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## PRIMING AS COGNITIVE MOTIVATION FOR THE “FIRST TRANSLATIONAL RESPONSE UNIVERSAL”

This article first surveys the current, somewhat unproductive state of research into potential universals of translation. Then it considers in specific the “first translational response universal” (Malmkjær 2011), suggesting that it may be rooted in the cognitive mechanism of priming. Empirical evidence for this is next sought in the analysis of a set of 34 novice translations of the same short passage from Swedish into Polish, which are shown to exhibit the effects of priming to a considerable extent. Overall, the objective is to illustrate a possible way of investigating postulated translation universals: first identifying a cluster of cognitive mechanisms to motivate the universal, then determining the linguistic structures that are concrete manifestations of such mechanisms in languages meeting in translation. The proposed research procedure thus proceeds from a cognitive process to a detailed language structure, allowing for the examination of phenomena observed in the “third code” on the supra-cultural level.

*Keywords: translation universals, Cognitive Linguistics, cognitive motivation, non-professional translation*

### 1. Introduction

Malmkjær (2008a) notes that every field of scientific research at some point experiences a certain moment of stagnation:

There comes a time in the life of most disciplines when it or some of its notions appear to have reached a point of stagnation, impasse or simply general scholarly boredom. All that can be said seems to have been said, with relatively little advance or agreement. (Malmkjær 2008a: 293)

In many respects, this passage aptly describes the current state of research into translation universals, i.e. the characteristics that are ascribable to the language of translated texts, otherwise known as the “third code” (Frawley 1984) or “translationese” (e.g. Tirkkonen-Condit 2002). A review of the various publications that have appeared on the topic over the past twenty years shows that the study of translation universals has indeed come to an impasse of sorts. This is evidenced not only by the general paucity of the intellectual debate between translato­logists on the issue, but also by the quite routinized approach that is typically taken by researchers to the inventory of postulated universal features and to the linguistic material so analyzed. On the other hand, the field is also peppered with various notions that have to date essentially lingered on the sidelines of mainstream translation-studies research, on both the theoretical and empirical levels. Revisiting these lines of thought could, however, prove to be the first step on a new path towards uncovering the essence of universal features of the “third code”. In this article, I will examine one such notion and demonstrate its potential for triggering a revitalization of the field.

The objective of this paper is, therefore, first to sketch an image of the current state of mainstream contemporary research on translation universals<sup>1</sup> and then, with this as a backdrop, to examine the so-called *first translational response universal*, mentioned in a few works by Kirsten Malmkjær (see Malmkjær 2011, 2012). This potential universal feature’s rooting in the cognitive mechanism of priming as well as the feature’s connections with other cognitive mechanisms are discussed, and evidence for this is sought in a short empirical analysis of a set of 34 novice translations of a short passage from Swedish into Polish.

## 2. A groundbreaking thesis

In her article “Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies – Implications and Applications”, published in 1993, Mona Baker draws attention to the possibility of using parallel language corpora to conduct research on, as she puts it, “the nature of translated text as a mediated communicative event” (Baker 1993: 243). Because translated texts are created in specific communicative conditions they may display certain unique attributes. These attributes, according to Baker, constitute universals of translation, whose identification and description allow us to explore the core of mediation via translation. Although, as Baker (1993: 242) herself stresses, the first observations concerning the existence of certain specific patterns of content construal in translations already appeared in the works of Even-Zohar (1979) and Toury (1980, 1991), it can be concluded that it was Baker’s thesis that launched a “hunt for regularities” in translation

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<sup>1</sup> The theoretical part of the article is partly based on my book: Data-Bukowska, E. 2016. *Ekspliyctacja w nieprofesjonalnym przekładzie szwedzko-polskim. Perspektywa kognitywna*. Kraków: WUJ.

research (Toury 2004a: 28). Also important in this context are Vanderauwera's (1985) work in which the existence of such regularities was first confirmed in a detailed empirical analysis, and the thesis formulated by Blum-Kulka (1986) on the universal character of *explicitation*. This latter thesis made it clear that any universal feature of the "third code" should be "inherent in the process of translation" (Blum-Kulka 1986: 19).

Unlike Blum-Kulka and Vanderauwera, who dealt with postulated universals involving the source text (ST), Baker (1993) defines universals of translation with reference to translated texts, standing in distinct opposition to original utterances produced in a chosen target language. Another important criterion for distinguishing such features is the fact that they do not derive from the systemic differences occurring between the languages meeting in translation.

