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DO TRANSLATORS GET ATTACHED TO CONSTRUCTIONS? ON A PIVOTAL ROLE OF THE MINIMAX STRATEGY IN TRANSLATION

The article presents an analysis of renderings of the Swedish –s passive voice construction in a sample of multiple non-professional Polish translations of the same non-literary Swedish text, with a view to verify the validity of the thesis that translators resort to the minimax strategy while translating, as well as it discusses the possible correlation of this strategy with the development of characteristic features of the language of translation, the so-called “third code”. The article is structured as follows: Firstly, it presents the origin of the notion of the minimax strategy in translation studies and discusses it in reference to the psychology of translation. What follows is a brief description of the “third code” and its characteristic features. The subsequent part offers a discussion of the passive voice structures in Swedish and Polish as well as the semantically akin Polish constructions that may potentially be used to render the Swedish –s passive conceptualisations. Subsequently, the collected data are examined to answer the research questions. The article concludes with suggestions for further research on the “third code” and translation universals with reference to the minimax strategy.

1. Introduction

According to Lévy (1967[2000]) and Ivir (1981), translators resort to the minimax strategy, which means, among other things, that they first look for formal correspondences in their search for translation equivalents. It is proposed that this tendency is cognitively motivated as it is strictly connected with language users’ ambition to economize on the mental effort involved in any human action (see e.g. Zipf 1949). In this article I shall present an analysis of various renderings of the Swedish –s passive voice construction in a sample of multiple non-professional Polish translations of the same non-literary (i.e. non-fictitious)

Swedish text¹, with a view to verify the validity of the above-presented thesis, as well as to discuss the possible correlation the minimax strategy may have with other phenomena widely discussed in translation studies, e.g. the development of the characteristic features of the so-called “third code” (Frawley 1984).

As there are several constructions which can potentially be used to express the Swedish grammaticalised –s passive in translation into Polish, translators have to choose from among them to render the conceptualisations present in the source text. The solution which promises the greatest effect with the least effort is the passive voice construction, which Polish expresses lexicogrammatically. Reorganising the construal and applying other Polish structures that may be seen as semantically similar to the passive, is more costly in terms of cognition. Therefore, the aim of this article is to answer the following research questions:

1. Is the minimax strategy a general feature of the collected translations, i.e. do novice translators apply this strategy in the remapping process of each of the -s passive forms of the source text into Polish and render them as passive form structures in this language?
2. Can the minimax strategy be also seen as an individual feature of the translators’ style, i.e. a preferred way of rendering the ST structures into the TT within a single text?
3. To what extent can the minimax strategy be seen as a driving force behind the so-called “third code” in translation?

2. Game theory and minimax strategy in translation studies

Game theory, developed by the mathematician John von Neuman (who was probably inspired by the work of Emile Borel), proposes to study the behaviour of people with conflicting interests in a competitive game, which, at its simplest, is a zero-sum game with two players who are provided with perfect information and assumed to act rationally when fulfilling their interests. In such a game there is only one optimal strategy that enables one participant to become the winner irrespective of the moves of the other person. However, in real life situations these kinds of conditions are a rare exception. Real life players, who usually have imperfect information at their disposal, arrive at such an optimal strategy by way of a pay-off matrix that lists the available alternatives. This kind of situation was conceived of by von Neuman as the minimax theorem, in which he proved that the players could minimize the maximum loss other players could inflict on them. (Cronin 2001: 91, see also Hoff Kjeldsen 2001)

A major part of the cognitive development of von Neuman’s minimax theorem has been neglected in the history of mathematics (Hoff Kjeldsen 2001:

¹ The text concerns some changes to the Swedish tax system and can be classified as administrative. Additional information on characteristic features of non-literary (as opposed to literary) texts can be found in Gibová (2012: 16-26).

39). Yet, his conception (broadly taken) was applied to translation studies by Jiří Levý (1967[2000]), who drew a parallel between the translation process and the activity of game-playing and proposed a novel application of the minimax to the description of the decision-making process in a translation task. According to him, translation theory is traditionally normative and instructs the translator on the optimal (best) solution. However, a real translation task is pragmatic at its core, which influences decisions taken during the translation process. Just like in a game, the translator is forced to choose from among a number of possible solutions. Furthermore, each choice influences his/her subsequent choices. Yet, such choices seem to be clearly connected with the translator's actual position and his/her awareness of the expectations of the target language audience. Taking into consideration these factors, when translating, he/she intuitively aims at the solution which promises the greatest effect with the least effort. By applying the minimax strategy, the translator is acting economically, not only in terms of time but of cognition. (Cronin 2001: 91, Fuertes Olivera and Velasco Sacristán 2001: 75-76)

Levý (1967[2000]) defines two types of instructions for dealing with a translation problem: definitional and selective. The former define the paradigm, i.e. the class of possible solutions to a problem. They are not completely equivalent but ordered by such criteria as register, connotation, etc. The latter direct the choice from among the alternatives in a given context. In this respect translation is an active decision-making process. (Cronin 2001: 91-92) Levý (1967[2000]) explains this mechanism in the following way:

Suppose an English translator is to render the German word "Bursche". He may choose from a group of more or less synonymous expressions: boy, fellow, chap, youngster, lad, guy, lark, etc. This is his paradigm, that is, the class of elements complying to a certain instruction, which in this case is a semantic one: "a young man". [...] Selective instructions are in a relation of inclusion to their definitional instructions; there exists between them a relation of [...] a class and its member. From the set of alternatives circumscribed by the definitional instruction, a subset is eliminated by the selective instruction, which in turn becomes the definitional instruction of this subset, and so on, till a one-member paradigm is reached. (Levý (1967[2000]):150)

It can therefore be concluded that due to the minimax strategy translators only choose when they have to choose, as experimenting is costly in terms of cognitive effort and it may be risky in terms of translational effect. Choosing not to choose, whenever possible, means going as fast as possible but still gaining a level of efficiency in terms of equivalence and successful communication. However, this kind of activity may be connected with a lower level of conventionality in the target text. On the other hand, all possible similarities between languages that meet in translation can be co-opted in the remapping process in translation.

3. The psychology of translation

According to Jääskeläinen (2012), Levý's idea of the minimax strategy in translation is an example of early contributions to translation psychology, which nowadays are mainly represented by cognitive approaches, which focus on cognitive processes (perception, problem-solving), emotions (motivation, attitudes) as well as on the personalities of translators. However, for many years the concept has been neglected within the framework of translation studies, which meant, for example, that the characteristic features of the language developed in the process of translation – the so-called “third code” (Frawley 1984) – have been investigated with no reference to the processes that may enhance their development. The minimax hypotheses has neither been verified nor related to other phenomena widely discussed in translation research. This may seem surprising as its cognitive roots make the strategy a good candidate for a key concept in translation research, similarly to other research areas, which focus on the ambition exhibited by language users to economize on mental effort involved in any human action (see e.g. Zipf 1949).

Taking this into account, one may conclude that a fresh look at Levý's postulate enables us to take a modified perspective on the issue pertaining to the characteristic features of the “third code” and, among them, the proposed translation universals. As the minimax strategy is rooted in human cognition, it can be assumed that it will be applied by a great majority of translators irrespective of the languages that meet in the translation process. Therefore it can be hypothesised that this strategy will be the main trigger of the characteristic features of the language of translation and that it may underlie the so-called translation universals. Moreover, it may be seen as a potential candidate for a translation universal itself. This is due to a postulate presented by some researchers that only the cognitive mechanisms involved in translating may result in universal features shared by all (or most) translations (see e.g. Chesterman 2004, Malmkjær 2008, Mauranen 2008). Other necessary conditions for distinguishing such features pertain to the mechanism underlying the translator's choice that must not be determined by the pre-set (i.e. systemic) rules (Baker 1993).

The concept of the minimax hypothesis fulfils both these requirements. On the other hand, it can also imply that linguistic phenomena which require a greater conceptual effort (e.g. linguistic variation, modification, explicitation, etc.) may be excluded from the inventory of the universal characteristics of the “third code”. Whether this is valid is another interesting research subject. Nevertheless, the question to what extent is the “third code” developed by the principle of less effort still remains unanswered. Answering it by analysing general processing tendencies in translating different types of structures in various languages may help us to anchor the proposed translation universals to solid ground. What it means is that we can highlight the question of the kind of motivation that may underline such values and make them develop. Moreover, our knowledge of the

differences between the universal and the individual (i.e. culturally influenced) in translation may grow.

4. The “third code” and its characteristic features

The language developed in the process of translation is conceived of as the “third code” (Frawley 1984) or translationese (Toury 1980, Gellerstam 1986). The features ascribed to such a language represent different types of characteristics. The first type includes translation universals, defined as the features that are present in translated texts, unlike genuine utterances, but are not a result of interference from a specific language system (Baker 1993: 243). These features are, among others, explicitation, simplification, normalisation, avoidance of repetition, etc. (Laviosa-Braithwaite 2002). Corpus research, which has been carried out in the last decade, allows us to conclude, with some reservations, that translated texts, when they are compared with genuine target text utterances, tend to be more explicit, more conservative in terms of linguistic expression and lexically less coherent. However, it cannot be excluded that in reality all these features result from some culturally motivated norms or conventions, which are connected with our (Western) view on how to translate (Tymoczko 1998).

The postulated translation universals are usually analysed on the basis of bilingual corpora with the use of concordance, which has led to considerable limitations in our knowledge of the mechanisms that operate in the translation process. According to Mauranen (2002: 166), a traditional corpus constitutes a record of individual unique solutions applied with regard to a given structure of the source text. They do not allow us to conclude whether other translators would take a similar course of action in the same situation. Additionally, the corpora are usually created on the basis of texts which have been subjected to editorial correction. Therefore, when analysing such linguistic material, we do not really know the kind and the extent of uniformity introduced by the editor in the case of the observed phenomena. The characteristic features of the language of translation are therefore established on the basis of a specific kind of “third code”, treated as a constant (i.e. not subject to change) idealised system, which is detached from an individual act of translation, whose author is a bilingual language user – a translator who is equipped with a definite cognitive apparatus.

