

1 The reception of literary translations as space for intercultural encounter

1 The problem of literary reception

Słownik terminów literackich [A Dictionary of Literary Terms], edited by J. Sławiński (2008), gives two non-synonymous terms: “odbiór dzieła literackiego” [perception of literary work] and “repcja dzieła literackiego” [reception of literary work]. This differentiation is specific of the theory of literature in Poland, whereas in other countries there is usually one equivalent of these two terms: *reception of literary work* (English), *réception de l'oeuvre littéraire* (French), *Rezeption des literarischen Werkes* (German) or *recepción de una obra literaria* (Spanish). The above-mentioned dictionary defines the first term as follows:

a set of the reader's perceptive activities assumed by every literary text, conditioned by its structure, realised during reading (p. 351).

On the other hand, reception means:

reception of a literary work by the literary public and its functioning among various readers' groups (p. 464).

These definitions reflect two different approaches to the problem in question. The basic presumption of the first definition is that the author of a literary work provides for the existence of a concrete reader, imagines him in a certain way and hides information about the reader in the text and structure of the work. Consequently, we do not deal with a real reader, but with an assumed one, anticipated by the writer. The reader does not appear in the text but is only a certain theoretical construct. One can attempt to recreate the reader first of all on the basis of **internal** instructions, i.e. by analysing the work, and also by following **extratextual** hints, such as the author's comments, letters and literary conventions of the epoch.

Furthermore, this virtual receiver refers beyond the work since the author creates him for a concrete literary public, the one the author knows. Thus, the writer places his work in the existing literary circuits and expectations of various readers' circles. Consequently, he exerts a considerable influence on its primary reception. The first interpretations and evaluations of a given work mark the beginning of its functioning in the historical-literary process (Sławiński

1982:68). In Poland, the development of this issue caused the creation of the so-called poetics of reception propagated among others by Edward Balcerzan.³

On the other hand, the term “reception” unambiguously refers to research concerning decisive indicators, which are extratextual, in the functioning of a literary work. Such factors include the social and economic situation as well as all elements that influence the circulation of a book, the number of its editions, promotion, etc. (*STL* 2008). The range of issues related to this understanding of literary reception is very broad and embraces matters of the reception of a single work or the whole output of the author, reception of a concrete literary genre and even the whole literary trend at a given place and time. Sometimes research concerns the so-called comparative reception within which the reception of a single work or the whole output of a selected author is described and compared in different countries.

The reception of literature includes many levels and aspects, among other things readership, criticism or potential impact on other authors’ works (Sierotwiński 1986:205). The reconstruction of this phenomenon is a complex process since “in most cases the fact of reception [...] is not directly available to a historian of literature, contrary to the obtainability of a literary work” (Głowiński 1998d:137). Therefore, investigating the reception of literature one must refer to diverse testimonies, including:

- utterances (literary, paraliterary, critical) in which the process of reading is thematised;
- metaliterary utterances (critical, historical-literary, theoretical), indirectly testifying to reception, revealing the ways of approaching literature;
- texts referring to other texts, such as pastiches, parodies, stylisations, etc.;
- transformations performed on a literary work, i.e. translations, paraphrases, transcriptions, etc.;
- sociological research of an empirical character.

An essential element of the context in which the phenomenon occurs is literary culture, thus its description is one of the directions of research conducted within literary reception. From this perspective, scholars focus on the **real reader**, i.e. the one whose judgements, preferences and behaviour patterns are described using empirical methods (Żółkiewski 1979:XXVII).

3 This concept was criticised by Markiewicz (1979:9), who regarded it as utopian. He stresses that there are many ways of reception and they are performed at different levels of the work; thus, it is impossible to provide their complete and adequate description.

2 The concept of intercultural communication

The concept of intercultural communication is trendy, eagerly used and even misused in the contemporary humanities. It is differently defined as Grażyna Zarzycka (2000:30) states straightforwardly, “the number of definitions of this [...] term is equal to the number of research attitudes and the number of authors.” This lack of precision sometimes leads to the creation of related terms that are to show semantic nuances. In English bibliography, one can come across *cultural communication* along with *cross-cultural communication*, *international communication* and *intercultural communication*.⁴ A similar tendency can be observed in Polish works concerning this issue.⁵ Their meanings can be the same, fully or partially. Zarzycka (2000:35) considers the terms “cross-cultural,” “intercultural communication” and “intercultural dialogue” as synonymous.

Sometimes authors use the term *intercultural communication* without defining it; they refer to a purely intuitional understanding of the term, and thus it loses its clarity and becomes almost colloquial. Anna Duszak (1998), in her monograph *Tekst, dyskurs, komunikacja międzykulturowa* [Text, Discourse, Intercultural Communication], provides an extensive analysis of the first two terms, but does not explain the meaning of the third one, evidently assuming that it belongs to general knowledge. Therefore, intercultural communication becomes a term that is extremely broad and commonly embraces almost anything that somehow concerns different cultures.

Today “intercultural communication” is often labelled to texts that have quite recently been classified as belonging to a completely different field of the humanities. For instance, in the volume *Komunikacja międzykulturowa: perspektywy badań interdyscyplinarnych* [Inter-cultural Communication: Perspectives of Interdisciplinary Research], edited by Władysław Chłopicki (2007), one can find such articles as “Kilka uwag o dokonaności w języku polskim i francuskim” [Some remarks on the perfective aspect of verbs in Polish and French] or “Pozycja podmiotu w zdaniu pojedynczym w językach niemieckim i polskim” [The

4 A comprehensive outline of approaches concerning the relationships between communication and culture can be found in Zarzycka’s work *Dialog międzykulturowy. Teoria oraz opis komunikowania się cudzoziemców przyswajających język polski*, [Inter-cultural Dialogue. Theory and Description of the Communication of Foreigners Learning Polish] Łódź 2000.

5 Such terms as “komunikacja poprzekulturowa,” “komunikacja pomiędzykulturowa,” “komunikacja międzynarodowa” (Mikułowski-Pomorski 2003:10), “komunikacja zewnętrzzkulturowa, wewnątrzzkulturowa” (*Słownik pojęć i tekstów kultury* 2002:148).

position of the subject in simple sentences in German and Polish], which several years ago would have been found in a work about contrastive grammar. Another text from this volume “O traktowaniu leksyki z czasów komunistycznych przez autorów najnowszych słowników języka polskiego i leksykografów niemieckich” [About treating the lexis of the communist times by authors of the latest dictionaries of the Polish language and by German lexicographers] is rather an analysis belonging to comparative lexicography. What is alarming is not the fact that proposals from various fields of the humanities are included in the framework of cultural communication, but the fact that referring to this concept does not always lead to using new methodological proposals, and thus the concept remains semantically empty.

Studies regarded as classic define intercultural communication in a broad way as the “art of understanding and being understood by the audience of another culture” (Sitaram, Cogdell 1976:26). The research has an interdisciplinary character, and the most frequently mentioned fields to which methodology we should refer embrace cultural anthropology, psychology, social psychology, sociology, linguistics and semiotics as well as knowledge concerning communication and communicating. Works of a sociological character focus on the interpersonal dimension of intercultural communication. Assuming this approach, communication directly involves members of various national or ethnic communities (Mikułowski-Pomorski 2003: 12). An essential aspect of this phenomenon is the fact that the practices of communicating as well as desires and intentions that constitute their sources must “relate to a given time, place and social expectation” (Mikułowski-Pomorski 2007:20).

Other approaches allow for such an understanding of intercultural communication according to which it does not take place directly between representatives of different cultures but through artefacts. This is the attitude assumed by the aforementioned *Słownik pojęć i tekstów kultury* (2002:148), which defines intercultural communication as one of the forms of cultural communication understood as

customs and norms that are applicable to a given culture and that govern the processes of communication within social groups; the way a given community communicates with one another (intercultural communication) and with other communities (cross-cultural communication) through what constitutes the element of the social acquis: art, religion, technology, architecture and social structure.

Accordingly, intercultural communication is understood as a certain tradition worked out by a given community that enables it to communicate with another community through various material and non-material forms that it has created.

Assuming this approach, a literary work appears to be an agent of intercultural exchange. Cultural and intercultural communication will be co-created by literary communication and other types of artistic communication: film, theatre and media. Consequently, analysing intercultural communication one should refer to knowledge gained through studying different disciplines; besides the aforementioned ones, literary studies as well as the theory and history of culture.