### 3. What stage has research on translation universals now reached?

An overview of translational works over the last twenty years shows that our currently amassed knowledge on such universals of translation may raise some concerns. In the initial stage of the research, universals were distinguished intuitively and, in an atmosphere of optimism, they were treated as phenomena still in need of continued, deeper analysis (Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997: 194). However, for quite a long period of time the state of research on such characteristics of the "third code" was characterized as initial or preliminary (cf. Mauranen and Kujamäki 2004: 3, Chesterman 2004a: 45, 2004b: 11), which may be seen as a first warning signal for translationalists that the investigation of potential translation universals might be experiencing considerable difficulty.

Studies focusing on common features of translations were undoubtedly invigorated by the increasing use of language corpora (cf. Laviosa 2002, 2004, 2008: 122ff, Mauranen 2008: 38ff, Kanter et al. 2006, Ilisei et al. 2010). Some translation scholars emphasize, however, that the methodology developed in this type of analyses (Baker 1993), reproduced in subsequent works, could also be contributing to a certain distortion of our image of such features. Malmkjær (1998) draws attention to the fact that corpus studies may offer excellent juxtapositions of statistical data, but they do not take into account the diversity of possible translation solutions. Corpus studies also underestimate the role of the source text in the process of investigation, which in turn leads to a significant reduction of our knowledge on the mechanisms operating during the translation process. Moreover, the individual nature of the translation act is overlooked, which means that it is deprived of its main participant, i.e. the translator. Finally, the vast majority of translated texts constituting bilingual corpora (and other analyzed language data) are published translations that have been subjected to editorial revision, which always leads to considerable changes in the target text.

Some translationalists, therefore, express the opinion that the positing of a set of translation universals was done too hastily, based on first impressions rather than

on specific language observations (Toury 2004b: 17). An element of uncertainty has crept into the ranks of translation scholars, as is reflected in the terminology used in various works. Since first being described as “universals” by Baker (1993), the features under discussion are now often referred to as “general or law-like tendencies or high probabilities of occurrence” (Mauranen 2008: 35), “less-than-universal generalisations” (Chesterman 2010: 44) or “accepted tendencies” in translation (Jiménez-Crespo 2011). A decisive attempt to move away from the concept of “universals” in the field of translatology is evident in Toury’s thesis (1991) concerning “the laws of translation”. As noted by Malmkjær (2011: 88), Toury distanced himself from the term ‘universal’ relatively early. A strong voice questioning the existence of such features comes from House (2008: 11).

Some researchers also point to an ideological basis for the notion that there exist universal features of the “third code”. For example, Toury (2010: 161ff) includes the issue of universals into translatalogical myths, combining facts and fiction. These myths have the main purpose of allowing researchers trying to establish a new discipline to define their identity.

Statements of this kind most of all reveal a disturbing fact – that honing in on the actual core of any universal feature in the “third code” has been a subject of interest to translation scholars only to a very limited extent (Malmkjær 2011: 88).

#### **4. New possibilities**

Halverson (2003) draws attention to the three-level description model of language generalization developed by Croft (1990), which allows for a more precise characterization of generalizations formulated in a specific research area. The first level refers to the most basic observations pertaining to “the basic facts of language.” The second level refers to the so-called “internal generalization” identified on the basis of specific languages. The third level of “external generalization” means interdisciplinary approach to linguistic phenomena, merging “concepts from psychology, biology and other realms outside the structure of language” into the description (Croft 1990: 247, after Halverson 2003: 231).

Considering the taxonomy presented above, Halverson (2003: 231-232) points out that only claims formulated on the basis of cognitive factors can be treated as generalizations of the highest (third) level. Therefore, to start talking about the universality of a given translation phenomenon we must not only accept the condition that it is an inherent feature of the “third code”, but also that it is a manifestation of cognitive processes occurring in the minds of translators. Only such processes may be considered common to all people and to operate regardless of cultural conditions influencing translators. Then, there is a question about unconscious mechanisms that may affect translators’ decisions and may be stronger than certain culturally determined rules that translators have been subjected to.

A similar opinion on translation universals is presented by Chesterman (2004b), who stresses the role of causality, or the core of a universal. On this approach, a key aspect of the existence of such features in the “third code” is their rooting in human cognitive processes.

