

PAULINA BIAŁY  
University of Silesia

## CULTURAL ADAPTATION IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE INTO POLISH: THE CASE OF *MARY POPPINS*

This paper considers two Polish translations of Pamela Travers' *Mary Poppins*. I shall analyse the translation procedures applied by the translator Irena Tuwim to render culturally marked words and expressions, the difficulties she encountered during her work, and modifications that occur in the target text. Besides, there are also some discrepancies in two Polish editions which I shall compare.

### 1. Introduction

In every translation particular information is either lost, or added, or deformed. A translation seems to be the most direct form of commentary and a kind of interpretation. Perfect translation is impossible because translators involuntarily bring to the translation their cultural heritage, reading experience and images, and they have different backgrounds and frames of reference. The only thing they can do is to provide that the target text is as close to the source text as possible and that the message, the atmosphere and the symbolism is retained in the target text. According to Newmark (1988: 24), a translator has to ensure that his translation reads naturally as 'naturalness' is "a touchstone at every level of a text, from paragraph to word, from title to punctuation" (1988: 20).

The most crucial issue that concerns the translator of children's literature is the inevitable limitation on the young reader's world knowledge. According to Lathey (2006: 7), we cannot expect young readers to have acquired the understanding of other cultures, languages and geographies in such a broad way as adults do. Translators are permanently faced with the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects present in a source text (they may range from lexical content and syntax to ideologies and ways of life in a given culture) and find the most appropriate method of successfully conveying these matters in the target text.

Culture-bound elements not only place the story of a book in a specific culture and period of time, but also imply certain values and create an ambience. These elements also have an effect on how the reader identifies with the story and characters. Therefore, they play a crucial role in the original work and it is very important to translate them skillfully so that they would not lose their significance in the target text.

As a good example, I shall underline the huge problem of translating names of food products from one culture into another. As “food is for many the most sensitive and important expression of national culture, food terms are subject to the widest variety of translation procedures” (Newmark 1988: 97). The terms coming under this category are further complicated due to the ‘foreign’ elements present. Also, it is very difficult to render the full meaning of a given word. A translator often has to describe the whole idea because it is impossible to find a one-word equivalent. How to translate the English word ‘pudding’ into Polish without a long explanation of what it looks like and how it tastes? As it is not present in Polish culture, children would have problems with understanding this particular idea. Moreover, terms connected with food and kitchen have one important role. According to Carpenter (1985: 163), they are the symbols of security in children’s literature as kitchen is usually presented to be a safe, warm and cosy place where nothing wrong can happen and where only delicious things are prepared. Since footnotes are not a satisfactory solution to this problem, the translator uses other techniques.

This work considers Polish translation of Pamela Travers’ *Mary Poppins*, a great children’s classic. I assume that there are many significant inconsistencies in the translation of culture-bound elements that merit attention. I shall concentrate on that aspect and analyse the translation procedures, and also the function, meaning and purpose of culture-bound elements in children’s literature at large. I will also try to compare two Polish versions of the translation, as I suppose that there are also some substantial differences between them.

## 2. Essential data concerning the texts under analysis

Before analysing the translation procedures, I shall present basic information about the source text – *Mary Poppins*. Like Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* or A.A. Milne’s *Winnie-the-Pooh*, Pamela Travers’ *Mary Poppins* is one of the children’s classics that are said to have defined the course of children’s literature. This is a quintessentially English book that is set in a specific historical and social era. First published in 1934, it clearly reflects the British reality of that time, not only because of the text itself, but also due to original illustrations by Mary Shepard. Her father, E.H. Shepard, illustrated *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The Wind in the Willows*. She collaborated with Pamela Travers for over fifty years.

The author of the book, Pamela Lyndon Travers, was born in Australia in 1899. She left for England in 1924. There she wrote *Mary Poppins*, which

occurred to be a great success. Later on, she published seven more books about the mystical and magical nanny and other novels, which were not related to that series. *Mary Poppins*' adventures have been adapted many times, including the 1964 film starring Julie Andrews. In 1977 Travers was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. She died in 1996, at the age of 96.

*Mary Poppins*, the first book of the whole series, tells the story of a mysterious, vain and acerbic English nanny, Mary Poppins. She is blown by the East Wind to Number Seventeen, Cherry Tree Lane in London, which is the Banks' household, to care for their children. The Banks family consists of Mr. Banks, his wife Mrs. Banks and their children Jane, Michael and baby twins John and Barbara. Each chapter of the book describes one particular adventure or story.

As far as the translation of *Mary Poppins* is concerned, I have chosen two versions of it to present differences and similarities between them. The differences basically arise from the period of time when the books were published.

The original book *Mary Poppins* was translated from English into Polish four years after its publication, in 1938, by Irena Tuwim, a sister of a famous Polish poet Julian Tuwim. She also translated *Winnie-the-Pooh* and many other stories for children. The early Polish editions of that book were entitled *Agnieszka*, but later, at the author's request, the original name was given back to the main character.

In my work I use the newest English edition published by HarperCollins in 2008 and two Polish translations. The first one, translated by Irena Tuwim and entitled *Agnieszka*, was illustrated by Polish illustrator Maria Orłowska and published in 1957. The second one, published in 2008, is entitled *Mary Poppins* and contains original illustrations by Mary Shepard. It is also Irena Tuwim's translation but it includes some changes and modifications made by the Julian Tuwim and Irena Tuwim Foundation, which was established by Julian Tuwim's daughter Ewa Tuwim-Woźniak and holds the copyright of their whole literary output.

### 3. A lexical and syntactic analysis of the target texts

According to Adamczyk-Garbowska (1988: 30ff), translation, as every artistic text, functions on many levels. We may distinguish:

- Level denoted by lexis and syntax,
- Level denoted by stylistics,
- Level denoted by sociology and literature.

On the basis of those levels, the requirements of ideal translation may be defined as following:

- the translation should be equivalent to the original when it comes to all levels,
- the translation should constitute an integral whole (Adamczyk-Garbowska 1988: 36).