Those using this concept within cultural studies refer to neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). They have borrowed from NLP the concept assuming the existence of four filters responsible for orienting and modelling our own perception, interpretation and evaluation of the world. One of the filters, in addition “language,” “physiological” and “individual,” is “culture.” For Katan, cultural filters are one of the ways “in which groups organize their shared [...] perception of the world” (Katan 2009:75).

3 Intercultural encounter

Sociological studies state that an intercultural encounter takes place when two people brought up in different cultures meet, assuming that they do not plan to join any of these cultures (Mikułowski-Pomorski 2007:355). Consequently, we mostly deal with experiences of people who visit some country as guests, and the culture of this country is alien to them. Such an encounter is of an interpersonal dimension in which its participants exchange their judgements and experiences; such a meeting can be defined as an act of communication. In order to perform such an act, its participants should have a certain predisposition expressed through their intentions, needs or directed attitudes, response or at least looking for some context (Casmir 1978:255). This means a **mutual** will to reach agreement that should characterise the participants of the interaction, otherwise problems and conflicts may occur. The most important factor of the act of intercultural communication is considered to be intention understood as the consumption of cognitive energy both by the sender and receiver of a message, assuming that the sender uses this energy to encode its message while the receiver – to decode it (Borden 1991).

Can we then understand the area of the reception of foreign literature as a territory of intercultural encounter? With all certainty, it is not an area of interpersonal contact nor is it face to face communication. Receivers of a literary text are living people and not theoretical constructs; yet, there is no direct encounter between participants of different cultures. The encounter is realised indirectly through a product – artefact – of an alien culture. In this case, communicative intentions are not symmetrically spread. It is difficult to ascribe unambiguously

to the author of a literary work an intention to communicate with his readers being part of a different culture, one of the reasons being that the author cannot foresee whether, when and into which language his work will be translated. It is the reader that shows his cognitive effort, for example through the very fact of choosing a given book. Some scholars describe such a behaviour of the participants of the interaction as proper, but this behaviour has not been regarded as an expression of human communication. It is thought that it should be analysed as a matter of perception (Borden 1991).

Reducing the act of reading a literary work to an act of perception would make it impossible to interpret an artistic text as an intermediary in intercultural communication, and thus it would contradict the above-cited definition of this concept proposed in *Słownik pojęć i tekstów kultury*.

Assuming this course of reasoning, one should describe the attitude of the recipient of a literary text as passive. Since perception is

the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses,⁶

while the verb *to perceive* means

1. «become aware or conscious of something
2. «become aware of something by the use of one of the senses».

In light of the dictionary definitions, there is no room for any reader's action in an act of perception. Yet, the contemporary textual theory stresses the reader's active role in the process of reading a work. Reading is not only decoding the text and potentially experiencing its content, but requires the receiver's constant collaboration. The essential condition to understand the text is to catch its **coherence** (Mayenowa, 1993:188). This means that the knowledge of grammatical rules and rich vocabulary do not guarantee that the reader will be able to understand a given text fully. Perceiving the meanings brought by the system of a language is only the first phase. One can speak of a complete understanding only when the reader can assign to a given text

a certain fragment of reality, some *universum* of things, people, events, etc. which the text speaks about, in such a way that he can identify the elements of this *universum* (people, things, events) to which the elements of the text refer (Lalewicz, 197710).

In other words, the knowledge of language alone is not sufficient to understand a text. One should match to it proper elements of non-linguistic reality.

6 <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/perception>, access: 24.04.2018.

A similar definition of this issue is provided in *Encyklopedia językoznawstwa ogólnego* [Encyclopaedia of General Linguistics] (1995:505):

A text is coherent when it constitutes some kind of a whole that semantically refers to the definite non-linguistic sphere of reality that can be colloquially separated as homogenous.

In both definitions, the most important criterion is the ability to relate proper elements of reality to the text. This association sometimes is done almost automatically when, for instance, the cultural context of the read text is known; however, in most cases it requires a smaller or bigger effort on the side of the reader. In order to interpret the text as an utterance concerning one topic⁷ one needs something more than linguistic fluency: one needs a certain **knowledge of the world** that goes beyond the knowledge of grammar and lexicon.

No text is complete from the point of the information it contains: as a rule, the author does not put in all of the information necessary to understand the text. The author does this because he assumes that the receiver whom he anticipates possesses certain knowledge, general and detailed, connected with concrete problems, and thus there is no need to refer to it in an explicit way. While reading we use this knowledge, less or more consciously completing “information gaps” that the sender has left in the text. Cultural differences resulting from age, education, social background, separating the sender of the text and its receiver, can cause that the text will not be understood since the reader will not be able to refer to a range of knowledge that is necessary to decode the text. This is a problem especially for the reader of a translation as he comes from a different cultural circle. His knowledge is based on a different programme of education; he refers to a different tradition and experiences. Thus, many a time the reader lacks foundations that would allow him to properly decode the text created in a different language despite reading the translation in his language.

Therefore, coherence is not a feature of the text resulting only from its linguistic construction. In order to perceive the text as coherent we also need certain non-linguistic knowledge. Neither is coherence an immanent feature given exclusively by the author and realised through certain exponents (Mayenowa

7 Defining the conditions a text should meet to be regarded as coherent, Mayenowa (1993a) points to the need of fulfilling the conditions of three ‘unities’: the text must possess one, possible to identify, author, must be addressed to one receiver and must tell about one topic or constitute reasoning that proves one thesis.

1993). Whether a text is perceived as coherent depends equally on the receiver and on the attitude that he assumes towards the text. The reader must first of all assume as certain that the sender creates the text as a semantic whole, subject to some concrete idea, and then he tries to interpret it accordingly. Consequently, he must know the fundamental rules of the mechanisms cementing the text and have some understanding of the socio-cultural sphere. Thanks to that the reader and author will be able to communicate within a certain common horizon of knowledge.

If the receiver's linguistic competence and knowledge are not sufficient to decode all or at least the most important meanings of the text, he must make an effort to complete his knowledge. Otherwise, he will read the text as incoherent, i.e. as a set of sentences that are not related to one another. Therefore, to a large extent coherence results from the receiver's activities expressed in his will to understand the text and undertaking a series of actions to make that happen. This attitude is shared by the contemporary theory of literature that stresses that the reader's role does not come down to decoding the message passively, but consists in acting actively; hence one can speak of the act of reading (Lalewicz 1975:102).

Accordingly, reading a literary text can hardly be regarded only as an act of perception since it is something more – it is an action requiring additional, considerable energy and sometimes is risk-bearing. The risk is connected with the fact that in spite of the effort undertaken in reading it can happen that a given literary work will not be fully comprehensible or will not meet our expectations, e.g. the aesthetic ones.

In the case of literary texts that have been translated into foreign languages, the readers' efforts are, in my opinion, nothing other than attempts of moving towards the source culture. For example, assuming that readers' linguistic competence is that of native speakers, they should have no problems in decoding a given text. Yet, they may have problems with identifying the elements of the linguistic reality about which the work speaks. An average Pole knows about certain areas that are close to his culture, but he does not usually know a lot about exotic cultures. However, his knowledge about the non-linguistic reality described in a work rarely equals the author's knowledge. Thus, readers must undertake some actions aiming at sharing, at least to a certain extent, the horizon of their and the author's knowledge. These activities may involve their intellects or imagination, activate the forgotten data gathered before or may consciously seek necessary data in all kinds of sources. In my opinion, the effort of moving towards a different culture is the first step to encountering this culture and its users. The encounter may not be only a personal contact; the Polish dictionary *MSJP* (1989:768) includes

the expression *to meet* meaning “to anticipate one’s activities, to treat one’s aspirations in a friendly manner.”⁸

In fact, this friendly anticipation, expressed in various kinds of activities, is, from my point of view, a condition of intercultural communication that is realised through literary translations. It is a kind of invitation to face the unknown and an expression of opening up to a different culture.

If we recognise translation as a form of intercultural communication, the text should be treated as an important element of the meaning, but not the only one. The way it will be understood is co-determined by other factors – hidden, silent or unconscious – which we can call ‘cultural’ as far as they are shared by community members. The product of a translator’s work is a new text constructed in accordance with the model of the world of the target culture read through its proper perceptive filters. Hence, there is the need to negotiate between the participants of the initial and target culture⁹ – the translation of a work of art constitutes the space in which two cultures must necessarily meet.

4 The space of intercultural encounter

Space along with time belong to the most fundamental spheres of human experience. They are “the framework in which all reality is concerned” (Cassirer 1944:62), without which we cannot understand any real thing.

