

## PIDGIN ENGLISH AND SAILORS' JARGON IN POLISH TRANSLATIONS OF JOSEPH CONRAD'S *TYPHOON*

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**Abstract:** The translation of dialect and jargon undoubtedly presents translators with a challenge. Approaches to translating dialect have evolved from the simplistic assertion that dialect in the source language ought to be replaced with dialect in the target language to the more nuanced strategies of neutralization, lexicalization, Pidginization or even the ad hoc creation of an artificial dialect. Peter Newmark claims that the crucial factor in translating non-standard speech is the identification of its functions in the original. Once the functions have been recognized, they can be “recreated in target language texts by drawing on appropriate varieties.” However, in Translation Studies there is also a completely different view. Jeremy Munday notes that “The norm for translating dialect, slang and social variation tends to be that of the ‘homogenizing convention’. This involves replacing non-standard forms in the source language with standard forms typical of the written language in the target version.” Translators can therefore apply several different techniques to match the non-standard heterogeneity of the original in the target text. In Joseph Conrad’s short story entitled *Typhoon* we come across two different varieties of non-standard English. The first is Pidgin, which is a reduced language that results from extended contact between groups which have no language in common; it evolves when these groups need some means of verbal communication. The other kind of non-standard English is sailors’ jargon.

**Keywords:** Joseph Conrad, Polish translation, Sailors’ Jargon, *Typhoon*

The translation of dialect and jargon undoubtedly presents translators with a challenge. Approaches to translating dialect have evolved from the simplistic assertion that dialect in the source language ought to be replaced with dialect in the target language<sup>1</sup> to the more nuanced strategies of neutralization, lexicalization, Pidginization or even the ad hoc creation of an artificial dialect.<sup>2</sup> Assuming dialect to be a user-dependent variety of speech<sup>3</sup> — and taking the human factor into consideration — Peter Newmark has questioned the “universality of the simple replacement of dialects

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<sup>1</sup> John Cunnison Catford. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Leszek Berezowski. *Dialect in Translation*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1997, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

from the source language with the dialectal varieties in the target language.”<sup>4</sup> He claims that the crucial factor in translating non-standard speech is the identification of its functions in the original. Once the functions have been recognized, they can be “recreated in target language texts by drawing on appropriate varieties.”<sup>5</sup> Some translation theorists, however, hold a completely different view: “The norm for translating dialect, slang and social variation tends to be that of the ‘homogenizing convention’”. This involves replacing non-standard forms in the source language with standard forms typical of the written language in the target version.”<sup>6</sup> Translators can therefore apply several different techniques to match the non-standard heterogeneity of the original in the target text.

In Joseph Conrad’s short story entitled *Typhoon* we come across two different varieties of non-standard English. The first is Pidgin, which is a reduced language that results from “extended contact between groups with no language in common; it evolves when they need some means of verbal communication, perhaps for trade [...]”.<sup>7</sup> The other kind of non-standard English is sailors’ jargon.<sup>8</sup>

The aim of the present article is to discuss some of the problems that arise when translating dialect or jargon, using the example of *Typhoon*. How have Polish translators dealt with non-standard speech? What translation strategies have they applied in order to render idiosyncratic English?<sup>9</sup> Is it possible to outline some general techniques for the translation of dialect and jargon in order to avoid the creation of an unknown and clumsy “third language”?<sup>10</sup> If we accept that the role of the translator is that of an intermediary between cultures, then — in some way — he or she ought to convey the ‘otherness’ of the speech used by the protagonists, i.e. its deviation from the standard language. At the same time, however, the translator must show that a given linguistic subsystem has its own distinctive syntax, grammatical constructions and vocabulary. In keeping with the Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) approach, this article eschews value judgements and concentrates on describing the techniques

<sup>4</sup> Peter Newmark. *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall, 1988. Qtd. in Berezowski, *Dialect in Translation*, ed. cit., p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Berezowski. *Dialect in Translation*, ed. cit., p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies*. Ed. Jeremy Munday. New York: Routledge, 2009, p. 181.

