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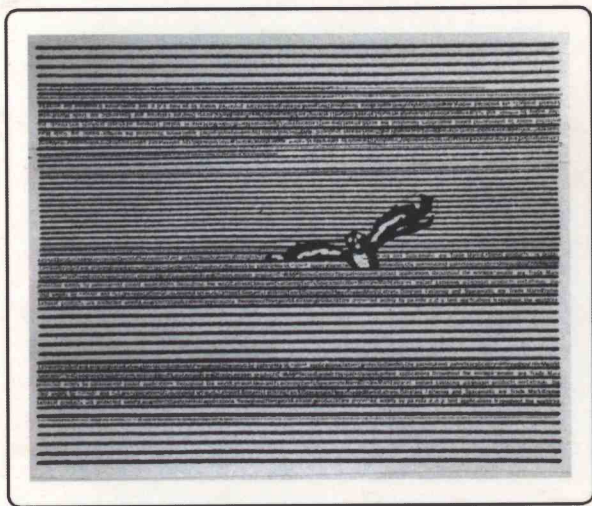
No. 2

Z przyjemnością przedstawiamy drugi numer periodyku studentów

Instytutu Anglistyki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego – FOLIO.

W przeciwieństwie do zeszłorocznego debiutu, który składał się wyłącznie

z referatów wygłoszonych na konferencji mediewistycznej, niniejszy numer

to zbiór artykułów z różnych dziedzin: językoznawstwa,

literaturoznawstwa oraz kulturoznawstwa.

FOLIO

No. 2

Spis treści / Contents

Słowo wstępne / Foreword

Drogi Czytelniku!

Z przyjemnością oddajemy w Twoje ręce drugi numer periodyku studentów Instytutu Anglistyki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego – FOLIO. W przeciwieństwie do zeszłorocznego debiutu, który składał się wyłącznie z referatów wygłoszonych na konferencji mediewistycznej, niniejszy numer to składanka artykułów z różnych dziedzin: językoznawstwa, literaturoznawstwa oraz kulturoznawstwa. W ten sposób FOLIO staje się studenckim forum do wymiany poglądów i dzielenia się pierwszymi samodzielnymi badaniami naukowymi w zakresie szeroko rozumianych English Studies. Żywiąc nadzieję, że lektura magazynu sprawi Ci niekłamaną przyjemność, zapraszam na kolejne strony!

Bartłomiej Trośniak

Aleksandra Chmielewska

Prepositions in English and Polish:
A study of the English preposition *in*
and its Polish correlates

The aim of the present paper is to offer a contrastive cognitive grammar analysis of a selected group of uses of prepositions expressing spatial relations in English and Polish. Specifically, I will concentrate on the semantic–conceptual analysis of the English preposition *in* expressing a spatial relation between physical entities, as well as compare and contrast these findings with the data concerning the Polish equivalent(s) of *in*. I will attempt to argue that, although in the majority of cases there is a close correspondence between the English *in* and its Polish translation(s), in some uses the semantic equivalence is not so evident.

The present paper will be structured as follows: first, I will sketch the theoretical framework of my analysis and present how spatial relations are understood in cognitive semantics; then, I will define and analyse *in*, and contrast this analysis with the corresponding Polish equivalent(s)[1].

In cognitive semantics, spatial relations coded linguistically by spatial prepositions, and all kinds of semantic structures in general, are considered to be a) experientially grounded and b) conceptual in nature. Given the fact that our experience is necessarily embodied – that is structured by the nature of our bodies – the range of concepts we have access to is

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[1] It is worth noting that the judgments concerning which spatial preposition most appropriately describes spatial scenes described in English are based on the author's intuitions as a native speaker of Polish.

constrained. In other words, we can only think and talk about what we can perceive and experience, and these perceptions and experiences are represented in our mind in the form of concepts (see Evans and Green 2006: 46). Conceptual structures, in turn, are thought to be reflected in the semantic structure, ie. the meanings conventionally associated with linguistic expressions. It is claimed, moreover, that language itself does not encode meaning; linguistic expressions are only prompts for the construction of meaning at the conceptual level. Meaning is, therefore, equated with conceptualisation (see Evans and Green 2006: 162).

Likewise, the meaning expressed by spatial prepositions is conceptual in nature and derives from our earliest spatio-physical, bodily experience (see Evans and Green 2006: 157). In other words, as infants we acquire an understanding of objects and how they relate to each other in physical space by manipulating them, so that these relationships become part of our conceptual system well before the corresponding words expressing them are used (see Lee 2001: 18).

In order to account for the experiential basis of spatial relations denoted by spatial prepositions, Tyler and Evans (2006: 50) introduce the notion of a "spatial scene", which is an abstract representation of a recurring experience with entities related in a particular spatio-configurational way. The spatial scene is defined by both configurational and functional elements. The configurational elements consist of a "trajector" (TR), which is the primary, most salient entity (ie. the element located), a "landmark" (LM), which is considered a secondary, less salient entity (ie. the element with respect to which the TR is located), and a conceptual spatial relationship between them. The functional elements express the interactive relationship between the TR and the LM in a given spatial organisation (see Tyler and Evans, 2003: 50–51).

To illustrate the above-mentioned claims, let us now analyse the relation denoted by the preposition *in*. Consider examples (1)–(3):

(1)   *I awoke in my bedroom*
(2)   *The cupboard is in the kitchen*
(3)   *The box of cereal is in the cupboard*

In these sentences, the *bedroom*, *the kitchen* and *the cupboard* are three-dimensional, bounded objects (LMs) that possess an interior, a boundary and an exterior, and that contain the *person*, *the cupboard* and *the box of cereal* respectively (TRs). Such TR–LM configuration represents the notion of

containment, which is part of our everyday experience: we often find ourselves surrounded by walls, floor and ceiling, we put things into boxes, or simply we eat – we "put" food into our bodies.

The basic function of *in* is, therefore, to describe a situation in which one entity (the TR) is contained within another entity (the LM) characterised by three salient structural elements: an interior, an exterior and a clearly defined boundary (see Tyler and Evans 2003: 183). Apart from the purely spatio-configurational (logical) components, the preposition *in* is also associated with some functional properties of containment such as delimitation of the TR's movement, opacity and support, resulting from our interaction with certain types of bounded landmarks (see Tyler and Evans 2003: 179).

However, because of the flexibility of human conceptualization, the spatial scenes do not have to involve the canonical arrangement, where the TR is wholly contained within the three-dimensional, well-defined LM as in the case of bedroom, kitchen or cupboard. Consider the example (4) provided by Lee (2003: 4), and the examples (5)–(7) provided by Herskovits (1986, quoted after Lee 2001: 19):

(4)   *I'm standing in the street*
(5)   *the bird in the garden*
(6)   *the bird in the tree*
(7)   *the flowers in the vase*

In (4) *the street* is conceptualized as a container with the buildings on either side; it does not, however, have the upper boundary as contrasted with rooms or boxes. Similar to (4) is the example (5), where *the garden* is not a prototypical container since it lacks a clearly defined upper boundary. The use of *in* in (6) exemplifies the fact that a tree may be conceptualised as a container, even though its boundaries are not clear-cut, that is prototypical (they are defined by the ends of the branches). The example (7) shows that the TR – LM relation can still be considered a containment relation even if the TR (*the flowers*) is only partially enclosed by the LM (*the vase*). Although partial inclusion is not a canonical, spatial arrangement of the TR and the LM, the scene in (7) can be coded by *in* because of the key functional aspect of the containment relation, namely providing constraint, or support, for the TR (*the flowers*) (see Tyler and Evans 2003: 182–183).

In certain circumstances, the LM can be construed as a three-dimensional container, although prototypically it would be thought of as a two-dimensional surface, for instance (for examples 8 and 9 see Lee 2001: 19, 20; for examples 10–14 see Tyler and Evans 2003: 179, 184):

(8) *the crack in the vase*
(9) *the wrinkles in his skin*
(10) *There are several potholes in the street in front of my house*
(11) *the weeds in the lawn*
(12) *The cow munched grass in the field*
(13) *The tiny oasis flourished in the desert*
(14) *China is in Asia*

In examples (8), (9), (10) and (11) the concept of containment is understood differently. The TRs (*the crack, the wrinkles, the potholes* and *the weeds*) are neither wholly nor partially enclosed by the LMs (*the vase, the skin, the street, the lawn*), but embedded in their surfaces These TRs reveal the depth and internal structure of the LMs. The examples (12), (13) and (14) show even less canonical bounded LMs. In (12) *the cow* is conceptualized as being 'contained' by the field, which is a two-dimensional entity. Nevertheless, fields where livestock are kept are often bounded with fences, which constrain movement; therefore, the use of *in* to describe this spatial scene is justified. (13) exemplifies even more extreme extension from the prototypical LM since the desert has no physical impediment constraining movement. How does it happen then that the desert is conceptualized as a three-dimensional container? The desert is construed as container, because it has its interior (ie. the area covered with sand) which contrasts with the exterior (ie. the area which is not covered with sand, and thus cannot be called a desert). On the basis of two contrasting areas, a natural boundary is established and the notion of containment arises. Similarly, (14) shows that *in* describes the spatio-functional relation in scenes involving geo-physical divisions such as continents, countries and regions (see Tyler and Evans 2003: 184).

Sometimes, objectively the same situation can be described with the use of different prepositions. For the purpose of this analysis, I will concentrate on the use of *in* and its alternatives. Consider the following examples (for examples 15a and 15b see Lee 2001: 4; for examples 16–18 see Herskovits 1986, quoted after Lee 2001: 21, 24–26):

(15) a) *I'm standing in the street*
     b) *I'm standing on the street*
(16) a) *the wrinkles in the face*
     b) *the wrinkles on the face*
(17) a) *the words in the margin*
     b) *the words on the page*
(18) a) *John is in the bus*
     b) *John is on the bus*

In both (15a) and (15b), the sentences describe the same situation; in (15a), however, the speaker conceptualises the scene in terms of containment relationship, where *the street* includes buildings on both sides of the road, whereas in (15b) *the street* is construed as a supporting surface, that is merely a roadway for vehicles to travel along it (see Lee 2001: 4).

(16a) and (16b) are equally plausible to be uttered by the speakers of English. The difference between the two sentences lies, again, in the conceptualisation: *in* suggests that the wrinkles are deeply embedded in the skin, while the use of *on* is more probable when the wrinkles are not so much visible (see Lee 2001: 22).

Examples (17a)–(18b) illustrate yet another point, namely the importance of functional (apart from topographical) relationships. The choice of *in* and *on* in (17a) and (17b) might seem somewhat arbitrary as in both situations words are located in a two-dimensional space, so topographical relations cannot account for the difference in the choice of the preposition. Nevertheless, when we consider the function of a margin and a page, we come to the conclusion that these uses are motivated. In (17a) the paper is construed as a surface serving to display words; the concept of support is, therefore, more salient than that of containment. Whereas, in (17b) the function of a margin (ie. to define a particular part of the page, not just to display words) makes the notion of containment more salient, so that the situation is coded linguistically with the preposition *in* (see Lee 2001: 24–25).

Examples (18a) and (18b) show that vehicles (eg. buses, trains) can be conceptualised either as containers or supporting surfaces (see Lee 2001: 25). The former construal is most probable when the vehicle is stationary, thus comparable to other prototypical containers such as houses, and results in the use of *in* as in (18a). The latter construal, on the other hand, takes place in the context of travelling. Here, it is more important

that we are attached to a vehicle and transported by it than that we are inside or outside the vehicle (see Lee 2001: 25–26).

Native speakers of English conceptualise the scenes lexicalised by *in* in terms of containment relationship, in which the TR is, ideally, fully contained within the three-dimensional bounded LM. However, as the notion of containment captures also some functional elements, like constraint and support, a number of extensions from the prototypical arrangement concerning TRs and LMs can be made.

From a contrastive point of view, *in* has its counterpart in Polish, ie. the preposition *w*. There are, however, cases in which *in* does not translate as *w*, but as *na*, which is the Polish equivalent of the English *on*. Now, I will translate the English examples that have been analysed so far, and attempt to account for any differences that might occur.

Examples (1)–(4) can be translated as follows:

(1) *Obudziłem/am się w swojej sypialni*
(2) *Szafka jest w kuchni*
(3) *Pudełko płatków zbożowych jest w szafce*

These translations show that in the case of prototypical LMs, the conceptualisations of these spatial scenes do not differ in English and in Polish, which is revealed by the use of *in* and *w* prepositions, both expressing the notion of containment.

Consider now the following translations of (4)–(7):

(4) *(Ja) stoję na ulicy*
(5) *ptak w ogrodzie*
(6) *kwiaty w wazonie*
(7) *ptak na drzewie*

The above sentences are rendered in English with the preposition *in*. In Polish, however, only the garden (*ogrodzie* LOC. SG.) and the vase (*wazonie* LOC. SG.) are preceded by the equivalent of *in*, whereas the street (*ulicy* LOC. SG.) and the tree (*drzewie* LOC. SG.) by the equivalent of *on*. Most probably, Polish speakers interpret the scene in (4) (ie. the activity of standing) in terms of support relationship involving the speaker (*ja* NOM. SG.) (TR) and the street (LM); the street is thus conceptualised as a supporting surface. Note that in English it is possible to construe the street in two ways: either in terms of containment relationship or as

a supporting surface (see the analysis of 15a and 15b). Similarly, the tree is not construed as a container by Polish speakers, but rather as a surface that provides support for birds, fruit etc. The garden and the vase, on the other hand, are construed as three-dimensional LMs which can contain other entities. Notice that, similar to English, the container does not have to wholly contain the LM, as in the case of the vase, and it does not have to be bounded from the upper side either, as the case of garden shows.

The Polish equivalents of (8)–(13) reveal yet other differences.

(8)   *pęknięcie na wazonie*
(9)   *zmarszczki na jego skórze*
(10) a) *Jest kilka dziur na ulicy przed moim domem*
      b) *Jest kilka dziur w ulicy przed moim domem*
(11) *chwasty na trawniku*
(12) *Krowa przeżuwała trawę na polu*
(13) *Mała oaza rozkwitła na pustyni*

The example (9) illustrates the fact that Polish, unlike English, does not allow for much flexibility in the construal, at least in the case of wrinkles. In English it is possible to conceptualise wrinkles as being embedded in the surface of the skin as in *wrinkles in the skin*, or displayed on the skin (*wrinkles on the skin*), depending on how deeply the TR is contained within the LM. In Polish, wrinkles (*zmarszczki* NOM. PL.) are conceptualised as being displayed on the surface of the skin (*skórze* LOC. SG), and the scene in (9) is highly unlikely to be coded with *w*. However, a certain degree of variation in construal is exemplified in (10a) and (10b), where the street (*ulicy* LOC. SG) can both be perceived as a container with potholes (*dziur* GEN. PL) embedded in it (10b), and a two-dimensional area with potholes displayed on the street's surface (10a). Also, unlike the speakers of English, Polish speakers would conceptualise the spatial scenes in (8) and (11) in terms of support relationship with the crack (*pęknięcie* NOM. SG.) and the weeds (*chwasty* NOM. PL.) as being displayed on the surface of the vase (*wazonie* LOC. SG.) and the lawn (*trawniku* LOC. SG.) respectively.

(12) and (13) show that entities such as fields or deserts (plain areas in general) are construed as surfaces in Polish, and the scenes involving them are coded linguistically with *na*, ie. the Polish equivalent of *on*. However, when we consider the example below, further specifications are required.

