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Compensation in Translation¹

1. Introduction

Compensation in translation is a standard lexical transfer operation whereby those meanings of the SL text, which are lost in the process of translation, are rendered in the TL text in some **other place** or by some **other means**. Compensation is one of the best-described lexical operations its first definition was given by Vinay and Darbelnet in 1958. In English translation it goes like this: "The stylistic translation technique by which a nuance that cannot be put in the same place as in the original is put at another point of the phrase, thereby keeping the overall **tone**"(1995:341). Hervey and Higgins define compensation in the following way: "techniques of making up for the loss of important ST features through replicating ST effects approximately in the TT by means other than those used in the ST" (Hervey and Higgins 1992:35).

The main difference between our and Vinay and Darbelnet's approach is that we regard compensation as a **lexical** operation, while they – unlike us – include into it grammatical operations as well (cf. compensation for gender differences). The concept of compensation was further developed by Hervey and Higgins (Hervey 1992: 248), and it has been given an independent entry in the *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Harvey 1998: 37).

A classical case of compensation involves the rendering of individual, vernacular or class speech patterns with means available in the target language, e.g., regional expressions, slang words or distorted grammar (**local compensation**). It is also a form of compensation if the translator takes advantage of the opportunities offered by the target language and uses striking and idiomatic expressions thus compensating the reader for having had to use less than ideal solutions in other areas (**global compensation**).

¹ The topic was selected to remind of János Kohn's work (1983), devoted to the problem of compensation in translation.

2. Serial (multiple) losses in translation

Losses are inevitable in translation. When translators omit honorific addresses (*méltóztassék*, (lit: be pleased to deign to) *alázatosan kérem* (lit: I humbly request), *esedezem* (lit: I beseech) in translating 19th century Hungarian classics, they act correctly, since these terms do not have natural and obvious equivalent in Indo-European languages, but by doing so they lose one means of indicating social differences between the characters in the original. This must somehow be compensated for.

We speak about losses when elements of SL meaning cannot be conveyed in the TL. **Loss (entropy)** (1995) or **perte (entropie)** (1958) are discussed in Vinay and Darbelnet's book slightly differently. They define as:

“The relation between the source language and the target language which indicates the absence of message constituents in the target language; there is loss (or entropy) when a part of the message cannot be conveyed because of a lack of structural, stylistic or metalinguistic means in the target language”. (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:345)

As we can see, they speak about “the lack of structural, stylistic or metalinguistic means in the target language” while we concentrate first of all on the meaning of lexical elements, which have no equivalents in the TL.

Most translations are characterised by a **series of losses** and not by just one or two. A good example for inevitable serial loss is the translation of Kálmán Mikszáth's novel, *Beszterce ostroma* into different Indo-European languages (*The Siege of Beszterce*, *Der Graf und die Zirkusreiterin*, *Osada Bestertse*). The playfully proverbial, lovingly teasing Mikszáth style has linguistic characteristics which are either untranslatable or become ineffective when translated.

Like Mikszáth's other novels, *Beszterce ostroma* (The Siege of Beszterce) is full of lexical devices which create the unmistakable atmosphere of Felvidék (lit: Highland) which was the name of the northern part of Hungary before 1921 (today this territory belongs to Slovakia).

These lexical devices include:

(1) geographic names pertaining to the Felvidék ('Highland'): *gömöri akcentus* ('gömör accent'), *besztercei szilva* ('Beszterce plums'), *lapusnyai szelid-gesztenyeerdő* ('chestnut forest of Lapuchna'), *gbelai molnár* ('gbela miller'), etc.

(2) Hungarian historical realia: *Árpád vezér* ('chieftain Árpád'), *Mátyás korabeli fekete sereg* ('King Mathias' Black Brigade'), *török spáhi* ('turkish spahi'), *Rákóczi-féle brigadéros* ('Rákóczi's brigadiers'), etc.

(3) characteristic officials from the Hungarian county system: *főispán* ('prefect'), *alispán* ('sub-prefect'), *vice-jegyző* ('assistant town clerk'), *pandúr* ('pandour'), *csendbiztos* ('gendarm'), etc.

