Translating audio description scripts… into English

Anna Jankowska, Michał Milc, Louise Fryer

Abstract

Translation as a new strategy of creating audio description was proposed and investigated by several researchers and adopted by professional practice as a cost-cutting strategy that produces a good quality audio description. Theory and practice have at least one thing in common – AD translation is performed exclusively from English into other languages. This article explores the possibility of translating into English AD scripts created locally for non-English-language films. More specifically – based on a case study of the Polish award-winning film Ida (dir. Pawlikowski, 2013) it aims to get some insight on if and what strategies would needed to be applied in order to render the cultural references from the Polish AD script into English.

Key words: audio description, competence, strategies, intercultural references, audiovisual translation, accessibility

Introduction

In recent years accessibility for the blind through filmic audio description (AD) has received attention and full recognition of many stakeholders – scholars, policy makers, practitioners, NGOs, cultural institutions, user associations, target audience etc. The concept of accessible culture and inclusive society has been developed in academic theory as well as in broadcasting and distribution practice.

However, with AD crossing many borders there are new challenges ahead. One of them are audio describer's competencies. It has long been suggested that a professional profile of describers should be created (Orero 2005; Matamala and Orero 2007; Remael and Vercauteren 2007; Utray, Pereira, and Orero 2009; Jankowska 2015). For now there is no systematic and comprehensive description of skills and abilities needed to become a successful describer. This gap might soon be filled by the outcomes of the ongoing ADLAB PRO[1] project whose aim is to create a professional profile of the yet little known professional figure. Unfortunately for now training in audio description is based on arbitrary assumptions and guidelines.

As noted by Jankowska and Szarkowska (2015) it has often been thought that the ability of describing what one sees is the only skill a describers needs. And while all describers are trained in describing the image many are not trained in intercultural competence. This competence – essential to any translator – seems to be overlooked when it comes to describers who are not only intersemiotic translators but very often also intermediaries between different cultures. As a result describers are faced with tasks they are not fit to perform such as creating audio description to films embedded in a culture distant to theirs.

Training describers in intercultural competence – as necessary as it is – will solve this problem only partially. While it is perfectly feasible to raise describers' awareness of

---

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/fd594781-ccfb-4118-ae90-a15441abb9c9 and www.adlabproject.eu

intercultural issues, it seems impossible to expect a describer to gain intercultural competence in all cultures. The same is valid for translators trained to become describers. It is highly probable that even if describers gained intercultural competence, those who specialize in "smaller cultures" would be scarce or non-existent. A possible solution to those cases is to create AD script locally and then translate it into the target language. As Lopez Vera (2006: 9) suggests:

> After all, translators are better trained to address cultural references and to adapt them to the target audience. Moreover, an original AD gives the appropriate cultural background and accordingly is more informative than the AD for the same film done from scratch. In this way, translators could avoid a significant loss of necessary cultural references […]

Translation as a new strategy of creating audio description was proposed and investigated by several researchers (Herrador Molina 2006; López Vera 2006; Remael and Vercauteren 2010; Jankowska 2015). Despite the initial scepticism (Hyks 2005; López Vera 2006) results of various studies show that it is a feasible, cost and time-cutting strategy that delivers good quality AD, accepted by the target audience (Herrador Molina 2006; Jankowska 2013, 2014, 2015). Translating AD from English was also introduced into professional practice by the industry (Benecke 2007 Georgakopoulou, 2009; Denise Kreeger and Shak Yousaf, personal communication, November 2, 2016).

Until now translation of AD scripts was considered exclusively from English into other languages (Georgakopoulou 2009; Herrador Molina 2006; López Vera 2006; Remael and Vercauteren 2010; Jankowska 2015) and almost exclusively for English-language films. The reasons behind that are the hegemony of English-language films and quality of audio description. Since AD was relatively new in many countries, experienced or professionally trained describers were almost inexistent in countries other than the US and UK (Herrador Molina 2006; López Vera 2006; Remael and Vercauteren 2010; Jankowska 2013, 2014, 2015). Translating from English was considered a means of providing good quality AD since describers from countries such as the UK or the US were far more experienced than their colleagues from other countries López Vera 2006; Remael and Vercauteren 2010(Georgakopoulou 2009; Herrador Molina 2006; Jankowska 2015;).

Intercultural references in audio description

Translation of culture elements also known as cultural references is a topic widely covered in Translation Studies and audiovisual translation. In the area of audiovisual translation Pedersen (2011: 43) calls them Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR) and defines them as "a reference that is attempted by means of any cultural linguistic expression, which refers to an extralinguistic entity or process".

