A comparison of selected aspects of two Polish translations of J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings".

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Introduction

The interest in what is considered Tolkien's most famous work – the Lord of the Rings (henceforth LOTR) - has been greatly revived by the box office triumph of the recent motion picture by Peter Jackson – the first successful film adaptation of LOTR ever. Thus it is no wonder that as soon as or even before the famed blockbuster reached the theaters, bookstores all over the world were flooded with reprints, new editions and, last but not least, new versions of the novel. The situation was no different in Poland. Polish readers had the opportunity to rediscover the first and the second translation of Tolkien's work provided by Maria Skibniewska and Jerzy Łoziński respectively while the patience of those not entirely satisfied with either of them was rewarded just a month or so after the Polish screening of the first part of the saga, with the publishing of the newest Polish version of LOTR, namely that provided by Maria and Cezary Frąc.

The area of proper names in the translation of Tolkien's work seems particularly rewarding for a translator. Much ink was spilt on describing and criticizing the seemingly futile efforts undertaken by Jerzy Łoziński in transforming what appeared to be so deeply rooted in the British cultural universe presented by J.R.R. Tolkien into our all too well known mundane Polish reality. Every Polish reader of LOTR is familiar with the outcome of Jerzy Łoziński's efforts and the feedback it received, which was more than discouraging.

Proper nouns are however, not the only elements of Tolkien's prose worthy of note and requiring undivided attention from the keen translator. The richness and vastness of Tolkien's imaginary world is partly due to his mastery of English. Styled to bring back memories of old medieval tales of knights and dragons and craftily interwoven with colorful adages, idioms, dialectal speech and novel expressions, so very specific to Tolkien's invented universe and used abundantly by the protagonists, the exquisite prose of J.R.R. Tolkien will not make the translator's life a bed of roses. Obviously those and other elements of

the writer's style are also branded by the British culture thus making the translator's life even more difficult. Different approaches taken by translators with regard to this problem will be the topic of this thesis.

The author of this work, however, will not concern himself with Jerzy Łoziński and his unorthodox translation choices other than by citing several excerpts from his text to illustrate and support propositions laid out in this thesis. The focus of this paper will be on the review of the older translation provided by Maria Skibniewska in 1961 (which by the way was the third translation of the book that the literary world saw ever), acknowledged as "standard" and "model" among Polish LOTR fans and some experts and the newest rendition supplied by Maria and Cezary Frąc in 2001 and also on the comparison of the two. The author will demonstrate that the work of Maria Skibniewska, in spite of being the oldest one, still remains truest to the spirit of the Tolkienian world at the same time doing full justice to the extensiveness and rich vastness of the Polish language. The author will also show that the translation provided by Maria and Cezary Frąc, although on the whole considered by the same less accurate, has certain advantages over Ms. Skibniewska's work and should therefore be considered a valuable source of information and a lesson for all linguists and aspiring literary translators alike.

The first part of the thesis will provide a brief overview of peculiar characteristics of literary translation, with elements devoted to proper names and their translation. The second part will contain practical examples and excerpts from the Polish versions under analysis to illustrate the nomenclature-related differences between them and tendencies prevailing in each of them and to briefly discuss translation strategies applied by both Maria Skibniewska and Maria and Cezary Frąc. At the center of the third chapter the author of this thesis has placed dialectal and distorted speech. The fourth one focuses on jokes, puns idioms and novel phrases used in LOTR and the fifth one on proverbs and sayings which all characters in the book use profusely. Those last three chapters will attempt to emphasize and highlight specific differences and deficiencies of both versions in these areas of language, so very specific and difficult for a

translator. The third chapter will be followed by a conclusion to discuss the effect that translation choices made in both cases had on each version in its final form.

1. Literature in translation

1.1. Literary Translation and its peculiarities

All performing arts - acting, singing, dancing - place the performing artist on a stage in front of an audience. Every one, that is, except literary translation, which consists in performing a literary work in a different language. Literary translation is a difficult trade, often tedious and painstaking but hardly ever duly appreciated and rewarded. The translator's task is broad and complex, as it bridges disciplines and cultures. If one were to encapsulate the pivotal features of literary translation in a simple definition, it probably would not be unlike this one: literary translation is an art that demands creative expression, linguistic precision and knowledge of social and cultural contexts. This, however, is not the whole story – not by far. Let us dwell on the subject a little more. As Robert Wechsler relevantly suggests:

> "Literary translation is an odd art. It consists of a person sitting at a desk, writing literature that is not his, that has someone else's name on it, that has already been written. The translator's work appears to define derivativeness. Would anyone write a book about people who sit in a museum copying paintings? Copiers aren't artists, they're students, wannabes, or crooks." (Wechsler 1998:12).

This notion in itself is truly disturbing. But Wechsler is not trying to convince us that literary translation is mere craftsmanship, requiring no more than skills of a run-of-the-mill counterfeiter to deliver the results. And so he proceeds to explain:

> "(...) literary translation is an art. What makes it so odd an art is the fact that physically a translator does exactly the same thing as a writer. If an actor did the same thing as a playwright, a dancer did the same thing as a composer, or a singer did the same thing as a songwriter, no one would think much of what they do either." (Wechsler 1998:13)

This, however, is not the only peculiarity of a translator's work. Apart from its seemingly artless foundations and uninspired nature, literary translation has other noteworthy characteristics, which deserve to be discussed, if only briefly. Wechsler writes:

> "Like a musician, a literary translator takes someone else's composition and performs it in his own special way. Just as a musician embodies someone else's notes by moving his body or throat, a translator embodies someone else's thoughts and images by writing in another language. The biggest difference isn't really that the musician produces air movements while the translator produces yet more words; it is that a musical composition is intended to be translated into body and throat movements, while a work of literature is not intended to be translated into another language. Thus, although it is practically invisible, the translator's art is the more problematic one. And it is also the more responsible one, because while every musician knows that his performance is simply one of many, often one of thousands, by that musician and by others, the translator knows that his performance may be the only one, at least the only one of his generation, and that he will not have the opportunity either to improve on it or to try a different approach." (Wechsler 1998:25)

This however, is not the only peculiar thing in the translating business. While the translator is shouldering this responsibility and forcing literary works into forms they were originally not intended to take, he also lacks a "stage" to do it on. No one can see his difficult performance, except where he slips up. In fact, unlike all other performers, he is praised primarily for not being seen, for having successfully created two works, one on top of the other, an original and a performance, difficult to tell apart. This seems particularly unrewarding, especially when we consider that the only time that the translator is ever noticed in a review of a translated work is when the reviewer with vengeful satisfaction points out supposed "mistakes" or "translating errors", judging by such surface details that a translation is "weak" or "inadequate". Otherwise, when the reviewer does not even know the source language, it is common and somehow even appropriate to say that the translation is "good" or "suitable" because it "reads well". Both reactions are naturally based on an absurd yet popular presumption that it is sufficient to know the target language to judge a translation's quality, which is predominant among readers and reviewers alike.

Not surprisingly, this most popular manner to evaluate an outcome of a translator's hard work and diligence by the target language text only, without any reference to the source language base, is nothing new and has long been a prevalent idea among most non-professional readers of literary translations, meaning non-linguists and non-translators. This is perfectly reflected in C. Belsey's sarcastic remarks:

> "a translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text – the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation but the original." (Belsey 1980:12)

This harmful and narrow perception of literary translation can simply be brought down to one very simplistic statement: the more the translator is transparent and invisible, the better his/her work is and the clearer we can see the intentions of the author of the original work. Nothing, in this case, could be farther from the truth. Alas, the translator's invisibility, as rightly pointed out by Lawrence Venuti (Venuti 1995:12; see also Simpson 1993; Hermans 1985) involves decoding the source language text and recoding it back into the target language, immersing it thoroughly in such target language's systemic structure, which includes its lexical, grammatical, semantic and stylistic features, but also the target culture, so inherent in every translating process. This is best explained by Nida, who writes:

> "Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations. The total impact of a translation may be reasonably close to the original, but there can be no identity in detail" (Nida 1964:156)

Newmark (1981:128) on the other hand claims that the translator should write in his own idiolect or in whatever his conception of that of the original author might be. This naturally leads to a striking semantic discrepancy between the source and

target text, since being born out of two different separate systems and therein enrooted, the source and the target text cannot be directly equivalent, which of course does not mean that a translation thus produced is wrong or faulty. Besides, as Bassnett (1988:23) writes the translator "should not be tempted by the school that pretends to determine the original *intentions* of an author on the basis of a self-contained text. The translator cannot *be* the author of the SL text, but as the author of the TL text has a clear moral responsibility to the TL readers".

The other pivotal issue connected with the art of literary translation is that although many a time translating practice has shown that translators can and will produce works of unsurpassed merit, being masterpieces in their own, the translation, as flawless and inventive as it can become, is always secondary to the original text. It is in this context that Hilaire Belloc in a lecture noted that:

> "the art of translation is a subsidiary art and derivative [which] (...) has never been granted the dignity of original work and has suffered too much in the general judgement of letters". (Bassnett 1988:2)

This view is supported by Edward Balcerzan (1998:114), who claims the reader should never forget that the resulting target text he/she is in touch with is a mere product of the original and is subordinate to it. And yet the reader, the primary recipient of the product of translation, is often seemingly oblivious of the fact, tending to view it as the original creation, and disregarding its origins to focus on the plot or contents of the resulting work. Balcerzan (1977:12) also notes that the perception of a translated work in the target language's literary milieu is contingent not only on the original evaluation of the source text in its native literature, as this depends on source language and culture standards, but also on how adequately and elegantly it has been transposed into the target language. This is also a very important point, leading us to conclude that the responsibility of a literary translator is thus even greater than popularly believed. He is not only a 'travel agent' taking the reader into the foreign world of the source literature and opening new worlds but also a missionary, who shapes and affects the way many a generation of target language readers will view the particular author, the

source language and, more often than not, as is frequently the case with such grand literary works as LOTR, a particular segment of the entire source language culture; this naturally makes the task doubly difficult and requires the translator to exercise extreme caution on his/her difficult path.

One of the more curious characteristics of literary translation as a work of art is that it is not permanent and will, from time to time, be replaced, unlike any other product of artistic expression, by a newer or more popular version of the same source text. In fact, this phenomenon is not in the least uncommon, especially as far as popular, influential and potent literary works are concerned, and it is also naturally the case of the book being the topic of this paper. The reason for this is that the translations tend to become older and obsolete faster than the originals, which is partly due to the fact that even a good translation is replaceable, being as it has already been pointed out, in a way secondary, whereas even a mediocre original is not. New translations tend to be published, catering to the changing requirements of the target language reader. These in turn result from evolving cultural, linguistic and other conditions, which might affect the comprehension or the reception of the translated text. The best example is provided by Shakespeare's works, of which the most popular ones have more than just one or two established translations in the majority of modern languages. The translation of Hamlet only into Polish was, as Renata Sas (2003) writes, was undertaken by no less than twenty-one authors, with the first one (actually an adaptation from a German version by F.L. Schröder, deviating significantly from the original) published by Wojciech Bogusławski's in Lwów as early as 1798 and the latest one by Stanisław Barańczak. This obviously broadens the range of options that a target language literature lover has while reading a sonnet or a play written by the Bard. Those who opt for period flavor might choose the older and traditional version by Józef Paszkowski, those wanting logic and clarity will no doubt find the translation supplied by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz best to their liking whereas those in favor of novelty will possibly go for the new rendition supplied by Stanisław Barańczak.

There is of course another point worthy of making – older texts, especially those dating back more than a century or two, may seem bizarre and needlessly complicated to the contemporary reader. In some extreme cases they may spoil the pleasure of a good read and even be utterly incomprehensible in some parts, not unlike Beowulf or even the more recent but by no means less valuable works by Christopher Marlowe, as they might seem foreign – to say the least - to your average English-speaking reader, for whom they just happen to be assigned reading, be it at school, college or elsewhere. Situations where a same-language translation or else a modern adaptation of a literary work is available through efforts of literary scholars are rare and Beowulf – by the way translated also by J.R.R. Tolkien – is just one of the few notable exceptions. Chaucer's work – especially "*the Canterbury Tales*", written in Middle English, are also utterly incomprehensible today without the assistance of a good historic dictionary or a comprehensive glossary – Chaucer's language as it existed in 14th century is like nothing the English speaking readers now today, resembling more a Scandinavian language in its grammar and vocabulary. Therefore this masterpiece of medieval literature was retranslated by several authors, the most prominent including Nevill Coghill and Geraldine McCaughrean.

A target language reader's position is infinitely better, since he/she can always expect a newer, better translation to be produced, remedying all or most of the pains it originally took to absorb the previous one(s).

Another issue emerges here as well - no translation is obviously perfect. This is just one more reason to publish a new, more perfect, adequate, elegant or simply better one, or at least to strive to achieve that commendable aim. Why in most cases it is not simply sufficient to revise the existing translation – which by the way is also done – is best explained by Nida (1982:175), who postulates that the amount of time and effort usually put to the process is by no means proportionate to the nuance in question, which might require revision. Thus the process of amendment to Nida becomes "painting over the dirty spots on a wall. The spots of new paint do not harmonize with the rest of the well and are no more satisfactory than the dirty spots they cover. It is much better to repaint the entire

wall" (Nida 1982:176). Therefore, it is less time- and effort-consuming to publish a new translation, especially if, as Małgorzata Łukasiewicz (1995:189) notices, the royalties for the previous ones are high and the competition on the translation market is stiff, so the publisher can readily afford to contract a new translator to do the job rather than overpay for the printing rights. This is the financial aspect of literary translation, which although hardly lofty and rather mundane, is no less important than the other ones and often becomes a crucial driver on the translation market.

1.2 Proper names and their translation

Proper names are a very specific area both in language, literature and finally, literary translation. The Random House Webster's Electronic Dictionary (henceforth RHWED) thus defines a proper name:

> a noun that designates a particular person, place, or thing, is not normally preceded by an article or other limiting modifier, and is usu. capitalized in English, as Lincoln, Beth, Pittsburgh (...)

Proper names – or nouns – have long been a fascinating area of research for language scholars, translators, theoreticians of literature, logicians researchers in the fields of semantics and semiotics and to many others. Zabeeh writes:

> Poets, magicians, linguistics and logicians have often been fascinated and angered by the protean functions of proper names, The interest of poets was mostly concerned with the connotations which the phonemes and the morphemes of personal or place-names carry with themselves and may awaken the memory of sundry bits of information about the bearers of the names. Even a bare mentioning, a mere echo of the name of some significant person or place – not to speak of the significant use of such a name – may occasion the floating of forgotten images. As if the name which supposes to be a mere label for a thing tries to tell us that it can do many other things besides its supposed proper role – it can tell us tall tales about its bearer." (Zabeeh 1968:1)

Proper names have always been assigned magical, mystical or at least significant functions in literature. Zabeeh (1968:5) goes on to quote the example of Romeo and Juliet, claiming that it was their names that led them to their fatal destinies rather than anything they did, since the names Capulet and Montague in the Verona of the period were never meant to be tied together.

It goes without saying that the proper interpretation, assessment and treatment of proper names is crucial to every accomplished translator in an effort to accurately translate a literary work.