<sup>7</sup> John Holm. *An Introduction to Pidgins and Creoles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 5. There is some disagreement about the precise definition of “Pidgin,” as well as whether it should be classified as a dialect or as a language. In the present article we use the term ‘dialect’ for Pidgin English on the basis of Berezowski’s classification in his *Dialect in Translation*.

<sup>8</sup> The terminological nuances between jargon, dialect and slang have been discussed in minute detail by M. Błaszczak. Cf.: M. Błaszczak. “Some Remarks on the Sailors’ Language Terminology and Related Issues in British and American Nautical Fiction”. *Stylistyka* 2006, № XV, pp. 331–349. Cf. also Peter Trudgill. *Dialects*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001, pp. 1–12.

<sup>9</sup> However, we must bear in mind that it is extremely difficult to decide whether the translator used a given strategy or procedure deliberately. Cf. Roman Lewicki. “Między adaptacją a egzotyzacją”. [In:] *Przekładając nieprzekładalne I*. Ed. Wojciech and Ola Kubiński. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2000, p. 194.

<sup>10</sup> Here I am referring to a term introduced by Duff. Cf. Alan Duff. *The Third Language. Recurrent Problems of Translation into English*. Oxford–New York: Pergamon Press, 1981, p. 10.

that have been applied in the output versions — analysing their strengths and weaknesses, but at the same time steering clear of any prescriptive agenda.

In an interview given to Marian Dąbrowski in 1914, Conrad complained about the inferior quality of Polish translations of his work, which had been published without his agreement:

To begin with I was never even asked for permission to translate my books and besides, the translations are extremely poor. It is real agony for me to read things that were written in English in my native language [...]. And the Polish translations are so careless, so unfaithful to the original. [...] The Polish [translations] always irritate me.<sup>11</sup>

We know from Conrad's extant letters how much he cared about the translation of his works into various languages.<sup>12</sup> The situation in Poland changed for the better in the 1920s, when the first Polish collected edition of Conrad's works began to appear with Conrad's approval. The first translation of *Typhoon* was made by Jerzy Bohdan Rychliński in 1925.<sup>13</sup> Later Halina Carroll-Najder translated it for the collected edition of Conrad's works edited by Zdzisław Najder in 1972.<sup>14</sup> The most recent translation was made by Michał Filipczuk in 2000.<sup>15</sup>

*Typhoon* is all about language. The story revolves around the fact that the narrator and the protagonists alike have to grapple with the force of language and this struggle seems to constitute the 'semantic dominant' of the novella.<sup>16</sup> In this article I will compare three Polish translations of Conrad's *Typhoon* to check whether non-standard English has been reflected in the target versions — and, if so, by what means.

<sup>11</sup> Marian Dąbrowski. "An Interview with Joseph Conrad". [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder, Transl. Halina Carroll-Najder. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 200.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. an analysis of Conrad's attitude towards the French translations of his work made by A. Gide in: René Ropin. "A. Gide et sa traduction du *Typhon*". *Revue des Lettres Modernes* 1973, pp. 187–201; Stuart Barr. "Gide, Conrad, Isabelle Rivière et la traduction de *Victory*". *Bulletin des Amis de J. Rivière et d'Alain Fournier* 1981, № 12, pp. 172–86; John H. Stape. "The Art of Translation: Conrad, Gide, and the Translation of *Victory*". *Journal of Modern Literature* 1990, № 17.1 (Summer), pp. 155–165; Walter Putnam. "Typhoon in a Teapot". *The Conradian* 2009, № 34: 2, pp. 129–132. Conrad's comments on Polish translations have been analysed by W. Borowy: cf. Waław Borowy. "Conrad krytykiem polskiego przekładu swojej noweli *Il Conde*" (Conrad as a critic of the Polish translation of his novella *Il Conde*). [In:] *idem. Studia i szkice literackie*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1983, vol. II, pp. 398–409.