Although the role of cognitive motivation for postulated universal phenomena in translation seems to be a crucial issue, only a few translation scholars have aimed at exploring it in detail (see e.g. Mauranen 2008, Malmkjær 2008b). Malmkjær (2011: 89) points out that she tried to emphasize this issue in some of her studies (2004a, 2008, 2009), having regard to Toury’s recommendation (2004a: 22) that distinguishing translation universals should also mean that they give translation researchers “new insights” in translation. She has also taken a closer look at motivations underlying the phenomena (i.e. potential universals) analyzed in empirical studies conducted by other researchers. In her view, only a few of such phenomena can be described as cognitively motivated. A clear example of these is, however, a phenomenon defined as *reduction of features typical for the target language* in translations (Malmkjær 2008b: 56). In one of the analyses of this potential universal, Tirkkonen-Condit (2004) indicates a purely cognitive basis for it. Units that are typical for the target language (branded by Tirkkonen-Condit as “unique items”) are used in translations into that language less frequently, because they are underrepresented in the translator’s mental lexicon. According to Malmkjær (2008b: 56-57) the kind of transfer that can be observed in this case is the key to further research on universals in translation. The scholar stresses, however, that what we are dealing with here is not the impact of the source language into the target language, as it is generally believed, but rather the impact of the target language on the shape of translation.

This observation can be considered a pivotal one for translation studies, because it suggests a change in the method of searching for translation universals. Universal features of the “third code” may be primarily conditioned by the impact exerted on the target text by target language structures in the translator’s mind, and not, as is believed, by the source language. Thus, the central component of the emergence of such features in the “third code” is the translator himself, whose mental activity is reflected in the produced translations. According to Malmkjær (2008b: 57) research on translation universals should be focused on finding precisely this kind of cognitively motivated phenomena.

## 5. Forgotten links

In the work of Malmkjær mentioned in the introduction to this article (Malmkjær 2008a), the scholar proposes one more potential way out of the research impasse. In such a situation, Malmkjær (2008a: 293) argues, it is advisable to dig deeper into the roots of the research area and to investigate whether this may turn up some forgotten or omitted thoughts that may be an

invigorating impulse for new, both theoretical and empirical approaches. In the context of research on translation universals, one such forgotten link seems to be the “third code’s” potential connection with cognitive economy, which lies at the foundation of our world (Zipf 1949).

The first translation scholar to notice cognitive economy as underlying translation phenomena was Levý (1967, 2009). He observed that translators in the mapping process intuitively apply those solutions that are connected with minimal mental effort, i.e. by using the so-called minimax strategy. According to him, a real translation task is pragmatic, a fact that influences decisions taken during the translation process. The translator is forced to choose from among a number of possible solutions. Yet, he/she intuitively aims at the solution which promises to yield the greatest effect with the least effort. By applying the minimax strategy, he/she is acting economically, not only in terms of time but also of cognition. (Cronin 2001: 91; Fuertes Olivera & Velasco Sacristán 2001: 75-76).

Reference to cognitive economy can be also found in the work of Ivir (1981), who stresses that translators begin the process of establishing equivalence by determining formal correspondences between languages used in translation and they opt away from such solutions only when their use becomes impossible. The formal aspect of the mapping is, however, always present in their consciousness (Ivir 1981: 58). Therefore, it can be concluded that cognitive economy manifests itself here in the literal mapping, which is commonly associated with form-oriented translation and still remains an underappreciated aspect of translation.

In the context outlined here, it also seems important to mention a study by Puurtinen (2003), in which the absence of *explicitation* in the analyzed novice translations is explained on the basis of the translators’ use of “the target language structure that comes first to mind and seems the easiest to use” (Puurtinen 2003: 60). Although such a procedure is usually treated as unprofessional and even undesirable (Wilss 1989: 13), in Malmkjær’s opinion it is a more common phenomenon, which she describes as “the first translational response universal” and relates to literal translation. On this view, the translator applies in such cases “the first meaning” that appears in his/her mind while mapping the source conceptualization into the target language. (Malmkjær 2011: 92, 2012: 68) Although Malmkjær relates the mentioned procedure mainly to translators’ competence, rather than to more general cognitive mechanisms, her thesis seems to correlate with the minimax strategy proposed by Levý and to observations of Ivir. If any content comes first to mind, it can be assumed that its language verbalization must occur with minimal mental effort underlying cognitive economy. This kind of content must also show cognitive prominence in the translator’s knowledge representation, and this condition can be ascribed to the form of the created source conceptualization (cf. Maier, Pickering and Hartsuiker 2016; Taylor 2007: 17f). The phenomena presented here, then, combine with each other, allowing us to point to an underappreciated aspect of translation, one which may nevertheless have the potential of universality.