Human existence is of a spatial character. Spatial orientation is necessary both to realise acts of perception and to conduct effective activities. Since a human subject cannot function outside of space: “being is synonymous with being situated” (Merleau-Ponty 2005:194). The human must constitute a certain fundamental spatial level that will become his point of reference. This is where the process of the appropriation of the world by the human body begins; in other words, establishing the domination of the body over the world.

Space is a primary concept, so primary that it cannot be identified.¹⁰ The human can describe only its different fragments, areas, kinds, but cannot

8 English dictionaries give similar meanings.

9 More in Katan’s article “Translation as Intercultural Communication,” in: *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies*, ed. Munday, Routledge, London and New York 2009, pp. 74–92.

10 According to Merleau-Ponty, it is impossible to understand the essence of space, “We must not wonder why being is orientated, why existence is spatial, why [...] our body is not geared to the world it all its positions, and why its co-existence with the word magnetizes experience and induces a direction in it.” (2005, pp. 293–294).

understand this concept in a pure state. Thus, we can speak, for example, of a physical, geometrical space, but cannot speak of space *tout court*.

Ernst Cassirer (1944: 63–64) differentiated three basic categories of space. The first one is **organic space**, i.e. three-dimensional, available to cognition through the senses, being part of the lowest layer of experience, common to the world of the living creatures, both humans and animals. In turn, **perceptual space** is available to animals of a higher order. It is not identical with the organic space although it is related to all kinds of sensorial experience: optical, tactile, acoustic and kinesthetic that co-operate in its constructing. What is exclusively accessible to humans is the **abstract space**, also called **symbolic**, which, according to Cassirer, the human can construct first of all thanks to his ability to generalise. It is connected with the specific type of memory that does not only depend on “saving” pictures of some events or impressions but makes their “rebirth” possible (Cassirer 1944:74). The rebirth happens through ordering, reorganising and synthesising the collected data.

Accordingly, translation would be realised in the symbolic space. If we follow the cognitivists’ assumption (Tabakowska 1995:24) that the human constructs it on the model of three-dimensional space, available through sensorial experience, we can make an analogy between human activities in both of these spaces. If the human aims at all cost to subordinate the physical space, he probably tries to gain power over some part of the symbolic space as well. Consequently, translation would be an attempt to appropriate, to control new, so far unknown, areas of this space. Since thanks to translation we have the chance to name what has been unnamed in the native language. Naming is an integral element of cognition,¹¹ hence translation opens the possibility of getting to know what has not been part of our experience, what has been hidden to us.

According to Jacques Derrida, the act of translation is dramatically suspended between the exceptionality – the uniqueness of a literary work which by itself makes it untranslatable – and its cry for being translated. The uniqueness of a work is inseparably related to the fact that it has been created in a concrete language, and on the other hand, the possibility of translation is inscribed in its very structure (Markowski 1997:310). Since there is no “pure” language, cut off from contacts with other languages. No language can isolate itself from other languages; it must open itself to another language (Markowski 1997:310). Therefore, the original text is not a closed perfectness, fullness, which the

11 “Creating a concept and name, we create as if a phenomenon of a world that having no name in a way does not exist, is not perceived and distinguished from the continuum” (Grzegorzcykova 1995:15).

translator, with a worse or better result, tries to transmit through structures of another language. The original is “*a priori* indebted in translation,” while translation is its complement, “creative (productive) writing that the original demands” (Markowski 1997:314). What unites them is “the community of the language that two different languages discover” (Markowski 1997:315). Assuming this approach, translation becomes an act of opening oneself to another language; remaining in the space of one language means capitulation, stopping the search for some way to understand this language. Thus, translation can be understood as a “metaphor of a journey towards the other” (Borkowska 2006:15).

Further, translation would contribute to creating an “in-between space,” which Martin Buber (1993:128) regarded as the primary category of human reality. Since only in man’s world there is a certain specific relationship between individuals, characteristic of this world and constitutive for human being. “In-between” is the place where this relationship takes place, a real place and medium of a person-to-person action (p. 128), soothing that is almost elusive, difficult to define, something that is constituted each time when there is an authentic, non-scripted encounter between people. In order to have such an encounter, it is necessary to create a certain common space, at the same time lying beyond the individual space of each participant of the encounter. A conversation or lesson is an event whose basic sense is revealed neither in any of the participants nor in each of them simultaneously, but in the dimension that is available to them, a dimension situated **between** them. An extremely important role in creating this common space is played by language as the fundamental tool of interpersonal communication. Thus, translation, in particular literary translation, contributes to creating such a common space between representatives of different cultures, date-to-date using different languages. Thanks to translation, encounters between people are made possible, encounters that otherwise would be impossible because of a barrier – the lack of a common language. As noted by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1966:65), “whoever speaks a language that no one else understands does not speak.”

5 Literary communication

The contemporary paradigm of the study of literature breaks the positivist paradigm according to which there were two opposing methods of examining a literary work: external and internal. The first assumed focusing on the work as such without considering the influence of any external factors. The other focused on the analysis of relationships between a literary work and such factors as historical and social conditions of the epoch when it was composed or facts from the author’s life (Głowiński 1998a:8).

The theory of literary communication obliges us to see a literary work from a different perspective. On the one hand, we cannot negate that it is an idiopathic, completely autonomous creation, but on the other hand, we cannot separate it from the context in which it was created. Both features are inseparably linked and constitute the essence of a literary work. Its exceptionality and uniqueness are a function of 'its historical nature and social anchorage' (Głowiński 1998a:13). Thus, the most important features of a literary text can be captured only when it is examined as an element of a certain social situation of communication.

One of the consequences of such an approach was the origin of the theory of reception of a literary work that developed from an apparently banal statement that a literary work is created to be read. Describing a communicative situation, of which a literary work is part, none of its elements, including the reader, can be omitted. Since communication is not performed during producing a written message, i.e. a literary work, but in the process of its decoding – while reading it (Lalewicz 1975:100).

Every act of communication assumes the presence of the sender and receiver, their interaction within this process as well as the possibility that they can exchange their roles. In the text of literary work itself, one can discover essential information about the participants of such an arrangement on different levels of communication, both inter- and extratextual. Such information is of a double character: **themed and implied** (Okopień-Sławińska 1971:113). The themed information results directly from the meanings of words and sentences that construct a given message; thus it has an explicit character. It can concern anything, both on the level of the depicted world and the real world. Since there are no limitations related to the content of the message being part of a literary work. It can concern topics that are directly associated with a given situation of communication or issues that are not linked with it.

Moreover, every message carries some communication about the sender which is not expressed directly. This information is implied, related to the structure of the message. The way in which the sender uses a language code characterises him as a user of a language belonging to a concrete social group, betrays his status, education, background and even personality. In an indirect way, it also reveals the sender's worldview since it unveils his attitude towards various kinds of

norms revealed in the linguistic construction of the utterance, [...] showing not only the relationship between the utterance and linguistic system, but also with the so-called secondary modelling systems: literary, religious, etc., expressed by speech, but added above the linguistic system (Okopień-Sławińska 1971:114).

According to Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska (1971:125), the scheme of the roles in literary communication is as follows (tab. 1):

Tab. 1: Scheme of the roles in literary communication.

Levels of communication	intratextual	Senders	Receivers
		speaking protagonist chief narrator (lyrical I)	protagonist addressee of the narration (addressee of the lyrical monologue)
	extratextual	speaker in a literary work sender of the work (responsible for rules, agent of creative activities) author	addressee of the work receiver of the work (ideal reader) concrete reader

A characteristic of this communication scheme is asymmetry. Each participant plays a certain role that has been defined *a priori* and cannot be exchanged (Głowiński 1998b:28).

At this point, I would like to look at the extratextual elements of literary communication. The agent of creative activities is the only external sender concerning the text which the literary work indicates and which can be defined to some extent, referring to this text. The rules governing the utterance are the basis for this indication. They themselves prove that someone “has chosen them from the repertoire of constructive possibilities and actualised them in speech” (Okopień-Sławińska 1971:120). The fact that the rules are actualised means that over the utterance there is the sender who is responsible for the rules, defined on the one hand by the language system, and on the other – by literary tradition. The sender is not identical with the author but rather with some kind of the author’s role.