(14) *Chiny są w Azji*

Asia (*Azji* LOC. SG.) is a geographical area, and yet it is conceptualised as a container, which is reflected by the use of *w* in (14). It may be assumed that it is because Asia, as a continent, has more clearly delineated boundaries: it is marked on a map, and, generally, we know what is and what is not in Asia. In comparison to a continent, a desert or a field, whose boundaries may not seem so clear-cut, are poorer examples of bounded LMs.

Below are presented the Polish translation of (17a)–(18b)[2]

(17) a) słowa *na* marginesie
 b) słowa *na* stronie
(18) a) John jest *w* autobusie
 b) John jest *w* autobusie

These examples point to the fact that Polish allows for less rich conceptualisations of the scenes in (17a)–(18b) than English. On the linguistic level, Polish speakers do not seem to differentiate between the function of a page and a margin, since the margin (*marginesie* LOC. SG.) and the page (*stronie* LOC. SG.) can only be construed as supporting surfaces in the above scenes. Similarly, in the Polish language the difference between 'being in the bus' and 'being on the bus' does not emerge, and vehicles such as buses and trains are always construed as containers.

The analysis shows that Polish and English do reveal some degree of similarity in their use of the spatial prepositions *in* and *w*. In the majority of cases, ie. when prototypical three-dimensional, bounded LMs are considered, there is a straightforward correspondence between English *in* and Polish *w*. However, when the LM is not prototypical (when it is a two-dimensional or/and not clearly delineated entity), the differences in construal between these two languages can be observed. In such cases, *in* translates as *na*, ie. the English *on*. In other words, Polish speakers conceptualise the scenes as involving a support relationship (for example: *ptak na drzewie, chwasty na trawniku*), where English speakers construe them in terms of containment (for example: *the bird in the tree, the weeds in the lawn*).

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[2] The analysis of (15a)–(16b) has been omitted because the construals of these scenes by speakers of Polish have already been analysed (see Polish translations of 4, 9, 10a and 10b and the explanations that follow).

Also, as it was already noted, Polish does not allow for such rich and complex conceptualisations as English. This is visible in the apparently greater possibility of construing objectively the same situation in different ways in English: either as containment (*in*) or as support relation (*on*), as the examples of wrinkles, a street or a bus show.

Finally, the results of the analysis seem to be consonant with the basic assumptions of cognitive linguistics. The embodiment and the fact that we, as humans, share common cognitive and perceptual abilities entail that we experience and perceive the world, as well as relations between objects, in a similar way. This, in turn, accounts for the patterns of conceptualisation shared by different languages, especially in such basic domain as SPACE. Shared experience also seems to be a plausible explanation for the similarity in the construal of the spatial scenes mediated by *in* and *w* found in English and Polish. Certainly, both Polish and English speakers, interact with various types of containers on a daily basis, and their experiences are very much alike. However, despite these commonalities, there remains a considerable degree of cross-linguistic variation. It appears that the variation may result from the fact that different languages (in this case Polish and English) elaborate different aspects of the common pattern in the conceptualisation of space. This phenomenon was described by Slobin in terms of "thinking-for-speaking", that is "a special form of thought that is mobilised for communication" (Slobin 1996: 76). In other words, it is argued that a given language influences the way we think (ie. construe a certain scene), but the influence is restricted only to thought employed in the activity of speaking, thus only for the sake of communication. While Polish "makes" its speakers categorise the spatial scene for *in* on the basis of whether an entity is placed in a prototypical, bounded container, English "forces" its speakers to pay linguistic attention to more functional aspects, and disregard topographical elements on certain occasions. The examples of Polish and English show that different languages can and do label the world and the relations between objects in different ways.

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Mike Leigh – auteur?

Much has been said about the so-called auteur theory and its usefulness for film analysis. Although accused of being anachronistic and sometimes bound with author's biography, auteur theory is equipped with tools resisting time and various theories[1]. Some film directors (most frequently associated with auteurs) may prove to be the key figures to film production, and its "single organizing intelligence" (Stoakes: 89). Mike Leigh, one of the key directors for British cinematography, seems to be one of them. The aim of this paper is to analyze Mike Leigh's feature films[2] and the process of their production in search for aspects and features confirming his authorial status. The key concern is to establish a feature confirming that Leigh's contribution to the film production is indispensable

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[1] It has to be noted that irrespective of accusations of ascribing all the efforts to themselves and disregarding a number of people responsible for film production, auteurs are vital in relation to audiences' reception of the movies. Films 'signed' by some of directors are recognizable to the audience. This label informs the viewer what he or she may expect from the film. Just as in Hollywood cinema a movie star is a trademark for a film, in its European counterpart a film director very often performs the same function. Thus, the author may be "dead" according to Barthes and Foucault in terms of his/her own interpretation of their works but he/she is definitely alive as a label, a category for a work of art, or even a genre.

[2] The fact that these films are often called by numerous scholars "Leigh's films" is an obvious confirmation that Leigh is treated as an auteur.

for the existence of the movie. Therefore, the main focus will be put on the relation between Leigh and the actors starring in the movies he directed. Leigh's work will be approached from the stylistic rather than thematic angle, it has to be noted however that his style has great influence on the themes present in his movies.

The above-mentioned collaboration between the director and actors may pose some doubts whose contribution is crucial for the existence of the movies analyzed. When one watches Leigh's movies one is mesmerized by the exceptional work of actors creating memorable and very disturbing roles. *To think back on most of the great scenes in Leigh's work is to remember particular vocal tones and facial expressions, bodily shapes and movements, and practical and verbal interactions* (Carney, Quart: 23). It may be stated that these films revolve around actors and their creations. This then moves the line of argumentation to the side of auteur theory antagonists. It is even claimed that *it is not so much the case that Leigh gets great performances out of his actors, as that he and they work together to create great performances* (Whitehead: 16). However, without Leigh's approach to working with actors these memorable roles would lose their intensity. He facilitates specific contexts which release emotions creating exceptional performances. Most of work on film directed by Leigh comprises rehearsals and not filming itself. These rehearsals are in fact a series of brain-storms, numerous interactions which create the material for shooting. Leigh works with actors individually and first encourages them to employ their life experiences in the performance i.e. think of various people they have met and situations they found themselves in. Through such action the character is created, and obviously it is easier for an actor to create a character based on a life experience, which enhance credibility and authenticity of the performance. Furthermore, this credibility is strenghtened through various "extraordinary" activities e.g. an actor is ordered to perform a daily/routine action (shopping, cinema, dinner at a restaurant) as if he/she was the character. "Leigh's actors literally have to find their characters, through improvisation and research into the way people in specific communities speak and behave. (...) Wherever the setting of the movie is, Leigh and his cast immerse themselves in the local life before creating the story" (Watson: 29). By such activities, the actors really know their character, the created reality exists also beyond the borders of the movie.

Despite the fact that the first impression after watching films such as *Vera Drake* or *Secrets and Lies* one believes that these films are "actors' movies", the performers starring in those films play in a manner that may

be called a "Leigh manner". Some directors may have such impact on the performance of their actors. For instance, it very often happens that actors playing in Woody Allen's movies behave in a way Allen would behave himself, they are his replicas, each of them having a part of a neurotic intellectual inside. Although Leigh does not intend to make his own clones out of his actors, a trace of his direction may be found. Each of his main protagonists has a dominant, characteristic personality, often unbearable for the viewers. Although he tells stories about ordinary people, his characters are very often grotesque, with a personality far from, what one would call ordinary e.g. Brenda Blethyn (Cynthia in *Secrets and Lies*) with her piercing voice creating a tense atmosphere throughout the whole film, Imelda Staunton (*Vera Drake*) playing a cheerful, kind-hearted and very naive working class woman who performs abortions out of good intentions and without any interest, Sally Hawkins (Poppy in *Happy Go Lucky*) being an incorrigible optimist etc. Looking at the viewers' opinions on IMDB among myriads of positive comments and praises, one can also find words of annoyance and confusion: *annoying and excessive, a seemingly naive extrovert with a very expressive and optimistic attitude towards life, a bit of a loon and a really annoying person all rolled into one* (Poppy); *her character was intensely annoying to me at first (almost made me switch off in fact)* (Cynthia), *in a superb cast Blethyn stands out as the haunted, tormented Cynthia.* In fact what characterizes all the major performances of these actresses is excess, which may be related to Leigh's experiences in the field of theatrical direction.

Not only does Leigh collaborate with the actors to achieve images worth shooting, he is also responsible for putting them together into a logical whole, the editing process in other words. All the above-mentioned elements of creation are the stages that form no movie yet and seem to some extent chaotic. The process of editing also takes place within the stage of rehearsals. Although, the actors have the autonomy of interpretation of the characters, they are very often refused to know the line of events and are often acquainted with their own role. They may never have a chance to read the screenplay as it will either be never written down or Leigh will not permit them to do so in order to "enhance the authencity of the performances by giving the actors no more information than their characters know" (Whitehead: 15). Therefore, a natural way of interaction is achieved and their performances seem more true-to-life. For example, in *Life is Sweet* Alison Steadman was not aware that her characters' daughter was suffering from bulimia until she saw the preview of the film. Likewise in *Vera Drake*, where only Imelda Staunton playing the title character knew

in advance about her character's second occupation, an illicit abortionist. The rest of the crew were to discover it during the scene when Vera is arrested on charge of performing abortions.

Thus, what is already known is that what interests Leigh and what he wants to capture is "the entirely disorganized and traditional business of living" (Carney, Quart: 14). He attempts to connect the characters he and the actors created. As he says himself: "what's it all about is distilling it down to something that is coherent, dramatic and cinematic" (McFarlane: 361). But what does a spectator receive of this mixture? European if not whole culture is used to arranging events into stories. Continuity is an absolute must. And one gets stories from Leigh as well. But they seem to be lacking major events, they are devoid of the extraordinariness. As Leigh said himself, he makes films "about the unextraordinary lives of ordinary people and making that interesting and meaningful" (McFarlane: 359). What Leigh's movies are about is interaction: "since what you are is not something that can be altered by an action, the films are not really about events. Rather than competing in the realm of action, Leigh's figures are placed in situations in which their ways of feeling and thinking are compared" (Carney, Quart: 15). If there are any events, these occur during "special, ritualistic and potentially (at least) festive occasions" (Watson: 23). Ordinariness and routine are the priority. Even when some major event comes it is put in a frame of the ordinary. While watching *Vera Drake*, the most frequent phrase (apart from "dear") used by the protagonist is "I'll put the kettle on" and it seems that drinking tea is close in its importance to breathing. When Vera is arrested, it happens during supper. The major outbreak of emotions in *Secrets and Lies* when all the family get to know that Cynthia has a black daughter takes place during a Sunday barbecue. And while watching Leigh's latest film *Happy Go Lucky* one can hardly establish a plot. What one watches is a series of events put in context of a daily routine: one gets to know the main character Poppy by observing her at work, during her driving lessons, visiting friends and family, going to the doctor. Rearranging most of these elements would not spoil the continuity of the movie. However, arranging events and characters (such as contrasting white working class Cynthia with her abandoned black middle-class daughter) creates certain interaction which makes these films so memorable.

Anaylyzing Leigh's films one may have doubts who is the more prominent and crucial participant of their production. Brilliant and memorable performance of actors starring in these films seem to give them this priv-

ilege: not only do they focus the viewers' attention to their characters but in a way they also function as a link between events presented in the films, as everything revolves around actors and their interaction. But, on the other hand, it is Leigh, who arranges these elements into a whole, and it appears that not the actors but rather their characters are the links between different events. Actors play in a manner typical for films directed by Leigh, not to mention other aspects such as mixture of theatrical/cinematic, realistic and the grotesque, bitter and sweet which are designed by the director. Thus, it seems that Leigh may be given the title of a 'single organizing intelligence', an author.

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Polish *Neo-partitional Politpunk* – a Case Study of *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder* (pl. *Pieprzony los Kataryniarza*) by Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz as an Exemplar of Domestic Cyberpunk

1. Introduction

In one of the first Polish critical works on science fiction, Zdzisław Lekiewicz asserts that

"science fiction *en masse* has long ceased reflecting the peculiarities of particular countries. In fact, contrary to opinions presented by some authors, it never has. Its subject matter is universal"[1].

Although some "American-ness" or "other-ness" could be attributed to the diverse discourses of science fiction, it remains true that science fiction in general ensues from the Western tradition of scientism and therefore national literatures within that tradition will find that science fiction is indeed their shared, universal language. What is characteristic of science fiction *en masse*, however, does not hold true for cyberpunk itself. Cyberpunk as a sub-genre of science fiction is unquestionably American in its context and subject matter. As a cultural movement it can be traced back to a distinct sociopolitical era in American counterculture and as

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[1] Translated from: Lekiewicz Z., *Filozofia Science Fiction*, Warszawa 1985, p. 7.: *Fantastyka naukowa w swojej masie dawno już przestała obrazować specyfikę jakiegoś konkretnego kraju. Zresztą, wbrew sądom niektórych autorów, nigdy tego nie robiła. Jej problematyka jest uniwersalna.*

literature, it reinvents American myths and metaphors, notably the topography of the West and the discourse of the frontier.

For all its "American-ness", cyberpunk as aesthetics and/or vehicle for discourse has nevertheless surfaced as a minor sub-genre within Polish science fiction, with examples of literature ranging from works of purely derivative value (J. Cyran, T. Kołodziejczak, M. Protasiuk, M. Przybyłek, J. Sobota) to those which succeeded in creating a syncretic combination of cyberpunk and "Polish-ness" (J. Dukaj, R.A. Ziemkiewicz).

Literary criticism on Polish cyberpunk, though scarce, presents the Polish sub-genre in terms of its presumed failure – the failure to "liberate" cyberpunk from its distinctly American discourse; the failure to acknowledge that a different construct of the frontier (and no Western tradition) exists within Polish discourse in particular, rendering cyberpunk immune to attempts of "domestication". Adam Mazurkiewicz claims that

"It should not go unnoticed that within Polish cyberpunk, the myth of the American frontier has been embraced without much thought. In Polish literature, the historical Polish eastern frontier (*Kresy*), which might serve as an analogy to the American frontier, does not **primarily** function as a means of showing the protagonist's active nature, but instead offers a glimpse into the historical past (which is sometimes [...] demystifying, though most often nostalgic)"[2].

The aim of this essay is to argue the contrary and provide a case study of *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder* by Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz to show that not only can cyberpunk aesthetics and discourse be transplanted into Polish literature in a "liberated", un-American variation, but also that cyberpunk itself can serve as a vehicle for culture-specific, refreshing discourses of distinctly Polish nature.

