# Translation Strategies in a Rapidly Transforming Culture

## A Central European Perspective

**Piotr Kwieciñski**

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PIOTR KWIECIÑSKI
*Uniwersytet Adama Mickiewicza, Poznañ*

Abstract. *This article examines cultural asymmetry, a feature engendered by rapid cultural transformation and posited to be a crucial contextual factor in translating into and from weaker or dominated cultures. It argues that the asymmetry affects translators' choices – often implicitly – in terms of domestication and foreignization and presents an analysis of an extensive corpus of English-Polish translations in two genres: voiceover and news articles. The findings demonstrate a marked dominance of highly foreignizing procedures in the translation of culture-specific items, a trend which in the majority of cases cannot be attributed to formal or genre-related restrictions, audience design, or lack of competence on the part of translators. In addition, the article provides an overview of the effects of the Polish cultural transition on translation practices and suggests ways in which a cotext- and context-sensitive analysis of individual translations can be accommodated within a quantitative study.*

Poland, a Central European nation under transition, is the main concern of this article. This focus may seem surprising in a volume devoted to minority cultures in translation. True, Poland's situation appears widely different from what is typically associated with the term 'minority culture', where the Basque and Frisian cultures for instance are frequently cited in the European context as clear examples. The Polish community has nearly 40 million members in Poland and about 10 million more abroad; it is firmly grounded in the institutions of a nation state; unlike a prototypical minority language, the Polish language has a very wide range of firmly established, institutionalized discourses; moreover, it itself serves as a dominant culture for minority cultures/languages.[1] But terms such as minority/weaker/minor culture are clearly relative and describe particular cross-cultural encounters rather than permanent qualities. Beyond that, although the effects of being on the weaker side of an asymmetrical cultural encounter may well be experienced by relatively stable cultures, I want to argue that the rapid sociocultural transition that Poland has been undergoing since 1989 has resulted in a particular vulnerability and weakness in cross-cultural encounters with Anglo-American

culture and the English language as hegemonic representatives of the West. This weakness, although affecting translation into Polish in striking ways, seems to go largely unnoticed in much of the local and international writings on translation.

## 1. Poland: a Central European nation under cultural transformation

Since 1989 Poland has been undergoing a particularly rapid and far-reaching transformation, away from 'authoritarian statism' and towards the Western model of liberal-democratic capitalism.[2] Many sociologists suggest that this has initially resulted in the society's growing 'anomie' (crisis of hitherto dominant norms, beliefs, modes of behaviour, etc.) and a sense of 'axio-normative vacuum' (Szafraniec 1990, Marody 1991, Reykowski 1993). Boski (1992), a psychologist who investigated the cultural identity of Poles resident in Poland as well as Polish expatriates in the United States and Canada, further postulates that correlative attributes of cultural identity,[3] normally functioning as a set of hidden normative assumptions, may be brought to collective consciousness in a situation of abrupt cultural change such as emigration or a systemic sociopolitical transformation.

This transformation has inevitably led to a particularly rapid rate of absorption of the norms and concepts of the dominant culture. The dominant culture in this case, which functions as the donor in the process of transition, is Western European and North American culture, itself dominated by Anglo-American culture and the English language. This type of transition creates a *dominant → dominated* relationship in which Polish culture clearly represents the weaker or dominated party. What sets this situation apart from the colonial and postcolonial context to which analyses of the asymmetry of power have mostly been applied (e.g. Niranjana 1992, Pennycook 1994) is a sense, pervasive both among the Polish elite and in the society at large, that Polish culture, while possessing a distinct and deep-rooted identity of its own, is nevertheless part of the Western world. Poland, it is felt, was artificially and temporarily cut off the West as a result of a short-lived, sociopolitical experiment imposed by an alien power, but it must now 'catch up' as quickly as possible. Even a very cursory look at major Polish discourses, both public and private, reveals that *powrót do Europy* ('the *return* to Europe') and *staæsiê na powrót normalnym krajem europejskim* ('to be a normal European country again'), often conflated as *powrót do normalnoœci* ('return to normality'), are powerful mottoes used both to justify new changes and to denounce the material or conceptual remnants of the post-1945 sociopolitical system. Poles are enthusiastic advocates of 'rejoining the Euroatlantic community': according to the 1995 USIA survey, 81 per cent of Poles "strongly support" or "support" joining the NATO alliance; broadly similar figures are given in all surveys as regards joining the EU. While tension continues to exist between mainstream cultural liberalism and main-

stream cultural conservatism, especially over the role and influence of the Catholic church, this is not in itself generally seen by either side as conflicting with the Western model. If anything, these competing discourses serve to reinforce the generally dominant orientation towards 'reuniting with the West', with both sides appealing to modern Western European standards and Western Christian heritage, respectively, to support their views.

Against this background, the Polish language has been witnessing an influx of loans. On the syntactic level, there is now a tendency to use nouns as premodifiers under the influence of English (*rock opera*, *A klasa*), a structure traditionally alien to Polish and one which provokes vocal protests from purists (Walczak 1994). Lexical items are also being imported on a massive scale, normally together with their signifieds, from the dominant Anglo-American culture directly as loans (often adapted to Polish morphology, sometimes with slightly modified spelling). Imports include names of physical objects (*Big Mac, Whopper, Mars*); institutions (*sex shop*, *pub, Pizza Hut, drive-in, cash and carry*), occupations and activities (*copywriter, creative director, casting, landscaping*), abstract concepts mainly related to technology and economics (*marketing, joint venture, auditing, leasing*), and computer terms such as *e-mail, host, login, boot*. Significantly, the popular computer register which was initially based on radical spontaneous borrowing has been largely standardized, mainly due to the fact that localized Microsoft products now completely dominate the software market and consequently reach nearly all Polish computer users. The overall strategy adopted in the translation of Microsoft software is a combination of calquing at word and phrase level (as in *klikn¹æ* for 'click'), semantic extension (for example *zachowaæ* – 'keep/retain/save' – has come to mean 'save'), and/or phraseological calquing. These strategies represent a step back on the scale of foreignization compared with the originally dominant strategy of loan+ morphological/phonological adaptation. The latter, however, continues to be used widely, especially in informal style and in professional and semi-professional jargon.

This influx of anglicisms is common in other Western European countries; what is striking in the case of Poland is the rate of penetration of these anglicisms over the short period of transition. Comprehensive comparative studies of anglicisms in Europe are yet to see the light of day (Görlach, forthcoming), but if the provisional and fragmentary results reported in Görlach (1997) are anything to go by, Polish has already reached a degree of anglicization that either exceeds or is only slightly behind that of many national languages of the EU that have been exposed to the impact of English for a significantly longer period.