As for the receiver, on the same level of literary communication the ideal reader corresponds to the agent of creative activities. Such a reader should desire to discover the meanings of the work given by the author in the process of creation. This type of reception takes place, for example, when one aims at reconstructing the historical meaning of the work. However, it is not the only possible reception. The actual reception of a literary work, although to some extent directed by interpretative hints enclosed in it, is unpredictable to a large extent and subject to many different factors. Okopień-Sławińska (1971:124) defines it as “pure potentiality.” This is seen as the most important constitutive feature of a literary work: the fact that it is subject to various interpretations and can function in extremely diverse contexts which many a time fundamentally differ from the context of its creation, constitutes its strength and universality

(Głowiński 1998c:117). Since a work of art departs from the original reception and can function beyond the primary, foreseen by the author, set of references (Sławiński 1982:72).

The highest level of literary communication is occupied by the real author and concrete reader. The fact that the reader's role was noticed and that he was recognised as a full member of the process of literary communication inspired serious redefinitions in the field of the contemporary theory of literature.

According to Sławiński's definition (1982:79), the reader is "someone whose life among other events includes reading works of literature." Additionally, reading should not be accidental, but should be repeated and should form an essential part of the reader's activities.

The reader commences using literary works with a certain amount of knowledge and skills. He knows the binding literary conventions and reading standards. To some extent, he has been shaped by his own reading experiences (Sławiński 1982: 69). Consequently, he has a large amount of freedom to choose interpretative keys to the work. The work can reveal an almost unlimited number of meanings that have not necessarily been intended by the author (Okopień-Sławińska 1971:124).

Such a reader is very rarely described as an individual; he is most frequently seen as a representative of a certain community, e.g. society or social class, but not only that. Looking from the perspective of the theory of reception, the reader is interesting first of all as a typical carrier of behaviour patterns characteristic of some clearly defined group (Lalewicz 1982:13). This community is a factor that fosters and orders the world of texts, which is a collection of works that is partly systematised and partly chaotic. It consists of: firstly, canonical works of the past; secondly, other old works being on the margin of the main current; thirdly, texts that aggressively fight for a place closer to the centre of the system and fourthly, those works that remain in the sphere of vision, postulates and expectations¹² (Sławiński 1982:81). It is readers that decide to which group texts will be included and which will be their hierarchy, which will be perceived as classic and which ones will be marginalised.

Although the reader is sometimes called "a silent receiver" (Đurišin 1973:156), he plays an important role in shaping literary tastes, conventions and norms. It is seen as "the most important indicator of reception and criterion of demand"

12 At this point, we are dealing with a certain picture of ideal texts that can be found in programme texts and literary criticism.

(p. 156). Thus, his behaviour patterns and choices to a serious extent influence policies of publishing houses.

The reader as an active participant of an act of literary communication and partner of the author, taking decisions, making choices, is rarely the object of interest of theorists of translation. He is most often seen as a passive receiver of the product of a work done by a translator who tries to discover his tastes and preferences and adjust his translation strategies. According to Anton Popovič (1971:206), an active receiver of translation is only the one who knows the language and culture of the original, and thanks to that he can follow and evaluate the process of translation.

As aforementioned (see subchapter 3), the real author and reader must use the same code and refer to the common horizon of knowledge. If this condition were not fulfilled, it would be impossible to understand the work. When we deal with a literary translation, the relationship between the author and reader assumes an additional dimension since the author of the original and the reader of the translation belong to other, many a time, very different cultures. From the receiver's perspective, the author is "the other," "foreigner," speaking about a world that we do not know or know only to a limited extent, and referring to experiences that may seem odd or incomprehensible. According to Antoine Berman (1985), the essence of translation is the experience of the foreign (*épreuve de l'étranger*). Struggling to enable the reader to experience the foreign of the translated work establishes a specific relation between *one's own kind* and *the foreign*. Then there is a chance to create some space between the author and reader in which they can meet, and consequently, there is an attempt to understand the foreign. However, such an encounter carries a potential threat: "the other" or "the foreign" are words that have a clearly pejorative connotation in Polish; they are used interchangeably with such words as "the second," "an intruder" or even "an enemy." The opposition *one's own kind* – *foreign* has been expressed in many cultures as the opposition *humans* – *non-humans*; *humans* – *animals*, or in a smoothed version as *humans* – *barbarians*. "The foreign" also means *the non-speaking* as opposed to *one's own* – i.e. the one that can speak.¹³

Through translation, the other, i.e. the one that does not speak, has received the ability to speak, the possibility to speak to us in our own language. On account of that, one can recognise a human in the one that was seen as a non-human. This is the first condition to create between participants of literary communication "the

13 A large analysis of this issue can be found in Benedyktowicz's *Portrety obcego* [Portraits of the Stranger] Kraków 2000, pp. 121–160.

Tab. 2: Scheme of the roles in literary communication in translation.

	Senders	Receivers
extratextual	speaking protagonist chief narrator (lyrical I)	protagonist addressee of the narration (addressee of the lyrical monologue)
	speaker in a literary work	addressee of the work
intratextual	sender of the work (responsible for rules, agent of creative activities) + the agent of translation activities author (real) + translator (real)	receiver of the work (ideal reader) real reader (real receiver of a translation)

in-between space” in which – according to Martin Buber – the relationship that is difficult to capture but is the essence of our humanity, has a chance to appear.

6 The translator and his role in literary communication

The translator and his activities belong for obvious reasons to the main issues of the theory of translation.¹⁴ As my work focuses on the problem of reception, I am more interested in the reader than the translator and the strategies he uses. Yet, speaking about translation one cannot omit this topic while considering the process of literary communication because the translator’s role is a key one. An attempt to describe the translator’s place and role in the process of communication has been undertaken by Anna Legeżyńska (1999:11–19). Having noted that in the case of translation, the personal relationships in the process of communication are more complicated than in the original work she slightly modified the model proposed by Okopień-Sławińska (tab. 2)

In this approach, the changes concern the senders in the extratextual level of communication. The sender’s apparatus has been enlarged: the agent of creative activities occurs with the agent of translation activities, and the real author – along with the real translator. According to this scheme, the translator can be located unambiguously on the senders’ side. This does not reveal his specific role

14 There are numerous works dedicated to this issue, both theoretical ones and those focused on the works of concrete translators. Among the former, *The Translator’s Turn* (1991) is worth mentioning, and on the Polish market – *Tłumacz i jego kompetencje autorskie* [Translator and His Author’s Competences] by Legeżyńska (1999). A very interesting work analysing the methods of the translator’s work is Levine’s *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction*.

in the process of literary communication. However, the translator is at the same time the reader of the original work and author of the translation, and consequently, he plays a double role: of the receiver and sender. Additionally, we can ascribe the translator the function of the reviewer of the original work, the role he or she performs, for example, while choosing some work to be translated. The translator is also a researcher since working on a translation often requires activities that characterise such a role. The translator must frequently use various sources, for example, to decode the author's intentions, to get to know the epoch or understand the meanings of specialist terms (*MEP* 2000:240).

Obviously, Legeżyńska is aware of the translator's numerous roles, but her scheme does not reflect them. She takes it for granted that 'the translator desires to create an illusion of the reception of the original work' (1999:13). Her conviction is that it is a sufficient argument allowing her to place the translator as a sender. Indeed, this can be the basic aim of translator's strategies, but I think that attributing similar intentions to all translators is a too far-fetched generalisation.

In my opinion, the translator's role falls **between** the author of the original work and the reader of the translation. Therefore, the translator is 'in no man's land' contributing to create space between the source culture and the target culture. In ideal conditions, the translator should not support either side but should try to assume the role of a mediator between them.

This task is extremely difficult; in a common perception, the translator is rarely seen as a mediator of cultural exchange, but rather as an advocate of one of the cultures, which is reflected in metaphorical terms concerning the translator, collected by Elżbieta Skibińska (2008:11–13). One of the most popular terms: *traduttore – traditore* explicitly shows the translator as a traitor of the source culture. Another image of the translator being a pirate is a vision of a usurper who seizes the work of a different culture, replaces the original language with his native one and, introduces it, properly arranged, into his own culture. The translator as a cannibal appropriates a given text and in a way swallows it to make it his own, taking over its values. So he behaves as a cannibal who ate some parts of the enemies' bodies to assume their qualities. Skibińska (2008:11–13) also coined her own metaphor of the translator – a cook: "his role is to adapt dishes from a distant world for his guests, dishes that are strange; to use new, unknown and brought especially for this occasion, ingredients in his dishes [...], and also – if it cannot be made otherwise – replaces the ingredients with local products that – used in a new recipe – reveal hidden tastes [...]." Therefore, the translator's task is to prepare a digestible dish – acceptable – for the reader of the translation, the one who, although it suggests certain new elements, will not become an excessive challenge for his present consumer's habits.

