Tomasz Wiech
Kielce, Republic of Poland

Strategies for Translating Stutterer Characters in the Novels

Characters with communication disorders are not common in the literature. Although their number has increased since 1960s, it is still limited. Nevertheless, some of the novels with a stutter character are published and translated globally. Due to those facts, the researcher makes an attempt to analyze shortly the history of disabilities, communication disorders and stuttering portray in the novels. The paper also examines how many novels with a stutterer character are translated from source language into Polish and it discusses the methods used to translate them.

Keywords: communication disorders, disabilities, literature, stuttering, translation strategies

> *The following paper is dedicated to Aleksandra W.*
> *who supported me in the research*

Miller [1, p. 28-33] states the literature can be used as an education tool to promote understanding, empathy and acceptance of disabilities because it affects attitudes, feelings and awareness. Keith [2, p. 7] notices that the disability has been used metaphorically to show qualities of inner characters. It was caused by the stereotypical viewpoint which occurred in the ancient times. It was believed that disability is a punishment for bad behaviour, evil thoughts or for not being a good enough person. As a result, disabled literary characters were on the margins of fiction. They were portrayed as uncomplicated figures, exotic aliens or freaks and they were also marked with attributes like missing limbs, twisted bodies or chronic illness to make evil more visible. In the 19th century some authors, such as Hugo (1831), Andersen (1838) or Dickens (1843), made attempts to change the attitude by portraying disabled characters as protagonists, however, the viewpoint changed in the 20th century mainly due to the novels like *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (Mc Cullers 1940), *The Rye* (Catcher 1951), *I can jump puddles* (Marshall 1955), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Kesey 1962), *Midnight Cowboy* (Herlihy 1965) or *The Cay* (Taylor 1969). Safran [3, p. 44] notices the increment of disabled protagonists from 311 between 1940-1975 to 348 between 1975-1981. Trepanier-Street & Romatowski [4, p. 45-9] and Favazza & Odom [5, p. 405-418] add that the knowledge and acceptance towards disabilities increased. It should be also stressed that the abovementioned situation set a new trend in literature, i.e. inclusion books

used as a treatment tool, recommended for people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Similar situation can be observed in the case of characters with communication disorders. Tsumoto & Black [6, p. 22-3] stress that those characters were also stereotyped and portrayed as *needed to be fixed*, *isolate*, *angry* and/or *unable to function in daily life*. According to Eagle [7, p. 14] the viewpoint changed after World War I and more books with characters with communication disorders were published; nevertheless, their number is limited. Ayala [8, p. 103-114], who reviewed 59 books with disabled characters from 1974-1996, states that visual- or orthopaedic-disabled characters were portrayed more frequently than other impairments, such as emotional disorders, autism, learning difficulties etc. The study shows that 22% of reviewed books presented orthopaedic impairment and 14% visual disorders. The study reveals that more books with multiple disabilities, learning disabilities, medical concerns, autism and attention deficit disorder were published between 1989-1996. Dyches et al. [9, p. 420-6] and Landrum [10, p. 230-4] state that the characters with visual and orthopaedic disabilities were portrayed more frequently because novelists and illustrators do not have difficulties to present them.

There are different types of communication disorders, however, stuttering has been the most popular in the literature since 1960s. It is worth to mention that stuttering (stammering) is defined as an interruption in the flow of speech which manifests itself by interjections (*mhm*, *yes*), repetitions of sound (*p-p-party*), syllable (*in-in-internal*), word (*party-party*) or phrase (*give me-give me a pen*), prolongations, blockings, revisions and atypical movements of face and body. Trotter & Silverma [11, p. 553-4] notice that the disorder is portrayed differently in the literature. Between 1960s-1980s, it was identified as a struggle and typical symptoms, such as repetitions or prolongations, were not portrayed. Moreover, most of those books, with a stutterer character (e.g. *The Change Over*, Mathy 1984) or stuttering in the plot (e.g *The Unmaking of Rabbit*, Greene 1972), were for caretakers who support stuttering children. Since 1990s, the stuttering has been presented as a feature and the novels touch on issues that concern dealing with the disorder in families (e.g. *Mary Marony Hides Out*, Kline 1993), the physiological process of disorder (e.g. *Sometimes I just stutter*, Eelco 1999) or the process of therapy discussion.

