006: 583), the data show that in translating an adverbial participle into Czech coordination prevails (example 14), the ratio of hypotaxis and parataxis being 1 : 4. Postmodifiers, on the contrary, are mostly rendered into Czech by subordinate adjectival clauses (7.5 : 1), as in example 15.

- (14) Mrs. Dursley came into the living room **carrying** two cups of tea.
 Do obývacího pokoje vstoupila paní Dursleyová **a přinesla** dva šálky čaje.
 Lit.: Into living room came Mrs. Dursley and she-brought two cups of-tea.
- (15) The thought of zero-gravity was a kind of talisman, **protecting** him from harm.
 Pomyšlení na stav beztlíže bylo něco na způsob talismanu, **který ho ochraňoval** před nebezpečím.
 Lit.: ... a kind of-talisman, which protected him from harm.

On the one hand, the Czech counterparts in the form of a subordinate clause (example 16) retain the hypotactic relationship between the dependent clause and an element of the superordinate clause. On the other hand, these Czech counterparts are more explicit than the English

participial clauses due to the finite form of the predicate (*uvědomil si* – ‘he-realized’ in example 16), the overt expression of the subject (or at least its easier identification through the categories of person, number and gender, e.g. the suffix *-l* in *uvědomil si* indicates, apart from the past tense, third person, singular number and masculine gender), and – in adverbial clauses – the conjunction signalling not only subordination but also the semantic relationship between the two clauses (*protože* – ‘because’ in example 16). Subordinate finite clauses therefore do not seem to be strictly equivalent to the participial ones since they reduce the semantic indeterminacy typical of the participial clauses (cf. Kortmann 1991).

- (16) Now, as Langdon approached the stationary escalators, he paused, **realizing** Fache was no longer beside him.
 Když Langdon došel k nehybným eskalátorům, zarazil se, **protože si uvědomil**, že ho Fache nedoprovází.
 Lit.: ... he-paused, because he-realized ...

A mere juxtaposition of an adverbial clause and its superordinate clause, without a subordinator explicitly marking the relationship, is a peripheral means of clausal connection in Czech. Such sentences are formally identical with those whose clauses are in a paratactic relationship but semantically the inter-clausal relationship can be described more adequately as subordination. In our data it is represented by one translation pair only, example 17.

- (17) She was enjoying herself immensely, **having taken** a long shower, **eaten** a pound of candy, and **watched** the TV nonstop.
 Měla se nadmíru dobře, pořádně **se vysprchovala**, **snědla** koku cukroví a vytrvale **se dívala** na televizi.
 Lit.: She-was enjoying herself immensely, thoroughly she-showered, she-ate a lot of candy and she-watched the TV.

Unlike the English sentence where anteriority is indicated by the form of the participle (*having taken/eaten/watched*), in the Czech translation the causal interpretation rests on the reader’s general knowledge of the

world, supported merely by the perfective aspect of the verbs *vysprchovala se* and *snědla* ('she-showered, she-ate'). This translation solution seems to be facilitated by the coordination relationship within the adverbial element.

The translation of a participial clause by a finite adverbial clause always involves making the potential semantic relationship between the participial and its superordinate clause explicit. As pointed out by Kortmann (1991: 116), "the range of interpretations that the addressee views as being available to a given free adjunct/absolute is restricted and identical with the set of interpretations that emerges when all instances of intersubjective variation for this adjunct/absolute are taken together". The translator's task, then, involves selecting merely one of these potential interpretations. The participial clause in example 18 is potentially ambiguous between causal, temporal simultaneity/accompanying circumstance, and possibly even concessive interpretation. By using the conjunction *protože* ('because') the translation narrows down the options to 'cause' only.

- (18) You got a wealthy lawyer from a wealthy firm deliberately allowing a wrongful eviction to occur, and as a direct result my clients got tossed into the streets where they died **trying to stay warm**.
 Šlo o bohatého právníka z bohaté firmy, který záměrně dovolil, aby proběhlo protiprávní vystěhování. Následkem jeho přístupu se moji klienti ocitli na ulici, kde zemřeli, **protože se snažili zahřát**.
 Lit.: ... where they-died because they-were-trying to-warm themselves.