In addition to anglicisms, the rapid growth of ELT (English Language Teaching) as a profitable industry, as well as the growing presence of English as the language of international communication in a variety of contexts

(most notably in business, academic, and military contexts, where it has assumed important gatekeeping functions), is generally presented in dominant discourses as a natural, inevitable, and even beneficial consequence of the transition and of Polish aspirations to 'rejoin the West'. The current official language policy of the European Union, which declares that all members should be entitled to speak with their own voices, does not seem to be taken seriously. On the other hand, the intensity of penetration of the Polish language by English is beginning to create a backlash; most notably, there have been attempts to introduce legislation to ban foreign borrowings, calques and coinages. The proposed Polish Language Act – which forbids the exclusive use of foreign languages in product and service names (with the exception of proper names and trademarks), legal contracts, advertising, labels, forms, bills and receipts – was defeated in parliament in 1996, but it is likely to be reintroduced and debated again in the near future. According to its proponents, the new law is meant to fight "the deluge of anglicisms, the vulgarization of speech, the spread of Polish which is grammatically incorrect, deficient in vocabulary and stylistically poor" (in Bąkowska 1996). Walery Pisarek, a prominent Polish linguist and the bill's initiator and co-creator, stated in a press interview that Polish was being forced out in many areas and that his aim was to ensure that "Polish has its place in all aspects of life" (ibid). The Polish Language Council was established in 1997 as an affiliate of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAN); it is composed of linguists, journalists, teachers, politicians, artists and writers, and its declared aim is to provide guidelines for normative usage, particularly with respect to new lexical items. While it is as yet uncertain how active a role the council will play, its establishment clearly signals a tendency towards protectionist prescriptivism in language policy, at least among the Polish elite.

## 2. Cultural asymmetry and domestication in translation studies

Much of the recent writing on translation which draws on functional linguistics in the broadest sense adopts domestication as a default translation strategy. Snell-Hornby (1988), for example, advocates a model of translational practice which strives to recreate those dimensions of the source text that are deemed significant by the translator after considering factors such as readership and purpose, from the perspective of target readers in their own cultural sphere (ibid:53). This is achieved chiefly through creating target culture-specific imagery, in accordance with TL textual conventions. As a practical aid to translators in "creating a natural and idiomatic translation" (ibid:86), she advocates the use of parallel texts, that is independent texts in the two languages, conceived and functioning in similar situations: stock examples include cooking recipes, instructions for use and public signs (ibid).

Christiane Nord, a representative of the skopos school, recommends a

detailed analysis of intratextual and extratextual factors (Nord 1991, 1992) with the aim of either recreating or altering these factors in the translation on the basis of a hierarchy of target functions; this hierarchy is formulated by the translator and guides his/her work (see esp. Nord 1994:62ff). Like Snell-Hornby's model, Nord's approach appears in principle dynamic and open to the possibility of adopting foreignizing strategies. Within both frameworks, the 'foreignness' of some textual aspects may be justified if, for instance, the initiator of the translation stipulates that a literal translation is required, or if the source text itself has some deliberately foreign, unidiomatic or culturally exotic qualities which the translator deems to be worth preserving. Indeed, Nord clearly states that "translational conventions which ask for 'literal translation' [in a given culture community] have to be taken into account as seriously as translational conventions which allow an adaptation of some or all text dimensions to target-culture standards" (1994:63). She also envisages a situation where the purpose of a translation is primarily to produce "a target-culture document of a source-culture communication" (documentary translation) rather than "a communicative instrument for the target culture" (instrumental translation) (1991:11), the former justifying – I take it – a more pronounced element of foreignness.

However, functionalist approaches normally take it for granted that even when foreignizing strategies are justified (as in Nord's documentary translation), they must include the necessary degree of explication, either covert or overt, in order to avoid obscurity and reduced intelligibility. Furthermore, as Nord states, they must conform with established TL conventions of exoticism. Thus, the production of normalized or domesticated target texts remains the recommended norm of competent translating. Domestication (or normalization; I treat the two terms as synonymous) is understood here somewhat more loosely than in Venuti (1995): I see domestication as maximal approximation to a target-language parallel text in terms of textual and communicative dimensions, imagery, etc., to create the illusion of transparency and avoid 'translationese'. But this does not have to imply the elimination of, for instance, polysemous and exotic or creative effects in the translation, as long as the parallel genre and target context favour such exoticism and creativity. Venuti tends to associate domestication with a more specific and inflexibly applied discursive strategy of fluency, consisting – among other things – of a stress on linear syntax, immediate intelligibility, avoidance of polysemy, elimination of any obscurity (ibid:60), in short, strategies which have a 'flattening' effect. But it would be an injustice to ascribe the advocacy of such a strategy wholesale to authors such as Snell-Hornby and Nord. Venuti further associates a radical kind of domestication with the inscription of translation with dominant target-culture ideological values (which he later distinguishes as 'assimilation', ibid:203), in other words with blatant ethnocentrism. This is a practice that is vehemently opposed by some advocates of

an otherwise (textually) normalizing translation policy (see esp. Hatim and Mason 1997).

What I wish to subject to critical scrutiny in this study is the implicit claim that a functionalist, domesticating stance represents some sort of indisputable natural law in translation, a claim which consequently reduces the epistemological self-awareness of the researcher and the translator and ultimately effaces the role of cultural politics in shaping translational behaviour. This claim seems to coexist comfortably with the hugely popular 'cultural turn' in linguistics-based approaches, where the relevant paradigms reject early structuralist views of translating as a series of decontextualized substitution operations and open themselves up to the world of the respective cultures; and yet they remain caught in the liberal-humanist metaphor of 'bridging' or 'narrowing the gap' between different cultures, which are implicitly portrayed as equal partners in a humanistic enterprise of enhancing cross-cultural understanding. What I want to question here is the tacit assumption that achieving maximal target-text normalization, through either keeping relatively invariant or manipulating the values of a hierarchy of universals, should be a default translation strategy, and that such a strategy is an ideologically indifferent one.

The downplaying or complete erasure of cultural asymmetry as a powerful contextual factor in translating, and hence of the implication of translation in cultural politics, has already been addressed in a number of studies, including Álvarez and Vidal (1996) and Niranjana (1992). Sturge (1997:1) shows how "different translation strategies are implicated in the construction of the unequal relationships between source- and target-language cultures"; importantly, she ascribes this role not only to normalizing approaches which "smooth down [the source text's] lumps and bumps in the process of normalization or accommodation to target-language conventions" (ibid:26), but also to a particular kind of canonized, estranging approach where "precedence is given to target-language expectations of the abnormality of the source culture" (ibid:30). Whether foreignization serves to resist or perpetuate cultural asymmetry and dominance then depends crucially on the directionality of translation. As Aubert (1996) explains, the effects of a source-centred approach may vary strikingly depending on the nature of the dominant/dominated relation. In the *dominated  dominant* context (the focus of Venuti's study) "the source-centred approach sustains the voice of the dominated" (ibid:194), but in the *dominant → dominated* context it "may, depending on the specific reception circumstances, intensify the domination process ... by introduction and ingraining of forms and values of the source language-culture in the target language-culture" (ibid:194-95). Hatim and Mason (1997:146) similarly point out that "if a domesticating strategy is adopted in the case of translating from a culturally dominant source language to a minority-status target language, it may help to protect the latter

against a prevailing tendency for it to absorb and thus be undermined by source language textual practice" (1997:145-46).