Particular levels may be distinguished on the basis of the scope of issues they deal with (Adamczyk-Garbowska 1988: 31ff):

- Level denoted by lexis and syntax – deals mainly with such issues like understanding of the original text, faithfulness of translation, omissions, additions and other changes, methods of translating idioms, neologisms, puns, linguistic deformations, cultural and technical vocabulary as well as with the most frequent translation errors.
- Level denoted by stylistics – covers types and ways of using the stylistic means and literary styles (which deal with problems such as the occurrence of dialects, slangs, archaic expressions, poems, etc.) in the original as well as in the translation.
- Level denoted by sociology and literature – deals with such issues like the analysis of the influence of the target language literature on translation, comparison of various translations of one work, reactions of readers and critics towards translation, method of translation chosen by the translator (whether it is domestication or foreignization) as well as the addressee of the original in comparison with the one of the translation, illustrations in both the original and the translation.

Following Adamczyk-Garbowska, I will try to analyse particular aspects of translation, adopting her point of view.

### 3.1. Difficulties, modifications and errors in translations

At the beginning it must be stated that both translations of *Mary Poppins* are rendered very faithfully, with some exceptions only. The translator, Irena Tuwim did not find it difficult to understand the source text. Indeed, apart from some vocabulary, the text itself does not pose a serious problem for a skilled reader. In general, the language is quite simple and the grammar is not very complicated. Still, we can observe some difficulties, modifications and errors in translation. They may result from an insufficient command of English or just from conscious choice. Most often, the problem concerns the translation of specific English humour, as well as vocabulary, phraseology, syntax, some puns, idioms and sayings.

I shall present some chosen translation errors that occur in the version from 1957<sup>1</sup>.

The sentence:

(1) *What on earth is happening?* (En 161)

is translated as:

(1b) *Co się wyprawia na tym świecie!* (Pla 166)<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of clarity, I shall mark examples taken from the original version as “En” (followed by the number of page), examples taken from the version translated in 1957 as “Pla”, and examples taken from the version translated in 2008 as “Plb”.

<sup>2</sup> Suggested translation: *Co się tu u licha dzieje!*

Or another one:

(2) *I take the chance.* (En 106)

And the translated version:

(2b) *To już jak los zdarzy.* (Pla 105)<sup>3</sup>

As far as English humour is concerned, we come across a sentence:

(3) *Don't believe we're going to get any summer at all – not that we ever did, of course.* (En 101)

which is rendered as follows:

(3b) *Nie wierzę, żebyśmy w tym roku mieli jeszcze lato. To nie to, co dawniej.* (Pla 100)<sup>4</sup>.

When it comes to vocabulary, the translator sometimes had some difficulties in rendering the proper meaning of lexical items which refer to English culture. In some situations she completely changes a given word: *Match Man* (En 26) – *sprzedawca papierosów* (Pla 18), *shilling* (En 15) – *napiwek* (Pla 7), *Nanny* (En 16) – *wychowawczyni* (Pla 7), *sponge cakes and doughnuts* (En 139) – *kruche ciasteczka* (Pla 140). However, there occurred some situations in which the translator employs a borrowing: *aeroplanes* (En 152) – *samoloty* (Pla 154) but also *aeroplany* (Pla 155) or *hall* (En 17) – *hall* (Pla 9), *hol* (Plb 13).

It could be stated that some other modifications in the Polish version result from the translator's attitude towards the text. English is concerned by many scholars to be the language for adults, and especially for men (Jespersen, 1972: 2). It is not as emotional as the Polish one (Wierzbicka, 1985: 166-169). Therefore, the translator wants to soften the text in order to adjust it to Polish standards. That is why the language of translation is more polite than the original one. What is more, the translator does not want to write about some events literally. Below there are some examples supporting this hypothesis:

Mary Poppins says angrily to a malicious pigeon:

(4) *You ought to be in a pie* (En 97).

And the translation is as follows:

(5b) *Powinieneś być sroką* (Pla 95).

The Nanny answers children's question about her visit at the Zoo:

(6) *"I have all I need of zoos in this nursery, thank you," said Mary Poppins uppishly. "Hyenas, orang-utans, all of you. Sit up straight, and no more nonsense."* (En 150)

In Polish version we read:

(6b) – *Ma się rozumieć, że nie byłam. Także pomyśl – powiedziała Agnieszka. – I proszę bardzo, jedz owsiankę i nie pleć głupstw!* (Pla 153)

Michael behaves very naughtily:

(7) *And at that he let out his foot and kicked Mrs Brill very hard on the shin, so that she dropped the rolling-pin and screamed aloud.* (En 77)

---

<sup>3</sup> Suggested translation: *Zaryzykuje.*

<sup>4</sup> Suggested translation: *Nie wierzę, żebyśmy w tym roku mieli jeszcze lato – nie to, że w ogóle kiedykolwiek mamy, oczywiście.*

In the version from 1957 we have:

(7b) *Na to Michaś wysunął nogę i tak sprytnie podstawił ją Jakubowej, że biedna kobieta zachwiała się, upuściła walek i krzyknęła głośno.* (Pla 75)

In the version from 2008 the sentence is corrected:

(7c) *Na to Michaś wysunął nogę i tak kopnął Jakubową, że biedna kobieta zachwiała się, upuściła walek i krzyknęła głośno.* (Plb 93)

There are also some changes in translation that may result from cultural differences between English and Polish tradition. For example in the original text there is a chapter entitled *Bad Tuesday* (En 75), whereas in Polish translation we come across the title *Feralny piątek* (Pla 73). I suppose this is because in Polish tradition we usually associate Friday with bad luck or misfortune.

Terminology connected with food is the next area of translator's modifications. In most cases they occur simply because of the fact that in Polish reality some names of food or notions connected with eating do not exist. That is why the translator has to replace them with familiar equivalents: *lunch* (En 109) – *obiad* (Pla 108), *deser* (Plb 135), *Afternoon Tea* (En 30), *tea* (En 37) or *tea time* (En 54) – *podwieczorek* (Pla 30), *apples-on-a-stick* (En 103) – *herbatniczki i ciastka z jabłkami* (Pla 102), *Yorkshire pudding* (En 139) – *zapiekanka z szynką* (Pla 141), *little flat rolls with the curly twists of crust on the top* (En 50) – *specjalny rodzaj precelków* (Pla 46). Only in few examples the names of food remain unchanged, but simply adapted to Polish morphology or phonology (*rum punch* (En 21) – *poncz rumowy* (Pla 14)).