Still, some logicians and philosophers – such as John Stuart Mill – do not distinguish between proper names and common names. Several claimed that

proper names were actually devoid of meaning. This view is supported by Newmark, who writes:

> (...) names of single persons or objects are outside languages; belong, if at all, to the encyclopaedia, not the dictionary; have, as Mill stated, no meaning or connotations, and are, therefore, both untranslatable and not to be translated. (Newmark 1981:59)

Incidentally, Zabeeh (1968:63) notes, however, that a proper name is prone to transform into a common name once it absorbs some properties of their bearers in virtue of their association. He provides the example of "Quisling" becoming a common name in virtue of a notable description of Vidkun Quisling, the pro-Nazi Norwegian leader. Similar phenomenon of proper names losing their character and drifting into the common noun territory occurs in the area of brand names and trade marks, such as "Kleenex" or "Hoover" in the US or, to return to the more familiar ground, "Electrolux" or "Adidas" in Poland.

There are naturally some proper names, which irrespective of the context they are placed in, will always be translated, which is imputable to historic reasons. Particularly names originating from the Middle Ages, where the translation of proper names was much more common than it is today. It is safer, however, to leave most other names untouched. Verónica Albin writes:

> it is quite obvious to all of us that Bill Gates oughtn't be rendered as Guillaume Portillons into French, nor Jimmy Carter as Santiaguito Acarreador into Spanish. And no matter what you hear in the Spanish version of the Sabrina remake with Harrison Ford, Sabrina and Linus did not go to 'el viñedo de Marta' in order to get drunk with Marta in her vineyard, but rather took pictures in that quaint Massachusetts whaling town called Martha's Vineyard without any wine ever touching their lips. But it is also equally obvious that Cristóforo Colombo must be translated as Christopher Columbus, and Henrique o Navegante as Henry the Seafarer. (Albin 2002)

But what of other names? Should we simply go on and leave them all untranslated, just as Newmark suggests? The issue is not as simple as it sounds. Some names, especially in works of fiction, created for amusement and purposes other than scholarly, have clear and precisely devised meaning, intended by the

author to resound in the reader's imagination, to provoke certain specific impressions about the character or place so denoted and to stand as one of its inherent characteristics. Thus the untranslatable character of a proper name is clearly contingent on whether it has preserved any descriptive features in the eyes of the source language reader, which should consequently be carried over or transposed in the target language equivalent. This has been summarized by Zabeeh, who notices:

> "If a proper name is used not only as a referring expression which identifies uniquely its bearer but also as an expression which is intended to say something about its bearer, then the translator should translate those expressions (...) However we should not worry about proper names which are now used purely as identification marks even though originally they were meant to be descriptions. (...) In novels and poems sometimes proper nouns are bestowed upon things for some specific reasons other than identification. Even the mere sound of a name is sometimes significant (for example, in rhyme) and hence a good translator should transmit these significant concomitants of the names. Otherwise the reader may miss the point intended by the writer." (Zabeeh 1968:69)

Newmark (1981:71), although admitting the fact that proper names may indeed carry assorted meanings, proposes a solution radically different from that supplied by Zabeeh, namely explaining any connotations in a glossary and leave the proper names in their original form. Newmark (1981:72) only allows translation of proper names if characters and the environment of the story are naturalized, which often happens in fairytales and, more generally, children's books because, as he claims, these are generally the same all over the world. He then proposes that a translator should first translate the word serving as a basis for the source language name, then on the basis of that word try to invent a suitable naturalized name in the target language, which would convey similar connotations. Newmark makes a reservation at this point stating that whenever heroes of tales bear names that refer to the intrinsic, be they true or alleged, qualities of the nation in question, the names should not be translated. There is also the question of personal names which briefly express the characteristic features of their bearers, such as for instance in the prose of Charles Dickens (*Wackford Squeers*) or, to name a more familiar name, count Aleksander Fredro

(*Raptusiewicz, Milczek, Jowialski)*. According to the general tendency not to translate proper names, which is prevalent in today's translator's practice such names would not be translated if they were expressly placed in a foreign-speaking milieu, as translating them would somehow suggest changing their nationality, for instance from English to Polish (as in Dickens), and might be received as awkward and out of place. Newmark (1981:71) also suggests that the translator needs to consider and verify whether a previous translation or transcription is already available and generally accepted, as this would make it inadvisable to introduce a new one.

Referring to place-names Newmark (1981:72) brings up the issue raised by Albin, concerning historic reasons for the supposed "translation" of some toponyms. Thus the German town of Aachen will be called by the Polish "Akwizgran", which is attributable to the Latin roots of the name, while the Polish "Pekin" or "Kanton" will be virtually unintelligible or at least foreign to the contemporary English ear, acquainted with differently transliterated versions of the Chinese toponyms, Beijing and Guangzhou respectively. Thus the concern for tradition and history is an essential problem in translation of proper names.

Obviously some of the names, if considered important or used often, will be renamed to facilitate pronunciation, such as Warsaw for Warszawa or Prague for Praha. Others still will be *naturalized* into the target language with no actual change to their spelling, but with the approximation of their pronunciation to the local standards. Newmark (1981:77) quotes the example of the difference in the way two German city-names are pronounced in English: that of Hamburg and that of Klagenfurt. Zabeeh also notes that the popularity of an object or item may simply be the decisive reason why it is given a name at all and thus:

> "Unless we are sufficiently interested in an item and not *qua* its type, we do not bestow a name upon it. We do not gibe a name to any patch or cloud, but if the cloud turns into a hurricane, it might receive a name" (Zabeeh 1968:66)

A curious point about proper names was made by R. Bell who points out that every proper name apart from its denotative functions also has certain connotative features saying:

> "The first refers to meaning which is referential, objective and cognitive and, hence, the shared property of the speech community which uses the language of which the word or sentence forms a part. The second, in contrast, refers to meaning which is not referential but associational, subjective and affective" (Bell 1991:98)

This fact the translator must not overlook. Omission of elements present in the source text during translation is one of the possibilities; another one is introduction of elements and meanings in the target text which were not originally intended to be enclosed in the source one; both are equally frequent and equally dangerous. And yet those two phenomena are unavoidable since no translator, no matter how qualified, will be equally competent in both source and target language and as competent in both as the respective native users of such languages. Teresa Micewicz (1971:113) supports this view saying that for a native language user a word will have much more meanings than can be recorded in even the most comprehensive, up-to-date and complete dictionaries. There will always be certain elusive and delicately present nuances, which must and will escape the attention of all translators, be they native users of the source or the target language.

Cieślikowa (1996:312; see also Cieślikowa 1992; Cieślikowa 1993) claims that names, which have a associative or connotative meaning play a creative role in the literary text by co-founding the vision of the world therein portrayed, which is why it is right to say that "origin and ontology of proper names cannot be infallibly traced back to the contents of a dictionary". Balbus (1993:100) adds that it would have been impossible to reasonably interpret some of Zbigniew Herbert's poems without the knowledge of proper elements of Greek mythology or to enjoy his "Tren Fortynbrasa" without having at least read Shakespeare's "Hamlet". Cieślikowa (1996:315), however, goes on to say that the main reasons for the retention of proper names in their original form may be twofold – namely

to localize the milieu, the protagonists or the setting of the text, in which case such names play a sociological role – but also to emphasize their expressive function (*phonic expression*) rather than only their informative one. These are situations where the writer might choose to add a special color or feel to his text by leaving some names in their original form. Cieślikowa then quotes the example of Italian place-names, such as *Via Foria, Via Toledo, Marina Grande* and church-names: *Santa Maria Prisca, San Francesco, San Giovenale*. Similarly in Tolkien's prose some of the terms had to be retained in the original form not only where the writer had explicitly demanded that it be so but also when he had failed to provide exact instructions leaving the choice to the translator – the plotline is set in the English-speaking world, which is to closely resemble the England of yore both geographically and linguistically and it would have indeed been unsound to naturalize it wholly or more than reasonably necessary.

2. Proper names in Tolkien's LOTR

2.1. Background information on proper names in LOTR

The difficulty of translating works of fiction containing proper names, particularly those that carry a meaning, has been noted in many studies and papers on translation linguistics. The appropriate rendition of meaningful place-names, names of characters and events, whether based in the source language reality or entirely fictional, into the target language and the effort to approximate the meaning and possibly the "feel" – the contextual meaning – of the original text has always been at the center of research conducted by theorists of literary translation. The extensive, multicultural and multilingual universe of LOTR that Tolkien, a recognized linguist and language researcher himself, developed with painstaking accuracy and meticulous attention to detail presents a very difficult task for any translator. Many names are based on actual existing names functioning in British reality, familiar to the Anglo-Saxon reader yet distant and foreign to the Polish one; some are deeply personal - drawn from Tolkien's private life as from names of his acquaintances that he happened to fancy; others yet were borrowed from Celtic and German legends and myths that Tolkien studied with relish; and a great deal of those names were invented, for instance most of names given in fictitious Elvish tongues such as *Quenya* or *Sindarin*, which Tolkien devised almost entirely on the basis of old Celtic vocabulary and grammar; the latter are thus incomprehensible to the British and Polish ear alike, but may sound somewhat familiar to Britons, who will usually be more acquainted with the history or mythology of the Celtic peoples than the Polish reader. This makes the translation of LOTR a tremendous, exhausting and risky enterprise, requiring extensive knowledge, research and resources but also great courage, steadfastness and consistency.

Fortunately, even as he was still writing LOTR, Tolkien envisaged its popularity and anticipated it would be translated globally. He was reluctant to leave the work of his life in the hands of inexperienced translators and realized that even seasoned ones may have trouble rendering the full text exactly to his

liking. The line between meaningfulness and meaninglessness in LOTR nomenclature, which incidentally is also the line representing the choice of *translate* versus *leave as is* was very thin and Tolkien realized that; he therefore refused to leave the translator in the lurch, coming up with the "Guide to the Names in *The Lord of the Rings"*, which included notes on the nomenclature used in the book, with the sole aim of assisting translators in their work. Although the notes were composed when only the Swedish and Dutch versions of LOTR had appeared on the market and were according to their author best suited for Germanic languages, which Tolkien was most familiar with, they would be useful for generations of translators in different countries. The "Guide" simply stated that

> "all names not in the following list should be left entirely unchanged in any language used in translation, except that inflexional -s, -es should be rendered according to the grammar of the language" (Lobdell 2003:24).

It should be noted that in the guide the author refers to the English-sounding names as translations from the Common Speech or Westron as it is sometimes termed, a sort of a *lingua franca* used by the peoples of the Middle-Earth for cross-cultural communication (the entire book is said to be a translation of a Common Speech writing found by the author). Therefore the guide will explain that an English-sounding word is in fact a Common Speech translation of a Rohan (Old English in actuality) or Elvish (Celtic) term. He writes:

> "In the original text English represents the Common Speech of the supposed period. Names that are given in modern English therefore represent names in the Common Speech, often but not always being translations of older names in other languages, especially Sindarin (Grey-elven). The language of translation now replaces English as the equivalent of the Common Speech; the names in English form should therefore be translated into the other language *according to their meaning* (as closely as possible)." (Lobdell 2003:23)

Consequently, Tolkien recommends that only the Common Speech terms be translated, as they are the only ones whose meaning is transparent or at least

semi-obvious to the English reader. Words that were not adopted by the Common Speech and thus quoted by Tolkien in their original versions are not expected to be translated. Words or expressions combining two different language sources are a separate yet particularly interesting and fascinating case. Generally, Tolkien concluded:

> "most of the names (...) should offer no difficulty to a translator (...). In a few cases the author, acting as translator of Elvish names already devised and used in this book or elsewhere, has taken pains to produce a Common Speech name that is both a translation and also (to English ears) a euphonious name of familiar English style, even if it does not actually occur in England. (...)It is desirable to translate such names, since to leave them unchanged would disturb the carefully devised scheme of nomenclature and introduce an unexplained element without a place in the feigned linguistic history of the period. But of course the translator is free to devise a name in the other language that is suitable in sense and/or topography; not all the Common Speech names are precise translations of those in other languages." (Lobdell 2003:25)

All of this information obviously made the work much easier since all a translator needed to do as far as proper names were concerned was to follow the guidelines and leave all names not mentioned in the guide untranslated. However, different translators took several different approaches to this task, not always following Tolkien's instructions to the letter.

This chapter of the thesis will be subdivided into two sections, one of which will be devoted to the proper names which in both versions have been translated and the other to those that have been left in the original form. In the second section the author will attempt to demonstrate whether the choice to leave a name in English was appropriate and justified in a given situation.

2.2 Translated proper names

2.2.1 Names of races, peoples and beings

One of the most notable character names referred to in the LOTR is undoubtedly the Great Enemy, represented by Sauron. This embodiment of all evil and essence of everything the peoples of Middle-Earth fear, loathe and abhor simply had to be translated properly to help the target reader realize the ominous character of this name. Thus in Maria Skibniewska's version we have "*Wielki Nieprzyjaciel"* and in Maria and Cezary Frąc's version the name reads *"Wielki Wróg"*. However slight and insignificant this detail may seem and however synonymous the two Polish words may be considered, there is still a hint of difference in the general quality of the term. *"Wielki nieprzyjaciel"*, which carries dated, old-fashioned and nearly biblical references (the word *"nieprzyjaciel"* is commonly used by bible scholars and translators in older and established translations of the Old Testament – [*"Love thy enemy" – "Miłujcie nieprzyjacioły wasze"*]), somehow seems more colored and better suited to this legend-styled text than just *"Wielki wróg"*, which although seemingly appropriate when considered in isolation, seems bland and colorless in comparison.

Similarly, Maria and Cezary Frąc preferred to translate the *"Dark Lord"* as *"Czarny Władca"*, while Maria Skibniewska had him as *"Władca Ciemności"*. Here, the difference in quality is not so obvious and it is more difficult to judge which one is more appropriate. Still, the term that Maria Skibniewska came up with sounds clearer and more sinister, referring to other common names assigned for example to Satan in the Polish religious nomenclature, where the *"Dark Prince"* is translated as *"Książe Ciemności"* rather than *"Ciemny Książe"*, *"Czarny Książe"* or otherwise. The name *"Czarny Władca"*, in spite of sounding every bit as ominous and powerful as *"Władca Ciemności"* simply does not carry the same amount of viciousness and does not clearly point to the evil intentions of its bearer. In addition, *"Czarny Władca"* may be associated with the physical

characteristics of Sauron (concerning his color), who as we know, never had any detailed bodily characteristics in the LOTR but was rather presented as a physically vague yet inherently deadly threat lurking in the darkness of Mordor. Therefore in this context, the epithet *"Czarny"* will probably not do justice to Sauron and to his nature.

