ABSTRACT
Since the “cultural turn” in Translation Studies it has been widely accepted that it is crucial to sensitize future translators to the interaction of culture and language and to teach translator trainees how to deal with culture-bound issues in translation. This paper seeks to investigate how these premises can be implemented in practical translator training. It argues for using tourist guidebooks as a classroom resource and provides practical examples for utilizing them in intercultural communication and practical translation classes. The material for analysis consists of guides to Portugal available on the Polish market. As it has been shown, the majority of them are translations of English source texts, creating interesting discussion material for intercultural communication courses as regards translation. Thus the suggested issues for analysis involve cultural stereotypes, politics of representation, identity creation, the place of translations in the literary polysystem, and translation as a source of cultural influence. As for practical translation, the paper focuses on translation of culture-specific items, demonstrating how cultural transposition (Hervey and Higgins) can be used as a didactic tool for solving culture-bound translation problems.

keywords: translator training, tourist guidebooks, intercultural communication, culture-specific items, cultural transposition
BACKGROUND

Since the term “cultural turn” was proclaimed in 1990, its implications have informed both translation theory and pedagogy. The need to educate future translators to become competent and professional mediators, aware of and sensitive to linguistic and cultural diversity, has become one of methodological axioms in translator training institutions. Cultural skills, defined as “means and strategies for identifying and solving culture-bound translation problems” are listed in the professional translator’s skills profile by the Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission (DGT) in its recommendation for the program of a European Master’s in Translation.

This paper seeks to investigate an interface of methodological assumptions and teaching environment, i.e. solutions for classroom didactics: with what models, strategies and materials to teach “culture” in translation training programs. It argues that tourist guidebooks are valuable teaching material for that purpose, demonstrating how and in what modules of translator training they can be used.

A clear separation of cultural and linguistic elements in language or communication seems more of an exercise in academic argumentation or, as in this case, a division undertaken for methodological purposes. In translator training curricula, although naturally present in varying intensity and on various levels of training, the culture element becomes the explicit focus of such courses as intercultural communication or cultural analysis, and one of the aspects of practical translation classes. Whereas the former tend to be devoted to broader issues of what makes a culture, how to describe and interpret it, how its values differ across societies, what are the reciprocal relationships between cultural values or dimensions and (linguistic) behavior, the latter offer a hands-on approach, concentrating on textual manifestations of cultural specificity and ways of its rendering.

The aim of this paper is thus twofold. It discusses briefly how tourist guidebooks could be used in intercultural communication courses before moving on to a specific case of dealing with culture-bound lexical items in a general translation course. Material for analysis consists of tourists guidebooks to Portugal currently available on the Polish market (2007-2008).

TOURIST GUIDEBOOks AS REPRESENTATIONS OF STANDARDIZED “CULTURAL IDENTITIES”

In the times of increased mobility, traveling – or as some would prefer, tourism\(^\text{(1)}\) – has become a significant constitutive part of global, symbolic communication.

\(^\text{1. Valuative distinction between travelling and tourism, or travellers and tourists, with the former representing a true search for deeper meaning and the latter standing for superficial collection of fleeting impressions is frequent both in travel writing itself and in scholarly studies of the subject. Following Buzard’s argumentation, such a distinction, which he calls “anti-tourism discourse” (1993), fails to contribute new insights about travel and travel writing but is rather constitutive for these phenomena.}\)
space and of identity construction process. Travel experience confronts the traveling subject with otherness, and this encounter may contribute to finding ways not only to other cultures but also to the Self, as images and reflections of oneself and home are challenged abroad. Traveling in its various forms has been frequently hailed an exercise in cross-cultural understanding and overcoming stereotypes, yet, paradoxically, it contributes both to reinforcing and leveling of cultural differences. Tourist guidebooks are a significant element of this paradoxical mechanism. While travel writing documents and mediates encounter with otherness, tourist guidebooks, due to their generic constraints, do so in a particularly conventionalized and ritualized manner, presenting their destinations as mythologized cultural packages. In a globalizing world, replete with homogenized (pop) cultural products, most tourist guidebooks produce and reproduce distinct cultural identities of destinations and their inhabitants. As Bausinger argues, “das Touristenspezifische wird für Touristen hergestellt” (1991: 345). In other words, tourist guidebooks maintain and reinforce cultural differences and cultural specificity for the sake of upholding travel myths, desires and fantasies and thus of motivating travelers to set off.