<sup>13</sup> In this article a later edition is used which parallels the first publication; only the spelling has been modernized: Joseph Conrad. *Tajfun*. [In:] *idem. Dzieła wybrane*. Transl. Jerzy Bohdan Rychliński. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1976, vol. VII. Further references to this edition are by the abbreviation 'R' with page numbers (all in brackets).

<sup>14</sup> In this article a later edition is used which parallels the first publication: Joseph Conrad. *Tajfun i inne opowiadania*. Transl. Halina Carroll-Najder. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1999. Further references to this edition are by the abbreviation 'CN' with page numbers (all in brackets).

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Conrad. *Tajfun*. Transl. Michał Filipczuk. Kraków: Zielona Sowa, 2000. Further references to this edition are by the abbreviation 'F' with page numbers (all in brackets).

<sup>16</sup> Charles Schuster. "Comedy and the Limits of Language in Conrad's *Typhoon*". *Conradiana* 1984, № 1, pp. 60–61; Carolyn B. Brown. "Creative Combat in *Typhoon*". *The Conradian* 1992, № 1, pp. 1–16; Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pośpiech. "Letters and Books in Conrad's *Typhoon*, or On Writing and (Mis-) Reading". [In:] *Yearbook of Conrad Studies (Poland)*, Cracow: Jagiellonian University Press, 2008, vol. 4.

## PIDGIN ENGLISH

Pidgins are new languages that arise from the need for various ethnic groups that do not share a common language to communicate with each other.<sup>17</sup> “Most of the forms in the lexicon of the new language come from one of the languages in the contact situation, called the ‘lexifier’ (or ‘superstrate’) — usually the language of the group in control of the area where contact occurs.”<sup>18</sup> There are many varieties of Pidgin, depending on the two languages that come into contact. In *Typhoon* Conrad introduced elements of Chinese Pidgin English. The ‘lexifier’ is the English language, as Britain was the dominant trading power in the South Seas region at that time. It must be noted that the stylization of Pidgin English in literature is culturally biased and would seem to constitute that element of culture that is untranslatable.

Absolute (or ‘inherent’) untranslatability occurs whenever a text is presented for translation the full comprehension of which by its source-language recipients requires the application of extra-textual subjective information or, more generally, extra-textual emotional experience which is inaccessible to the recipients of the target language for the translation. Ultimately, absolute untranslatability involves irreconcilable differences of collective social identity between the group of recipients of the original text in its source language and the target group of the recipients of the translation in the target language. These irreconcilable differences of recipients’ communal identity create insurmountable, absolute barriers preventing the full transfer of the original message in the translation [...].<sup>19</sup>

Without a doubt the English-Chinese dialect requires some knowledge of the colonial expansion of the British Empire on the part of the reader of the original text, as well as some extra-textual information about the particular modifications that English underwent when it came into contact with speakers of Chinese. Those in a less powerful position (i.e. the speakers of the ‘substrate’ language — in this case the Chinese) usually use and adapt words from the language of those in control (in this case the English).<sup>20</sup> The morphology of the auxiliary language is typically simple, while the vocabulary is limited.<sup>21</sup> The most minimalized system is exhibited by Chinese Pidgin English.<sup>22</sup>

Here the task of the translator is to show the essential linguistic differences and at least to indicate to what extent this variety of English diverges from standard speech. In these cases one would expect translators to perform operations similar to those which R. Jakobson described as *intralingual translation*,<sup>23</sup> subsuming not only the

<sup>17</sup> Jeff Siegel. *The Emergence of Pidgin and Creole Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Teresa Bałuk-Ulewicz. “Beyond Cognizance: Fields of Absolute Untranslatability”. [In:] *Przekładając nieprzekładalne I*, ed. cit., p. 173.

<sup>20</sup> Holm. *An Introduction to Pidgins...*, ed. cit., p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Siegel. *The Emergence of Pidgin...*, ed. cit., pp. 11–30.