The most fearsome servants of Sauron – the Black horsemen *"Nazgûl"* (or Ring-wraiths as they were called in the Common Speech) were referred to as the Fell Riders by the people of Rohan. Again, this may cause confusion among inexperienced translators, since the word is rarely used in this sense (and more as a preterit form of the verb *"to fall"* or as the verb *"to fell"* in its own right, meaning "*to strike, to cut down*" (RHWED)). This may be the cause for choosing the expression "*Upiorni Jeźdźcy*" by Maria and Cezary Frąc, whereas the actual meaning of the word *"fell"* as an adjective is "*fierce; cruel; dreadful; savage*" (RHWED), which is better reflected in Maria Skibniewska's "*Okrutni Jeźdźcy*". Still, it may have been so that Maria and Cezary Frąc realized the adjectival meaning of *"fell"* but were inclined to translate *"the Fell Riders"* exactly as they did and the author of this thesis is not to judge this. Nonetheless, the version of Maria Skibniewska just seems more accurate in this situation.

As mentioned before, another name for the *"Nazgûl"* was their Common Speech translation – the Ring-wraiths, the name being a "translation of the Black Speech *"Nazgûl",* from *"nazg"* 'ring' and *"gûl",* "*any one of the major invisible servants of Sauron dominated entirely by his will*" (Lobdell 2003:43). This in the translation provided by Maria and Cezary Frąc are called*"Duchy Pierścienia"*. Maria Skibniewska went for *"Upiory Pierścienia"* instead. Despite the apparent similarity between those two translations and the fact that they are both semantically accurate, the terrifying and lethal nature of the *"Nazgûl"* seems better reflected in the latter version and the *"Duchy Pierścienia"* are just not strong enough in this context.

"Gandalf Greyhame", which is Gandalf's by-name in Rohan caused all translators difficulty, to the point that in both versions it was translated simply as "*Gandalf Szary*", which is wrong, making absolutely no reference to the

distinctive and colorful moniker bestowed upon the old wizard by the people of Rohan. Naturally, considered with a plain English dictionary, *"Greyhame"* does not seem to make much sense, since *"hame"* means "*either of two curved pieces lying upon the collar in the harness of an animal, to which the traces are fastened*" (RHWED), defined verbosely by the English-Polish dictionary as *"jedna z dwóch części chomąta, do których przymocowane są postronki."* However, one needs but to briefly consult Tolkien's "*Guide..*" to disclose the true meaning of the nickname. Of Greyhame Tolkien writes:

> Modernized form of Rohan grēg-hama 'greycoat'. (...) Since both Grēghama and Greyhame would probably be unintelligible in a language of translation, whereas at least the Grey- is meant to be intelligible to readers, it would be right, I think, to translate this epithet: that is, to represent Éomer as translating its sense into the Common Speech (II 37). So the Dutch version has correctly Grijsmantel; but the Swedish wrongly gråhamn 'grey phantom'. In German it might be Graumantel? (Lobdell 2003:39)

With this explanation the solution is much simpler. *"Gandalf Szara Opończa"* or *"Gandalf Szary Płaszcz"* would have done just fine, although it is possible that the translators preferred to shun lengthy names and decided to sacrifice correctness for brevity. Whatever the reason, from the linguistic point of view, either of the above translations would be good, particularly if we consider that in the Common Speech the term was also a somewhat artificial coinage and as a translation from the language of Rohan may not have sounded right anyhow. Thus a simple literal translation was probably required here but none of the translators provided it.

Interestingly enough, Gandalf's faithful steed gifted to him by the king Théoden going by the name of *"Shadowfax"*, which was not a difficult issue either, was apparently mistranslated by Maria Skibniewska, who introduced the horse to the Polish reader as "*Gryf*". The translator was probably reluctant to concoct an elaborated and suitable name for the animal and went for a brief, well-sounding yet entirely misconceived name instead. True, "*Gryf*" does bear unmistakable

references to swiftness and power, which are the indispensable attributes of a good horse, but does not carry the meaning intended by Tolkien, who wrote:

> This is an anglicized form of Rohan (that is Old English) Sceadu-faex 'having shadow-grey mane (and coat)'. It does not actually occur in Old English. Since it is not Common Speech, it may be retained, though better so in a simplified form of the Rohan name: Scadufax. But since in the text this name has been assimilated to modern English (= Common Speech), it would be satisfactory to do the same in a Germanic language of translation, using related elements. Fax 'hair' is now obsolete in English, except in the name Fairfax (no longer understood). It was used in Old High German (faks) and Middle High German (vahs, vachs), but is, I believe, also now obsolete; but it could be revived in this name, as it is in the English text: for example Schattenvachs? Fax (faks) is still in use in Iceland and Norway for 'mane'; but 'shadow' has no exact equivalents in Scandinavian languages. The Dutch version has Schaduwschicht (shadow-flash), the Swedish Skuggfaxe. (Lobdell 2003:45)

Maria and Cezary Frąc coped with the assignment much better – their "*Cienistogrzywy*" is an almost perfect rendering of this memorable name.

Gandalf as a wizard had besides horses obviously other means of transportation at his disposal. One of the most notable examples was his winged friend, *"Gwaihir the Windlord",* the giant eagle responsible for saving Gandalf from the imprisonment of Saruman, who had placed the Grey Wizard on the pinnacle of Orthanc, his fortress. Obviously the name *Gwaihir* is to be retained but the byname – *Windlord* – is entirely translatable. Thus in Maria Skibniewska's version we have *Gwaihir Pędziwiatr*, which no doubt is very colorful but not quite adequate. Furthermore, it may bring up unwanted associations with Warner Bros' popular *Looney Tunes* character, *the Roadrunner* known to the Polish viewer as *Struś Pędziwiatr.* Maria Skibniewska's coinage may have preceded the *Roadrunner's* premiere in Poland but still the reference is there and it is no less than hilarious. Therefore the translation of Maria and Cezary Frąc – *Gwaihir Władca Wiatrów* – although longer and not so pleasantly compact, is still more adequate and, incidentally, much more serious. Still, it is worth noting which will be repeated several times in the following paragraphs, that English compounds need not necessarily be translated as two words but rather as one with a proper

suffix; thus there might have been better solutions around that problem that would have seized the essence of the name and at the same time been brief and strong-sounding, such as *Gwaihir Wiatrołap*.

Wormtongue, the nickname of *Gríma*, counselor to King Théoden is yet another example of possible miscomprehension of the word's origin; this time, however, it is on the part of Maria and Cezary Frąc, who used a vivid and powerful yet entirely misconceived translation "*Robaczywy Język*". True, it does evoke the evil nature of Saruman's agent and depicts *Gríma* as a liar and evildoer but it does not hold true to the etymology of the word, which, as Tolkien writes, is "'modernized' *form of the nickname of* "Gríma", *the evil counsellor to Rohan: Rohan* "wyrm-tunga" 'snake-tongue'" (Lobdell 2003:48). It is clear now, that the element *"worm"*, which was apparently misinterpreted by Maria and Cezary Frąc and rendered in its present, modern sense, should have been viewed from a historical perspective. In this context, Maria Skibniewska managed to capture the actual sense of the name much better, inventing the name "*Smoczy Język*". This seems significantly closer to the roots of the name, especially if we consider that Tolkien failed to give full account of the etymology of *"worm"*, which after remembering that Rohan words often represented Old English or Middle English in the Book and after consulting RHWED turns out to be: "*ME; OE wyrm dragon, serpent, worm, c. OS, OHG wurm, ON ormr, Go waurms; akin to L vermis*" (RHWED). Thus not only the snake but also the dragon seems accurate here. Naturally, if one were to follow Tolkien's guidelines to the letter, "*Wężowy Język*" might have been the best solution. Still, Maria Skibniewska did a far better job in this situation.

There is only a slight difference between the rendering of the name "*Wandlimb*", Treebeard the ent's wife, in both translations. The name, of which Tolkien only writes "*translate by sense*" (Lobdell 2003:44) Maria Skibniewska translated as "*Gałęzinka*" and Maria and Cezary Frąc as "*Gałązeczka*". In both cases, the translation choices are adequate, since *"limb"* obviously refers to a tree branch and *"wand"* adds the slender and ethereal feel to the entire compound. Looking for a diminutive ending in the target language seemed a fair solution. It

is hard to judge which one of the Polish names is better - suffice to say that "*Gałęzinka*" is perhaps a little more out of the ordinary and has more tenderness and delicacy to it, but this naturally just a subjective opinion.

There is also little difference in how the nickname given by Sam Gamgee to obnoxious insects assaulting hobbits with their clattering on the way to Rivendell was rendered in both versions. Tolkien says *"neekerbreekers"* are an "*invented insect-name*" (Lobdell 2003:39) which it is advisable to "*represent (...) by some invention of similar sound (supposed to be like that of a cricket).*" (Lobdell 2003:39). Maria Skibniewska had them as *"Skręcikarki"* and Maria and Cezary Frąc as "*Skręćkarki*". Obviously those translations are virtually equivalent, but neither of them managed to comply with Tolkien recommendations. Furthermore, neither of them attempted to retain that dialectal sound represented by distorted pronunciation. The first condition may have been difficult to secure but the second one could have simply been complied with by slightly changing the spelling of the name to "*Skryncikorki*" or something to resemble dialectal speech in Polish. Still, it does not resolve the main issue of believing that noise of any insect may sound as elaborately as to imitate human "*skręć-kark*". Naturally, this all seems much more plausible in English, where words are much more vocal and there are significantly more homophones. Still, the effort of translators is praiseworthy even though the results are far from perfect.

The name of byname *"Thorin",* the great dwarf-chieftain called *"Oakenshield"* obviously offered some difficulty to Maria and Cezary Frąc who, either out of ignorance or out of negligence, retained the name in English. Since there was no reason to do so, the author of this thesis must admit that *"Thorin Dębowa Tarcza"* invented by Maria Skibniewska sounds much better and has a familiar, colorful touch to it.

2.2.2 Place-names and names of things

At the beginning of this chapter the author wishes to share an interesting observation – there are several place-names in this section that were only translated by Maria Skibniewska, which Maria and Cezary Frąc for good reason or for no reason at all resolved to retain. These include without limitation ***"Bywater", "Hoarwell", "Withywindle", "Limlight", "Stock and Rushey", "Dwarrowdelf", "Tuckborough"***. The author will deal with those names in the presented order.

"Bywater" is a curious example – Maria Skibniewska translated this as ***"Nad Wodą"***. Everything would be just fine but for the confusing sound this name obviously has in Polish. In sentences like "*Nie próżnowały więc języki w Hobbitonie i Nad Wodą*" the uniqueness of this place-name would probably be missed were it not capitalized. If read aloud, it would entirely escape the attention of the audience. Since the name ***"Bywater"*** is obviously not quite the same as a "*hamlet situated by the water*" or otherwise "*by the river*", thus Maria Skibniewska could have reached out for coinages like "*Przywoda*" or "*Nadwodzie*" – ones that would clearly point to the word's original meaning and yet distort it slightly, so it may sound more plausible as a toponym. But that is the author's only complaint with this name – other than that it is a praiseworthy and commendable effort.

"*Hoarwell*" is a curious item too. It shows a complete lack of consistency on the part of Maria and Cezary Frąc. Whereas Tolkien writes:

> Hoarwell - the Common Speech translation of Mitheithel = 'pale grey' + 'spring, source'; well, as usually in place-names, has this sense (not that of a deep water-pit). Translate. (Lobdell 2003:42)

and Maria Skibniewska complies, more or less adequately and translating Hoarwell in a somewhat vague fashion as *"Szara Woda"*, Maria and Cezary Frąc are of a different opinion and decide to retain the word the first several times it

appears in the text. Later on, however, they seem to change their mind and translate it nonetheless, albeit with no attempt at originality, as *"Szara Woda"*. Without delving into detail, suffice to say that although Skibniewska's coinage *"Szara Woda"* (since the author is not inclined to think that both Skibniewska and Mr. and Ms. Frąc came across exactly the same idea, but rather that the latter simply plagiarized Skibniewska's concept) is not perfect and perhaps *"Szare Źródło"* could better fit the bill in this case, in view of Tolkien's remarks, consistency is most certainly the key in every translation and Maria Skibniewska passed the test, whereas Maria and Cezary Frąc obviously failed it.

Translation of the name Withywindle, which appears several times in the text and of which Tolkien writes:

> River-name in the Old Forest, intended to be in the language of the Shire. It was a winding river bordered by willows (withies). Withy- is not uncommon in English place-names, but -windle does not actually occur (Withywindle was modelled on withywind, a name of the convolvulus or bindweed). An invention of suitable elements in the language of translation would be desirable. Very good is the Dutch version Wilgewinde (with wilg = English willow). I do not understand the Swedish version Vittespring. Words related to withy are found in the Scandinavian languages; related also is German Weide. (Lobdell 2003:46)

is probably also reason for embarrassment in the newer version of LOTR. This time, however, the blame rests with the editor's failing to coordinate translation efforts of Maria and Cezary Frąc, who were responsible for translating the main narrative and those of Tadeusz Olszański, who was assigned all pieces of poetry found throughout the text. Thus ***"Withywindle"*** is retained in the main story but translated as ***"Wierzbowija"*** in songs and poems, which would indeed be more than confusing if this place-name were more prominent and crucial to the plot. The author must confess, however, that in this case the cloud definitely has a silver lining, since ***"Wierzbowija"*** seems to be an almost perfect translation of the name, in keeping with the spirit of the book and with Tolkien's guidelines at the same time. Maria Skibniewska's ***"Wija"*** has the advantage of brevity but fails to include the important tree-element, namely the willow (***"withy"***), even though the "*winding*" movement of ***"windle"*** is still there. All in all, a commendable effort

on the part of Maria Skibniewska and Tadeusz Olszański, slightly marred by the publisher's negligence.

Limlight is an interesting place-name, which none of the translators rendered to the author's full satisfaction. None of them was willing to make compromises and it shows. Maria and Cezary Frąc retained the name as a whole, while Maria Skibniewska translated this as *"Mętna Woda"*. However, Tolkien writes:

> Limlight (River). The spelling -light indicates that this is a Common Speech name; but leave the obscured element lim- unchanged and translate -light: the adjective light here means 'bright, clear'. (Lobdell 2003:49)

The choice of Maria and Cezary Frąc was probably motivated by the lack of a better alternative. On the other hand, the translation provided by Ms. Skibniewska is entirely out of place, in view of Tolkien's remarks. If one were indeed bent on leaving out the element "*lim*" and adding a Polish word *"woda"* to the translated name (possibly to match other translations – see *"Szara Woda"*), this could be translated as *"Jasna Woda"* or *"Przejrzysta Woda"*. *"Mętna"*, however, is an almost perfect antonym of *"light"* in this context. The only thought that comes to the author's mind is that Maria Skibniewska must have somehow associated *"lim"* with *"dim"*, which led to her bizarre coinage. All things considered, it was probably better to retain the name than to concoct something as ridiculous as Ms. Skibniewska did, though a good translation would naturally have been desirable.

> *Stock and Rushey* are small hamlets in the Marish appear only once throughout the whole book. *Stock* does not have any mention in Tolkien's "Guide…" and *Rushey* is described as: 'Rush-isle'; in origin a 'hard' among the fens of the Marish. The element -ey, -y in the sense 'small island' (= Swedish ö, Danish ø, Old Norse ey) is very frequent in English place-names. The German equivalent is Aue 'river-side land, water-meadow', which would not be unsuitable in this case. (Lobdell 2003:50)

Maria and Cezary Frąc played it safe retaining both names, while Maria Skibniewska ventured a translation – *"Słupki"* and *"Łozina"*. They may seem genuine Polish place-names and certainly add a touch of familiarity to the text, however *"Stock"* might be translated better as *"Pień"* or to make it more believable *"Pnie"*. *"Kępa"* or *"Ostrów"* on the other hand would be suitable in the case of *"Rushey"*, if one decided to heed Tolkien's advice to the letter.

