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SOME LEAKS, SOME DRAUGHTS:
ON THREE UNSTAGED POLISH TRANSLATIONS
OF HAROLD PINTER'S PLAYS

A b s t r a c t. The article discusses translations of three plays by Harold Pinter (*The Room*, *Party Time*, *Moonlight*) which so far have not been staged in Poland. The plays are significant since they represent three major stages in Pinter's playwriting career while simultaneously enriching and extending Pinter's predominant motifs and concerns. So as to reflect the inherent duality of the dramatic text (which can be treated both as a literary work and a script for potential performance), the article investigates the translations of the plays by placing emphasis on their literary as well as theatrical features. This is done with a view to presenting challenges facing translators of Pinter's plays and to reflect on selected translator's choices and strategies which might have a bearing on the interpretation by potential readers as well as theatre practitioners. It is especially relevant in the light of Pinter's determination in underlining the importance of the dramatic text in the actual performance.

Key words: Harold Pinter; theatre translation; *The Room*; *Party Time*; *Moonlight*.

    In comparison with works by other contemporary English-language playwrights, Pinter's plays belong to the most frequently translated and staged dramas in Poland in the second half of the 20th century (he was surpassed only by Samuel Beckett, by 30 to 17).[1] In Poland, fascination with Pinter's plays was especially deep from the 1960s to the 1980s and then was briefly revived when Pinter received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2005. In the majority of cases, Pinter's plays were translated into Polish soon after their publication in the UK, and then staged. A good example in this respect is *The*

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[1] The data is primarily based on 3-volume publication *Dramat obcy w Polsce*: *Premiery, druki, egzemplarze*, ed. Stanisław Hałabuda — see works cited for details.

Lover (*Kochanek*). The play is from 1961, it appeared in Polish translation in 1966 (trans. Bolesław Taborski), and until today it has had 17 stage versions.[2]

Bolesław Taborski is the main translator of Pinter's plays. Others that should be mentioned are Adam Tarn (who founded *Dialog*, Poland's most famous journal devoted to theatre, drama, film and radio, and translated Pinter's famous *The Birthday Party* [*Urodziny Stanleya*] and *The Homecoming* [*Powrót do domu*]) as well as Kazimierz Piotrowski and Bronisław Zieliński, who collaboratively translated *The Caretaker* (*Dozorca*), the play which established Pinter's position in British theatre. So far, the latest translations of Pinter's plays have come from Piotr Sobolczyk (*Silence* [*Milczenie*], "Night" ["Noc"]), Marek Kędzierski (*The Room* [*Pokój*]) and Artur Grabowski ("The Black and White"—the translation has the same title).

Critical discussions on the translations of Harold Pinter into Polish are virtually non-existent. One can mention the unpublished PhD dissertation by Barbara Poważa-Kurko "Tłumaczenia i recepcja sztuk Harolda Pintera w Polsce w latach 1960–1990" (2002; The Translations and Reception of Harold Pinter's Plays in Poland 1960–1990), and her article, in which she summarizes her observations from the dissertation ("Przekład elementów specyficznych dla kultury na podstawie tłumaczeń sztuk Harolda Pintera" [Translation of Culture-specific Elements in the Plays of Harold Pinter]). As Pinter's biographer Michael Billington rightly puts it, "translating Pinter into another tongue is itself a notoriously difficult exercise" (357), referring to Martin Esslin's article in which he deplores the pitiful quality of German translations of Pinter's works. Doubtlessly, Pinter's plays present significant challenges also for the Polish translator, to which the above-mentioned article by Poważa-Kurko clearly testifies but in no way exhausts the topic.

In spite of various efforts to formulate a methodology of critical analysis of theatre translation,[3] discussions on plays in translation are dominated by

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[2] See the official website for the Zbigniew Raszewski Institute at http://www.e-teatr.pl/pl/realizacje/149,sztuka.html (accessed 10 July 2016).

[3] See, for example, essays in *Page to Stage. Theatre as Translation* edited by Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt, also Romanowska (31–65) or two recent publications by Ordóñez.

In this paper, the terms "theatre translation" and "drama translation" are used interchangeably (see, for example, Ordóñez, "Theatre Translation Studies: An overview of a Burgeoning Field (Part I)", 91–92, for the same approach). This is to reflect the dual nature of dramatic texts. They are specific instances of literary works in whose composition the potential for staging is inscribed (Świdziński 320–321; see also Windle). This places special requirements on the reader of plays, as he or she "*must be ready to see and hear in his mind's eye and in his mind's ear*" (Styan 3; italics in original).

case studies. As Alinne Balduíno P. Fernandes notes, referring to Mark O'Thomas's (2009) metaphor of theatre translation as jazz improvisation:

> The improvisational nature of the genre presents a new challenge to the translator each time s/he deals with a different play in a way that each play becomes a different case-study, and hence the difficulty to set rules and to confine drama translation to a specific paradigm. (125)

For Fernandes, theatre translation is a cultural encounter on the level of all theatrical components (cf. 127), in which she indirectly recalls Patrice Pavis, who speaks of the intersection of situations of enunciation of the source and target cultures. For Pavis theatre translation is a hermeneutic act—the translator has to "bombard" the source text with "questions from the target language's point of view" in order to reveal its meaning and then interpret it. In effect, theatre translation "[pulls] the foreign text towards the target culture and language" (cf. Pavis, "Problems" 25–27).

Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt in his article "Translation Science and Drama Translation" suggests linking research on theatre translation with theatre documentation (i.e., theatre programmes and scripts etc.) (cf. 9). Such undertakings could be conducted with regard to the majority of Pinter's plays in Polish translation. However, in the rich history of Pinter's stagings in Poland there are still translated, but so far unstaged plays. In such cases, the most appropriate approach seems to be to focus analyses on interlingual translation, while retaining the perspective of intersemiotic translation,[4] which is part and parcel of each transfer of dramatic texts to multiple sign systems of the theatre stage. This dual perspective reflects the inherent duality of the dramatic text and aims to reflect on the literary as well as theatrical features of these yet unrealized Polish renderings of Pinter's works. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to present challenges facing translators of Pinter's plays and to look into those translator's choices and strategies which might influence the interpretation by potential readers as well as theatre practitioners considering the staging of the plays.

Among these unstaged theatre translations are the following (the order follows the actual writing of the plays): *Pokój* (*The Room*, 1957, trans. Marek Kędzierski, 2005), *Przyjęcie* (*Party Time*, 1991, trans. Bolesław Taborski, 1991) and *Światło księżyca* (*Moonlight*, 1993, trans. Bolesław Taborski, 1993).[5] These

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[4] I refer here to the typology of translation put forward by Jakobson (233).

[5] The other unstaged Polish translations of Pinter's plays are *Silence* (1968) and "Night" (1969) translated by Piotr Sobolczyk (*Milczenie* and "Noc", respectively, both 2006) and "The

translations have never been analyzed before and it is interesting to note that taken together they constitute an overview of Pinter's main concerns in the course of his playwriting career, which is often divided into three stages.

And so, *The Room*, on the one hand, linked Pinter with the Theatre of the Absurd and on the other introduced his own original brand of comedy called "a comedy of menace."[6] The next work, *Party Time*, is openly political. The themes from this play occupied Pinter in the last period of his life and work, which resulted in readings of his previous plays through the lens of political involvement (see, e.g., Hollis-Merritt or Grimes). As has been succinctly noted in the publisher's note for G.D. White's book devoted to this one-act play:

> Harold Pinter's *Party Time* (1991) is an extraordinary distillation of the playwright's key concerns. Pulsing with political anger, it marks a stepping stone on Pinter's path from iconic dramatist of existential unease to Nobel prize-winning poet of human rights. (White i)

Finally, *Moonlight*, although written two years after *Party Time*, represents an earlier trend in Pinter's work known as "memory plays" (see, e.g.,

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Black and White" (1959) translated by Artur Grabowski (Polish title is the same, 2007). "Night" and "The Black and White" belong to the so-called revue sketches, a separate category of Pinter's writing (even if closely linked with his full-length plays). What is more, the staging history of "Night" is unclear. According to Agencja Dramatu i Teatru, the official Polish publisher of Pinter, the Polish version of the sketch was first broadcast in August 1968 on the BBC Polish Section, while *Polska Bibliografia Literacka* contains information that "Night" (translated by Artur and Mikołaj Grabowski) had its premiere in the Polish Television Theatre on 23 April 1984 (ADiT does not mention this fact, nor the official Polish theatre digital archive of stage realizations e-teatr.pl). This calls for explaining the situation and—possibly—comparing the translations, if they are found.

In critical discussions, *Silence* is most often analyzed in juxtaposition to *Landscape* and "Night" (see e.g., Billington 196–202; Hinchliffe 140–143). The timespan that separates the translations of *Landscape* (*Krajobraz*, 1967, trans. Bolesław Taborski, 1969) and *Silence* (2006) makes it possible to carry out a diachronic comparative analysis of both texts which could be the subject of a separate article.

Anyone interested in the full overview of data relating to the translations of Pinter's plays into Polish as well as their stagings can have a look at my visualization entitled "Harold Pinter in Poland. His Dramatic Works in Polish Translation 1960-2015", available at: https://my.visme.co/projects/q6rz447r-pinter-project#s1.

[6] The term was first applied to Pinter's early works by Irving Wardle in *Encore* (September 1958): "[I]f Pinter's themes are loneliness, menace, communication, and verification, his characteristic mode of expression is comedy […] that causes pain" (qtd in Hinchliffe 38). Elements of comedy and tragedy are constantly interwoven in "comedies of menace", which results in a uniquely "Pinteresque" dramaturgical expression.

