

DOI: 10.31648/an.9556

Agnieszka Majcher

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2149-0278>

Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach/ Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce
agamajcher74@gmail.com

Differences in Construal in Douglas Adams's *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and its Polish Translations

Abstract: This paper, aiming to illustrate construal, is a study of selected extracts taken from Adams's science-fiction novel: the source text, and its two translations by Banaszak and Wieczorek. While analyzing corresponding parts, we observe the discrepancies in terms of dimensions of construal. They are presented in the subsections: Prominence, Specificity, Perspective. The concepts in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar, focusing on human mind, allow us to study grammatical and semantic aspects (regarding them as equally meaningful) with the same tools. Analyzing different aspects of texts or expressions' conceptualization, the level of equivalence between the source and target texts can be investigated.

Keywords: translation, science-fiction, Langacker, Cognitive Grammar, dimensions of construal

1. Introduction

Contemporary approaches to translation emphasize the role of human mind in the process. The need to provide a researcher with scientific tools to discuss the cognition has become apparent. Translation theorists develop their thoughts not only from literary or cultural theories, but from the linguistic ones. Cognitive Grammar, focusing on human mind, is claimed to have a great potential to study and describe translations with. The original thought by Langacker was developed in terms of translation studies by Tabakowska, focusing on the concepts in Langacker's theory which enable us to analyze different aspects of texts or expressions' conceptualization in order to seek equivalence between the source and target texts. Thus, grammatical aspects can be studied with the same tools as vocabulary, being equally meaningful as the latter.

2. Cognitive Grammar

Langacker's Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 1987; 1991; 2005; 2008) represents the holistic approach to language. Language is regarded here as an integral part of the human cognition (cf. Langacker 1987: 12). Therefore, language is considered as one of the phenomena which can be acquired, developed, and described with the use of human cognitive abilities. Contrary to understanding grammar as a system of forms which are arbitrary and result from abstract rules not linked to human activities, Langacker claims that "grammar is meaningful" (Langacker 1987: 3).

Understanding the concept of meaning is crucial for Langacker: "Meaning is what language is all about" (Langacker 1987: 12). A speaker identifies meaning of any expression with *conceptualization* produced by its linguistic expression in this view: "[t]he meaning of an expression is equated with a conceptualization in the mind of a language user" (Taylor 2002: 187). Conceptualization implies that language users, while producing their utterances, try to relate a conceptual structure to what they see or imagine. In other words, they try to find and order the terms (concepts) that correspond to the situation in which they currently are. Each language user has an ability to form new, individual conceptualizations. The individual conceptualizations can be later conventionalized in the language community concerned. Humans form mental constructs in their heads, so called scenes, which are mostly representations of non-linguistic objects, properties, relations. Two scenes concerning the same situation may differ from each other in:

- the level of abstraction or specification,
- the perspective from which the situation in question is viewed,
- selection concerning which elements of the given scene are in the center of the observer's attention and which ones remain only as part of the ground (cf. Langacker 1987: 110–123).

The notion of *construal* is related to the notion of conceptualization. However, "[a]n expression's meaning is not just the conceptual content it evokes – equally important is how that content is construed" (Langacker 2008: 55). Construal is a cognitive process, a natural capacity of a human being to "imagine" the same situation differently – with help of different means – in the process of thinking or in the process of communication: "Construal is our ability to conceive and portray the same situation in alternate ways. In cognitive linguistics, the term indicates an array of conceptual factors (such as prominence) shown to be relevant for lexical and semantic description" (Langacker 2019: 140).

A construal, also known as *mental imagery*, is produced on the basis of *cognitive domains* (cf. Langacker 2005: 14). As it has been pointed out previously, a scene can be presented in various ways, i.e. different utterances can evoke the same conceptual content, which still can be semantically distinct as the expressions portray that content in alternate ways. Because conceptualization is realized within time, it matters which element of the scene will be used first in the utterance and how the elements will be organized. Thus, different aspects of the scene will be profiled. Although utterances refer to the same scene, different construal will change the way the scene is viewed by the receiver, as one can barely focus on all the elements of the scene. What seems important at the moment is selected: “what we actually see depends on how closely we examine it, what we choose to look at, which elements we pay most attention to, and where we view it from” (Langacker 2008: 55). Therefore, organizing dimensions of construal, selecting one or more elements which our attention will focus on is indispensable to describe how the expression can be construed.