(4) characteristic forms of 19th century Hungarian addresses: *kend* ('you'), *vitéz bátyámuram* ('valiant sir'), *instállom* ('saving your presence'), *alázatos szolgája* ('your humble servant'), *amice* ('my friend'), *domine* ('my lord'), etc.

(5) latinisms used by the above officials: *skandalum* ('scandal'), *direktor* ('manager'), *jus gladii* ('power of life and death'), *punktum* ('I have told you'), *apelláta* ('appeal'), *spektákulum* ('spectacle'), *elokvencia* ('eloquence'), *violencia* ('violence'), *konfidens* ('confidential'), *elementum* ('element'), etc.

(6) archaic and regional names of dresses, dishes, beverages and furnishings of the Felvidék: *kócsagos kalpak* ('kalpak with an egret's plum'), *atilla* ('hussar jacket'), *veres dolmány* ('scarlet dolman'), *csibuk* ('chibouk'), *susztartallér* ('silver coin'), *bugyelláris* ('wallet'), *ibrik* ('mug'), *rokolya* ('skirt'), *kulacs* ('flask'), etc.

(7) foreign language insertions in the Hungarian text: mixture of Hungarian, German, Polish and Slovakian, spoken by the characters: *vojna* ('war'), *cserveni* ('scarlet'), *pod szmrty* ('come on death'), etc.

And we have not even mentioned yet the pleasantly witty use of the diminutive of *tót*, *tótcoska* ('Slovak', 'little Slovak'), etc.

These characteristic features are almost inevitably lost or become ineffective in English, German and Russian translations. Geographical names and historical realia, as well as the characteristic officials of the Hungarian county system mean nothing to a foreign audience. The traditional address forms and courtesy forms are omitted from translation. The archaic, obsolete names of food, clothes and furnishings which generate the atmosphere of the 19th century *rokolya* ('skirt'), *bugyelláris* ('purse'), *csibuk* ('pipe'), *ibrik* ('mug') are rendered with neutralising translations.

(1) Ebéd után *csibukra* gyújtott a várúr ... (Mikszáth 15)

(1a) After lunch the count lit up his *pipe* ... (Sturgess 17)

(1b) Nach dem Essen steckte sich der Burgherr seine *Pfeife* ... (Schüching-Engl 280)

(1c) Posle obeda hozyain zakurival *trubku*, ... (Leybutin 18)

The connotative meaning of the Hungarian word *csibuk* ('chibouk', 'chibouque', 'Turkish pipe'), was neutralised (*pipe*, *Pfeife*, *trubka*) in all the three translations (1a, 1b, 1c).

The speech of the characters in Mikszáth's novels is a strange mixture of Hungarian, German, Polish and Slovak. The Slovak words and expressions: *vojna*, ('war'), *cserveni* ('black'), *szmrty* ('death') are generally retained and explained in the English translation, but simply translated into German and Russian. As for the Russian translation, there are two interesting aspects which may influence the translator's decision: (1) preserving the foreign language words requires insertion of Roman letters into the Cyrillic text, and (2) being cognate languages, Slovak words are very similar to Russian ones: Slovak: *vojna* → Russian: *voyna*; Slovak: *smrt'* → Russian: *smert'*, which means that they do not contribute much to the representation of the local colour.

(2) A "*Rákóczi vojna*" óta nem volt még ilyen felfordulás erre felé.
(Mikszáth 29)

(2a) Since the "*Rákóczi vojna*" – *Rákóczi's wars* – there had not been such an upheaval in these parts. (Sturgess 34)

(2b) Seit *Rákóczis Krieg* hatte es hier kein solches Durcheinander gegeben.
(Schüching-Engl 299)

(2c) So vremeni *voyn Rakotsi* eti kraya ne vidali takovo stolpotvoreniya.
(Leybutin 25)

The Slovak words in the Hungarian text *Rákóczi vojna* are retained and explained in the English translation (2a), but are dropped in the German and Russian translations (2b, 2c).