Megson), which includes the famous *Old Times* (1971) and *Betrayal* (1978). On the one hand, *Moonlight* "continues Pinter's obsession with memory, its unreliability, the family as battleground, the impossibility of a return to the past" (Baker 116). On the other, however, it marks "a major departure for Pinter" which Billington calls "a total emotional openness" (339), "informed by a sense of private pain" (345) (Billington refers here to the death of Pinter's mother and estrangement from his son Daniel). Most probably due to this fact, *Moonlight* "is a difficult play to get right: full of recurring themes, but also sudden jolting mood changes" (Billington 342).

At the same time, each of the discussed plays presents another step in the exploration of the most famous Pinter motif of the room whose space can be invaded at any moment by an unexpected guest capable of turning the balance upside down. As Martin Esslin notes, the room in Pinter represents "[m]an's existential fear, not as an abstraction, not as a surreal phantasmagoria, but as something real, ordinary, and acceptable as an everyday occurrence—here we have the core of Pinter's work as a dramatist" (28–29).

In Pinter's debut play, *The Room*, the stability and balance are disrupted by the mysterious dark-skinned Riley, who seems to hold power over the main character, an old lady called Rose, thanks to the information he possesses about her unclear past.[7] In *Party Time* the room becomes a place where political elites are relaxing, while outside, in the streets, civil riots are being brutally suppressed. The balance in this room is also disrupted. At the end of the play—announced earlier by the bright light coming from behind the door—appears Jimmy, who in a brief monologue "describes a state of solitary confinement" (Peacock 144), most probably resulting from his active opposition to the state's regime, represented by the rich and wicked party participants. In this way the violence of the state—despite its physical absence from the stage—"symbolically penetrates the onstage world" (Peacock 144). Finally, *Moonlight* presents three playing areas. Each area is occupied by different family members. In the first one, the married couple Andy and Bel are waiting for their children. Andy might pass away at any moment, his two sons (in the next area) are not eager to visit their parents, and his daughter Bridget (separated in the third area), while waiting for her mother and father, remains suspended in a mysterious place flooded with moonlight. Apart from one dream sequence and one flashback scene, the characters never meet during the play. They do so only through memories. The parents'

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[7] Hinchliffe adds: "[T]he mixture of an Irish name and a black face makes Riley an ideal image for the 'foreign' that so terrifies Pinter characters" (45).

attempt to contact their sons by phone ends in failure, "the most heart-breaking in all Pinter" (Billington 343). The sons mock their mother, do not allow her to speak, and keep asking: "Chinese laundry?" (*Moonlight* 380–381). Here the balance of each room is disturbed by placing emphasis on the waiting—the family is never complete, cannot ever communicate fully. In a way, the play starts with the balance in each room already disrupted by the absence that all the characters unsuccessfully strive to fill.

In this article I would like to look at the unstaged translations of the above mentioned plays in the order in which Pinter wrote the original texts. The choice of the discussed elements in translations aims at reflecting a given issue best, with the simultaneous consideration of a given work as a whole (see e.g. Sawicki 132–134). What is more, in the course of the following discussion my intention is to attempt—in the words of Jerzy Brzozowski—to "take the side of the translator" and thus assume that "the translator more often than not is aware of his or her goal" (Brzozowski 81[8]), even if inevitable shortcomings come to light on the way.

A very good example in this respect is the translation of Pinter's debut one-acter *The Room* (*Pokój*) by Marek Kędzierski from 2005 (that is, forty-eight years after Pinter wrote the play). It has to be noted that the translated text contains quite a few signs of hurried work. Firstly, the translator presents the play as if it was the original text "reflected in a mirror." He does this by reversing the sides of the stage, which—as Zatlin notes—is typical of Spanish drama conventions rather than English or Polish (see Zatlin 68; cf. Pinter, *Pokój* 49PL[9]). The translator's lexical indecisiveness is noticeable: in one part of the play "curtains" are "firanki" (95, 58PL), in another "zasłony" (109, 78PL). The word "armchair" in the final scene of the confrontation between Riley and Bert, Rose's husband, varies between being "fotel" and "krzesło" in the same paragraph (110, 79PL). Some of the lines spoken by the characters are quite hard to follow, e.g. Mr Kidd's words spoken to Rose: "As soon as I heard the van go I got ready to come and see you" (103) are rendered: "Czekałem, żeby przyjść i pani powiedzieć, jak tylko usłyszałem, że furgonetka odjeżdża" (70PL), which in Polish suggests that, paradoxically, he began waiting as soon as he was able to visit her. Some inaccuracies change the potential theatrical realization of the play, e.g., in the scene when blind Riley enters Rose's bedsitter, he uses his careful gestures to familiarize

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[8] All translations from Brzozowski by Ł.B.