Special attention must be paid to chapter *Bad Tuesday* in which Mary Poppins and the children use a compass to visit places all over the world in a remarkably short period of time. The original 1934 printing of the book contained a version emphasizing many cultural and racial stereotypes of Chinese, Inuit, Africans and Native Americans. Pamela Travers responded to criticism in that matter by revising the chapter in 1981 and including animal representatives instead of people. At the same time, original illustrator Mary Shepard altered the accompanying drawing of the compass to show a Polar Bear on the north, a Macaw on the south, a Panda on the east and a Dolphin on the west. What is interesting in Polish translation, while it is obvious that in 1957 edition we have the original version, is that in 2008 edition we still read about Mary Poppins having a conversation with people and not with the animals. Publishers of the book did not take this change into consideration and did not put it in the newest edition. That is why there is a complete difference between the most recent English and Polish versions of a story about the trip all over the world.

### 3.2. Omissions in the target texts

Throughout the text we come across some omissions introduced by the translator. In most cases they concern only those fragments which were impossible to translate into Polish or would be too difficult to understand for the target reader, e.g. the translator did not render some names of animals or plants which

are rare and unknown in Poland, e.g. *wombat* (En 136). There are also omissions of fragments containing cultural references, as it is in the case of a sentence expressing someone's anger: (...) *or my name's not Clara Brill*. (En 171). There was also a situation in which the translator changed the word *whelks* (En 31), which may be problematic for Polish readers, into *raki* (Pla 24), which sounds more familiar. That is why the translator also had to omit the rest part of a text because it describes a piece of cutlery used to eat whelks only: "*And your Pin!*" *He dusted the pin on his napkin and handed it to the Match Man*. (En 31).

Among other parts of a text omitted in the Polish version we can find proper names and names of places, but I will take it into deeper consideration in the section concerning methods of translation of proper names in detail.

### **3.3. Translation of culturally marked words and expressions**

Elements of culture from the source text are sometimes very difficult to render in translation. In case of children's literature it is even more complicated, because the target audience may not be familiar with foreign terminology. In literature intended for adult readers it is possible to include footnotes or glossary at the end of a book, whereas in children's literature it may seem strange. Nevertheless, children are very open to new experiences and eagerly learn about foreign cultures, which do not surprise them at all. Just the opposite – strange names and places excite their curiosity and encourage them to discover new worlds.

#### **3.3.1. Notions of domestication and foreignization**

When working on a particular text, a translator must make a choice whether to make it more reader-friendly or rather preserve the exotic and the unknown in the target text. The choice of one of those two methods, known as domestication and foreignization, influence the whole process of translation because after choosing one option, the translator has to be consistent and stick to one method. This choice is rather difficult and the translator must consider many aspects before making decision. What is the most important issue is that culture-bound elements such as proper names or food items demonstrate not only into which culture the story is set but also create an atmosphere that reflects the values prevalent in that culture. It is then obvious that when such a book is translated into another language, the translator has to decide whether he or she wants to imply these same values for the target text readers, or whether he or she wants to make adaptations to the text in order to fit it better into the target culture. Here the crucial questions must be answered. If the culture-bound elements in the translation of such a text are foreignized, is the reader able to identify with the characters? On the other hand, if the cultural references of a story set in a specific culture are domesticated, does the book lose a part of its charm (Hagfors 2003: 118)?

Oittinen (2003: 129), following Lawrence Venuti, makes a clear division between those two technical terms. She states that “domestication accommodates itself to target cultural and linguistic values: through domestication, we adapt the text according to its future readers, culture, society, norms, and power relations”, whereas foreignization “maintain traces of the original text, depict cultural differences and a foreign origin.” Darja Mazi-Leskovar (2003: 254) also elaborates on these strategies of translation. For her, foreignization denotes “the conservation of significant amount of what is alien and unusual in the reading context of the new target audience but common, unique, distinctive or typical for the source culture.” She also underlines the fact that “the foreign, strange or even the exotic retained in the text is expected to be a stimulus to reading”. Domestication, on the other hand, “intervenes when the foreign and the odd is considered to represent a hindrance or barrier to the understanding of the text.” She adds that “even if there were no conscious decision for domestication, there is a certain degree of it in every translation because of the differences between the languages of the source and the target text. Domestication refers to all changes performed on various levels of the text in order to enable the target readers, the members of another nation, living in another geographical reality, with a specific socio-historical experience and a unique cultural background to fully grasp the text.” Oittinen aptly describes it as a very powerful means of “bringing the translation closer to the target-language readers by speaking a familiar language” (2000: 84). To put it briefly, domestication means substitution of an element characteristic for the target culture for an element characteristic for the source culture in order to make it sound more natural and comprehensible for the readers (Bednarczyk 2002: 63) whereas foreignization involves leaving this element of the source culture in its original form to make it sound exotic and, consequently, intriguing.

Having considered those two methods of translation, a translator must choose which one is better. There is no unanimous opinion on that matter, however, more linguists and translators opt for foreignization. Hagfors (2003: 125), for example, believes that translated children’s literature can be either a means of “bridging cultural differences or of obscuring them.” Therefore, if a translator chooses foreignization, a particular story can serve as a tool for learning about foreign cultures, times and customs and intrigue readers to find out more about them. Hagfors (2003: 125) claims that foreignized children’s stories are “a way of drawing attention to cultural matters: to learn what is different and what is shared between the reader’s culture and that in which the story is set”. Another linguist, Isabel Pascua, states that the main task of a translator is to let his or her readers know more about the foreign. That is why she considers foreignization a better choice. In her opinion, a translator should keep in mind intercultural education and maintain the “cultural references” of the original text. Readers know that they are introduced to a foreign text and want to ‘feel’ that they are reading a translation with the exotic names, places, food, clothes or customs kept unchanged (Pascua 2003: 280). She gives an example of Spain, where a few

decades ago translated texts were required to ‘sound’ very Spanish. Now the situation is different and the norms have changed. Nowadays, Spanish translators use foreignization because it emphasizes the different, which is essential when translating multicultural literature. Also Eva-Maria Metcalf is in favour of this method of translation. She believes that it is better to “keep intact much of the otherness of the foreign culture” in translations (2003: 326). Children can gain a broader vision by experiencing difference and in that manner their cross cultural knowledge increases. It is very important, especially now, when multiculturalism and globalization became common and widespread phenomena. However, more translators tend to domesticate their versions, especially when it concerns children’s literature.