Characteristically, the myriad of extratextual conditioning parameters listed by functionalist approaches does not seem to be able to account for the overwhelming tendency to foreignize in some textual dimensions of target texts produced in some cultures rather than others, for example in terms of the rendition of culture-specific items. This tendency to foreignize can be seen clearly in the English-to-Polish data gathered for this study and analyzed below. Here, in the majority of cases no local translational conventions, no formal, situational or genre-related restrictions seem to prohibit normalizing solutions. Can stable and consistent patterns of foreignization be dismissed simply as incompetence, as indicating a lack of bicultural knowledge or of training in applying normalizing translation strategies on the part of translators? I want to suggest that the primary factor responsible for those patterns, and one that has been missing from functionalist models, is the asymmetry between source and target cultures.

## 3. Data analysis

The data used in this study falls mainly within the area of 'general/ordinary language'; for the purpose of the present article this includes journalistic, tourist and educational texts as well as film subtitling and voiceover.[4] This is an area where the sheer volume of translation (into Polish) is massive, where the embedding of source texts in the culture-specific system of signification is especially strong, and where the impact of cultural asymmetry on translation seems to be most in evidence. It is also an area where one would intuitively expect a relatively more pronounced tendency towards domestication compared to the literary domain (where the new, the foreign, the resistant, the creative can be assumed to be generally more valued and hence more readily tolerated). This expectation, as I will attempt to demonstrate, is not borne out in the Polish context.

In the analysis below, I tend to draw mostly on Aixelà's (1996) categories because they have been developed specifically for the analysis of culture-specific items in translation. But it is worth noting that other scholars have used different sets of terms to refer to similar concepts. For example, Aixela's 'conservation procedures' are similar to Venuti's 'foreignizing' and Sturge's 'estranging' strategies; and his 'naturalization' is similar to Baker's 'cultural substitution' and Mailhac's 'cultural transplantation'.

### 3.1. Voiceover

Voiceover is virtually the only translation method used on Polish television. It is less restricted than dubbing and subtitling in terms of physical factors such as lip-synchronicity, reading speed and screen size, but it is still subject

to the constraints of the medium, being part of a polymedial semiotic composition (Gottlieb 1992, 1994) where a number of channels of communication are present (subdued speech of the original, voiceover, image, music and other sound effects).[5] These constraints would suggest that, compared with genres that are both mono- and isosemiotic (e.g. a press report), substitutive translation strategies are likely to be overrepresented with respect to rendering culture- and/or language-specific items such as references to institutions, myths or stereotypes. These strategies might include limited or absolute universalization as well as instances of cultural assimilation. An example of limited universalization would be the translation of *Super Bowl* as *mecz o mistrzostwo w footballu amerykañskim* (a game to win the championship in American football). If any conservation strategies are to be expected – what Sturge (1997) calls 'estranging' strategies, including the use of loan words, these would probably be limited to transference, with very brief intratextual glosses, as in *Wendy's, sieæ barów szybkiej obs³ugi* (*Wendy's*, a chain of fast-food restaurants) to translate *Wendy's*. It is true that voiceover, being a monosemiotic speech-for-speech mode, is not quite as constrained by temporal restrictions as subtitling. Nevertheless, these restrictions still apply and they naturally preclude the use of lengthy intratextual glosses. The norms of the medium further rule out the use of ancillary text, for example footnotes and glossaries.

With respect to language-specific (rather than strictly culture-specific) textual elements, for example the kind of humour that exploits polysemy and that is frequently used in situation comedies, one would expect extensive use of radical substitutive strategies which involve replacing the relevant stretch of source text with one that achieves the desired humourous effect in the target language, however semantically distant from the original, as long as the coherence of the whole text is preserved. We might also expect difficult culture- and language-specific items to be deleted, provided the deletion does not affect the overall coherence of the text and does not interfere with character portrayal, for instance.

But how do these expectations compare with what actually happens in the Polish context? The examples discussed below are drawn from approximately 90 hours of programming, consisting of 20 thirty-minute episodes of *Seinfeld*, *Mad About You*, *Married with Children*, *Drew Carey Show*, *Newsradio*, *Alf*, *Suddenly Susan* and *Fawlty Towers* and 10 one-hour episodes of *L.A. Law*. Only about one fourth of the corpus has been analyzed in detail for the purposes of the present study, with all series represented in equal proportions. The phenomena I am attempting to investigate are not dense enough for a long transcript of any single text in the corpus to offer a meaningful sample of strategies, and I will therefore quote short excerpts to exemplify the individual strategies discussed. Source texts and their respective translations are followed by back translations into English.[6] Visual and/

or sound material is transcribed where it seems relevant to understanding translation choices and formal restrictions on them.

Gottlieb (1992) mentions a strategy which is used when, for example, the combination of restrictions posed by various channels (especially the visual image) prevents the use of other solutions: this is the strategy of 'resignation', i.e. mere transference or literal translation, where the desired effect is not conveyed. This strategy is foreignizing in Venuti's terms and represents the opposite extreme of substitutive strategies which, as I argued above, one would expect to see overrepresented in a corpus of voiceover. Surprisingly, however, it does account for much of the data in my corpus, as the following examples will demonstrate.

**Sample 1A** (*Married with Children*)
Marcy: Have you, um, been here long?
Steve: Well, I have been here a little while. It takes some time to wash
 **Lincoln Towncar**.
Marcy: You're driving a **Towncar**?
Steve: Well, I live in **town**.

**Sample 1B** (*Œwiat wed³ug Bundych*)
Marcy: D³ugo tu jesteœ?
Steve: Jakiœ czas. Nie³atwo wypucowaæ **lincolna towncar**.
Marcy: Masz model **towncar**?
Steve: W koñcu mieszkam **w mieœcie.**
[Marcy: Are you/have you been here long?
Steve: Some time. It's not easy to thoroughly clean a lincoln towncar.
Marcy: You have a towncar model?
Steve: After all, I live in a town/city]

The use of a combination of loan words and literal translation in this example is motivated by the language-specific play on *towncar/town*, which is difficult to convey through domesticating procedures, at least if the name of this particular car make is to be retained. The various instances of *town* and *towncar* are therefore translated semantically (perhaps in the hope that a percentage of viewers will be familiar with the basic English word *town*) and the related cultural reference to *Lincoln Towncar* is merely repeated without a gloss. The foreignizing effect of these strategies is reduced to some extent, because the cotext/context make it relatively clear that the intended connotation is one of luxuriousness and high social status. Some Polish viewers may also be familiar with the car make in question. It should be stressed that none of the more domesticating options can be applied here without undermining the coherence of the episode or even the whole series: no cultural substitute (a make of a luxurious car which would be widely known to viewers and whose brand name could at the same time be exploited as a

source of wordplay) is available, and to limit the choice even further, the mention of *town* is not incidental. In earlier episodes, Steve, Marcy's ex-husband, is said to have moved to a cottage in the woods and become a forest ranger. In sum, contrary to what the choice of the procedure alone might suggest, the whole translated excerpt is not entirely opaque. But it is highly 'resistant' and, unlike the source text, requires much mental processing.