Kálmán Mikszáth's loving attitude to the Slovak inhabitants of the region is reflected in his use of diminutives of their Hungarian ethnic name *tót* - *tótcoska*. This attitude is also lost in Indo-European translations. In the English translation, *tótcoska* became *little Slovak*, in the German translation became simply *Slowaken* or *guten Slowaken*, and in the Russian: *slovaki*, and *malenkie slovaki*.

The preference for diminutive suffixes, characteristic of the regional Hungarian dialect spoken by the Slovak population is reflected in the word *istenke* ('little god'); this nuance is also lost in the English and German translations, where *istenke* became: *good Lord*, *liebe Gott* (3a,3b). The Russian translator was able to preserve the diminutive form

of God: *bozhenka* (from the Russian word *bog* ‘God’), and he was also able to insert an additional diminutive, *kartojska*, from Russian *kartofel* (‘potato’) (3c).

- (3) A gondviselő a *tótokkal* a krumpli útján beszél. Ha sok krumpli van az annyt jelent: "szeretlek *tócskák*, szaporodjatok!" Ha nincs krumplitermés, akkor az *istenke* haragszik: "Minek vagytok ti a világon, *tótocskák*?" (Mikszáth 21)

- (3a) Providence speaks to the *Slovaks* only through the potato crop. If this is abundant, it means: "I love you, *little Slovaks*. Go forth and multiply." If the crop fails, the *good Lord* is angry. "What are you doing here on earth *little Slovaks*?" (Sturgess 25)

- (3b) Die Vorsehung spricht nur durch die Kartoffel zu den *Slowaken*. Gibt es viele Kartoffeln, so bedeutet das: Ich liebe euch, meine guten *Slowaken*, mehret euch! Ist die Kartoffelernte schlecht, dann zürnt der *liebe Gott*: Wozu seid ihr auf der Welt, ihr *Slowaken*? (Schüching-Engl 289)

- (3c) Providenie obyasnyaetsya so *slovakami* tol’ko cherez posredstvo kartoski. Bogat urozhay kartofelya – znachit bog blagovolit k nim i kak bi govorit: Ya lyublyu vas *milen’kie slovak*i, plodites’ sebe na zdorov’e. Ne urodilos’ kartoske – znachit *bozhenka* gnevaetsya: i zachem, mol, vi tol’ko sushchestvuete na belom svete *slovak*i. (Leybutin 27)

Contemporary Hungarian language has a large number of Latin loanwords in the field of science, culture and administration. As in the previous centuries of Hungarian history Latin had a dominant role in Hungarian state, economic and cultural life, in the novels of the 19th century Hungarian writers (Kálmán Mikszáth, Mór Jókai) there are many Latinisms, which can be unfamiliar even for contemporary Hungarian readers (Balázs 1997). Latinisms in the above-mentioned novel of Kálmán Mikszáth *The Siege of Beszterce* are connected with the language of county administration, student life, medical science, law, etc. In translation from Hungarian into IE, Latinisms are generally omitted, which is one of the characteristic losses in translating from Hungarian into IE: In all the three translations of *Beszterce ostroma* Latinisms are omitted or neutralised (translated by neutral TL words).

- (4) A *vitalicumot* félévenként kapták ... (Mikszáth 20).
 (4a) This *income* was paid every six months ... (Sturgess 23)
 (4b) *Die Rente* bekamen sie halbjährlich, ... (Schüching-Engl 286)
 (4c) *Dengi* viplachivalis' baronam dvazhdi v god. (Leybutin 24)
- (5) A Te Deum után *magnum* áldomás következett... (Mikszáth 13)
 (5a) After Te Deum came the *traditional* thanksgiving ... (Sturgess 14)
 (5b) Auf das Tedeum folgte ein *grosses* Gelage: (Schüching-Engl 277)
 (5c) Za molebnom sledovlao *velikoye* prazdnestvo. (Leybutin 14)

In example (4) the Latin word *vitalicum* ('life annuity') was neutralised in all the three translations (*income*, *Rente*, *dengi*). In example (5) the Latin word *magnum* ('great') was totally transformed by the English translator (*traditional*) and neutralised by the German and Russian translators: *grosses* ('big'), *velikoe* ('big').