Of *"Dwarrowdelf",* the seat of Dwarf-kings and the main center of the civilization of Dwarves, Tolkien writes:

> Dwarrowdelf is a translation of the actual Common Speech name of Moria, Phurunargian, given an archaic English form, since Phurunargian was already itself archaic in form. The 'archaism' is not of much importance; the name should be translated by the same element as that used to translate Dwarf (or a variety of that) + a word meaning 'mine, digging, excavation' — for instance German Zwergengrube? (Lobdell 2003:43)

Both translations are very similar, with Maria Skibniewska having it as *stolica krasnoludów* and Maria and Cezary Frąc as *krasnoludzka stolica*. The latter has a more archaic and classic touch to it and is more appealing. Still, this obviously means that all translators chose the easy way, contenting themselves with conveying the "deeper" meaning of the word, without touching the colorful surface. The idea is not necessarily wrong, though it might be reasonable to avoid leaving the capital city of the dwarves without an actual name, which is somewhat rude and inconsiderate. One might either add the retained English name or a properly styled Polish coinage to the already existing translation. The proper version would sound "*Dwarrowdelf – krasnoludzka stolica*" and the latter might involve one of a variety of words, for instance "*Wykopalica*" or "*Kopaliska*".

Tuckborough, a hobbit-village, is a fascinating illustration of convoluted translation logic and choices. The name itself consists of the personal name *Tuck* and of a suffix *borough* not uncommon in English place-names, originally meaning a town, a municipality or an urban community. Maria and Cezary Frąc retained the name and Maria Skibniewska came up with the word *Tukon*. This is

naturally consistent with her translation, or rather retention, of the name *Hobbiton* that neighbors *Tuckborough* in the text. Still, it does not change the fact that the suffix *ton*, albeit widespread in British place-names is not normally used in Poland with towns or villages. It would be more suitable to render this as *Tukowo*, considering that *Tuk* was retained only with adjusted spelling and *Hobbiton* might have been rendered as *Hobbitowo* as well.

The *Cracks of Doom* were rendered as "*Szczeliny Zagłady*" by Maria Skibniewska and as "*Rozpadliny Zagłady*" by Maria and Cezary Frąc. These two versions sound equally good and are both similarly accurate. There is one reservation to be made, though, that "*rozpadliny*" are somewhat less ambiguous and clearly point to the actual meaning of this place-name, while "*szczeliny*" may have multiple meanings, not necessarily connected with the peculiar rock formation that the original text invokes. Other than that, both versions are perfectly fine.

The *"Golden Perch",* the famed inn at Stock well-liked among the locals, caused Maria Skibniewska some confusion. Apparently, consulting the first dictionary definition at hand she considered the natural and obvious translation should be (Zajazd) "*Pod Złotą Tyczką*". Nothing could be farther from the truth! Tolkien, in his guide, warns:

> Golden Perch. An Inn name; probably one favored by anglers. In any case Perch is the fish-name (and not a land-measure or bird-perch). (Lobdell 2003:43)

Thus in this case it is the version of Maria and Cezary Frąc – "*Pod Złotym Okoniem*" that is accurate and correct and "*Złota Tyczka*" must unfortunately be considered as one of Maria Skibniewska's greatest blunders.

Next in line is *"Hornburg"* Gondor's fortress built in the midst of the *Helm's Deep*. As Tolkien remarks, "*Hornburg (...)"* is "*so called because of Helm's great horn, supposed still at times to be heard blowing.*" (Lobdell 2003:43), recommending that it be translated, which all translators decided to do, coming up with two different ideas. Maria Skibniewska invented "*Rogaty Gród*", while Maria and Cezary Frąc showed more creativity naming the fortified castle

"*Rogaty Kasztel*". Both versions are semantically more or less correct and the slightly archaic English sounding of "*burg*" is just as well retained in the one as in the other. However, "*Rogaty Kasztel*" seems more original and has more of that ancient flavor that Tolkien's admirers love about his work, and this is probably the only thing that can be said to compare these two translations. Besides that, they are fairly equal.

The *Forsaken Inn* situated on the road between the Shire and Rivendell was also translated differently by Maria Skibniewska and Maria and Cezary Frąc. The proper had it as "*Opuszczona Gospoda*" and the latter as "*Zapomniana Gospoda*", which is slightly less accurate, though by no means less colorful.

The Black Pit, or the Common Speech rendering of Dwarf-tongue *Khazad-dűm* or Elvish *Moria* also came to be translated in two different ways: as "*Czarny Szyb"* by Maria Skibniewska and as *"Czarna Otchłań"* by the two other translators. While certainly very colorful and ominous, the latter version is perhaps too vague and lacks specificity. It is also quite inaccurate. Considering the Dwarves and their principal livelihood, which was the mining business, it would have been reasonable to expect that their capital city or the hub of their civilization would not be given a terror-inducing name but rather that it would somehow be connected with excavations or digging. Enter Maria Skibniewska with her *"Czarny Szyb"*, which may not sound very romantic, but given the pragmatic nature of the Dwarves is undoubtedly far more convincing and, more importantly, accurate as well.

"Derndingle", the spot where the Ents would gather for their 'moots', seemed problematic to all translators. Indeed, the word, according to Tolkien's description, which follows, is not very easy to translate in a faithful and yet concise manner:

> Derndingle. Said by Treebeard to be what Men called the meeting-place of the Ents (II 82); therefore meant to be in the Common Speech. But the Common Speech name must be supposed to have been given a long time ago, when in Gondor more was known or remembered about the Ents. Dingle is still known, meaning 'deep (tree-shadowed) dell', but dern 'secret, hidden' is long obsolete, as are the related words in other Germanic languages

— except Tarn- in German Tarnkappe (from Middle High German). Translate by sense, preferably by obsolete, poetic, or dialectal elements. (Lobdell 2003:39)

Maria Skibniewska translated *Derndingle* as *Zaklęta Kotlina*, which takes care of the *"dingle"* component and gives the outcome a desirable archaic touch. Still, the rendering of "*dern"* remains incorrect. A different version would be required here, such as *Tajemna Kotlina* or *Sekretna Kotlina*. On the other hand, Maria and Cezary Frąc would not even go as far as Ms. Skibniewska, contenting themselves with "*kotlina*", which aside from sounding harsh and being neglectful is simply unfaithful to the original text.

Black Country, which is "*Common Speech translation of Mordor*" (Lobdell 2003:42) and is supposed to be translated directly, is the exact reflection of the translation strategy differences earlier observed by the author if this thesis by analyzing the translation of the "*Dark Lord*" or Sauron. Maria and Cezary Frąc chose to use the more literal term "*Czarny Kraj*", while Maria Skibniewska made an effort to ensure functional equivalence of the translation and gave Mordor the name "*Kraj Ciemności*". Indeed, the latter choice seems much more justified since rather than the actual physical blackness or even bleakness of Mordor the name was meant to convey the atmosphere of hopelessness, threat and evil lurking in Sauron's lair. Furthermore, "*Czarny Kraj*" brings up infelicitous and probably unintentionally amusing associations with the Polish nickname for Africa – "*Czarny Ląd*". Thus "*Kraj Ciemności*" seems by all means a more fortunate and adequate translation.

"*The Teeth of Mordor"*, in which Tolkien recommends the element *teeth* be translated, were faithfully rendered by all translators as "*Zęby Mordoru*". However, the common associations with Mordor being what they are, it would perhaps have been more accurate to rename Mordor's watchtowers to "*Kły Mordoru*". True, this would not have been faithful to the original text and might have seemed exaggerated; still, one needs to remember that in literary translations such exaggerations are often allowed if not welcome, especially if we consider that the semantic circle of a term will never overlap with that of its seemingly "perfect" equivalent in the language of translation.

Fortunately, none of the translators let themselves be led astray by the name "*High Hay*", keeping in mind that according to Tolkien's *Guide* it "(...) is derived from *hay* 'fence' (*not* 'grass')". Thus we obtained two different versions: "*Wysoki Mur*" by Maria Skibniewska and "*Wysoki Płot*" by Maria and Cezary Frąc. Which is more adequate in semantic terms the author will not judge, however, considering the fact that the High Hay was a hedge, it does seem quite awkward to juxtapose the term "*żywopłot*" and the phrase "*zwany Wysokim Płotem*" as is the case in Maria and Cezary Frąc's version. Thus in this context, "*Wysoki Mur*" seems a better choice, though it is naturally far from perfect.

The translation of "*league"* as an ancient unit of distance estimated roughly at 3 miles was no problem for Maria Skibniewska, who skillfully and adequately rendered it as "*staja*" – the closest available Polish equivalent of the term that there is. Maria and Cezary Frąc generally followed in her footsteps, not managing, however, to avoid a few slips here and there, such as in "*within a hundred leagues of the Shire*", which was translated as "*bliżej niż sto mil od Shire*". Besides the imprecise expression "*bliżej niż*", which fails to do justice to the English "*within*" and ought to have been replaced in this situation with "*w promieniu*", this is a gross understatement and a serious error, since a hundred leagues is a rough equivalent of three hundred miles rather than just a hundred.

The Shire-reckoning translated by Maria Skibniewska simply as "*Rachuba Czasu*" was rendered in a more precise and probably better manner by Maria and Cezary Frąc – "*Rachuba lat Shire*". Dropping the genitival element "*Shire*" was utterly unjustified and "*rachuba lat*" is somehow more adequate and accurate than simply "*rachuba czasu*". Still, the difference in quality of translation is not very significant.

Springle-ring – a vigorous dance that the Hobbit youth relished – is a colorful invention and Tolkien expected a target language equivalent to be coined accordingly stating:

> (…) render it by a similar one suitable to the language of translation, implying a vigorous ring-dance in which dancers often leaped up (Lobdell 2003:49)

In Maria Skibniewska's version the name of the dance is translated as "*hopka-galopka*". This is a good choice and it conveys both the joy and the energy of the original name, preserving the "*leap-up*" aspect of the name, pointed out by Tolkien. Maria and Cezary Frąc, however, were of a different opinion, rendering the name as "*hopka-dzwoneczka*", mistakenly interpreting the element "*ring*" as a reference to *ringing* and thus to *bells*, whereas it obviously originated from the fact that dancers moved in circles or *rings.* Therefore it would be difficult to declare the latter translation adequate.

Sweet galenas, the Gondor name of the Hobbit all-time favorite pastime or the pipe-weed, is a curious example of misunderstanding. It being a new coinage and there being obviously no equivalents of it in any language and furthermore there being no mention of it in the *Guide*, Maria and Cezary Frąc decided to retain it in the Polish version, obtaining "*słodki galenas*". This was probably the wisest choice and considering that the "s" ending was probably not meant to be plural, the grammatical form of the Polish translation is good too. Maria Skibniewska, on the other hand, came up with a somewhat bizarre and utterly unexpected term "*słodka psianka*". As far as the Polish herbal terminology is concerned, such plant does not exist. A possible inspiration for the translation might have been the plant known as "*psianka słodkogórz*" or in English "*bittersweet*". Nonetheless, it does not fit the physical description of the pipe-weed, it is used as a diuretic, laxative and cholagogue, it is quite poisonous in large doses and under no circumstances is used for smoking. Why Maria Skibniewska decided to use that name (randomly perhaps?) will remain a mystery.

Town-hole, an amusing word-play of a name describing the Shire's center of administration or its Town Hall (being naturally no less than a Hobbit hole) caused all translators trouble. None of them found it translatable, with Maria Skibniewska rendering it simply as "*ratusz*" and Maria and Cezary Frąc trying to save the day by translating the pun as "*norka Magistratu*". Indeed it would have been hard to convey the full flavor of this inventive coinage and Maria and Cezary Frąc were probably right in translating it as they did, in plain terms, preserving all informative aspects and with a touch of archaic flavor, since

”magistrat”, unlike *”ratusz”,* is an older term, nowadays found only in specialized legal or highly formal writing. Thus their version is better in this context although it is still far from being adequate.

2.3 Proper names left untranslated

2.3.1 Names of races, peoples and beings

The first and obvious example of a term retained in Polish (and probably in most other international versions) in its original form is naturally "*Hobbit*". The choice did seem fairly easy in this case, since the word was entirely fictional and invented by Tolkien. There does not seem to be any mention of it in any earlier work, whether in academic writing or in folklore. Although Tolkien writes that the word "*seems (...) to be a worn-down form of a word preserved more fully in Rohan: _holbytla_ 'hole-builder'*" (Tolkien 2001:1156), he insists on not translating it, "*since the name is supposed no longer to have had a recognized meaning in the Shire*" (Lobdell 2003:26).

Furthermore, the term is so well established in the Polish language and originates from Tolkien's previous book, "*Hobbit*", which only had one full translation, that it would have been unreasonable to change it.

Hobbits, however, were divided into several distinct races. In addition, Tolkien invented several names for hobbit families and even more eminent hobbit individuals. Many of those are meaningful. Harfoots, Stoors, and Fallohides, names used to denote different races or more precisely, breeds of the hobbit people are a good example of such names. Of Fallohides Tolkien writes:

> "It should if possible be translated, since it is meant to represent a name with a meaning in the Common Speech, though one devised in the past and so containing archaic elements. It is made of English fallow + hide (cognates of German falb and Haut) and means 'Paleskin'. It is archaic, since fallow 'pale, yellowish' is not now in use, except in fallow deer, and hide is no longer applied to human skin (except as a transference back from its use of animal hides, used for leather). But this element of archaism need not be imitated." (Lobdell 2003:30)

The same applies to the name 'Harfoots', which Tolkien describes as "*(...)meant to be intelligible (in its context) and recognized as an altered form of an old name = 'hairfoot', that is, 'one with hairy feet'*" (Lobdell 2003:32). Stoors, Tolkien

concludes, may be left as they are, since the word to denote that breed is all but obsolete in the Common Speech itself. However, both Maria Skibniewska and Maria and Cezary Frąc decided to leave all breed-names unchanged, thus having them as "*Harfootowie*","*Stoorowie*" and "*Fallohidzi*" (with one minor difference – Maria and Cezary Frąc have them as "*Fallohidowie"*, this being a reflection of the general tendency in the declension, as discussed in the previous sections). This is obviously wrong both in terms of fidelity to the author's recommendations and to the common sense. Terms such as *Bladawcy* or *Włochonogowie* would have seemed an interesting attempt at illustrating the characteristic traits of the respective hobbit-breeds to the author of this thesis; for some reasons, however, all translators decided against changing them.

The only explanation for leaving those names in the original may be that none of the translators considered those names important enough to be given much consideration (indeed, those names appear only several times in the whole book) and the fact that due to the systemic difference between the Slavic and Germanic languages, faithful translation both in terms of meaning and phonology might be difficult here. The same may apply to many other proper names left in the original throughout the text.