2. The State of Scholarship

When attempting to approach Polish cyberpunk from an academic perspective, one finds the field of modern science fiction curiously devoid of previous literary criticism. This is not to say that Polish cyberpunk lacks

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[2] Translated from: Mazurkiewicz A., *O polskiej literaturze fantastycznonaukowej lat 1990–2004*, Łódź 2007, p. 228.: *Nie można jednak nie zauważyć, że w rodzimym cyberpunku mit "frontier" został przyjęty bezrefleksyjnie. W polskiej literaturze Kresy, które można byłoby uznać za analogię "frontier", służyły głównie nie tyle ukazaniu aktywności jednostki, co wędrówce w przeszłość (niekiedy – [...] demistyfikującej, najczęściej jednak nostalgicznej).*

qualities which would make it worthwhile to be considered from an academic perspective, but rather, the scarce literary criticism on the subject can be traced back to a general reluctance of the Polish academia to embrace popular literature. Until the '80s, the attitude of the Polish academia towards domestic science fiction has been to consider it a variation of Soviet science fiction *en masse*. In Z. Lekiewicz's academic *Philosophy of science fiction* (1985), Polish science fiction has been presented on the grounds of showing/lacking sensitivity towards Marxist social discourse[3]. *The enchanted game* (1982), an academic monograph on Polish science fiction authored by A. Smuszkiewicz, focused on domestic social and political SF and attempted to trace science fiction back to its presumed roots in utopias and myths[4]. Another monograph on Polish science fiction in the years 1990–2004 was published in 2007 by A. Mazurkiewicz[5]. His monograph is the first to contain a survey chapter on Polish cyberpunk (*Polish-ed cyberspace*), which attempts to construe a typology of domestic cyberpunk narratives on the basis of how saturated with *cyberpunk poetics* particular narratives are. Of note is his cyberpunk re-reading of S. Lem's 1981 novel/philosophical treatise *GOLEM XIV*[6]. That said, Mazurkiewicz's chapter remains a preliminary overview of Polish cyberpunk and does not, by any means, do full justice to the subject matter.

For more extensive overviews of Polish cyberpunk, one is forced to search outside the academia, within the realm of semi-academic or popular criticism of the fandom itself. The most fortunate SF writer with a cyberpunk novel and several cyberpunk short stories to his name is J. Dukaj, on whom two non-academic survey papers were written[7]. R. Ziemkiewicz, the author of *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder*, was featured in just one survey paper[8]. In view of the scarce scholarship on Polish cyberpunk, and in view of the fact that the several Polish renditions of cyberpunk hardly

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[3] See: Lekiewicz Z., *Filozofia Science Fiction*, Warszawa 1985.

[4] Mazurkiewicz..., p. 129.
See: Smuszkiewicz A., *Zaczarowana gra*, Poznań 1982; Parowski M./Smuszkiewicz A., "Cały czas w *Zaczarowanej grze*", *Czas Fantastyki nr 1 (2) 2005*, p. 3–6.

[5] Mazurkiewicz A., *O polskiej literaturze fantastycznonaukowej lat 1990–2004*, Łódź 2007.

[6] Mazurkiewicz..., p. 220–222.

[7] See: Klementowski R., "Niewolnik wyobraźni", *Czas Fantastyki nr 2 (3) 2005*, p. 10–15; Rogaczewski G., *Odczytywanie światów Jacka Dukaja*, 2004. (http://dukaj.pl/opinie/OdczytywanieSwiatowJackaDukaja).

[8] See: Klementowski R., "Rzucając perły...", *Czas Fantastyki nr 4 (9) 2006*.

constitute a regular sub-genre with its own typology, uniqueness and trends, a case study of a particular domestic cyberpunk novel seems appropriate and will nonetheless shed new light on the Polish sub-genre.

3. Literary/Extra–Literary Contexts

Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz's *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder* (*FFOG*) (1995) is a syncretic mixture of elements belonging to two distinct aesthetics and discourses – those of the cyberpunk novel and the Polish political/social fiction novel, which together constitute a uniquely Polish variation of the political cyberpunk novel – the *politpunk* novel.

The novel's protagonist, Robert, is an *Organ-grinder* – a sophisticated information broker who scans cyberspace in search of information for companies, politicians and governments. During a routine assignment for a contractor, which consists of gathering data on the state of the Polish infrastructure, Robert discovers that Poland's infrastructure has become evenly partitioned among the areas of influence of Russia and Germany. The same is true for all the countries of Eastern Europe in the buffer zone between Western Europe and Russia. Having realized that the partitions he discovered are a prelude to invasion and occupation, Robert is contacted and intimidated by a certain influential third party, which does not wish for such knowledge to see the light of day. Robert struggles with his persecutors in an attempt to stay independent.

The last of its kind, *FFOG* is a '90s retelling of a typical '70s and '80s Polish political fiction (dystopian) narrative within modern cyberpunk aesthetics. It should not be understood to represent Polish cyberpunk in general, as there is no distinct Polish cyberpunk sub-genre or subculture to speak of. Instead, it should be interpreted as a unique cyberpunk reinvention of Polish social/dystopian writing.

4. A. *FFOG* in the Context of Polish Cyberpunk

Polish cyberpunk has never become a distinct sub-genre within Polish science fiction, despite early expectations to the contrary. Until the '90s, knowledge of Anglo-Saxon science fiction in general and Anglo-Saxon cyberpunk in particular in the readers' consciousness in Poland was trifle due to the limited number of translated foreign works. After the political transformation of Poland, access to foreign popular literature improved

considerably, though more in quantity than in quality. A. Mazurkiewicz provides the ratio of Polish science fiction novels to translations of their (usually) Anglo-Saxon counterparts[9]:

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Polish	29	35	15	13	15	22	26	27	15	28
Foreign	105	140	132	195	271	209	214	223	241	239

The over-saturation of the Polish market with foreign translations and the scarce Polish offer resulted in a popular demand for narratives of an "American" nature[10]. Before the popular success of the Polish fantasy writer A. Sapkowski with his *Witcher* novels, Polish writers went as far as to author their novels under American-sounding pseudonyms in order to become published. Such a popular demand for "American" narratives would imply that Polish derivatives of the then-popular cyberpunk sub-genre would enjoy success equal to their Anglo-Saxon counterparts. Indeed, Polish authors (T. Kołodziejczak, R. Ziemkiewicz) attempted to write within the sub-genre, though to little success. A. Mazurkiewicz claims that the novels did not enjoy popularity due to the fact that

> "Original [American] cyberpunk literature [...] which has been made available in translations, was written better and had more artistic merit and the novels of Polish authors, who followed in the footsteps of Gibson, were considered to be poor in comparison. [...] This resulted in the disappearance of the [Polish] cyberpunk sub-genre within [Polish] science fiction due to diminished potential reader interest"[11].

In fact, Polish cyberpunk derivatives were presented to Polish readers at the same time as the original novels they have been, to a considerable extent, based on. W. Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984) was first published in Poland in 1992, at a time when the sociopolitical discourse of American cyberpunk was already being dethroned by the more capitalist and conservative post-

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[9] Mazurkiewicz... p. 8.
[10] Mazurkiewicz... p. 8.
[11] Translated from Mazurkiewicz... p. 8.: *Sprawniej napisane i artystycznie warto-ściowsze wzorce [...], dostępne dla polskich czytelników dzięki tłumaczeniom, przyczyniły się do niższej oceny rodzimej literatury wzorujących się na powieściach Gibsona twórców. [...] Fakt ten zadecydował o wygaśnięciu w obrębie fantastyki naukowej nurtu cyberpunkowego, jako nie spełniającego oczekiwań potencjalnych czytelników.*

-cyberpunk. Cyberpunk was introduced into Polish popular consciousness late in the game; its discourse, critical of the threats of technological progress, already outdated. After decades under a communist regime, Poland was eager to embrace such technological progress despite critical discourse.

The aesthetics of American cyberpunk in relation to American life were more of an extrapolation in quantity than in quality. The large megalopolises of cyberpunk narratives were quantitative extrapolations of existing, American cities. Cyberspace itself was nothing more than a quantitative extrapolation of the Internet in its infancy. In contrast, the relationship of cyberpunk to Polish life was not only that of quantity, but also quality. What America extrapolated from reality into its narratives, Poland perhaps did not even possess. The logical assumption would be that the *future shock* associated with such radical changes after the Polish political transformation would make Polish readers even more eager to embrace cyberpunk as a reaction to the qualitative technological changes around them, but for the most part technological changes have been introduced without the accompanying, critical discourse which cyberpunk embraced. Cyberpunk, therefore, was not expected in Poland to perform as a vehicle for critical discourse: anti-capitalist, anti-scientic, anti-monopolistic or otherwise. R. Ziemkiewicz has therefore stripped his cyberpunk of any distinctively American discourse and instead applied its attributes to serve the Polish discourse of political fiction.

4. B. *FFOG* in the Context of Polish Political Fiction

Though highly critical of Polish, right-wing conservative political/social (science) fiction, the literary journalist Wojciech Orliński nevertheless acknowledges that

> Poland was perhaps the only country in the world where political fiction became the main genre of science fiction. It was not as fascinating to read in the West and not as safe to write in the East[12].

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[12] Translated from: Orliński W., *Polskość jako nerwica natręctw* (@ http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,1232755.html): *Byliśmy jedynym chyba krajem na świecie, w którym political fiction stało się głównym nurtem literatury fantastycznej. Na Zachodzie nie był to temat aż tak fascynujący jak u nas, na Wschodzie zaś nie był to temat aż tak bezpieczny jak u nas.*

The tendency to explore conspiracy theories of left-wing world domination in Polish political fiction Orliński dismisses as *obsessive-compulsive patriotism*. Yet there is much more to Polish political fiction and its subsequent cyberpunk retelling – the *politpunk* of Ziemkiewicz's *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder* – than Orliński would like to admit.

FFOG is one of the last novels written within this political (science) fiction genre. M. Parowski has labeled the generation of Polish science fiction writers from the late '70s and '80s *the Hamlet generation* – for their inability to express their political dissatisfaction with the Polish communist regime directly and doing so indirectly by means of – then misjudged by the censors as apolitical – science fiction narratives[13]. The first generation of political fiction authors (M. Oramus, M. Parowski, A. Wiśniewski-Snerg, M. Wolski, E. Wnuk-Lipiński, W. Żwikiewicz, J. Zajdel) wrote in direct opposition to the communist regime, although their narratives strove to be more than makeshift political pamphlets. The novels (Zajdel's *Paradyzja* and *Limes inferior*, Parowski's *Twarzą ku Ziemi...*) were an attempt to construct a full catalogue of the general mechanisms of totalitarian oppression[14]. Although Polish political fiction was written in a specific historical context, the universal character of its sociological diagnoses provides for their adequate modern re-readings. Zajdel's *Paradyzja*, though aimed at communist Poland, describes mechanisms of dehumanization and oppression universal enough that it could as well describe the modern North Korea or China.

Polish political fiction of *the Hamlet generation* had certain qualities which enabled its spiritual successor, *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder*, to fully embrace the cyberpunk aesthetics. In most novels of the genre, the protagonist was a proto-hacker – one which did not hack the then-nonexistent cyberspace, but "hacked" society. The full knowledge of the mechanisms of social oppression/repression and totalitarian regimes enabled the protagonist/antagonist to "hack" the "system". Zajdel's protagonist Sneer from *Limes inferior* is more akin to the American shepherd figure than to the cowboy. Being forced to live on the borderline of the

oppressive system and his own convictions, he is forced to negotiate between the totalitarian system and his own creed of freedom as if an American shepherd figure would negotiate between nature/civilization – or a Polish citizen would between communism/freedom/capitalism. Not only does this imply no cowboy figures in Polish cyberpunk, there also is no *frontier* in Polish political fiction which would provide a topography of potential freedom. Instead, there is the image of *the last bastion* – the last possible negotiable quantity of freedom in an oppressive regime, usually attainable by the meritocracy by means of "hacking" the system. In addition, dehumanization in Polish discourse did not begin with the image of the cyborg. The literary creation of oppressive regimes (dehumanization of individuals/collective) was sufficient context for such discourse to appear in and therefore the cyborg, as a redundant figure, did not appear in Ziemkiewicz's *FFOG*, nor, for that matter, Dukaj's short stories.

After the political transformation of Poland, political fiction writers were no longer forced to allegorize under the guise of science fiction and indeed, most of them (M. Oramus, B. Wildstein, M. Wolski) went on to write mainstream historical and sensational novels with scarce SF elements. Ziemkiewicz's *FFOG* was the last political SF novel and afterward he also started writing mainstream literature.

5. CASE STUDY – *THE FUCKED-UP FATE OF AN ORGAN-GRINDER*

The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder by Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz, a conservative journalist, television anchor, science fiction and mainstream writer, is a spiritual successor to Polish political/social (science) fiction, while also belonging to Polish cyberpunk. A. Mazurkiewicz acknowledges the existence of this peculiar sub-genre:

> "*Politpunk* is its own, marginal sub-genre, though it remains connected with "political fiction". The author of the term – Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz – lists the following features of *politpunk*: "a Polish setting, references to latest history and a punk fashion of describing reality". [...] Thus understood, *politpunk* would be first and foremost a description of a certain distinctly Polish sub-genre of science fiction, which I propose could be called *partitional science fiction* (or – as Wojciech Orliński would have it – *neo-partitional science fiction*)"[15].

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[13] Parowski M., "Kilkunastu Hamletów", *Czas Fantastyki*, Szczecin 1990.

[14] See: Ziemkiewicz R.A., "Inżynierski epos", "Ucieczka przed eskapizmem", "To oni mieli kłopoty ze mną, nie ja z nimi", *Frajerzy*, Lublin 2003; Dębska A., "Ten pesymista Zajdel, czyli co nam zostało z *Paradyzji*", *Czas Fantastyki nr 3 (4) 2005*, p. 8–11; Dużyk A./Żwikiewicz W., "Wołanie ze smutnej galaktyki", *Czas Fantastyki nr 2 (11) 2007*, p. 3–16; Klementowski R., "Literatura w czasach przełomu, czyli – A nie mówiłem!", *Czas Fantastyki nr 3 (12) 2007*, p. 27–31.

[15] Translated from: Mazurkiewicz... p. 99: *Jako zjawisko osobne i marginalne, choć pozostające w związku z "political fiction", należy traktować nurt określany mianem "polit-*

The *neo-partitional* (pl. *neo-rozbiorowa*) adjective refers to Poland being partitioned off to neighboring countries by force or as a result of conspiracy. Such laid-out topography rejects American frontier discourse and, in consequence, the cowboy figure. This foreign partition/Poland dichotomy resembles the nature/civilization dichotomy of American discourse to a much greater extent than that of old America/Western frontier. The protagonist – Robert – is not a cowboy figure by any stretch of the imagination. Not unlike Zajdel's protagonist Sneer, Robert is more of a shepherd figure; forced to negotiate between partitions/Poland as if he were negotiating between oppression/freedom. The topography of the West is substituted for a topography of *the last bastion* – Robert is forced to apply his sophisticated knowledge to "hack" the political system in order to remain true to his political and moral creed. He hopes to achieve the minimum negotiable political and moral independence – although his *fate* as an *Organ-grinder* is *fucked-up* and he will be inevitably forced into conformity. In a more post-cyberpunk fashion, he uses his "hacking" skills not against the system, but for the system – though against his preferred vision of Poland.

In a somewhat Polish, cynical fashion, Ziemkiewicz attempts to demythologize cyberpunk and liberate it from distinctly American discourse. When asked if he considers himself part of the cyberpunk tradition, Ziemkiewicz replies:

"No. I couldn't care less about this pathetic punk, social filth, cyber-drunkards and others of that sort. I believe that the interesting activities within the society involve the elite, and not the drop-outs. I look with interest upon the aristocracy, and not the tramps, whose lives are as mundane as those of livestock. There is an obsessive cult of the drop-out within the older generation, visible [in science fiction] in the writings of Oramus, or, in the mainstream, in the writings of Stasiuk – a mere no-good drunkard is automatically considered to be an *arbiter elegantiarum*. I consider this to be an aberration, not unlike cyberpunk's fascination with underage gangs and the outcasts of the urban jungle"[16].