<sup>22</sup> Suzanne Romaine. *Pidgin and Creole Languages*. London: Longman, 1988, p. 26.

<sup>23</sup> Roman Jakobson. “On Linguistic Aspects of translation”. [In:] Lawrence Venuti. *The Translation Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 2000, p. 114.

Pidgin English dialect and the sailors' jargon, but also the differentiation between the modes of speech of MacWhirr, Jukes and the narrator himself.

Let us now examine one passage to see what techniques have been applied in order to translate Pidgin English. Jukes does not speak Pidgin. He tries to imitate the sounds of the language and to simplify its structures. Conrad is careful to characterize Jukes' improvised language as pantomime — a caricature of the dialect used by the Chinese traders. What the readers of the primary text are therefore given is not Pidgin English, but Pidgin English à la Jukes.

'Wanchee look see, all same look see can do,' said Jukes, who having no talent for foreign languages mangled the very Pidgin-English cruelly. [...] 'Catchee number one piecie place to sleep in. Eh?' [...] 'No catchee rain down there — savee?' pointed out Jukes. 'Suppose all'ee same fine weather, one piecie collie-man come topside,' he pursued, warming up imaginatively. 'Make so — Phooooo!' He expanded his chest and blew out his cheeks. 'Savee, John? Breathe — fresh air. Good. Eh? Washee him piecie pants, chow-chow top-side — see, John?' (C 13)

The characteristic features of Pidgin English as produced by Jukes are the omission of pronouns, the lack of morphological endings, the addition of the 'ee' suffix, linguistic stopgaps (the use of the lexical item *piecie* in various meanings and contexts) and the maximum simplification of vocabulary. The only lexeme that he borrows from the Pidgin inventory is *savee* (to know how to).<sup>24</sup> However, all these linguistic modifications generally comply with the tendencies to be found in Pidgins<sup>25</sup> — and, more importantly, they appear to be systematic.

We must bear in mind that the linguistic description of Pidgins began in the 1950s and so it is quite obvious that the first translator of *Typhoon*, Rychliński, could not have consulted any sources. The key question, then, would be whether the translators recognized the general linguistic modifications of Pidgin, i.e. lexical impoverishment and the elimination of many grammatical devices such as number, gender and morphological marking. A corresponding strategy of linguistic changes that give the impression of being methodical should therefore be introduced in the Polish versions. Let us see whether Polish readers are given the same impression. Chronologically, Rychliński's text comes first:

— On chce zobaczyć, zobaczyć może — powiedział Jukes, który nie odznaczając się zdolnościami lingwistycznymi, przekreślał okropnie żargon angielsko chiński. Wskazał na otwarty luk. — Duże jedno miejsce do spania, he? [...] — Nie złapie deszcz tam na dół, John wie? [...] Pewno być dobra pogoda, jedna sztuka kulis wyjść na wierzch — ciągnął zapalając się. — Robi tak: Phuuu! — nabrał do płuc powietrza i dmuchnął. — John patrzy, on oddychać ... świeża powietrze. Dobra, He? On prac jedna sztuka portki i jeść na wierzch ... patrzy John? (R 445)

In Rychliński's rendition we may note the technique of using infinitives instead of full verb forms. In Polish this is a significant simplification, since all verbs conjugate according to a specific set of rules. Rychliński also drops case endings, which can be extremely complex, depending on the noun. This seems to have been a good strategic

<sup>24</sup> Siegel. *The Emergence of Pidgin...*, ed. cit., p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Romaine. *Pidgin and Creole Languages*, ed. cit., pp. 23–37.