On the other hand, researchers also agree that different types of “third code” can be distinguished depending on the languages which meet in the translation process (Koppel and Ordan 2011). The features of such varieties of the “third code” may be called specific, even if it is not always easy to distinguish them from the universal ones. In this respect, we should consider not only the differences but also similarities between languages (Santos 1995). Therefore, the main hypothesis of my research claims that if morphological, syntactic and pragmatic differences and similarities between Swedish and Polish exist, they will result in the development of features specific to a Swedish-Polish “third

code” variety. However, the features that are postulated to be universal result from the underlying cognitive processes, because only these processes can guarantee the commonality of a feature. As Chesterman (2004: 10) puts it:

[t]he immediate causes of whatever universals there may be must be sought in human cognition – to be precise, in the kind of cognitive processing that produces translations.

5. Passive voice in Swedish

Swedish has two distinct ways of expressing the passive: by attaching the grammatical suffix *-s* to a given verb form, or analytically, by using the auxiliary verbs *vara* ‘be’ and *bliva* ‘become’ and a past participle (*perfekt particip*). The former construction is the most widespread (Teleman et al. 1999: 360) and differentiates Swedish from other Scandinavian languages. As Laanemets’s (2012: 92) research demonstrates, the *-s* passive is the most prevalent in Swedish as compared to other Scandinavian languages.

6. The passive and like constructions in Polish

In Polish, the passive is prototypically a complex form, which consists of a past participle (*imiesłów bierny*) combined with the appropriate form of the auxiliary verb *być* ‘be’ or *zostać* ‘become,’ e.g. *jestem chwalony*, *będę chwalony*, *byłbym przekonany*, *został przekonany*. The auxiliary *zostać* is used only with perfective verb forms, while *być* can be combined with past participles of both perfective and imperfective verbs, e.g. *był przyjmowany* and *był przyjęty* (Klebanowska et al. 1985: 144, Bąk 1987: 358, Szober 1959: 271), which means that, potentially, this construction has a broader range of uses than the one with the verb *zostać*. However, the two constructions are not completely synonymous, even though both of them use past participles, e.g. *W roku 1683 kościół został zburzony* ‘became destroyed’ / *był zburzony* ‘was destroyed’; the latter form suggests that it may have been destroyed earlier than 1683 (Klebanowska et al. 1985: 144-145).

The content profiled with the use of a passive construction can also be realised within linguistic conceptualisations by other means. Polish has several constructions that can be considered semantically akin to the passive voice. First of all, there is the impersonal construction, which consists of the reflexive pronoun *się* and a third person singular neuter verb form: *W naszym mieście buduje się nową szkołę*, *Dawniej pralo się wszystko zwykłym mydłem*. (Klebanowska, et al. 1985: 145, Bąk 1987: 360) This form is employed in all tenses and moods, e.g. the past: *budowało się*, the future: *będzie się budować*, the conditional: *budowałoby się*, etc. (Bąk 1987: 359). Such clauses, characterised

as impersonal, which do not make the subject of the action explicit, resemble clauses in the passive, which is impersonal by nature. In such clauses the subject is not known; the speaker either does not wish to make it known or assumes that the subject is 'people' or 'every person'. This construction is commonly accepted to be the preferred way of constructing content in Polish whenever there is no need to make the doer of the action explicit.

Another form that can be considered semantically akin to the passive is the impersonal form of a verb formed by means of the suffixes *-no* and *-to*, which is only used in past tense, e.g. *budowano* 'was built', *zbudowano* 'has been built'. The forms *budowało się* and *budowano* are close in meaning, but the latter highlights the fact that the subject is indeed unknown. *Budowało się* may, in turn, mean *budowaliśmy* 'we were building (something)', *budował każdy* 'everybody was building (something),' depending on the context. In many conceptualisations, the *-no* and *-to* forms of transitive verbs can therefore be equivalent to the passive: *widziano* = *było widziane*, *zobaczono* = *zostało zobaczone*.

7. The realization of passive meaning in translation into Polish

The passive is used whenever the speaker wants to highlight the occurrence (the event, its circumstances, its character) itself and leave out the person or persons responsible for the action (or to keep them in the background) (Wierzbicka and Wierzbicki 1968: 100). Of course, the passive does not duplicate the function of the active or the impersonal construction. It is indispensable if one wants to use the language skilfully, and to learn to use the passive well in the language is no mean feat (Wierzbicka and Wierzbicki 1968: 102). However, it should be pointed out that Polish has no clear-cut guidelines as to the use of the passive and like constructions². It is the speaker who decides how they wish to frame a situation in which they want to keep the doer of the action in the background, bearing in mind the character of the situation. Likewise, there are no guidelines as to how such constructions should be used to realise Swedish passive constructions in translation into Polish. What it means is that the same structures can be used in Polish to realise both the Swedish *-s* passive and the analytical passive constructions.

