The limits of domestication in the translation of modern literary texts from Yiddish to Czech *

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THE FOREIGN, THE OWN AND THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE TRANSLATOR

In the cultural studies-oriented translation theories, the terms "foreignization" and "domestication" are used primarily to describe translation processes. Since Venuti's resolute plaidoyer against the invisible translator, the power potential released by these strategies has been probed intensively.[1] In this paper, I will examine the impact of domesticating/foreignizing strategies on the interpretative processes carried out by readers (for this topic cf. Zhong Yong 2014). To this end, the notion of domestication will be broadened to readers' interpretation processes, which will be analysed on the basis of the Czech translation of the Yiddish fable *Der lokh fun beygl un meshene kneplekh b*y Eliezer Shteynbarg. I assume that in spite of the indicators of foreignness, the readers will tend to adapt the text to their own cultural background and horizon of experience and, on a second level, domesticate[2] the structures and culture-bound information in the interpretation process. A translation from Yiddish to Czech, and this Yiddish source text in particular, is in my view an ideal basis for such an analysis. The Czech and Yiddish languages are both considered "minor" languages[3] and thus there is no unilaterally balanced power relation[4] between the two cultural contexts. This fact is reflected in the publishing policy and in the translation process; both will be briefly discussed here in connection with the translation of Yiddish literature. There is also a considerable cultural "gap" between the two literary systems. The religious, social and historical specifics of Yiddish literature require intense explicitation on the pragmatic level. The application or non-application of such explicitations leads to strategies of domestication or foreignization in the process of translation (cf. Klaudy 2012, 41–48). In turn, the use of these strategies compels the readers towards compensatory or complementary reactions. For several reasons that will be mentioned later, Shteynbarg's fables are an ideal basis for the research of the correlation between the translator's strategies and readers' interpretative reactions. I assume 1. that even if the translator preserves indicators of the cultural context of the source text, the reader will develop compensatory adaptation strategies or they will further intensify the domesticating strategies used by the translator; and 2. they will produce

interpretation patterns in several variations. Therefore one of the main aims of this paper is to examine to what extent the interpretation of the translator and its "encipherment" in the target text enable the (re)construction of text coherence. The fact that the author of this paper is also the translator of the fable implies subjectivity in the analysis of the former process. At the same time, it opens up the possibility of describing the translation process on two levels. Firstly on the level of intention – how did the translator interpret the source text? Secondly on the level of the choice of the particular strategies – what means did she use to communicate this interpretation to the readers? From this perspective, the subjective approach can be considered rather as an advantage. The method to describe and analyse the latter process – readers' interpretation – is based on written surveys. The structure of the surveys and the characteristic of the test takers will be specified in a separate chapter. The connection of the two processes is actually a hermeneutically based control procedure during which the reaction of the target readers shows how the text interpreted and enciphered by the translator functions in the target culture (comp. Stolze 2011).

TRANSLATING YIDDISH LITERATURE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CZECH TRANSLATION LANDSCAPE

The terms "Yiddish" and "Yiddish culture" are definitely not unknown to the general Czech readership; however, they are often laden with stereotypical notions that are rather nourished from sources other than literary ones. The number of Czech translations of Yiddish literature is extremely limited, as is evident from a brief inventory of Yiddish literature available in the Czech language meticulously compiled by Petr Jan Vinš (2015, 16–19). There is but one author whose translations were published in book form on a noteworthy scale, namely Isaac Bashevis Singer. All 44 works by Singer were translated from English[5] and were published after 1990.[6] Numerous translations – about half of the whole source list compiled by Vinš – were published in periodicals such as *Židovská ročenka* (Jewish Almanac), *Věstník židovských náboženských obcí v Čechách, na Moravě a na Slovensku* (Bulletin of Jewish Religious Communities in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia) and *Maskil* that have a relatively limited circle of readers. As for the time distribution of the translations, even after 1989,[7] there was no significant tendency towards a more intensive publishing of translations of Yiddish literature. What is problematic is not only the perception of Yiddish literature as a "small" literature on the part of the publishing houses but also – as is the case with many uncommon languages – the sheer lack of translators. This is proved, among other things, by the "flood" of Singer translations – all of them from English. For the purposes of this paper, it is suffice to say that in the context of the Czech target culture, Yiddish literature is apparently a literature with a very limited scope of reception.