decision, as the effect is parallel. In Pidgins the superstrate speakers drop unnecessary complications such as morphological endings. As far as vocabulary is concerned, however, there could have been much more simplification. For instance, instead of using the simpler word *kawałek* (a bit, a piece) for *piecee*, Rychliński uses two words: *jedna sztuka* (one piece, one unit). Also, the collocation *na wierzch* (on the surface) would be more difficult for a foreigner to understand than *na góra* (up). Lastly, the word *see* is translated literally as *widzieć* (to see, i.e. to perceive with the eyes) instead of figuratively as *rozumieć* (to understand). Likewise, the racial slur *John*, which is a nickname for a Chinese person or for the Chinese collectively,<sup>26</sup> is rendered as a neutral proper noun — *John* — whereas an equally offensive Polish word such as *kitajec* or *żółtek* could have been used. It is difficult to explain why Rychliński does not use a derogatory term in this conversation, as in other parts of the text he does recognize the abusive form *Johnies* (C 98) and uses the emotionally loaded equivalent *żółtki* (R 508). On the basis of this analysis, therefore, we can say that Rychliński in part employs the technique of simplification for morphological inflections, which constitutes a distinctive feature of Pidgins,<sup>27</sup> but is not consistent, because for the vocabulary he chooses more sophisticated lexemes instead of the simpler ones that are available in the vocabulary of Polish speakers.

The next version is by Halina Carroll-Najder:

— On chcieć patrzeć zobaczyć, to móc patrzeć zobaczyć może — powiedział Jukes, który nie mając zdolności do obcych języków, przekręcał okropnie nawet żargon angielsko-chiński. Wskazał na otwarty luk. — on złapać prima kawałek miejsce do spać, ech? [...] — Nie złapać deszcz tam w dół, rozumieć? [...] Jak cała taka piękna pogoda, jeden kawałek kulis wyjść na góra — ciągnął z ożywieniem. — Zrobić tak: Phuu! — Nabrał do płuc powietrza i wydał policzki. — Rozumiesz, John? Oddychać ... świeże powietrze. Dobrze, Co? Prać swój kawałek portki, papu na góra ... widzisz, John? (CN 21)

In this translation we can see strategies that are similar to those used by Rychliński: the use of infinitival forms and the reduction of grammatical morphology. Halina Carroll-Najder also fails to recognize the offensive quality of the term *John*, though elsewhere she translates it by using the racially loaded word *kitajec* (CN 89).<sup>28</sup> As regards vocabulary, she realizes the need for a small and simple list of words. She therefore uses the expressions *kawałek* and *na góra* instead of the more advanced *jedna sztuka* and *na wierzch*. Suprisingly, she introduces the modern word *prima* and the childish diminutive *papu*, which come from different jargons: *prima* is colloquial, while *papu* is motherese. Both terms are typical of modern usage and their appearance in a text from the beginning of the twentieth century is anachronistic. Like Rychliński, Carroll-Najder has not used one consistent strategy for the simplification of grammar and vocabulary.

<sup>26</sup> John H. Stape. "Notes". [In:] Joseph Conrad. *Typhoon and Other Stories*. Ed. *idem*. London: Penguin, 2007, p. 235.

<sup>27</sup> Siegel. *The Emergence of Pidgin...*, ed. *cit.*, pp. 11–30.

<sup>28</sup> This was first noted by A. Czasak: Adam Czasak. "*Tajfun* i inne opowiadania: Conrad w języku polskim". [In:] *Między oryginałem a przekładem*. Ed. Maria Filipowicz-Rudek et al. Kraków: Universitas, 1997, vol. III, p. 351.

The last version we shall look at is by Michał Filipczuk:

— Chodź no tu, John, my zobaczyć — i Chińczyk posłusznie ruszył za nim. — Chcieć patrzeć widzieć, to samo, co patrzeć, widzieć, móc — rzekł Jukes, który nie będąc obdarzonym talentami do języków, okrutnie kaleczył angielszczyznę Chińczyków. Potem wskazał na otwarty luk. — On zapaść się — niezłe miejsce — Spać — co? [...] — Nie zapaść deszcz tam w dół — poinformował go Jukes. — Jaka piękna pogoda, kawałek kulis wyjść na góra — perorował \_\_\_\_\_ wyjść na góra i zrobić tak: fuu!! Nabrał do płuc powietrza i wydał policzki: — Kapujesz, John? Oddychać — świeże powietrze — dobrze — co? Prac portki, jeść — na góra — widzisz, John? (F 11)