Potentially, the Swedish passive can be rendered into Polish by means of several constructions. For instance, it has been observed that the *się* impersonal construction can always be used instead of the *zostać* / *być* passive form. The Swedish sentence *Huset revs ned 1999* can therefore be realised as both *Dom został zburzony / był zburzony w 1999r.* and *Dom zburzyło się w 1999r.*

² The use of the passive or the active requires that the theme-rheme structure be preserved. However, in this case, there are no rules that would allow to exclude a given solution or consider it the preferred one.

The impersonal *–no* construction is also fully acceptable in this context: *Dom zburzono w 1999r.* Which equivalent is chosen depends to a large extent on the context, which, however, may sometimes fail to suggest a clear solution. Since the passive highlights the person or thing that remains passive in a given situation, such an object can also be included in a conceptualisation based on an active construction, thus being brought back into the linguistic picture. More often than not, the Swedish passive is therefore rendered into Polish by means of the active. Furthermore, in translation, every relational structure (including the passive) can be realised by means of a nominalisation of one kind or another, e.g. *Dom został zburzony in 1999 r. / Zburzenie domu w 1999 r.*

Taking all of the above into consideration, one may conclude that, when translating the passive into Polish, the translator can always choose from or use at least two different Polish constructions for any given Swedish conceptualisation that includes a passive form.

8. The data and theoretical prerequisites

My sample data consisted of a non-literary Swedish text (218 words) and its 43 Polish translations prepared by trainee translators (fourth-year students at the Department of Swedish Philology at the Jagiellonian University of Kraków, who had just started a practical course in translation).³ An important condition for the collection of the data was to preserve the authenticity of the translators' behaviour. The students were asked to translate the text with the ordinary Polish target reader in mind. The text was translated independently, in each translator's natural environment, and the students had dictionaries and other reference material at their disposal. All translators worked from their second language (Swedish) into their first language (Polish). They had a relatively good command of their L2, but it was certainly worse than their command of L1 (the native tongue). No editing corrections to the collected texts were made. The translations have been numbered 1-43 and they are referred to by these numbers whenever quoted in this text.

For the purposes of the study, 7 source text structures (i.e. all but one *–s* passive structures present in the ST) were selected to form the basis for the investigation. As the investigation was partly aimed to broaden our knowledge of the universal features of the "third code", it was ensured that the collected data would make it possible to draw relevant conclusions. With Baker's (1993: 243) definition of translation universals in mind, i.e. "features which typically occur in translated text rather than original utterances and which are not the

³ The source text was taken from Jan Svensson's compendium of text analysis *Kompendium I, Språklig textanalys*, Lund 1995, p.16. The analysed data is included in a Learner's Translation, designed specially for the research project focusing on the category of repetition in translation.

results of interference from specific linguistic systems”, it was ensured that all the investigated instances of Polish equivalents are not systemic but optional (i.e. depend on the translator’s decision in a situation when they have a choice to make). For each form, a class of possible translational solutions was defined to build a paradigm for each –s passive form separately. The following TT structures were taken into account: the passive voice construction with the auxiliary verb *zostać/być*, the impersonal construction which includes the reflexive pronoun *się*, the impersonal form which ends in the –no/–to suffix, and the active voice construction. Additionally, as it is always possible to nominalise the relational ST structure in translation, this kind of structure was also considered as a possible translational equivalent for the chosen ST structures. According to Levý (1967[2000]), choosing from among such defined alternatives is derived from the psycholinguistic factors that determine the translation process. It was therefore assumed that the distance between the forms included in the paradigm may be measured in the cognitive effort required to use them as renderings of the s-passive form. The least effortful (or most effortless) solution is copying, while the most effortful one is nominalisation (or another kind of formal change applied in the Polish rendering).

Moreover, as the investigation pertained to the minimax strategy, which is assumed to be cognitively motivated, another important factor in the analysis was the translators’ lack of experience. The texts by the inexperienced translators are seen as reflecting the translator’s most cognitively natural reactions to content processing from a source text to a target text in translation between two specific languages. In consequence, by revealing that the minimax is the strategy that underlies the course of action taken by the majority of the novice, inexperienced translators in reaction to the same language stimulus (i.e. the same ST structure in translation into a language), we manage to confirm the cognitive roots of this strategy. Since it is cognitively motivated, the strategy may be hypothesised to possess the maximal potential to develop universal features of the “third code”.