THE TRANSLATOR AS A DECIDING AUTHORITY

The decision-making space of the translator, which was discussed from several points of view in Christiane Nords' (e. g. 2011) concept of loyalty among others, can be purely "technically" divided into two closely related domains; the production-rela-

ted and text-immanent space. In the former, the translator makes decisions necessary for embedding the target text in the literary and publishing landscape of the target culture. In the latter, the translator is – along with the author and the reader – a subject in the hermeneutically defined translation process (cf. Cercel 2013, 349). In this context, his or her task consists of what Levý (1972; 2012, 42) and Popovič (1968, 34) among others metaphorically describe as mediating a cipher. That includes revealing the key parts relevant for interpretation in the text, identifying digressions from genre specifics, determining the historical horizon, deciphering intertextual references etc.

Below follows an outline of the individual decision-making process of the translator, who is at the same time the author of this paper. The text to be tested here targeted the edition of the magazine *PLAV – Měsíčník pro světovou literaturu* (PLAV – World Literature Monthly) which presents samples of literature from diverse countries in Czech translation. Issue No. 6–7/15 focused on Yiddish literature. Such a starting position has two causally related consequences; the translations are adapted to the medium, as it is more clear now who the intended reader is; the typical subscriber of this magazine is a university graduate, usually from the field of humanities.

The decision to translate Shteynbarg's fables[8] for the Yiddish issue of *PLAV* was motivated by several reasons. In the Czech translation landscape, Shteynbarg is an absolutely unknown author, although he is considered "the most imaginative fabulist in modern Yiddish literature, (who) transformed the popular genre into a sophisticated form of dramatic poetry " (Howe et al. 1988, 113). In the context of Yiddish literature, he represents one of the most innovative experimenters with language, in such measure that the translatability of his fables is often called into question (cf. Eidherr 2002, 56; for Shteynbargs fables cf. Sadan 1969, 9–34 and Bikl 1936, 30–43). The consequence of these experiments on the level of language and intertextuality is the transformation of a classic genre. The genre of the fable has certain established characteristics whose knowledge on the part of the target readers I assume. Let me also assume that these characteristics raise certain expectations as to the content and form that will shape the interpretation of the target text. However, in Shteynbarg's fables, the norms of the genre become a starting point for a subversive play, which, too, is firmly rooted in the source culture. On the one hand, relatively frequent digressions from the features of the fable stand out in the text. On the other hand, however, these are complex shifts in the complex structure of the fable genre intrinsic to the source culture, which are hard to mediate from the perspective of intertextual coherence (cf. Udel-Lambert 2006). This will be demonstrated using the translation of the fable *Der lokh fun beygl und meshene kneplekh.*

> **Der lokh fun beygl un meshene kneplekh**
> zogt der beker moyshe-mekhl:
> "vi azoy me makht a beygl veystu? nem a lekhl,
> kleb arum a teygl,
> hostu dir a beygl."
> est men oyf dem beygl, vu-zhe blaybt der lokh? in keshene.
> iz bay shloymelen in keshene a lokh.
> un vos nokh?
> kneplekh tsvey azoyne sheyne – meshene.