The term ‘culturally marked words or expressions’ includes many parts of vocabulary, such as: units of measurement, names of food, proper names, idioms, sayings, as well as literary, historical, political and social facts. Some of them are not troublesome for translators, but other may be even impossible to render in the target text (see sections 3.1 and 3.2).

Below, different parts of vocabulary and ways of translating them into Polish shall be presented.

### 3.3.2. Idioms, proverbs, sayings and other fixed expressions

Multiword expressions and interjections are inseparably connected with the language of particular nation. They may be used only within one culture as they reflect its features. That is why translators find it very difficult to render their meaning properly, as is exemplified below for the translation of *Mary Poppins* by Irena Tuwim:

Table 1. Translation of fixed expressions in *Mary Poppins*

English original	Polish translation
<i>Care killed a cat.</i> (En 130)	<i>Indyk też myślał i zdechl.</i> (Pla 131)
<i>(...) early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise?</i> (En 150)	<i>(...) wie, co wypada, a co nie wypada?</i> (Pla 152)
<i>You’d talk the leg off a chair.</i> (En 118)	<i>Zakrzyczałbyś cały świat!</i> (Pla 118)
<i>Strike me pink!</i> (En 30)	<i>Jak pragnę zdrowia!</i> (Pla 22)
<i>What a load off my mind!</i> (En 57)	<i>Co za ciężar spadł mi z serca!</i> (Pla 53)
<i>(...) red as raspberries.</i> (En 69)	<i>(...) poczerwieniały jak buraki.</i> (Pla 66)
<i>(...) spit-spot (...)</i> (En 130)	<i>(...) raz-dwa (...)</i> (Pla 131)
<i>Certainly, madam.</i> (En 158)	<i>Do usług.</i> (Pla 162)
<i>dainty David</i> (En 96)	<i>hrabia</i> (Pla 94)

English original	Polish translation
<i>cowardy-custard</i> (En 107)	<i>beksa</i> (Pla 106)
<i>cry-baby</i> (En 107)	<i>galareta</i> (Pla 106)
<i>Bank Holidays</i> (En 15)	<i>dni świąteczne</i> (Pla 7)
<i>Mr Know-All</i> (En 55) <i>Mr Smarty</i> (En 80)	<i>pan Mądraliński</i> (Pla 51, 77)
<i>Blast my vitals!</i> (En 139)	<i>A niech to kule biją! Niech mnie połamie!</i> (Pla 140)
<i>Blast my gizzard!</i> (En 49)	<i>A niech to kule biją!</i> (Pla 45) <i>A niech to wszyscy diabli!</i> (Pla 139)
<i>Golly!</i> (En 29)	<i>Do pioruna!</i> (Pla 22) <i>Dobra jest.</i> (Pla 24) <i>Dobrze.</i> (Plb 32)
<i>My goodness!</i> (En 43)	<i>Mój Boże!</i> (Pla 36)
<i>Good gracious!</i> (En 68)	<i>Na Boga!</i> (Pla 65)
<i>My gracious, goodness, glory me!</i> (En 155)	<i>Wszelki duch Pana Boga chwali!</i> (Pla 158)
<i>Oh, my Gracious, Glorious, Galumphing Goodness!</i> (En 47)	<i>Ach, miły Boże, ach, miły Boże!</i> (Pla 42)
<i>Oh, Lordy, Lordy (...)</i> (En 39)	<i>Och, Boże, Bożyczku (...)</i> (Pla 33)
<i>Bless my soul (...)</i> (En 41, 46)	<i>Dalibóg (...)</i> (Pla 34, 41)
<i>For all the world.</i> (En 19)	<i>Dalibóg!</i> (Pla 11)
<i>Hssst!</i> (En 142)	<i>Sss.</i> (Pla 144)
<i>“Cheerio!”</i> (En 128)	<i>„czik-czirik”</i> (Pla 129)
<i>Yay-yap!</i> (En 54)	<i>Hau-hau</i> (Pla 50)
<i>Shoo! Shoo!</i> (En 57)	<i>Kysz, kysz!</i> (Pla 54)
<i>Hulloh!</i> (En 62)	<i>O!</i> (Pla 59)

The table clearly shows that in all cases the translator used Polish equivalents to the original forms of idioms, sayings, proverbs, as well as expressions of religious character and words expressing sounds made by animals and people.

### 3.3.3. Polite phrases, forms of address and formulaic expressions

In every language we can find distinctive methods of addressing people. However, there is a substantial difference between Polish and English when it comes to politeness in conversation.

In her work, Jentsch (2006) points out an important issue of translating English word 'you' as titles and forms of address can also be problematic in translation. She believes that it is a further challenge to the translator to translate this form of address into a language that has more than one equivalent for this word. The reason for that is such a translation should appropriately render the universal 'you' of English to specific forms, which in the target language denote the relationship of the speakers to each other and contribute to the readers' sense of characterization (Jentsch 2006: 191).