Intercultural references are not a central issue in audio description research. This topic was taken up by a small number of researchers who proposed classifications of ECR types and/or possible strategies of their description (Szarkowska 2012; Walczak and Figiel 2013; Chmiel and Mazur 2014; Maszerowska and Mangiron 2014; Szarkowska and Jankowska 2015; Jankowska and Szarkowska 2016). However it should be noted that the classifications of ECR types for AD purposes and strategies of dealing with them in AD proposed up to this date were

based on a very limited corpus (many of them were exploratory studies based on just one film) thus they are not comprehensive and some inconsistencies might be found.

Table 1 below presents an overview of the ECR strategies proposed so far for AD purposes. It is easily seen that all the proposed classifications draw on Translation Studies and overlap significantly when it comes to both the scope and the naming of the categories.

Matamala and Rami (2009)	Szarkowska (2012)	Walczak and Figiel (2013)	Maszerowska and Mangiron (2014)	Chmiel and Mazur (2014)	Szarkowska and Jankowska (2015)	Szarkowska and Jankowska (2016)
	Naming	Naming	Naming	Retention	Naming	Naming
			Retention	Retention	Retention	
					Specification	
Amplification	Explicitation	Explicitation	Explicitation	Explicitation	Explicitation	Explicitation
Adaptation						
Generalisation			Generalisation	Generalisation	Generalisation	Generalisation
Omission			Omission	Omission		
	Describing without naming	Describing without naming	Description	Description	Describing without naming	Description
	Describing and naming	Describing and naming	Describing and naming	Describing and naming		
	Combination of strategies	Combination of strategies				Combination of strategies

Table 1 ECR strategies in AD research

Table 2 presents an overview of different ECR types detected and categorized in AD. As we already mentioned – studies conducted so far were based on a very limited corpus. This is reflected in the categories proposed below – categories that are often limited to the scope of the analysed film and definitely do not present a full picture. Providing an exhaustive classification of ECRs and of ECR strategies for AD goes beyond this article. However it falls within the scope of the "ADDit!" project within the scope of which this article is written (see below).

Matamala and Rami (2009)	Szarkowska (2012)	Walczak and Figiel (2013)	Maszerowska and Mangiron (2014)	Chmiel and Mazur (2014)	Szarkowska and Jankowska (2015)	Szarkowska and Jankowska (2016)
Text on screen Emblematic places in Berlin Pioneers Commercial products Children programmes Berlin Wall Press	Geographical references	Characters Clothing Character's actions/ behaviour/ gestures Religion Sports Signs/subtitles/on-screen texts Stereotypes Laws and customs Rights and liberties	Emblems and insignia Real-life characters Popular culture Body language Food and drink Religious symbols Newspapers and press articles	Insignia Emblematic places Gestures Clothes Objects	Geographical references Ethnographic references	Geographical references Ethnographic references Socio-political references

Table 2 ECR items/categories in AD research

When it comes to ECRs in AD translation, the topic was briefly tackled by some of the researchers dealing with this issue. Experiments with this new AD creation strategy – i.e. translation – showed that dealing with ECRs will be an important part of the process. While some researchers see them as a general translation-related issue that can be solved with translation strategies (Herrador Molina 2006) others see it as a more complex problem. Remael and Vercauteren (2010: 167-169) point out that ECRs are not only general translation crisis points (TCP) but classify them as an important AD translation issue:

> With respect to ECRs, the challenge resides in the source text as a pivot translation that the translator can or must double-check with the film, and the differences in cultural distance that might occur between film, audio description and translation. […]The AD translator cannot take the verbal source text for granted and will have to evaluate whether the original describer has chosen a suitable strategy and/or level of specificity in the source description.

Or as Georgakopoulou (2009: 41) sees it:

> When translating an AD script from one language to another, extra-linguistic considerations need to be taken into account, such as the audience's knowledge and expectations. Therefore, culture specific elements may be necessary for description in one culture but not in another. For instance, one of the programs for which we created templated AD scripts featured Greek Orthodox priests, who were described by our US colleagues as "priests dressed in black robes with long beards." This information was purposely left out in the Greek AD script, as a Greek audience is well familiar with the appearance of Greek Orthodox priests. So, the time allocated to their description could be used more effectively to focus on other information in the program.