viln zey, di knepelekh, nit hoyzn
in der keshene fun shloymes alte hoyzn
mit a lokh fun beygl –
kumt zey epes den derfar? tsi zenen zey den khoyte beeygl,
az zikh glitshn fun der keshene zey nemen?
vos? vos iz der lokh fun beygl? gornisht shebegornisht.
un bay vemen halt zikh? mit vemen?
ersht – er efnt gor a moyl der beygllokh: "ir megt zikh shemen,
ir megushemdike! keyn farshtand nito bay aykh dokh oyf keyn hor nisht!
iker iz bay aykh der beygl, nit der tokh?
ir fun rukhnyes antloyft gor? dos iz dokh der etsem-mehus un der kol-velokh
fun a yedn yesh,
un afile oykh fun grobn mesh!
nemt far a balones un tseteylt dos mesh oyf teyln un oyf teylekhlekh,
mer, alts mer, pamelekh un pamelekhlekh,
un dos teylekhl dos dinste vi a hor
vayter teylt es vi me teylt dos yor
oyf khadoshim, teg un shoen, reges un sekundn –
kumt ir nit tsum beygllokh, tsum nul tsum rundn?
ir banemt dem inyen! tut a kler!
nemt dos tifer nor! nemt tif es!"
un geredt der lokh fun beygl seykhldik kharifes,
rukhnyes ahin un rukhnyes aher –
nor geredt tsu vemen? tsu a rukhnyes vi er:
oysgeven di knepelekh di tsayt, nito zey mer!

Díra v bejglu a mosazné knoflíky
Říká pekař Mojše Gáblík:
„Víte, jak se dělá bejglík? Vezmi díru,
těsto smotej okolo,
a máš bejgl – hotovo!"
Bejgl sněden, kde je díra? Zeje v kapse.
U Šlojmeho v kapse je,
co tam ještě najdeme?
Dva mosazné knoflíky, v celé lesklé kráse.
Brání se ti krasavci, nechce se jim do kapsy
Šlojmeho starých nohavic
spolu s dírou od bejglu, tak to radši nic!
Je to snad hřích jako vzývat zlaté tele,
když vyklouznou z kapsy majitele?
Co je vlastně díra v bejglu? Nula z nuly,
nezdrží je, užuž se z kapsy vykoulely.
A tu otvor promluvil: „Že se nestydíte!
Materialisti! Rozum žádný, na špičku nosu nevidíte!
Je snad bejgl přednější než jeho střed?
Utíkáte snad před duchovnem? Vždyť to je podstata všech věd,
jádro všeho bytí, ve všem se nachází
– dokonce v sprosté mosazi.
Však představme si: dělíme mosaz na kousky až k nejmenšímu dílku,

pomalu, ještě pomaleji, úplně pomalinku,
až tenčí než vlas nám dílek vychází.
A dělíme dále, jako se dělí rok – fázi za fází,
měsíce, dny, hodiny, minuty, vteřiny. Jaká je podstata?
Což nevyjde díra v bejglu, nula, oblá a kulatá?
Už chápete problém! Výsledek znáte!
Tak bádejte do hloubky! Zkoumejte dále!"
Dí otvor jak kniha, učeně, zrale.
Duchovno sem, duchovno tam – koho tím asi zmate?
Ke komu mluví? Jen k duchu, jako je on sám:
knoflíky nejsou tu, zmizely do nikam.
(For the English translation cf. Curt Leviant 2003, 17–19.)