The requirements posed to the translator are usually very high, and the list of competences he or she should have – long. The list includes first of all linguistic competence, i.e. fluent knowledge of the original language and the language of the translation; many a time it is said that it should be a fluency similar to the level of the native user of the language. Then the translator should have encyclopaedic competence, i.e. appropriate knowledge, socio-cultural competence and also – rhetorical-pragmatic competence (*MEP* 2000:241).

Information about the translator that can be found in the target text is rarely of a themed character. If it appears, it is most frequently in the notes, commentaries and various kinds of glosses to the main text, in which the translator explains the motives of his choices or shows the untranslatability of some fragment (Legeżyńska 1999:21). Yet, the text of the translation generally shows implied information about the translator. Translation studies call it “**traces**.” The information is made visible first of all in the confrontation of the source text and the target text. Sometimes the information is left unconsciously, i.e. its appearance is not related to the translator’s intentions. Such traces are most often mistakes resulting from the translator’s insufficient competence. Traces that are left consciously result from the translator’s decisions taken in the name of variously understood translation strategies (*MEP* 2000:227).

Recently translation studies have predominantly investigated the translator as being inscribed in the text, looking for his traces or reconstructing his strategies. Some theorists of translation (Pym 2004) sought to create “the sociology of translation,” i.e. initiating research on real translators who live and work in concrete societies and are rooted in concrete cultures. The question about a translator’s identity and type of relationships with partners of communication assumes a special meaning when we see the translator as a mediator between cultures. Since it becomes interesting to discover the identity of those who conduct mediation, to expose the network of connections and influences, network whose element is the translator, and to see the social effects of his activities.

7 Literary life

The discussed model of literary communication does not clearly show that the relationship between the author and reader is of an indirect character. Yet, the sender-receiver arrangement in literature is very complicated.¹⁵ Between the

15 A large overview of research stands concerning this issue can be found in Dmitruk’s *Literatura – społeczeństwo – przestrzeń* [Literature – Society – Space] (1980).

author and reader there are a number of intermediaries that can have a considerable impact of the final shape of the work.

A literary work, as any other phenomenon of culture, combines substantive and semiotic functions (Żółkiewski 1979b:XVI).¹⁶ Every text of culture uses a certain system of signs. A literary work is characterised by the code which it uses: it is its natural language. Its semiotic functions are related to the fact that it becomes part of a common repertoire of artistic forms and contents of a given community, introducing specific meanings to it. The material functions result from the physical aspect of a given work, i.e. the fact that the receiver obtains them, for example in the form of a book. They are realised among other things through editorial paratexts which constitute one of the factors of transforming a literary work into a market product.

When investigating a literary work one cannot omit all those activities that serve to actualise the material functions. They embrace manufacturing operations as well activities related to market mediation and social control. They usually have an institutionalised character (Żółkiewski 1979b:XXI), meaning the activities of teams determined by a common aim and established in time (Dmitruk 1974:309). Their interaction is not limited to a physical shape in which a work reaches receivers, but can modify its semantic functions to an important extent (Żółkiewski 1979b:XI).

Such phenomena include research on **literary life**. *STL* (2008:640) defines this term as

all social phenomena constituting in a given time and environment the creative background and conditions, the circulation and distribution as well as the reception of literary works; it embraces all institutions that constitute the framework of activities and mutual relationships of those interested in literature: writers, reviewers, readers, publishers and patrons.

The term “literary life” is sometimes exchangeable with the term “literary culture.” Yet, they are not identical. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I want to quote Sławiński’s definition of the latter (1974:65–66). By **literary culture** he understands a system ensuring the participants of the process of literary communication “mutual adequacy of sending and receiving codes” thanks to which

16 *Słownik pojęć i tekstów kultury* (2002: 307) defines it in a slightly different way. It does not focus on the functions but on the material and spiritual dimension of texts of culture, ‘the material dimension is concrete objects, e.g., a book, painting, recorded film tape, musical notes; the spiritual dimension means the ability of a material object to be a carrier of ideas, to shape attitudes and influence emotions.’

they are able to communicate through their works. Assuming this approach, literary culture is an orientation system embracing:

- **knowledge** about literary accomplishments, enabling us to recognise given works as exemplary or significant;
- **taste**, preferences for certain types of message;
- **literary competence**, knowledge of rules resulting from readers' experiences, allowing them to produce or understand new works.

On the other side, literary life embraces activities of groups and institutions connected in various ways with the circulation of literary works and knowledge about them. Processes in this area are of a dynamic character. Since literary facts¹⁷ constantly circulate, are copied, transmitted and borrowed (Straszewska 1976:445). The dynamics of literary life is also revealed in receivers' positive and negative reactions. This phenomenon is called "**literary movement.**"

Literary life appears in societies that have reached a certain level of cultural development, level on which literary texts have stopped being communicated to receivers directly through authors. Therefore, we can speak of this phenomenon from the moment when intermediaries between them appear (Maciejewski 1982:125).

Research on literary life can be conducted from the historical perspective, i.e. considering all aspects of this phenomenon, searching for its characteristics in a given period and area, or considering its selected aspects, focusing on some elements (Straszewska 1976:444).

The intermediaries between the artist and reader can be divided into the following groups:¹⁸

- institutions dealing with preserving literary works and technical aspects of their transmission: publishing houses (editing and printing), the press and electronic media (radio and television). Today we should add the Internet, which Maciejewski did not mention for obvious reasons. These institutions

17 A literary fact is "any literary message available for reception" (Straszewska 1976:444).

18 I am following J. Maciejewski's division proposed in his article "Publiczność literacka a instytucje i mechanizmy życia kulturowego" [Literary public vs. institutions and mechanisms of cultural life], in: *Publiczność literacka* [Literary Public] eds. S. Żółkiewski and M. Hopfinger (1982). Maciejewski himself states that the typology may not embrace all institutions being intermediaries between writers and readers. However, I think the typology helps order the problems of literary life to a great extent.

- fulfil **intermediary-regulatory functions**, i.e. they do not only preserve, copy and transmit works to receivers or other intermediaries, but also select them;
- institutions distributing (dealing with distribution and propagating) literature, such as bookstores, libraries and readers' clubs. They also include meetings with authors, recitation events, etc. Similarly, they fulfil the intermediary-regulatory functions;
 - patronage, embracing single artists, group or branch of art, offering material support. It aims at creating a work and making it public. Institutions or individuals acting as patrons do not only fulfil the intermediary-regulatory functions, but also the **hierarchizing** ones: they try to create their hierarchies of literary preferences and impose them on the receivers;
 - institutions of social control, assuming the forms of formal and informal censorship. Informal censorship occurs when a writer yields to social pressure and does not deal with certain themes, while formal censorship is a special organ established by the authorities of a given country, controlling its publishing market. During the period of the Polish People's Republic, the censor was the Central Office for the Control of the Press, Publications and Performances. Institutionalised censorship undertakes preventive actions, i.e. controls texts that are to be published, and repressive actions, e.g. activities leading to withdrawing published books or periodicals from circulation. Basically, censorship fulfils a regulatory function.
 - Opinion-making institutions, i.e. literary criticism, literary meetings and cafes, discussion book clubs, etc. Considering the present reality, this group should include Internet forums dedicated to a given book or author as well as publishers' initiatives aiming at encouraging readers to publish their opinions and reviews on their websites. Beside the intermediary-regulatory functions they also perform the hierarchizing function;
 - Associations aiming at defending artists' interests, such as Pen Clubs or the Polish Union of Writers. This role is also undertaken by agencies representing writers.

The aforementioned institutions have originated to serve the most important participants of the act of literary communication, i.e. artists and readers. Their first, most important task is to deliver literary works to receivers. However, with time this role has changed. Some of these institutions, e.g. publishing houses and patrons, try to become independent, usurping the right to influence both the works and their reception (Maciejewski 1982:132).

A similar issue has been taken up by the contemporary theory of literary translation, having the goal of describing the impact of the intermediaries of

literary communication on translation strategies and the final shape of a translation. Nowadays, in translation studies one can speak of the roles played by “agencies” and “agents” in the process of rendering translations.¹⁹

8 Literary public

The act of reading a book is first of all a personal contact with a literary work, entering into a certain intimate relationship with the work. It is also “a kind of performance played for others” thanks to which the reader can join the community of all readers (Sławiński 1982:79). In order to describe this community, it is necessary to go beyond the text of a literary work as it does not provide sufficient data for an adequate description of the community (Żółkiewski 1982:60).