Filipczuk follows in the footsteps of his predecessors: he employs infinitives and drops inflections. He also follows his predecessors in not using a Polish deprecatory nickname for the Chinese, while at the same time — like them — he recognizes the derogatory term *Johnnies* (C 98) in other parts of the text and translates it as *żółtki* (F 64) or *kitajce* (F 67). What distinguishes Filipczuk from Rychliński and Carroll-Najder is his frequent use of the technique of omission for difficult fragments.<sup>29</sup> He consistently skips the word *piecie*, which deprives the text of a basic feature — whenever Jukes cannot find the right word, he uses the filler *piecie*. Filipczuk also omits another phrase that is difficult to translate — marked by a blank in the quotation above — describing Jukes' particular way of speaking (using gesticulation rather than articulation). Another technique he uses is the adaptation<sup>30</sup> of the dialect name *Pidgin English* (*angielszczyzna Chińczyków*), which suggests that the Chinese spoke substandard English and not that they had developed a new language of the Pidgin type. Given that this translation was made in 2000 — at a time when intercultural exchange had become so rapid and widespread and descriptive studies of Pidgins were easily available — the translator could have used the technique of 'foreignization' by introducing the foreign phrase *Pidgin* as the term for a particular dialect.<sup>31</sup> In this way he could have preserved "the foreignness of the foreign text"<sup>32</sup> — something that has become a primary aim of contemporary translation practice.<sup>33</sup>

All in all, these three translators would seem to have managed to indicate the linguistic 'otherness' of the original and also to show the gap between standard and non-standard English, which is a distinctive feature of this passage taken from Conrad's *Typhoon*. A translator has no right to make the translated text more fluent or more correct than the original.<sup>34</sup> Yet it seems to me that none of these translators has

<sup>29</sup> Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet. "A Methodology for Translation". [In:] Venuti. *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. cit., pp. 92–93.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>31</sup> Lawrence Venuti. *The Translator's Invisibility*. London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 11–38. In Polish Translation Studies this strategy has been discussed at length by Lewicki: Roman Lewicki. *Obcość w odbiorze przekładu*. Lublin: Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2000.

<sup>32</sup> Lawrence Venuti. "Translation, Community, Utopia". [In:] *idem. The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. cit., p. 469.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 468–487.

<sup>34</sup> Venuti. *The Translator's Invisibility*, ed. cit., pp. 11–38; Aniela Korzeniowska. "Tłumacząc przetłumaczone". [In:] *Przekładając nieprzekładalne II*, ed. cit., pp. 158.

come up with a coherent system reflecting the Pidginization of language. One more method that could have been used to illustrate the Pidgin-like quality of Jukes' speech — in addition to morphological and lexical simplification — is the levelling of pronunciation, e.g. the use of 'l' instead of 'ł' (*kawalek*) or 'sz' instead of 'szcz' (*desz*) — all the more so as Conrad himself resorts to this technique when he conveys the speech of the Chinese interpreter (C 13).

## SAILORS' JARGON

Idiolects are an important component of Conrad's prose. In *Typhoon* we come across sailors' jargon. Speakers using this jargon gain individual features. Stylisticization by means of jargon is a method of creating a character's personality, uniqueness and credibility. It presents one of the greatest challenges for a translator, who must avoid the temptation to "cast all the characters in the same mould. All such uniformity detracts from the quality of the translation."<sup>35</sup> Although utterances in this idiolect are not very frequent, their significance should not be underestimated. Conrad set great store by sailors' jargon. From numerous statements that he made, it would appear that what he valued in this hermetic mariners' slang was its preciseness. He was also of the opinion that it rendered maritime reality more directly and in more concrete terms.<sup>36</sup> Sailors' jargon, it should be added, is used more often in *Typhoon* by MacWhirr than by Jukes — something that emphasizes the captain's professional experience and highlights Jukes' lack of practical knowledge. This linguistic differentiation finds its most concrete expression in their conflicting reactions when the typhoon attacks.<sup>37</sup>