For these reasons – offering foreign culture in a nutshell – tourist guidebooks can prove their usefulness in the intercultural communication classroom. A critical reading of these texts offers discussion material concerning significant aspects of intercultural communication such as world views, stereotypes, cultural assumptions and values, attitudes and beliefs, politics of representation, generic or text type constraints. Tourist guidebooks are also of significant pragmatic value, offering general and thematic knowledge about their destinations, ranging from history to cuisine.

General knowledge of the world, accompanied by thematic knowledge, is considered one of the key elements of a translator’s profile. To establish the cognitive context for the guidebook activities and gather data about Polish students’ knowledge and perception of Portugal, the author conducted a survey(2) based on an anonymous free association questionnaire. One of its questions was to provide a list of associations with this country.

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2. The survey was conducted among Polish M.A. students of English (specialization translation) and B.A. students of English (specialization in Applied Linguistics, with Spanish as C language).
Table 1. Charting an imaginary map of Portugal: Polish students’ associations with Portugal

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<td>metalevel: acknowledgment of ignorance (4)</td>
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<td>closeness to Spain (3)</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Lisbon (2)</td>
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<td>machos (2)</td>
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<td>pious people (2)</td>
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Note. The numbers in brackets correspond to the total mentions of a particular association, one-off mentions were not counted.

The brevity and general nature of the answers provided show that the respondents are not very familiar with Portuguese culture. Although football was one of the most frequent associations, very few actual names were given. Surprisingly, despite Poland’s Catholicism and John Paul II’s close bond with the apparitions in Fatima, references to religion were rare. Interestingly, some respondents’ resorted to a metalevel response, directly admitting the superficiality of their knowledge. The survey had a local and limited character, yet it may be indicative of the fact that Portugal remains a poorly marked territory on the cognitive map of Polish students. It also provided justification for the need of conducting tasks aimed at increasing students knowledge about Portugal.

TRAVELING FROM POLAND TO PORTUGAL: OVERVIEW OF GUIDEBOOKS

Even a cursory examination of guides to Portugal available on the Polish market reveals immediately an interesting feature of the country’s literary polysystem: with basically one exception, all guidebooks are translations of English source texts. Guidebooks 6 and 7, written by the same authors and published by the same publishing house, do not show considerable differences in the text content.

Available guidebooks:
Commenting on travel writing and its relation to translation in general, Clifford insists on “the crucial traduttore in the tradittore, the lack of an “equals” sign, the reality of what’s missed and distorted in the very act of understanding, appreciating, describing” (1997:42). If travel writing is translation, then the guidebooks above are translations of a translation. The vicarious nature of travel experience as expressed in writing becomes increased in a case of “double translation”.

Another guidebook, which deserves particular attention due to its renowned author and fascinating publication history is Lisbon, What the Tourist Should See. Completed by Fernando Pessoa in 1925, it was part of his larger project of promoting Portugal. Driven by affection toward his homeland and conviction that the perception of Portugal abroad is inadequate and distorted, Pessoa developed the idea of an extensive All About Portugal series around 1917. The series was planned to include other publications about Portugal and also an establishment of a weekly in London, with the aim of not only changing the country’s image, but of putting it properly on the tourist map. Explaining his reason for penning the guidebook, Pessoa wrote that “for an average Brit and generally for any average person beyond Portugal (with the exception of a Spaniard), Portugal is but a small country somewhere in Europe, sometimes perceived as part of Spain” (in Lopes 2001: 7). Thus, the guidebook was a fine example of, using Pessoa’s term, “cosmopolitan nationalism” (2001: 11). Unlike importing and following foreign trends as his modernist literary friends did, Pessoa wanted to focus on exporting Portuguese culture and making it popular abroad.

Although the guidebook idea can be traced back to 1917, it was only in 1992, that is over half a century after Pessoa’s death, that the guidebook, found among the author’s literary remains in the fabled trunk, was published in Portugal. Translations into Italian (1993), Spanish (1994), French (1994) and German followed (1995) (Lopes 2001:17). The Polish edition appeared in 2001 in translation by Katarzyna Bienkowska.