[9] For clarity purposes, each page number ending with PL refers to the Polish translation of the discussed texts.

himself with the objects in the room. At one moment Riley touches a chair (in which he soon sits). Rose explains to him: "You just touched a chair" (106, "<u>Właśnie pan dotknął fotela</u>"[10]), whereas in the Polish version the line is "Dotknął pan tylko fotela" (74PL; "<u>You only touched a chair</u>"), which may suggest that Riley suddenly got scared of the obstacle and Rose tries to calm him down—an implication which is absent from the original.

This is just a selection of the translated version's shortcomings. However, one may look at this translation from another perspective. The fact that from the early 1960s Pinter was almost always translated by Bolesław Taborski has doubtlessly provided Pinter stagings in Poland with a specific, to some extent even uniform style determined by the translator's strategies. In this light, the translation by Kędzierski offers a new look at Pinter's text and presents three intriguing figures of translation against the background of the target language ("figury przekładu na tle języka docelowego", see Brzozowski 131);[11] that is, Kędzierski's version employs: 1) literal translation which violates target language norms and style; 2) literal translation which introduces innovative approaches to the target language and 3) hybrid phraseological structures.[12]

The first group contains such phrasings as "Mamy tu spokój, tu jest bez problemów" (50PL, "We're quiet, we're all right" 87), "W starszym wieku jak pan, trzeba panu odpocząć" (72PL, "An old man like you. What you need is rest" 105), "No to dziękujemy za ogrzanie" (69PL, "Thank you for the warm-up" 102). In the first example, it is incorrect to use the Polish word "problem" with the introductory phrase "tu jest bez". A much more natural way would be to say, for instance, "nie mamy tu problemów." The awkward expression "w starszym wieku jak pan" in the second example most probably aims at being an elliptical phrase which stands for "człowiek/

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[10] To avoid ambiguity in the discussion of Pinter's translations, all underlined English-to-Polish and Polish-to-English translations are by Ł.B.

[11] Although Brzozowski does not discuss drama translation strategies, his categorizations—due to their focus on linguistic aspects of translation—seem especially useful in the context of Kędzierski's translation.

[12] "[Tłumaczenie dosłowne naruszające] normy poprawnościowe i przyzwyczajenia stylistyczne, [tłumaczenie dosłowne nienaruszające] powyższych, a [wnoszące] elementy innowacji do języka" oraz "hybrydalne konstrukcje frazeologiczne." The last ones "are expressions that are not literal translations, since they to some extent refer to typical target language expressions, while preserving the traces of source language structures" ("sformułowania niebędące dosłownym tłumaczeniem tekstu oryginału, bo w jakimś stopniu nawiązujące do typowych sposobów wypowiadania się w języku docelowym […], lecz wyraźnie zachowujące ślady struktur języka oryginału"; Brzozowski 153).

osoba w starszym wieku jak pan". However, the conjunction "jak" is wrongly used here. Finally, the Polish word "ogrzanie" in the last example requires an object which identifies the person/thing that has been warmed-up. It has to be stressed that in all these cases the English original does not imply non-normative use of language.

In the second (most numerous) category the expressions do not strike one as incorrect, but at the same time do not seem to reflect the natural way of speaking, contrary to the original. In the target language, they draw attention through a not entirely natural rhythm (using "zaraz" at the end of a sentence in "zrobi się ciemno, zaraz" 50PL, "It'll be dark in a minute as well, soon" 87) or awkward syntactic structures (the "tak ... to" sequence in "tak po zastanowie-niu, to widziałam gwiazdę" 62PL, "Now I come to think of it, I saw a star" 97).

Finally, in the last group—hybrid phrases—two examples are worth noting. The first one is: "I could swear blind I've seen that [rocking chair] before" (90)—"Głowę bym dał, że go [tj. bujany fotel] kiedyś widziałem" (53PL) and "I wouldn't take an oath on it though" (91)—"Ale w ciemno bym się nie zaklinał" (53PL). Careful translation of these fragments (as well as all the others referring to sight and seeing) is crucial in the case of *The Room*, as "metaphors of failing sight and blindness haunt Pinter's work from *The Room* onwards" (Billington 159). Kędzierski skilfully transfers the reference to blindness in the first idiom of the original—both expressions follow each other closely—to the second one in his translation, albeit he does this indirectly. Thus, the whole idiom links lack of knowledge with inability to see.

The second example is connected with the comparison (which runs through the play) of the outside world to a state resembling death. Pinter is careful to make characters share this view of the outside on the linguistic level. Thus, Rose at the beginning of the play states: "It's very cold out, I can tell you. It's murder" (85), which is reflected later in Rose's conversation with Mr and Mrs Sands, who unexpectedly visit her room. When Rose asks Mrs Sands about the weather, she replies: "It's murder out" (95). The translator uses the following: "To morderstwo" (49PL) and "mordercze zimno" (59PL), respectively. With reference to weather these are uncommon in Polish, but especially the last one is based on a wide range of collocations with the adjective "morderczy", thus creating the impression of naturalness.