Interestingly the issue of ECRs is seen as far more problematic by these researchers (Georgakopoulou 2009; Remael and Vercauteren 2010) who deal with translating English-language AD prepared to non-English-language films. This of course could be explained by pure coincidence. But a more probable hypothesis is that the crisis points encountered during the interlingual translation were at least partially caused by the quality of the intersemiotic translation. To be more precise by the fact that the English-language AD was prepared for films embedded in a culture distant to the describer's, who might have not been fit to perform the task of intercultural-intersemiotic translation, through lack of training and awareness.

The ADDit! Project

"ADDit!" is a research project financed by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education under the Mobility Plus programme (2016-2019) carried out at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

The project aims at investigating the issue of ECR transfer in audio description through carrying out an analysis of audio description understood both as the product and the decision-making process. The project is organized in smaller tasks whose objective is (1) to define and systematize strategies for describing ECRs in audio description; (2) to carry out an in-depth

understanding of the process of describing ECRs in audio description; (3) to confirm the feasibility of using script translations as a method of creating audio description scripts for foreign language films and finally (4) to examine the reception of various strategies for describing the ECRs and their impact on the understanding of the film.

This article is one of the first articles written within the framework of the "ADDit!" project and it aims at giving a state of the art overview of ECR research in audio description as well as presenting ad discussing a first attempt of translating AD scripts from a minor language into English.

The study

Our study was conducted on an audio description script prepared for *Ida*, a film from 2013 directed by Paweł Pawlikowski. The film enjoyed substantial international success. It has won awards including the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, the British Academy Film Award, the Goya Award, the European Parliament LUX Prize, the European Film Award, and many more. To date *Ida* has been shown in more than a dozen countries including Belgium, France, Italy, Holland, Germany, Norway, Australia, Argentina, the USA, and others (IMDb n.d.). However, *Ida* with AD has only been available in two countries: in Poland (special screenings organized by NGOs: Fundacja Kultury Bez Barier and Fundacja na Rzecz Rozwoju Audiodeskrypcji "Katarynka", DVD release, VOD) and Belgium (a special screening with AD during the Brussels Film Festival).

The film tells the story of the title protagonist — Ida[2], who is a novice in a religious order. The viewer enters her world immediately before she is due to take her monastic vows, when she is sent to meet her aunt, Wanda Gruz. The heroine's relative tells her about her roots, revealing her origin and uncovering her true identity, name, and surname — Ida Lebenstein. The women embark on a journey to places from Ida's childhood; the journey reveals more information about Wanda herself: her personality and her lifestyle. The plot of *Ida* is set in the second half of the 20th century in Poland. In effect, the film abounds in ECRs characteristic of the historical period popularly referred to as the PRL [an abbreviation of the official name of the Polish state under the communist rule – Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa – the People's Republic of Poland]. They have come to constitute a part of Polish culture, setting it apart from other cultures, whereas they are so characteristic that their presence in the film cannot go unnoticed by the Polish viewer.

For the purpose of this study we identified those fragments of the Polish AD script that contained ECRs. In total we were able to find 22 examples. The detected ECRs were grouped in categories according to the proposals discussed above, namely: Maszerowska & Mangiron (2014) and Jankowska & Szarkowska (2015 and 2016). Following that we undertook the task of translating selected passages into English in order to verify if and what strategies would be needed to be applied in order to render the ECRs from a Polish AD script in the target language. Translation was carried out by ourselves, consulted with a native speaker of English and finally revised by a professional describer from the UK.

---

[2] The protagonist has two names — Anna, used among the nuns, and Ida — the real name used by her aunt. Consequently, depending on the context of events, in AD the heroine is referred to interchangeably as Ida or Anna.

In what follows we present and discuss the strategies used to render the ECRs when translating into English an AD script written for a Polish film by a Polish describer. The ECRs are marked in bold while the changes made to the translation by the professional describer from the UK in italics.