Names of hobbit families are an interesting case as well. Tolkien describes them in detail explaining in the "*Guide*" that they are all meaningful, such as Bracegirdle, which Tolkien states is:

> (...) a surname, used in the text, of course, with reference to the hobbit tendency to be fat and so to strain their belts. A desirable translation would recognize this by some equivalent meaning Tight-belt, or Belt-tightener / strainer / stretcher. (Lobdell 2003:27)

Tolkien also adds that "the name is a genuine English one; a compound of the Romance type with the verbal element first, as in *Drinkwater = Boileau*" (Lobdell 2003:27), which would present a particular difficulty for the ambitious translator bent on preserving both the semantic sense and the familiar sound of the name, but for Tolkien's casual remark that follows:

> it is not necessary that the representation should be a known surname in the language of translation. (Lobdell 2003:27).

In this situation rendering the name Bracegirdle would not actually have been very difficult, while even an obviously humorous attempt at it such as Zaciskpasowie could add flavor to the entire description.

Following in Bracegirdles' footsteps are the Chubbs, another hobbit family who owe their names to their hearty appetite and fun-loving disposition. Chubbs were retained and – for reasons unknown – the spelling of the name was modified so as to suit Polish pronunciation, which led to a bizarre coinage "*Czubbowie*" in Maria Skibniewska's version (Maria and Cezary Frąc retained the name in its original spelling). There are other families to follow, whose names are even more self-explanatory, such as Proudfoot (plural Proudfeet, obviously lost in the Polish versions where we simply have "*Proudfoot*" or "*Proudfootowie*" depending on the context; incidentally a similar last name – "*Puddifoot*" – though also recommended for translation, was retained as well), "*Hornblower*", which in the Shire is a surname "*evidently occupational*" (Lobdell 2003:30) and one that the translator needs to "*translate by sense*" (Lobdell 2003:30) or the "*Brockhouse*", to which Tolkien refers extensively in the Guide, reproaching Dutch and Swedish translators:

> Brock is an old word for the badger, still widely current in country speech up to the end of the nineteenth century and appearing in literature, and hence in good dictionaries, including bilinguals. So there is not much excuse for the Dutch and Swedish translators' having misrendered it. In the Dutch translation Broekhuis (not a misprint, since it is repeated in the four places where this name occurs) seems absurd: what is a 'breech-house'? The Swedish Galthus 'wild-boar house' is not much better, since swine do not burrow! The translator evidently did not know or look up Brock, since he uses Grävlingar for the name Burrows (Swedish gräflingar, gräfsvin 'badgers'). (Lobdell 2003:25)

However, there are exceptions to that rule, i.e. last names which have lost their original meaning or never had any. Not surprisingly, one of the hobbit-

names most widely used throughout the book – Took – belongs to that category. Tolkien writes that Took is a "*hobbit-name of unknown origin representing actual Hobbit* Tūk *(...) It should thus be kept and spelt phonetically according to the language of translation*" (Lobdell 2003:36). All translators followed Tolkien's advice, modifying the spelling accordingly - Tuk. Incidentally, Tolkien also adds that "the Took personal names should be kept in the form and spelling of the text, as "*Peregrin*", "*Paladin*", *"Adelard", "Bandobras*" " (Lobdell 2003:36). Bolger is another hobbit name which Tolkien recommends should be left as it is. Both translations comply with those recommendations. There is one additional remark on hobbit-names and it concerns the moniker of a legendary hobbit chieftain, famed for his striking height, one "*Brandobras*" nicknamed "*Bullroarer*", which Tolkien concludes is "*in Common Speech and should be translated by sense (if possible alliterating on B)*" (Lobdell 2003: 38). An attempt to adapt this nickname to the Polish language, which could result in a colorful coinage such as "*Byczyryk*" would have obviously been most welcome by Tolkien. Unfortunately, no such attempt was made. Interestingly enough, Maria and Cezary Frąc, in spite of their general inclination to retain place-names and names of characters in their original version, ventured a translation here, rendering the name as "*Ryczywół*". This is certainly a laudable attempt even if the coinage does not seem entirely felicitous (*"wół"*, which is only one of the meanings that the word *"bull"* has in Polish somehow does not seem fit to describe a great and noble hobbit lord who enjoyed great esteem among his folk).

We must not forget to consider the name Marigold, of which Tolkien writes *in extenso*:

> Translate this flower-name (...). The name is used because it is suitable as a name in English and because, containing 'gold' and referring to a golden flower, it suggests that there was a 'Fallohide' strain (...) in Sam's family—which, increased by the favour of Galadriel, became notable in his children: especially Elanor, but also Goldilocks (a name sometimes given to flowers of the buttercup kind) who married the heir of Peregrin Took. Unfortunately the name of the flower in the language of translation may be unsuitable as a name in form or meaning (for instance French souci). In such a case it would be better to substitute the name of some other yellow flower. The Swedish translator solved the

> difficulty by translating the name as Majagull and adding Ringblom (Swedish ringblomma 'marigold'; compare German Ringelblume). The Dutch translator was content with Meizoentje 'daisy'; which is good enough. He did not include the genealogies in his translation, and ignored 'the fact that Daisy was the name of a much older sister of Sam and not a playmate of Rosie Cotton. (Lobdell 2003:33)

Apparently this is a hobbit girl's name which only comes up once in the text and therefore was probably considered unimportant by all translators, who chose to leave it in the original version. However, the situation here is rather awkward, since a similar girl's name, Rosie, was translated as "*Różyczka*" by Maria Skibniewska (Maria and Cezary Frąc preferred *"Róża"*), although it is a common name occurring in the English language or maybe exactly because of that. Another explanation could be that the more popular meaning of Marigold in Polish is "*nagietek*" (*Calendula*), obviously not very well suited to serve as a girl's name. However, what the translators may have overlooked is that it also has a second meaning, namely "*aksamitka złota*" (*Tagetes*), which would make a perfectly normal and even sweet-sounding name for a girl of any race, hobbits included and would exactly comply with Tolkien's recommendations in this matter.

Plant-derived first or last names were not uncommon among the Shire-folk, to name but one of the chief "*petty villains*", Bill Ferny, whose name might have easily been translated as *Paprotny* or *Paprotnik*. Considering that the name in the original version has absolutely no associations to the Polish ear and sounds rather dull, this might have been a way to make it more colorful and characteristic.

Naturally, attention must also be given to the hobbit-name central to the entire story, the name of the main protagonist – Baggins. Of Baggins Tolkien writes:

> Intended to recall 'bag'—compare Bilbo's conversation with Smaug in The Hobbit -- and meant to be associated (by hobbits) with Bag End (that is, the end of a 'bag' or 'pudding bag' = cul-de-sac), the local name for Bilbo's house. (It was the local name for my aunt's farm in Worcestershire, which was at the end of a lane leading to it and no further). Compare also Sackville-Baggins. The translation should contain an element meaning 'sack, bag'. (Lobdell 2003:25)

The name Baggins was, however, left in its original form in both translations. The one reason for this was that it dated back to LOTR predecessor – Tolkien's "*Hobbit*" and was left as it was in the only Polish translation of this book done by Maria Skibniewska. The other reason was probably a more complex one: it was difficult to find a name which would recall a bag or a sack, be natively Polish (and have a pleasant, familiar albeit slightly common sound to it, just as Tolkien intended for Baggins) and last but not least alliterate on B (Bilbo was the original bearer of this name in the "*Hobbit*"; it was only later that his nephew, Frodo, came to the reader's attention as the main protagonist of LOTR). Thus the translators were, in the opinion of the author hereof, probably right in not translating Baggins, especially if we consider that previous attempts thereat made by Jerzy Łoziński in his translation of LOTR (replacing Baggins with Bagosz) were in the opinion of the author of this thesis futile and unsuccessful.

Other notable names which in Tolkien's opinion should or may be left unchanged, and where applicable inflected or spelt in a slightly different manner, depending on the target language system, mostly because they include elements foreign to Common Speech or because their original meaning was obscured in time, include "*Gamgee"* (Sam's last name – actually also the last name of an existing historic personage – a British surgeon), "*Isengrim*" (a hobbit first name), "*Maggot*" (a hobbit last name whose resemblance to English term for a larva is explained to be incidental), "*Gamling*" (name of one of the Rohirrim), "*Forn*" and "*Orald*" (names of Tom Bombadil), "*Dunlendings*" (inhabitants of Dunland), "*ents*" (giant tree-people), "*swertings*" (legendary people of the south), "*oliphaunts*" (huge beasts resembling mammoths or elephants), "*scatha*" (*"robbers", "injurers"*). Generally, the translators complied and all modifications were implemented accordingly, i.e. "*Scatha*" were rendered as "*Skata*", "*swertings*" as "*swertowie*", "*Dunlendings*" as "*Dunlendingowie*" and "*oliphaunts*" as "*olifanty*". Incidentally, this is a very curious point, since Tolkien so writes of oliphaunts:

> It is an archaic form of 'elephant' used as a 'rusticism', on the supposition that rumour of the Southern beast would have reached the Shire long ago in the form of legend. This detail might be retained simply by substituting O for the initial E of the ordinary name of the elephant in the language of translation: the meaning would remain sufficiently obvious, even if that language had no similar archaic form. In Dutch olifant remains the current form, and so is used by the translator, but with loss of the archaic colouring. Oliphant in English is derived from Old French olifant, but the o is probably derived from old forms of English or German: Old English olfend, Old High German olbenta 'camel'. The names of foreign animals, seldom or never seen, are often misapplied in the borrowing language. Old English olfend, Old High German olbenta, are probably ultimately related to the classical elephant (Latin from Greek). (Lobdell 2003:31)

The Polish version, in turn, is neither archaic nor familiar, although may remotely resemble "*wielbłąd*", which is the Polish coinage based on the same core as "*elephant*"; thus the translators' decisions to retain the word untranslated may seem controversial, considering the circumstances. However, probably associations with the Polish term for the animal best resembling an oliphaunt, which is "*słoń*", might produce new coinages which would fail to achieve the desired effect – the exotic "feel" of the word. Hence the Polish "*olifanty*".

The giant spider inhabiting the caves and mountain tunnels under Cirith Ungol going by the name of "*Shelob*" has her name thus explained by Tolkien in the Guide:

> Though it sounds (I think) a suitable name for the Spider, in some foreign (orkish) tongue it is actually composed of She and lob (a dialectal English word meaning 'spider'; see Bilbo's song in chapter VIII of The Hobbit). (Lobdell 2003:33)

Reading this passage we are led to believe that since *"lob"* is supposedly a dialectal element referring to "*a spider*" (though it is not noted in any of the English dictionaries in the possession of the author hereof, the Merriam Webster's Unabridged English Dictionary included), it is to reflect the Common Speech in this context and should if possible be translated, although Tolkien avoids giving clear solutions in this respect. *"She"*, on the other hand, is a

entirely foreign component and as it is, it should most likely be retained. It does not constitute a reference to the sex of the monstrous creature, though she clearly is female, as indicated in the text. In this situation it would be suitable to find an adequately dialectal term for spider in Polish and affix it to the element *"She"*, properly adjusting the spelling or at best to retain the word altogether, which is precisely what Maria Skibniewska did, probably for want of a good translation and uncertainty as to Tolkien's intentions concerning the name. A suffix "a" was added at the end of the word to indicate the feminine nature of the spider in Polish. Maria and Cezary Frąc did almost the same thing, but for reasons unknown, they retained the original spelling as well, which led to a bizarre coinage "*Sheloba*", most likely causing pronunciation confusion in inexperienced readers, unfamiliar with Maria Skibniewska's translations.

2.3.2 Place-names and names of things

One of the most notable examples of place-names left unchanged is the Shire. Tolkien does mention Shire in the "*Guide*" and therefore we should conclude that it is to be translated. Shire, however, is a very specific place-name; Tolkien insists that Shire "*is current in modern English and therefore is in the tale in the Common Speech*", adding that it is to be translated by sense. Translation by sense in this context might seem somewhat difficult, since "*shire*" is simply a county in Great Britain and does not have an established Polish counterpart. What's more, shire is an ancient word, deeply enrooted in many a county-names in the UK, to name but Worcestershire or Hertfordshire. Thus it is not only an administrative unit, but a meaningful suffix, adding familiarity to the name of this hobbit country and locating it at the very heart of British-informed reality. Finding a good translation seems in this context impossible since there is no such suffix in Polish indicating geographic relation to the reader's home country, which could at the same time be employed as an independent place-name. Thus the coinage proposed by Mr. Łoziński "*włość*" does not really seem appropriate. Retaining "*Shire*" might be the best choice in this situation.

Many regions or areas neighboring the Shire, like "*Archet"* or "*Bree*" need not be translated, since they are of Celtic origin and hence are not derived from the Common Speech.

Since the name Baggins was mentioned in previous sections of this chapter, it would not be amiss to look at several other place-names obviously derived from "*Baggins*", such as "*Bag End"* (Bilbo's residence) or "*Bagshot Row"* (row of small 'holes' in the lane below *Bag End*). Both were retained by the Polish translators and it was probably the best choice, considering that they should be consistent with the translation of the original name Baggins, which was left in the original version as well.

Brandywine – the name of the Shire's main river – might cause some trouble to inexperienced translators, particularly considering that it contains two lexemes associated with drinking and with liquor. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Nonetheless, this folk etymology probably inspired Jerzy Łoziński's failed attempt to bring the name closer to the Polish reader, by replacing it with amusing albeit inappropriate "*Gorzawina*". Tolkien thus explains the origin of the name:

> This means 'the long gold-brown river.' Leave untranslated: Brandywine is represented as a corruption of Sindarin Baránduin (accent on the middle syllable and), from baran 'brown, yellow-brown' + duin 'river'. The common Elvish was duinē: stem dui 'flow (in volume)'. The Quenya form would have been luine (in Quenya initial d became l), but the word was not used. (Lobdell 2003:38)

Interestingly enough, "*Brandybuck*" - a hobbit family-name – is said to have been derived from Brandywine. Tolkien recommends that *"Brandy-"* be retained and *"–buck"* translated as with any other name containing that word, such as *"Oldbuck","Buck Hill"*. It was, however, kept in the original.

The word "*buck*", present in the abovementioned *"Oldbuck"* and *"Buck Hill"* but also in *"Bucklebury"* is explained by Tolkien as "*'buck' (animal): either Old English "*bucc*" 'male deer' (fallow or roe), or "*bucca*" 'he-goat'*" (Lobdell 2003:26). For want of a proper Polish equivalent and due to the fact that it appears throughout the text in several different configurations, i.e. as a suffix in *"Oldbuck"*, as a prefix in *"Bucklebury"* and as an attribute in *"Buck Hill"*, the word was left untranslated. There is also one major reason – consistency. Since *"buck"* appears with another word *"bury"* in *"Bucklebury"*, it had to be left in the original version or else *"bury"* would have had to be translated as well, which could be extremely difficult, if possible at all. *"Bury",* as Tolkien instructs, is a derivative of "*Old English "*burg*", a place occupying a defensive position, walled or enclosed; a town*", but it is also (not unlike *"–shire"*) a common suffix found in British place-names (cf Canterbury, Waterbury or Bloomsbury), a phenomenon foreign to the Polish onomastics. Retaining the term seemed the only sensible choice.