When juxtaposed with renderings by Pinter's main translator, Bolesław Taborski, Kędzierski's so far one-off attempt at translating a play by Pinter seems quite intriguing. This is because Kędzierski's version, as it were, removes Pinter from his established position in the target culture, acquired

through the specific linguistic shape given to him by Taborski. In addition, the translation by Kędzierski—whose research interests revolve primarily around the life and work of Samuel Beckett—attempts to bring Pinter closer to Beckett,[13] which indirectly confirms Pinter's open and frequent references to Beckett's influence on his own work.[14] All this makes Kędzierski's translation an interesting experiment which disrupts Pinter's quite "fixed" translated form in Polish. What is more, the fact that *The Room* was translated almost fifty years after its publication may point to the need for re-approaching the already existing and thus quite dated earlier translations (see e.g. Bassnett 111, who estimates that the maximum length for the currency of a theatre translation is about 25 years).

This, however, does not mean that Taborski has completely "domesticated"[15] Pinter in his translations. The feeling that the audience is dealing with a foreign author is consistently maintained, but the translator makes careful effort to render effort to make the language of the characters "speakable,"[16] not forgetting at the same time about the form of the original (e.g., text which is supposed to present a challenge for the actor in the source language has to remain such in the target language).

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[13] See for example the following fragment from *Malone Dies* (*Malone umiera*) in Kędzierski's translation: "Ale o co dokładnie tu idzie, nie potrafiłbym określić, w obecnej chwili. To dość nieokreślone, życie i śmierć. Musiałem chyba mieć na ten temat jakiś pomysł, jakąś drobną ideę, kiedy zaczynałem, inaczej bym nie zaczynał, zachowałbym spokój, […] zabawiając się […] ziarnami prosa i innych *panica* dla ptaków, czekając, aż ktoś uprzejmie zechce wziąć moje wymiary" (Beckett 66). Strikingly, the translation is from French, which emphasizes the translator's style even more. In this case, one may conclude that the writer's (here, Beckett's) style influences the translator's style, who in turn takes on him the translation of a work by another writer (Pinter) being under a strong influence of the previously translated author. This is complex enough to deserve more discussion than just a footnote. However, to elucidate this point briefly let us cite Mona Baker, who initiated research on the translator's style: "[A] study of a translator's style must focus on the manner of expression that is typical of a translator, rather than simply instances of open intervention. It must attempt to capture the translator's characteristic use of language, his or her individual profile of linguistic habits, compared to other translators. Which means that style [...] is a matter of patterning: it involves describing preferred or recurring patterns of linguistic behaviour, rather than individual or one-off instances of intervention" (245).

[14] One of the most telling pieces of evidence is the short essay on Beckett entitled simply "Samuel Beckett" (see Pinter, *Various Voices* 45).

[15] The term is understood as bringing the author closer to the target audience, in contrast to foreignization, which brings the target audience closer to the author. See, e.g., Venuti, L. "Genealogies", 129-130, and—for a much more extended discussion—Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*.

[16] Together with "performability" and "theatricality" the term raises many controversies among theatre translation scholars. An interesting discussion on the issue can be found in Randaccio.

Taborski's translation of *Party Time* wavers between narrowing and broadening the meanings contained in the source text. Although this is achieved in subtle and discreet ways, in some cases the translator's decisions can influence a potential theatrical realization. These cases include two interesting examples from the stage directions at the beginning of the play. Firstly, one of the doors on stage (which is used at the climactic end of the play) in the source text is described as being "in a dim light" (281), while in the target text it is "nieoświetlone" ("<u>unlit</u>"; 153PL); secondly, "salonowa muzyka" ("<u>refined music</u>"; 153PL), which forms the background for the play, in the English text is actually "spasmodic party music" (281). The consequences of both Polish renderings seem quite significant. In the source text attention is directed towards the door by way of highlighting its presence from the very beginning of the play. The target text seems to relegate the door to being one of the scenographic elements, only to be suddenly put to use at certain moments of the drama. Finally, in the Polish version the music appears "od czasu do czasu" ("<u>from time to time</u>"; 153PL), while in the original it is present "throughout the play" (281). Thus, in the Polish translation the potential director is given more freedom with regard to employing music for diverse effects. By contrast, the source text uses music to maintain the tension of the events in the play and reflect the violence of the riots outside the party room.