Taking into consideration Malmkjær’s thesis in the context of future research on translation universals, it therefore seems important to ask: What is the

translator's first translational response motivated by? Based on the observations presented above, we can assume that it is motivated by cognitive economy. This economy is connected with the cognitive mechanism of distinguishing a figure on a background based on the figure's conceptual prominence. The prominence pertains in this case to the formal aspect of linguistic conceptualization, which in turn, is manifested in translations. There may, however, exist other such mechanisms and their elucidation may be a step towards a better understanding of the core of the "third code" and universal features of this particular language. Namely, it can be assumed that the stronger the cognitive motivation of a postulated universal feature, the greater chances that this feature may be present in translations irrespective of the particular translator, text type, language, culture, etc.

## 6. A sample study

### 6.1. The hypothesis

The central thesis I will put forward in this article is that the cognitive phenomenon of priming, which, according to Wagner (2002: 27) "refers to facilitative changes in the ability to identify, generate, or process an item due to a specific prior encounter with the item," can be seen as a cognitive mechanism underlying the *first translational response universal*.

Priming is an unconscious process that increases the probability of a specific mental category being invoked in the processes of perception. It evidences itself in the impact of a stimulus on the subsequent transformation processes of this stimulus (perceptual priming), or on another stimulus that is connected with the former semantically (conceptual priming). The main difference between the two types of priming, then, is that the former is affected by differences in the physical features of the prime and probe stimuli, whereas the latter is influenced by differences in the degree of semantic processing of the stimuli. (Henson 2009: 1060)

According to the mechanism of priming, the speaker's memory representation of an object or some associations of this object are activated, both in mono- and inter-lingual contexts. However, the phenomenon can also occur in the absence of awareness of the perception of the stimulus. (Wagner 2002; Henson 2009: 1060)

It should be stressed that the phenomenon of priming is a subject of empirical research in relation to not only single words but also syntactic structures (Loebell and Bock 2003); detailed information on the extent of such studies can be found in Branigan (2007). My proposal here to consider priming as a mechanism potentially involved in the *first translational response universal* was in part motivated by casual observations made while analyzing translated texts before they were subjected to editorial revision.



## 6.2. Research setting

The aim of the empirical study was to investigate the impact of the cognitive mechanism of priming in translation and to demonstrate whether this phenomenon may indeed, in line with the research hypothesis, underlie the *first translational response universal*.

The sample data used in the analysis consisted of a non-literary Swedish text and 34 Polish translations thereof prepared in 2013 and 2014 by trainee translators (fourth-year students at the Unit of Swedish Philology at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, who were at the beginning of a practical course in translation but already had done translation). The source text used was “De som inte kan läsa blir bara fler och fler” by Göran Leijonhuvud. It was taken from the book *Språket i bruk*, 1974, edited by U. Teleman and T.G. Hultman, Gleerups: Lund, pp. 210-211. It is referred to by the abbreviation (TiB) whenever quoted in this article.

An important dimension of the collection of the data was the authenticity of the translators' behaviour. The students were asked to translate the text with an ordinary Polish target reader in mind and to provide a neat translation. 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). The text was translated independently, in each translator's natural environment (at home), and the students had dictionaries and other reference material at their disposal. As the translation task was part of ordinary course requirements, I collected the translations to be evaluated. One of the phenomena which clearly manifested itself in the collected texts was repeating of structures and this coincidental observation was the trigger for the idea of conducting a deeper investigation of the observed phenomenon.<sup>2</sup> I asked the students individually if I could use their translations as research material assuring them that they would remain anonymous. After the translators had provided their renderings no editing corrections were made to the texts used as language data. Therefore, these texts do to a large extent satisfy the conditions necessary for allowing us to potentially observe the operations underlying the *first translational response universal*. It was assumed that the first translational response can be treated not only literally, i.e. as the first decision taken by the translator, but also as his/her solution applied before external editorial revisions. The translations were numbered 1-34 and they are referred to by these numbers whenever quoted in this text. However, the analysis presented in this article represents only an initial fragment of the study as a whole, and is to be seen as offering only a general presentation thereof.

Seeking evidence of the impact of priming, I now report some of the results of the empirical study.

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<sup>2</sup> In private communication many Polish novice and professional translators also confirm that they fail to notice repetitions of content in their own translations, especially with respect to structures that occur next to iterations consciously avoided by the translator in line with stylistic norms.