In Sample 2B, we see the same strongly foreignizing strategy of repetition applied to a culture-specific item in a situation where no situational constraints, possible disruption of overall coherence or restrictions posed by other channels appear to preclude the use of a more normalizing strategy.

**Sample 2A** (*Married with Children*)
Jeff: Marcy, I don't want to work in a car wash!
Marcy: Look, I'm getting tired of coming home after a hard day's work
    and hearing you say: 'Hey, guess who was **on Oprah** today!'

**Sample 2B**  (*Œwiat wed³ug Bundych*)
Jeff: Marcy, nie chcê pracowaæ w myjni!
Marcy: Mêczy mnie ju¿, kiedy przychodzê po ciê¿kiej pracy, a ty
    mówisz: "Zgadnij, kto wyst¹pi³ dziœ **u Opry**!"
[('World according-to Bundys')
Jeff: Marcy, I don't want to work in a car wash!
Marcy: It tires me already, when I come after hard work, and you say
    "Guess who appeared today **on Oprah's**!"]

The wording of the Polish version, especially the choice of *wyst¹pi³'* (meaning 'appeared', 'gave a public show/performance/lecture'] for '*was on Oprah*', offers the Polish viewer a vague clue to the meaning of *Opry* by suggesting that a TV show or a similar public event is perhaps being referred to. Nevertheless, the reference remains highly obscure. Alternative normalizing strategies are in principle available to the translator, for example the strategy of universalization as in *Zgadnij, co dziœ w po³udnie lecia³o w telewizji* (Guess what ran today at noon on television) and the more radically domesticating strategy of cultural assimilation as in *Zgadnij, co dziœ puœcili w Telewizji Edukacyjnej* (Guess what ran today on Educational Television). Both strategies would have neatly reproduced the primary function of the item, which is to convey an image of Jeff as a layabout who spends his mornings and afternoons hanging about the house and watching whatever is on TV while his wife goes out to earn a living.

Sample 3B illustrates a similar case of repetition without gloss.

**Sample 3A**  (*Married with Children*)
Jeff: So, what are you and Peggy doing for your anniversary?
Al: First I'm taking her to **Denny's** ... (laugh track) ... She'll stuff herself
    with shrimps and maybe shut up for a while ...

**Sample 3B** (*Œwiat wed³ug Bundych*)
Jeff: Co robicie z Peggy z okazji rocznicy?
Al: Najpierw zabiorê j¹ do **Denny**'ego ... (laugh track) ... Napcha siê
   krewetkami to mo¿e na chwilê siê zamknie ...
[Jeff: What are you doing with Peggy on the occasion of the anniversary?
Al: First I am taking her to **Denny** ... She will stuff herself with shrimps,
   so maybe she will shut up for a while ...]

The righthand cotext in the above example provides a basic clue to the na-
ture of the culture-specific item: the reference to 'shrimps' makes it clear
that *Denny's* is some sort of eating house. But the intended connotation is
lost: *Denny's* image in the US is one of a rather downmarket restaurant chain,
which means that this is not a normal or generous choice for an anniversary
treat. The original laugh track clearly indicates that humour is intended, and
this is bound to puzzle Polish viewers. Retaining the reference to shrimps
further weakens the intended 'downmarket' effect (in Poland shrimps are a
fairly exotic culinary novelty). Overall then, the translator's choices are highly
foreignizing, even though a strategy of smooth cultural assimilation could
have been employed, as in *Najpierw zabiorê j¹ do baru mlecznego. Napcha
siê kartoflami, to mo¿e siê zamknie...* (First I'll take her to a milk bar. She'll
stuff herself with potatoes, so maybe she'll shut up). Something along these
lines would have communicated the intended connotation succinctly, with-
out reinforcing the decidedly non-American context.
    The most extreme type of foreignization is illustrated in Sample 4B.

**Sample 4A** (*Suddenly Susan*)
Jack (an editor-in-chief of a magazine; to Susan, looking at a stack of
   papers on his desk): We have two new readers: **Ernest and Julio**
   (laugh track)
(Susan exits)

**Sample 4B**
Jack: Mamy dwóch nowych czytelników: **Ernest i Julio** (laugh track).
(A teraz Susan)
[Jack: We have two new readers: **Ernest and Julio**.
('And now Susan')]

The source-text fragment represents a slightly offbeat and absurd type of
humour. American viewers are familiar with *Ernest & Julio* as a popular
Californian wine brand and would therefore know that these are not likely to
be real names of real readers. The procedure used in the translation is again
repetition without gloss, but no cotextual or contextual clues in this instance
are available to help the Polish viewer interpret this passage. As in sample
3B, the laugh track mystifies viewers by signalling that humour was intended.

In sample 5B we see an attempt to use a naturalizing strategy to deal with a narrowly linguistic, rather than cultural, translation problem, namely wordplay based on homophony. A comparable homophonous pair is used in the target text, but the resulting humour is strained, and the passage consequently has a resistant, rough quality, essentially similar to the effect of the foreignizing translations we saw used in samples 1B to 3B.

**Sample 5A**  (*Fawlty Towers*)
Guest (exasperated): Excuse me! There's sugar in the saltcellar.
Basil: Anything else?
Guest: I put it all over the **plaice**!
Basil: All over the **place**?! What were you doing with it?!
Guest (pointing to the fish): All over the **plaice**!

**Sample 5B**  (*Hotel Zacisze*)
Goœæ: Przepraszam. W solniczce jest cukier!
Basil: Coœ jeszcze?
Goœæ: Pos³odzi³am **halibuta**!
Basil: **Buta Hali**?! Po co?!
Goœæ: **Halibuta**!
[('Hotel Seclusion/Tranquility')
Guest: Excuse me. There is sugar in the saltcellar!
Basil: Anything else?
Guest: I sweetened the **halibut**! (*halibuta*, the accusative form, is
    homophonous with *Hali buta* 'Hala's shoe')
Basil: **Hala's shoe**? What for?
Guest: The **Halibut**!]

The same procedure is applied in Sample 6B, but this time much more smoothly; apart from finding a Polish minimal pair which is perfectly natural in Polish (*modliæ–mydliæ*), the translator manipulates the semantics and syntax of  David's line to make the 'mishearing' even more plausible. It is worth noting that samples 6B and 4B (and in fact all the *Suddenly Susan* episodes) have been translated by the same person.