Emblems and insignia

The film does not abound in an excess of national symbols, yet they do appear at the moments of crucial significance for the plot. The greatest accumulation of such ECRs is to be found in scenes depicting the professional life of Wanda Gruz, the aunt of Ida – the protagonist of the title. Wanda is a judge, which the viewer learns about by watching a court hearing over which she presides.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Za stołem sędziowskim siedzi Wanda. Ma kamienny wyraz twarzy. Jest ubrana w togę, na kołnierzu ma **łańcuch z wizerunkiem orła**. Obok niej siedzą dwaj sędziowie, jeden po prawej, drugi po lewej stronie. [Sitting behind the judge's bench is stone-faced Wanda. She wears a judge robe and **a thick chain with an eagle.** On her right and left sit two additional judges.]	Sitting behind the judge's bench is stone-faced Wanda. She wears a judge robe and **a thick chain with an eagle, the emblem of Poland**. On her right and left sit two additional judges	Sitting behind the judge's bench is Wanda <u>stony-faced</u>. She wears a judge's robe and a thick chain with an eagle, the emblem of Poland. On her right and left sit two additional judges

Table 3 ECRs related to emblems and insignia

The author of the Polish version of the AD employed the description without naming strategy. Having assumed that the recipient of the Polish AD version would be Poles exclusively, a mention of what the pendant on the chain depicts should be sufficiently easy to decipher for a majority of the viewers with partial or total sight impairment. In the case of English speaking viewers, the application of the same culture description strategy may limit the comprehensibility of significance of the described element of Wanda's apparel. The strategy proposed in the translation of this fragment – description with naming – first and foremost aims to present the function that the image of the eagle possesses in the context of Polish culture. Changes introduced by the professional describer were limited to simple language editing.

Body language and gestures

The ECRs included in the film's visual layer also extend to gestures and body language. Although *Ida* is not packed with these types of culturally-charged elements, they constitute an interesting research material and in the majority draw upon the strong ties between Polish culture and Christianity. An example from the closing sequence of the film is presented below. Ida is on the verge of taking her religious vows and she is watching a ceremony in which other

novices are participating. They are praying in a position known as a prostration – which in the Roman-Catholic church implies lying on the ground with arms stretched to the sides to form the sign of the cross.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Przed ołtarzem, na posadzce, **leży krzyżem** pięć nowicjuszek. [In front of an altar, five novices **lie prostrate on the floor.**]	In front of an altar, five novices **lie on the floor. Face down**. **Hands spread like a cross. They pray.**	In front of an altar, five novices <u>lie face down</u> on the floor. <u>Their arms</u> spread like a cross. They pray.

Table 4 ECRs related to body language and gestures

The Polish AD takes advantage of the fact that the above-mentioned body posture is comprehensible to a person raised in Polish culture which is closely tied with the Roman Catholic church. According to the Central Statistical Office of Poland (Główny Urząd Statystyczny 2015) as many as 92,8% of Poles declare to belong to the Roman Catholic church. The AD describes the above mentioned posture using a figurative and commonly known idiom '*leżeć krzyżem*' [literal translation: to lie like a cross]. The idiom simultaneously describes the posture adopted by the nuns while pointing to the gravity of the situation – a prayer in this body position is an expression of deep faith and devotion to God, which is significant in the context of the internal strife Ida is experiencing following the journey she had embarked on with her aunt. Thus, not only do the two words provide the description of the activity, but they also hold its function, symbolism, and meaning. Presumably, it was for this reason that the author of the AD did not think it necessary to enrich the description with additional information, if only to indicate that the novices are in prayer. Rendering this fragment of the AD into English necessitates a different approach. Admittedly, English does use the phrase '*to lie prostrate*'. Yet its application engenders two problems. Firstly, similarly as in Polish, it is a specialist term which is rather unclear for a majority of recipients. Secondly, even if someone understands it, it does not necessarily have to be associated with the position used in the Roman Catholic rite. Prostrations are used in many religions, e.g. Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. They, nevertheless, always signify an exceptionally devout prayer and adopting a posture in which part of the body above the knee touches the ground. It may, however, assume a variety of forms. This is why the English translation uses the strategy of description without naming next to the strategy of explicitation. As to the changes made by a professional UK describer – there were no changes made regarding the strategies used to transfer ECRs.

Religious symbols

In connection with its plot, *Ida* abounds in religious symbols. One such example to be found in the audio description is the gesture of kissing a medallion Anna (Ida) wears on a chain on her neck. This action serves to express the deep feelings the protagonist has for God, which is also visible in her facial expression when she removes the medallion from her lips, closing it tightly in her palm. In this case, the very gesture of kissing is not included within the set of ECRs since its significance is universal. What is important in this case is the combination of a gesture with an object of religious cult. The scene where this ECR is visible serves to present

Anna's (Ida's) character – a deeply devout person whose faith has been put to a difficult test. Before taking the Holy Orders, Ida must face the difficult family past – she is instructed to pay a visit to Wanda Gruz, her only relative.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Noc. Anna leży w łóżku. **W dłoń bierze zawieszony na szyi medalik.** Całuje go. [Nighttime. Anna is in bed. She grabs **a medallion hanging on her neck.** She kisses it.]	Nighttime. Anna is in her bed. She grabs **a medallion hanging on her neck.** She kisses it.	Nighttime. Anna is in her bed. She grabs a medallion hanging on a chain around her neck <u>and</u> kisses it.