In studies dealing with the reception of literature, besides the term “public” one can find a number of similar terms: receivers, readers, audience; some authors use them interchangeably, while others try to differentiate their meanings.²⁰ On the other hand, in Polish specialist literature the term “literary public” is ambiguous: various authors understand it in slightly different ways.

The broadest meaning ascribed to this term includes both readers and all those who are active in creating and receiving literary works (Sławiński 1974a:61). These two groups differ by the type of relationships shared by their participants with the diffusive apparatus, which is literature in the sociological approach. Consequently, the authors are those who operate this apparatus, while the readers are all those who use it (Żółkiewski 1982:61). So the senders are not only artists in the narrow sense of this word, but all those who through their activities can influence the final physical shape and content of literary works (Żółkiewski 1982:60). Thus, the sending apparatus embraces those who are connected with publishing activities – editing and printing, those in charge of distribution, patronage – both institutional and individual – as well as various forms of censorship (Maciejewski 1982:127–128).

19 See *Sociocultural Aspects of Translating and Interpreting*, ed. Pym, Shlesinger and Jettmarova, John Benjamins, Amsterdam and Philadelphia 2006, and Simeoni’s “Translating and studying translation: The view from the agent,” in: *Meta*, 1995, no. 3, pp. 445–460.

20 These issues are analysed by Lalewicz in his article “Pojęcie publiczności i problem więzi społecznych” [The concept of public and the problem of social bonds] and by Dmitruk in the study “Wprowadzenie do teorii publiczności literackiej” [Introduction to the Theory of Literary Public]. Both texts can be found in the volume *Publiczność literacka*, eds. Żółkiewski and Hopfinger (1982).

The slightly narrow meaning of the term “literary public” includes three basic groups: authors, reviewers and readers. They form a community that is distinguished in the society by their active participation in the creation and reception of literary works (Sławiński 1974a:61). The link between them constitutes a *universum* of expectations concerning the duties of literature (Sławiński 1974a:64). Both the writer and the reader are aware of the obligatory literary standards and norms of reception. The author, adjusting to them or going beyond them, abides by a certain agreement or breaks it. In both cases, however, he refers to the system of values known to him and his receivers. Referring to this system, the reader can evaluate literary works and create their hierarchies. Thus, a constitutive feature of the literary public does not mean a passive reception of the work, but “a reception received by some evaluation in the form of an opinion” (Maciejewski 1982:124).²¹ Since the literary public makes a bilateral arrangement of sender–receiver: authors create values, being at the same time recipients of evaluations, while readers are recipients of these values, and at the same time they carry out evaluations. This arrangement also embraces critics as intermediaries between authors and readers, who professionally pass literary judgements and can influence the way of the reception of a work and writers’ behaviour patterns.

Ankudowicz (1982:108) stresses that three groups: artists, intermediaries and readers, constituting the literary public thus understood, form a very heterogeneous community, which poses serious methodological problems for scholars. Therefore, it is justifiable to separate these groups and analyse them independently. In order to avoid any misunderstandings concerning the used terminology, Ankudowicz proposes the term **reading public** to describe a group of readers to which the meaning of “literary public” is sometimes narrowed (see e.g. Lalewicz 1982). “Reading public” refers to a community within literary communication that is characterised by a receptive approach to texts (Ankudowicz 1982:108). Becoming a member of the reading public is conditioned by potential readiness for reception. Accordingly, the reader needs to show not only an intention to start reading a work but must have suitable skills that will make that possible. The term “public” also assumes a community situated in a concrete framework of time (1982:109).

21 According to Sławiński (1982: 80), the exchange of opinions is not necessary to speak about a community defined as “literary public.” Since it is sufficient that this community “creates potential conditions to such communicative initiatives.”

The reading public can be described in a distributive or integrative point of view (Lalewicz 1982:11). The former understands it as a collection of individuals: individual receivers. This does not alter the fact that what is sought for in the behaviour of the individuals creating this collection is chiefly repeatable characteristics. While describing such a group, one needs to consider its size and possible sub-divisions referring to age, gender, education, social status, etc. The public consists in readers being members of the same society who can be recognised as a community on the basis of important sociological features. One of the criteria can be the reference to a certain system of communication, i.e. medium or a network of distribution. Accordingly, we can speak of readers of the press or readers of books. The other important criteria are those resulting from the adherence of receivers to social groups: class, professional, local, etc. Consequently, we can distinguish, for instance a rural audience, an educated audience, and so on.

The integrative approach to the literary public focuses on a community of opinions, receptive attitudes and behaviour patterns of a given group. It perceives such a community as a certain whole and examines its collective behaviour. The reading public is by its nature a dispersed community. Subsequently, questions about the mechanisms that integrate it are important. The adherence of a certain group to some social class and professional or religious community is not a sufficient reason for becoming an integrated audience. Since the literary public functions in various social circulations at the same time. Moreover, literature constitutes a heterogeneous material and does not communicate any concrete, specific contents on the basis of which one can define its receivers (as it is the case of the scientific audience, from which one can separate, for example, the audience of mathematics; Żółkiewski 1982:64). Therefore, a description of the literary public as a community coming from a certain social group, able to show its specific cultural equipment and access to literary patterns as well as referring to a common system of values, is not satisfactory. The condition leading to the transformation of a dispersed community of readers into an audience is the existence of relationships thanks to which the act of reading as well as experiences and evaluations that result from it can become the subject of communication between members of this group. At the same time, one should remember that reading a literary work and sharing the after-reading impressions do not belong to the most important elements of a person's activities. "Thus, the relationships uniting people as readers create a community of opinions and behaviour patterns only on a specific level of social life, generally, a secondary one and more or less distant from the level of the fundamental activities, for example in social life or ludic activities" (Lalewicz 1982:18).

The distributive approach is used in research on readership, mass communication, propaganda and others, applying sociological methods. Observing individuals' behaviour patterns leads to drawing conclusions concerning the whole group. Using the integrative approach leads to drawing conclusions concerning the mechanisms of the collective behaviour of a given group of readers.

9 The horizon of expectations

This concept was introduced to the theory of literature by Hans Robert Jauss (1970). Though aware of the doubts and controversies that the term evokes among theorists of literature,²² I still refer to it at this point since it has become one of the key terms used in research concerning literary reception.

For Jauss (1970:11), one of the essential goals was to create a tool that would be adequate to describe the reception and influence of a literary work and which at the same time would allow him to avoid psychologism that could threaten such an analysis. This condition would have been fulfilled by the term "horizon of expectations," understood as a system of references available to readers that could be made objective. Since a literary work does not appear in some vacuum, but in a certain context defined by an earlier tradition; it is inscribed in the existing and known literary canons or challenges them. The text itself, through the author's hints, creates a horizon of expectations, preparing the addressees for a predicted way of reception (p. 12). Their disposition towards the reception assumed by the author can also be reconstructed on the basis of extratextual factors: the known norms or the poetics of the genre, references to other literary works and by confronting the text with the readers' experiences.

A new work can explicitly 'stand out' from the prevailing norms and habits of the public, thus contributing to changing the reader's horizon of expectations. Jauss calls the difference between the old horizon of expectations and the changes caused by the appearance of a new work the "aesthetic distance," which can be described observing the reactions of the reading public and analysing critical texts. The smaller the distance, the less innovative the work is since it does not pose any new challenges to the receivers, which allows us to regard it as purely playful art (Jauss 1970:15).

The horizon of expectations is a function of the reader's knowledge, but it is not exclusively the knowledge resulting from his literary competence (Handke

22 See for example the criticism of Jauss' conception in Markiewicz's "Odbiór i odbiorca w badaniach literackich. Perspektywy i trudności" [Reception and the receiver in literary research. Perspectives and difficulties] (*Ruch Literacki*, issue 1 (112), 1979, pp. 1–15).

1982:20). Since literary works also refer to other fields of knowledge as well as to the receivers' experiences. Their impact is not limited to literature and its reception. Like any works of art, they are meant to influence non-literary attitudes and behaviour patterns. This is their social function.

Moreover, Jauss (1978:258) mentions the sociological dimension of the horizon of expectations and even introduces another term "**horizon of social expectations**," wishing to stress that aesthetic norms are closely related to the needs and aspirations of concrete groups and classes.

Developing this theory has led to the conclusion that both the reader's horizon of expectations, foreseen by the author, and the reader's choices are not of a purely subjective character, but are, at least to a certain extent defined by various practices of social life. In this perspective, the shaping of the horizon of expectations is essentially influenced by various institutions of literary life, such as bookstores, libraries, school education, advertisements and mass media.