Table 2. Translation of polite phrases in *Mary Poppins*

English original	Polish translation
<i>You</i> (En 17)	<i>Panienka</i> (Pla 10) <i>panna</i> (Pla 54) <i>panicz</i> (Pla 74)
<i>'You girls'</i> (En 157)	<i>Moje Dziewczęta</i> (Pla 161)
<i>Master Michael</i> (En 171)	<i>panicz</i> (Pla 176)
<i>Miss Jane</i> (En 171)	<i>panna Janeczka</i> (Pla 176)
<i>Mister</i> (En 31)	<i>szanowny pan</i> (Pla 24)
<i>Moddom</i> (En 30)	<i>łaskawa pani</i> (Pla 24)
<i>ma'am</i> (En 25)	<i>proszę pani</i> (Pla 17)
<i>your Majesty</i> (En 67)	<i>Wasza Królewska Mość</i> (Pla 64)
<i>Oh, no – please. (...) Please!</i> (En 21)	<i>O, nie, bardzo przepraszam! (...)</i> <i>Przepraszam bardzo!</i> (Pla 14)
<i>(...) How do you do!</i> (En 19)	<i>(...) Dobry wieczór.</i> (Pla 11) <i>Dzień dobry pani.</i> (Pla 30)
<i>Goodbye.</i> (En 161)	<i>Żegnajcie!</i> (Pla 165) <i>Żegnaj...</i> (Pla 165)
<i>Au revoir.</i> (En 172)	<i>Au revoir.</i> (Pla 177)

Polish is much more diverse than English when it comes to polite phrases. Translators must be very careful as to the appropriate form to be used in a given context. Here, Irena Tuwim uses Polish equivalents to English form 'you', and not the version 'ty'. The same method concerns other polite expressions. Only when it comes to phrases from languages different than Polish and English, she leaves the original form.

### 3.3.4. Other culturally marked expressions

Below we can see that the translator used Polish equivalents to render some cultural phenomena.

Table 3. Translation of culturally marked expressions in *Mary Poppins*

English original	Polish translation
<i>Christmas</i> (En 160)	<i>święta</i> (Pla 164) <i>Gwiazdka</i> (Pla 164)
<i>Father Christmas</i> (En 152)	<i>św. Mikołaj</i> (Pla 155)
<i>polka</i> (En 65)	<i>polka</i> (Pla 62)
<i>Highland Fling</i> (En 65)	<i>zbójnicki</i> (Pla 62)
<i>Sailor's Hornpipe</i> (En 65)	<i>taniec marynarzy</i> (Pla 62)

In case of names of dances she applies various methods. In the first example the situation was simple as there is the same name for that dance in Polish and English. In case of the last example she just described the dance without naming it.

### 3.3.5. Proper names

In the story we find several names of real-life historical persons and fictional characters. Is it possible to render them in the target text? Is it necessary to translate them at all? Obviously, there is a good reason to translate names if they have a meaning relevant to the story but children can and do take delight in the sound and shape of unfamiliar names. Would a name Harry Potter sound so attractive if it was Henio Garnarcz in the Polish translation of a famous series of books by J. K. Rowling? This is a matter of translation, of course. A translator must deal with a question: how to render proper names correctly so that they would not lose their importance as they indicate many relevant issues.

Christiane Nord (2003) states in her work that an important function of proper names in fiction is to indicate in which culture the plot is set. Apart from that, they identify an individual referent. If we are familiar with the culture in question, a proper name can tell us whether the referent is a female or male person, can inform us about their age or geographical origin within the same language community or from another country. It can also indicate whether the referent is a person or an animal. Sometimes authors use names which explicitly describe the referent in question. It can be a description of the character of a protagonist, his or her physical appearance or habits that he or she has. Furthermore, in some cultures, there is the convention that fictional proper names can serve as “culture markers” (Nord 2003: 184), that is, they implicitly implicate to which culture the character belongs. What is more, to find a name for their fictional characters,

authors can either use the whole repertoire of names existing in their culture or invent new, fantastic, absurd or descriptive names for the characters they create. There is no name in fiction without some kind of author's intention behind it, although, of course, this intention may be more obvious to the readers in one case than in another (Nord 2003: 182ff). That is why translators often find it difficult to deal with translation of them. To render the appropriate meaning, they use various strategies which "entail different communicative effects" (Nord 2003: 182) for the readers. Nord lists the most frequent ones:

- Non-translation;
- Non-translation that leads to a different pronunciation in the target language;
- Transcription or transliteration from non-Latin alphabets;
- Morphological adaptation to the target language;
- Cultural adaptation;
- Substitution.

Nord also notes that translators do not always use the same techniques with all the proper names of a particular text they are translating.

As far as geographical names are concerned, they often have specific forms in other languages (exonyms), which may differ not only in pronunciation or spelling, but also with respect to morphology or seem to be different lexical entities. Some are literal translations, and others go back to ancient Latin forms (Nord 2003: 184).

In her work, Nord claims that there are no rules for the translation of proper names. Nevertheless, there is a convention to use the target-culture exonym of a source-culture name, if, of course, there is one. The reason for that is: "wherever the function of the proper name is limited to identifying an individual referent, the main criterion for translation will be to make this identifying function work for the target audience" (Nord 2003: 184). If a translator prefers to use the source-culture form, he or she may do it as long as it is clear what place the name refers to. According to Nancy K. Jentsch (2006: 191), names which are readily understood by the target audience and those that have no further significance can and should be left in the original.

There is one more problem connected with translation of proper names. It is known that there are some names that exist in the same form both in the source and the target culture. This seems to make a translator's work easier but, after careful consideration, it is some kind of a trap for him or her as the character changes 'nationality' just because the name is pronounced in a different way. An English *Robert* thus turns into a Polish *Robert*, which may interfere with the homogeneity of the setting if some names are 'bicultural' and others are not (Nord 2003: 185). This is a very common problem in the translation of children's books, especially if there is a pedagogical message underlying the plot. "A story set in the receiver's own cultural world allows for identification, whereas a story set in a strange, possibly exotic world may induce the reader to stay 'at a distance'" (Nord 2003: 185). It depends on the politics of the country

which the translator comes from whether the culture markers – and proper names unquestionably belong to this category – are domesticated or foreignized.