### 6.3. Structural and semantic priming effects in practical translation

According to the definition of priming outlined above, the analysis included the following two levels:

1. the occurrence of the specific unit in the ST constituting the prime and causing a repetition of the same word in the TT (the probe) if the prime occurs in the ST again (perceptual priming connected with visual perception);
2. the semantic processing of chosen content in the mind of the translator, manifested in the repetition of the TT unit used in this text before, although no repetition appeared in the ST (conceptual priming).

It was hypothesized that priming would occur at both levels. Visual representation of an entity seen as maximally cognitively prominent would result in the TT in repetitions of the corresponding item chosen for this entity by the translator. In addition, activation of a particular item (being the conceptual prime) in the translator's knowledge representation would result in the use of this item in the TT, even though the ST structure suggested a different, but semantically related solution.

The following Swedish ST unit was subjected to detailed analysis:

(1)

Under den **tid (a)** som det tar att läsa den här meningen föds elva **människor (b)** till världen. Under samma **tid (c)** dör fem **människor (d)**. Jordens befolkning har **ökat (e)** med sex **personer (f)**. Dvs när du har läst hit har den hunnit **öka (g)** med omkring tjugo **personer (h)**.

De 200 000 # **(i)** som föds varje dag måste utbildas om de skall ha någon chans i livet, [...]. (TiB, p. 210, changes E. D.-B.)<sup>3</sup>

In the **time (a)** it takes to read this sentence eleven **people (b)** are born into the world. During the same **time (c)**, five **people (d)** die. The world population has **increased (e)** by six **people (f)**. That is, when you've read here, it has managed to **increase (g)** by about twenty **people (h)**.

The 200 000 # **(i)** born each day must be educated if they are to have any chance in life, [...]. (translation by E. D.-B.)<sup>4</sup>

In passage (1), four Swedish items have been highlighted: *tid*, *människor*, *öka*, *personer*. Each of them is repeated in the subsequent part of the text. Each occurrence of one of these items is designated as (a), (b), (c), (d), etc.

<sup>3</sup> The changes pertain only to using bold, underlying some words and designating them as (a), (b), (c), etc.

<sup>4</sup> This assumption cannot be straightforwardly fulfilled in English, for instance, because the Swedish unit *människor* and *personer* will likely be rendered by means of the item 'people', as it is shown in the translation of the Swedish unit into English above.

(see also Table 2 in Appendix). As the possibility of priming depends on “the existence of structurally different ways of saying the same thing” (Loebell and Bock 2003: 795), systemic determinants of the examined phenomenon were excluded from the analysis. I considered that the passage (1) can be translated into Polish in a version that does not include any repetitions, and concluded this is indeed the case: for instance, text no. 7 from the collected translations provided confirmation of this possibility:

(2)

W **czasie (a)** potrzebnym na przeczytanie tego zdania na świecie rodzi się jednaścioro **ludzi (b)**, jednocześnie umiera pięcioro **Ø (c)**. Populacja **zwiększyła się (d)** o sześć **osób (f)**. To oznacza, że dokładnie od tego momentu **jest (g) nas (h)** około 20 więcej.

Te dwieście tysięcy **# (i)**, które rodzi się każdego dnia, musi uzyskać wykształcenie, jeśli chce mieć w życiu jakiegokolwiek szanse [...]. (7, changes E. D.-B.)

Conversely, I checked whether this passage can be translated into Polish in a version that preserves all the analyzed repetitions (while retaining their character); this, too, proved possible, as is shown in the constructed example (3) below:

(3)

W **czasie (a)** potrzebnym na przeczytanie tych zdań przychodzi na świat jedenastu **ludzi (b)**. W tym samym **czasie (c)** umiera pięciu **ludzi (d)**. Populacja na Ziemi **zwiększyła się (e)** o sześć **osób (f)**. Oznacza to także, że w momencie, w którym doczytałeś do tego miejsca **zwiększyła się (g)** o około dwadzieścia **osób (h)**.

Te 200 000 **# (i)** przychodzące na świat każdego dnia musi zdobyć wykształcenie, jeśli ma mieć jakąś szansę w życiu [...]. (constructed example, not from any of the novice translations examined – E. D.B.).

The viability of this translation variant also allowed me to determine the potential extent of priming in the analyzed text unit. It was assumed that each translator could be influenced by priming to the maximal extent. In the 34 texts, the four analyzed items could be repeated four times which means that in total, repetition could be applied in 136 cases (100%) in the analyzed test unit.