The phenomena constituting the dimensions of construal can be labelled as: *specificity*, *focusing*, *prominence*, *perspective* (cf. Langacker 2008: 55). The dimensions usually focused on in describing construal are:

- level of specificity (or schematicity) at which a situation is characterized,
- relative prominence of substructures (*profiling*; *trajector/landmark alignment*),
- perspective (*vantage point*, *viewing arrangement*, *direction of mental scanning*) (cf. Langacker 2008: 55–85).

One of the aspects of prominence is *profile*. An expression's profile is the specific focus of attention within the *immediate scope*. An expression evokes a certain body of conceptual content, called its *base*. Within it, the expression gives special prominence to some substructure. This structure is called its *profile*. An expression's profile can be defined as what it refers to or designates within its *conceptual base* (cf. Langacker 2008: 66–67).

Another important feature of prominence appears when we deal with a relationship that is profiled. Its participants are made prominent to varying degrees. The most prominent participant is called the *trajector* and is construed as the “entity being located, evaluated, or described” (Langacker 2008: 70). It is the *primary focus (figure)* within the profiled relationship. Another participant is often made prominent as a *secondary focus* and is called a *landmark*.

Tabakowska (1990; 1999; 2001; 2009) refers to Langacker's concepts (1987; 1991; 2005; 2008) in her works concerning translations. According to her, construal is “a process based on appearing non-verbal representations of objects and events

in a human mind” (Tabakowska 2001: 43). Individual images created by a language user may become fixed both in the user’s mind and in the community of the target language users, that is they are subject to conventionalization. Therefore, the grammar of a language is the result of conventionalization of some deeply rooted types of construing the linguistic content (cf. Tabakowska 2001: 37–50).

The construal’s effects are present in a language, which influences creating and reading texts, as well as translation. With further reference to translation, the same situation may be obviously perceived in multiple ways. Therefore, its representations in one’s mind can differ significantly, for instance in terms of the level of specificity or generalization. Thus, the construal is not the same. However, once it is expressed with specific language structures, they determine the construal.

Construal is also subject to a *viewpoint* which a language user or translator takes, “a location where the scene is observed from” (Langacker 1988: 123, cited in: Tabakowska 2001: 62). A language user, whilst producing an image, takes a role of an observer of the scene. A viewpoint is the main aspect of perspective, that is “situating the author¹ in relation to the observed scene” (Tabakowska 2001: 62).

For the purpose of translation, it is worth emphasizing that the observer may take other than their own viewpoint any time. Such a shift in mental space, pointed out by Tabakowska, leads to another very important aspect of imagery, that is *objectification*, when the observer becomes simultaneously a participant of the scene, thus taking an external viewpoint. In the opposite process, however, called *subjectification*, the observer is not subject to their own observation (cf. Langacker 2005: 11–31; Tabakowska 2001: 50–97).

As construal resembles designing a painting, Tabakowska (2001: 75) focuses on conceptualizer’s ability to choose the most adequate composition alternative, emphasizing that it depends on a language’s inherent feature, *iconicity*. She describes it as correspondence or similarity of language expressions to things described by them. In a language it can be reflected by putting elements that are semantically associated next to each other. A simple instance of it would be adjective plus noun and such phenomena will not give much freedom to a translator. Whenever there is a choice, however, a translator faces a challenge. This is associated with natural order (*ordo naturalis*) and salient order – when conceptualizer decides to emphasize one element by composing it out of natural (e.g. temporal) order. The latter may be regarded as *experiential iconicity* (cf. Tabakowska 2001: 77).

¹ In this case – the observer.

As mentioned before, construal has a significant impact on the selection of specific expressions and linguistic structures when creating a text. The number of possibilities is here limited by the language convention. Thus, different languages may result in favouring different solutions in the process of translation.

3. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* – case study

This paper aims to study how linguistic aspects of construal work and presents the impact that seemingly unimportant changes concerning specific aspects of construal can have. This analysis is to illustrate how different the dimensions of construal can be if we compare the source text with its translations. Only selected aspects of construal and limited examples from the texts are described for the purpose of the analysis.

Douglas Adams's novel is a parody of science-fiction literature in English. The protagonists are refugees from the Earth who travel through space, where the difficulties concerning the rules of time and space organization and the communication limitations between alien species have been already overcome. As it is an example of science-fiction literature, the text abounds in descriptions of invented worlds, made with words coined by the author. Thus, the reader has to imagine the world depicted. Construal may require undertaking more complex cognitive operations than those employed for reading a text that reflects the reality. And the task of a translator will be to select the best language means to activate the expected cognitive domains and recreate equivalent dimensions of construal in Polish.