In her analysis of Shteynbarg's fables, Miriam Udel-Lambert (2006, 379) describes the shift of the moral message from the field of behaviour to the field of speech form. This shift goes back to the complex term *khkire* firmly rooted in the Jewish rhetorical tradition. Udel-Lambert (381f) describes the history of this Hebrew term which originally – in Hebrew – meant a cross-examination of witnesses in court, with the meaning later shifting to study, search or speculation. In Yiddish, the noun retained the meaning of "oysforshung, tife arayntrakhtung, filosofye" – search, deep exploration, philosophy (Niborski – Neuberg 1999, 100), while the verb *khkiren* (*zikh*) rather implies the act of excessive, speculative speech. The speeches – often monologues rather than dialogues – of Shteynbargs' protagonists are characterized by this kind of pompous, conceited tone. It is mostly those protagonists who express themselves in a fulsome and rhetorically well-versed way that are eventually disgraced as "losers", just like the *pilpul*–practising bagel hole in the tested fable.[9] Pomposity is achieved primarily by play with allusions and hints bound to the source language and source culture, which require a fitting choice of translation strategies. At the same time, the choice of strategies decides to what extent the translators' interpretation will be transparent to the reader. The following observations do not aim at an exhaustive analysis of all figures, tropes, metaphors and metrical structures in the fable. They will rather focus on selected phenomena – mainly wordplay and puns – which the translator considered relevant/peripheral in the process of interpretation and subsequently central/marginal to the process of translation.

The enthusiastic sermon of the bagel hole on the value of emptiness is in fact a highly ironic play within Jewish rhetorical traditions. This ensues not only from *what* the bagel hole preaches to the two brass buttons but also *how* it formulates its "sermon". The fable is larded with puns and examples of wordplay which basically have two functions. The first type of pun aims at producing an amusing effect. The examples of wordplay of the second type are complex indices which determine the interpretation steps. The following passage marks a transition from "simple", amusing puns to the domain of complex wordplay. In the verses "mit a lokh fun beygl – / kumt zey epes den derfar? tsi zenen zey den khoyte-beeygl" the identical rhyme results from the homonymy of the Yiddish expression for bagel (originating from Middle High German) and the Hebrew phrase for worshipping the golden calf. In its monologue, the bagel hole celebrates itself as the highest spiritual authority. The rhyme,

based on homonymy, matches the boastful rhetoric and heresy. Generally the use of Hebrew words – mostly expressions or set phrases for religious concepts – is one of the most important indications for the interpretative *khkire*-scheme outlined above. The speech of the bagel hole is larded with expressions of the Hebrew component which only seemingly imply a high rhetorical quality. Shteynbarg does not directly distort the Hebrew words, rather playing with their form and meaning in Yiddish. This can be demonstrated in the following four verses: "Ir fun rukhnies antloyft gor? dos iz dokh der etsem-mehus / un der kol-velokh / fun a jedem jesh, / un afile oykh fun grobn mesh!" In the speech of the bagel hole, Shteynbarg is highly creative in combining Hebrew expressions from the field of Jewish religiosity such as *rukhnyes* (spirituality), *etsem-mehus* (the principal essence), *yesh* (being, existence) with the expression *kol-velokh* which in Yiddish has a highly ironic meaning (bighead, swell-head). Moreover, this lexeme contains the German word *lokh* which is an allusion to the main protagonist. This word – *lokh* or the diminutive *lekhl* – is the leitmotif of the fable appearing in the form of suffixes: *pamelekh, pamelekhlekh, teylekhl, teylekhlekh*. This concealed but excessive repetition of the leitmotif has a central function – to emphasize the self-importance of the main protagonist and to imply the emptiness of his preaching on the formal level.

From the perspective of intertextual coherence, it seems very difficult (if not impossible) to mediate the techniques outlined above which cause the shift of the moral message from the field of behaviour to the field of speech form within the information provided in the Czech target text. This will now be demonstrated on the basis of chosen examples on the semantic and pragmatic level.