A good example for **serial losses** can be found in the Russian translation of Mikszáth's novel, where three of the above-mentioned losses occur in the translation of one single sentence: the ethnic name *tot* has a neutralising translation and appears as *slovak*, the Latinism *disputál* has also been neutralised and has become *sporit* ('discuss'), and finally the foreign language (Slovak) insertion *pod smrt'* has simply been translated into Russian *idi smert'* ('come death'). The foreign language insertion is preserved in the English translation with an additional explanatory translation.

- (6) S azonfelül is jó, szelíd nép a *tót*, ha jön a halál, nem kötekedik az vele, *nem disputál*, ... hanem megadja magát: "*pod szmrty*"! (gyere, halál!) és behunyja a szemeit az örökkévaló álomra. (Mikszáth 54)
- (6a) Besides, the *Slovaks* are nice peaceful folk, and when death comes they *don't pick a quarrel* with him ... They give themselves up, saying "*pod smrti*!" (*come on death!*) and close their eyes forever. (Sturgess 68).
- (6b) I krome tovo *slovaki* narod dobrodusniy, smirniy, esli uzh prishla smert', *ne sporyat s ney* ... i skazav "*Idi smert*" naveki zakrivayut glaza. (Leybutin 65)

3. Local compensation

The above-mentioned inevitable losses in certain places in literary texts works

makes it necessary to compensate the TL readers. We make a distinction between **local** and **global** compensation. Local compensation is a subtype of compensation which involves the rendering of individual, vernacular or class speech patterns by the means available in the target language,

A classic example of **local** compensation is the case when the translator has to render the individual speech habits of a character. If somebody speaks with a German accent, this will be treated differently in a French novel from a Hungarian one. The fact that somebody speaks a Prussian dialect, that is, has difficulties with the pronunciation of the sound “r” can be illustrated only by TL words containing the sound “r”.

- (7) "Es ist alles bereit", sagte Mamsell Jungmann und schnurrte das r in der Kehle, denn sie hatte es ursprünglich überhaupt nicht aussprechen können. (Mann 11)
- (7a) – *Minden rendben van* – szólt Jungmann kisasszony, az "r"-et görgetve a torkában, mert eredetileg egyáltalán nem tudta kiejteni. (Lányi 10)

In example (7) the German expression "*Es ist alles bereit*" (lit: Everything is ready) is translated into Hungarian like *Minden rendben van* (lit: It is all right) because the Hungarian literal translation *Minden készen van* (lit: Everything is ready) does not contain sound “r”.

If the characters speak a **regional dialect**, it makes no difference **where in** the original work they use dialectal forms. The translator can indicate a dialect only in words which have a regional dialectal variant.

When the Hungarian translator of Mikhail Solohov's novel *Silent Don* decided to replace the Don Cossack dialect of Russian with the a Hajdúság (county in Eastern Hungary) dialect of Hungarian, he prepared three different translations of some short passages: one fully dialectal, another in the standard literary language, and a third in which he used the dialect with moderation, to create only a general impression and illusion of reality. In the latter he completely omitted the best-known characteristics of the Hajdúság dialect, which would have moved the action from the banks of the Don to the banks of the Tisza. He omitted vernacular words which would have been understood by only a small number of readers, and vernacular word endings which could have caused misunderstanding. He finally decided in favour of the last one of the three options. He used Hajdúság words only sparingly, to create a general impression and an illusion, and did not use a vernacular word in every case when such a word appeared in the Solohov original

(Makai 1981: 575-576).

The situation is the same when rendering **social dialects**. Translators can practically never render uneducated language or fancy language with words of the same stylistic value as those used by the author of the original work.

(8) 'Well, *she – don't have to worry* about that,' said Kramer. In a room with three people who said *She don't*, he couldn't get a *doesn't* out of his mouth. (Wolfe 199)

(8a) *Hungarian TT*: – Nos... nem kell aggódnia, *eztet* elintézzük – mondta Kramer. Egy szobában, ahol hárman is *eztet* mondanak *ezt* helyett, úgy érezte engednie illik. (Fencsik 157)

In example (8) the English uneducated speech is represented by the incorrect use of the English auxiliary verb *do*. As there are no auxiliary verbs in Hungarian, the translator decided to render uneducated usage with the accusative of the Hungarian demonstrative pronoun *ezt*, which has a lower prestige variant *eztet*.