On the other hand, the name of the Hobbit village – Hobbiton – with the notable suffix *"–ton"*, representing corrupted "*town*" would not have been

difficult to translate. True, *"-ton"* is equally common in British place-names as *"–bury"* or *"–shire"* but it has a quality to it that make it translatable into Polish on a certain level. The name of a hamlet, village, town or city ending in *"–ton"* is usually associated with the name of its original founder or of the person whom the founders wished to honor and in many cases it retains the possessive form " 's " (cf Charleston, Palmerston, Eggleston). This is much closer to the Polish tradition where there exists a multitude of towns and cities named after their founders, which have typical endings - *"-ów","-owa"* or *"–owo"* depending on the gender. The author of this thesis believes it would sound reasonable to therefore translate the name Hobbiton as Hobbitów or Hobbitowo, seeing as names of some other villages in the area have been translated.

The name for the refuge of the Rohirrim called *"Dunharrow"* Tolkien describes as a joint formation of two lexemes, namely that of *"dun"* as in dark or gloomy (akin to *"Dunland"*) and *"harrow"*, which Tolkien emphasizes "*has no connection with* harrow *the implement*" (Lobdell 2003:35) as it is used in current English, and which is derived from the Old Norse term *"hörgr"* meaning a fane or a temple. Both *"Dunharrow"* and its derivative *"Harrowdale"* were retained; however, a hamlet situated below *"Dunharrow"* and suitably called *"Underharrow"* was by Maria Skibniewska translated as *"Podskale"*. Maria and Cezary Frąc simply omitted the name in their text, as it only occurred once, which was certainly convenient, but hardly appropriate. "*Podskale*" may possibly be a good name in terms of describing the geographic location of the designated place, referring to the mountainous terrain that surrounded it, but was by no means faithful to Tolkien's intentions and was a sign of grave inconsistency. Nonetheless, the author of this thesis does not find it appropriate to translate any of those names, since no affix can be found in Polish place-names meaning a temple that could replace *"harrow"* and *"dun"* was left untranslated elsewhere in the text anyway, as in *"Dunland"* or its derivative, *"Dunlendings"*.

The name of Elrond's house and the dwelling of the Grey Elven – Rivendell – is not so easy to translate as it might seem. Tolkien writes about it in these words:

> Rivendell [means] 'Cloven-dell'; Common Speech translation of Imladris(t) 'deep dale of the cleft'. Translate by sense, or retain, as seems best. The Dutch version retains the name as Rivendel; the Swedish version has Vattnadal, which is incorrect and suggests that the translator thought that Riven- was related to river. (Lobdell 2003:39)

Apparently it is not only to the Polish ear that the association with river seems the most obvious choice. However, once the proper meaning of the name is understood, it is still not easy to render it in Polish without sounding too technical or simply dull. Possible solutions such as *Rozcięta Dolina* simply would not do justice to the poetic quality and striking brevity that Rivendell seems to possess. Therefore retaining it was probably the wisest choice.

Aside from place-names and names of persons or peoples, LOTR includes several very interesting terms describing hobbit-specific phenomena. One of such terms is the Old Toby, a variety of finest tobacco "*named after Tobold Hornblower*" (Lobdell 2003:42), smoked by Hobbits at length and with relish. Tolkien suggests that the translator should employ "*whatever equivalent of Toby is used for the personal name*" and the translators chose to render this as "*Stary Toby*". Obviously Tobold is a name foreign to the Polish literary tradition (and may have been invented by Tolkien anyway) but the name Tobiasz is not. Thus it would not be amiss to invent and use a more "native" diminutive in the Polish version, such as Tobek or Tobuś.

Another hobbit-specific term is "*mathom*", defined as "*anything that Hobbits had no immediate use for, but were unwilling to throw away*" (Tolkien 2001:35). Connected with "*mathoms*" were "*mathom-houses*", where hobbits kept their mathoms. Tolkien instructed translators to leave this word unchanged as it "*is not Common Speech*" and "*represents Old English* máðm *'precious thing, treasure'*" (Lobdell 2003:42). It might have been reasonable to adapt the spelling to the Polish pronunciation as was often done with other names but it is not simple in this case, what with the specifically English phoneme "th". Dropping the "h" to obtain "*matom*" could be an option, but since Tolkien did not make any comments on possible spelling adjustments, leaving mathoms unchanged is also acceptable. Incidentally, even as mathom was retained out of necessity, no

translator thought of any suitable and relevant term to render the "*Mathom-house*", a building located in Michel Delving, Shire's main hub, where all mathoms were stored. Maria Skibniewska's "*Dom Mathom*" sounds particularly awkward and "*Dom Mathomów*" that Maria and Cezary Frąc came up with is not much better. One needs to remember that English compound place-names including the element "*house*", as in "*burger house*" or "*pancake house*" need not necessarily have Polish equivalents that are compound as well. On the contrary, the nature of the Polish language dictates that a main element of the compound should be used and an appropriate suffix added. Thus we have "*naleśnikarnia*" or "*hamburgerownia*". Alternatively, such terms may have Polish equivalents that are altogether different, as in "*whorehouse*" – *"burdel"*, but these are merely exceptions. Therefore, considering the fact that the Hobbits regarded the Mathom-house as a sort of museum, and the only one Michel Delving had, which can be demonstrated by the following words:

> So, though there was still some store of weapons in the Shire, these were used mostly as trophies, hanging above hearths or on walls, or gathered into the museum at Michel Delving. The Mathom-house it was called; (Tolkien 2001:35)

it would be only fair to invent a name for that museum, such as "*matomeum*" to be associated with "*muzeum*" or "*mauzoleum*" or ultimately "*matomisko*" to remind of "*śmietnisko*". Either one of those would not only have been shorter, but would also have sounded funnier and more inventive, emphasizing the jocular nature of the whole idea.

It might also be reasonable to look at the word "*smials*", which is a "*word peculiar to hobbits (not Common Speech), meaning* 'burrow'" (Lobdell 2003:44). Tolkien explains that:

> It is a form that the Old English word smygel 'burrow' might have had, if it had survived. The same element appears in Gollum's real name, Sméagol. (Lobdell 2003:44)

Smials can also be found in the company of attributes, as in Great Smials or Better Smials. Tolkien recommends that Smials be left unchanged and the Polish translators comply retaining the word, its spelling slightly modified to "*smajale*", which better reflects the original English pronunciation of the word.

3 Dialectal, distorted and colloquial speech

One of the most significant problems for translators are phrases that are taken from or modeled on actual dialectal speech used throughout the countryside. The ability to rely on parallel texts and comparable material in the target language is invaluable in such contexts. LOTR abounds in excerpts from colloquial, dialectal and otherwise highly informal speech, of which but a few will be quoted and analyzed here.

During his conversation with the Hobbits, Mr. Maggot the farmer uses the following words: "*Ms. Maggot will be worritin"*", which is a bastardization of the standard "*worrying*". None of the translators, however, found it justifiable, reasonable or necessary to convey this colorful aspect of Mr. Maggot's speech in their translation. In Maria Skibniewska's version we have a plain "*Żona się niepokoi*", whereas Maria and Cezary Frąc made Maggot utter a sequence of a sophisticated and polished gentleman: "*Pani Maggot z pewnością bardzo się o mnie niepokoi*", which is even more out of place considering the original text. In the sentence it does not necessarily need to be the actual verb that is translated, so a translation like: "*Żońcia się będzie o mnie zamartwiać*" or (slightly more brusque) "*Stara się o mnie będzie zamartwiać*" would not have been unwelcome.

Later on into the chapter Mr. Maggot says: "*It's been a queer day and no mistake"*. The old-fashioned – the adjective *"queer"* - and the colloquial – the phrase *"and no mistake"* - elements in this utterance did not seem to cause the translators much trouble; however, their strategies varied. Maria Skibniewska wrote: "*Nie ma co, dzień był niepowszedni*" while Maria and Cezary Frąc ventured: „*Był to niezwykły dzień, bez dwóch zdań*." As far as the *„no mistake*" element is concerned, both versions are arguably on a par, although *"nie ma co"* sounds slightly more like an everyday, causal and highly informal statement than "*bez dwóch zdań*". Still, the difference is not significant. With the other element, however, Maria and Cezary Frąc failed miserably. "*Był to niezwykły dzień*" is a perfectly standard and neutral sentence, which one might go even as far as to call formal. Spoken by a simple farmer such as Mr. Maggot it seems artificial and

forced. On the other hand, "*Dzień był niepowszedni*" with emphasis on "*niepowszedni*" is a masterpiece. The sentence is brief, powerful and highly informal and the choice of words is natural and felicitous.

Ted Sandyman's bitter sneer: "*Leastways ole Bilbo was cracked, and Frodo's cracking!*" was translated by Maria Skibniewska as "*W każdym razie stary Bilbo miał bzika, a Frodo zaczyna bzikować*" and by the other two translators as "*Bilbo był niespełna rozumu, a i Frodowi go stale ubywa*". The difficulty of translating this sentence consisted in conveying the dialectal character of the term "*leastways*", the archaic form "*ole*" and the colloquial verb "*cracking*", being a back-formation of the British informal term "*crackers*", as in "*to go crackers*", an equivalent of the more general "to go nuts", "to go bananas" or simply to go crazy. Sadly, only the last aspect of the sentence was rendered and only Maria Skibniewska's translation of this aspect was satisfactory, since "*niespełna rozumu*" cannot be readily accepted as a slang term. Still, the sentence is much too standard and polished to come out of the mouth of a plain, simple hobbit like Ted Sandyman, the miller's son. Adding a few colorful elements certainly would not have hurt.

Throughout Mr. Maggot's lines, it is difficult not to observe a certain regularity, being rather a product of careless and informal speech than manifestation of any dialect or idiolect. Sentences like: "*I caught'em trespassin'*", "*and nearly set my dogs on'em*" or "*Lor bless me*" are just a few examples of this tendency. This cannot obviously go without translation; however, these lines cannot be translated literally, since the Polish literary tradition does not readily provide examples of similar spelling distortions indicating the register used by the speaker. Careful choice of vocabulary, word order or grammar may be helpful in this case. Maria Skibniewska translated

Sam, out of all characters in the book, is an unending source of colloquial and dialectal phrases. Therefore, a good translator must take great care when translating Sam's lines, keeping in mind that consistency and creativity is the key to the adequate rendering of his speech. For instance, at the end of chapter 2 in vol. I "*Shadow of the Past*", Sam is caught eavesdropping by the enraged Gandalf

and Frodo. Terrified he might be punished for his doings, he pleads to Frodo: "*Don't let him turn me into anything unnatural! My old dad would take on so!*", which is Maria Skibniewska's version is translated as: "*Niech pan nie pozwoli, żeby on mnie przemienił w jakiego cudaka! Mój stary tatuś nie przeżyłby tego!*". This is nearly perfect – although the amusing aspect of Sam's first sentence in the original text in the word "*unnatural*" is slightly exaggerated in "*jakiego cudaka*" and the meaning of the phrase "*take on so*" is not immediately obvious from the context, on the whole it is a perfectly vivid and colorful example of simple, colloquial speech. The only thing worth changing here, for the sake of brevity and flavor, would be to replace "*stary tatuś*" with "*tatko*" but this is just a detail. On the other hand, the version proposed by Maria and Cezary Frąc – "*Niech pan nie pozwoli, by przemienił mnie w jaką szkaradę! Mój stary ojciec bardzo by się zmartwił!*" – is far from perfect. The first sentence is actually fairly well-written and comparable to the first version in terms of accuracy, though not half as funny. The second, however, is neither witty, nor colloquial. It is, in fact, dull, conservative and quite incorrect (translating "*dad*" as "*ojciec*").

In contemplating their possible choices upon leaving the Shire, Sam and Frodo have a conversation where Sam, asked by Frodo about his plans says: "*I seem to see ahead, in a kind of way (...) I don't rightly know what I want*". The focal points of this line are expressions "*see ahead*" and the adverb "*rightly*", which nowadays is no longer used in everyday speech in this sense (really, quite), but is rather synonymous with correctly or justly. Maria Skibniewska has it: "*Jak gdybym widział drogę przed sobą. (...) sam nie wiem dokładnie, czego pragnę."*, whilst Maria and Cezary Frąc wrote: „*Jakbym sięgał wzrokiem w przyszłość. Właściwie nie wiem, na czym mi zależy.*" Again, neither of the translations is perfect, however, Maria Skibniewska attempted to convey the simple sound of Sam's unrefined speech and both sentences seem fairly natural, except that *"pragnę"* at the end might have been replaced with a mere *"chcę"*. On the other hand, Maria and Cezary Frąc's version appears to be excessively polished and suave – the first sentence is built almost as a Gondor-born nobleman would speak it. Truly, calling this unsatisfactory would be a gross understatement. The ill-

conceived eagerness to touch up utterances that seem brusque, unseemly or just too "simple" throughout the book is unfortunately very obvious and widespread in the newer translation.

In yet another scene Sam, recounting his conversation with Ham Gamgee, quotes his father describing one of the *Nazgûl:"...tall, black-like, he stooped aver me...*", which Maria Skibniewska renders as: "*Wysoki, czarny, z góry na mnie patrzał"* and Maria and Cezary Frąc as "*Wysoki, czarny, patrzył na mnie z góry.*" The unusual elements of the English original include the colloquial term "*black-like*" and the preposition "*aver*", being a graphic representation of the dialectally distorted pronunciation of *over*. As has already been pointed out in this thesis, dialectal or non-standard speech cannot and need not necessarily be mirrored in the target language to the point of fastidiousness. It is neither possible nor desirable to do that. Indeed, a good translation may be provided on the level of entire sentences or paragraphs, which are constructed so as to convey the "*general feel*" of the source text, without going into too much detail over imitating its precise grammatical structure. In this context, Maria Skibniewska's version is again much closer to the original, with her natural, spoken syntax and the non-standard verb form "*patrzał*". A perfect equivalent of "*black-like*" which would have benefited the translation could have been "*czarniawy*", and an ideal rendering of this sentence might have gone along these lines: "*Duży, czarniawy, z góry na mnie patrzał/z góry się na mnie gapił*". Thus, without being overly comical, the sentence might have been colorful, vivid and natural. The version presented by Maria and Cezary Frąc is again very refined, cultured and polished but lacks a genuine spoken character and spirit, thus being highly inadequate in this situation.

Samwise Gamgee has also a word he likes to use often in the book – it is "*ninnyhammer*". However, he uses it in differing contexts. When passing with Frodo through the ridges of Emyn Muil, he finds in his backpack a badly needed rope he had forgotten about. He then recalls his grandfather saying in reproach: "*You're nowt but a ninnyhammer, Sam Gamgee!*" This sentence presents two problems, one of which is certainly the term "*ninnyhammer*" itself and the other –

the word "*nowt*" being a dialectal form of "*nothing*". Maria Skibniewska translated this as "*Głąb z ciebie, Samie Gamgee!*", which is a good effort, although one that fails to take account of the word "*nowt*". The word might have been somehow preserved in the translation, if not literally, then perhaps in the form of another dialectal variation, like "*Głąbem żeś jest, Samie Gamgee*". This, however, might not have sounded so smooth and realistic as it does now. "*Ostatnia z ciebie fujara, Samie Gamgee*" is a version proposed by Mr. and Ms. Frąc. This also sounds very real and funny, although somewhat too modern and not dialectal enough. Naturally, this version does not do justice to "*nowt*" either.