Last but not least, as I believe that the characteristic features of the “third code” should be distinguished on the basis of material which reflects cognitive processes (which are always connected with an individual brain) the analysed texts were not subjected to editorial corrections. The reason was that, first of all, proofread texts represent two perspectives – the translator’s and the proofreader’s – which has a considerable influence on research results. Secondly, they may be filtered through cultural norms, which excludes the universality of a feature. This means that any kind of proofreading of a translated text is to be seen as strictly connected with introducing some culturally-rooted conventions, which may characterize the local branch of the “third code”, which, however, cannot be treated as typical for the language of translation as such.

The ST text under investigation contains eight conceptualizations which include verbal –s passive forms. They have been labelled A - H. The A structure was not included in the analysis, because it uses the –s form as an auxiliary

verb, which is not possible to be rendered by a passive *zostać/być* construction in Polish.

- A. Förslaget **föreslås träda** i kraft vid årsskiftet [...]. 'is proposed to enter into force'
- B. Enligt förslaget **slopas** sjukförsäkringsavgiften för löntagarna. 'is abolished'
- C. Och samtidigt **avskaffas** avdragsrätten för denna avgift [...]. 'is deducted'
- D. Vidare **justeras** skatteskalorna [...]. 'are adjusted'
- E. Ett extra avdrag för lägre inkomsttagare **införs**. 'is introduced'
- F. Och det ska **finansieras** genom höjda arbetsgivar- eller socialavgifter. 'will be financed'
- G. Den skattesänkning som den nya reformen medför **äts** till en del **upp** av höjningar av komun- och landstingsskatten. 'is compensated'
- H. Dessa skatter **höjs** med i genomsnitt en och trettiofem. 'are raised'

In the collected data the renderings of the chosen ST structures were analysed in two ways: horizontally (in all the collected translations of the given ST structure) and vertically (within each translated text with reference to all the selected ST structures). The analysis of the collected target texts focused on the realisation of the selected units (which reflect cognitive processes) and not on adequacy. That is why *all* realisations of a given unit in the target texts were taken into account, even if some of the translators failed to render the message of the original successfully.

Another important factor in the investigation was text type. It should be stressed that languages may differ as to the use of the passive. While in Swedish the passive expressed with the *-s* suffix is widespread, in Polish, passive forms, being more complex than active ones, are less common (Bąk 1987: 359). Since in Polish the passive is a less popular means of expression in ordinary texts, that is natural, normal Polish texts that simply concern people and things (Wierzbicka and Wierzbicki 1968: 100) and tends to be associated with written language and more formal registers, the study discussed in this article uses a text that represents bureaucratic language. In Polish using the passive comes more naturally in this kind of language and corresponds with the Swedish text. However, this does not mean that other kinds of constructions, which are equivalent to the passive with respect to content, cannot be used in a text of this sort.

9. The results

Let us now have a look at what kind of translational decisions the translators made. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1 below. The horizontal data analysis has demonstrated that each of the structures under investigation was translated into Polish with the use of at least three different equivalents. The ST structure C was rendered with the use of five different types of structures in the Polish translations, as illustrated by example 1 below. The Polish equivalents of the *-s* passive form *avskaffas* 'is deducted' are shown in bold.

(1)

Jednocześnie **znosi się** prawo do potrącenia [...]. (1) [**The się impersonal construction**]

Jednocześnie [...] **zostaje zniesione** prawo do [...]. (6) [**The zostać passive construction**]

Równocześnie **zlikwidowane będzie** prawo do [...]. (23) [**The być passive construction**]

Projekt reformy [...] jednocześnie **likwiduje** możliwość odpisania [...]. (19) [**The active voice construction**]

Zniesienie prawa do odliczenia [...]. (35) [**nominalisation**]

Reforma przewiduje [...], jednocześnie **anulując** możliwość odliczenia [...]. (43) [**-ąc gerund**]

Yet a great majority of all the renderings collected in the investigation were the passive voice constructions. Except for structure H, all the other source structures (B-G) were realised by means of Polish passive constructions in over 50% of the translations, i.e. in twenty-two texts and more. In the case of F, as many as 95% of the translators resorted to this kind of rendition.

The data can then confirm that the beginner translators display a strong tendency to apply the minimax strategy when translating the same text. What it means is that the translators would choose the least effortful of all the available variants Polish has to offer. At the same time, the study shows that nominalisation, which entails a greater conceptual effort on the part of the translator, was rarely used. No doubt, whether nominalisation is used or not depends on the degree to which the conventions of the target language make such a solution acceptable. However, in the assembled data, nominalisation concerned all but one structure (i.e. conceptualisation F). What is also noticeable is that the *-no/-to* construction is very rarely used as an equivalent to the Swedish passive voice. The reason might be its association with the past tense. Since the source text is written in the present tense, the construction was difficult to use and indeed occurred in exceptional circumstances in the case of two source structures, D and E.

Moreover, the vertical data analysis revealed that in thirty-three texts the translators used the passive construction (in both variants) in over 50% of the analysed structures, i.e. to translate four source structures and more in each individual translation. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 2 below. It can therefore be concluded that most translators used the minimax strategy in their individual translations because they preferred the passive construction as an equivalent to the Swedish passive voice even though they had a range of other options to choose from. Only ten translations did not render the passive literally in most of the translated structures. This group includes translations: 1, 3, 5, 11, 18, 19, 27, 35, 36, 43 (see Table 4 below where the solutions used in 1, 5, 19, 27, 36, 43 are shown).