It only seems to be less exacting to find fitting strategies to render the first type of puns than to compensate the complex hints on the formal level. In fact, the shifts performed in the translation of these seemingly simple puns have an impact on the structure of the whole fable. To give an example: in the Czech translation, the pun in the proper name *moyshe mekhl* has been substituted by an example of semantically similar wordplay, *Mojše Gáblík*. On the formal aesthetic level, the alliteration has disappeared, while on the macrostructural level, the name does not rhyme with the central metaphor (and leitmotif) of emptiness/nothingness (*díra*) but exactly with the opposite (*bejglík*). That makes the transfer of the complex structures and wordplay even more complicated. For instance, it was not possible to find a fitting compensation for the concealed repetition of the leitmotif. In the Czech translation, the translator attempted to compensate the process by use of similarly sounding words (*dílku, dílek*), however, the degree of explicitness is naturally much lower. Moreover, in the Czech translation, the continuity of repetition is broken due to the use of the synonyms *díra/otvor*. In connection with the verba dicendi, the translator decided on the masculine synonym ("a tu otvor promluvil", "dí otvor jak kniha") since the feminine form would – at least in the context of Jewish rhetoric – distort the image of the pompous preacher. The best example of an absolute omission on the pragmatic level is the transfer of the Hebrew expressions whose function has been described above. Not only is it impossible to find a compensatory strategy for their high frequency in the Czech target text;[11] the wordplay resulting from the use of the Hebrew words have

to be omitted, too. The Czech translation of the above-quoted four verses mediates only the semantic value of the particular expressions, while the rhetorical quality of the speech expressed by the use of Hebrew words has been neutralized, and thus the ironic effect has disappeared.

The following surveys will examine which interpretation mechanisms are employed by the target readers to establish intratextual coherence.

STRUCTURE AND AIMS OF THE SURVEYS; CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEST TAKERS

As the following experiment attempts to probe the interpretation process, the design of the experiment was adapted to the examined texts.[12] The 20 test takers[13] are Czech university students or university graduates approximately corresponding to the intended readers of *PLAV*. The first, larger group of 13 TTs consisted of students of humanities, mainly German philology. The second, smaller group of 7 TTs comprised students of Jewish studies or those who regularly attend events organized by the Department of Jewish Studies. One can assume that the members of the latter group have comparatively more experience with the cultural context of the source text, however, they would rather perceive it from an extrinsic position.[14] The survey dealing with the interpretation of the fable is preceded by two preliminary surveys conducted before the TTs had read the text. The first preliminary survey examined the contextual knowledge horizon of the readers. For this purpose, six highly frequent culturally related terms were chosen: *shabat* as the most important Jewish feast, *talit* and *tfilin* as the most frequent prayer objects, *shiva* as one of the central ceremonies, *chala* as one of the typical Jewish meals and *klezmer* as a characteristic lexeme from the field of Jewish folklore.

In the preliminary survey dealing with the definition of the fable genre, the TTs were to specify their understanding of this genre. The following questions were to probe: a) the extent to which specific play with the genre form was recognizable to the readers of the target text; b) which strategies and interpretative schemes they have developed to replace the subversive "rules of the game" – defined in the context of the source culture – in the target culture. The following questions that are presented here in English were formulated in Czech in the surveys.

Preliminary survey on the contextual knowledge horizon
1. Do you know these terms?
shabat, shiva, chala, klezmer, talit, tfilin
(The TTs were to mark YES or NO in a table)
2. Define the meaning of the terms you have marked as known as precisely as possible.

Preliminary survey on Shteynbarg's fable
What are the characteristic features of the fable genre in your opinion?
Questions concerning genre classification and interpretation:
1. Try to make a brief summary of the content of the fable "Díra v bejglu a mosazné knoflíky".

2. Do you think that the text heads towards a point?

YES NO

If you have marked YES, please, give reasons for your answer.

3. Were you able to identify indications of a "foreign" culture?

YES NO

If you have marked YES, specify these indications.

4. Does the text correspond to your notion of a fable?

YES NO

Give reasons for your answer.

Evaluation of the preliminary survey on the contextual knowledge horizon

The survey on the culturemes (comp. Vermeer – Witte 1990, 137) showed, as expected, an essential difference in the contextual knowledge horizon of the TTs in the two groups.

The results of the first group of 13 TTs: the following culturemes were recognized and defined to a mentionable extent: *shabat* (12 TTs), *klezmer* (3 TTs).