10 The cultural turn in research on literary translation

The publication of the collected work *Translation, History and Culture* edited by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere in 1990 is regarded as a turning point in research on translation (Munday 2001:127). In their introduction, they state that the previous translation studies stopped at the level of the text. They regard comparing the source and target text, which in their opinion was the focus of the previous analyses of translations, as painstaking, and at the same time insufficient because their cultural background was generally omitted (Bassnett, Lefevere 1990:11). Therefore, one should overcome this way of thinking about translation and place emphasis on the relationships between translation and culture, on the impact of cultural factors on translation and the limitations that some cultural system can impose on translation activities. Bassnett and Lefevere postulate to investigate translation in a broader background, considering the context in which it appears as well as the historical background and institutions that can have influenced it in any way. One should look at translation, and generally at literature, through the prism of anthologies, histories, criticism and adaptation as well as institutions participating in its production.

This moment marks a turn towards the sociology of translation. "Sociological approach hangs in the air" commented Anthony Pym (2004), analysing the translation works created at the beginning of the century. At the same time, he remarked that the sociological approach was nothing new in translation studies. He gave the example of the classic work of Maurice Pergnier *Les fondements sociolinguistiques de la traduction* (1980). Yet, there is a substantial difference

between this work and contemporary studies: for Pergnier, at the centre of interest was the text, while the sociolinguistic methodology gave tools for its analysis. At present, the emphasis is laid on the impact of external factors on the text.²³

From among the American studies, the biggest recognition and impact were earned by the works of Lawrence Venuti (1992, 1995, 1998). This author demands the inclusion of the sociocultural context in research concerning literary translation. However, his views differ from the ones of his predecessors since he stresses that one cannot concentrate on the receiving culture since the background of the source culture is equally important: its beliefs, values, ideologies used by various social groups and various groups of interests. Venuti also points to the necessity of considering all people and institutions involved in the process of translation production. In his opinion, such elements co-creating literary life as publishing houses, editors, the whole apparatus of promotion and advertising, authors' agents exert an important influence on the final shape of every translation.²⁴

In his works, Venuti realises the postulate of "sociology of translation." He describes the translator as a worker of humble income, looking for new contracts who is many a time a victim of heartless publishers who are greedy for profits. The position of the translator in the network of elements entangled in the production of translation is usually weak. Venuti proves that the publishing policy and the pressure exerted by cultural institutions and literary authorities are directly reflected in the translator's choices and strategies. As a result, the translators most frequently become invisible, sometimes in the strict sense of the word since their names are often omitted by editors and/or reviewers. The translators' invisibility also results from their strategies: the pressure of various factors involved in the

23 In the cited text, Pym poses a series of questions: are we allowed to identify the cultural aspect with the sociological aspect in translation studies? Where is the borderline between them? What should be the direction of such research: from the sociological conditions to cultural patterns or the other way round – from cultural factors to conclusions concerning the social conditions of a translation? Today it is difficult to give explicit answers to these questions and to show prevailing tendencies since the present publications on translation studies are characterised by a multitude of approaches and methodologies. In Pym's opinion, the cultural factors are qualitative, while the sociological ones are recognised as quantitative data.

24 One can clearly see that in many points Venuti's theory shows some convergence with the conceptions worked out by the Polish school of the theory of literary communication and the aesthetics of reception in general, although Venuti does not refer to works regarded as classic.

production of translation causes that yielding to this pressure the translators many a time seek to eliminate all ‘otherness’ from the target text. As a rule, the participants of the audience of the literary target culture who are oriented ethnocentrically demand, more or less openly, that a translation should be read as if it was written in the language of this culture. As a result, it undergoes *domestication*, i.e. domination through the target culture. The process is to adjust translations to literary canons obliging in this culture, which influences the choice of works made by translators or editors. The pressure of the target culture²⁵ causes the translator to follow considerably more seldom the logic of the *foreignization* of translation. This strategy requires preserving in the target text values that are not present in the target culture, or strictly speaking, values that this culture does not tolerate. Consequently, the translated text preserves certain features of otherness both at the linguistic and cultural level, and thus it is more difficult to understand and requires the reader to put in more effort and show co-operation. Yet, the text introduces new values to the target culture.

The demand to apply the sociological approach to literary translation is also put forward very emphatically in translation works inspired by Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of the literary field. Bourdieu (1995:141) defines a literary field as an autonomous *universum* to a large extent, but not completely – despite its distinctiveness it is not free from certain dependence: from the economic and political field. Literary works are characterised by a specific duality of nature. They are at the same time symbolic goods and wares having defined market values. Thus, two opposite logics clash in the literary field. On the one hand, it is the logic of the market, i.e. artistic or literary industry, which “confer priority on distribution, on immediate and temporary success, measured for example by the print run, and which are content to adjust themselves to the pre-existing demand of a clientèle” (Bourdieu 1995:142), that is, the logic that follows the tastes and requirements of potential consumers. On the other hand, the literary field is governed by “the anti-economic” economy of pure art that is selfless in the material sense, focused on accumulating the symbolic capital.

Translation should be considered from the perspective of the world literary field in which contradictory tendencies clash: globalisation and forms of resistance towards it (Heilbron, Sapiro 2002:3). One of the research objectives is to describe the context in which the process of translation happens and the influence

25 Venuti’s observations refer to American and British culture. Nevertheless, many of them occur true in other cultural contexts.

of this context on the activities of people and institutions related to its production. This context is understood in a very broad way as **international space**.

The sociological approach has led to redefine the concept of literary translation since so far it has been above all the subject of interest of the broadly understood philological sciences. In research on translation the methodology worked out within the theory of literature as well as various fields of linguistics has been used.²⁶ However, even in linguistics there has been no single, satisfactory definition of translation: “the way of understanding this term is strictly connected with particular theories and schools” (*MEP* 2000:12). Generally speaking, one can assume that on the one hand, translation is ‘a process, activities and operations performed on texts,’ and on the other hand, “the result of translation operations, i.e. translator’s activities” (p. 12.). Such an approach silently assumes the equality of the analysed items: neither the source text nor the target text is described *a priori* as “better” or “worse,”²⁷ similarly, one does not evaluate the source and the target culture. But considerations concerning literary translation conducted in the field of cultural theory of literature refer to the sociolinguistic conception of the power of a language. This concept does not undermine the equality of languages from the point of view of their structures, but stresses the meaning of extralinguistic factors when the texts produced by users of a concrete language are evaluated. The power of a language can be defined as a value “that causes that the carriers of this language are ready to dedicate a certain amount of time and economic means to its promotion, while foreigners that do not know this language are ready to devote a certain amount of time and means to get to know it, encouraged to take these efforts by the influence of the language and the culture related to it” (Miodunka 1990:45).²⁸ From this perspective, languages are not equal; some enjoy great prestige, which is very strongly connected with

26 Jakobson’s article *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation* (1956) is commonly regarded as a turning point in introducing translation studies in linguistics. In Poland, one sometimes forgets that Klemensiewicz’s paper “Przekład jako zagadnienie językoznawstwa” [Translation as a problem of linguistics] (published in the volume *O sztuce tłumaczenia* [About the Art of Translation] ed. M. Rusinek), defining translation as “a kind of realisation of the relationship between two languages, precisely, two linguistic and stylistic systems,” appeared a year earlier (p. 85).

27 For many scholars, structuralists, but not only them (see for example the works by Sapir and Whorf), all languages are equally good, constant and attractive since all languages are tools of social communication (Miodunka 1990:39).

28 The power inherited in a language depends on the number of those who use it as their mother tongue, the size and number of groups speaking a given language in the world, mobility of the carriers of a given language, ideological factors, cultural values

evaluating the culture created by their users, others are valued less highly – and so is the culture of their users. In Bourdieu's conception of **symbolic violence**, language is an element of cultural exchange whose basis is the conflict of interests and fight for symbolic power.

In light of this theory, translation is defined as an “unequal linguistic exchange” conducted in a highly-hierarchized world (Casanova 2002:7). Since there are entities having a different status in the world literary field. They are governed by certain hierarchies, both literary and linguistic. In order to describe these hierarchies, it is necessary to define the size of the linguistic-literary capital of particular languages, which is not a derivative of the number of native users of this language, but the number of “literary polyglots” who know and use it as well as the number of translators who render literary texts from and into this language. This is the basis on which the opposition between dominant languages (*langues dominantes*) and dominated languages (*langues dominées*) is distinguished. The former embraces languages enjoying high prestige, from which a big number of texts recognised as universal cultural heritage have been created, in other words, those languages that are supported by a considerable literary capital. In turn, there are languages “dominated” for various reasons: languages that have reached the status of national languages recently or languages of countries with large populations and highly developed culture as well as have been unknown for a long time, “unseen” in big cultural centres (for example, Chinese or Japanese), or languages of small countries whose literature, because of a small number of translations, have not been recognised on the international literary market.