Let us now see to what extent the translator's succeeding moves were influenced by his/her previous decisions. It was observed that once the translators

have decided in favour of one of the alternatives, they have repeated the choice in a number of consequent moves. A vast majority of the translators (twenty-nine) used the same construction (of choice) in over 50% of structures (i.e. four and more), as also illustrated by Table 2. What is more, in a vast majority of the texts (twenty-seven) the *zostać* + past participle passive construction was used repeatedly. In six of them, no other type of construction was used in translation: 6, 9, 14, 17, 22, 26. The solutions used in these texts are shown in detail in Table 3 below.

The study shows that the minimax strategy was also employed in another way. In Polish, the translator who uses a passive construction can place the auxiliary either before or after the past participle, e.g. *zostaje zniwelowane* / *zniwelowane zostaje*. As far as the analysed texts are concerned, the translators mostly repeat one kind of word order in the phrase. In eleven texts 2, 8, 9, 14, 17, 26, 30, 34, 37, 40, 41 (cf. Table 3) the translators preferred the order *zostać* + past participle (e.g. in 14: *zostanie zniesiona*, *zostanie zniesione*, *zostają uregulowane*, *zostało wprowadzone*, *zostanie sfinansowane*, *zostanie odzyskane*), while in text 12 the dominant choice was past participle + *zostać* (*zniesiona zostaje*, *zniesiona zostaje*, *skorygowana zostaje*, *wprowadzone zostaje*). This tendency to use the same word order in the construction within one translation exemplifies cognitive economy, which results in individual translators using the minimax strategy. Furthermore, some translators would choose one Polish structure and employ it throughout the text, as illustrated by Table 4. This was the case mostly with translation 1, in which the impersonal *się* construction was used consistently. An attachment to a specific behaviour can also be seen in the alternate use of certain constructions, e.g. in text 3, where the passive was used interchangeably with the impersonal *się* construction, or in 35, in which three different constructions were used, repeated in pairs of the same type. In translation 18 the only repeated verb form was *miałaby*, which is used to render the conditional mood both in the passive and in the active. The use of this mood has to be attributed to the translator's independent choice, which seems completely inaccurate from the point of view of equivalence. However, the fact that the translator employs this form consistently throughout the text points to their subconscious use of the minimax strategy.

Table 1. The translation of the investigated Swedish –s passive structures into Polish

	The <i>zostać/ być</i> passive construction		The <i>sig</i> impersonal construction		The aktive construction		A nominalisation of one kind or another		The impersonal – <i>no</i> construction		The – <i>qc</i> presens gerund		No equivalent	
A	föreslås	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B	slopas	31	72,09%	2	4,65%	1	2,32%	9	20,93%					
C	avskaffas	33	76,74%	2	4,65%	2	4,65%	5	11,62%			1	2,32%	
D	justeras	30	69,76%	2	4,65%	2	4,65%	6	13,93%	2	4,65%			1
E	införs	28	65,11%	7	16,27%	3	6,97%	3	6,97%	2	4,65%			
F	finansieras	41	95,34%	1	2,32%	1	2,32%							
G	äts ... upp	28	65,11%	4	9,30%	8	18,60%	3	6,97%					
H	höjs	21	48,83%	2	4,65%	17	39,53%	1	2,32%					2

Table 2. The use of the passive construction (in both variants) in each individual translation (1-43)

The translation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
The quantity of the used <i>zostać/być</i> passive construction	2	6	3	5	3	7	6	4	7	5	3	6	6	7	5	5	7
The repetition of the chosen passive construction in more than 50% of structures	5	5		5	7			4	7	4		4	6	7			7

The translation	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
The quantity of the used <i>zostać/być</i> passive construction	3	3	6	4	7	6	7	6	7	3	6	6	6	4	5	6	4
The repetition of the chosen passive construction in more than 50% of structures	4		4		7		4	6	6		5	5	5	4	5		4

The translation	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
The quantity of the used <i>zostać/być</i> passive construction	2	2	5	4	7	4	4	5	2
The repetition of the chosen passive construction in more than 50% of structures			4	4	4	4	4	5	

Table 3. The repetition of the *zostać* passive construction in the texts in detail