"*Ninnyhammer*", however, as has already been said, has also a second, slightly different meaning, being used as a mild expletive. Thus Sam says, after a perilous climb down a mountain ridge on an Elvish rope: "`*Ninnyhammers! (...) Noodles!*" meaning he had no idea how to recover the rope after the descent from the rock up above it had been fixed to. Maria Skibniewska has this rendered as "*Och, półgłówek ze mnie! Gamoń!*", and Maria and Cezary Frąc as "*Ale z nas cymbały! (...) "Ale z nas osły!*" As to the choice of words, it seems appropriate enough - the swearing is mild, yet very expressive, exactly as intended. Still, the translators might have shown a little more consistency, since neither translation has the term "*ninnyhammer*" translated the same way as several paragraphs before, where it is used for the first time. Apart from that, both versions seem fine, with a small exception. The second translation is apparently based on a presumption that the "s" in the words "*ninnyhammers*" and "*noodles*" is to denote plural and is thus meant to refer to both Hobbits. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Firstly, Sam was too considerate and too respectful a servant to address, even indirectly, his master in this way. Secondly, the ending "s" is not for plural but rather a common way to form expletives, not unlike for instance "*Good Heavens!*" or "*Yikes*!" This is, however, a minor flaw and thus the difference in quality between the two translations is not very striking in this context.

Hobbits, however, are more than just Sam; Hobbit speech on the whole is full of colorful and non-standard expressions, of which a fine example is: "*'There's a tidy bit of money tucked away up there, I hear tell. (...) All the top of your hill is*

full of tunnels packed with chests of gold and silver, and jools, by what I've heard." This has been uttered by a traveler passing by the Hobbiton in a conversation with the Gaffer and other hobbits. The interesting elements in this piece of discourse include the expressions "*tidy bit*" and "*I hear tell*" and naturally the term "*jools*", which is a distorted version of "*jewels*", spelled roughly the way it is usually pronounced. Let's take a look how the two Polish translations cope with that issue.

> "Jak mówią, w Bag End zakopany jest ładny grosz. (...) Wedle tego, co słyszałem, cały wierzchołek Pagórka jest wydrążony w środku i korytarze są tam zapchane skrzyniami pełnymi srebra, złota i klejnotów."

is what Maria Skibniewska came up with. Mr. and Ms. Frąc, on the other hand, offered a different version of those lines:

> „Słyszałem, że cały wierzchołek wzgórza podziurawiony jest tunelami pełnymi skrzyń ze złotem, srebrem i innymi bogactwami."

Translating "*a tidy bit of money*" as "*ładny grosz*" seems adequate enough, although "*ładny kawałek grosza*" might have been equally correct and perhaps more inspired. Rendering "*I hear tell*" as "*jak mówią*" is also a decent effort though "*jak powiadają*" might just have been a better choice in the context. In the translation by Maria and Cezary Frąc, on the other hand, the entire sentence has been left out, for reasons entirely unexplained, which seems hardly appropriate. The distortion "*jools*" as such is untranslatable and Maria Skibniewska must have been aware of that translating it into the standard Polish "*klejnoty*". Replacing this with a diminutive "*klejnociki*" to underline the distinct character of the word in context might be a good idea, however this is merely a suggestion and the lack of such a translation is not a serious deficiency. However, the word is simply omitted in the second translation and replaced with a more common and colorless "*bogactwami*", which is unpardonable.

The Hobbit-speech had another very peculiar quality about it. Hobbits used a distorted form of the verb "*drown*", spelling, and possibly pronouncing it as "*drownd*", with the preterit and participial forms being "*drownded*". Unfortunately, neither translation does justice to this curious linguistic occurrence, which is always rendered simply in a standard way as "*utonąć*". Most likely any reasonable attempt at finding a decent Polish equivalent would have failed anyway, so this choice was probably a smart one.

Hobbits, being slightly different in many aspects of language, naturally had their own names to call people they did not take kindly to. One of such names is used by Bill Ferny, who contemptuously speaks of Aragorn, back then still known as just a ranger, in the following words: "*That's Stick-at-naught Strider, that is!*" This is obviously meant to be rude and disrespectful, but is also a reference to Aragorn's nomadic way of life. Maria Skibniewska translates this as "*To Wiercipięta Obieżyświat we własnej osobie!*" and Maria and Cezary Frąc as „*To nie kto inny jak powsinoga Obieżyświat!*". Considering the sentence that follows: "*Though I've heard other names not so pretty*", one might be inclined that the name used by Ferny is of a mild sort. However, "*wiercipięta*" used by Maria Skibniewska just seems too mild, childish and jocular even. Therefore it is probably "*powsinoga*" that is the wiser choice, although it does sound unusually rude.

A linguistic feature certainly worth our attention is the use of the phrase "*small wonder*" instead of "*no wonder*" in phrases: "*small wonder there's bad news from the battles*", "*Small wonder that trouble came of it*", "*Small wonder it is that you have not heard them, Boromir*". This is not restricted to Hobbits and uttered on many occasions by representatives of other races and cultures, such as the Elves or the Orcs. It is not a dialectal variation, but rather an old and obsolete form of the expression. This is how these sentences were translated by Maria Skibniewska respectively: "*Nic dziwnego, że z pola bitwy nadchodzą złe nowiny*", "*Nie dziw, że z tego wynikło nieszczęście*", „*Nie dziw przeto, żeś jej nigdy nie słyszał, Boromirze*." The lack of consistency is not a reason to reproach the translator, since every uttering had to be translated in the exact context it had

been placed in by Tolkien, and thus naturally an orc's speech had to be less dignified than an elf's. However, the second sentence, spoken by a Hobbit, whose speech is normally intertwined with colloquialisms and dialectal elements could have been altered to "*nie dziwota*", which would have made more sense considering the speaker. Maria and Cezary Frąc had it slightly different: „*Nic dziwnego, że z pola bitwy przychodzą same złe wieści*", „*Nic dziwnego, że doszło do nieszczęścia*" and „*Nic więc dziwnego, Boromirze, że nie słyszałeś dotąd tej części historii*". Despite their consistency in translating the expression plainly as the standard „*nic dziwnego*", their choices do not seem appropriate. The unusual flavor of "*small wonder*" has been lost and the last sentence seems excessively polished, diffuse and verbose, which may be unfortunately be said of many excerpts from the newer translation.

"*There were several meals at which it snowed food and rained drink, as hobbits say*" is a very curious phrase. Maria Skibniewska translates this as "*a podczas wszystkich tych posiłków - wedle hobbickiego wyrażenia - jadło sypało się jak lawina, a trunki lały jak deszcz*" and Maria and Cezary Frąc as "*nie poskąpiono jadła, a trunki lały się strumieniami*". The latter translation is an obvious attempt at concealing the presumably idiomatic character of the Hobbit expression and approximating it to the target language inasmuch as possible. Consequently, the reference to the expression being Hobbit-specific is gone in the translation. So is the originality of the metaphors, of which only one is left, but in a flat and tame form. Thus the sentence sounds perfectly natural in Polish and reads well, but that unfortunately is not the point. The phrase is meant to stand out and amuse the reader by its peculiarity. A much better endeavor has been undertaken by Maria Skibniewska, who retained the metaphoric elements in both parts of the phrase and rendered them with equivalent Polish metaphors, which are not only colorful but also original, as intended by the author.

Hobbits, aside from other peculiar linguistic habits, had several very curious numerals, relating to their lifespan, which was somewhat longer than that of people as we know them today. The narrator mentions at one time that "*Frodo was still in his _tweens,_ as the hobbits called the irresponsible twenties between*

childhood and coming of age at thirty-three" and, later on, describes the somewhat older Frodo saying that he "*retained the appearance of a robust and energetic hobbit just out of his tweens*". This of course is due to the fact that Hobbits reached maturity later in their lives than we do. This is very interesting material for translation. Maria Skibniewska rendered the first sentence as "*Frodo podówczas był jeszcze smarkaczem, jak hobbici nazywali nieodpowiedzialnych dwudziestolatków, którzy wprawdzie wyrośli z dzieciństwa, lecz nie osiągnęli pełnoletniości, czyli trzydziestu trzech lat.*" and the second one as „*wyglądał bowiem wciąż na krzepkiego i energicznego hobbita, który ledwie wyrósł z lat chłopięcych*" whereas Maria and Cezary Frąc had this as „*W owym czasie Frodo był jeszcze podrostkiem, jak hobbici nazywali niefrasobliwych dwudziestolatków, którzy co prawda dawno wyrośli z pieluch, ale sporo im brakowało do pełnoletniości osiąganej w trzydziestym trzecim roku życia*" and the second one as „*stale był krzepkim, pełnym energii hobbitem, jakby dopiero co wyrósł z lat dziecięcych*". It is natural that this pun is not easily translatable so both versions present an attempt at a workaround, rephrasing the sentences in Polish and shunning the difficult expression, which is particularly justified considering the English idiomatic expression "*being in one's teens*", which does not have a direct equivalent in Polish. Therefore both versions are correct, albeit, again, the first sentence is unnecessarily wordy and diluted in the second translation (comparing both with the original and with Maria Skibniewska's work).

Similarly, the numeral eleventy-one, used several times throughout the text, is more than likely to cause serious problems to any translator willing to tackle it. Unfortunately, there have been no attempts at translation. Neither of the versions makes even a slightest effort to emphasize the dialectal character of the expression, replacing it with a bland "*sto jedenaście*" instead. This would no doubt have been very difficult to translate accurately and effectively, which is probably why nothing was done in this respect.

4. Jokes and puns

One of the most notable things about Tolkien's prose is that it is consistent to a fault in its depiction of the local reality, which informs everything in the book, especially the language. Thus characters in the story may happen to use various expressions as we know them in everyday English, although in a slightly changed, "localized" form. One of the examples of such tendency is certainly the expression "*What in the Shire can he want?*" uttered by Pippin upon his encounter with one of the Black Riders sent to the Shire in pursuit of Frodo. This is an obvious alteration of the common expletive "*What on/in...*" phrase usually followed by "*Earth*" in standard speech, as in "*What on Earth are you doing here?*" Since there is no such expression in Polish, it may be difficult to translate it properly. However, proper translation is not the only problem here – in order to overcome an obstacle, it is absolutely necessary to recognize and identify it, which is not always the case. Maria Skibniewska translated this as "*Czego u licha chce ode mnie?*", which is fine, although it naturally fails to retain the localized element of "*Shire*". However, the version presented by Maria and Cezary Frąc – "*Czego on szuka w Shire?*" is utterly unacceptable, not only being inadequate, but entirely missing the point of the phrase and distorting the meaning. On the whole, misinterpretation such as this is not uncommon in literary translation and although is to be generally avoided, it is not a serious error, since it does not affect any main elements of the plot. However, whenever accuracy suffers, the overall image of the translation suffers as well, and thus it is absolutely necessary to consider each sentence very carefully and to exercise extreme caution with regard to verbatim translation. Translators were faced with a very similar problem at the end of the book, where Gimli asks his companions: "*Where in Middle-earth are we?*", meaning "*Where on Earth are we?*" or plainly "*Where the hell are we?*" Unfortunately all translators failed miserably at this test - Maria Skibniewska's version reads: "*W jakim miejscu Śródziemia jesteśmy teraz?*" whereas Maria and Cezary Frąc offer the following translation "*W jakim miejscu Śródziemia jesteśmy?*" Both are fairly similar and can thus be commented on

collectively. Obviously, the right answer would have been "*Gdzie u licha jesteśmy?*" or a similar phrase with a mild expletive. It is no wonder that Maria and Cezary Frąc mistranslated this one, having already shown their incapacity to cope with this trap, but explaining why Maria Skibniewska misunderstood the meaning of the sentence is slightly more difficult. A plausible answer would be that the second sentence is much more ambiguous than the first one and may potentially be taken to convey the meaning presented in the translations, whereas this would hardly be the case with the first one, which seems perfectly clear (still, evidently not to everyone).

Letters are a very curious element in the book, especially the finishing or the greeting lines. One of the letters in the novel is left by Gandalf for Frodo and ends with the following words: "*Yours in haste*". This is an almost standard greeting line, except it is customized to fit the occasion – the author is obviously in a hurry. Maria Skibniewska translates this as „*Twój oddany, choć w wielkim pośpiechu*", which is perfectly adequate and exhaustive, if unnecessarily wordy and verbose. Possibly "*Z pospiesznym pozdrowieniem*" or "*Pozdrawiam w pośpiechu*" might just be closer to the Polish idiom and brief enough to be elegant. On the other hand, Maria and Cezary Frąc make absolutely no note of the expression, finishing the letter with a plain and dull "*Twój Gandalf*", which is negligent and utterly unpardonable. There is a very similar situation where Gandalf says goodbye to Frodo while leaving Bad End, telling him: "*Look out for me, especially at unlikely times*". This is a very wizard-like, mysterious expression, not unlike many others Gandalf would indulge in throughout the story and it demands a proper translation, which Maria Skibniewska reliably delivered. Her "*Spodziewaj się mnie szczególnie w najbardziej niespodziewanych momentach*" is brilliant, capturing the spirit of the original phrase and doing it very sublimely too – the repetition of the words "*spodziewaj*" and "*niespodziewany*" perfectly reflects the paradoxical structure of the sentence. Verbosity of her version, surprisingly enough, is not a problem here, since the outcome reads very well and is quite natural. Again, Maria and Cezary Frąc with their translation "*I czekaj na mnie*" do not really deserve praise. Their version

misses the point of the phrase, is overly brief, abrupt and frankly sounds almost rude. This is definitely not know this should be done.

There is a very curious metaphor used by Quickbeam the Ent, in his conversation with Merry and Pippin. The ent tries to explain why his companions regard him as "*hasty*", saying "*I drink quickly, and go out while some are still wetting their beards*." The bearded metaphor is nicely and colorfully translated by Maria Skibniewska as "*zanim zdążą kubki przechylić*" and by Maria and Cezary Frąc simply as "*gdy wciąż moczą brody*". It would be pointless to argue which one is better here, although the word-for-word translation might be a little harder to understand and picture for the average reader. Still, one should not expect that this type of metaphor is common in everyday English either, so it will require a little imagination at any rate. Therefore this is arguably a tie.