In discussing sailors' jargon I would like to concentrate on selected forms used in dialogues and juxtapose them with the same phrases formulated in standard English:

In the Polish translations we may note the standardization of mariners' speech. In the table above all the examples of sailors' jargon have been rendered in neutral Polish. The Polish dialogues give the reader no inkling of the fact that the speakers are using slang that is restricted to a specific social group.

This becomes even more evident when we compare the same phrases uttered first in sailors' jargon and then in standard English. Linguistically, these utterances are radically different. What is more, there is a noticeable difference between the behaviour of the mariners (who use their jargon) and that of the others: the former usually act and react as they should when faced with danger. Once again, we see that language reflects identity. This subtle differentiation, however, will go unnoticed by Polish readers, as in all the available translations the sailors' jargon has been levelled with standard speech. To illustrate this, let us juxtapose three pairs of synonymous expressions in sailors' jargon and also in standard speech:

<sup>35</sup> Anna Pieczyńska-Sulik. "Przekład – idiolekt – idiokultura". [In:] Lewicki. *Przekład...*, ed. cit., p. 57.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Joseph Conrad. *The Mirror of the Sea*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 21, 23.

<sup>37</sup> The long line denotes an omission in the translated text.



Conrad	Rychliński	Carroll-Najder	Filipcuk
<i>Thank'ee...</i> (C 4 x2, 8)	„Dziękuję panu, dziękuję ...” (R438, 41) _____ <sup>37</sup> (R 453)	„Dziękuję panu, dziękuję” (CN13 x2, 17)	„Dziękuję panu” (F 5) _____ „dziękuję panom” (F 8)
<i>D'ye mean to say...</i> (C 25)	_____ (R453)	„Czy chce pan przez to powiedzieć ...” (CN 30),	„Czy chce pan przez to powiedzieć ... ” (F19)
<i>Damme!</i> (C 25, 100)	„Do diaska!” (R453) „Do pioruna” (R510)	„Do cholery!” (CN 30, 90)	„Jasna cholera!” (F19)  „Do stu diabłów!” (F66),
<i>Aye!</i> (C 32),	„Tak jest!” (R459),	„Tak jest!” (CN35)	_____ (F23)
<i>D'ye hear?</i> (C 12, 13, 76, 89),	„Słysz pan?” „Czy pan słyszy?” (R491, 501),	„Słysz pan?” „Słysz pan?” (CN 70, 81)	„Słyszysz?” „Słysz pan?” (F 51, 58)
<i>Forward with'em. Jam'em up</i> (C 77)	„Na przód z nimi!” „Zablokujcie ich!” (R 492)	„Na przód”. „Zablokować ich!” (CN72)	„Do przodu!” „Zablokujcie ich” (F52).

Conrad	Rychliński	Carroll-Najder	Filipcuk
<i>D'ye mean to say...</i> (C 25)	_____ (R 453)	„Czy chce pan przez to powiedzieć ... ” (CN30)	„Czy chce pan przez to powiedzieć ... ” (F19)
<i>Do you mean to say</i> (C 29)	„Czy pan chce przez to powiedzieć ... ” (R 456)	„Czy chce pan przez to powiedzieć ... ” (CN 33)	„Twierdzi pan, że... ” (F22)
<i>Damme!</i> (C 25, 100)	„Do diaska!” (R 453), „Do pioruna” (R 510)	„Do cholery!” (CN 30, 90)	„Jasna cholera!” (F19) „Do stu diabłów!” (F66)
<i>Damn!</i> (C 77)	„Do diaska!” (R 492)	„Psiakrew!” (CN 72)	„A niech was!” (F 52)
<i>Thank'ee Jukes, thank'ee...</i> (C 4)	„Dziękuję panu, dziękuję...” (R 438)	„Dziękuję panu, dziękuję” (CN.13)	„Dziękuję panu” (F 5, ____ )
<i>Thank you very much</i> (C 95)	„Dziękuję pani bardzo” (R 506)	„Dziękuję pani bardzo” (CN30)	„Bardzo pani dziękuję” (F 63)