**Sample 6A**  (*Suddenly Susan*)
Luis: ... Speaking of behinds, I'd **watch** yours.
David: You said '**wash**'? (laugh track)
Luis: Don't be disgusting, '**watch**'. (laugh track)

**Sample 6B**  (*A teraz Susan*)
Luis: Ty te¿ zacznij **modliæ** siê o swoj¹.
David: Mam siê **mydliæ**? (laugh track)
Luis: Nie b¹dŸ obrzydliwy, powiedzia³em '**modliæ**' (laugh track)

[Luis: You too start to **pray** for yours.
David: I am to **soap** myself?
Luis: Don't be disgusting, I said '**pray**']

Crucially, the thoroughly foreignizing procedure of repetition (transference), exemplified in Samples 1B to 4B, represents by far the largest percentage of strategies used for rendering culture specific items. Almost 47% of culture specific items which appear in contexts that would easily allow the use of more domesticating strategies (as in Samples 1B and 2B) were rendered in this foreignizing manner. This figure rises to almost 69% when all culture specific items are taken into account, regardless of contextual and formal restrictions that limit the translator's range of options. Within this 69%, 30% of the total set of examples recorded consist of completely obscure repetitions with no explanatory glosses or contextual clues (as in Sample 4B), 32% consist of repetitions supported only by vague and/or incomplete cotextual/contextual clues (Samples 1B, 2B and 3B), and 7% are repetitions without glosses where the cotext and context clarify the nature of the item in a way judged satisfactory for the purpose.

As far as the remaining procedures are concerned, repetitions supplemented by brief glosses (as in *napój Dr. Pepper* – 'the drink Dr. Pepper') constitute a marginal category: less than 2% of the total set. Through-translation, that is literal translation, represents 4% of the strategies recorded in the corpus. Universalizing procedures applied to culture-specific items account for about 10% of all strategies. About 4% of culture specific items have been deleted, almost all of marginal status and about half are compensated for by the cotext or context. The strategy of cultural assimilation is applied to a small but significant percentage of culture specific items (about 11%). Instances of cultural assimilation are distributed evenly in the work of all the translators represented in this corpus. This suggests that the strategy is not unfamiliar to the translators, who nevertheless decided against using it in the majority of cases.

The figures quoted above do not take into consideration examples such as 5A and 6A, where the difficulties involved are strictly speaking language-rather than culture-specific. Here, the tendencies are almost completely reversed. In 79% of the cases recorded in this corpus a naturalizing solution was sought (as in samples 5B and 6B), and 65% of all such instances can be described as entirely smooth translations (as in Sample 6B). The remaining 21% covers foreignized, opaque renditions; for most of these no feasible naturalizing alternative is available in the relevant context (as in Sample 1B).

### 3.2 Press translation

Turning now to the corpus of news articles, we find a broadly similar picture as far as the degree of foreignization is concerned. The corpus consists

of about 800 articles published from 1994 onwards, mainly in the *Forum* magazine and featuring translations mostly from American and British sources, but also from the German, French, Italian and (occasionally) Russian press. The findings presented in this article are based on the analysis of about 30 per cent of the entire corpus.

Like other English-Polish press translations included in the corpus, the target texts quoted below are typically only slightly foreignizing in their textual makeup. Typical foreignizing features on that level include word order occasionally being influenced by English, often resulting in a less readily recoverable sentence focus. The translations consequently tend to be less 'fluent', especially given that Polish can and does manipulate word order much more frequently and radically than English to signal varying theme-rheme alignments. Some syntagmatic choices also decidedly strike the reader as 'foreign', for instance *podniesienie kosztu przestêpstw* (raising the cost of ... crimes) in Sample 7B below.

However, foreignizing strategies (for instance repetition of the source item with no gloss, or literal translation with no gloss) dominate again in translating culture specific items, even though press translation is not subject to the same material restrictions that I described above in relation to voiceover. One would further expect translators of analytical, reflective quality-press articles to favour strategies such as transference with gloss or through-translation with gloss given the idealized profile of the relevant audience as educated readers with a fair interest in international matters, the norms of the parallel Polish genre, and the overall purpose of the texts, which is to provide an informative and fairly detailed account of some aspect of a foreign culture.

The dominant strategy of foreignization is clearly demonstrated in Sample 7B. Here, the references to both 'Founding Fathers' and James Madison, literally translated with no gloss, are likely to be rather obscure, though the cotext does offer some helpful clues in both cases. The familiar American principle of 'three strikes and you're out', again through-translated with no gloss, is highly opaque and seemingly unmotivated in the context of crime fighting; hence, the bill's name in Polish is anything but 'catchy'. As before, the cotext provides some help, but the reference remains opaque for target readers right until the end of the paragraph, where the association with baseball is spelled out. Overall then, the passage is interpretable but 'resistant', and again it requires more mental processing than the source text.

**Sample 7A**  ('Hyperdemocracy', *Time*, 23 January 1995)
"Electronic town halls" featuring push-button voting have always faced one major theoretical handicap: the long shadow of America's **Founding Fathers**. The Founders explicitly took lawmaking power out of the people's hands, opting for a representative democracy and not direct democracy. What concerned them, especially **James Madison**, was the specter of popular "pas-

sions" unleashed. Their ideal was cool deliberation by elected representatives, buffered from the often shifting winds of opinion – inside-the-Beltway deliberation ....

Madison would not have enjoyed watching how the "**three strikes and you're out**" provision wound up in last year's crime bill .... While liberals deemed it draconian, many conservatives found it a dubious exertion of federal power, as well as a sloppy form of draconianism. The law does nothing to raise the cost of the first two strikes, and meanwhile spends precious money imprisoning men past middle age, after most of them have been pacified by ebbing testosterone, free of charge. Of course, on the positive side**, the law does have a catchy title** (How would the crime bill read if baseball allowed each batter five strikes?)

**Sample 7B** ('Cyberdemokracja', *Forum*, February 1995)
"Ratusz elektroniczny" – g³osowanie (wszystkich obywateli) za pomoc¹ naciœniêcia guzika - zawsze trafia³ na istotn¹ przeszkodê w postaci d³ugiego cienia **Ojców Za³o¿ycieli**. Odebrali oni *explicite* w³adzê ustawodawcz¹ ludowi, opowiadaj¹c siê za demokracj¹ przedstawicielsk¹, a nie za demokracj¹ bezpoœredni¹. Niepokoi³o ich – **zw³aszcza Jamesa Madisona** – widmo rozpêtania namiêtnoœci ludu. Ich idea³em by³o rozwa¿enie na ch³odno problemów przez wybranych przedstawicieli, chronionych os³on¹ przed zmiennymi wiatrami opinii publicznej - rozwa¿anie spraw wewn¹trz Obwodnicy (...)