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punkowego". *Autor tego określenia – Rafał. A Ziemkiewicz – jako wyznaczniki "politpunku" wyróżnia: "polskie realia, nawiązania do historii najnowszej i punkowy sposób przedstawiania rzeczywistości." [...] Tak rozumiany "politpunk" byłby – przede wszystkim – określeniem pewnego specyficznie polskiego nurtu "science fiction", który można byłoby (roboczo) nazwać "fantastyką rozbiorową" (bądź – za Wojciechem Orlińskim – "neorozbiorową").*

[16] Translated from an interview with R.A. Ziemkiewicz (@ http://ziemkiewicz. fantastyka.art.pl/wywiad2.htm): *Nie. W ogóle mnie nie obchodzi ten nieszczęsny punk, margines społeczny, cyber-żule i inne takie. Uważam, że to co się dzieje interesującego w społeczeństwie,*

Ziemkiewicz's positive approach towards the elites (meritocracies) of mainstream society is a reevaluation of cyberpunk discourse from a post-cyberpunk perspective. Though Gibson's *Neuromancer* was published in Poland only two years earlier, Ziemkiewicz's novel, though aesthetically somewhat similar, is a clear counterpoint to *Neuromancer*'s American discourse. The romanticized *cyberpunks* of American discourse are reduced in Ziemkiewicz's novel to mere anarchists and trouble-mongers:

"I've read about some affair involving hackers. – The press often confuses them with cyberpunks. But they're an entirely different lot: snotty blokes who simply destroy data in a blind rage, distribute viruses, stomp the root sector of the Net, you know, try to deal as much damage without getting caught. A form of cyber-terrorism really"[17].

Not only does Ziemkiewicz reevaluate the image of the cyberpunk, he also renders useless the image of the hacker itself. In the novel, true hackerdom is no longer possible. Robert is not a hacker, but an *Organ-grinder* (pl. *Kataryniarz*) – his profession thus named because navigating the VR interface resembles operating the street organ. Such a comparison does not hold positive connotations:

"Period literature often represents the grinder as a gentleman of ill repute or as an unfortunate representative of the lower classes. Newspaper reporters would sometimes describe them cynically or jocularly as minor extortionists who were paid to keep silent, given the repetitious nature of the music"[18].

Confined to their VR consoles for hours without end, the *Organ-grinders* are a profession of passive information brokers. Because their consoles are state- or business-owned, *Organ-grinders* are dependent on influential, sociopolitical third parties. This capitalist dependency is also a feature of

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dzieje się wśród elity, a nie mętów. To arystokraci są ciekawi, w życiu meneli nie ma nic więcej, niż w życiu bydła w oborze. W starszym pokoleniu zaznacza się jakiś taki obsesyjny kult lumpa, u nas widać to u Oramusa, w głównym nurcie na przykład u Stasiuka – byle zapity obszczymurek to dla nich z punktu arbiter elegantiarum. Jest to dla mnie jakaś aberracja, chyba podobna do zafascynowania cyberpunku młodzieżowymi gangami i wyrzutkami wielkomiejskiej dżungli.

[17] Translated from *Pieprzony los Kataryniarza*, p. 124:

– [...] czytałem o jakiejś aferze z hakerami.

– Prasa czasem ich myli z cyberpunkami. Ale to zupełnie inna sprawa: gówniarze, którzy po prostu niszczą zbiory, na ślepo, rozprowadzają wirusy, zadeptują obszary systemowe sieci, no wiesz, starają się zrobić jak najwięcej zamętu i nie dać się złapać. Taka odmiana cyberterroryzmu.

[18] Wikipedia, *Organ grinder*, retrieved on 19.06.2009.

American cyberpunk, although *Neuromancer* leaves the possibility of operating as an independent contractor. In Ziemkiewicz's novel, the *fucked-up fate of Organ-grinders* is their inevitable dependency on omnipresent, mafia-structured third parties. The *Organ-grinders* are not left with much freedom, and therefore there is nothing romantic/Western in navigating the Net:

> "The same convention obliged all users of the Net to use fixed and instantly retrievable ID codes. Anonymity in cyberspace was gone. And with it was gone the hackerdom of old movies, when one could hack the Pentagon network and nick some top-secret documents. Not any more"[19].

Having demythologized the hacker persona, Ziemkiewicz pokes fun at its counterpart from traditional American cyberpunk:

> "People want spies who break in at night, photograph some top-secret documents and conceal the photos in their teeth. In the meantime, they might engage in some steamy affair with a member of the opposing counter-intelligence. Who the hell gives a damn about some mathematical analysis on the pricing of red meat?"[20]

At the same time, however, Ziemkiewicz liberally borrows attributes from traditional cyberpunk aesthetics. Not unlike *Neuromancer's television tuned to a dead channel*, the world of Ziemkiewicz's Warsaw is filled with the unintelligible white noise of omnipresent information:

> "The only thing everyone needed was the soothing buzz [of information], constantly leaving people in the false impression that they know what's happening around them, that the world more or less conforms to their beliefs, meaning it does not spin out of control, and even if it did, there would be someone to inform them in advance"[21].

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[19] Translated from *Pieprzony los Kataryniarza*, p. 123: *Ta sama konwencja narzuciła wszystkim użytkownikom sieci obowiązek posługiwania się stałym i dostępnym na każde życzenie kodem identyfikacyjnym, ID. Skończyła się anonimowość w cyberprzestrzeni. A z nią skończyło się takie hakerstwo jak w starych filmach, że tam ktoś się włamuje do komputera Pentagonu i podbiera tajne dokumenty. Nie te czasy.*

[20] Translated from *Pieprzony los Kataryniarza*, p. 136: *Ludzie chcą szpiegów, którzy włamują się nocą, odfotografują lajką tajne plany i potem szmuglują je w zębie. A jeszcze po drodze mają erotyczne przygody z kontrwywiadem strony przeciwnej. Kogo, u cholery, interesuje analiza matematyczna cen baraniny?*

[21] Translated from *Pieprzony los Kataryniarza*, p. 28: *Ludzie potrzebowali jedynie kojącego uszy szumu, ciągłego utwierdzania ich w fałszywym przekonaniu, że wiedzą, co się wokół nich dzieje, że świat jest mniej więcej taki, jak sądzą, nie wymyka się spod kontroli, a w razie, gdyby się wymykał, zostaną o tym w porę powiadomieni.*

In another instance of deromantization, the VR of the Net is not metaphorized as an architectural wonder, but rather as a crude system of robust shaft mines, tunnels and wells winding like Escher's impossible constructions.

People themselves are metaphorized (and dehumanized) as forming parts of a larger clockwork machine. Their lives are compared to a dance of atoms

> "clashing with each other and orbiting around each other, while at the same time spinning in clusters of two and three around their bosses, and, in even larger groups with those bosses at the core, orbiting around even more important bosses, who in turn traversed wide circles around Very Important individuals, on orbits so far away that at first glance they could be taken for straight lines. [...] Everyone was spinning"[22].

6. Conclusion

Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz is the essential Polish cyberpunk author who not only understood the underlying mechanisms of American frontier discourse in cyberpunk, but also avoided the mistake of replicating such discourse without much thought in Polish cyberpunk. His *The fucked-up fate of an Organ-grinder* consciously offered valid criticism of American cyberpunk from a post-cyberpunk perspective, which focused on demetaphorizing the aesthetics and discourse of the sub-genre. Using the stripped-down attributes of cyberpunk poetics, Ziemkiewicz succeeded in reinventing the traditional Polish political fiction narrative and updating it for the '90s.

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[22] Translated from *Pieprzony los Kataryniarza*, p. 47: *[...] odbijając się i wirując wokół siebie nawzajem, a jednocześnie dwójkami-trójkami wokół wspólnych szefów, i jeszcze całymi, skupionymi wokół tychże szefów grupami wokół szefów jeszcze ważniejszych, którzy pomykali na odległych orbitach osób Bardzo Ważnych; orbitach tak odległych, że w pierwszej chwili można by pomyśleć, iż poruszali się po liniach prostych. [...] Wszyscy wirowali.*

From Mississippi to Tyne – Woody Guthrie's characters as an inspiration for Mark Knopfler's *Get Lucky*

Mark Knopfler, a voice and guitar of the legendary band *Dire Straits*, is still an active artist. His solo career, initiated by the album *Golden Heart*, which was released in 1996, has been, however, far away in terms of form from the late 70s rock playing of *Dire Straits* which brought the band to the tops of the charts. Knopfler's evolution threw him out of the big rock'n'roll world and led him into the peaceful niche of gentle and subtle Brit-American traditional sounds. He himself describes his music as one which has its haven in the place where "the Tyne meets the Delta"[1]. Indeed, contemporary Knopfler's songs are a particular fusion of British and American folk music, dressed in unforgettable melodies and ornamented by guitar mastery. Yet, much as Knopfler has always cared about the notes, he has also about the lyrics. The messages carried by his songs seem to be equally important as any other element. In this article I am going to take a closer look at the lyrics from the latest record by Knopfler – *Get Lucky* (2009). To be more precise – my aim is to find in them substantial evidence for Knopfler's deep affection for the American tradition of folk music as represented by Woody Guthrie. Guthrie, predecessor of such artists as Bob Dylan or Bruce Springsteen, won his place in history as a 'folk singer' – a singer of the people, a vagabond who created simple but

genuine music. Accompanying himself only on a guitar he voiced the tales of Americans from the times of Great Depression and Dust Bowl. Although it is the hardships tormenting America in the 20s and 30s that he focused on, his works also managed to capture other images of his homeland – the beauty and charm of the American Land. Over 1400 songs written by Guthrie are living accounts of the stories, criticism and appraisal of the United States of America in the first half of the 20th century.

What is characteristic of Knopfler is that his songs very often speak about ordinary people and their lives. *Get Lucky* is not an exception here. The album, which was recorded in Knopfler's private studio British Grove (in 2009 the winner of the Music Producers Guild Award for 'Best Studio'), delights not only with its sounding but also its lyrical content. The latter, as I will try to prove in a moment, arguably echoes Woody Guthrie's works. With the first glance at the lyrics one notices certain motives which are very much present in the poetry of the American bard. These are for instance: a motif of journey, a motif of an outlaw, a motif of drudgery or a motif of heavy commitment to the case. Even though the characters from Guthrie's songs come mostly from the working class, the message conveyed by his songs and the troubles touched upon can be easily labeled as universal. He himself believed that his texts had enormous power: "music is a weapon, the same as gun, and can be used by the slave just the same as by the big boss"[2]. The fact that America in the times of Guthrie was a 'fertile soil' for his music does not deprive his works of the ageless dimension – quite on a contrary. The same thing can be ascribed to the poetry of Knopfler which finds its place in the living space of the today's people. Folk, meaning the "human", subject area is simply an inherent element of human life which cannot be seceded of. Be it yesterday or today, we keep facing the hardships of common day. Be it yesterday or today, there have always been people who fail to settle things down, who suffer from being exploited by the establishment, who are doomed for illegal activity or inhuman drudgery in order to make the ends meet. The means and circumstances have definitely changed but the ultimate goal is still the same – happiness and worthy living. These simple, but the most primordial, needs of human existence constitute the core of the texts of the both discussed here artists. This is also a confirmation that not everything changes with time. Some things are equable and even though our everyday

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[1] Sutcliffe Phil, *Our friend in the North*, Mojo 1996 (http://www.mark-knopfler. info/p1996mojo.htm) accessed on April 10, 2010

[2] Jackson Mark Allan, *Prophet Singer: The Voice and Vision of Woody Guthrie*, University Press of Mississippi 2007, p.2

life tends to kick them aside into the background, they are always alive and ready to come back and surface in every one of us.

The outlaw

an outlaw[3]

> **1 :** a person excluded from the benefit or protection of the law
> **2 a:** a lawless person or a fugitive from the law **b:** a person or organization under a ban or restriction **c:** one that is unconventional or rebellious
> **3 :** an animal (as a horse) that is wild and unmanageable

Get Lucky is opened by a subtle and slow melody of the flute which immediately evokes images of the green Scottish Highlands (no wonder, as the tune is played by a flesh-and-blood Scotsman – John McCusker). The song's title is *Border Reiver*. The opener of Knopfler's new record, dressed in traditional British notes, treats about a character who very much resembles American heroes dominant in Guthrie's poetry – the outlaws. The title itself is a sort of an indication what we are going to listen about in a moment. The first question to be posed must be: who were border reivers? It is a name of the bands of English and Scottish plunderers who were lurking on the border of the aforesaid countries for their victims. They were active from the 13th to 16th century. What was the reason for those bands, often comprising whole families, to make for the living by means of mutual aggression, robbery and hatred? One of the explanations can be that in the times of constant Anglo-Scottish conflicts, some did not really feel any attachment to the monarch, the state, least the law. The loyalty and lawfulness were not guarantees of welfare nor safety which, in consequence, were preferred to be won in some other way – at an expense of the enemies. Interestingly, the attitude of the English and Scottish authorities towards border reivers was positive and even encouraging. Those gangs constituted in a way the first-contact military divisions of the two countries. A word "to reive" in a contemporary English means nothing but "to rob". However, Knopfler's song does not take us back to the medieval times but to the more modern world of industry and civilization. It tells a story of a truck driver from Glasgow. The truck is not a second rate one though – an A-class product of Albion Motors of Scotstoun which

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[3] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/outlaw, accessed on April 10, 2010.

was a renowned for its quality Scottish manufacture. What does a truck driver have in common with the historic robbers? As soon as in the chorus of the song, Knopfler plays with words: *"Sure as the sunrise, that's what they say about the Albion"*. Albion is a name of the historic land of Angles while the phrase *"sure as the sunrise"*, being a worldwide known slogan of Albion Motors, seems to be a clever irony targeted at the welfare and generosity offered by Albion the country. Our hero, likewise the reivers, does not find in England anything *"sure as the sunrise"*. What really matters for him is the truck – a car which is not too comfortable (*"too cold in winter, but she cooks me in the heat"*) has nevertheless a great value for the guy – it is his tool of work. The machine is everything he has and... everything he cares for. The question is – is that man really beyond the law? The verses *"the ministry don't worry me my paperworks' alright, they can't touch me, I got my sleep last night"* suggest rather something else. As a professional driver the man obeys the rules of the trade. Mark Knopfler's outlaw seems not to be an outlaw in the first meaning of this word. However, he sins elsewhere. Although obedient to the law, he is not obedient to the established order of living. The driver lives beyond society, as a non-conforming rebel, whose only occupation is work. He created his own reality, his own course of life which allows him *"to knock out a living wage in 1969"*. If we recall the late 60s in England what we see is the country which had just managed to lift itself up from the aftermath of the World War II. It is also a time of anti-war, hippie, moods. Time of rebellions against the previous (dis)order. The metaphoric reiver of Knopfler's does not steal money but only time (*"I'm just a thiever stealing time"*). We do not know if this is the fate that happened to him or that he chose. What seems certain is that Knopfler draws an image of a man living 'beyond' the generally accepted social norms. A man who lives in his own world, preoccupied with his work, sees nothing but the passing hours. And although it is not an easy bread (*"I'm a six-foot driver but you can't adjust the seat"*) the effort appears, or is believed to appear, profitable.