Regional and social dialects frequently appear together in certain characters. The language of the gamekeeper in D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is a good example. It is not possible to avoid the rendering of dialectal forms in his speech, since there are times when the gamekeeper speaks correct English and times when he does not. These times have a significant dramatic meaning in the novel, and are also reflected by the comments of the author.

When Mellors, the gamekeeper first speaks to Lady Chatterley, he uses a vernacular which draws a comment from the author.

(9) 'Nay, yo' mun ax 'er,' he replied callously, in broad vernacular. (Lawrence 65)

(9a) – *Őtet tesszen kérdeni* – mondta nyersen tájszólásban. (Falvay 65)

Further down, the man chooses the vernacular or uses correct English depending on how much he wishes to show his independence vis à vis Connie. When he fights her, he uses the vernacular. The author of the original work accomplishes this by dropping certain vowels, while the translator uses a different technique. He makes the gamekeeper use

vernacular words (*katróc*) and folksy expletives (*oszt*).

- (10) "Ah'm gettin' th' coops ready for th' young bods", he said in broad vernacular. (Lawrence 99)
- (10a) – *Katrócot eszkábálok a fácáncsibéknek* – mondta erős tájszólással. (Falvay 126)

It is generally true that when dialect must be suggested in translation translators rarely attempt to use a TL dialect consistently. They usually just hint at it occasionally. Thus not only the method varies, but also the frequency of dialectal hints. In the English translation of Géza Gárdonyi's *Egri csillagok* (Eclipse of the Crescent Moon), the low-class vernacular of the Gypsy, Sárközy, is reflected by the translator not only in other places but also less frequently. In the German translation the frequency even increases, because all the *-ch* and *-s* are pronounced by *-sch* in Sárközy's German speech. *ich* → *isch*, *nicht* → *nischt*, *sollen* → *schollen*, *sein* → *schein*, etc.

- (11) – Hát *besegődök* hadnagy uram, ingyen is *besegődnék*, de ha egypár sarkantyús sárga csizmát is tetszik adni, *bizsony megkesenem*. Nem baj ha *likas* a talpa, hadnagy uram, csak sarkantyús legyen. (Gárdonyi 20)
- (11a) 'Well then I'll enlist, sir. I'd do it for nothing; if you'd throw in *a pair o' yellow* boots and spurs as well, I'd be grateful. *It don't matter* if there are *'oles* in them, sir, so long as they've got spurs.' (Cushing 298)
- (11b) "*Alscho, isch verding misch*, Herr Leutnant, *verding misch* auch *umschonscht*. Aber wenn *isch* auch noch ein Paar gelbe Schtiefel mit Schporen bekomm, schlag *isch rescht* schönen Dank. Tut *nischt*, wenn *Schohle* durch *ischt*, nur Schporen *schollen dran schein*, Herr Leutnant." (Schüching 279)

It is even more difficult to translate a text where the characters speak with different dialects or have various degrees of foreign accent. In the play *Kitchen* by Arnold Wesker, the cooks, bakers and waiters of the Tivoli Restaurant in London all speak a different sort of broken English, depending upon whether they come from Germany, Italy or Cyprus, and

how recently they came. The translator can easily render the German accent because there is a **received German accent** in Hungarian which mainly consists of devoicing and de-palatalisation of consonants pl. *Hogy vagy* ('How are you') pronounced as (*Hoty faty*), but, of course, not the same consonants are devoiced and de-palatalised as in the English original.

In Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* we frequently encounter both regional and societal dialects. The Southern dialect, generally used by the characters is completely ignored by the translator and it is only in the words of Jim that an attempt is made to indicate that he belongs to a lower social class.