Interestingly, Lisbon, addressing the foreign tourist, was originally written in English, is thus an example of self-translation. Spending nine formative years in Durban, Pessoa became well acquainted with the English language, yet he did not achieve in it the mastery and ease with which he wrote in his mother tongue. Well aware of both this and the role of English in the future, Pessoa himself commented on his Fifth Empire that it would be “entirely Portuguese in spirit, although half-Portuguese in word” (in Lopes 2001: 17). As Lopes notes in the preface to Lisbon, “during this trip we shall be led not by Pessoa’s words but his vision” (2001: 17).
IN THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION CLASSROOM: STEREOTYPES AND POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION

A number of stimulating activities and discussions based on tourist guidebooks can be conducted to increase students’ cross-cultural awareness, encourage self-reflexivity and critical analysis and to heighten their sense of their own identity. In the suggested activity we focus on cultural stereotypes and their function, sensitizing students to real and imagined differences between cultures. Cultural stereotypes are defined here in non-valuative terms as mental schemata, structuring and facilitating our perception of the world.

Paprocka-Piotrowska (2007: 291) draws attention to a series of Xenophobes Guides (3), recently translated into Polish, and how these could be used as a starting point for a critical discussion of stereotypes in a teaching environment. The title and the objective of the series “disarm” the stereotypes presented; calling them xenophobic and using a humorous style introduce distance to the opinions presented in the guides. In our activity we use a traditional guidebook as it is vital to identify cultural stereotypes and their construction.

The activity involves sections from Guidebook 8. This 386 page-long publication appeared in 2005 in a series of thirty guides entitled Dream Voyages (Podróże Marzeń), brought out by the Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza. The guidebook series are translations of APA Insight Guides. Lavishly illustrated, they were available at a very moderate price with the purchase of the daily. Although this was clearly a marketing strategy to increase the paper’s circulation, the guidebooks enjoyed popularity not only due to their low price, but also due to their visual attractiveness and an extensive coverage of the destination. The guide’s strong cultural bias, sometimes at the cost of practical information and thus a point of criticism, makes it a particularly stimulating classroom resource.

The sections chosen include three subchapters: “The Portuguese”, “Saints, Wonders and Cult” and “Travelers’ Stories”. While the former two are attempts at descriptions of the Portuguese society, the latter could be more appropriately called “Stories of British Travelers” as it is a brief account of impressions and anecdotes of British authors exclusively. The literary figures referred to include Dorothy Quillinan, William Wordsworth’s daughter, William Beckford, Robert Southey, Lord Byron and George Borrow.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. The product – text oriented tasks
Read the subchapters “The Portuguese” and “Saints, Wonders and Cult”. What is the image of “the Portuguese” as presented in these sections? How is it constructed, what textual and visual means are used? What is the function of these sections within the guide? How does the image presented compare to the auto- and

3. As of writing this article, The Xenophobe’s Guide to the Portuguese (by Claudio Monteiro) was about to be published in an English language version.
heterostereotypes of “the Poles”? What is the function of the subchapter “Travelers Stories”? Does it, in your opinion, perpetuate cultural stereotypes?

2. Skopos of the translation
The Polish edition explicitly states that polonika, that is elements referring to Polish history and culture have been included along with information that the Polish tourist needs. How is this manifest in text? Discuss and assess the editors/translators adaptation or “Polonisation” of the source text.

3. Translation as a source of cultural influence
The majority of guidebooks to Portugal available on the Polish market are translations. What does it say about Polish publishing and translation policies? What are the implications of this for the translation product and the reader? What and whose world view is disseminated?

IN THE TRANSLATION CLASSROOM: CULTURE-SPECIFIC ITEMS AND TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

This section will focus on representations of cultural specificity – traditionally considered a potential source of untranslatability – as reflected in lexical items. The translation of such culture-specific elements has been discussed by many scholars, who referred to such elements as “cultural terms” (Newmark 1991: 2), “cultural references” (López Rodríguez 2002: 214) or “culturemes” (Zohar 1997: 22).