However the image of an outlaw drawn by Knopfler does not mirror exactly the characters from Guthrie's texts, the inspirations can be easily traced. The American bard often matched being an outlaw with a laborious exploitation of women and men. His verses are not only an explanation why 'Okies'[4] happened to perform wrongdoings – they also serve as a heavy

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[4] Originally denoting an inhabitant of Oklahoma; in 1930s a contemptuous term used on the West Coast to refer to the numbers of immigrants who left their homes

criticism for the inequality between the social classes, what partly can be heard in Knopfler's tale as well. In *Ain't Got No Home* Guthrie talks explicitly about a 'wandering worker' being almost a slave:

> *"Now as I look around, it's mighty plain to see*
> *This world is such a great and a funny place to be;*
> *Oh, the gamblin' man is rich an' the workin' man is poor,*
> *And I ain't got no home in this world anymore".*

A slave of what? Of time? Machine? Fate? Could Knopfler's reiver be such kind of a worker? Certainly he is a so-called 'common man' – a type of man not only portrayed but also defended and pardoned by Guthrie, as in *Pretty Boy Floyd*:

> *"You say that I'm an outlaw,*
> *You say that 'm a thief;*
> *Here's a Christmas dinner*
> *For the families on relief".*

Guthrie points to the fact, that although the simple men do not always act in accord with the law, they are not morally broken:

> *"But as through your life you travel,*
> *As through your life you roam,*
> *You won't never see an outlaw*
> *Drive a family from their home".*

According to Guthrie, Okies breaking the law was nothing but a response to the social domination of those well-off which left little space and choice for those from lower classes. The latter were classified as wrong-doers even for such 'Robin-Hood-like' acts as stealing from the rich and giving to the poor.[5] The American singer makes a very clear distinction between the social classes and, doubtlessly, Knopfler's reiver would fit into his division perfectly.

Woody Guthrie's interest in outlaws originated probably from the stories about such characters Woody listened to in his childhood. Many

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much due to the Dust Bowl. (Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okie), accessed on April 10, 2010

[5] Jackson Mark Allan, *Prophet Singer: The Voice and Vision of Woody Guthrie*, University Press of Mississippi 2007

outlaws could be spotted in Oklahoma – Guthrie's early days home. Surely, those stories became richer and were evolving as Guthrie was traveling to Texas and then New York. According to Jackson, the image of an outlaw ultimately widespread by Guthrie was also influenced by the tales of Afro-Americans he happened to come across on his way to and fro. One of the possibly most well known songs by Guthrie treating about an outlaw is *Jesse James*. A legendary American Robin Hood, who robbed banks and clerks and gave the money away to the poor. William A. Settle Jr. in his *Jesse James Was His Name*[6] writes: *"In all the voluminous material that pertains to Jesse James and the James band, evidence of specific act of generosity toward the poor... is practically nonexistent".* Then, he continues: *"the impression that Jesse James robbed the rich and gave to the poor lives on".* Despite this, James became so popular, legendary, that many people saw in him a role model. Another outlaw, a historic character visiting at the beginning of the 19th century the area where Guthrie had later his home, was Belle Starr. In Guthrie's song by the title *Belle Starr* from 1946 we can once again find the poet's attitude towards the outlaws – the evident longing for the late Starr indicates that being an outlaw does not denote being a "bad guy":

> *"Belle Starr, Belle Starr, tell me where you have gone*
> *Since old Oklahoma's sandhills you did roam?"*

Although regarded as a rustler and robber, in fact Starr was not a criminal. Her bad reputation can be ascribed to the contacts with other outlaws, such as James, that she had.

> *"They say it could be, they say maybe so,*
> *That you loved Jesse James that desperado."*

Woody Guthrie does not tell her story as a tale of somebody living beyond the law. What he concentrates on instead is the eight lovers that she had. This is another piece of evidence that the American tends to portray the outlaws as simple, but not evil, men. Both his characters and Knopfler's truck driver seek for the method for living and find it in the unaccepted socially activity – rambling, stealing, rebelling, settling things on their own. Obviously it is much easier to imagine an outlaw as an equipped with guns, unshaved man threatening the defenseless carriages

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[6] Ibid. after William A. Settle Jr, *Jesse James Was His Name*, Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 1966, p. 203

than a driver having his sight stuck in the windscreen, the universalism of the rebellion against the class division, necessity to take control over one's own life, finding the best possible way of living even if it means disobeying the law, has not changed. Moreover, Guthrie's outlaws find their philosophic foundation in the Utopian socialism of Robert Owen. According to that philosopher, the class division and private property should not be present. This philosophy, along with Guthrie's liking to the idea of socialism and the reality of America of that time, might have had a strong influence on the way the poet perceived outlaws per se. Knopfler, similarly, shows us how the social inequality push the man into functioning beyond the generally accepted system. Yet, Knopfler also suggests that even in such a life there is some room for happiness, and that operating beyond the law might be nothing but a necessity.

The labourer

Mark Knopfler's texts, from the very beginning of his career, have been touching upon the simple people and their everyday lives. Such was the facing ups and downs single handed sailor from the *Communique* album, the autographs hunter Rudiger from the *Golden Heart* LP, the boxer Sonny Liston from the *Shangri-La* CD. The latest Knopfler's record is not different in this respect. This time Knopfler set his pen to the class of working people – a craftsman Monteleone, a seeker of happiness present in the title song *Get Lucky* and helpless sailors from *So Far from the Clyde*. What I would like to do now is to analyze roughly those songs in search for an answer to the question whether Guthrie's inspirations again play here a role.

Monteleone is a song devoted to the authentic character – a craftsman John Monteleone, a renown maker of guitars and other instruments. Knopfler's musical "thank you", apart from being a tribute, shows Monteleone also from another angle. Namely – as a person of labour. It is not, though, an unrewarding job but one which allows the craftsman-artist to fulfill himself. Knopfler shows us how important for Monteleone this work actually is:

> "The chisels are calling
> It's time to make sawdust
> Steely reminders of things left to do
> Monteleone, a mandolin's waiting for you".

There seems to be a certain form of a metaphysical connection between the tools and their master. So strong this connection appears, that the master answers to the call of his inanimate devices. A chisel and a saw suffice to remind him that there are tasks waiting to be accomplished. They have to be accomplished, as *"Monteleone, they're calling for more"*. The work has no end which is reminded to our character both by tools and, possibly, by the commissions of the musicians he crafts instruments for. What I find here is that Knopfler draws our attention to the inseparable bond between a man and his professional occupation. Such a connection is portrayed as one which governs the way we live – all too often totally devoted to work. Guthrie also accounts for that issue although in a bit more negative fashion. In *The Weaver's Song* the American writes straight: *"weaver's life is like an engine"*. For him too there is no alternative for work, which, as far as "Okies" are concerned, meant drudgery and hard struggle for survival. In Guthrie's world nothing and nobody must remind about the 'things left to do'. This awareness is in a way imprinted on people. Woody wrote: *"very often meet a partner, who would like to learn to weave, and we feel it is our duty, we are bound to believe"*. The bard gives out his socialist, almost Marxist, view on the society in which the faith that "work is a power" was dogmatic. This doctrine was, obviously, advocated by "the have-s" – those who without any scruples exploited the "have-nots" for hard work. The end, and at the same time release, from this bond with work is death. *"Soon we'll end this life of weaving, soon we'll reach a better shore, we won't have to weave no more"*. Guthrie was himself a witness of the great exploitation of the working class, many of whom were his fellow 'Okies' suffering from the untamed forces of nature which took their harvest in the deadly Dust Bowl, and it is most likely them he writes about. In spite of totally different reality it is quite easy to find the theme of enslavement of a man by work in the works of both authors. The difference is that Guthrie sees it as a condition for living, while Knopfler praises the commitment to the idea. Or, possibly, a criticism of that idea?

America of the 30s was a time of a great clash between the poor and the aristocracy. No wonder then that Guthrie, with all his experience, brought up by and as simple man, voices, even cries out, his objection to the inequality and marginalization of the poor. In *I Ain't Got No Home No More* thus he portrays the working man:

> "I ain't got no home, I'm just a-roamin' 'round,
> Just a wandrin' worker, I go from town to town.

And the police make it hard wherever I may go
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore".

Here we see that apart from the work (or its lack) another disturbing issue for the poor was homelessness, no perspectives for the future, for settling down. Such America, a rising at the costs of lower classes empire, was denounced by Guthrie. In the same song Woody also points to the doom of the workers, who are unlikely to ever become free of their miseries. Once a worker, always a worker: *"I mined in your mines and I gathered in your corn I been working, mister, since the day I was born"*. Most upsetting, the work cannot reward them even with such basics as home. Home understood not only as a place to stay, but as a place which will not have to be abandoned. And the need to leave could come every minute.

"Now I worry all the time like I never did before
'Cause I ain't got no home in this world anymore".

The alternative version of the song features also these verses[7] *"a working man is nothing but a slave, and a slave he'll be till they lay him in his grave"* which emphasize the particular dependence on work and relation between the worker and his job.

Mark Knopfler also sings about the hard working men. The hero of the song *Get Lucky* is a typical manual worker (*"I'm better with my muscles than I am with my mouth"*). However, the reality he lives in allows him to have a more optimistic outlook at the world. He can count that *"I might get lucky now and then – you win some"*. Still, apart from this attempting to colour the song positively chorus, *Get Lucky* conveys similar to Guthrie's ones message. The singing character is a man of no place and time, sentenced to endless wandering in search for work:

"I'll work the fairgrounds in the summer
or go pick fruit down south
And when I feel them chilly winds
where the weather goes I'll follow"

His everyday troubles involve finances (*"keep an eye on what I spent, got to think about eating, got to think about paying the rent"*) – he is a type of the stereotypical Mr Smith who goes to extremes to make the ends meet. At

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[7] *Jackson Mark Allan, Prophet Singer: The Voice and Vision of Woody Guthrie*, University Press of Mississippi 2007, p.104

some point the hero of *Get Lucky* laughs at the adage that money gives no happiness: *"the one about happiness and money – tell it to the bread line"*. Those who form the lines waiting for the unemployment benefit, alike those waiting for bread in America after Wall Street crash, can only count for a stroke of luck. The real change, sadly, comes no sooner than in the afterworld, when at last a man becomes free of work and finds real happiness.

"Now I'm rambling through this meadow
happy as a man can be".

Knopfler shows us a tragic dependence of a man on his ability to work in another song – *So Far From The Clyde*. Its lyrics tell us a story of a ship, a galley, which apparently brings no profits. Eventually, its existence comes to an end – the galley will be dismantled. Knopfler very movingly, personifying the galley by calling it 'her', portrays the dismantling as death: *"they pull out her cables and hack off her hatches, they swarm on her carcass with torches and axes"*. Indeed it is death – metaphorically and literally, at least for the skeleton crew which remained on duty to the end. The future fate of the mariners is uncertain. The style in which the captain leaves the galley confirms the assumption that this wooden hooker was something more than a tool of work – it was a complete life for the mariners:

"Later the captain shakes hands with the hangman
and climbs slowly down
to the oily wet ground
Goes bowed to the car
that has come here to take him
through the graveyard and back to the town".

As a captain who leaves the sinking ship so does he, bent down, pass the galley into the hands of an executor. Another issue that plays here a role is the fact which inspired Knopfer to write this song[8] – the author talks about the recent tendency to dismantle English ships in India as it is cheaper. The crew of the galley not only lose their floating home but are also left on a foreign ground, so far from their homeland – from the Clyde. The sacrifice they make is double, but the choice is none.

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[8] http://www.mark-knopfler-news.co.uk/GLpress.html, accesed on April 10, 2010

The examples could be multiplied, but I dare say that the few described in this article are enough to notice the similarity between the characters from Knopfler's *Get Lucky* and the ones present in Guthrie's songs. This should not surprise us as the tradition of folk music is very close to Knopfler. Mark has always seen in American bards the examples to follow. The motif of drudgery or outlaw had definitely stronger sounding in the times of Guthrie than in those of Knopfler. Nevertheless, these issues are universal and regularly crop up in the works of artists of the subsequent generations. And even though the contemporary reality seems distant to the topics touched upon by Knopfler and his alike, we will always find the evidence to support the continual topicality of the latter.

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The influence of the setting on the character design in Franco Zeffirelli's and Michael Almereyda's "Hamlet" films

After Roman Polanski's failure to bring his 1971 version of *Macbeth* to mass audience, one can say that Shakespeare has disappeared from the movies for a considerable time of 10 years. The directors seemed to lack any ingenious idea as for how to introduce, or rather re-introduce The Bard into the domain of the cinema. It was probably due to the fact that many conditions had to be met in order to produce a good (if any?) Shakespeare film. Firstly, the picture had to fulfill special "academic" requirements, appeal to the scholars, etc. Secondly, it would be very much welcome if it was suited to serve classroom purposes later on. Thirdly, it had to posses those qualities that would attract the audience, and make people go to the cinemas. Shortly, the film had to be all-encompassing – it had to represent the craft of *haute culture*, appeal to the audience, and pay back.

What may be called the beginning of breaking free from the lock-up is the 1989 appearance of Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V*. The director's eclectic vision made him merge successfully all the necessary elements of a good production. Branagh followed the text closely, took the best from the experiences of his best predecessors, added some new elements of his own political convictions, promised the audience to get something of a *Dirty Harry,* and consequently, it all ended well – academically, as well as commercially. This partially unexpected high acclaim of the Irish director woke up some older filmmakers and inspired those who never tried their luck with Shakespeare. The 1990s witnessed the appearance of at least twelve well

known productions, but in this essay I would like to deal with these two that may be viewed as "braces" for the whole decade – Franco Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* from the year 1990, and Michael Almereyda's *Hamlet 2000*.

It is very difficult to compare a director who is considered by most scholars a popularizer, or even as Robert Hapgood puts it, a "re-popularizer" (Hapgood, 1997:81) of Shakespeare, with another réalisateur, who actually became famous because of his (as for now) one and only Shakespeare movie. Yet, when one decides to bring the two creators together, and make them even in the face of tackling the same Shakespearian drama, one can start looking at what they actually decided to do with the same written material. Of course, the careers, private lives and professional experiences of both directors cannot be disregarded here, but this paper will also look at the time difference between the two films. We will try to observe how the passage of time influenced the design of the discussed movies, so that they could appeal to the audiences of the early 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century. This essay will be an attempt at illustrating different approaches to the design of the setting, which in turn influences the design of the characters. Strange though it may appear, both in Zeffirelli's and in Almereyda's films, it is not that much the characters that build the worlds around them, but it is the world around them that creates, or recreates their minds. The only thing that differs is the outcome of these (re)creations. On the one hand, we are given an action man from medieval castle (Zeffirelli) and on the other, a nihilist numb introvert from postmodern apartment (Almereyda).

When it comes to describing the setting in Zeffirelli's *Hamlet*, it may be viewed as unjust to dismiss the importance of the director's whole career. His work for the theatre as well as for the opera leaves a heavy mark on all of his productions. *Hamlet* is no exception. Zeffirelli says: "my real pleasure is to make whatever I have added look as if it has always been there... this notion of belonging both to the past and the future pleases me so much. When I succeed, I feel I have defeated time..." (Zeffirelli, 1986:345). Putting his thoughts into practice, the director placed his Hamlet in a medieval setting that joins the "fairy-tale image and the realism of the epoch" (Kołos, 2007:193, my translation). Watching the film, the viewer gets the impression that every detail fits properly into the space that is provided particularly for that object. For Zeffirelli, there is nothing like a wasted space, or a redundant prop. Everything means something: the emptiness on the one hand is not

merely a whim, or an overlooking; the exuberance on the other is also not just a post-opera frenzy.