(12) 'Well, 'twarn't no use to 'sturb you, Huck, till we could do *sumfn* - but we's all right now. I *ben a-buyin'* pots and pans *en wittles*, as I got a *chanst*, *en apatchin' up de raf'* nights when'. (Twain 99)

(12a) – Hát nem *vót*, *mér* zavarjalak, Huck, amíg valamit ki nem *tanálunk*. De most már minden rendbe *gyütt*. Vásároltam már fazekakat meg tepsit meg ennivalót, és *főszerelem* a tutajt is. (Koroknay-Karinthy 122)

In example (12) we can find two methods in the TL to indicate lower class speech: (1) dropping of certain sounds: *volt* ('was') → *vó(l)t*, *miért* ('why') → *m(i)ér(t)*, *főszerelem* ('equipped') → *fő(l) szerelem*, and changing certain sounds: *jött* ('came') → *gyütt*, *talál* ('find') → *tanál*.

4. Global compensation

Global compensation is a subtype of compensation whereby translators do not compensate for a specific item, but they compensate for compromises imposed upon them by the fact of translation itself as an indirect, mediated type of communication.

The above-indicated losses (and omission and total transformation mentioned in the previous chapters) are only a minute portion of the losses which are inevitable during translation, when the translator is forced to put up with less idiomatic TL solutions.

Yet there are also cases, when the TL permits the use of a more striking and more idiomatic construction. We may call this phenomenon **enrichment**, although the term may be misleading, since we are not trying to improve the original text, but are dealing with a special case of compensation where translators compensate for the compromises imposed

upon them.

Our concept of **enrichment** is not identical with the concept of **gain** as defined by Vinay and Darbelnet, because they define gain as follows: a phenomenon which occurs when there is explicitation” (1995: 343), or: “we speak of gain when translation expresses a situational element which is unexpressed in the source language (1995 170). On the basis of their example, English: *Walk in* and French: *Entrez sans frapper* their concept of gains is close to our concept of specification.

Enrichment or gains in our understanding means that translators, where possible, utilise and set in move the whole inventory of the target language, and they dare to use more idiomatic solutions when the TL offers them.

(13) She was a *harsh* girl. (Greene 140)

(13a) Cynthiát *kemény fából faragták*. (Ungvári 197)

(14) *Absolutely no deception*. (Christie 140)

(14a) *Nem csalás, nem ámtás*. (Sziójgyártó 141)

(15) Then he stood there for five, ten, fifteen seconds at least, *staring like an idiot* ... (Dahl 144)

(15a) Azután csak ott állt, állt öt, tíz, tizenöt másodpercig, ha nem tovább, és *bámult mint a borjú az újkapura* ... (Borbás 145)

In example (13a) the Hungarian translational equivalent *kemény fából faragták* has the following meaning: 'she is a woman of strong character' (lit: she is made of hard wood). In example (14a) the meaning of the Hungarian translational equivalent *Nem csalás, nem ámtás* is 'everything is open and above board', 'there is no hocus-pocus about it' (lit: no cheating, no deception). In example (15a) the meaning of the Hungarian translational equivalent *bámult mint a borjú az újkapura* is 'look dounbfounded', 'be flabbergasted', 'look like a stuck pig' (lit: gaze like a calf on a new gate).

In such a situation, translators do not compensate for a specific item, but compensate for the fact that the text of the translation is a **secondary** text produced at the price of numerous compromises and contains many less-than-perfect renditions. Such less-than-perfect renditions are due not only to the reasons given above (cf. differences between languages) but are also inevitable because authors of original texts use a different strategy

to move from an idea to a linguistic form. Translators are always aware of how many compromises they have to make, and how often they must be satisfied with a substantially less idiomatic rendering than the original. It is for this reason that whenever the text permits translators to take advantage of the resources of the TL, they will certainly do so.

If they did not do so, if they never probed into their target language resources than absolutely necessary, required by the translation, Hungarian translations would never contain expressions like *száz szónak is egy a vége* ('to cut the long story short'), *aki sokat markol, keveset fog* ('grasp all, lose all'), *kerülgeti mint macska a forró kását* ('he is beating about the bush') and the Hungarian used in translations would be poorer than the Hungarian used in original works. This latter form of compensation may be termed **general or global compensation**, as compared to **local or limited compensation**, which may render linguistic peculiarities.