The research, based on the bibliographies performed by Trotter & Silverman [11:2008], Warmka [12:2015], Goodreads catalogue data and summarised in the figures below, shows that 94 novels portraying a stutterer character have been published since 1970s. In the 1970s, 28 (30%) novels were published; 1980s – 16 (17%); 1990s – 36 (39%); 2000s – 10 (12%)

and 2010s – 4 (2%). 80 novels, which is equal to 85%, were written in the 20th century and only 14 (15%) in the 21st. The highest number of novels can be observed in 1990s and the lowest in 2010s. It is worthy of mention that in 2010s the list of new novels includes *The King's Speech* (Conradi & Logue 2010), *Love, puppies, and corner kicks* (Krech 2010), *Paperboy* (Vawter 2013), *Embattled Minds* (Cohen 2014), *A boy and a jaguar* (Rabinowitz 2014). Tsumoto & Black [13, p. 22-23] stress that the growing interest in autism spectrum disorders at the beginning of 21st century caused that decrement. One may also notice that there are more novels for adults (60%) than children (40%).

Number of novels throughout the years
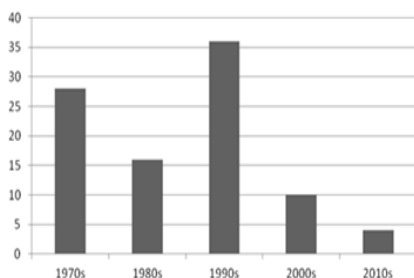
Number of novels for adults and children throughout the years
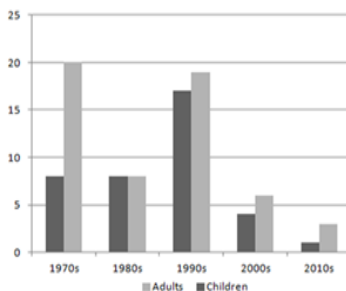
A more comprehensive analysis has showed that 16 novels have been translated into Polish language since 1970s. – 15 for adults and 1 for children. The list of those novels is presented in the table below.

The novels with stutter characters translated from source language into Polish			
Author	Novel	Year	Translation
Barker P.	*Regeneration (Odrodzenie)*	1993	1998
De Geus E.	*Sometimes I just Stutter (Czasami po prostu się jąkam)*	1999	2014
Deigthon L.	*Bomber (Nalot)*	1970	1989
Ellroy J.	*Big Nowhere (Wielkie nic)*	1989	2003
Ellroy J.	*Black Dahlia (Czarna Dahlia)*	1988	2007
Ellroy J.	*L.A. Confidential (Tajemnice Los Angeles)*	1991	2006
Evans N.	*The Loop (W pętli)*	1998	1998
King S.	*It (To)*	1997	2001
King S.	*The Shining (Lśnienie)*	1977	1990
Kress N.	*Beggars in Spain (Hiszpańscy żebracy)*	1994	1996
Logue M., Conradi P.	*The king's speech (Jak zostać królem)*	2010	2011
Pratchett T.	*Equal Rites (Równoumagicznienie)*	1987	1996

Roth P.	*American Pastoral (Amerykańska Sielanka)*	1997	2001
Rowlling J.K.	*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's stone*	1997	1997
Vonnegut K.	*Jailbird (Recywidysta)*	1979	2004
Wouk H.	*The Winds of War (Wichry Wojny)*	1971	1991

In the case of adults, 4 (20%) novels which were published in 1970s were translated in to Polish language, 1980s – 3 (38%); 1990s – 7 (37%); 2000s – 0 (0%) and 2010s – 1 (33%). In the case of children only one novel which was published in 1999 was translated, i.e. *Sometimes I just Stutter* by De Geus. The highest number of translation can be observed in 1990s and the lowest in 2000s and 2010s. It should be mentioned that the difference between first printing and translation is 10-15 years.
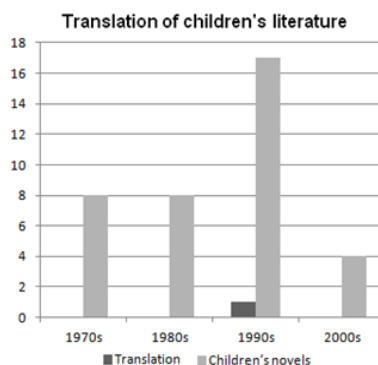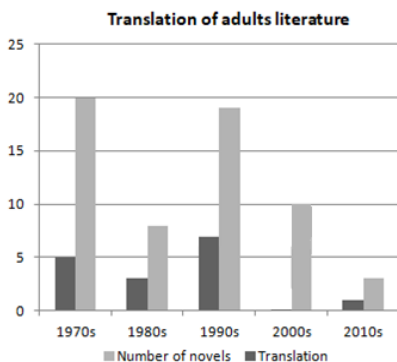
Although the lists of stutter characters portrayed in the literature were made, scholars have not gone deeper into the analysis of translation process. The question remains what kinds of strategies are used to render the speech of stutter characters from the source language into the target one. In order to investigate that issue 8 novels were selected. The number of disordered words in the source language (English) and the target language (Polish) was counted and the strategies were defined. The ways of dealing with structural and lexical differences were made on the basis of strategies by Malone [14, p. 15-36], who distinguishes (a) equation and substitution, (b) divergence and convergence (c) amplification and reduction, (d) diffusion and condensation, (e) reordering. The results are summarised in the table below.