Table 1 below shows the results of the analysis (see also Table 2 in Appendix where particular renderings of the analyzed items (a), (b), (c), (d), etc. are mentioned).

Table 1. Repetition of the same word in the designated points

1. Perceptual priming	(a) / (c)	(b) / (d)	(e) / (g)	(f) / (h)
	19	6	15	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>			
2. Conceptual priming	(b) or (d) / (f) or (h)		(h) / (i)	
	20		9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>			

Perceptual priming means that the chosen Polish equivalent for the ST prime is repeated if the prime occurs in the ST again, e.g. the Swedish item *tid* 'time' in (a) and (c) is rendered as the Polish *czas* 'time' (in different inflectional forms), *människor* 'people' in (b) and (d) is rendered as the same Polish item, etc. Repetition primed by the ST structure was used in 65 cases, accounting for 47.79% of possible instances of the phenomenon. Example (4) taken from the material demonstrates this type of TT conceptualization:

(4)

W **czasie** (a) czytania tego zdania na świecie rodzi się jednaścioro **dzieci** (b). W tym samym **czasie** (c) umiera pięciu **ludzi** (d). Zatem liczba ludności świata **wzrasta** (e) o sześć **osób** (f). To oznacza, że w czasie czytania tego akapitu zdąży **wzrosnąć** (g) o około dwadzieścia **osób** (h).

Dwieście tysięcy dzieci, które każdego dnia przychodzi na świat musi zdobyć wykształcenie, jeśli chce mieć w życiu jakąś szansę [...]. (13, changes E. D-B.)

In example (4) above, repetition is not used exclusively in one case stimulated by the ST prime, i.e. in points (b) / (d) (the same item in source Swedish: *människor* / *människor*, two different items in target Polish: *dzieci* / *ludzi*).

The effect of priming is, however, evidenced most clearly by repetitions of the same TT item used consecutively in cases where the ST applied different, but semantically similar items, i.e. in points (b) or (d) / (f) or (h) (two different item in source Swedish: *människor* / *personer*, the same item in target Polish, e.g. *osób* / *osób*). This type of renderings was treated as manifestation of conceptual priming pertaining to the semantic processing of chosen content in the mind of the translator. To this category also the point (i) was included; it contains an elliptical phrase (*the 200,000 # born each day*) that could potentially be completed by several Polish TT items showing similarity in meaning (e.g. *osób*, *ludzi*, *dzieci*, etc.) and that could be used in the previous text. In example (1) above it was marked by using the symbol #. This point is

particularly interesting in terms of research due to the fact that it appears in the initial part of a new thematic whole (a new paragraph), which partially diverts the translator's attention from the former paragraph. Therefore it was assumed that the appearance at this point in the TT of an item that was used as the last one in the prior TT context (i.e. in point (h)) would represent evidence of strong conceptual priming. Since this kind of priming could potentially occur at two places in the analyzed passage of text, it was assumed that it in total could appear in 68 cases (100%) in the analyzed target texts.

Conceptual priming can be seen in texts no. 1 and 12, where only one Polish item *osób* is applied as the equivalent for the two Swedish items *människor* (d) and *personer* (f). This type of translation is illustrated in example (5).

(5)

W czasie, który zajmuje przeczytanie tego zdania, na świecie rodzi się jedenastu ludzi. W tym samym czasie pięć **osób** (d) umiera. Populacja ludzi na ziemi zwiększyła się o sześć **osób** (f). Znaczy to, że do momentu, w którym doczytałeś do tego miejsca, zdążyła wzrosnąć o około dwadzieścia.

Te 200 tys. osób, które rodzi się każdego dnia, [...]. (1, changes E. D.-B.)

Yet, a strong variant of priming can be identified in nine cases, in which the translators consistently applied the chosen unit also in another places in the TT, and so used it successively at least three times (translations: 20, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34). This type of translation is illustrated in example (6).

(6)

W czasie kiedy czytasz to zdanie w świecie rodzi się jedenaścioro dzieci (b). W tym samym czasie umiera pięć **osób** (d). Zaludnienie Ziemi wzrosło o sześć **osób** (f). Jeśli przeczytałeś ten fragment to zaludnienie wzrosło właśnie o około 20 **osób** (h).

200 tysięcy ludzi, którzy rodzą się każdego dnia [...]. (20, changes E. D.-B.)