What strikes us as a tremendously interesting feature in *Hamlet* is the division between the interior and the exterior. Both are built more or less consistently, on the basis of mutual opposition, though additionally, one can single out a space that can be qualified either as the exterior or as the interior. Zeffirelli's world seems to have a circular structure. The first circle, that is, the "coat" exterior is cold and vast. It is the island of Denmark that looks like a prison – great and powerful, yet limited by the sea, with curbed possibilities of expansion. The greenery of the landscape is ironically juxtaposed with the idea that what is so drastically restricted and lacks fresh air, ultimately has to rot. The second circle, i.e., the second exterior – or perhaps, the second interior – functions within the premises of the castle. Elsinore, for that matter, is not only the chambers for the king, his wife, and the prince, but it is also "the city". In the yard, it seems that everybody is connected to everybody. The crowd is ever-present and the atmosphere is rustic, and definitely non-majestic. The third, inner circle is the interior proper. Here one can observe the merging of the two previously mentioned dimensions. On the one hand, the interior is mostly "the walls made of stone, the spacious chambers, the simple wooden furniture and the stairs that are one of the most important symbolic elements of the cinematic space, when it comes to the moral issues of the piece" (Kołos, 2007:194). On the other, there is still a lot of coolness and vastness if one looks at the chambers and corridors.

How can this kind of setting influence the design of the characters? First of all, going from the general to the particular, the overall architecture of the castle can point at some events that are about to take place in the building. As in Lawrence Olivier's film, here as well the castle is presented in vertical, rather than horizontal dimension. What it means for Hamlet is that he is going to be entangled in a problem of *moral* importance, and that the tragic conflict will be based on his entrapment between ascent and descent. In Zeffirelli's film Hamlet is very often placed literally above other people. He observes, eavesdrops or even talks to others, being most of the time "up there". He delivers "Words, words, words" from an entresol, looking down on Polonius (the pun on the phrase "to look down on somebody." comes here in handy). He watches Claudius's revelry from the soldiers' platform, and from the castle window, he looks at his mother going away hunting. All these

observations from above give Hamlet the quality of moral supremacy over other inhabitants of Elsinore. The prince has several reasons for monitoring those who surround him. Polonius is utterly stupid and he simply deserves being looked at with superiority and contempt; Claudius is deceitful and dangerous, so he has to be watched from above; the mother is lost and confused, so there has to be some wider spectrum provided for evaluating and controlling her. Yet, as there is the possibility of ascent, there is also the danger of descent. The same "elevating" stairs that let Hamlet see himself as someone better than all his family and friends, let him also perceive the worse part of his nature. Going down, the prince plunges into the world that he despises, and he is shocked to discover how similar and cut for it he actually is. On the other hand, when he reaches Elsinore's basement (catacombs), he decides upon entering the events that till this moment took place next to him, or beyond him, rather than with his active participation. As Kołos puts it: "Hamlet begins to descend lower and lower, because he cannot remain just an observer any longer. He has to begin to act, and the necessity for action is also a necessity for changing the perspective" (Kołos, 2007:194).

One can argue that it was the actors along with their past careers that shaped the characters in Zeffirelli's film, but is it truly the case? Many critics[1] wrote on Gibson's performance in *Lethal Weapon* and *Mad Max*, but in fact the experience that the Australian actor gained from these productions was only an addition to the overall idea that the director already possessed. This idea, in turn, was already visible in the genre that Zeffirelli invented for his Hamlet (a detective story, an action movie) and in the elements of the setting, such as the architecture mentioned above, and the props. It may be said that even such little elements as the sword can be treated as objects that shape the character. Hamlet's weapon, visible on the screen all the time, when treated as an extension of his body unmistakably points at the character's qualities: his masculinity, decidedness (which somehow goes against the famous procrastination), inclination to fighting etc.

A lot can be said also about the influence of the setting on the character of Gertrude. Since I focus here mainly on Hamlet, I will only briefly point at the most important issues. First of all, though there are

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[1] To mention only: Crowl, 1998:56; Taylor, 1994:193; Kołos, 2007:117; Pilkington, 1994:174.

critics who claim that the film is mainly about fathers[2], the majority agrees that in fact Zeffirelli's film is pretty much obsessed with women[3]. Of course, the arguments claiming that the film begins "within a *womb-like* sepulchre" (Charnes, 1997:8, my emphasis) are slightly farfetched, but it is very hard to deny that Glenn Close rises as a major figure in the whole production. The director chose for her such specific milieus as revelry halls, landscapes for horseback excursions, and finally, a closet adorned with red and gold tapestries. The dresses and hairstyles are designed specifically for someone who has to be a star, a diva. Again, one can brood over the importance of Close's roles in *Fatal Attraction* or *Dangerous Liaisons*, but I would like to stress again that these performances are of secondary importance. The argument that appears to be stronger is, among others, one that presents Zeffirelli's gay attachment to divas[4]. The director, being closely acquainted with female opera stars, adored this kind of powerful, yet girlish, whimsical personages. That is why his Gertrude is so vivid and full of contrasts: her colours are blue, red and gold (both pale, as the colour of her hair, and warm, as the tapestry in her chamber). In consequence, one can perceive Gertrude as an extremely ambivalent character, with slightly perverted pure, maternal and angelic qualities, and the overt lush, vivacious and passionate features. It is very much visible that in fact the setting and the props, and presumably, nothing else shape the character of Gertrude. Because of the director's primary idea to design the setting the way he did, the character that comes into life has to find herself solely in the space provided.

Michael Almereyda in his *Hamlet 2000* decided to take a very different path, when it comes to the design of the setting. First of all, he did not wish to head, as Sylwia Kołos puts it, "towards tradition"[5]. The young director's refusal to place his prince in a medieval castle is a prelude for the (post-Branagh) decision to take Hamlet into some other epoch. Almereyda chooses postmodern and postindustrial year 2000, what he additionally stresses by adding the date to very title of his production. Consequently, we do not have Denmark, the kingdom, but Denmark Corporation; no Elsinore castle, but Hotel Elsinore; no yards and fields,

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[2] E.g. Charnes, 1997:7.
[3] E.g. Crowl, 1998:57.
[4] See Crowl, 1998:57.
[5] See Kołos, 2007: Table of contents.

but an enormous city bustling with life. As for the characters, it is not difficult to figure out that they have to respond to, and correspond with, the director's primary idea pertaining to the setting. And so it truly happens: Hamlet bears no signs of a medieval rascal-fighter (like Gibson), and Ophelia is anything but a rakish, pugnacious little woman (Bonham-Carter).

Starting with the setting itself, it is designed in a similar manner as in the film of Zeffirelli, because it also has "layers". First of all, there is the city of New York. The streets are most often crowded and pulsing with life. The people are running, coming and going, just like in Zeffirelli's courtyard. Everybody is busy with their matters, what actually increases the feeling of loneliness and isolation. Whenever the streets are empty, there is always a sense of danger enhanced by the vapours sneaking out of the sewers. This is a thug city, with ever-present lights, but with such ones that are artificial and deceitful. Nobody walks in the purifying sunshine; people are surrounded and blinded by the neon lights of billboards and banners. The approach towards the question of light is something that already creates the moral attitude: if lack of light means evil and darkness of the soul, then the presence of artificial illumination means hypocrisy and deceit.

Moving further, to the interiors, there is Hotel Elsinore with all its secret-keeping chambers. Before one can analyze the interior proper, it is good to have a look at the position of Elsinore _within_ the space of New York City. In Zeffirelli's approach, medieval realism forces the director to make his castle unique – it is obvious that only the king and the queen can own it and live in it. The presence of other monarchies and of other domains is sketched very vaguely[6]. Almereyda uses various ways to remind the viewers (and his characters!) that they are not isolated in the fight for power. Denmark Corporation is not unique in any way, and it is made explicit that it has to fight constantly not that much for its political position, but rather for its economic stance. There are many luxurious hotels in New York, and Denmark is just one of several different enterprises competing on the stocks exchange. Thus, the place of DC is all the time unsure, which to a certain extent justifies the mafia-like features of Claudius's policy.

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[6] Branagh is the one who makes the presence of other monarchies explicit by using flashbacks, or "mute" scenes with young Fortinbras, old Norway, etc.

The chambers of Elsinore are characterized by the post-modern blankness, roughness and coolness. They are mainly office-like white areas, filled with furniture and paintings of geometrical shape. Everything is regular and suspiciously clean, which adds to the effect produced by the ever-present bizarre lights. The main idea of the director is that the interior should be de-individualizing and estranging. However, the way is also given for particularizing the most important rooms. For Hamlet, Ophelia, and possibly for Gertrude, Almereyda designs specific milieus.

The influence of the setting on the characters in _Hamlet 2000_ is tremendous. First of all, one can discuss the placement of the rooms. Hamlet's apartment is situated within the building of the company. Therefore, the prince has no private space. He is surrounded by the contaminated milieu, because he does not have enough strength to escape, and lead his own life. Possibly, he even possesses predispositions to be like his whole family, entangled into morally questionable matters. Unfortunately, being "attached to the world of his corporation" (Kołos, 2007:191), he is unable to run away. The question is, whether he actually wants to do it or not. One may claim that Hamlet is soaked with the dirt of his family business, but is it truly the case? After all, he has been away for a while doing his studies. It can be argued that Almereyda's Hamlet is one of the most difficult to be defined in terms of "vocation". Possibly, he is also a kind of Zeffirelli's spy, but spying is rather his hobby and a way of life, than a professional occupation. Ethan Hawke creates a character that fits Almereyda's empty setting. He is neither a philosopher, nor a student, neither a poet, nor an idle rascal. According to the director[7], Hawke's Hamlet is a post-grunge nihilist, on the one hand overpowered by the bustling city life around him, and on the other benumbed by the isolating spaces of his own home. Being the youngest Hamlet ever (the actor turned 30 in the year of the film's release), Hawke is very precise to show a modern (postmodern?) teenager caught in a role that was not really cut for him.

As a seeming medication for Hamlet's troubles, Almereyda proposes technology. In _Hamlet 2000_ multimedia are shown everywhere, all the time: the camera is treated almost as an emblem of Hamlet, and the whole movie is very often described as a true "onslaught of images" (Owens after Lehmann, 2003:22). Eavesdropping is here realized of course through modern spying equipment, and the ghost of old Hamlet is visible through

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[7] See the interview by Cynthia Fusch, _Looking Around Corners_, answer to question no. 6.

the company's intra cam. All these devices enhance the feeling of isolation of the characters, they add to dehumanizing them and making them hostile towards each other. Purely because of the setting, Hamlet is designed as if he really did not have to pretend madness. As Almereyda puts it: "he [Hamlet] didn't have a problem making decisions, he would make a decision and then he'd reverse himself, which is a very different thing, more truthful to human nature and to the character. We kind of dropped the ball on the madness issue. Hamlet wasn't mad, he was feigning madness. I mean, he was dangerously depressed, which is a kind of madness, but the whole element of him acting goofy, we downplayed that, or maybe it just eluded us, and stuff that we shot in that direction, we didn't use" (Fusch, 2008:q. 6). Because of all the equipment, his hobby, and a simple, unkempt style of clothing, Hamlet already looks like a loony art student. It appears that things mostly happen to him, and he accepts whatever is brought by the externally governed events. Yet in privacy, the prince is unable to escape the constant noose of editing. He finds great pleasure in governing his recorded materials; he has aspirations of a demiurge: he cuts, develops, rewinds and forwards his films, but all in all, his actions prove futile.

Unavailing though they mostly are, it seems that at least a few of Hamlet's deeds exercise some influence on others. With Ophelia's struggle this is not the case. According to Almereyda, she is the one that "walks away with the madness prize" (Fusch, 2008:q. 7). At one point, it appears that technology may actually cure and save the characters. As Zeffirelli's Hamlet had his sword, Almereyda's prince has "technological devices (that) seem to be natural extensions of his body" (Abbate, 2004:1–2). Ophelia has her photo camera, and she looks as if she was strongly united with Hamlet precisely by their similar hobbies. Unfortunately, the reality of the cold, postmodern world devoid of values, takes away even this feeble link between the characters. In the world which constantly looks at itself, scornfully asking introspective questions and doubting any purpose for its own existence, Hamlet and Ophelia use their devices to reify each other. Hamlet does it when he does not come to the appointed meeting, but observes his beloved on the screen, and Ophelia does it when she agrees to serve Claudius and Polonius as a moving wire-tapping system. Over real (and thus imperfect) people and feelings, the characters prefer the idealized dead objects that can be edited and improved. Printed photos (Ophelia), or recorded films (Hamlet) become substitutes for a genuine contact with another human being. That is why the lovers abuse each other, and destroy the love that could actually offer a real purpose to their empty lives.

Summing up, one can say that both Zeffirelli and Almereyda paid much attention to the design of the setting in their *Hamlet* films. Zeffirelli did this rather because of his previous career and experiences. He paid homage to his own longtime-practiced particular directing habits, and he stressed once again his attachment to a specific work with the image. Almereyda did this, because he wanted to translate the work of Shakespeare into the realia of the modern world. Zeffirelli decided to choose a traditional realistic medieval setting, with the buildings and the props coming from, or stylized for, those from the epoch. Almereyda found it "incredibly natural" (Blackwelder, 2008:q. 9) to put his Hamlet into postindustrial milieu of a great city. In both cases, the films proved to be very good in terms of box office success. Academically, they both received mixed reviews, going from the psychoanalytical remarks, through social economy discussions, up to comments pertaining to popular culture.

Zeffirelli as well as Almereyda took the design of the setting as his primary objective, which thus influenced accordingly the design of the characters. The Italian chose to present his Elsinore as a castle in which everybody spies on everybody; the moral problem is mirrored by the castle's architecture; the chambers are designed specifically for the characters; there is a great stress put on emblems (e.g. Claudius and his glass) to manifest certain qualities that define the character. The American also focused much on Elsinore. Yet, his castle-hotel is a desolate place, especially when juxtaposed with the busy city. Almereyda showed even more eagerness to present the difference between the rooms of particular characters. Hamlet has his apartment within the premises of Elsinore, which might suggest his inability to run away from his family and its way of life. Ophelia lives in a bachelor flat in a poorer district of the city. She tries to escape from the hostile world of her father's corporation, but ultimately her place of dwelling is not distant enough to save her. Both characters have their emblems (a camera and a photo camera), which help to describe them and to manifest the strength of their relationship.

Making dissimilar movies, both Zeffirelli and Almereyda presented the possibilities for directors to design their characters, having the setting fixed for them at a starting point. That situation clearly shows how different the same character may become, when placed in different surroundings. It seems that the only quality that is shared by Zeffirelli's rascal reveler and Almereyda's post-grunge introvert is spying. Done either with the aid

of modern equipment, or simply by peeping at others from high stairs, both Hamlets are observers. Whether the observations leads to action, or remain merely a passive act is a question for yet another discussion.

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Functional Sentence Perspective and Translation. An analysis of a text.

