

JERZY TOMASZCZYK

Gdańsk

POLISH SCHOOL SYSTEM: ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS
OF RELEVANT POLISH TERMS

The standard procedure in collecting material for a bilingual dictionary is to draw, as far as possible, on monolingual dictionaries of the source and target language, SL and TL respectively, and to supplement this with additional excerption to fill the time gap between the dictionaries used as sources of data and the one that is being compiled. Considering the time it takes to compile and polish a dictionary this gap is rarely less than several years, which is enough for the vocabulary to undergo at least some changes. Additional excerption is also necessary to take care of any areas of vocabulary that are not, or are only superficially covered by the existing monolingual dictionaries. It has been suggested that a useful source of data for bilingual dictionaries are texts translated from the SL into the TL and vice versa /Veselitskij 1962:113f/. The aim of the study reported here was to find out to what extent English translations of Polish texts can be used in the work on a Polish-English dictionary and to suggest a way of dealing with the problem of finding equivalents for bilingual dictionaries.

Generally speaking, the degree of equivalence of lexical items of two languages will depend, in a significant way, on the extent to which the two communities are culturally related; individual meanings apart, a sizable proportion of the lexical items of such languages as Polish and

English exhibit quite a considerable degree of equivalence, even though exact one-to-one correspondences are rare. Real problems set in when we consider what have come to be called "culture bound" items. These are lexical items which refer to those aspects of culture - understood here in the broad anthropological sense - which make a community unique, or at least different from the other community under consideration, each being a product of a different, even though sometimes partially overlapping, historical and social development. If equivalents are taken to be standard lexical items referring to the same bits of extralinguistic reality, then it is quite clear that culture specific items will have no exact equivalents in other languages. This is a problem of great concern to both bilingual lexicography and translation; although the lexicographer can always paraphrase the untranslatable SL item and the translator can fall back on the context to make his meaning clear, lengthy definitions are not what one really expects to find in a bilingual dictionary, while in translation an apt word or phrase often does a better job than a wordy description, even if the accuracy has to be sacrificed. Accordingly, wherever no ready-made equivalents exist, both the lexicographer and translator are at liberty to invent them, and the chances are that with time at least some of these inventions will become established items of the TL /cf. Zgusta 1971:324f/. The probability of this happening seems to depend on the frequency of occurrence of such items in TL texts, the odds in favour being increased if the item in question has referents in a number of foreign cultures. An inevitable consequence of this is that only the most basic content of the SL item is conveyed; technical university, which has no exact referent in any English speaking country but has them in a number of European countries might be quoted in support of the above statement. On the other hand, if the SL item refers to something truly unique to the SL culture, and if the condition of relatively high frequency of its occurrence is satisfied, other languages tend to adopt it as it is, with appropriate modification of its sound and morphological form /borrowing/.

For a TL item to be regarded an equivalent of an SL item, a number of requirements have to be satisfied. Thus, e.g. it must actually belong to the TL lexicon, enjoy similar social status, carry similar emotional load, etc., and above all it must be relatable to at least some of the situational features, i.e. distinctive features of substance, or extralinguistic reality, to which the SL item is relatable /Catford 1965:50/. Owing to differences in the organization of extralinguistic reality in the societies as well as differences in the organization of the lexical systems, these requirements cannot always be fully satisfied, the more so as they often turn out to be in conflict with one another.

As has already been said, the aim of this study was to find out to what extent texts translated from Polish into English can be used as a source of data for Polish-English dictionaries. The analysis is based on lexical items which reflect the organization of the school system in post-war Poland; the decision to use such items was quite arbitrary - any other set of items would have served the purpose equally well. No effort was made to make the list below exhaustive, or to bring it up to the minute. The circumstance that some of the institutions in the list no longer exist does not alter the fact that the lexical items corresponding to them are part of the Polish language. On the other hand, inclusion in the list below of vocabulary items that would reflect the latest developments in Polish education would miss the mark, as most of the available translations on the subject cover the period up to ca. 1970. Thus, the most important institutions making up the school system in People's Poland have been the following:

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| 1. wychowanie przedszkolne | 9. liceum ogólnokształcące |
| 2. przedszkole | 10. szkoła pomaturalna |
| 3. szkolnictwo podstawowe | 11. szkolnictwo wyższe |
| 4. szkoła podstawowa | 12. szkoły wyższe |
| 5. szkolnictwo średnie | 13. wyższa szkoła
inżynierska |
| 6. zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa | 14. uniwersytet |
| 7. liceum zawodowe | 15. politechnika |
| 8. technikum zawodowe | |