The list of proper names used in *Mary Poppins* is presented in Table 4:

Table 4. Translation of proper names in *Mary Poppins*

English original	Polish translation
<i>Mary Poppins</i> (En 18)	<i>Agnieszka</i> (Pla 11) <i>Mary Poppins</i> (Plb 16)
<i>Mr Banks</i> (En 13)	<i>pan Banks</i> (Pla 5) <i>Tatuś</i> (Pla 8)
<i>Mrs Banks</i> (En 14)	<i>pani Banks</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Jane</i> (En 14)	<i>Janeczka</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Michael</i> (En 14)	<i>Michaś</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Miss Jane Banks</i> (En 143)	<i>panna Janina</i> (Pla 145)
<i>Master Michael Banks</i> (En 143)	<i>pan Michał Banks</i> (Pla 145)
<i>John</i> (En 14)	<i>Jaś</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Barbara</i> (En 14)	<i>Basia</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Mrs Brill</i> (En 14)	<i>Jakubowa</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Ellen</i> (En 14)	<i>Helenka</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Robertson Ay</i> (En 14)	<i>Maciuś</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Katie Nanna</i> (En 14)	<i>wychowawczyni Kasia</i> (Pla 6)
<i>Admiral Boom</i> (En 15)	<i>admiral Bum</i> (Pla 7)
<i>Bert</i> (En 27)	<i>Bobi</i> (Pla 19) <i>Bobby</i> (Plb 26)
<i>Herbert Alfred</i> (En 27)	Omitted
<i>Mr Wigg</i> (En 35)	<i>pan Perukka</i> (Pla 28)
<i>Albert</i> (En 37)	<i>Albert</i> (Pla 31)
<i>Mrs Wigg</i> (En 37)	<i>pani Albertowa</i> (Pla 30)
<i>Miss Persimmon</i> (En 37)	<i>panna Persimon</i> (Pla 30) <i>panna Persimmon</i> (Plb 38)
<i>Amy</i> (En 40)	Omitted
<i>Emily</i> (En 43)	<i>Emilka</i> (Pla 37)
<i>Miss Lark</i> (En 49)	<i>panna Skowronek</i> (Pla 45)
<i>the Bird Woman</i> (En 93)	<i>Ptaszniczka</i> (Pla 91)
<i>Flossie</i> (En 94)	<i>Micia</i> (Pla 91)

English original	Polish translation
<i>Mrs Jackson</i> (En 94)	<i>pani inżynierowa</i> (Pla 91) <i>pani Smith</i> (Plb 114)
<i>Wren</i> (En 94)	<i>Mysikrół</i> (Pla 92)
<i>Jenny</i> (En 94)	Omitted
<i>Mrs Corry</i> (En 99)	<i>Bajkosia</i> (Pla 98)
<i>Fannie</i> (En 103)	<i>Frania</i> (Pla 102)
<i>Annie</i> (En 103)	<i>Ania</i> (Pla 102)
<i>Barbarina</i> (En 126) <i>Barbie dear</i> (En 127)	<i>Basieńka</i> (Pla 127)
<i>Pleiades</i> (En 156)	<i>Plejady</i> (Pla 160)
<i>Maia</i> (En 156)	<i>Maja</i> (Pla 160)
<i>Electra</i> (En 156)	<i>Elektra</i> (Pla 160)
<i>Merope</i> (En 156)	<i>Merope</i> (Pla 160)
<i>Taygete</i> (En 158)	<i>Tajgete</i> (Pla 162)
<i>Alcyone</i> (En 158)	<i>Alcjona</i> (Pla 163)
<i>Celéno</i> (En 159)	<i>Celena</i> (Pla 163)
<i>Sterope</i> (En 159)	<i>Steropa</i> (Pla 163) <i>Sterope</i> (Plb 201)
<i>Lizzie</i> (En 130)	<i>Kasia</i> (Pla 131)
<i>Andrew</i> (En 49)	<i>Duduś</i> (Pla 45)
<i>Willoughby</i> (En 59)	<i>Anastazy</i> (Pla 56)
<i>the Red Cow</i> (En 63)	<i>Krasula</i> (Pla 60)
<i>the Red Calf</i> (En 64)	<i>mała Krasulka</i> (Pla 61)
<i>Hamadryad</i> (En 142)	<i>wąż Okularnik</i> (Pla 144)
<i>Barnacle goose</i> (En 147)	<i>gęś</i> (Pla 150)
<i>Christopher Columbus</i> (En 105)	<i>Krzysztof Kolumb</i> (Pla 104)
<i>William the Conqueror</i> (En 106)	<i>Wilhelm Zdobywca</i> (Pla 105)
<i>Alfred the Great</i> (En 108)	<i>Alfred Wielki</i> (Pla 107)
<i>Guy Fawkes</i> (En 111)	<i>król Ćwieczek</i> (Pla 110)
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i> (En 27)	<i>królowa Elżbieta</i> (Pla 19)

English original	Polish translation
<i>Prime Minister</i> (En 56)	<i>burmistrz</i> (Pla 52)
<i>Cinderella</i> (En 33) <i>Coster</i> (En 109)	<i>Kopciuszek</i> (Pla 27, 108) omitted in the version from 2008
<i>Robinson Crusoe</i> (En 33)	<i>Robinson Cruzoe</i> (Pla 27)
<i>Dover Sole</i> (En 100)	<i>sola</i> (Pla 99)
<i>Morning Paper</i> (En 14)	„ <i>Dziennik Poranny</i> ” (Pla 6)
<i>The Times</i> (En 157)	<i>gazeta</i> (Pla 162)
<i>Sunlight Soap</i> (En 20)	<i>mydło</i> (Pla 12)
<i>Lifebuoy soap</i> (En 153)	<i>mydło glicerynowe</i> (Pla 156)
<i>Vinolia soap</i> (En 153)	<i>mydło lanolinowe</i> (Pla 156)
<i>Meccano set</i> (En 153)	<i>klocki</i> (Pla 156)
<i>Swiss-Robinsons</i> (En 159)	<i>Robinsonowie Szwajcarscy</i> (Pla 163)
“ <i>Mary Poppins by Bert</i> ” (En 172)	„ <i>Agnieszka</i> ” (Pla 177)

In the case of translation of proper names on the example of *Mary Poppins* we can clearly see that it is a possible operation, but also that there is no consistency in choosing one method. The translator rendered the meaning in various ways. Below, the most important issues I came across while reading the three versions shall be discussed.