The inexplicitness of the semantic relationship between the clauses may be retained in the Czech translation if a non-restrictive relative clause can be employed as a counterpart of the English adverbial clause (example 19). These postmodifying clauses "convey supplementary information about the referent of the noun. Since they are irrelevant for the description of what the speaker has in mind, *various* semantic relationships may obtain between the content of the relative clause and

that of the superordinate clause, such as a causal relationship” (Karlík et al. 1995: 497-498, translation ours).

- (19) "Leigh?" Sophie repeated, clearly **not appreciating** being left out of the discussion.
"Leighu?" zopakovala Sophie, **které se vůbec nelíbilo**, že ji vynechávají z diskuse.
Lit.: ... repeated Sophie, who did not appreciate that they are leaving her out of the discussion.

Generally, adverbial clauses with ‘less informative’ semantic roles¹⁰ of accompanying circumstance, temporal simultaneity or manner tend to be translated by means other than finite adverbial clauses more frequently than the ‘more informative’ adverbial clauses (Mašková 2013: 59). The semantic relations expressed by finite adverbial clauses in our data were most frequently causal (i.e. clauses of reason, purpose, or result; example 18), temporal (example 20), and conditional and concessive (example 21).

- (20) It turned out she'd broken her leg **tripping** over one of her cats, ...
Harry zjistil, že paní Figgová si zlomila nohu, **když zakopla** o jednu ze svých koček, ...
Lit.: ... Mrs. Figg broke her leg when she tripped over one of her cats ...
- (21) ... they reached the rock, where Uncle Vernon, **slipping and sliding**, led the way to the broken-down house.
... dorazili k útesu, kde je strýc Vernon, **i když se smekal a klouzal**, dovedl k polorozpadlému stavení.

¹⁰ Kortmann (1991) uses the term ‘informativeness’ to indicate how much co-/contextually substantiated evidence or general knowledge is needed on the part of the reader/listener to identify the semantic role of a participial adjunct. More informative semantic relations, such as concession, condition or causal relations, require “a considerably higher amount of knowledge or evidence” (Kortmann 1991: 121).

Lit.: ... where them Uncle Vernon, even though he slipped and slid, led to the broken-down house.

For English postmodifying participial clauses, the subordinate finite clause appears to be the preferred translation correspondence, although even here the finite clause is more explicit than the participial one. In the Czech translation in example 22, for instance, “the aspect ... is specified as perfective although the original allows both perfective and imperfective readings” (Mašková 2013: 63), i.e. while in English *coming* may indicate an action either simultaneous with or anterior to being *deeply committed to volunteer counseling*, the translation eliminates the simultaneity option.

- (22) When Margaret McDermid had been in her forties, she'd been deeply committed to volunteer counseling of young American men **coming** to Canada to escape the Vietnam War.

Když bylo Margaretě McDermidové přes čtyřicet, velmi se věnovala dobrovolné pomoci mladým Američanům, **kterí uprchli** do Kanady, aby unikli povolání do Vietnamu.

Lit.: ... young Americans who fled (PERFECTIVE) to Canada ...

4.2.4 Finite coordinate clauses

While postmodifying participial clauses tend to be translated into Czech by finite relative clauses, the adverbial ones display a marked preference for finite coordinate clause correspondences.¹¹ Both types of Czech

¹¹ The prominence of the paratactic correspondences of participial clauses was related to “more deep-reaching” differences between the two languages by Vachek: “[o]bviously, one has to do here with something more deep-reaching than a mere difference in syntactical forms: what is involved is two different ways in which the two languages tackle the realities of the outside world. In Czech one observes the tendency to dissociate the reality to be expressed into a number of actions or processes, which may be mutually either coordinated or subordinated; in English, on the other hand, a different tendency is at work, viz. one that endeavours to grasp the same reality as a single, basic action or process,

counterparts involve a higher degree of specificity due to the overt expression of grammatical categories in the finite verb predicate. At the same time, both make it possible to render the underspecified semantic relationship between the participial and the superordinate clause into Czech. The relative clauses, moreover, retain the same syntactic function as the postmodifying participial clauses.