Among these cases, five texts (26, 28, 30, 33, 34) are noteworthy in that the item *osób*, once selected, consistently applied throughout the text, as equivalent to both *människor* and *personer*, such as in example (7) below (where it is indeed used once again in place of the ellipsis at point (i)):

(7)

W czasie, kiedy czytasz to zdanie na świecie rodzi się 11 **osób** (b). W tym samym czasie umiera 5 **osób** (d). Światowa populacja wzrasta o 6 **osób** (f). Oznacza to, że w momencie doczytania do tego momentu, populacja wzrosła o około 20 **osób** (h).

200 000 **osób** (i), które rodzą się każdego dnia [...]. (28, changes E. D.-B.)

A kind of longer-distance priming may be observed in nine texts (2, 5, 6, 9, 17, 18, 19, 22, 27), in which a Polish item selected at the beginning of the unit (used as equivalent of the Swedish *människor* in point (b)) returns as equivalent to another structure (*personer*) and is often used as the main explicit equivalent throughout the TT. Examples (8) and (9) below:

(8)

W czasie, który poświęcasz na przeczytanie tego zdania, na świat przychodzi 11 **osób (b)**. W tym samym czasie umiera 5 innych. Populacja Ziemi zwiększyła się o 6 **osób (f)**. Oznacza to, że jeśli doczytałeś do tego momentu, to populacja zdążyła się zwiększyć już o około 20 **osób (h)**.

Te 200 000 ludzi, którzy rodzą się każdego dnia, [...]. (19, changes E. D.-B.)

(9)

W czasie, który potrzebny jest, by przeczytać to zdanie, rodzi się jedenaście **osób (b)**. W tym samym czasie pięć umiera  $\emptyset$ . Liczba ludności na świecie wzrosła o sześć **osób (f)**. Oznacza to, że w czasie, w którym zdążyłeś przeczytać ten fragment, liczba ludności zdążyła wzrosnąć o około dwadzieścia **osób (h)**.

200 000 **osób (i)**, które rodzi się każdego roku [...]. (2, changes E. D.-B.)

The appearance of an item previously present in the TT in the elliptical structure in (i) was confirmed in nine texts (2, 4, 12, 15, 16, 25, 28, 32, 33). This type of operation is illustrated by examples (7), (9) above and (10), (11) below.

(10)

W czasie potrzebnym na przeczytanie tego zdania na świecie rodzi się jedenaście osób. W tym samym czasie pięcioro umiera. Populacja wzrasta więc o sześć osób. W ten sposób kiedy kończysz czytać ten akapit, na świecie jest około 20 **ludzi (h)** więcej niż kiedy zacząłeś.

Tych 200 tysięcy **ludzi (i)**, którzy przychodzą na świat każdego dnia, [...]. (12, changes E. D.-B.)

(11)

W trakcie czytania tego zdania urodziło się jedenaścioro dzieci. W tym czasie umarło też pięcioro osób, zatem całkowita liczba ludności na świecie zwiększyła się o sześciu ludzi. To oznacza, że do tego momentu zdążyła już wzrosnąć o około 20 **osób (h)**.

Te 200 tysięcy **osób (i)**, które rodzi się każdego dnia, [...]. (15, changes E. D.-B.)

In total, the study confirmed 29 cases of conceptual priming, which represents 42.64% of possible instances of this phenomenon in the analyzed

language material. Overall, at least one occurrence of priming was identified in the vast majority of texts, i.e. in 24 of them, which is 70.58% of the analyzed language data.

## 7. Concluding remarks

The small-scale empirical analysis presented in this article has shown, in particular, that one type of priming, i.e. perceptual priming, was applied by novice translators at a high level (47.79%), confirming their natural and cognitively economic attachment to the form of linguistic items, recognized as maximally prominent. However, the second type of priming, i.e. conceptual priming, should be seen as more interesting in the context of the *first translational response universal*, and it was shown to be exhibited on the level of 42.64%. Given that there is an unwritten but quite commonly applied stylistic norm with respect to the target language in this particular configuration, according to which repetition is to be avoided in Polish texts, iterations of content based on semantic priming in the collected language data should be seen as a very clear sign of translator's moves that are cognitively motivated. They occur even though both TT stylistic recommendations and ST structures urge lexical diversity.

Therefore, the following cognitive phenomena can be mentioned among the mechanisms underlying the occurrence of the *first translational response universal*:

1. an entity's conceptual prominence in the ST (relating e.g. to the form of an expression),
2. priming, which partially confirms the role of the formal aspect of the ST conceptualization in shaping the TT renderings, and partially complements it relating to a kind of routine procedure in translators' moves motivated by cognitive economy.