First of all, we shall look at the titles of the books. It is well known that the title has significant implications for translation and the way it is rendered shows the general tendency of the translator. Here, the title refers to the name of a main protagonist of the whole story, that is to the nanny. The name is then used throughout the text. In the older translated version from 1957 we see a completely changed name that has nothing in common with the original one. ‘Agnieszka’ is a typical Polish name, that is why it can be suggested that the translator purposely wanted to make the whole story more familiar to the target audience. What is more, in socialist Poland signs of the Western world were unwelcome and translators had to submit to the current authority in order to have their books published. In the newest version from 2008 we observe a tendency to leave the original character of the book by replacing the title *Agnieszka* with *Mary Poppins*. Nowadays, in the time of globalization, when people tend to use foreign expressions in everyday life and the occurrence of strange proper names on the covers of books does not surprise anyone, the original title seems to be even more encouraging than the postwar version, considered by many as old-fashioned and outdated.

When it comes to proper names appearing in the book, we can see a broad spectrum of translation methods. Sometimes the name remains unchanged (*Banks – Banks*) but in most cases it is replaced with Polish equivalent or exonym (*Katie – Kasia*, *Electra – Elektra*, *the Bird Woman – Ptaszniczka*, *William the Conqueror – Wilhelm Zdobywca*, etc.). Also, it is a common practice to use a diminutive form of a name which in the original version was given in a full way: *Michael – Michaś*, *John – Jaś*, *Ellen – Helenka* etc. In general, most proper names are polonized in translated version and, because of that, they lose their British character. Sometimes they are substituted with a completely different form that cannot be associated with the original one in any way: *Mrs Brill – Jakubowa*, *Robertson Ay – Maciuś*, *Willoughby – Anastazy*, *Guy Fawkes – król Ćwieczek*. In some cases they are adapted to Polish by using a description of a particular name instead of an equivalent (*Mrs Jackson – pani inżynierowa*). In a few situations the translator gives the name in its phonetic form (*Boom – Bum*) or translates it literally (*Lark – Skowronek*). Besides, unfortunately, some names are simply omitted in translated text: *Herbert Alfred*, *Amy*, etc. In the version from 2008 some names were given back their English form. Nevertheless, they still differ from the original ones: *Bert – Bobby*, *Mrs Jackson – pani Smith*.

As far as the examples of particular objects are concerned, apart from methods presented above, usually the translator omitted that part which included the proper name (*Dover Sole – sola*, *Sunlight Soap – mydło*) or gave its description (*Lifebuoy soap – mydło glicerynowe*, *The Times – gazeta*).

### 3.3.6. Geographical and place names

To render geographical and place names, the translator used methods similar to those applied in translation of proper names.

Table 5. Translation of place names in *Mary Poppins*

English original	Polish translation
<i>Cherry Tree Lane</i> (En 13)	<i>ulica Czereśniowa</i> (Pla 5)
<i>Robertson Road</i> (En 36)	<i>ulica Mostowa</i> (Pla 29)
<i>Ludgate Hill</i> (En 93)	<i>ulica</i> (Pla 91) omitted in the version from 2008
<i>Yarmouth</i> (En 32)	<i>rodzinna wieś</i> (Pla 25) <i>Ujście</i> (Plb 33)
<i>Bournemouth</i> (En 126)	<i>wieś</i> (Pla 127)
<i>Margate</i> (En 29)	omitted
<i>America</i> (En 105)	<i>Ameryka</i> (Pla 104)
<i>England</i> (En 106)	<i>Anglia</i> (Pla 105)

English original	Polish translation
<i>Green, Brown and Johnson's</i> (En 102)	<i>sklep</i> (PlA 102)
<i>Royal Academy</i> (En 28)	<i>Akademia Królewska</i> (PlA 20)
<i>St Paul's Cathedral</i> (En 94)	<i>katedra Św. Pawła</i> (PlA 92)
<i>Sir Christopher Wren's Cathedral</i> (En 94)	omitted
<i>Big Cat House</i> (En 136)	<i>Pawilon Drapieżców</i> (PlA 138)
<i>Snake House</i> (En 141)	<i>Pawilon Wężowy</i> (PlA 143) <i>Pawilon Węży</i> (Plb 177)

Sometimes the translator replaces the name with Polish equivalent (*Cherry Tree Lane* – *ulica Czereśniowa*, *Royal Academy* – *Akademia Królewska*, *Big Cat House* – *Pawilon Drapieżców*) or with exonym which is phonologically or morphologically adapted to the target language, that is to Polish (*America* – *Ameryka*). As it was in the case of proper names, many geographical and place names are polonized, because of what the ‘Britishness’ of the text is lost. We see the examples of substituting the original name with a completely unconnected Polish word: *Robertson Road* – *ulica Mostowa*, *Yarmouth* – *Ujście*. There are also some situations when the translator gives the description of a particular function of some place instead of any translated form: *Ludgate Hill* – *ulica*, *Bournemouth* – *wieś*, *Green, Brown and Johnson's* – *sklep*. Sometimes the name is omitted in translation (*Margate*, *Sir Christopher Wren's Cathedral*).

#### 4. Results of the research

As I have assumed, there are many differences between the original English version of *Mary Poppins* and its Polish translation, when it comes to culture-bound elements. What is more, there are also some discrepancies in two Polish editions. Below I shall present my observations, conclusions and reflections after reading and analyzing the three versions of *Mary Poppins*.