The coordinate clause correspondences highlight “the only all-important difference” between paratactic and hypotactic clauses:

“Unless special lexical means (e.g. connective adverbs) are employed, propositions encoded via parataxis are of equal informational rank; in other words, none of the propositions can be marked (!) for presenting background information. It is at least this piece of information, i.e. the presentation of one proposition as backgrounded, which always gets lost in paraphrases of free adjuncts/absolutes by means of coordinate clauses.” (Kortmann 1991: 113)¹²

Therefore, while the semantic indeterminacy is retained in the Czech coordinate clause counterparts of participial adjuncts, the structuring of information within the sentence becomes more opaque. The non-finite form of the English participial adjunct marks the information it conveys as concomitant or of lesser importance. “The backgrounding, dedynamizing effect of the participial form is lost but the relative degree of [communicative] dynamism of the coordinated clauses may be indicated by other means than in the English sentence, namely by linear modification.” (Malá and Šaldová 2012: 153-4) The clause which corresponds to the participial adjunct can be shifted to the sentence-initial position to indicate its being a part of the thematic layer of the sentence (example 23).

- (23) No doubt I might have taken up with her straightaway the matter of the following day, but she and Ichiro did not stay on the veranda, **going** inside to wash their hands.

absorbing all other potential actions or processes as its elements or concomitant circumstances.” (Vachek 1955: 65)

¹² Cf. Mathesius (1966 [1942]: 80–81): “Most frequently the task of the transgressive is to express an action concomitant with the main action and temporally so equal to it that both constructions can easily be swapped depending on which action is considered the main one by the writer.”

Nepochybně bych s ní byl otázku programu na příští den probral na místě, ale **zašli** si rovnou umýt ruce a na verandě se nezdrželi.

Lit.: ... but they-went straight to-wash hands and on the-veranda they-did-not-stay.

The coordinate clauses in the Czech rendition cannot be swapped if their mutual position is indicative of the semantic relation between them. This applies generally to the iconic ordering of clauses related through temporal sequence or cause and result (examples 24 and 25, respectively).

- (24) Langdon took it and switched it on, **shining** the beam on the back of the key.

Langdon si ji vzal, rozsvítil **a namířil** na zadní stranu klíče.

Lit.: Langdon took it, switched it on and pointed it on the back of the key.

- (25) **Sensing** Rémy's presence, the monk in the back emerged from a prayer-like trance, his red eyes looking more curious than fearful.

Mnich **ucítil** Remyho přítomnost, probral se z modliteb a podíval se na něj. Jeho pohled byl spíš zvědavý než vystrašený.

Lit.: The monk sensed Rémy's presence, emerged from the prayer and looked at him. His look was more curious than fearful.

Apart from the mutual position, the semantic link between the coordinate clauses can be indicated by adverbials or by conjunctions (either in both languages or in Czech only, examples 26 and 27, respectively).

- (26) **After asking** Harry furiously if he knew the man, Aunt Petunia had rushed them out of the shop without buying anything.

Teta Petunie **se napřed** Harryho rozzlobeně **zeptala**, jestli toho člověka zná, **a pak** ho i s Dudleym spěšně odtáhla z krámu, aniž něco koupila.

Lit.: Aunt Petunia first asked Harry furiously if he-knew that man and then she-rushed him with Dudley out-of the shop ...

(27) He lay and watched his birthday tick nearer, **wondering** if the Dursleys would remember at all, ...

Ležel a sledoval, jak se jeho narozeniny přibližují; **přemítal přitom**, jestli si na ně Dursleyovi vůbec vzpomenou, ...

Lit.: He-lay and watched how his birthday ticked-nearer; he-wondered at-the-same-time if the Dursleys would-remember him at-all...