As for the second group of TTs, all of the terms were known to some extent: *shabat* (7 TTs), *shiva* (6 TTs), *chala* (7 TTs), *klezmer* (6 TTs), *talit* (7 TTs), *tfilin* (7 TTs)

Evaluation of the preliminary survey on the definition of the fable genre

The preliminary test on the understanding of the fable genre produced relatively uniform results. In the responses of all test takers, altogether 7 characteristics appear. I list them according to their frequency in the responses:

Personified animals (all TTs except for TT10 and TT15); Moral (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20); Personified objects (6, 8, 15, 16); Limited length (2, 4, 6, 8, 10); Point (14, 16, 20); Classified as children's literature (8, 10, 15); Criticism of bad character traits (7, 15).

Evaluation of the survey on the interpretation processes performed by the readers of the target text

Due to the experiment's design, it was first necessary to solve the methodological problem of how to approach the diversity of formulations. My assumption that the answers to the questions concerning the key parts would produce certain interpretation patterns in several variations was confirmed. Therefore it was possible to group the answers in relatively homonymous thematic clusters.

The first question concerning the "content" of the fable was answered by more than half of the TTs directly by the interpretation of the moral so that the answers to the first and second questions basically overlapped.[15] The interpretations can be divided into thematic clusters based on responses which were only slightly reformulated by the author of the article. The reformulation consisted mainly in: 1. simplifying the statements on the syntactic level; 2. removing repetitive explanations within one and the same response; 3. translating the answers to English. In this way, the answers automatically constitute matching groups. My assumption that there would be substantial differences between the reactions within the first and second group of the test takers was not confirmed. With a few exceptions, which will be described later,

the answers of the two groups were surprisingly similar. Therefore they are presented together.

The responses to the question aimed at the presence/absence of the point already indicate the main interpretative directions. Except for TT7, all TTs answered the question of the presence of a point positively. In their answer to the second part of the question, the readers tried to define the message mediated in the point. After a slight reformulation, the answers of the TTs can be divided into three thematic groups. The majority of the test takers (17 TT) emphasized the contrast between the material and the spiritual in various semantic shades, interpreting the personification of emptiness/nothingness in the bagel hole as spirituality.

1. Contrast between material and spiritual principles (8, 11, 15)

1.1 The way from the material to the spiritual through the process of division (1)

1.2 The process of division as a criterion for differentiating between the spiritual and the material (3)

1.3 Victory of the spiritual over the material (5, 7, 12, 13, 19)

1.4 Normative approach to the contrast between material and spiritual principles; one should not yearn for the material (2, 9, 16, 17)

1.5 Instruction on a deeper perception of the world as a whole and as parts (6, 10, 14)

In the dichotomy spirituality/materiality established by the readers, spirituality is mostly marked as the positive principle (10 TT). The mocking, ironic aspect that is strongly present in the source text thanks to the allusions to rhetorical traditions in Jewish culture is obviously completely non-transparent to those readers of the target text who work with the dichotomy spiritual/material. The unavoidable operations of domestication in the process of translation on the microstructural level, such as the despecification of the Hebrew terms or the omission of culture-bound wordplays, activated a further process of domestication on the macrostructural level on the part of the readers of the target text.

Two test takers from the second group interpreted the point explicitly with regard to the religious context of the source culture.

2. Criticism of the nitpickery (probably meaning the *pilpul* method) of the rabbinic interpretation (18, 20)

Both test takers obviously identified the pompous undertone in the speech of the bagel hole and interpreted it within the context of the source culture as criticism of the traditional method of studying the Talmud. The term *pilpul* was not explicitly mentioned, but it follows from the formulation. TT18 even mentioned the German expression *Haarspalterei* which indeed is used in Yiddish as well (*horshpalteray*) as a synonym for the Hebrew term. The two test takers responded to the preserved indicators of the source culture which obviously blocked further domestication on the macrostructural level in the interpretation process.