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| 16. wyższa szkoła rolnicza | 22. wyższa szkoła wychowania fizycznego |
| 17. akademia rolnicza | |
| 18. wyższa szkoła ekonomiczna | 23. akademia wychowania fizycznego |
| | |
| 20. wyższa szkoła artystyczna /plastyczna, muzyczna teatralna, etc./ | 24. liceum pedagogiczne |
| | 25. studium nauczycielskie |
| 21. akademia sztuk pięknych | 26. wyższa szkoła nauczycielska |
| | 27. wyższa szkoła pedagogiczna |

Let it be pointed out that for lexicographic purposes we are interested in lexical items, i.e. individual words or multiword lexical units corresponding in this case to types of establishment rather than in official names of particular institutions.

For the sake of comparison let us now consider the British and American systems of education:

Great Britain

pre-primary - nursery school

primary level - primary school or junior private school

secondary level - grammar, comprehensive, or secondary modern school, or, following the junior private school - secondary private school, or, following kindergarten and preparatory school - public school

post-secondary level - degree courses at universities or polytechnics entered from all but secondary modern schools, which lead to colleges of education or further education. To enter university, some grammar school and many comprehensive school graduates go through the sixth form college.

United States

pre-primary level - nursery school followed by kindergarten

primary level - elementary school

secondary level - high school, often preceded by intermediate school; secondary school, or junior high school followed by senior high school

post-secondary level - junior college and/or degree courses at

universities entered from high schools, or professional school entered from secondary schools through technical schools or directly from senior high schools.

It follows from this brief outline that the three systems of education differ quite considerably, and the situation of one who tries to find English equivalents of Polish items is ambivalent, to say the least. If we consider the established English lexical items, the choice of possible equivalents or, strictly speaking, near-equivalents, is quite wide; for one thing, there are two sets of items corresponding to the British and American systems respectively. However, in such a case we run the risk of describing the Polish system in terms of either the British or American realities, which is not exactly what one would be ready to accept. Even without going into a detailed analysis of the three systems in terms of their respective historical and social development, it would not be too much to say that the items corresponding to them have entirely different semantic value.

Let us now consider how this problem has been dealt with by different translators. The texts from which the renderings listed below have been taken are Polish books and other publications translated by professional translators into English and meant for foreign readers interested in Polish affairs; the publications excerpted are listed in the references. References to sources are omitted to save space; about half of the renderings are used interchangeably in from two to ten publications examined, about one third of them are used in all of them.

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|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1 pre-school education | 2.3 nursery |
| 1.2 kindergarten education | 2.4 pre-school nursery |
| 1.3 nursery education | 2.5 infant school |
| 2.1 kindergarten | 2.6 infant nursery |
| 2.2 nursery school | 3.1 elementary education |

- 3.2 primary education
- 4.1 primary school
- 4.2 elementary school
- 4.3 grade school
- 4.4 eight grade school
- 4.5 eight-grade primary school
- 5.1 secondary education
- 6.1 basic vocational school
- 6.2 vocational school
- 6.3 trade school
- 6.4 basic trade school
- 6.5 primary vocational school
- 7.1 vocational lyceum
- 8.1 vocational secondary school
- 8.2 secondary vocational school
- 8.3 technical school
- 8.4 secondary technical school
- 8.5 technicum
- 8.6 trade school of secondary status
- 8.7 technical trade school
- 8.8 technical vocational school
- 8.9 technical secondary school
- 8.10 technical college
- 9.1 general education secondary school
- 9.2 secondary general education school
- 9.3 general education school
- 9.4 general secondary school
- 9.5 general education lyceum
- 9.6 secondary school
- 9.7 grammar school
- 10.1 state technical school
- 10.2 state school of economics
- 10.3 vocational college
- 10.4 vocational courses for secondary school graduates
- 10.5 post-secondary vocational studies
- 10.6 vocational school of technology
- 11.1 higher education
- 11.2 higher learning
- 11.3 higher studies
- 11.4 academic education
- 11.5 university education
- 11.6 university studies
- 12.1 schools of higher education
- 12.2 schools of academic standing
- 12.3 schools of higher learning
- 12.4 institutions of higher learning
- 12.5 institutions of higher education
- 12.6 institutions of academic standing
- 12.7 higher education institutes
- 12.8 higher schools
- 12.9 university level schools
- 12.10 university level institutions
- 12.11 university type schools
- 12.12 university schools
- 12.13 academic institutions
- 12.14 institutes of higher education
- 12.15 institutes of higher learning
- 13.1 higher technical school
- 13.2 engineering college