Madisonowi nie sprawia³oby przyjemnoœci obserwowanie, jak do zesz³orocznej ustawy o przestêpczoœci trafi³a klauzula **"trzy uderzenia i jesteœ wyeliminowany"** (...) Libera³owie uznali tê koncepcjê za drakoñsk¹, wielu zaœ konserwatystów dosz³o do wniosku, ¿e jest to, w¹tpliwy z punktu widzenia przestrzegania konstytucji, przejaw w³adzy urzêdów federalnych, a jednoczeœnie, ¿e drakoñski charakter ustawy znalaz³ doœæ niechlujn¹ formê. Ustawa ta w niczym nie przyczyni³a siê do podniesienia kosztu dwóch pierwszych przestêpstw, za to przeznacza pieni¹dze, którym tak jest brak, na trzymanie w wiêzieniu ludzi, którzy przeszli ju¿ przez wiek œredni i zostali bezp³atnie spacyfikowanie obni¿aniem siê testosteronu. Oczywiœcie, do pozytywnych cech tej ustawy nale¿y zaliczyæ jej **atrakcyjn¹ nazwê** (jak wygl¹da³aby sprawa projektu tej ustawy, gdyby w baseballu mo¿na by³o uderzaæ nie trzy, lecz piêæ razy?)

The translator's first intervention in Sample 8B (*downtown jury →rada przysiêgtych wyselekcjonowana z dzielnic niebiatych*/'selected from non-white districts/neighbourhoods') is considered an instance of universalization in the current scheme of analysis. The part of the meaning of *downtown* that is seen as crucial in this particular case (poorer and predominantly black), and to which only members of the source culture have direct access, is made explicit in descriptive, more culturally neutral terms. Had the core meaning

of *downtown* been reproduced as well (as in *przysiêgli pochodz¹cy z czarnego, biedniejszego centrum Los Angeles*/'jurors coming from/living in the black, poorer centre of L.A.'), the item would have been categorized as through-translation with intratextual (covert) gloss, a procedure which is a notch higher on the scale of conservation.

In the same sample (8B) we see an instance of transference with an extratextual gloss, where the translator's intervention is overt.

**Sample 8A** ('Playing the Race Card', *Newsweek*, 20 February 1995)
For his part, lead defense lawyer Johnnie Cochran told Newsweek lat week that, in style anyway, the defense made some adjustments to appeal to the **downtown** jury. "If [we] were trying this case in **Santa Monica**, [our] approach would probably be a lot different", he said.

**Sample 8B**  ('Proces stulecia', *Forum*, 26 February 1995)
Z kolei g³ówny adwokat O.J.Simpsona Johnnie Cochran powiedzia³ naszemu pismu w ubieg³ym tygodniu, ¿e – przynajmniej pod wzglêdem stylu – obrona dokona³a pewnych korekt (swej taktyki), aby pomóc odpowiednio oddzia³ywaæ na radê przysiêg³ych, **wyselekcjonowan¹ z dzielnic niebia³ych.** Gdyby proces odbywa³ siê w **Santa Monica**, nasze podejœcie by³oby zupe³nie inne'' – powiedzia³.   **(bogatej miejscowoœci bia³ych – przyp. FORUM)**

*Santa Monica* is glossed in a footnote as *bogatej miejscowoœci bia³ych* ('a rich town of whites'). Explication of this sort and a similar strategy of through-translation with gloss are treated as conservation or foreignizing procedures, as they retain the original item in one form or another while explicitly attempting to make it intelligible. However, both are clearly less foreignizing than mere transference or through-translation without glosses of any kind. Also, both represent the type of conventional foreignism that normalizing approaches would see as justified in a quality press feature.

The two types of explication (transference+gloss and through-translation +gloss) are under-represented in the press corpus. For about 53% of culture specific items, a strategy of transference is used on its own. Close to half (22% of the total set) can be categorized as cases where the cotext offers indirect or incomplete clues (as in the reference to James Madison in Sample 7B); in about one tenth of these (5% of the total set) the cotext seems to provide satisfactory clues (as in the  reference to 'three strikes and you're out' in Sample 7B). The remainder (26% of the total set) represents 'hardcore' foreignizing strategies which consist of opaque transference.

Through- translation, or literal translation, is used to render 14% of  all culture specific items in the corpus; in 26% of these (3.6% of the total set), no clues are available in the cotext or in the wording of the literal translation itself to help the reader make sense of the reference, and the rendition is consequently highly foreignized. This means that roughly 29.6% (26%+3.6%)

of all culture specific references are highly opaque for the Polish reader and cannot be interpreted unless the reader happens to be familiar with the source culture. Only in about 18% of all cases is some type of explication (through-translation+gloss or transference+gloss) applied. Roughly 13% of the strategies used can be subsumed under universalizing procedures (e.g. *the IRS → urz¹d podatkowy*, 'tax office'); the rest are (a) isolated instances of cultural and/or linguistic assimilation, limited almost exclusively to the translation of article headlines which exploit wordplay or intertextual associations, (b) omissions, or (c) a few cases of established equivalents (as in *jury → ³awa przysiêg³ych*, 'bench of sworn-ins') typically used for concepts that are recognizable as foreign and exotic but are nevertheless familiar.

The statistical data cited above is admittedly still fairly crude, since the statistics do not yet account for intratextual factors such as the textual centrality and recurrence of a culture specific item: a high degree of textual centrality and/or recurrence might motivate the translator to use strategies of conservation, or foreignization (cf. Aixelà 1996:70). Neither do these statistics account fully for the nature of culture specific items as a factor in themselves: the pressure exerted by preexisting translations, the linguistic transparency of the item, the degree of cultural obscurity, etc. (ibid). As the project develops, the statistics will be refined to take account of such issues. However, the findings presented so far do suggest that the heavy presence of foreignizing strategies is not attributable for the most part to such intratextual and item-specific parameters, but can rather be explained primarily as a function of cultural asymmetry as an overriding contextual factor.

Press translations from English into Polish, apart from being saturated with foreignisms, display one more remarkable and significant feature. Close to 12% of target texts published in Poland are translations of British and American articles written *about* Poland for the Anglo-American readership; in these articles Polish culture is interpreted and filtered through the Anglo-American system of concepts and values. Samples 9A-B and 10A-B illustrate this category of translations. The Polish versions are very close translations.

**Sample 9A** ('Against the Grain'; *The Economist*, 16 April 1994)
A visitor to hell beholds large vats in which the souls of the damned are boiling. A guard stands by each of them to prevent the lost souls from escaping their torment. The visitor notices that one cauldron is unguarded. Asked why, his satanic host replies, "Oh, that one's for the Poles. Every time one tries to escape, the others pull him back in."