Puns, bon mots, colloquial expressions and proverbial speech certainly are not what Tolkien's prose lacks. In his goodbye speech given on the occasion of his anniversary Bilbo proclaims to the amazed hobbits: "*I like less than half of you half as well as you deserve.*" This play on words is relatively simple to translate literally and the only problem is how to do it in a concise and yet consistent manner, since although Bilbo's line is in fact obscure, it is only so because of the fact that it is spoken. Once in writing, a keen reader should have no difficulty discerning its actual meaning. Maria Skibniewska wrote: „*Mniej niż połowę z was lubię o połowę mniej niż na to zasługujecie*", and Maria and Cezary Frąc: „*Mniej niż połowę z was lubię w połowie tak bardzo jak na to zasługujecie*". Both translations are adequate, although Maria Skibniewska was probably right in reversing the polarity of the second part of the sentence, rendering the natural English "*half as much*" as the natural Polish "*w połowie mniej*". Maria and Cezary Frąc unfortunately fell into the idiom trap, since their "*w połowie tak bardzo*", albeit word-for-word faithful and understandable, is simply unidiomatic and slightly bizarre in the Polish context.

During a conversation with Gandalf at Bag End after Bilbo's departure, Frodo, upon learning the story of the ring and of Gollum, bursts out in anger: "*What a pity that Bilbo did not stab that vile creature, when he had a chance!*" to

which Gandalf, nonplussed, responds: "*Pity? It was Pity that stayed his hand. Pity, and Mercy*". This is an example of a sophisticated pun, which in this case is central to the development of the conversation. It is also extremely difficult to translate into a foreign language, as it requires a term which would encompass both meanings of the word "*pity*" referred to in the text: that of "*shame*" and that of "*mercy*". Maria Skibniewska translated this as "*Szkoda? Przecież to litość wstrzymała wówczas jego rękę.*", which in this context makes no sense whatsoever, since the word Gandalf refers to in his rhetorical question is not repeated in the next sentence, with the concept of *shame* being entirely left out. On the whole, this must sadly be considered a failure. Maria and Cezary Frąc did not do much better, with their "*Szkoda? To właśnie litość i miłosierdzie powstrzymały jego rękę!*" Apart from being a little more precise in the second part, the sentence does not succeed in solving the translation dilemma we are presented with. Surprisingly enough, the dilemma is not so difficult to overcome. The obvious candidate for the functional Polish equivalent of '*pity*' is "*żal*" in all its forms. Frodo might have exclaimed: "*Żal mi, że Bilbo nie zgładził tej podłej istoty*", to which Gandalf might have replied: "*Żal? Przecież to właśnie żal i litość go przed tym powstrzymały*." This does not sound as natural in Polish as in the source language, but is plausible and comprehensible enough.

When describing the gifts Bilbo offered his guests on the occasion of his eleventy-first anniversary, Tolkien mentions that Lobelia was given a set of silver spoons, with a sarcastic message on the box, since Bilbo had been suspecting she had stolen some of his spoons during his previous travels. The author recollects that Lobelia "*took the point at once but also took the spoons"*, which is a humorous and colorful pun, based on the verb "*to take*". Maria Skibniewska decided to render this sentence as "*zrozumiała przytyk błyskawicznie, ale równie błyskawicznie zabrała łyżki*", which is adequate enough, but no so precise and accurate as the English original. Skibniewska's translation and the humor contained therein are based on the repetition of the word "*błyskawicznie*", which in some contexts, especially when we compare it with the original text, may seem awkward. Maria and Cezary Frąc dealt much better with the problem translating

the text as: "*z miejsca wzięła przytyk do serca, co zresztą nie przeszkodziło jej wziąć także łyżek*". Their version not only uses a verb, as intended by the author, to convey the joke, but it is also the same verb as in the original sentence. The only problem with this sentence is that as usual with Maria and Cezary Frąc it is a little wordy compared with the other translation and with the original text, but in this case it is negligible.

One of the most famous puns (which even found its way into the recent movie adaptation of the novel) of LOTR is certainly the one with Sam cutting grass and listening in intently on the conversation between Gandalf and Frodo. When the old wizard catches him red-handed, Samwise tries to explain himself. Asked how long he has been eavesdropping, he either plays the fool or is so shocked and frightened he misunderstands Gandalf and replies: "*'Eavesdropping, sir? I don't follow you, begging your pardon. There ain't no eaves at Bag End, and that's a fact.'*". The answer to that translation riddle is not a simple one and is a test of one's translating abilities. Maria Skibniewska decided to have the old wizard ask the protagonist: "*Od jak dawna strzygłeś uszami?*" to which Sam replies: „*Nie uszami, tylko trawę strzygłem, za przeproszeniem pańskim.*" This is an elegant and consistent solution, enough to be both funny and witty. The only problem is that the ambiguity as to Sam's condition – whether he actually is baffled or only pretends to be so – is gone. However, it would not have been easy to retain it anyway. Maria and Cezary Frąc delivered a merely adequate solution, which unfortunately is inconsistent with the original text and seems far-fetched. Samwise in their version is asked: "*Od jak dawna strzygłeś uszami?*" to which he responds: "*Uszami, panie? Przepraszam bardzo, ale nie pojmuję. Strzygłem nożycami.*". To add insult to injury, the narrator then adds "*Na dowód Sam pokazał trzymane w ręku narzędzie*". This clearly is a manipulation of original the text, since no such sentence is mentioned by Tolkien and there are no hints of Sam waving his scissors in front of Gandalf as proof either. This twist introduced by the Polish translators cannot be justified by their attempt to preserve the pun, which, as Ms. Skibniewska has shown, could have been structured in a much more elegant and plausible way.

Tolkien does not shun other word-plays either, sometimes toying with words on a purely linguistic level. In his speech Bilbo addresses many eminent hobbit families in the audience, naming them one after another. When he comes to the name "*Proudfoot*", he uses the plural "*Proudfoots*", which is instantaneously met with a protest from an annoyed representative of the Proudfoot family, who shouts "*ProudFEET!*" This unfortunately is virtually untranslatable, since the situation is only comic on the level of the English grammar and caused by a dilemma whether to regard the "*foot*" particle of the proper name as a meaningful element and thus decline it according to the usual rules applicable to that word. Maria Skibniewska entirely disregards the issue, taking the word "*Proudfoots*" out of Bilbo's lines and leaving the response - "*Proudfeet*" - translated simply as "*Proudfootowie*", making it seem as if Bilbo simply forgot to mention them at all, which is false. Maria and Cezary Frąc, on the other hand, offered a verbatim translation using the respective English stems and the same Polish suffixes "*Proudfootowie – Proudfeetowie*", which does not make any sense either, since it confuses the Polish reader as to why the elderly hobbit would want to correct Bilbo, when only a few paragraphs later the translators cite it exactly in the same way as Bilbo pronounces it in the first place. There is, however a way around this problem that would require a functional adaptation rather than a translation of the text. A simple pair of words: "*Proudfootowie*" – "*Proudfuci*" might just solve the problem, taking advantage of the similarly confusing Polish plural inflection issue. Alas, none of the translators came up with that idea.

5. Proverbs and novel phrases

"*Do not meddle in the affairs of Wizards, for they are subtle and quick to anger.*" is one of the first proverbs in the book. It is quoted by the Elvish lord, Gildor Inglorion, who having come across a party of four hobbits in the woods invites them to dine with the Elves. Maria Skibniewska translated this as "*Nie wtrącaj się do spraw czarodziejów, bo są chytrzy i skorzy do gniewu*", while Maria and Cezary Frąc as „*Nie mieszaj się w sprawy czarodziejów, są bowiem chytrzy i skorzy do wpadania w złość*". These are both fine translations, and each has its advantages and disadvantages. The first version is accurate and clear enough, however it lacks the stylized "*bowiem*" element found in the latter translation, which fits in well with proverbial speech, as proverbs are usually expected to have a "dated" feeling to them. The latter version itself, however, is not perfect either, since as is most often the case with Maria and Cezary Frąc, it is lengthy and unnecessary wordy; exactly the same concept could have been conveyed in much fewer words, as Maria Skibniewska has shown. The perfect version would have had to combine the best of both worlds, being an amalgam of the two translations.

No sooner had Gildor uttered his words than they were met with a quick riposte from Frodo: "*Go not to the Elves for counsel, for they will say both no and yes*", reproaching the Elvish kind on their indecisiveness. This is beautifully rendered by Maria Skibniewska, who writes: "*Nie pytaj o radę elfów, bo odpowiedzą ni to, ni sio*". The simple, country-like nature of the saying and its folk character has been very well reflected by the Polish "*ni to, ni sio*". Not so accurate, however, is the second translation, which reads: "*Nie chodź do Elfów po radę, usłyszysz odpowiedź wymijającą*". The first part may possibly be considered even better, with the elegant colloquialism "*nie chodź (...) po radę*". Still, the second part of the sentence is in stark contrast to the first one, once again being verbose and lengthy.

One of the most difficult proverbs to translate was undoubtedly "*But handsome is as handsome does*" uttered by Pippin in response to the Strider's

anxiety that his disheveled, vagrant-like looks may induce fear and distrust among people he meets. Maria Skibniewska shunned the problem somewhat by providing us with a familiar and all-useful "*pozory mylą*", roughly equivalent to the English "*appearances are deceitful*". This, however, was not in the spirit of Tolkien's colorful prose. Certainly, it is understandable and accurate enough but is simply bland. Maria and Cezary Frąc tried to deal with the situation in their own way but alas failed miserably as well – their "*ten jest piękny, kto szlachetnie postępuje*" is not only unnecessarily verbose – it is also unclear and requires several readings before the reader grasps the intended meaning and this should not be the case with proverbs. A good attempt at achieving the perfect result could have been a translation as follows: "*Nie szata zdobi człowieka*" or a different concept along those lines, which might, nevertheless, still have required some reworking.

As far as proverbs are concerned, two of those quoted in the book are particularly interesting, as they relate to the subject of short-time and time saving, an issue particularly important with the threat of the great war looming just ahead. The first one is uttered by Pippin – "*Short cuts make long delays*" – who thus voices his distrust of seemingly easy and useful short cuts, which somewhat resembles the familiar Polish "*chytry dwa razy traci*", but with reference to time rather than material gains. Maria Skibniewska comes up with a handy „*Kto drogi prostuje, ten w polu nocuje",* which is understandable enough, managing to be concise, adage-like and to rhyme at the same time. In this context, "*Kto ścieżki prostuje, ten w domu nie nocuje.*" proposed by Maria and Cezary Frąc seems merely like a feeble attempt to copy somebody else's good idea, ruining it completely in the process. The latter translation, almost too identical with Maria Skibniewska's, is a virtual copy of the proper one in terms of sense and wording and yet it is much worse – not so compact, no so elegant, not so clear – the entire concept falls apart just by adding one word and changing another – that is how little it takes for a good plan to go awry, proving again that the devil's always in the details.

A few dozen pages later, Tolkien makes an subtle reference to the first proverb, by having Aragorn tell the four hobbits, still distrustful of any shortcuts and similar devices: "*My cuts, short or long, don't go wrong*". Maria Skibniewska, always alert and ready, easily recognizes this allusion and accordingly produces a translation that visibly refers to her previous one, just as it ought to: "*Kto ze mną drogi prostuje, w polu nie nocuje*". Even if the casual reader fails to notice the similarity, the true admirer will always appreciate the attentiveness, alertness and precision of the translator. The same cannot unfortunately be said of Maria and Cezary Frąc, whose "*Moje skróty nie wiodą na manowce*" does not only demonstrate that the translators were clearly oblivious of Tolkien's sophisticated reference but, sadly, is also uninspired, unrhymed and non-proverbial.

6. Conclusion

As the author of this thesis evidenced, the version presented by Maria Skibniewska is the one closer to the original spirit of Tolkienian prose. She is the one who followed the author's instructions to the letter. By adhering to J.R.R. Tolkien's guide, she was able to satisfy most of the lexical requirements and guidelines that the author set for the prospective translations of his work. Skibniewska's version was edited and revised in 1990, which only increases its value. The style of the translation is well-adjusted and suited to the Tolkienian original, since the legend-like atmosphere and the fantasy setting calls for a specific choice of vocabulary, careful syntax and meticulous stylistic measures to preserve the true spirit of Tolkien's universe. Maria Skibniewska did just that.

Even more so, by closely following Tolkien's guidelines and, in lack thereof, using her own inventiveness, literary sense and mastery of the Polish language she created a unique work, not being a mere translation but a masterpiece in its own right, followed and admired by generations of LOTR admirers past - and generations to come, no doubt. A number of minor slips and misunderstandings on her part all but slightly spoil the overall impression. Obviously, Maria Skibniewska was a pioneer in her field of expertise and only the third translator in the world to endeavor the tremendous effort of translating LOTR into another language; she was also the first one to cope with the task of rendering Tolkien's work into a non-Germanic language, a dilemma in itself. She had to come up with a variety of translating solutions and approaches without the assistance of previous versions, which might have been handy in helping her make some of the difficult choices she had to make. Her pioneering position might explain certain small inadequacies or deficiencies, like the misjudged use of several words, mistranslation of the first volume of the book or a number of somewhat awkward expressions, highlighted throughout this thesis. Other than that, however, her choice of words is most of the time perfectly accurate, her syntax and style are well matched to the original and her decisions are thoughtful and prudent. And, best of all, her puns and jokes are intelligent, believable and yet very much

commonplace and familiar, which makes her version very readable and more than enjoyable for the Polish reader, with no traces of unnecessary artificiality, as polished as it might be.

On the other hand, the version presented by Maria and Cezary Frąc has certain advantages as well. Since there are always several reasons for the publication of a new literary translation for an already translated work, one might be led to assume that the fiduciary factor is of course involved, but need not and often does not play the major role in the decision, as has been explained in the previous chapters. The main reason is in the majority of cases the striving for perfection on the part of an ambitious publisher and an ambitious translator alike. Thus one may assume that the purpose of the new translation of LOTR, despite there being already two previous ones well established on the Polish literary market, was to offer the reader an opportunity to enjoy the original work in its best form, which had not been so far supplied by previous translators. As we have seen, the translating duo of Maria and Cezary Frąc only partially delivered on that promise. They managed to correct a few minor errors and mistakes committed by Maria Skibniewska in her work and to smoothen several infelicitous phrases and expressions she had used. This, however, is not enough to make a good translation. The style of the book is elegant, but at times simply too formal for casual conversations or down-to-earth situations depicted in the book. The verbosity and wordiness of the prose of the Maria and Cezary Frąc would sometimes kill even the best jokes and puns the original author came up with, leaving them all either bare and unnecessarily explained for the reader or, more often yet, incomprehensible and obscure. One needs to admit, sadly, that most of the good and successful solutions proposed in the newer translation had been borrowed from Maria Skibniewska's version, which is not a flaw in itself, since according to Nida (1964:152) if an element is well translated in one rendering, there are no reasons not to preserve it in versions to come. However, this cannot be the only merit of a new literary translation, since otherwise there would have been absolutely no point in publishing it in the first place, financial reasons aside. Unfortunately, it does seem so in the case of Maria Skibniewska vs. Maria and

Cezary Frąc. The older translation defends itself perfectly well and not only endures the trial of time, but in comparison with the newer one seems more mature and even more modern – i.e. suited to the expectations of the average Tolkien reader, naturally expecting very specific qualities from a work of this magnitude. Therefore, more prudence and caution is recommended in proposing new translations of literary works, since they may prove not only an unnecessary effort in terms of translating merit, but also fail to gain widespread acceptance with the readers, as is the case here.

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