Table 5 ECRs related to religious symbols

The Polish AD uses the strategy of naming. A somewhat blurry object was named '*medalik*', which in the Polish context unambiguously indicates a small pendant with an image of Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary. In translating the AD script into English, it is necessary to bear in mind that the English words '*medallion*' or '*medal*' themselves have no religious connotations. For this reason, it would be advisable to apply the strategy of explicitation in translation and add the word '*religious*'. Yet, in this specific scene the situation is more complex. In principle the object that Ida kisses is invisible. We do not know if her pendant is a religious medallion or maybe a family keepsake. It is, nonetheless, impossible to exclude the possibility that this is the crux of the matter and the description suggested in the Polish AD is an overinterpretation on part of the author who may have mistaken a religious medallion for a medallion or pendant of another type. Eventually, for the reasons presented above, generalisation would be the safest translation strategy. Yet, the word 'medallion' does not have such a strictly defined meaning, hence it deprives the description of its ambiguity and opens a substantial field for interpretation. The same possibilities are given to viewers without sight impairment who see Anna (Ida) shrouded in semidarkness. When it comes to the changes proposed by the UK describer – once again – they are of a linguistic nature.

Food and drink

An example of a culturally-charged element from this category of ECRs is a doughnut consumed by Wanda during her countryside outing with Ida. By any appearance, this element should not cause problems while translating the AD since doughnuts are also present in other cultures, especially those where English is a native tongue. However, the problem lies in the fact that in a representative of an American or British culture the word '*doughnut*' may evoke an entirely different image than that which can be seen on the screen.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Wanda wgryza się w **pączka**. [Wanda eats a **doughnut**.]	Wanda eats a **filled doughnut**.	Wanda eats a <u>jelly doughnut.</u>

Table 6 ECRs related to food and drink

This example is a very good illustration of an issue mentioned by Remael and Verecauteren (2010: 168) – 'AD translator cannot take the verbal source for granted'. In this case relying exclusively on the AD text might lead to an unsatisfactory translation. The *pączek* traditionally consumed in Poland differs in shape from the '*doughnut*', hence one might try to smuggle a hint on the type of the doughnut Wanda eats into the AD translation by applying the naming strategy which will allow one to take advantage of the fact that the name of the doughnut contains also its description. The translation supplies information on the doughnut's appearance, pointing to its distinction from the primary image that would be evoked in an English-speaking viewer. Although this particular phrase seemed very easy to translate into English, the final version differs from the one proposed by the AD translators. Although '*filled doughnut*' is perfectly understandable in the final version we opted for the more natural and more commonly used alternative.

Architecture

The appearance of places and sites visited by the protagonists is a crucial element introducing the viewer into the world of realities in which the plot of the film was embedded. Although ECRs appearing in this layer of the film constitute a background for the developing action, they must not be ignored since they outline the context and, furthermore, they offer a broader perspective on the image of life in a given time interval. Let us take a look at the scene from Ida and Wanda's visit to their native village which shows the image of Polish village and the lot of its inhabitants.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Wiejska chałupa. Na sznurze suszy się pranie. [**A farmhouse.** Clothes drying on a line.]	A **shabby farmhouse with stone and wooden walls**. Clothes drying on a line.	A shabby farmhouse with stone and wooden walls. Clothes drying on a line.

Table 7 ECRs related to architecture

Applying the naming strategy, the Polish AD script resorts to the storeroom of the viewer's knowledge and experience. It is very probable that associations which the AD will evoke in a Polish speaker will be consistent with what can be seen on the screen. However, translating this ECR into English entails a risk that, in an English-speaking viewer, a discrepancy between what appears on the screen and what the viewer will imagine might occur even if a linguistic equivalent in English does exist. There are two ways for describing this ECR. First of them is to combine naming with explicitation, however, with the awareness of a risk this strategy might entail. Another option is to apply combined strategies of naming, explicitation and description which will allow the viewer to form their own image of the element visible on the screen, to subsequently make it more precise thanks to the description provided by AD. In the final version we opted for the combination of the three strategies. No changes were introduced by the professional describer from the UK to the proposed AD translation.