This sardonic joke is so well known to Poles that they sometimes call their country's condition **"Polish hell"**. Poland's two-century history of partition and domination by the empires of Germany, Austria and (most persistently) Russia has helped to foster the notion that **advancement is akin to treachery** ....

Why, then, are Poles so glum? Blame, partly, their **traditional reluctance to admit good fortune** lest it inspire envy, alert the authorities or tempt malign spirits. Blame also the revolution that is reconfiguring their entire society with the uncomprehending efficiency of a child let loose on a stamp collection ....

The danger is not that Poland might revert to communism; it is that the new machinery of free markets could rust, leaving Poles poorer and less free than they should be. The choice looks an easy one, but democracy and capitalism demand new kinds of sacrifice from **a country with a history of sacrifice**. It is as if Pontius Pilate had pardoned **this "Christ of Nations"**, removed Him from the cross and obliged Him to return to carpentry. Poland may make the adjustment, but it will go against the grain.

**Sample 9B**   ('Wbrew polskiej naturze', *Forum*, 1 May 1994)
Zwiedzaj¹cy piek³o przygl¹da siê ogromnym kot³om, w którym sma¿¹ siê dusze grzeszników. Przy ka¿dym kotle stoi stra¿nik. Zwiedzaj¹cy zauwa¿a jednak, ¿e jednego kot³a nie pilnuje nikt. Zapytany dlaczego, diabe³-przewodnik odpowiada: "O, to jest kocio³ Polaków. Ilekroæ któryœ z nich chce siê z niego wydostaæ reszta wci¹ga go z powrotem.

Ten sardoniczny dowcip jest Polakom tak dobrze znany, ¿e czasami nazywaj¹ oni kondycjê swojego kraju "polskim piek³em". Trwaj¹ca dwa wieki epoka rozbiorów i zdominowania Polski przez cesarstwa Niemiec, Austrii i (szczególnie uporczywie) Rosji doprowadzi³a do ukszta³towania pogl¹du, ¿e **awans jest krewniakiem zdrady** ....

Czemu¿ wiêc Polacy s¹ tacy posêpni? Winê ponosi w jakiejœ mierze ich tradycyjna **niechêæ do przyznawania, ¿e im siê dobrze powodzi**, bo a nu¿ wzbudzi to zazdroœæ, albo zwróci uwagê w³adz, albo wreszcie bêdzie stanowiæ pokusê dzia³ania z³oœliwych duchów. Winê ponosi tak¿e rewolucja, która zmienia ca³¹ strukturê spo³eczn¹ z bezmyœln¹ sprawnoœci¹ dziecka, któremu pozwolono bawiæ siê cenn¹ kolekcj¹ znaczków pocztowych ....

Niebezpieczeñstwo polega nie na tym, ¿e Polska mog³aby powróciæ do komunizmu, lecz na tym, ¿e nowa maszyneria wolnego rynku mog³aby zardzewieæ, przez co Polacy staliby siê biedniejsi i mniej wolni, ni¿ powinni. Wybór zdaje siê ³atwy, ale demokracja i kapitalizm wymagaj¹ nowego typu ofiar **od kraju, który ma ju¿ za sob¹ d³ug¹ historiê wyrzeczeñ**. To tak, jakby Pi³at u³askawi³ **tego "Chrystusa Narodów"**, zdj¹³ Go z krzy¿a i zobowi¹za³ Go do powrotu do ciesielki. Polska byæ mo¿e dostosuje siê do nowych regu³, ale bêdzie to wbrew jej naturze.

Sample 9A is a text which explicitly addresses the 'correlative attributes' of Polish cultural identity (Boski 1992): the myths, beliefs and autostereotypes of prototypical Poles, some of them in common currency in Poland (*the Christ of Nations, a country with a history of sacrifice, Polish hell*), some deeply felt but largely unspoken (*advancement is akin to treachery, the traditional*

*[Polish] reluctance to admit good fortune*). If we adopt Boski's hypothesis that such correlative attributes, normally functioning as hidden norms, are often made explicit in a situation of abrupt sociocultural change, it is striking and significant that the primary role that translations like 9B have is performing that sort of explicitation from the Anglo-American perspective, typically from an evaluative stance informed by the ideology of Western democratic capitalism. The fact that a substantial number of such translations is produced, published and read seems to testify not only to some eagerness to define 'Polishness' at a time of abrupt change, but – more critically – a keen interest in seeing 'how the West sees us', especially as regards compliance with the dominant norms and values of democratic capitalism.

**Sample 10A**  ('Who will run Poland?', *The Economist*, 27 September 1997) The election results, though not the tricky business of coalition-building, are as clear as anyone could have wished. Solidarity Election Action (AWS) – an alliance of three dozen parties around Solidarity, the trade union that toppled communism less than a decade ago – defied opinion-poll forecasts to win first place with about a third of the vote. The ruling Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), a party of (mostly reformed) ex-communists, actually boosted its vote from 1993's parliamentary election but lost because support for its coalition partner, the Peasants' Party, collapsed and because most of the right united under Solidarity's banner. Last time, in 1993, the right destroyed its chance by splintering into a plethora of parties too small to win seats in parliament ....

AWS's only serious option looks like a coalition with the Freedom Union, a middle-of-the-road, secular-minded party that keenly favours the free market. A chance, then, for Poland to speed up, not just consolidate, the reforms that have already given it Europe's fastest growing ex-communist economy?

**Sample 10B**  ('Echa polskie: D³ugie manewry', *Forum*, 12 October 1997) Wyniki wyborów – acz nie zawi³y proces budowania obecnie koalicji – nie mog¹ byæ klarowniejsze. Akcja Wyborcza Solidarnoœæ (AWS) – przymierze oko³o 30 partii skupionych wokó³ "Solidarnoœci", zwi¹zku zawodowego, który przed niespe³na dziesiêcioleciem obali³ komunizm – zada³a k³am prognozom wyborczym oœrodków badania opinii publicznej, zdobywaj¹c pierwsze miejsce z jedn¹ trzeci¹ g³osów w rêku. Rz¹dz¹cy Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej – partia by³ych komunistów (w wiêkszoœci zreformowanych) – w rzeczywistoœci zdoby³ wiêcej g³osów ni¿ w wyborach parlamentarnych 1993 r., ale przegra³, poniewa¿ poparcie dla elektoratu dla PSL – jego koalicyjnego partnera – siê za³ama³o i poniewa¿ wiêkszoœæ prawicy zjednoczy³a siê pod sztandarem "Solidarnoœci". Poprzednio – w 1993 r.- prawica zruinowa³a swoje szanse poprzez rozproszenie siê na ogromn¹ liczbê stronnictw, zbyt ma³ych, by zdobyæ miejsca w parlamencie ....