At the beginning, I would like to concentrate on comparing English original with its Polish version. First of all, we come across numerous changes and modifications in translation. They concern many aspects of language. The translator had some difficulties in rendering particular words and expressions and that is why she replaced them with equivalents that have slightly different meaning than the original forms. There are some examples of such practice as far as syntax, vocabulary and phraseology are concerned. The possible reasons for the modifications appearing in the target text are explained in section 3.1. Unfortunately, the translator made several mistakes in her work resulting from the improper understanding of some phrases. They are also presented in

section 3.1. Throughout the book we may observe that the translator did not avoid some omissions which might impoverish Polish version. The examples and reasons for their occurrence are discussed in section 3.2. When it comes to the most important issue, that is the translation of culturally marked words and expressions, here I present various methods applied by the translator to render the proper meaning:

- omission of some words and sentences
- leaving the original form
- use of Polish equivalents and exonyms
- use of Polish forms completely unconnected with English original
- description of particular words
- adaptation to Polish reality

They are all discussed on the basis of numerous examples in section 3.3. As the occurrence of Polish equivalents and exonyms and, generally speaking, the adaptation to Polish reality prevail in the translation, we may be sure that the basic method applied by the translator was domestication rather than foreignization (see section 3.3.1). Of course, parts of the original British character are retained in Polish version, both in the text and illustrations. Nevertheless, in general, most elements that underline the 'Britishness' of the book are lost or modified in translation by replacing them with Polish equivalents. In general, I may state that Tuwim's translation reflects the conventions visible in the Polish literature for children, which influence, among other things, the translator's decisions. Polish translators tend to simplify the sentence structure and use more diminutives than in the original version. Therefore, the text itself becomes more pleasant and tender (Adamczyk-Garbowska 1988: 152).

Now I shall elaborate on the main similarities and differences between the two Polish versions of *Mary Poppins*. What may be noticed from the very beginning is that, as it was in the case of the original, both versions are intended for children. It is indicated by simple style, language and grammar. In general, the story is quite easy to comprehend by young readers. The version from 2008 is entirely based on Irena Tuwim's translation. Nevertheless, there are some modifications which arise from the changes in vocabulary and syntax that took place between the years 1957 and 2008. The language in the newest edition is slightly modernized and adjusted to contemporary norms. As I have mentioned before, some archaisms are replaced with more commonly used expressions. When it comes to the stylistics of the text, we can also notice some alterations. The sentences and phrases are modified in order to sound more natural to contemporary readers, e.g. *the Zoo* (En 130) is translated as *Zoologiczny Ogród* (PlA 131), but in the newest edition we read *Ogród Zoologiczny* (PlB 162) or the sentence *Jane and Michael saw a curious thing happen*. (En 16) as *Naraz Janeczka i Michaś ujrżeli, że dzieje się dziwna rzecz*. (PlA 8) and *Wówczas też Janeczka i Michaś ujrżeli, że dzieje się rzecz dziwna*. (PlB 12). All those modifications cause that the 2008 edition is slightly closer to the original. Nevertheless, the changes are rare and still the version resembles the one from 1957.

As far as illustrations are concerned, there are also some differences between Polish editions. In both versions they are adjusted to the text and reflect the reality of those days. Nevertheless, the 2008 edition includes the original illustrations by Mary Shepard, whereas the 1957 edition is adapted to Polish reality as it contains illustrations by Polish author Maria Orłowska.

To conclude, the translator managed to adapt the English culture to the Polish reality, but only to some extent. Therefore, the target text slightly differs from the original. Nevertheless, it seems to be inevitable as, on the basis of the results of my research, it may be stated that it is impossible to translate properly without introducing any changes to the text. In the article "Principles of Correspondence" (2000: 126) Eugene Nida claims that there is no ideal translation as "there can be no absolute correspondence between languages" and, therefore, "no fully exact translation. The total impact of a translation may be reasonably close to the original, but there can be no identity in detail." It was proved in my article that this statement fully concerns both translations of *Mary Poppins*.

## References

- Adamczyk-Garbowska, M. 1988. *Polskie tłumaczenia angielskiej literatury dziecięcej: problemy krytyki przekładu*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich.
- Bednarczyk, A. 2002. *Kulturowe aspekty przekładu literackiego*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Śląsk”.
- Carpenter, H. 1985. *Secret Gardens. The Golden Age of Children's Literature*. Boston: George Allen & Unwin.
- Hagfors, I. 2003. The Translation of Culture-Bound Elements into Finnish in the Post-War Period. *Meta Translators' Journal* 48 (1): 115-127.
- Jentsch, N. K. 2006. Harry Potter and the Tower of Babel: Translating the Magic. In G. Lathey (ed.) *The Translation of Children's Literature*, 190-208. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Jespersen, O. 1972. *Growth and Structure of the English Language*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Lathey, G. (ed.). 2006. *The Translation of Children's Literature*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Lopez, M. F. 2006. Translation Studies in Contemporary Children's Literature: A Comparison of Intercultural Ideological Factors. In G. Lathey (ed.) *The Translation of Children's Literature*, 41-53. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Mazi-Leskovar, D. 2003. Domestication and Foreignization in Translating American Prose for Slovenian Children. *Meta Translators' Journal* 48 (1): 250-265.
- Metcalfe, E.-M. 2003. Exploring Cultural Difference Through Translating Children's Literature. *Meta Translators' Journal* 48 (1): 322-327.
- Newmark, P. 1988. *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Nida, E. 2000. Principles of Correspondence. In L. Venuti (ed.) *Translation Studies Reader*, 126-140. London: Routledge.
- Nord, C. 2003. Proper Names in Translations for Children: *Alice in Wonderland* as a Case in Point. *Meta Translators' Journal* 48 (1): 182-196.
- Oittinen, R. 2000. *Translating for Children*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc.

- Oittinen, R. 2003. Where the Wild Things Are: Translating Picture Books. *Meta Translators' Journal* 48 (1): 128-141.
- Pascua, I. 2003. Translation and Intercultural Education. *Meta Translators' Journal* 48 (1): 276-284.
- Travers, P. L. 1957. *Agnieszka*. Trans. Irena Tuwim. Warszawa: Nasza Księgarnia.
- Travers, P. L. 2008. *Mary Poppins*. Trans. Irena Tuwim. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Jaguar.
- Travers, P. L. 2008. *Mary Poppins*. London: HarperCollins.
- Wierzbicka, A. 1985. Different Cultures, Different Languages, Different Speech Acts: Polish vs. English. *Journal of Pragmatics* 9 (1): 145-178.