One TT interpreted the point in a very particular sense simply as a warning against wasting money.

3. The copper buttons symbolize money that is quickly squandered; one should spend money carefully (4)

The answer of TT4 provides an interesting example of interpretative deviation

within the perception of the target text. The test taker left the monologue of the bagel hole which in fact dominates the fable widely uninterpreted. She/he put emphasis on the interaction between the brass buttons and the hole so that a normative point typical for the fable genre could be formulated.

The results of the survey on the interpretation of the text are very closely related to the answers to the question concerning the indications referring to the source culture of the original. Only 4 TTs (6, 7, 8, 9) answered the question negatively. The remaining answers show that the respondents focused on names, genuine concepts of the source culture (primarily the TTs from the second group) or on biased, frequently repeated stereotypes. It must also be noted that the TTs worked with a copy of the magazine with the printed translations so it is highly probable that they knew in advance that the originals were Yiddish. The following aspects were stated as recognized indications: Yiddish names (2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20); the term *bejgl* (5, 3, 15, 17, 20); a specific way of speaking (18, 20); emphasis on detail (10, 16); avarice (2, 11). The answer of TTs 18 and 20 concerning the "specific way of speaking" corresponds with their interpretative approach described above.

In general, the TTs recognized that the fable genre was being experimented with. The third question was answered positively only by four TTs (4, 7, 12, 14), while the remaining TTs had a problem with categorizing the text in this genre, almost exclusively giving formal reasons for that: lack of personified animals as protagonists (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20); the moral is not obvious (1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 17, 20); the whole text is too philosophical/complicated (1, 2, 10, 15, 19); verse form (2, 6).

The surveys make it relatively clear that the TTs had a problem in categorizing the text within the fable genre; however, they developed interpretation strategies to "bend" the text in the direction of the fable genre by establishing didactically normative patterns.

CONCLUSION

The main intention of the presented article was to examine the correlation between the domesticating/foreignizing strategies applied by the translator in her interpretation and the impact of these strategies on readers' interpretation of the target text. To this end, the notion of domestication was broadened to readers' interpretation processes. These correlations were analysed on the basis of a modern Yiddish literary text, a fable by Eliezer Shteynbarg. In the analysis of the strategies applied by the translator, it was shown to what extent her interpretation of the source text was transferable to the target text. Despite her effort to maintain as many indicators of the foreign cultural context as possible, the above exemplified processes of domestication were inevitable. The survey was to reveal what impact these processes have on the perception of the translated text by the readers on the macrostructural level. The following facts can be drawn from the results of the survey: 1. the answers to the question about the "content" of the fable and about the point overlapped – except for 7 TTs who tried to retell the plot in some way. This fact corresponds with the answers to the fourth question about the classification of the text as a fable, to which 16 TTs responded negatively (the plot of a classic fable is relatively easy to sum up). 2. In

their answers to the question about the point, the test takers formulated responses which can be grouped in relatively homogenous "thematic clusters". The bagel hole and the buttons were mostly interpreted as symbols of the dichotomy spirituality/materiality, while the principle of spirituality was interpreted as the positive one. The ridiculously pompous form of the monologue was not taken into consideration – it was probably non-transparent in the target text in consequence of the above-described domestication strategies carried out by the translator. Only 2 TTs identified the specific form of speech in the fable and interpreted the monologue within the concepts of the source culture. 3. Although most test takers recognized that the fable genre was being experimented with (16 TTs) and that this experiment takes place within the foreign culture (16 TTs), they tended to continue the domesticating strategies on the macrostructural level, for instance by formulating didactically instructive points. Generally the assumption concerning the reactions of the test takers to the strategies of the translator was confirmed: in the hermeneutically defined translation process, the readers continued the domesticating strategies initiated by the translator. The explicit identification of the foreignizing elements on the lexical level (question 3) had – with the exception of two TTs – a negligible impact on the approach to the text on the macrostructural level. In this respect, there were surprisingly lesser differences between the two tested groups than could have been expected on the basis of the preliminary survey.