- 13.3 professional engineering studies
- 13.4 technical studies
- 13.5 technical college
- 13.6 college of engineering
- 13.7 school of engineering
- 13.8 higher school of engineering
- 13.9 higher engineering school
- 13.10 advanced school of engineering
- 14.1 university
- 15.1 polytechnic
- 15.2 polytechnic institute
- 15.3 technical university
- 15.4 technical college
- 15.5 technical academy
- 15.6 polytechnic school
- 15.7 technological university
- 15.8 higher school of technology
- 15.9 institute of technology
- 16.1 higher agricultural school
- 16.2 higher school of agriculture
- 16.3 college of agriculture
- 16.4 agricultural college
- 16.5 advanced school of agriculture
- 16.6 agricultural university
- 17.1 farming academy
- 17.2 academy of agriculture
- 17.3 agricultural academy
- 18.1 higher school of economics
- 18.2 advanced school of economics
- 18.3 college of economics
- 19.1 medical academy
- 20.1 art /fine art/ /drama/theatrical/ college
- 20.2 college of art /drama/music/ fine arts/
- 20.3 /higher/ art /fine arts/ theatre/theatrical/drama/film/ television/ school
- 20.4 /higher/ school of music /film etc./
- 20.5 advanced school of fine arts /drama/music/
- 20.1 academy of fine arts
- 20.2 fine art academy
- 21.3 art academy
- 22.1 higher school of physical education
- 22.2 higher school of physical training
- 22.3 high school of physical training
- 22.4 college of physical education
- 22.5 physical education college
- 23.1 academy of physical education
- 23.2 academy of physical training
- 23.3 physical education academy
- 24.1 secondary teacher training college
- 24.2 teachers' training secondary school
- 24.3 teacher-training secondary school
- 24.4 teacher training lyceum
- 24.5 pedagogic lyceum

24.6 pedagogical lyceum	26.3 teacher training college
25.1 college of education	26.4 teachers' college
25.2 teachers' training college	27.1 higher pedagogic school
25.3 teacher-training college	27.2 teachers' training college
25.4 teacher training studies	27.3 higher pedagogical school
25.5 pedagogical training centre	27.4 higher school of pedagogy
25.6 pedagogical studies centre	27.5 teacher-training college
26.1 higher teacher's training school	27.6 teachers' college
26.2 higher teacher training college	

One can hardly help wondering at the multiplicity and variety of translation equivalents effected by all possible ways of rendering SL items in the TL /short of pictorial representation/. Thus we have:

- the so-called free equivalents, i.e. an existing and well-established British or American item is used, the assumption - or implication - being that the corresponding British or American institution bears a rather close resemblance, or is identical, to the Polish institution. Some examples are 9.7, 4.3, 15.1, 15.2, and also 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 4.1, 4.2, 8.3, 8.10, 13.5, 15.4, 25.2, 25.3, 26.3, 27.5;
- literal translations of Polish items into English, e.g. 24.5, 24.6, 27.1, 27.3, and also 4.5, 6.1, 8.1, 10.1, 11.3, 12.8, 13.7, 13.8, 16.1, 16.2, 17.2, 18.1, 20.3, 20.4, 22.1, 22.2;
- periphrastic translations, e.g. 6.1, 6.5, 8.1, 8.2, 8.4, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 10.6, 13.6, 15.3, 16.6, 25.5, 25.6.

With regard to literal and periphrastic translation, it seems that if the desired meaning is to be conveyed, words that belong to the current TL vocabulary should be used. Since it is not at all certain that an average native speaker

of English is familiar with words such as lyceum or technicum, 7.1, 8.5, 9.5, 24.4, 24.5 and 24.6 may be regarded as at least partial transliterations.

The above classification of equivalents is not very rigorous; it is difficult to decide whether, e.g. items 6.1 or 6.5 are literal or periphrastic translations, for all the difference that that makes.

The very number of renderings does not increase their chances of becoming stabilized units, although some polarization does seem to be taking place; items 9.1 and 15.3 are used by far more frequently than the competing renderings. Still, it seems that some sort of "legislative" activity would not be entirely out of place /cf. items 25.2, 26.3, and 27.2/. In many cases, however, the multiplicity of renderings can be accounted for on stylistic grounds - rarely does a translator insist on one equivalent as, e.g. is the case with the equivalents of item 12.

