

Abstract

The present master's thesis undertakes to provide a comparative study of authentic and literary nazi discourse. It takes up the thread of research already carried out into the concept of original nazi language, projects existing observations on that phenomenon onto a work of Czech fine literature and examines the possibility of the drawing of parallels between authentic nazi discourse and its recreation in fiction. The method selected for the purpose is one of study and collation of the features and devices of original nazi language as described in existing linguistic and philological commentaries in parallel with a detailed analysis of the discourse of Bedřich Brenske, the prime nazi protagonist in Arnošt Lustig's novella *A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova* (1964). The main focus throughout is on lexical and semantic aspects and their roles in the process of psychological manipulation; the analysis of the fictional text also casts light upon certain extralinguistic and paralinguistic aspects of Brenske's communication that are revealed to the reader through the narrator discourse. Consideration of Brenske's direct speech in the light of the original discourse of the Third Reich reveals a high degree of correspondence between the two, both on the fundamental level of linguistic features and in terms of the relationship between lexis and communicative intention. Taking into consideration these similarities, and Lustig's own experience of life in the nazi concentration camps as well as his own statements regarding the various motivations behind his treatment of the topic in literature, the close of the thesis considers the justifiability of perceiving Brenske's discourse as a linguistic record – albeit a fragmentary one – of a very specific time and location in history.

Key words

Arnost Lustig, A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova, Bedrich Brenske, nazi language, nazi discourse, totalitarian language, language of the Third Reich, holocaust literature, rhetoric, manipulation