All these translations consistently use the mainstream target language standard, with no jargon markers. Such a strategy is called neutralization.<sup>38</sup> We must bear in mind the time span between the Polish versions, however. Rychliński found himself in the most difficult situation, for when he was making his translation in the 1920s,

<sup>38</sup> Berezowski. *Dialect in Translation*, ed. cit., p. 49.

the Polish language had not yet developed a sailors' jargon or any proper maritime terminology.<sup>39</sup> Halina Carroll-Najder and Michał Filipczuk, however, could have made use of the modern translations of Herman Melville or Jack London, which offered certain methods of rendering naval *lingo*.<sup>40</sup>

Another issue that poses potential problems for translators — and which is connected with sailors' jargon — is the abundance of swear words. This is no simple matter in *Typhoon*, as vulgar words are suggested, though they are not explicitly present in the text — the reason being that after the publication of *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*, Conrad was criticized for using too much salty language.<sup>41</sup> In *Typhoon*, therefore, he winks at his reader and peppers the text with euphemisms replacing various swear words. He uses the circumlocutions *blessed*, *donkey*, *gory / crimson*, *cursed* and *condemned* for *damned*, *ass*, *bloody*, *damn* and *damned* respectively.<sup>42</sup>

Unfortunately, this intricate game with the reader is lost in translation. Polish translators have bespattered the target text with Polish swear words (referring to cholera, devils and dogs). It goes without saying that translators should not give a literal rendering of the *ersatz* words in question, but should find appropriate lexemes that function in Polish as euphemisms for vulgarisms. Be that as it may, the Polish versions do clarify or make explicit what was implicitly interwoven into the fabric of the text.<sup>43</sup>

The foregoing analysis illustrates a major problem that translators often have to face — the translation of dialect and jargon. Practical solutions have been discussed using the examples of three Polish versions of Joseph Conrad's *Typhoon*. The translations made by Jerzy Rychliński, Halina Carroll-Najder and Michał Filipczuk have been compared using two criteria: the rendition of Pidgin English and that of sailors' jargon.

As we have seen, these translators do not use consistent techniques to render Pidgin English. However, it must be remembered that this particular translational issue may well constitute an element of relative cultural untranslatability. The problem of rendering sailors' jargon, however, should not pose an unsurmountable difficulty — at least for contemporary translators, who could consult existing translations of maritime literature by writers such as Melville and London. As Even-Zohar aptly points out, translated literature is not an arbitrary set of texts, but constitutes a par-

<sup>39</sup> In modern times Poland first gained access to the sea after World War I and it was only then that there was a need for naval terminology and sailors' jargon. Cf. Edward Łuczyński. *Polska terminologia morska*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 1987.

<sup>40</sup> This method of translating jargon and dialect — i.e. to consult and take advantage of the models that are to be found in translated literature — has been proposed by Z. Grosbart: Zygmunt Grosbart. "Rola 'pseudobarbarizmów' przekładowych w odtwarzaniu kolorytu narodowego oryginału". *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego* 1971, pp. 48–49.

<sup>41</sup> Stape. "Notes", *ed. cit.*, pp. 233, 236.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

<sup>43</sup> This technique has been termed 'clarification' and has been analysed by A. Berman: Antoine Berman. "Translation and the Trials of the Foreign". [In:] Venuti. *The Translation Studies Reader*, *ed. cit.*, p. 288.

ticular literary system that is correlated with a "cultural and verbal network of relations".<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Itamar Even-Zohar. "The Position of Translated Literature Within the Literary Polysystem". [In:] Venuti. *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. cit., p. 193.

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