In a way, to compensate for such interventions, the translator adds an important element to the sequence recurring throughout the play, in which at certain moments all conversation ceases, the lights on stage become dim and from behind the unused door a new source of light suddenly "burns" (298).[17] The source text does not provide any information on the behaviour of the characters, but in the Polish translation "Wszyscy zastygają bez ruchu" ("<u>Everyone freezes</u>"; 162PL) is an additional stage direction. As a consequence, the target text is more clearly divided into scene sequences than the original. Additionally, the theatrical effect of the events in the translation is more prominent than in the source text.[18]

Less "intrusive"—and frequently quite vivid—are Taborski's choices concerning such lexical items as "frapująco" (160PL, for "delightful" (294), which in Polish combines the feeling of pleasure with curiosity and expecta-

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[17] In the target text it is less dramatic, as it merely "wpełza" ("<u>creeps in</u>", 162PL). Thus, the Polish version seems to make up for the fact that the door is indistinguishable from the rest of the background scenography.

[18] The term 'theatrical effect' "refers to stage action that immediately reveals its playful, artificial and theatrical origins" (Pavis, *Dictionary* 394).

tion), "z pocałowaniem ręki" (154PL, for "warmly welcome" (284), which strengthens the original meaning by adding an element of fervent willing-ness), "zawlokę [ją] do domu" (161PL; literally "<u>drag her home</u>" for the ori-ginal "get her home" (297)), or "My chcemy spokoju" and, soon after, "Takiego pokoju chcemy i taki będziemy mieć" (159PL), which plays on the fact that in Polish the English word "peace" (used in both original lines) can be translated as "pokój" (the state of being free from civil disorder) or "spokój" (mental or emotional calm).[19]

Definitely the most interesting are those translator's decisions which at-tempt to bring closer to the Polish reader/spectator Pinter's syntactic trans-formations, puns, alliteration and lists (of single words and phrases) with overlapping semantic ranges. Let us focus on one telling example from each category, and two for the last one:

1) Syntactic transformations—at one point Douglas reminisces: "I was—I'll be frank—[…] a salesman […] and travel I did" (308), in which the typi-cal word order is reversed in the last part of the quoted sentence. Taborski renders it in Polish by "taking out" the verb "wojażować" (to travel) that constitutes part of the already used noun "komiwojażer" (salesman): "By-łem—wyznam szczerze—komiwojażerem […] i... wojażowałem" (168PL).

2) Puns—Charlotte asks Fred (one of the political rulers) about his strategy to remain fit: "What's your diet? What's your regime? What *is* your regime by the way?" (307; original emphasis). In the political context of the play the word "regime" is crucial and Taborski eagerly uses the double ref-erence also in his translation: "Jaki reżim sobie narzucasz? Właściwie jaki jest twój reżim?" (167PL), undoubtedly thanks to the double meaning which exists in both languages.

3) Alliteration (untypical and thus always potentially refreshing for Polish[20])—when Douglas describes the kind of peace he and his colleagues strive for through suppressing civil disobedience, he says: "No leaks. No draughts." (292). There is no alliteration here, but in his translation Taborski transfers the alliteration from an earlier comment by Douglas: "Like clock-work. Look. Let me tell you something" (292), where the letter "l" is alliterated. Taborski uses the pair of letters "ż" and "p" for the same purpose: "Żadnych przecieków. Żadnych przeciągów" (159PL).

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[19] English definitions of selected words/phrases are taken from Oxford Dictionnaries, access-ed 10 July 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com.

[20] See, for example, Konert-Panek for a discussion on challenges posed by alliteration in Eng-lish-Polish translation.

4) Word lists—in many plays Pinter demonstrates a strong inclination towards word lists. In *Party Time* the representatives of the political regime take pride in belonging to an elitist club: "[O]ur club […] is a club which is activated by a set of moral values which is […] unshakeable, rigorous, fundamental, constant" (311). In the Polish version this takes the following form: "[N]asz klub […] to klub […] inspirowany przez […] zestaw wartości moralnych, który jest […] niewzruszony, surowy, podstawowy, stały" (169PL). The comment made by Terry: "People don't do vulgar and sordid and offensive things" (310) is rendered into Polish as: "Ludzie nie robią wulgarnych, plugawych, ohydnych rzeczy" (169PL). Especially the second example gives a feel of the overlapping nature of Pinter's word lists. In both cases the major challenge is to preserve the collocational links between the nouns ("set of moral values" and "things") and the adjectives, which has been quite successfully achieved.

It might be claimed that to a large extent it is exactly the skilful translation of word lists and lexical creativity that lie at the heart of the artistic value of the last discussed play—*Moonlight*. As already stated above, stage movement in this drama is replaced by three playing areas visible throughout the whole performance. As the characters remain virtually immobile in their areas, the dramatic action centres on dialogues. In *Moonlight* these vary from fast exchanges to long speeches, forcing the translator to pay exceptional attention to the linguistic aspect of the play. Taborski successfully finds his way out of potentially tricky translational alleys, into which Pinter draws him through such fragments containing elaborate enumeration:

It was an act […] which, for sheer undaunted farsightedness, unflinching moral resolve, stern intellectual vision, classic philosophical detachment, passionate religious fervour, profound emotional intensity, bloodtingling spiritual ardour, spellbinding metaphysical chutzpah—stood alone. (329)

Był to akt, którego odważna dalekowzroczność, nieugięta moralna stanowczość, ostra wizja intelektualna, klasyczny dystans filozoficzny, żarliwy zapał religijny, głęboka siła emocjonalna, tętniąca gorliwość duchowa, urzekająca metafizyczna hucpa—była [*sic*—it should be "były"] absolutnie wyjątkowa [*sic*—it should be "wyjątkowe"]. (181PL)

Lexical variety and flexibility is what is most required from the translator in such cases and Taborski's version oscillates between common collocation ("żarliwy zapał religijny") and vivid imagery ("urzekająca metafizyczna hucpa").