Since its inception in mid–20th century and throughout its further development, the so-called Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) has assumed multiple names and definitions. It has been referred to as *topic-focus articulation, information structure* (Dušková 2003:10), *information packaging, discourse pragmatics* etc. (Lambrecht 1995:2). This multiplicity resulted in confusion in terminology and an overall vagueness of the concept, enforced by the difficulty of analysis and experimental study. Nevertheless, some general assumptions behind this approach are unanimously believed to be reflected in construction of discourse, which has wider implications for production of texts. In this paper I wish to exemplify the way FSP may contribute to the production of a specific kind of text, namely specialized written translation, and how its negligence (or unawareness) on the part of the translator can result in obliterating the message and disturbing the information flow.

FSP deals with the form of utterances, i.e. their grammatical structure, as motivated by the assumed knowledge of interlocutors. As put by Lambrecht (1995:3), FSP is "not concerned with lexical and propositional content in the abstract but with the way such content is transmitted". The approach was first developed by the so-called Prague School of Linguistics (and further developed – and modified – by other linguists, e.g. Halliday) and generally speaking it advocates a dichotomy to be present in the semantic structure of an utterance (Bogusławski 1977:16). From this

semantic dichotomy follows a division into two basic functional elements: theme and rheme[1]. Generally speaking, theme is understood to be the part of a sentence denoting what is already known or expected (context-dependent), whereas rheme contains what is new or unpredictable in a given context (context-independent). According to González and Ángeles (2003:57) there are three basic interpretations of the theme/rheme notion: semantic (theme is "what the message is about"), informational (theme represents information to be derived from the utterance, the whole text of other knowledge of the recipient) and syntactic[2], which identifies theme as the initial element of a sentence. Especially the latter interpretation is of relevance here, as it directly translates to the easily observable in written texts external form of a sentence, most of all the word order.

Within the framework of FSP it might be stated that word order is one of the formal expressions of the theme/rheme structure of a sentence. Word order variations can indicate the textual status of the referents of individual constituents of a clause, which ultimately serves as a means to facilitate language processing (Downing, 1995:10). As far as word order is concerned, languages express different patterns of preference. This has heavy implications on the theme/rheme structure of sentences in a given language, as in general languages of a relatively free word order (such as Polish) are expected to allow information structure to influence word order to a much greater extent than "morphologically modest" languages such as English (ibid: 9–14). Some experimental methods have been employed to examine the principles governing the choice between alternative word orders in different languages. By way of such an experiment, Tomlin (1995) concluded that speakers of English tend to choose the syntactic construction where the "focally attended" referent (i.e. supposed semantic theme

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[1] Here, too, the confusion of terminology has often been acknowledged (González and Ángeles 2001:4). For the purpose of this paper, however, it is assumed sufficient to use only one of the co-existing terminological options, regardless of the differences in interpretation related to the terminology used by different scholars.

[2] Differences in interpretations have led some scholars to distinguish two distinct approaches to the theme/rheme structure: one represented by Halliday, where the defining feature of theme and rheme is their position in a sentence, and one represented by the Prague School (Firbas, Malthesius), where theme and rheme are understood more in terms of cognition and contextuality (cf. Baker 1992). Discussion of differences between these two approaches is however beyond the scope of this paper and for the sake of the analysis the distinction between them is altogether disregarded.

– what the message is about) assumes the function of syntactic subject. For Polish the experimental data were, however, inconclusive (which might reflect the fact that Polish, as an inflectional language, has at its disposal more means of grammatical focalization than just the passive vs. active distinction used in the experiment).

Word order, through establishing relations between sentence components and assigning to them the function of theme or rheme, is extremely important in maintaining unity and a consistent structuring on the level of text, which plays a major role in text production and, consequently, translation (which is in fact an act of production, not just imitation). Word order is therefore not only a grammatical feature, but also a textual strategy (Baker 1992:119), contributing to the preservation of coherence through the role it plays in cohesion (understood as "sequential connectivity of surface elements", as opposed to conceptual or logical connectivity, which is coherence; Hatim & Mason 1993:195). Translators therefore must not neglect the fact that their choices on the sentence level influence the overall thematic structure of a text.

What has just been referred to as thematic structure (i.e. the division of a sentence into theme and rheme) is considered to constitute the speaker's (writer's) perspective. From the point of view of the hearer (reader) the distinction is drawn between what is known (given) and new and generally referred to as information structure (Baker 1992:144). As new information needs to be represented more fully and explicitly, and therefore constitutes a longer and heavier element in a sentence, it follows that such long constituents should be placed towards the end of an utterance. This is known as the End-Weight Principle.

Given-New and End-Weight principles become problematic in translation practice when there are grammatical constraints which seem to be in conflict with the need to preserve the information structure of the source text in the target language. This conflict is all the more prominent between languages so considerably different in terms of grammar as Polish and English. As has already been mentioned, inflectional languages of a relatively free word order, such as Polish, allow for "less tension between the requirements of syntax and those of communicative function. Conversely, in languages with relatively fixed word order there will be greater instances of [such] tension" (Baker 1992:166). Failure to acknowledge this problem results in the translator producing unnecessary shifts, which are most awkward when conflating the so-far preserved information flow in the target text.

Let us analyse an instance of these phenomena at work in an example. The text to be analysed is a specialized translation from English into Polish. The text is a pharmaceutical document intended for patients participating in clinical studies of investigational drugs or therapies. Its objective is to provide detailed information on the nature of the study and its requirements. From the informative function of the text follows the necessity of absolute clarity and comprehensibility, as the document is addressed to a very heterogeneous group of patients of diverse educational backgrounds. It is expected that in such cases the requirements of information flow should be possibly best preserved.

Let us consider sentence [1] (for a broader context, see Appendix):

[1a] English: *During the study, medical information will be created about each person who takes part.*

[1b] Polish (translation): *Podczas badania o każdym uczestniku będą zbierane dane medyczne.*

Thematic structure of [1a] suggests that the 'given' information (or theme) is the study being described. The sentence introduces the 'new' information that medical data will be collected from *each of the study participants*. Sentence [1b], however, places the noun phrase 'each person who takes part' towards the beginning of the sentence and before the verb[3]; a shift entirely acceptable in terms of Polish grammar, yet introducing a slight change of the overall emphasis of the sentence: in Polish it is the medical data that is most emphasized element of the new information. A Polish sentence preserving the original structure would be e.g. 'Podczas badania dane medyczne będą zbierane na temat każdego z uczestników'.

A similar situation occurs in sentence [3]:

[3a] English: *All drugs can cause adverse effects in some people.*

[3b] Polish (translation): *Każdy lek może u niektórych osób wywołać działania niepożądane.*

In order to be faithful to the thematic structure in [3a] one would need to render it in Polish as 'Każdy lek może wywołać działania niepożądane u niektórych osób'.

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[3] For the sake of simplification, the verb in a sentence is understood here to represent Firbas's 'transition' between theme and rheme.

In reality, such faithfulness in rendering sentence-level information structure is however sometimes undesirable. Let us consider sentence [2]:

[2a] English: *About 270 men and women, aged 18 years old or older will be in the study.*

[2b] Polish (translation): *W tym badaniu weźmie udział około 270 mężczyzn i kobiet w wieku 18 lat lub więcej.*

At first glance perhaps one might observe that information flow is actually quite reverse in [2b]. Yet a closer look reveals a massive floating of information structure principles in the English original rather than the translation: it is the English sentence that is clumsy and distorts information flow, all the more so in view of the fact that the definite article in 'the study' instantly implies that it is the 'study' which is the known, re-appearing element of the text. In this case the translator's version restores the lost coherence of the paragraph.

A perhaps more subtle problem can be observed in clause [4]:

[4a] English: *Other reported events seen but not believed to be related to YYY include...*

[4b] Polish (translation): *Do innych działań niepożądanych, które zgłaszano i których związek z preparatem YYY jest wątpliwy, należą...*

The notion of 'reportedness' of a therapy side effect is treated as its defining feature in [4a] and belongs to the known characteristics of 'events', which are the topic of the paragraph. By distinguishing this element as a part of an interjection, clause [4b] implies that so far the text referred to non-reported events, which is a distortion of the original sense of the paragraph (cf. Baker 1992:151 on the role of punctuation in establishing the given-new distinction).

The last example to be considered here is sentence [5]:

[5a] English: *This was described in the "Introduction" section.*

[5b] Polish (translation): *Opisano to w punkcie „Wprowadzenie".*

'This' in [5a], being a demonstrative pronoun, should naturally be considered theme (given information), as pronominalisation is one of thematization strategies (Baker 1992:148). The equivalent Polish structures

'to zostało opisane' or 'to opisano' are however marked to a native ear, which is probably why the translator decided to resort to disregarding thematic structure of the original for the sake of grammatical acceptability. This strategy resulted in emphasis being put on the activity of describing, which was originally part of the new information introduced by the sentence (rheme). Yet it is not impossible to render the correct information structure without any loss of grammatical acceptability in Polish, for instance by introducing a noun phrase instead of the pronoun: 'Kwestię tę opisano w punkcie „Wprowadzenie"'.

To sum up, it seems that FSP can be a useful tool in explaining the organizational structure of texts (and languages, for that matter; Baker 1992:160), and as such should prove invaluable to professional translators. Nevertheless, in reality translators seldom seem to be aware of the intra-textual relations they should be able to address and are often guided solely by their linguistic intuitions. Whether this is sufficient probably depends on the translator's individual abilities, still however some familiarity with the implications of FSP should most probably be of much help to translators; at the same time though it should not be forgotten that certain restrictions imposed by syntax, such as word order, as well as the End-Weight principle and the natural phraseology of the target language might at times ally to render the thematic organization of a text altogether impossible to preserve (Baker 1992:172).

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Texts analyzed: courtesy of KONTEKST translations agency.

Appendix

Source text (fragments):

Patient Information and Consent Form to Participate in a Clinical Investigation

INTRODUCTION

(...)

This document is called a Patient Information and Consent form. This form explains the following about the study:

- Purpose
- Procedures
- Benefits
- Risks, discomforts and precautions
- Your right to stop being in the study (withdrawal) at any time.

If you are not truthful with your Study Doctor about your health history, you may hurt yourself by being in this study.

[1] During the study, medical information will be created about each person who takes part. This form will explain how your medical information will be used. It will also explain who may see this information. If you wish to allow your medical information to be collected, used and shared with certain persons involved in the study, you will be asked to sign this form. If you do not sign this form, you will not be able to take part in this study.

The study is being done for XXX. Your Study Doctor is being paid by XXX. to do this study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

(...)

YYY is an investigational medication. This means that YYY is still being studied. It also means that neither <Competent Authority name> nor other authorities in the world

allow it to be sold for treating patients. YYY is approved by appropriate authorities to be used only in research. [2] About 270 men and women, aged 18 years old or older will be in the study.

(...)

RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS

[3] All drugs can cause adverse effects in some people. You must tell the Study Doctor or Study Staff about any adverse effects you have. If you do not tell the Study Doctor and Study Staff about the side effects, you may harm yourself by being in this study.

Possible YYY adverse effects
The most commonly reported adverse effects for YYY in previous clinical studies are gastrointestinal and include:

- Abdominal pain, bloating, constipation (...)

In addition, a few instances of increases in calcium in the blood were observed in subjects who took the Z gram per day dose.

[4] Other reported events seen but not believed to be related to YYY include:

- Ventricular extrasystoles (irregular heart beat), chills (...)

CONFIDENTIALITY AND AUTHORIZATION TO COLLECT, USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION

(...)

You are being asked to allow the collection of your medical information. You are also being asked to allow the use and sharing of this information. This is done so that the safety and effectiveness of the study medication can be studied. [5] This was described in the "Introduction" section.

(...)

Translated text (fragments):

Informacje dla pacjenta i formularz świadomej zgody na udział w badaniu klinicznym

WPROWADZENIE

(...)

Niniejszy dokument nosi nazwę Informacja dla pacjenta i formularz świadomej zgody. Zawiera on wyjaśnienia dotyczące następujących aspektów badania:

- Cel
- Czynności i zabiegi
- Korzyści
- Zagrożenia, dolegliwości i środki ostrożności
- Pana/Pani prawo do przerwania udziału w badaniu (wycofania się) w dowolnym momencie.

Jeśli zatai Pan/Pani informacje dotyczące Pana/Pani historii choroby przed lekarzem prowadzącym badanie, udział w badaniu może zagrozić Pana/Pani zdrowiu.

[1] Podczas badania, o każdym uczestniku będą zbierane dane medyczne. Niniejszy formularz zawiera wyjaśnienie sposobu wykorzystania Pana/Pani danych medycznych, jak również wskazuje, kto będzie miał dostęp do tych danych. Jeśli wyraża Pan/Pani zgodę na zbieranie, wykorzystywanie i przekazywanie Pana/Pani danych medycznych określonym osobom zaangażowanym w badanie, zostanie Pan/Pani poproszony/-a o podpisanie niniejszego formularza. W przypadku niepodpisania niniejszego formularza nie będzie Pan/Pani mógł/mogła wziąć udziału w badaniu.

Badanie to prowadzone jest dla firmy XXX. Lekarz prowadzący badanie otrzymuje za swój udział wynagrodzenie od firmy XXX.

CEL BADANIA

(...)

Preparat YYY jest lekiem eksperymentalnym. Oznacza to, że preparat YYY nadal podlega badaniom. Oznacza to też, że nie został on dopuszczony do sprzedaży w celach leczniczych ani przez <nazwa organu rejestracyjnego>, ani przez inne organy na świecie. Preparat YYY został zatwierdzony przed odpowiednie władze do zastosowania jedynie w ramach badań naukowych. [2] W tym badaniu weźmie udział około 270 mężczyzn i kobiet w wieku 18 lat lub więcej.

(...)

ZAGROŻENIA I DOLEGLIWOŚCI

[3] Każdy lek może u niektórych osób wywołać działania niepożądane. O wszelkich występujących u Pana/Pani zdarzeniach niepożądanych należy poinformować lekarza lub członków personelu prowadzącego badanie. Jeśli nie powiadomi Pan/Pani lekarza lub członków personelu prowadzącego badanie o działaniach niepożądanych, udział w badaniu może zaszkodzić Pana/Pani zdrowiu.

Możliwe działania niepożądane preparatu YYY
Działania niepożądane preparatu YYY najczęściej zgłaszane w ramach poprzednich badań klinicznych dotyczą układu pokarmowego i należą do nich:

- ból brzucha, wzdęcia, zaparcia, (...)

Ponadto obserwowano kilka przypadków zwiększonego stężenia wapnia we krwi u pacjentów przyjmujących preparat w dawce Z gramów dziennie.

[4] Do innych działań niepożądanych, które zgłaszano i których związek z preparatem YYY jest wątpliwy, należą:

- Przedwczesne pobudzenia komorowe (nieregularny rytm serca), dreszcze (...)

POUFNOŚĆ ORAZ UPOWAŻNIENIE DO ZBIERANIA, WYKORZYSTYWANIA I UJAWNIANIA PANA/PANI DANYCH MEDYCZNYCH

(...)

Jest Pan/Pani proszony/-a o wyrażenie zgody na zbieranie Pana/Pani danych medycznych. Proszony/-a jest Pan/Pani również o wyrażenie zgody na to, aby dane te były wykorzystywane i aby można było się nimi dzielić. Jest to wymagane, aby umożliwić ocenę bezpieczeństwa i skuteczności leku badanego. [5] Opisano to w punkcie „Wprowadzenie".

(...)

Flarf poetry: a poor imitation of real poetics or an outstanding phenomenon influencing contemporary global poetry?