Na jedyny powa¿ny wariant wygl¹da utworzenie koalicji z Uni¹ Wolnoœci (parti¹ œrodka i nastawion¹ œwiecko), która gor¹co opowiada siê za wolnym rynkiem. Czy Polska ma wiêc szansê przyspieszenia, a nie tylko utrwalania reform, które ju¿ zd¹¿y³y daæ krajowi najszybciej rosn¹c¹ gospodarkê pokomunistyczn¹ w Europie?

Sample 10B additionally demonstrates the kind of redundancy and reduced informativity that could rightly baffle the researcher were the context of cultural asymmetry not taken into account. Almost all of the text has such low informative value for the average educated Polish reader that the whole translation seems devoid of purpose and relevance, as typically viewed by the functionalist school, and thus completely anomalous. But the target text – as all other translations of this kind – does appear to have a justifiable purpose, which is to allow readers to see Polish culture as it is seen through Western, notably Anglo-American, eyes. Moreover, the informative value of some items lies in the fact that they offer an interpretation of elements of Polish culture, from the ideological and evaluative position explained above, often in novel terms or stating explicitly perceptions and judgements that are only vaguely and implicitly present in Polish collective consciousness. For example, "the Freedom Union, a middle-of-the-road, secular-minded party that keenly favours the free market" is translated closely as "Uni¹ Wolnoœci (parti¹ œrodka i nastawion¹ œwiecko), która gor¹co opowiada siê za wolnym rynkiem".

Finally, it should be noted that cultural asymmetry stimulated by rapid sociocultural change, and the concomitant influx of Anglo-American concepts into Polish culture, introduce one more significant parameter that influences translation, namely the rapidly growing familiarity of Polish readers with Anglo-American culture (cf. esp. Aixelà 1996:55). As a result of this process, English-Polish translations which make extensive use of highly foreignizing strategies often become in a sense 'deforeignized' as the relevant items get absorbed into the importing culture, and thus older highly foreignizing translations become less opaque with time. Steven Spielberg's film *Back to the Future* contained a reference to *Calvin Klein* which was central to the overall coherence and humorous effect of the scene (Marty's mother back in the 1950s kept calling him Calvin because this was the name that he had on his underwear). In the Polish voiceover, produced in the late 1980s, the name was merely transcribed (repeated verbally), resulting in a very opaque rendition; in the 1997 rerun, the joke is likely to be fully recoverable for most Polish viewers. The rapid pace of absorption of Anglo-American concepts is likely to cause insecurity among translators and encourage transference or literal translation without glosses because the glosses might become glaringly redundant within a short period of time. This is particularly true of translations that are likely to stay in circulation for a long

time, for example voiceovers or subtitles in feature films, rather than press translations which are normally of a more transient nature.

## 4. Conclusion

This study has focused on exploring the strategy of foreignization where the direction of translation is from a dominant into a dominated culture and where the dominated culture is in a state of flux and is being 'absorbed' into the dominant, in this case Anglo-American, way of life. Radical foreignization, a general strategy that is clearly favoured in translation into Polish, appears in this context to sustain rather than resist the  process of domination; it follows that conscious adoption of relatively more domesticating strategies could serve as a means of resistance, a 'strategic intervention' against cultural domination.

The situation under study is further characterized by a number of complex phenomena. For example, apart from a heavy predominance of foreignizing strategies, such as transference of culturally and/or linguistically opaque items with no explanatory glosses, there is the fact that originally opaque Anglo-American items are rapidly absorbed and consequently 'deforeignized'. Moreover, translations of source texts which offer an Anglo-American interpretation of Polish culture seem to feature significantly in the press.[7] The primary function of such translations appears to be to recreate in Polish the way the dominant Anglo-American culture views the weaker culture; the translations often contain radical shifts of informativity and redundancy.

Apart from refining the empirical apparatus outlined above, future research into these issues might look into extending the analysis to other genres, both mono- and polysemiotic, performing a diachronic analysis of relevant translation phenomena to see if and how the tendencies observed evolve in time, comparing the translation corpus with the corpus of respective parallel texts to see to what extent the status of the TL text as a translation is a factor affecting the procedures used, and comparing the Central European situation with that of other, more stable, cultures that are also subject to Anglo-American cultural domination, for example Western European nations.

PIOTR KWIECIÑSKI
*Uniwersytet Adama Mickiewicza, Instytut Filologii Angielskiej, Zak³ad Badañ nad Przek³adem, Al. Niepodleg³oœci 4, 61-874 Poznañ, Poland.*
*pkwiecin@amu.edu.pl*

### Notes

1.    Kashubians, Muslim Tatars and Lemks should perhaps be singled out as endangered ethnic cultures that are entirely enclosed by the dominating Polish culture and have little or no institutional representation. Other

minorities occupy borderland areas and typically maintain cultural ties with neighbouring nation states; they include German, Belorussian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian minorities. Toury (1985:7) observes that the existence of a community where the minority language/culture in question in fact constitutes a majority enhances the prestige of the language/culture and increases the discursive repertory on which its members can draw.

2. Kornai lists seven main signals of change in postcommunist countries: an emerging market economy (to replace the command economy); the growth of the private sector and of the middle class; a reproduction of non-equilibrium in the macroeconomic dimension; the emergence of a constitutional, lawful state; the growth of democratic institutions; a new definition of the national community; growing discrepancies in the division of wealth.

3. Drawing on prototype semantics, Boski distinguishes criterial attributes of cultural identity (constituting necessary and sufficient conditions for membership) and correlative attributes, which are not defining features but are nevertheless perceived within the cultural group itself as frequently occuring and thus characteristic of prototypical members.

4. The attention I devote to voiceover, which seems rather marginal outside the former Eastern bloc, is due to its dominance as a translation technique on Polish television and in home videos. Dubbing is virtually absent, with the exception of some cartoons for children and (very rarely indeed) televised drama classics; subtitling is the only method used in cinema.

   The data analyzed in this article forms the basis of my PhD thesis, currently being undertaken at the Department of Translation Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan. My English-Polish corpus of translated press articles, tourist materials, educational materials, situation comedies, documentaries and feature films is still relatively small, but I hope to continue to enlarge it in future and to include both new genres and respective parallel texts.

5. Interestingly, voiceover occupies an in-between position between dubbing and subtitling in terms of the naturalness of translation with respect to channel use. Unlike subtitling, which is 'diasemiotic' or additive, introducing a new (written) channel, voiceover, like dubbing, is 'isosemiotic', using the same (speech) channel as the original (Gottlieb 1994). But unlike dubbing, voiceover coexists with the original within the same channel. This relatively more domesticating or normalizing function of voiceover compared with subtitling does not, however, seem to be related in any significant and convincing way to cultural asymmetry, but rather to situation-specific norms and traditions (as already mentioned, subtitling is virtually the only technique used in Polish cinema).

6. To avoid unreadability and given the specific purpose of the back translations, I have decided against a very close linguistic transcription.

7. This is not restricted to press translation; a fair number of British and American books about Polish history, society and politics have been translated into Polish in recent years.

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