Although no tests with native speakers of English have been made concerning the comprehensibility and acceptability of the above renderings, and although most of them do in fact seem to convey the meaning intended /especially as they all appeared in appropriate contexts/, the fact that native speakers of English

- usually use only some of the items employed in English translations of Polish texts, e.g. 11.1, 12.4, 12.5,
- often use items that are rarely, if at all, employed by Polish translators, e.g. higher educational establishment, higher educational institution for 12,
- when writing about education rarely or never use certain vocabulary items that are frequently employed by Polish translators, e.g. higher in the names of higher educational institutions, or pedagogic al with reference to teacher training establishments,

should make one sensitive to what is known as cultural shock, which consists in the use of familiar words in unusual contexts or collocational shock is not necessarily undesirable, it seems that one would do better to avoid it whenever possible.

Another problem concerns the particular case of translating into English, where we have to do with two major systems of reference, British and American. It follows from the great number of literal and periphrastic translations and the sporadic cases of free translations that few translators contemplate description of the Polish system of education by means of items referring exclusively to the British or American systems. How does one, however, establish that a given item refers exclusively to the British or American situation? In other words, on what grounds does one generally accept kindergarten for przedszkole but rejects grammar school or high school for liceum ogólnokształcące? An extensive analysis of the three systems of education in terms of their historical and social development performed along the lines suggested by Kielar /1973/ will, of course, be very helpful, but in the end one is bound to arrive at a rather obvious conclusion that every Polish item represents a bit of extralinguistic reality that is at least in some ways different from its British or American counterpart, assuming that there is one.

Thus, in the search for translation equivalents that would be acceptable to everybody we have to

- make sure that they convey the meaning intended,
- avoid reference to exclusively British or American phenomena, especially if any such reference were to involve undesirable connotations, which boils down to looking for neutral terms, washed out, if necessary, of any but the basic meaning,
- in the case of periphrastic translations, we should at least try to avoid the collocational shock, as far as this is compatible with the satisfaction of the other requirements.

In lexicography, all decisions concerning the inclusion of any material in the dictionary are taken collectively by a body of experienced people, usually following consultation with specialists in the respective fields of knowledge or activity which are lexically represented in the dictionary. These decisions are arbitrary in so far as

the editorial board may attach greater or less importance to the degree to which a particular requirement is met. It is quite clear, however, that they must be based on as comprehensive and detailed a description of the two languages as is only possible, together with an extensive analysis of both systems of reference and other relevant factors. For this decision-taking body to be presented with the best possible input data, let us tentatively suggest an extension to the standard procedure of excerpting linguistic material for bilingual dictionaries, especially as regards highly culture specific items.

The first step is, of course, a thorough excerption of SL and TL texts written by native speakers of the two languages. This is supplemented by excerption of TL translations of SL texts made by native speakers of SL. In this way one can see how professional translators have dealt with the apparently untranslatable items. The special value of such translations is inherent in the fact that they have been made by native speakers of SL, who have a first-hand experience of the SL system of reference. Provided the sample is large enough, one will have at one's disposal a vast amount of very useful information. However, since not all renderings obtainable in this way can always be fully relied on with regard to their comprehensibility and acceptability¹, we suggest that the above procedure be supplemented with excerption of other available types of material, above all, TL publications written by native speakers of TL about the SL system of reference, which in our case means British and American texts about Poland. In this way we may gain an insight into how British and American writers see specifically Polish phenomena and what language they use when writing about them. One can reasonably assume that whatever they write is comprehensible and acceptable to their, i.e. TL, readership although, on the other hand - and not at all surprisingly - it may not be wholly acceptable to us. We do, in fact, feel slightly uneasy about such items as e.g. police for milicja, COMECON = Communist Common Market for RWPG or Rada Wzajemnej

Pomocy Gospodarczej, and even firm for przedsiębiorstwo, the terms preferred by Polish translators being, respectively, militia, CNEA = Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and enterprise. Thus, although such texts should provide us with a large body of invaluable data, such as e.g. class teacher and class teacher's period for wychowawca klasowy and godzina/lekcja wychowawcza instead of teacher having general charge of the particular class and educational lessons set aside for and conducted by teacher having general charge of the particular classes or hours at the disposal of the master, it should be realized that a native speaker of English will tend to describe Polish phenomena in terms of the British, or American, system of reference, e.g. the use of tutorial for lekcja wychowawcza, or grammar school for liceum ogólnokształcące, and for this reason all the equivalents that he employs must be subjected to careful scrutiny. Still, a critical comparison and analysis of all possible equivalents and what passes as equivalents, bearing in mind all the requirements that they must satisfy to a greater or lesser degree, should produce worthwhile results.