„Can reverberate horribly, transmitting the special messages we've been ordained to deliver to mankind with a violence more often associated with alcohol abusers and old pre-digital Roland RX 550 synthesizers"[1].

Flarf: a meaningless quotation, a meaningless name and meaningless content are the first assumptions made by a random reader, who encounters the above extract and the expression enclosed in inverted commas. However, for many people, Flarf, the newest and very fresh American poetry movement, equals to a masterpiece. Why do people associate such a high word with, as many would say, so low an art? Because it comes out of necessity and everything which is necessary and poetic must sooner or later become a work of art. Sounds simple but simplicity is the last of all means used by Flarf poets. Fed up with murdering the language by Internet users they decided to find linguistic beauty right in the hotbed, which stands for the proto-language used by bloggers, chatters and mailers. The amount of weird mistakes, silly abbreviations or semantically incomplete structures have led them to regard the Internet as a storehouse of everyday speech. By mingling text messages with on-line information or announcements they create poems which strike with their uniqueness. Their activity

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[1] Flarf Collective (2003) "The True Meaning of Xmas" (retrieved from: http://mainstreampoetry.blogspot.com/2003_12_01_archive.html), accessed on December 14, 2009.

evokes extreme opinions depending on the assumptions of various innovative or conservative schools of literary criticism.

Poetry.com contest – epic failure which gave the start

Poetry.com was meant to be a site for everyone interested in both reading and writing poetry. Its noble aims were fulfilled, so the number of visitors was growing. However, site founders became fed up giving on-line poetic opportunities to every surfer and decided to make a step further, which, in the opinion of all critics, was the worst and most catastrophic step in their lives. A poem contest, remedy for poetry.com boredom, was announced. Every user had a chance to send in their own piece of poetry to be published in print. Everything sounded all right but there was one problem: contest initiators demanded money from everyone who wanted to see one's work printed and published. Blinded by consumerism, the poetry.com administration seriously harmed poetic craft and their manufacturers.[2] Gary Sullivan decided to check whether large numbers of temporary visitors and the enormous amount of works submitted didn't hinder the good choice underlying the selection of the work to be published. He also decided to check the "money factor" crucially involved in the whole shady business. He posted an innovative poem which consisted of different expressions found on the web, attaching to it a nominal sum. He wanted to check poetry.com standards for excellence and as he found out a month later his work was good enough to be published. So did many of his friends who wrote similar poetical lines. Their poems were in print. This is how Flarf gained its first fame and admiration.

However, Sullivan wasn't a sheer forerunner of the Flarf poetry movement. This poetical phenomenon owes a lot to various linguistic poets who in the early '90s founded the Language Poetry Movement. They were called avant-garde or language poets and their works were published by the "L.A.N.G.U.A.G.E." magazine. Their main aim was to make the reader a producer of poems. Sullivan and his colleagues quickly swallowed the hook and delicately transformed the legacy of the group. He spontaneously

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[2] Such sites as poetry.com are called poetry scams. They have made a huge profit out of fake poetry contests for nearly 100 years in the US. Apart from poetry.com, other poetry scams are e.g. Watermark Press, International Society of Poets, Publish-Today.com, etc. "Publishing Scams" (retrieved from: http://www.zolaenterprises.com/Publishingscams1.htm), accessed on December 14, 2009.

united his colleagues and, in 2000, created a single entity, calling it the Flarfist Collective. Maria Damon, Jordan Davis, Katie Degentesh, Drew Gardner or Nada Gordon were its most famous members, and they were connected with the so-called post-lang or post-ava generation, for whom the w o r d is the biggest object of interest. They wanted readers to be affected by words rather than any authority. Sounds simple but nothing at all is easy here, even the name of the movement may cause a lot of problems, because how can we know what flarf actually means... I know you're craving the answer. Here it is!

Flarfy flarf flarfs flarfiness

There is no logical explanation why Gary Sullivan decided to use the term f l a r f to name works presented by his colleagues joined together in the Flarfist Collective. According to Jennifer Ashton, professor of University of Illinois in Chicago, "the name flarf is perfect because it is as weird as its poems. It's a strange combination of words just as Flarf poems are strange combinations of different expressions"[3]. The verb itself has also gained a peculiar meaning. When you flarf something you write it very fast, without any hesitation, it's just a constant flow of your thoughts put on paper. We may go a step further and refer to Sullivan's opinions on this term. He is trying to play with the word and create its different morphological types. For example, according to Flarfist Collective, flarfiness is, "a typical state of mind. You're out of control, unok and these are adjectives which hide inside every Flarf poem"[4]. These words are still very fresh and, due to perfect co-operation between the net-world and Flarf poetry, their definitions are often introduced by Internet surfers. Urbandictionary.com is one of the best sources providing up-dated definitions of particular terms connected with Flarf poetry. For example, according to the Internet lexicon, the term "flarfy" means "to be wrong, awkward, stumbling, semi-coherent, un-P.C. To take unexpected terms, to be jarring". However, for many people such tight relation between these two very different media leads towards the enormous danger that poetry may be deprived of its sublimity and exclusiveness. Creating on-line hype around

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[3] Ashton, J. (2008) *American Poetry in 21st Century* (retrieved from the lecture held in April 2008 at the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw).

[4] Sullivan, G. (2003) "My Definition" (retrieved from: http://garysullivan.blog-spot.com/2003_07_13_garysullivan_archive.html), accessed on December 14, 2009.

high-art is a serious threat and the strongest argument in the hands of Flarf critics.

There is only one rule but it may sound cruel

Flarf advocates suggest that they cannot control their act of constructing a poem because it is very spontaneous, however, flarf critics juxtapose this view with their opinion and state clearly that Flarf poetry is a p u r p o s e f u l act of damaging well-formed poetry. Internet was supposed to set us free, democratise us but all has so far offered is a 24-hour access to emptiness. People don't write any more, they blog. Instead of talking, they text. No punctuation, no grammar, "LOLs" and "ROTFLs". For many writers Internet users are a bunch of stupid people pseudo-communicating with other stupid people in a proto-language which resembles more what cavemen used to speak than the King's English. Flarf takes inspiration from such sources as blogs, chats or forums, etc. All inaccuracies made by bloggers or chatters are smoothly transferred to poetry. Flarf is evidently rich in grammatical mistakes and it lacks any form. Its works may consist of one line or stretch out as far as one wants. What's more, critics can't stand the unconsidered and rapid manner of writing. They compare it to the process of cutting food and wood into pieces, putting them into the bowl, sprinkling with dust and finally serving as main course in an exclusive restaurant. The dish stands for flarf and the exclusive restaurant resembles poetry as a whole. In their estimation, such works don't deserve to meet any serious reception; therefore, readers are unable to derive any message from a particular flarfy work. Nonetheless, flarf poems are made to be flarfy and that's it!

Driving back to the future

The fact that Flarf poetry is unique and innovative is beyond any doubt; however, some of the methods used by its creators may derive from surrealist conventions used in the early 1920s. Flarf uses the cut-up technique dating back to 1920 France as a contribution of Tristan Tzara. "It is an aleatory literary technique or genre in which a text is cut up at random and rearranged to create a new text"[5]. Flarf poems are constructed in the

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[5] (retrieved from: http://www.artandpopularculture.com/Cut-up_technique), accessed on December 14, 2009.

very same way. Bits of on-line information are cut and pasted haphazardly, therefore artists always create a unique and innovative collage. In order to create a great one, poets use a number of methods which allow them to focus on a particular Internet source.

Googlism is a web application which queries text in Google, and displays the multiple ways in which the term is used among the results. The point is to type a word, and see what google "thinks" about the word. These thoughts are very useful to Flarf poets who make them sound poetic. Mixing various Google ideas, they are able to create an astonishing piece of poetry which strikes with its sly form, sense of humour, paradoxical elements, uniqueness and originality. John Ashberry, one of the greatest contemporary American poets, said that, "the more vague and crazy a poem is, the more fun and sense we may take out of it". Pasting these words into the dimension of flarfy verses they serve as a great support for the whole

Flarfist Collective Movement

Spoetry is another device used by Flarf poets in order to create their works. Spoems are poetic verses made primarily from the subject lines of spam e-mail messages. The concept is both outrageous and brave. Junk mail, defined by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary as, "advertising material sent by e-mail to people, who have not asked for it", is used for poetry production. You need to have guts to create something from nothing. Spam is often automatically erased from the Internet mail boxes; however, when it is not, people are really pissed off. Flarfists are transforming this garbage into haiku, limerick or concrete poetry. One of the best known spam poetry writers, Ben Myers, claims to have been writing such bizarre poetry since 1999. He has recently published his first book of poems, entitled "E-mail Inspired Poems".

> „what Can You Do in 3 Minutes?/Look out your window/Make a child happy/Groom those bushy eyebrows/Lose 10 Ibs./Remove dents/Pupate".

Flarf is very keen on using web filters which enables it to get a desirable content from the net. As a result, a particular poem may be totally focused on a particular area. When Flarfists want to write about love they may not only google the topic and find pages with the relevant information but they are also able to filter e-mail messages, blogs, chats, advertisements

or on-line announcements to support their work. This method brings a wide spectrum of sources which may become involved in the artistic process. One of the best known Internet filters is called Bayesian Spam Classifier[6] and it searches the web in order to find junk mail. Unfortunately, BSC worked properly only for five years and in 2002 its role ended. Sly spammers developed a technique which enabled them to deceive the filter. BSC was always looking for any substantial text which may look like a potential spam. Silly advertisements, fake contests, announcements generated by doctored Internet accounts were the most frequent victims of the classifier. A clever technique used a method of word-salad – spammers were weaving into their junk mail pieces of text which were totally unpragmatic and senseless. BSC didn't know how to behave so it accepted such a diverse content. Flarfists have got infected by "word-salad"[7] idea very early and it stands for another of their poem-writing-methods now. The "word-salad" technique is very original; however, its product is often ambiguous and weird. It is clearly art for art's sake and very often lacks any sense or didactic content. Nonetheless, Flarf poetry shows a new approach towards the reader which doesn't put emphasis on the emotion part.

Affection is irrelevant and unimportant to Flarfists. They want to show that everybody can write poetry and all of us is poetry. We create poetical works all the time writing e-mails, text messages, receiving spam or blogging. This approach is treated as very innovative and modern which makes many critics really anxious about the future of poetics. If everyone is able to write something and everything is poetry, where would we find the exclusiveness and beauty of this literary discipline? It's very hard to answer this question now because the gist of contemporary Flarf is held tightly by Flarfist Collective members; therefore, any potential hazard hasn't occurred yet. Moreover, according to Flarfists' approach, good poetry is always marked by the readers and if particular poems are exceptional they are always appreciated by the readers. People who write and lack recipients' appreciation will never be called poets.

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[6] Bayesian Spam Classifier has become one of the most renown systems which successfully distinguishes between illegitimate and legitimate e-mails. The technique is also applied to a number of disciplines including science, medicine, engineering.

[7] According to *answers.com* a word salad stands for a mixture of different words which put together seem to be meaningful but actually they do not convey any message.

Fad affects people, uniqueness affects poetry

One of the main assumptions of Flarf poetry is that it is made for seeking uniqueness. The notion of originality is the main argument present in every critical debate on contemporary poetry. In order to create something new, it must be shocking and outrageous to catch attention of all the readers. The above topics of Flarf poetry, such as e.g. junk mail, slang, spam or Internet filters, are not the only sources of Flarfists' inspiration. It may sound trivial but every expression we utter is always disposable and rarely returns back in the conversation. Flarf poets decided to concentrate on the notion of speech act which is always exclusive. They write what they hear on the streets, in public places, on the radio or television. These bits of different dialogues or singular utterances are mixed up and formed like a pulp into verses and stanzas. Body movements seem to be as original as speech acts.

It is worth mentioning Kenneth Goldsmith's work, which describes every minute activity her body does during a particular period of time. Her best known poem, entitled, "Fidget", her best known poem, is very peculiar. The whole text is about 100 pages long. However, the author decided to divide it into twelve parts, twelve hours. Actually Goldsmith describes her body movements throughout a whole day so the division is more hour than chapter-like. The action starts at 10 a.m. and ends at 10 p.m. Waking up, eating or defecating are exemplary activities described.

> „Eyelids open. Tongue runs across upper lip moving from left side of mouth to right following arc of lip. Swallow. Jaws clench. Grind. Stretch. Swallow. Head lifts. Bent right arm brushes pillow into back of head. Arm straightens. Counterclockwise twist thrusts elbow toward ceiling".

This is how Kenneth wakes up. The originality affects everyone and makes a profound impact on both readers and artists.

Flarf as a strong impulse to new poetical groups

The US – the country where Flarf originated, abounds in many groups trying to set new trends in contemporary poetry. Since 2005, poets including Reb Livingston, Joseph Massey and Andrew Mister have collaborated in a blog-driven poetry movement, described as a "new sincerity" – a contrast to "the cold, irony-laden poetry dominating journals, magazines and new

books of poetry"[8]. However, it is worth saying that the term "new sincerity" is also attached to such disciplines of culture as music, film, philosophy or film criticism. What they all have in common is the unanimous run against prevailing modes of postmodernism. Spam poetry proliferation has gained such a fast hold that their advocates decided to found a special institute which would preserve the legacy of spammers. It may sound ridiculous but at the official web page of The Spam Poetry Institute we get to know the message of this association:

> "The Spam Poetry Institute is an organization dedicated to collecting and preserving the fine literature created by the world's spammers. Not only do these persistent individuals sell useful products like cable filters and international drivers' licenses, they also know how to combine words in a very powerful way. We hope that you will browse our collection of special messages and that you will be as touched as we were when we first found these gems of imaginative composition".

At the bottom, lies sly encouragement inviting readers to send any poetic spam found on the net. In Poland Flarf poetry also has wide repercussions. Justyna Radczynska's contribution is worth mentioning because her work is unprecedented in our country. Her poems are very similar to literary pieces created by spammers or flarfists. However, she put a great effort to promote her outstanding products. For example she founded a web page nieszuflada.pl, where she presents her poems and encourages everyone to send their poetry. Every site-member is capable of voting or commenting on their favourite poems. Moreover, each on-line writer has an opportunity to publish one's own work by the site founder. Rabczynska's poem neatly correspond with the Google engine. Her latest work entitled, "Obcowanie z przyrodą przy dobrej zabawie dla przeciętnie wysportowanego turysty" has most of the phrases derived from Google search of the expression "obcowanie z przyrodą". Many literary critics regard Radczynska as the hope of contemporary Polish poetry which needs to be "reanimated"[9].

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[8] Henriksen, K. (2007). *Drunk Bunnies, The New Sincerity, Flarf: How Blogs are Transforming Poetry, EconoCulture.*

[9] *Kasprzak M. (2005). Automat nie wydaje reszty, Lampa, 4, 13.*

Flarf – the mirror of our shortcomings

Despite the opinions expressed by several literary critics that Flarf is a threat to poetical aesthetics and grammatical area of the language, in the opinion of the readers, this genre is a significant source for future ideas of contemporary poetry. Many people regard Flarf as the sponge which filters daily conversation and progress within human language. Critics accuse Flarf of purposefully presenting linguistic inaccuracies or grammatical mistakes; however, isn't it our own speech? Flarf has come out from our innermost necessity and this is the reason why it should exist as long as possible. People need to see their shortcomings and improve the inaccuracies which are not so obvious and visible in everyday speech. Presented in an interesting form, they have to catch readers' and make people think about the way they treat their mother tongue.

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