Various approaches for tackling culture specific items have been developed, from contrastive, linguistically-syntactically biased in the tradition of Vinay and Darbelnet to strategic ones, displaying a spectrum of the translator’s loyalty between a source culture and target culture orientation. These approaches, when involving decisions of detail, i.e. on a level of a particular translation unit (lexical item) are called here techniques, although terms such as procedure (Newmark 1991:3) or protocol (López Rodríguez 2002: 214) are also applied. An approach involving a global decision about a text is defined here as a strategy.

Mayoral and Munoz, for example, present an inventory of translation techniques that consists of the following (in López Rodríguez 2002: 214-215):
- established translation
- validated translation
- functional translation
- borrowing
- paraphrase
- combination of resources
- omission
- creation

However, methodologically and didactically most productive models are the ones that place repertoires of techniques within a larger framework of a translation strategy. Such a solution is offered by cultural transposition put forward by Hervey
and Higgins (2006: 33):

- exoticism - calque - cultural borrowing - communicative translation - cultural transplantation

Not only does it describe possible techniques of rendering culture-specific items, but also presents them on a spectrum between the extremes of exoticism (source-culture biased, or foreignizing translation) and cultural transplantation (target-culture biased, or domesticating translation). In a didactic setting, such a model helps students deal with potential translation problems and stimulates creativity by sensitizing them to the fact that a number of options are available, depending on the global translation strategy.

In a class devoted to translation of cultural items, students working with sections from travel guides to Portugal (Polish translation of an English source text). Their task was to identify culture-specific items, categorize them thematically and identify and discuss techniques for their rendering.

Numerous instances of culture-bound elements were found, such as names of institutions, historical buildings, tourist attractions, customs and dishes. The most frequently applied translation technique was, in Hervey and Higgins’ terms, cultural borrowing, often followed by a gloss; or, in Mayoral and Munoz’s terms, a combination of resources (borrowing with paraphrase).

EXAMPLES

(back-translation, Portuguese terms are rendered in spelling used in the source text):

- exoticism
  The elderly spend their time at taverna and tasca [...] (PM: 198)
  These ancient and mysterious pedras talhas seem to be everywhere – in fields, forests and villages. (PM: 230)
- cultural borrowing
  In turn, azulejos decorating Nossa Senhora de Lurdes belong to the most beautiful ones in Algarve. (PM: 210)
  - cultural borrowing with a gloss
  Each May the University celebrates Queima das Fitas („burning of ribbons”), during which graduates burn colorful ribbons, their colors symbolizing the subject of their studies. (PM: 255)
  [...] drinking medronho, that is brandy made from the strawberry tree (Arbutus unedo) (PM: 198)

Once students familiarized themselves with the methodology, as a follow-up they were to select a section (or a paragraph) from a tourist guidebook to their hometown, with a high-rate of cultural references, and prepare an annotated translation, explaining both strategic decisions and decisions of detail with reference to culture-bound elements.
Guidebook discussion can involve not only analysis on the micro level, but also on the macro level of general constraints such as the text type and its conventions, the skopos, the target audience and its knowledge of the source culture.

CONCLUSIONS

As this paper has demonstrated, guidebooks can be useful material in translator training classes. Embodying the spirit of traveling and worldliness, they increase students’ motivation and interest. With the model of cultural transposition, in the practical translation classroom guidebooks can be used to teach culture-specific items and techniques for their rendering, that is cultural and translation skills. As guides closely relate to the area of tourism, they also prepare students for translation of specialized tourist texts.

They can also be used in the intercultural communication classroom to foster students’ sensitivity to and awareness of cultural differences, cultural and national identities and politics of representation. Further, our guidebook-based activities are aimed at strengthening students’ feeling of integrity and empowerment by getting to know the self. Approaching the chosen guides as cultural and imported products, skills of critical analysis and self-reflexivity are taught. However, the objective is not to criticize or protect against “cultural imperialism” of the English language but to show how some cultural identities are made and to teach how to navigate through this world of proliferating and competing identities. Encountering and negotiating between different world views, students become equipped with transferable skills of communication specialists who are able to successfully mediate between cultures and languages.

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