TRANSLATED FROM GERMAN BY TEREZA CHOCHOLOVÁ

NOTES

[1] In the ideologically laden approaches, the terms *domestication/foreignization* coined by Venuti (1995) were modified over and over again. Bassnett (2005) mitigates the term *domestication*, which was given a negative overtone by Venuti, by the slightly more neutral term *acculturation*, while Tymoczko (2007) borrows the term *transculturation* from cultural studies in reaction to Venuti's dichotomy etc.

[2] In this sense, the term "domestication" means an interpretative adaptation by the readers which compensates the strategies of foreignization or broadens the strategies of domestication initiated by the translator.

[3] For the correlation between minor and major languages and cultures cf. Klaudy (2012, 33–48). The labelling of the Yiddish language as "minor" holds true only for the level of synchrony. In a diachronic perspective, Yiddish was a worldwide spread language with a rich literary tradition and ca. 12 million Yiddish speakers on the eve of World War II.

[4] The term "power" in this context is related to the notion of translation as a technology of domination between cultures (cf. Bassnett – Lefevere 1990, 65).

[5] For the problem of the "double original" – English and Yiddish – in the work by I. B. Singer cf. Vinš (2015, 78–82).

[6] The first published Czech translation of Singer was a 1990 book of short stories *Stará láska a jiné povídky* brought out by the publishing house Odeon. The "flood" of Czech Singer translations followed six years later when the publishing house Argo discovered Singer as an author who was attractive to readers and started to bring out at least one new translation every year.

[7] After the fall of the communist regime which did not support (or directly supressed) interest in Jewish (and religious) topics, a surge of literature from this realm was to be expected. It indeed happened, but in other fields such as general and local Jewish history, and Jewish culture and traditions, while there was no remarkable change in the production of translations from Yiddish to Czech.

[8] For the Yiddish number of *PLAV*, the author of this article translated one short story by Avrom Reyzen, two short stories by Hersh Dovid Nomberg and three fables by Eliezer Shteynbarg.

[9] The term *pilpul* (Yiddish *pilpl*) originally means a specific method of harmonizing different talmudic texts. In Yiddish, the expression has yet another – pejorative – meaning, namely that of a most meaningless, hair-splitting discussion (cf. Niborski – Neuberg 1999, 242).

[11] To explain the function of the Hebrew component, an extensive commentary would be necessary. In case of a poetic text this is a problematic solution.

[12] With respect to such a formulation of the question and examination perspective, it was naturally impossible to develop a universally applicable experiment design, as practised e. g. during the examination of a translation evaluation. Comp. Tirkkonen-Condit (1986).

[13] The problem of the size of the respondent groups has been discussed by many, comp. Toury (2012, 263).

[14] The conversations preceding the test made it clear that all test takers from the second group are interested in Jewish culture more from an academic perspective.

[15] Only 7 TTs (2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 14, 19) tried to sum up the plot.

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The limits of domestication in the translation of modern literary texts from Yiddish to Czech

Yiddish literature. Domesticating strategies. Intertextual coherence. Intratextual
coherence. Macrostructural level. Experiment design.

The paper focuses on the correlations between the domesticating/foreignizing strategies
applied by the translator within her interpretation and the impact of these strategies on rea-
ders' interpretation of the target text. This process is analysed on the basis of surveys concer-
ning the Czech translation of the Yiddish fable *Der lokh fun beygl und meshene kneplekh* by
Eliezer Shteynbarg. The surveys are aimed at the following related questions: 1. which options
does the translator have to make his/her interpretative steps transparent for the readers; 2. to
what extent is the interpretation of the target text homogenous resp. heterogeneous; 3. which
interpretative patterns do the readers of the target text develop to preserve intratextual cohe-
rence.

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