Costumes

Although the PRL-era fashion abounds in uncountable ECRs which appear exclusively in the visual layer of the film, the subject matter of *Ida* — numerous scenes playing out within the monastic order, the heroine's mission, and Wanda's unusual profession — exclude the possibility of reaching profusely to ECRs pertaining to this sphere of Poles' life. These are scant, yet they are capable of transmitting a handful of ideas prevalent in Polish fashion of that period. The point in case is scenes which give the viewer a chance to catch a glimpse of Wanda out of her professional environment. In one of such scenes Wanda leaves the court to Ida at a bus station. She is clad in an attire characteristic for the PRL era – on her head she is sporting a headscarf covering most of her hair and ears, clasped with a metal element at the bottom. She is wearing a coat with a fur-trimmed collar, and she is holding a small handbag.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Jest ubrana w **płaszcz z futrzanym kołnierzem**. Na głowie ma **wzorzystą chustę**. [She wears a **fur collar coat**. Her hair is covered with a **patterned shawl**.]	She wears **a classy fur collar coat**. Her hair is covered with a **patterned shawl pinned under her chin**.	She wears a classy coat with a fur collar. Her hair is covered with a patterned shawl pinned under her chin.

Table 8 ECRs related to costumes

The Polish AD does not overwhelm the viewer with excessive information, applying the strategies of naming and describing. The AD contains no phrases or wording that would suggest to the viewer the fact that Wanda's attire indicates her social and material status. The financial situation of an average Pole was rather difficult in the times of the People's Republic of Poland, and so Wanda's figure stands out against the crowd. However, one might claim that the author of the AD assumes that Wanda's apparel is sufficiently emblematic so that people with impaired vision will easily decipher it. The same assumption may not be applied to English-speaking viewers. For this reason, the English rendition of the AD used the technique of explicitation. Wanda's financial standing was emphasised with the use of the world '*classy*'. Additional information on the manner in which the headscarf was fastened was also included to avoid associations with other ways headscarves are worn outside of Poland. As to the changes made by a professional describer from the UK – they were purely linguistic.

Means of transport

ECRs to be found in the transport category in *Ida* are not very numerous, besides they have a high potential to be inscribed in the group of easily recognisable for representatives of other cultures. Nonetheless, they merit the same measure of attention as the previously described ECRs, as they play a key role in constructing the overall impression. One specific one, i.e. a Wartburg car owned by Wanda, frequently appears in various fragments of the film.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Wanda wsiada do **białego Wartburga.** [Wanda gets into a **white Wartburg**.]	Wanda gets into a **Wartburg – a classy white limousine.**	Wanda gets into a Wartburg – a classy white limousine.

Table 9 ECRs related to means of transport

In the Polish AD, a strategy of naming with description was used. This way the AD makes use of the car make name and supplements the whole with the vehicle's colour. The strategy applied in rendering the AD into English is somewhat different. Next to naming and description, it also utilises explicitation. In the English translation, not only is Wanda's automobile a white Wartburg, it also becomes a classy limousine, which straightforwardly highlights Wanda's financial status.

This example is also worth drawing attention to from the perspective of the impact that time has on cultural foreignness. Even in a model situation, i.e. in the case of screening for audience not affected by impaired vision, not everyone is certain to retrieve the vehicle's make from their memory – the main feature of this element is its appearance. It is an elegant limousine not too many individuals could afford in those times. The Polish AD – addressed to Polish viewers – must take on the challenge presented by a varied degree of understandability of the subject element depending on the viewer's knowledge. It is not said that everyone is sufficiently familiar with motorisation to imagine the form of the car manufactured in the 1950s based solely on its name. This is why in this case even in Polish audio-description it is worth considering the use in the case of this ECR of such description strategies which allow the viewers to form a better picture thereof.

Everyday objects

The last category to which the ECRs to be found in the film have been allocated covers items used by the protagonists, although also in this case not all of them could be included in the AD. In the film a part of them appears in situations which leave no room for their description. Those which appear in the AD reflect the air and atmosphere of the post-war Poland. One of the more interesting examples is the scene in which Ida helps prepare a bath. Considering the fact that the convent was short of amenities such as running water and gas, the women have to heat the water to take a bath.