The structural inequality of the global literary field makes us define translation in the categories of power relations between languages. Countries whose languages are dominant set conditions; it also concerns many aspects of producing a literary translation. It is seen as an effect of mutual relations between four factors: source language, target language, author and translator. In order to describe them adequately, one should consider the position and meaning of both languages as well as define the place of the author and translator in the global literary field. In light of this theory, they are understood as theoretical constructs fulfilling certain discourse functions. Their position is set by ideology (Althusser), authority (Foucault) or social structure (Bourdieu): “the author and

conditioning the influence of a language, the economic level of a given country and its political situation (Miodunka 1990:43). The power results from the influence of several of these factors simultaneously, assuming that the hierarchies according to which the languages are ordered can be different.

reader are called to perform their roles not through their private interests, but through the ideologies ruling in them and ways of cultural arrangement: gender and adherence to a social and ethnic class” (Markowski 2006:539). Examining translation, one should also remember of the role of intermediaries in literary communication, participating in the creation of a translation.

The circulation of a literary translation depends on three fundamental factors: political contacts between countries, international book market and cultural exchange. Thus, translation appears to result from the influence of various network relationships (Heilbron & Sapiro, 2002:5).

According to Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro (2002:5), the fundamental function of translation is to be an instrument of mediation and exchange. It may also fulfil political and economic functions as well as constitute a mode of legitimization of both authors and translators. Translating into a language exerting strong power can become an element that builds up the authors’ prestige in their homelands.²⁹ In other words, their position in their local literary field changes. The reverse direction of translating, i.e. from the world languages to the dominated ones, results in accumulating the literary capital by the target culture.

Investigating the development of translation studies after the so-called cultural turn, one can easily see that the role of research on the text, or more precisely, the role of comparative analysis of the source and target texts, is gradually decreasing. What has recently been the essence of literary translation studies, their fundamental meaning, basic source of knowledge about translators, their choices and strategies, becomes one of the elements of this research, which is not necessarily the most important one. Contemporary theory of translation focuses on factors that are beyond the text, i.e. the context, background and process of producing a translation. Consequently, translation studies opt to:

- interview translators so that to have access to first-hand information about their strategies and ways of taking concrete decisions,
- interview publishers, editors and literary agents in order to get to know the factors governing their choices of works to be translated,
- collect all kinds of figures concerning translations,
- analyse the contracts signed by translators,
- describe the final product of translation – in the material sense, i.e. the cover, title page, whether it contains an introduction or preface, etc.,
- analyse critical texts (Munday 2001:156).

29 The French studies use the term *consécration*.

The aforementioned theoretical proposals can, in my opinion, become only inspirations for research on literary reception in Poland. However, it is not now possible to accept this way of research conduct and methodology, especially the one worked out in France. Since the description of the phenomenon of translation, understood as a complicated sociological process, requires a specialist statistical apparatus (Poupaud 2008:38) and access to international databases of publishing houses, libraries and networks of bookstores. So far Polish scholars have had no such possibilities.³⁰

11 Summary

Literary culture and life do not constitute a separate, completely autonomous system, but are part of the broadly understood culture of a given society. Similarly, being a reader is only one of the possible roles of a given person, and in fact, not the most important one. An empirical reader, the one postulated by the theory of reception, is nevertheless a theoretical term. Such a reader does not factually exist because no one is only a reader, but at the same time he plays various social roles. If so, it is justifiable to assume that reading experiences do not influence only the reading awareness of an individual but can be transferred to other spheres of the individual's activities and sensitivity, and on the contrary, experiences resulting from playing different social roles can exert influence on readers' choices and reception of a work. Thus, motifs for reading and choosing texts can be diverse and do not unavoidably result from the necessity of meeting aesthetical needs. A motif can be a desire to follow some literary fashion or to build one's own image of an intellectual, someone who can boast wide reading. In other words, reading literary works can be a means of building up one's prestige.³¹ Finally, reading literary works can result from a desire to acquire knowledge as readers can see literature as a source of knowledge. As for literary translation, it is related to the intention to know the Other, which includes some effort and risk

30 So far Polish publishing houses have not wanted to make available for scientific purposes even their internal reviews, while the information about circulations, number of editions and reprints is treated as a trade secret.

31 However, Markiewicz thinks that the role of literature is no longer essential. In an interview for *Tygodnik Powszechny* (14/2009, p. 22), he states that earlier an intelligent person understood that it was proper to know who Kuncewiczowa was and to read *Cudzoziemka* [The Stranger] as all people spoke about it. Today it is no longer necessary, and the lack of knowledge of, for instance Pilch's or Stasiuk's works, does not compromise anyone.

consciously taken by readers. They usually realise that encountering the Other means the necessity of facing unknown things and problems, probably partly or completely incomprehensible. The will to understand such questions is always connected with an increased expenditure of cognitive energy, bigger than in the case of reading works written in one's native language. It requires going out to meet the Other, i.e. leaving one's safe space, space in which you meet only your locals, and attempting to create the "in-between space," indispensable if you want to meet the Other and initiate dialogue with him. In order to do that, one needs a translation because through it, the silent Other speaks to us in an understandable language.

Yet, translation is commonly seen as something "worse." "Everyone knows how the translation makes what is said in the foreign language sound flat," as Gadamer claimed authoritatively (1966:68), reflecting the conviction that translation cannot transmit all the meanings of the source text. He added, "The translation, as it were, has no space. It lacks that third dimension from which the original (i.e., what is said in the original) is built up in its range of meaning" (p. 68). Thus, Gadamer suggests that a translation will never equal the original. A similar approach can be found in professional studies concerning translation, first of all those that describe translation by reference to the original text. For example, Stanisław Barańczak (1992) entitled his collection of essays *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu* [Saved in Translation], as if assuming that during this process something must be lost. The theme of "saving" various values of the original in translation returns several times in his preface to this volume. Similarly, Jean-René Ladmiral (1979:18) described the translator's work as a "choice of lesser evil." Another outstanding example is the conception of Popovič (1975), who used the term "translation loss." This loss was to be an unavoidable consequence of the power relations between the language of the translation and the language of the original. In his opinion, if the language of the original is more powerful than the language of the translation, the translation most frequently preserves some characteristics of the syntax of the former and the realities of the source culture, which can lead to the fact that the text of the translation occurs to be incomprehensible for the receiver. Otherwise, i.e. when the culture of the original is stronger, the reader of the translation most probably receives a text written in a fluent language, without any features of foreignness, both cultural and systemic, and thus devoid of elements that are specific for the source culture. When the power of both languages is similar, the translation loss appears partly in the linguistic structure of the translation, and partly on the level of the realities. If we accept such a point of view, the translation loss is unavoidable because it is a function of the cultural distance between the translation and the original.

The text of a translation is rarely seen as a value in itself, created at the junction of two languages and two cultures, but as a new and autonomous one. This vision of translation is excellently reflected by the metaphor of translation as a point where the roads of two cultures cross (Bravo Utera 2004:213). It stresses that translation neither belongs to the source culture nor the target culture. This was the understanding of translation opted by Zenon Klemensiewicz (1956:85): in his approach, translation is a linguistic structure “which constitutes a means of exchange, a means of mutual transmission and absorption of the cultural heritage by different nations.” Only such a perception of translation does not put the source and target culture in a privileged position. It allows us to see translation as what happens between them and what at the same time unites them. This is beautifully expressed by a metaphor of Gadamer who modified his attitude towards translation after years. In the text published in 1993, he called the translator’s work a water crossing from one bank to the other, from one land to the other, from one text to another text. He perceived translation as a medium of building mutual understanding between the participants of the source and target culture; the translator’s text co-creates a route of our whole reading and understanding. It has its own substance, composed of sense and sound. It is like a bridge that can be entered from both sides, a bridge between banks in one country. This is the road of constant flow of communication (Gadamer 1993). This understanding of translation allows us to see in it a factor constructing some space of dialogue with the Other. Creating such space gives hope to meet the Other. A true encounter usually leaves some traces, more or less tangible, in its participants. This book is an attempt to find such traces.