As these are very distinct cognitive mechanisms that interact with each other it can be assumed that the universal feature proposed by Malmkjær (2011) may be confirmed in various translated texts, regardless of language. Moreover, confirmation of priming in the texts of novice translators allows us to assume that this phenomenon may occur in professional translations as well. The analysis confirmed, then, that the feature proposed by Malmkjær (2011) – the *first translational response universal*, still remaining on the sidelines of mainstream translatology, is a credible candidate for a common feature of the “third code”. Its distinguishing opens a new potential path of research leading to overcoming of “stagnation, impasse or simply general scholarly boredom” in translation studies, with novice translations (also undervalued and marginalized) as an essential element of such a new research direction.

Additionally, the conducted analysis allowed us to draw some conclusions about knowledge representation in bilinguals. It was conceived, that priming is a very strong mechanism underlying the translation process. A structure is

more likely to occur after its analogue has occurred (both interlingually i.e. in the source language and conceptually within the translator's consciousness) as this kind of procedure is cognitively economic. This kind of priming thus provides evidence for the hypotheses that structures in both of the languages in the bilingual speaker's mind may be simultaneously active or actually shared. On the other hand, the routine moves made by translators (due to cognitive economy) also enable us to note that translators constantly are trying to make use of any slightest conceptual resemblance existing between the languages in their language representation, meeting in a particular translation. This ability (phenomenon) also seems to be one of the determinants of the *first translational response universal* and may be seen as an interesting subject for future research (cf. Tymoczko 2005).

Finally, the analysis may be seen as illustrating a potential way of investigating postulated translation universals. The approach to translation universal research being advocated here involves first identifying a more general cognitive mechanism (or a cluster of such mechanisms) shared by all people as possibly motivating a given potential translation universal, and then determining the linguistic structures that represent concrete manifestations of such mechanisms in languages meeting in translation.<sup>5</sup> The proposed research procedure thus proceeds from a cognitive process to a detailed language structure, allowing us to examine phenomena observed in the "third code" on the supra-cultural level.

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<sup>5</sup> It should be stressed that the inventory of structures revealing the impact of an identified mechanism on translation must be precisely and individually determined on the basis of the particular languages.



## Appendix

Table 2. Repetition in the collected data – structural and semantic priming

	<i>tid</i> (a)	<i>människor</i> (b)	<i>tid</i> (c)	<i>människor</i> (d)	<i>ökat</i> (e)	<i>personer</i> (f)	<i>öka</i> (g)	<i>personer</i> (h)	# (i)
1	czas		czas	osób		osób			
2	czas	osób	czas		wzrosła	osób	wzrosnąć	osób	osób
3	czas		czas						
4								ludzi	ludzi
5	czas	osób	czas			osób		osób	
6		osób				osób		osób	
7									
8									
9		osób			zwiększyło się	osób	zwiększyła się	osób	
10		ludzi		ludzi		osób		osób	
11					wzrosło		wzrosnąć		
12	czas		czas					ludzi	ludzi
13	czas		czas		wzrasta	osób	wzrosnąć	osób	
14						osób		osób	
15								osób	osób
16	czas		czas		zwiększyła się	osób	zwiększyła się	osób	osób

17	czas	osób	czas			osób		osób		osób	
18	czas	osób	czas			osób		osób		osób	
19	czas	osób	czas		zwiększyła się	osób		osób		zwiększyć się	osób
20	czas		czas	osób	wzrosło	osób		osób		wzrosło	osób
21	czas		czas			osób		osób		osób	
22		osób				osób		osób		osób	
23	czas		czas								
24				osób		osób		osób		osób	
25	czas		czas	osób	wzrosło	osób		osób		wzrosnąć	osób
26	czas	osób	czas	osób		osób		osób		osób	
27		osób			wzrosła	osób		osób		wzrosła	osób
28	czas	osób	czas	osób	wzrasta	osób		osób		wzrosła	osób
29				osób		osób		osób		osób	
30		osób		osób	wzrosła	osób		osób		wzrosnąć	osób
31	czas		czas		wzrosła	osób		osób		wzrosnąć	osób
32	czas		czas		wzrosło	osób		osób		wzrosnąć	osób
33	czas	osób	czas	osób	wzrosła	osób		osób		wzrosnąć	osób
34		osób		osób	wzrasta	osób		osób		wzrosnąć	osób

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