Polish AD	Proposed English translation	Revised English translation
Kuchnia. Z kinkietu na ścianie sączy się mdłe światło. Na **piecu kaflowym** w dużych garnkach grzeje się woda. Ida metalowym pogrzebaczem zdejmuje **fajerki, czyli żeliwne obręcze przykrywające otwór w płycie kuchennej**. [In the kitchen. A small lamp on the wall sheds pale light. Water warms up in large pots put on **a tile stove**. Using a fire poker, Ida **takes off a round lid that covers a hole on the top of the stove**. Using a fire poker, Ida **takes off a round lid that covers a hole on the top of the stove**.]	In the kitchen. A small lamp on the wall sheds pale light. Water warms up in large pots put on **a masonry cook stove**. Using a fire poker, Ida **takes off a round iron lid that covers a hole on the top of the stove**.	In the kitchen, a small lamp on the wall sheds pale light. Water warms up in large pots put on a ceramic cook stove. Using a poker, Ida takes off a round iron lid that covers a hole on the top of the stove.

Table 10 ECRs related to everyday objects

The fragment above contains two separate ECRs in the description of which one may detect various strategies. The first ECR to be seen in the fragment given above is a masonry heater. The Polish AD describes it by applying the naming strategy. The Polish AD description is not enriched with explicitation. It does not attempt to explain the characteristic features of such a stove. It is highly probable that the majority of audience will be able to imagine what such a device looks like. In translation into English the same assumptions may be adopted and, consequently, the same strategy. There is one reservation. The example at issue is a perfect illustration of the fact that an AD script is a pivot and the translator dealing with it must consult the original, i.e. the image. In the scene being discussed in reality we do not come across a masonry heater, but a tile cook stove. For this reason, in the final English version we suggest correcting the original to prevent a situation where the viewer forms an untrue image of the item used by the protagonists.

In the same fragment, the AD describes as Ida in order to put more fire or rake the hearth uses a fire poker to lift an element covering an opening allowing to reach the stove interior. In Polish, this part of the cook stove has its own name which was introduced in the AD. Yet, it is a slightly archaic word and it may not be entirely clear to all viewers. This is why the AD contains an explanation of the Polish word '*fajerka*'. Meanwhile, in English the term '*stove lid*' is in common use. When applied in the AD, it requires no additional explicitation. For this reason in translating the Polish AD into English, the strategy of omitting explicitation was used.

Conclusions

Our study was carried out as a first step of the ADDit! project whose broad aim is to examine the transfer of Extralinguistic Cultural References in audio description. More specifically to

define and systematize ECR types and strategies for AD purposes and to explore the possibility of translating AD scripts created locally to non-English-language films into other languages.

We are aware of the limited scope of this study therefore we do not attempt to draw any general conclusions but rather present some food for thought and future research.

First of all – our study shows that existing frameworks ECR classification and strategies for AD purposes are insufficient and inconsistent. They do not withstand putting them into practice. We believe that a more extensive corpus study is needed in order to propose a more comprehensive framework.

When it comes to the changes introduced by the native speaker of English and the UK based professional describer – there are two conclusions to be drawn. On the one hand the intercultural competence of the translator performing the task is not to be underestimated – only a translator who is well aware of both cultures will be able to perform the task of translating and adapting AD scripts from one language and culture to another. This does not exclude further consultations about the choices made. On the other hand whoever performs the task of translating AD scripts should be trained in audio description and more specifically in the local style guidelines. Else the translated script should be revised by a professional describer. Although in our case the changes introduced by an English-speaking describer were minimal they noticeably improved the quality of the description making it sound more natural for any English-speaking AD user. It should however be noted that the amount of the introduced changes might have been smaller since one of the Polish team members is a trained describer with knowledge of the UK AD guidelines and was able to correct the script before its final revision by the British describer. To give just one example – the most commonly corrected issue was the use of the present continuous instead of the present tense.

Finally – as limited as it is in scope – our analysis demonstrates that translating into English AD scripts created locally to non-English-language films could be an option. Its main advantages being that of preventing a significant cultural loss. Given the results of previous studies that show that AD translation strategy is less time-consuming and accepted by the target audience (Herrador Molina 2006; Jankowska 2013, 2014, 2015), translation of AD scripts into English could be a feasible alternative to the current workflow. It is however evident – just as Remael and Verecauteren (2010) notice – that AD script translation cannot be done in isolation from the original that is being translated, that is the image. Thus AD script translation will never be a 'simple' task of translating written text.

14

References

CHMIEL, Agnieszka & MAZUR Iwona. 2014. *Audiodeskrypcja*. Poznań: Wydział Anglistyki im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 2014.