To this, one may add the need for syntactic changes. Where adjectives dominate in the source text, Taborski uses nouns, while preserving the fluency of the original: "Some say of course that he [Andy] was spiritually furtive, politically bankrupt, morally scabrous and intellectually abject" (370); "Niektórzy oczywiście mówią, że był duchowym karłem, politycznym bankrutem, moralnym parszywcem i nędzarzem intelektualnym" (205PL). Thus, the English adverb-adjective pattern has been replaced with Polish adjective-noun combinations. In this way, Taborski employs phrases which in Polish are suggestive of less-than-elegant but still official political debates.

In fast exchanges, formal expressions (e.g., "uneasily poised") and colloquial ones (e.g., "rule of thumb") are smoothly incorporated in the text. In the first case:

> JAKE And how is my little brother?
> FRED Cheerful though gloomy. Uneasily poised. (323)

> JAKE Jak tam mój braciszek?
> FRED Pogodny, lecz ponury. Chwiejna równowaga. (178PL; note the additional "p" alliteration—Ł.B.)

In the second case, Taborski significantly shortens Fred's answer by using a common Polish collocation, but this only adds to its bluntness and irony:

> JAKE My father adhered strictly to the rule of law.
> FRED Which is not a very long way from a rule of thumb. (328)

> JAKE Mój ojciec ściśle trzymał się zasad prawa.
> FRED Zwyczajowego. (180PL)

With regard to Pinter's word plays in *Moonlight*, one of the most interesting is his "dismantling" of the idiom "to live the life of Riley". Fred ironically comments on his daydreaming about a comfortable life: "I've decided to eschew the path of purity and abstention and take up a proper theology. From now on it's the Michelin Guide and the Orient Express for me—that kind of thing", to which Jake replies: "I once lived the life of Riley myself." The idiomatic expression is quickly literalized by Fred: "What was he like?" and in this way "Riley" as a symbol of careless existence undergoes personalization. Jake follows suit and continues the personification process:

"I never knew him personally. But I became a very very close friend of the woman he ran away with" (360–361). It could be claimed that by dismantling the idiom, Pinter indirectly comes to the translator's aid. As a result, in order to preserve the meaning of the idiomatic phrase Taborski adds an additional clarifying adjective ("beztroskie"). Even if the source idiom will most probably be lost for the potential audience, the translator manages to retain the ironic tone of the brothers' conversation without diverging too far from the source text:

> JAKE I ja kiedyś wiodłem beztroskie życie jak Riley.
> FRED A jaki on był?
> JAKE Osobiście go nie poznałem. Ale bardzo blisko przyjaźniłem się z kobie-
>   tą, z którą uciekł. (200PL)

The final example concerns a notable translator's decision which is also based on a more complex taking apart of an English idiom. In the opening scene of *Moonlight* Andy—already on his deathbed—is worried that his cat is mocking him and his state. He expresses his feelings in the phrase "take the piss out of someone." Bel tries to change the register of the conversation to at least the neutral one by using the adjective "nonplussed" and sophisticated syntax: "Perhaps it's my convent school education but the term 'taking the piss' does leave me somewhat nonplussed" (321). Although Andy does not react to this criticism, the mention of "convent school" makes Bel elaborate on the phrase in the comical reminiscence: "We girls were certainly aware of the verb 'to piss', oh yes, in the sixth form, certainly. I piss, you piss, she pisses, et cetera" (322). Taborski follows the most common translation of the idiom ("robić jaja") but with a different outcome:

> BEL To pewnie skutek wychowania w klasztornej szkole, ale określenie
>   „robić jaja"   wprawia mnie w zakłopotanie. […] My, dziewczęta, znały-
>   śmy, oczywiście, słowo „jaja", o tak, w ostatniej klasie na pewno. Jajka,
>   jajecznica, jajowa, jajogłowy i tak dalej. (176–7PL)

In this way, the mindless conjugation which devoids words of their meanings, commonly associated with the rigidity of English convent school education,[21] is comically replaced by a creative exercise in word-formation

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[21] See, e.g., Grace 38–9 or Webb for information on the characteristics of convent school education in Britain prior to Vatican II, which seems to be exactly the period Bel refers to.

where it is the base word that imposes potential patterns, not the patterns that impose themselves on the word. Especially suggestive in this context is the ending "i tak dalej." Thus, Taborski provokes interpretative questions, e.g., can Andy—in the context of the whole play and especially in the light of his sons' discussions—be called an "egghead" ("jajogłowy")? Could the imagery and symbolism of the egg be discussed with reference to the relationships and power relations in the play (just as the egg is commonly linked with the beginning of life, the comic dialogue begins the play)?