In view of the fact that not all aspects of life in Poland have been described in detail by native speakers of English, it might further be suggested that recourse be taken to TL publications written by native TL speakers about these areas of other, i.e. non-TL and non-SL, systems of reference that bear close resemblance to the SL system. It is common knowledge that, for example, the systems of education of some European countries are similar in certain respects to the Polish system or, to take another example, that the economies of the Socialist countries resemble one another quite considerably and in many respects, individual differences notwithstanding. Consequently, a British or American publication about the economy of e.g. the Soviet Union might reasonably be expected to offer something of interest also to a Polish lexicographer in the way of certain culture bound items related to the running of the national economy.

One might even go a step further and suggest an

occasional use of the publications written for UNESCO by some internationally renowned expert and concerning an aspect of life in his own or some other country that is similar to what we have here in Poland. We accept kindergarten for przedszkole, scholarship for stypendium, institute for instytut /the link between faculty and department in the organizational structure of universities/ and rector for rektor because these items are widely used for comparable phenomena in many European countries.

These are only tentative suggestions; the idea behind them is to draw as widely as possible on the specialist knowledge of various fields and on the competence in English of as many people as possible. It is hoped that an overall approach, carried out in practice, will produce worthwhile results.

NOTES

- ¹ To see what literal translation may lead to, consider the following renderings of British terms: secondary modern schools - szkoły nowoczesne, comprehensive schools - szkoły zintegrowane, multilateral schools - szkoły wielokierunkowe, grammar schools - szkoły gramatyczne, public schools - szkoły publiczne, where the last rendering is outright misleading and the others hardly mean anything to a Polish reader /after Willoch 1973/.

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Streszczenie

POLSKI USTRÓJ SZKOLNY: ANGIELSKIE ODPOWIEDNIKI
NIEKTÓRYCH TERMINÓW POLSKICH

W artykule rozważono możliwość wykorzystania tłumaczeń jako jednego ze źródeł materiału do słownika dwujęzycznego. Przedmiotem głównego zainteresowania są jednostki leksykalne odnoszące się do zjawisk swoistych dla danej społeczności językowej, tj. takie, które z definicji nie mogą mieć dokładnych odpowiedników w innym języku, ponieważ potencjalne ekwiwalenty są osadzone w realiach innego społeczeństwa.

Jest to związane z różnicami rozwoju historycznego, społecznego itp. Zagadnienie sprowadza się do znalezienia takich jednostek leksykalnych, które w miarę wiernie przekazują żadaną treść, a nie przekazują jednocześnie treści niepożądanych. W rezultacie tłumacz albo leksykograf jest często zmuszony tworzyć nowe, zwykle kilkuwyrazowe jednostki leksykalne w oparciu o zasoby języka obcego. W pracy zbadano sposoby, jakimi posługują się tłumacze przekładając teksty polskie na język angielski. Stwierdzono, że nie wszystkie znalezione odpowiedniki terminów polskich nadają się do wykorzystania w słowniku polsko-angielskim, a zwłaszcza dość częste tłumaczenia dosłowne. Najlepsze zdają się być odpowiedniki swobodne, ponieważ są one najbardziej zrozumiałe dla obcokrajowców. Często, jednakże, oprócz znaczenia podstawowego, odpowiedniki swobodne przekazują treści nieobecne w polskich jednostkach leksykalnych. Zaproponowano rozszerzenie przyjętej procedury doboru materiałów do słownika przez dodatkową ekscerpcję tekstów angielskich i amerykańskich o Polsce i o tych aspektach życia społecznego w innych krajach, które mają przybliżone odpowiedniki w Polsce. Krytyczna analiza obfitego i różnorodnego materiału zebranego w ten sposób, prowadzona w kategoriach wszystkich warunków, jakim ekwiwalenty powinny odpowiadać, w połączeniu z analizą właściwych systemów odniesienia, powinna dać pozytywne wyniki w postaci eliminacji tych odpowiedników swobodnych, które przekazują treści nam obce, oraz tych tłumaczeń opisowych i dosłownych, które są niewłaściwe z różnych względów językowych i pozajęzykowych.