GEORGAKOPOULOU, Yota. 2009. Developing Audio Description in Greece. In *MultiLingual,* 2009, pp. 38-42.

Główny Urząd Statystyczny. 2015. Życie Religijne W Polsce [online]. 2015. Available at: <http://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/inne-opracowania/wyznania-religijne/zycie-religijne-w-polsce,3,1.html#>.

HERRADOR MOLINA, Dolores. 2006. *La Traducción de Guiones de Audiodescripción Del Inglés Al Español*. 2006. Universidad de Granada.

HYKS, Veronika. 2005. Audio Description and Translation. Two Related but Different Skills.In *Translating Today*, 2005, vol. 4, pp. 6-8.

JANKOWSKA, Anna. 2013. *Od Teorii Do Praktyki. Tłumaczenie Audiodeskrypcji Języka Angielskiego Jako Alternatywna Metoda Tworzenia Audiodeskrypcji*. 2013, Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie.

JANKOWSKA, Anna. 2014. *Tłumaczenie Jako Alternatywna Metoda Tworzenia Audiodeskrypcji*. In *Przekładaniec,* 2014, vol. 28, pp. 23-38.

JANKOWSKA, Anna. 2015. *Translating Audio Description Scripts Translation as a New Strategy of Creating Audio Description*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2015.

JANKOWSKA, Anna & SZARKOWSKA, Agnieszka. 2016. Strategie opisu kulturemów w audiodeskrypcji. In *Między Oryginałem a Przekładem*, 2016, vol. 31, pp. 136-152.

LÓPEZ VERA, Juan Francisco. 2006. Translating Audio Description Scripts: The Way Forward? - Tentative First Stage Project Results. In *MuTra 2006 – Audiovisual Translation Scenarios Conference Proceedings* [online]. 2006, pp. 1-10, Available at <http://www.euroconferences.info/proceedings/2006_Proceedings/2006_Lopez_Vera_Juan_Francisco.pdf >.

MASZEROWSKA, Anna & MANGIRON Carme. 2014. Strategies for Dealing with Cultural References in Audio Description. In MASZEROWSKA, A. MATAMALA, A. ORERO, *Audio Description New Perspectives Illustrated*, Amsterdam/Philadelfia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014, pp. 159-178.

MATAMALA, Anna & ORERO Pilar. 2007. Designing a Course on Audio Description and Defining the Main Competences of the Future Professional. In *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series – Themes in Translation Studies* [online]. 2007, vol. 6, pp. 329-344. Available at: <https://lans-tts.uantwerpen.be/index.php/LANS-TTS/article/view/195>.

ORERO, Pilar. 2005. Audio Description: Professional Recognition, Practice and Standards in Spain. In *Translation Watch Quarterly,* 2005, vol. 1, pp. 7-18.

REMAEL, Aline & VERCAUTEREN Gert. 2007. Audio Describing the Exposition Phase of Films. Teaching Students What to Choose. In *Trans. Revista de Traductologia*, 2007, vol. 11. pp. 73-93.

REMAEL, Aline & VERCAUTEREN Gert. 2010. The Translation of Recorded Audio Description from English into Dutch. In *Perspectives,* 2010, vol. 18, no. 3, pp.155-171.

SZARKOWSKA, Agnieszka. 2012. Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Audio Describing Woody Allen in Polish [online]. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYsgYlSwOFQ>.

SZARKOWSKA, Agnieszka & JANKOWSKA Anna. 2015. Audio Describing Foreign Films. *The Journal of Specialised Translation* [online]. 2015, vol. 23, pp.243-269. Available at <http://www.jostrans.org/issue23/art_szarkowska.php>.

UTRAY, Francisco, PEREIRA Ana María & ORERO Pilar. 2009. The Present and Future of Audio Description and Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Spain. In *Meta: Translators'*

Journal, 2009, vol. 54, no. 2, pp. 248–263.

WALCZAK, Agnieszka & FIGIEL Wojciech. 2013. Domesticate or Foreignize? [online]. Available at <http://avt.ils.uw.edu.pl/files/2013/11/ Intermedia_Walczak_Figiel.pdf>.

Anna Jankowska
Senior lecturer
Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland
Visiting scholar
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
E-mail: anna.m.jankowsk@uj.edu.pl /Anna.Jankowska@uab.cat

Michał Milc
Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland
E-mail: milc.michal@gmail.com

Louise Fryer
Teaching fellow
University College London
E-mail: louise@utopians.co.uk