	2	4	6	8	9	12	14	17	22	25	26
A	föreslås	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B	slopas	zostają zwolnieni	zostaną zwolnieni	zniestienie	zostanie zniestiona	zniestiona zostaje	zostanie zniestiona	zostanie obniżona	zniestione zostaną	zostanie zniestiona	zostanie zniestiona
C	avskaffas	zostaje zniestione	zostaje zniestione	zostaje zniestione	zostanie uchylone	zniestiona zostaje	zostanie zniestione	zniestione zostanie	zostanie wylimi- nowana	zostanie zlikwido- wane	zostanie zniestione
D	justeras	będą kory- gowane	uregulowa- ne zostają	dokonuje się korekty	zostanie uregulo- wana	skory- gowana zostaje	zostaną uregulo- wane	zostaną uregulo- wane	zostaną uregulo- wane	zostaną skorygo- wane	zostaną dostosowa- wane
E	infräs	zostaje wprowa- dzony	zostaje wprowa- dzona	wprowadza się	zostaną wprowa- dzone	wpro- wadzona zostaje	zostało wprowa- dzone	zostanie też wpro- wadzone	zostanie wprowa- dzony	wpro- wadzona zostanie	zostanie ... wpro- wadzona
F	finansie- ras	ma wrócić	ma to zostać zrównowa- żone	zostaną pokryte	zostanie sfinanso- wane	mają być sfinanso- wane	zostanie ... sfinan- sowane	ma ... zostać sfinanso- wana	sfinanso- wane ... ma zostać	zostanie ... sfinan- sowana	ma zostać sfinanso- wane
G	åts ... upp	zostaną złagodzone	zostanie wyrównane	zostaje zrównowa- żona	zostanie wyrów- nane	jest bilan- sowane	zostanie odzyskane	zostanie częściowo pochłonięte	zostanie pochłonięte	zostanie pochłonięte	zostanie pochłonięte
H	höjs	zostaną zwiększone	zostaną zwiększone	zwiększo- ne zostają	zostaną zwiększo- ne	wzrośnie	zostały podwyż- szone	zostaną podnie- sione	zostaną podnie- sione	wzrosną	zostaną podnie- sione

Table 4. The solutions used in particular translations

	1	3	5	12	18	19	27	35	36	43
A föreslås	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B sloopas	znosi się	zniesione mają zostać	ma zostać zniesiona	zniesiona zostaje	miałaby być zniesiona	zniesienie	likwidację	zniesienie	uchylenie	zniesienie
C avskaffas	znosi się	planuje się zniesienie	zostanie zniesiona	zniesiona zostaje	miałaby zostać	likwiduje	zniesione zostanie	zniesienie	zniesione miałoby być	anulując
D justeras	reguluje się	mają zostać poddane korekcje	ulegnie korekcje	skorygowana zostaje	miałaby regulować	skorygowane zostaną	modyfikacji ulegnie	wyregulowano	zmieniono by	skorygowany zostanie
E införas	wprowadza się	planuje się wprowadzenie	planuje się wprowadzić	wprowadzone zostaje	miałaby wprowadzać	zostaną wprowadzone	zostanie wprowadzony	wprowadzono	proponuje się wprowadzenie	przystąpią będą
F finansieras	ma być finansowane	mają być uzyskane	zostaną pokryte	ma być sfinansowane	będzie finansowana	zostanie ... sfinansowane	ma to zostać sfinansowane	będą finansowane	zostanie on pokryty	zostaną używane
G äts ... upp	jest wspomagane	poczyni się	skutkiem będzie	jest bilansowane	doprowadzi ... do podwyższenia	odbędzie się ... dzięki	oznacza	będzie spożytkowana	pochłonie	wiąże się jednak częściowo z
H höjs	podwyższa się	ma wynieść	wzrosną	wzrośnie	zostaną podwyższone	wzrosną	zwiększą się	wzrosną	wzrosną	wyniesie

10. Summary and discussion

Quantitative analyses based on the frequency with which each potential translational solution applied as an equivalent to a Swedish -s passive form occurred have revealed that the tendency to copy the passive voice structure into Polish prevails over using other possible means of rendering the source text passive structure. Moreover, the investigation has demonstrated a tendency by beginner translators to copy and repeat a chosen structure in their individual translated texts. It has then been shown that the minimax strategy is a significant characteristic of translations of Swedish texts by Polish students, not only if the phenomenon is considered globally, but also individually.

Being cognitively motivated, the minimax strategy is a likely translation universal and may be considered the basis for other translation phenomena, which are traditionally labelled as translation universals in literature on the subject. If the mechanism is so conspicuous in non-professional translation, it can be assumed that more professional translation will not be completely free of it, particularly because, as Taylor (2007: 17) points out, people naturally focus on form. One may therefore suggest that the strategy will be a driving force behind the “third code”.

Incorporating the minimax strategy into the description of the “third code” has a significant bearing on the way the language can be perceived in future research. The minimax strategy is clearly connected with interference. However, it should be stressed that the concept is understood broadly here and encompasses the characteristic features of the source language (including those that bear resemblance to some features of the target language) on the one hand, and the influence of the target language on the structures used by the translator on the other. The recognition of the minimax strategy as a driving force behind the “third code” inevitably implies that individual features of the languages (and texts) that meet in a translation come to the fore as a factor that shapes this language. It can be safely assumed that, in accordance with this strategy, such features, if possible to transplant to the target language, will be rendered literally in translation and will therefore influence the character of the “third code”. What languages that come into contact in translation are studied determines the dominant features of the code. Therefore, drawing focus to the minimax strategy helps channel the researchers’ attention towards the similarities languages share in translation, rather than the differences, which are usually highlighted.