Finite clauses constitute 73.3 per cent of Czech translation counterparts of participial clauses. Postmodifying participles tend to be translated by subordinate adjectival clauses while adverbial participles display a preference for coordinate clauses as their counterparts. Finite clauses are – due to the presence of the finite verb predicate and the subject – more explicit than the participial ones. The postmodifying finite clauses, however, make it possible to retain two important characteristics of participial clauses, namely their backgrounding effect (both participial and finite clauses are modifiers of the head noun) and the indeterminacy of the inter-clausal semantic relationship. In adverbial finite clauses subordination is retained but the obligatory subordinator resolves the semantic indeterminacy of the relation between the adverbial and the superordinate clause. The fact that 63.4 per cent of adverbial participial clauses are rendered into Czech as coordinate clauses suggests that the possibility of keeping this semantic relation inexplicit seems to be so important that it is often given preference over the syntactic expression of dependency relations in the translation.

5. Conclusion

The present paper set out to explore the properties of English *V-ing* participles as they can be seen through their Czech translation counterparts, focussing primarily on the corresponding ‘units of

meaning'. The analysis of the correspondences, however, has also led to some observations concerning the differences between the two languages in general.

The divergent counterparts can be divided into less explicit – “shorter” ones (4.2.1 and 4.2.2) and more explicit – “longer” ones (4.2.3 and 4.2.4). The merger of the superordinate verb with the participle in what we have termed ‘synthetic correspondence’ attests to the synthetic character of the Czech language as opposed to the analytic tendencies manifested in the structure of the predicate in English. Conveying directional, temporal or aspectual modification, this type of Czech counterparts is associated mostly with adverbial uses of English participial clauses. The verbless correspondences, on the other hand, reveal a class of semantically weak English participles, such as *relating to*, *comprising*, *using*, *leading to*, *looking*. They may be used to modify a noun (postmodifiers) or a verb (adverbials) but their syntactico-semantic function is limited to serving as a linking element used to tie the modified element with its elaborator. They may be seen as functionally equivalent to prepositions, as demonstrated by the Czech prepositional counterparts. Taking a step further, the participles may become fully reanalysed as secondary prepositions. Accordingly, the de-participial prepositions can also be translated by Czech prepositions which have come into existence through a parallel process of decategorialization from transgressives.

Apart from these correspondences, quite rare in fiction, the only congruent counterparts, namely de-participial adjectives, are found among the translations of postmodifying participles. However, these counterparts are more explicit than the English participles since the tie between the head noun and the postmodifier is signalled not only by the position but also by concord in number, case and gender between the noun and the postmodifying adjective.

Comparing the two languages, the tendency in English to use a relational (i.e. semantically weak) participle to express syntactic relations in the sentence overtly may be required by the limited freedom of word ordering. This principle can be illustrated by the following example (though from a different set of data) with a discontinuous noun phrase, which is not necessary (and impossible) in Czech, whose word-ordering matches the information structure:

- (28) ... on ordinary days a notice used to hang in the window, saying: *Umbrellas Recovered*.
... ve všední dny visívala v okně tabulka s nápisem:
Potahování deštníků.
Lit.: ... on ordinary days used-to-hang in the window a
notice with the inscription: *Umbrellas Recovered*.

The choice of a Czech finite-clause counterpart is inevitably connected with explicitation in translation due to the overt expression of the subject and the verbal categories. The two types of finite-clause correspondences – a hypotactic and paratactic one – each point out a different characteristic of the English participial construction. The range of subordinating conjunctions used in the translations attests to the diversity of inter-clausal semantic relationships that participial clauses can convey; the explicitness of the subordinate-clause counterparts, on the other hand, contrasts with the indeterminacy typical of the participial clause. In coordinate-clause correspondences, the semantic inter-clausal relationships do not have to be made explicit. The possible non-equivalence between the participial clause and its finite counterpart concerns the structuring of information. The subordinate non-finite clause makes it possible to present a proposition as ‘backgrounded’; in coordinate clauses other means, such as the linear arrangement of the clauses, have to be sought to indicate the information structure.

Although restricted in its scope the present study hopes to have shown that a look at the English *V-ing* participial constructions through their Czech correspondences may reveal some of the functional, semantic and textual properties of participial clauses. At the same time, the contrastive view highlights the problematic areas of overlap between adverbial and postmodifying participial clauses, the status of absolute constructions, word-class shifts or semantic indeterminacy.

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