Each of the above-discussed and still unstaged translations seems worth investigating first of all due to their diversity. Despite its flaws, the translation of *The Room* can still be said to present an attempt at refreshing Pinter's rendition into Polish. Taborski's approach to *Party Time* reveals his sensitivity to shades of meaning, and *Moonlight* is very carefully crafted linguistically. At the same time, the discussed translations clearly need updating (consider, e.g., *Party Time*, where Polish old-fashioned "aparycja", 167PL is used for English "looks", 307) as well as a meticulous revision (e.g., in *Moonlight*, Silvio d'Orangerie, one of multiple characters mentioned in conversations between Fred and Jake, within the space of two pages is reduced from the rank of colonel ("pułkownik", 195PL) to lieutenant colonel ("pod-pułkownik", 197PL)).

The three discussed translations are also a reminder that despite Polish audiences' familiarity with Pinter, his plays still have a lot to offer, although recently they have rarely been staged. As of April 2017, the latest premiere of a play by Pinter was an original stage interpretation of *The Lover* (*Kochanek*) in the Juliusz Słowacki Theatre in Cracow in 2012. In her review of the play, Aleksandra Sowa highlights two features of Pinter's playwriting which counter the perception of his plays as "archaic" representations of "some kind of bourgeois drama."[22] The first one is the importance of fidelity to the playtext, on which Pinter put great emphasis,[23] the second is the universality contained in ambiguity, which prevents the drawing of definite conclusions, while simultaneously inviting participation. In this light, Sowa's

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[22] Cf. "Inscenizacje jego sztuk zdarzają się niezwykle rzadko — być może właśnie przez postrzeganie jego dramatów jako archaicznych czy noszone przez nie znamię jakiegoś rodzaju mieszczańskiej dramy" (Sowa).

[23] See, e.g., the interview with theatre director Peter Hall, with whom Pinter closely collaborated on the premieres of his plays in the 1960s and 1970s. Mark Taylor-Batty even states that Hall "set a standard for the approach to Pinter's language and atmospheres" (157), and Hall himself concludes that directing Pinter means "making the actor trust what is given, making him accept the premise of the words" (159).

comment on *The Lover* can be extended to the whole of Pinter's *oeuvre*: "Nothing is unambiguous; we don't even know if it's true: neither violence, nor nudity, nor sexual gestures, nor the relationships themselves are what they seem—for everyone who looks at them they become a personal experience" (Sowa).[24] And it seems that it is here where the unawakened potential of the still unstaged renderings of Pinter's plays can be discovered, even if—to paraphrase Douglas' words from *Party Time*—some preventive measures have to be taken against the "leaks" and "draughts" in the fabric of the discussed translations.

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"Właściwie nic w przedstawieniu nie jest jednoznaczne, nie wiadomo też czy w ogóle jest prawdziwe: ani przemoc, ani nagość, ani seksualne gesty, ani sama relacja nie są tym czym są — dla każdego, kto na nie patrzy stają się osobistym doświadczeniem" (Sowa).

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TROCHĘ PRZECIEKÓW, TROCHĘ PRZECIĄGÓW.
O TRZECH NIEZREALIZOWANYCH TŁUMACZENIACH
SZTUK HAROLDA PINTERA

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Artykuł omawia przekłady trzech sztuk Harolda Pintera: *Pokój*, *Przyjęcie* oraz *Światło księżyca*, które jak dotąd nie doczekały się scenicznej realizacji w Polsce. Są to jednocześnie sztuki, które z jednej strony reprezentują główne etapy twórczości Pintera, z drugiej zaś stanowią ich ważne wzbogacenie. W świetle dwoistej natury tekstu dramatycznego (będącego jednocześnie utworem literackim oraz scenariuszem potencjalnego przedstawienia) analiza tłumaczeń skupia się zarówno na ich aspektach literackich, jak i teatralnych. Celem artykułu jest ukazanie wyzwań stojących przed tłumaczami Pintera, a także refleksja nad podjętymi przez nich wyborami oraz ich potencjalnymi konsekwencjami dla lektury i realizacji scenicznej. Jest to szczególnie ważne ze względu na fakt, że sam Pinter z determinacją podkreślał wagę tekstu jako jednego z najważniejszych elementów składowych przedstawienia.

Streścił Łukasz Borowiec

Słowa kluczowe: Harold Pinter; przekład teatralny; *Pokój*; *Przyjęcie*; *Światło księżyca*.