Global compensation is an attempt to maintain a delicate balance between gains and losses manifested in the whole text. This strange "**add and subtract**" game is part of the ongoing weighing and choosing process which makes translating a creative activity.

The attempt to keep the balance between gains and losses can be illustrated by the Hungarian translation of Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye* (Ortutay 1993). The task of the translator was to render the speech characteristics of Holden Caulfield, a teenage American boy without making him seem arrogant to the Hungarian audience. She had to limit the use of slang words (*goddam*, *damned*, *damn*) but somehow compensate for them with words and expressions used by Hungarian young men of the same age. The English slang words (*goddam*, *damned*, *damn*) can be translated into Hungarian, but their dictionary equivalents (*istenverte*, *átkozott*) are not typical among Hungarian teenagers. So the translator tried to compensate for the omission of certain slang words by using some more specific Hungarian verbs and idiomatic expressions, trying to create the same effect as in the original.

Gain:

(16) The week before that, somebody's *stolen* my camel's hair coat ... (Salinger 8)

(16a) Az előző héten valaki *megléptette* a teveszőr kabátomat ... (Gyepes 7)

Loss:

(17) I was the *goddam* manager of the fencing team. (Salinger 7)

(17a) Én voltam az ügyintézőjük (Gyepes 7)

Gain:

(18) It was icy as hell and I damn near *fell down*. (Salinger 9)

(18a) Tiszta jég volt az úttest, majdnem *eltaknyoltam*. (Gyepes 8)

Loss:

(19) ... It cost him *damn* near for thousand bucks. (Salinger 5)

(19a) Majdnem négyezerbe van neki. (Gyepes 5)

Gain:

(20) .. . and you felt like you were disappearing every time you crossed a road.
(Salinger 9)

(20a) ... és ahányszor átmentem a másik oldalra, mindig úgy éreztem, hogy eltűnök,
mint a *szürke számár*. (Gyepes 8)

Loss:

(21) I am not going to tell you my whole *goddam* autobiography. (Salinger 5)

(21a) Ebből úgysem lesz itten életírás, vagy mit tudom én ... (Gyepes 5)

In (16a) the neutral English verb *to steal* is replaced by the slang Hungarian verb *megléptet* ‘swipe’ sg, ‘walk’ sg, ‘whip’ sg., lit: make sg walk (=Gain). In (17a) the English slang expression *goddam* is omitted from the Hungarian translation (=Loss). In (18a) the neutral English verb *to fall down* is replaced by the Hungarian slang verb *eltaknyol* ‘fall arse over tip’ ‘fall head over heels’, lit: prefix+snot+verbal suffix (=Gain). In (19a) the English slang expression *damn* is omitted from the Hungarian translation (=Loss). In (20a) the neutral English verb *disappear* is replaced by an idiomatic expression in Hungarian: *eltűnik mint a szürke számár* ‘disappear against the sunset’, ‘do a disappearing act’, ‘do the vanishing act’, lit: he disappears as a grey donkey. The full Hungarian expression *eltűnik mint a szürke számár a ködben* lit: disappears as a grey donkey in the fog (=Gain). In (21a) The English slang expression *goddam* is omitted from the Hungarian translation.

By applying global compensation strategies translators compensate for the secondary nature of the TL text, which was conceived originally in another language and if they do not take special care, the language of translation will be poorer than that of authentic TL texts.

5. Summary

Compensation, i.e. making up for inevitable losses suffered in translation is a transfer operation independent of language pair or direction of translation. It is a **translation specific** operation, since it stems from the very nature of translation: a change

in code will inevitably lead to losses. These losses must be remedied by other means.

While **local** compensation (e.g., dialectal features) can be noticed immediately, **global** compensation can be tracked only by examining the whole work. In the case of global compensation, the translator makes every effort in order that the target language text resulting from the translation should not be poorer and less colourful than the original source language text. It would seem that this means simply adherence to target language standards, but in reality it is much more than that. We are confronted with **translation norms** since translators make a special effort in order that certain expressions should appear in the translation. The "add and subtract" game must be played with a sound sense of proportion, "enrichment" of the target language text must not be carried to extremes and "overtranslation" must be guarded against.

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