Author & Novel		No. of disorder words		Difference ENG - PL	Method				
		ENG	PL		A	B	C	D	E
Stuttering	Ellroy J., *Black Dahlia*	28	35	+7	22	0	10	2	11
	Ellroy J., *L.A. Confidential*	45	39	-6	36	0	0	8	1
	King S., *The Shining*	61	60	-1	50	0	4	4	7
	Kress N., *Beggers and Choosers*	21	4	-17	3	0	1	18	0
	Lewis C.S, *The lion, the witch and the wardrobe*	12	11	-1	8	0	0	2	2
	Pratchett T., *Equal Rites*	91	96	+5	85	0	25	0	11
	Roth P., *American Pastoral*	146	123	-23	96	0	5	21	29
	Rowlling J.K., *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's stone*	24	32	+8	24	0	18	0	0
		500	400	TOTAL	324	0	63	53	61

The study showed that there can be pointed out 500 disordered words in the source language and 400 in the target one. There can be observed increment and decrement of the words in the target language. The number increases from 1 to 8 (37,5%) in case of 3 novels and it decreases from 1 to 23 (62,5%) in the case of 5. The highest increment can be observed in the novel *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's stone* (Rowling 1997) and the highest decrement in *American Pastoral* (Roth 1997).

It can be observed that 4 strategies were used by translators. Equation and substitution, strategies in which one word in source text is equal or similar to one word in target language, were used in almost all novels (with 324 cases of use, which is equal to 65%); then amplification and reduction (with 63 cases, which is equal to 12%), reordering (with 61 cases, which is equal to 12%) and the least frequent strategies were diffusion and condensation (with 55 cases, which is equal to 11%). By considering the results, it can be believed that the equation and substitution were frequently used because they seem to be the best strategies to translate disordered words. Moreover, when the translator used reduction and omitted or took away some elements, a stutter character became a character without disorder. In the diffusion one may observe the opposite situation.

The presented study can be useful for translators. It can help to know which strategy is more useful in translation of disordered speech and what kind of influence they have on the target language. Moreover, the research can be beneficial for scholars and students. It expands the knowledge about strategies by knowing which kinds are used more and less frequently. It should be stressed that the research is based on Malone's strategies, but in the literature of the subject one may point out other types of strategies worth considering. As a result, the paper should also open a wider discussion of strategies which can improve the process of rendering.

References

1. Miller D.L. Literature opens doors for all children. Phi Delta Kappa, 94(4), 2012. 2. Keith L. Take up thy bed & walk: Death, disability and cure in classic fiction for girls. New York, Routledge 2001. 3. Safran S.P. Using movies to teach students about disabilities. *The Council for Exceptional Children* 32(3), 2000. 4. Trepanier-Street M.L., Romatowski J.A. Young children's attitudes toward the disabled: A classroom intervention using children's literature. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 24(1), 1996. 5. Favazza P.C., Odom S. Promoting positive attitudes of kindergarten-age children toward people with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 1997. 6. Tsumoto C.A., Black R.S. Characters on the autism spectrum in young adult inclusion. *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education*. Vol. 3, No. 4. 2015. 7. Eagle Ch. Dysfluencies – on speech disorders in modern literature. New York, London, Bloomsbury Academic 2014. 8. Ayala E.C. Poor little things" and "brave little souls": Portrayal of individuals with disabilities in children's literature. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 39(1), London: Taylor & Francis, 1998. 9. Dyches T., Cramer, S.F., Prater M.A. Characterization of mental retardation and autism in children's books. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, 36, 2001. 10. Landrum J. Selecting intermediate novels that feature characters with disabilities. *The Reading Teacher*, 55, 2001. 11. Trotter W., Silverman F. The Stutterer as a Character in Contemporary Literature: A Bibliography. *The Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 41:4, 2008. 12. Warmka K. Stuttering in Children's Literature. mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/Bookstore/childrensbooks.html (access: 7.05.2019). 13. Tsumoto C.A., Black R.S., Characters on the autism spectrum in young adult inclusion. *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education*. Vol. 3, No. 4. Dayton: CORE Scholar, 2015. **14**. Malone J.L. The science of linguistics in the art of translation. Albany, State University of New York Press, 1998.