The widespread use of the minimax strategy in non-professional translation bears out the assumption that it will trigger the emergence of more detailed universal values. For instance, it may be related to simplification. On the other hand, it seems to rule out explicitation, understood as complementing the text of the translation with additional (implied in the source text) information, which is not, however, conditioned by the language systems. But is this true? This question begs further research, yet a few observations can already be made in the context of the present text.

As a translation phenomenon, explicitation seems to be motivated communicatively (rather than cognitively) and the rules of communication adopted within a given culture may determine the extent to which the translated text becomes explicitated. However, if one assumes that communication between two cultures in translation always requires that the content is somehow complemented for reasons unrelated to the systems themselves, then the communicative motivation becomes a potential trigger of universals.

In this particular context it seems interesting to relate explicitation to the minimax strategy. One might say that there are situations in which the strategy, which is based on literal rendition, ceases to work. Since using the strategy may result in communicative misunderstanding or the potential reader's failure to understand the text of the translation, employing it may no longer pay off from the point of view of communication. That is why in some cases the minimax strategy is abandoned in favour of explicitation, which is more effortful from the cognitive point of view. However, when explicitation is used, subjective psychological factors may become more conspicuous, that is the way the individual translator perceives a given source conceptualisation and the image they have of the receiver. This is how the translator demonstrates their psychologically motivated concern with the receiver or, as noticed, for instance, by Pym (2005: 41), their fear of losing credibility in the eyes of the potential receiver of the translation.

At the same time, highlighting the minimax strategy as a basis for shaping language in translation seems to contradict the claim that the avoidance of repetition may be seen as a universal feature of translation. The study has demonstrated that the strategy tends to favour the repetition of content if appropriate conditions are created in the source text.

It has been accepted that translators avoid reflecting the repetition present in the source text, which is one of the proposed translation universals. However, for most part, the proposition concerns the repetition of lexical units. The literature in the field makes no mention of avoiding repetition based on grammatical constructions or forms used in the source text. However, if one were to accept as true the proposition that the avoidance of repetition in translation is universal, according to this principle translators should also avoid formally-conditioned recurrence; one cannot expect the human mind to treat the various language units differently when in both cases it deals with linguistic realisations of conceptual content. The analysis has shown that the translators tend to repeat a construction when such a solution is suggested by the source text; at the same time, with reference to the realisation of a given source content, it is possible to diversify means of expression. However, one cannot rule out that sometimes the minimax principle (which entails minimal conceptual effort and implies literal rendition as well as repetition of content, if that is what occurs in the source text) overlaps with other culturally-based behavioural patterns, which may lead to the strategy being used less. It cannot be eliminated altogether, because it is rooted in the human mind. The results of the study support the claim that it is not in the nature

of man as a language user and translator to avoid repetition. He is required to do so by more or less well-established cultural norms.

In a broader perspective, the present study seems to confirm Toury's claim pertaining to the law of interference and the law of standardisation, which he believes to be universal mechanisms that govern translation (Toury 1995). Interference is the most natural manifestation of the cognitively-motivated minimax strategy, whose communicative dimension promotes the emergence of other values in the language shaped in the translation situation. On the other hand, avoiding repetition can be considered a specific demonstration of the standardisation law. A language devoid of repetition is a language that has been smoothed away and filtered through the stylistic norm – soundly-rooted in our culture – that prohibits the repetition of content. However, the norm is conditioned culturally and therefore locally rather than universally (even though it may seem universal to us).

It appears that universality in translation is measured by the degree to which cultural factors influence the occurrence of a given phenomenon. The minimax strategy is motivated cognitively and the only limitations it is faced with come from the languages that meet in translation (sometimes it is impossible to imitate a structure) and the demand that the act of communication be accurate (the communicative dimension). Explicitation derives from the minimax strategy. It seems to be motivated communicatively and therefore the influence of cultural factors on the language of translation is marginal in this case (although it cannot be excluded altogether). The avoidance of copying the repetitions occurring in the source text is motivated culturally in its very nature; it is connected with the existence of some more or less well-established cultural norms that pertain to the construction of discourse, which makes the odds of this phenomenon being considered a universal value extremely slim.

It is therefore highly probable that the language of translation, the “third code”, is driven by two opposing mechanisms: the minimax principle (which is connected with positive and negative interference) and standardisation. The former seems to be rooted in the very cognitive processes that condition successful linguistic communication, the latter in culture and the related norms of behavior. In view of that, Toury's approach to translation universals seems worth considering, especially that it allows to include in the research the role of man as an active creator of translation, who is not only endowed with a specific cognitive apparatus and psychological makeup but also follows the “prescriptions” agreed on by a given culture.

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