The novel was translated twice into Polish. Anna Banaszak's translation was first published in 1992 and Paweł Wiczorek's translation appeared in 1994. The two translations feature two different approaches to the source text. Banaszak produced an exoticized text, including foreign lexicon. On the other hand, Wiczorek's rendering is domesticated, with vocabulary that brings forth many central (for the Polish language community) cognitive domains. In terms of selection, the two translators turn to different register and types of expressions. Obviously, each act of communication faces the challenge of selecting one of synonymous lexemes, phrases, sentences. These specific language means impose the construal. However, within a translation process we must first interpret the source text author's intention (how the author construes) and then decide (perhaps not deliberately) on the dimensions of their construal. Without prior interpretation, it is impossible to select

the most accurate language. Apparently, we can only speculate that translators did this, instead of intuitively choosing the first matching item. For the purpose of this analysis, we will, however, assume that the selection might have been deliberate and followed the act of interpretation. In order to examine to what extent the translations of the novel are equivalent to the original in terms of construal, we will focus on three aspects: prominence, specificity and perspective, occasionally carrying out a more cross-over analysis of the excerpts. Two passages have been selected for most of the analysis:

Passage 1:

a)

Here's what the *Encyclopedia Galactica* has to say about alcohol. It says that alcohol is a colourless volatile liquid formed by the fermentation of sugars and also notes its intoxicating effect on certain carbon-based life forms.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy also mentions alcohol. It says that the best drink in existence is the Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster.

It says that the effect of a Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster is like having your brains smashed out by a slice of lemon wrapped round a large gold brick (OA 17)².

b)

Oto, co „Encyklopedia Galactica” mówi na temat alkoholu. Twierdzi, że alkohol to bezbarwna, lotna ciecz otrzymywana w procesie fermentacji cukrów. Odnotowuje również odurzający efekt, jaki wywiera on na pewne formy życia. Przewodnik „Autostopem przez Galaktykę” również wspomina o alkoholu. Mówi, że najlepszy drink, jaki kiedykolwiek istniał, to Pangalaktyczny Dynamit Pitny.

Informuje, że efekt wypicia tego trunku można opisać jako zmiżdżenie mózgu plasterkiem cytryny owiniętym wokół wielkiej cegły ze złota (TB 25).

c)

W *Encyclopaedia Galactica* można przeczytać o alkoholu, że jest to *bezbarwna łatwo parująca ciecz powstająca w wyniku fermentacji cukrów*, wspomina się tam także, że *działa trująco na określone bioformy zbudowane na bazie węgla*. Także przewodnik *Autostopem przez Galaktykę* wspomina alkohol. Napisano tam, że najlepszym istniejącym drinkiem jest Pangalaktyczny Gardłogrzmot.

Napisano, że Pangalaktyczny Gardłogrzmot działa jakby ktoś wytlukiwał pijącemu mózg z głowy plastrami cytryny owiniętym wokół sztaby złota (TW 28).

² In this paper the source references are indicated as follows:

Adams, D. (1992), *Przewodnik. Autostopem przez galaktykę*. Trans. Banaszak, A. as TB;

Adams, D. (2005), *Autostopem przez galaktykę*. Trans. Wieczorek, P. as TW;

Adams, D. (2009), *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* as OA.

Passage 2:

a)

Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz was not a pleasant sight, even for other Vogons. His highly domed nose rose high above a small piggy forehead. His dark green rubbery skin was thick enough for him to play the game of Vogon Civil Service politics, and play it well, and waterproof enough for him to survive indefinitely at sea depths of up to a thousand feet with no ill effects.

Not that he ever went swimming of course. His busy schedule would not allow it. [...]

Meanwhile, the natural forces on the planet Vogosphere had been working overtime to make up for their earlier blunder. They brought forth scintillating jewelled scuttling crabs, which the Vogons ate, smashing their shells with iron mallets; tall aspiring trees with breathtaking slenderness and colour which the Vogons cut down and burned the crab meat with; [...] (OA 39–40).

b)

Prostetnic Vagon Jeltz nie był miłym widokiem nawet dla innych Vagonów. Jego wysoko sklepiony nos wyrastał znacznie ponad małe świńskie czoło, a ciemnozielona, przypominająca gumę skóra była wystarczająco gruba, aby mógł grać w grę nazywaną „Vogońską polityką administracyjną” (i to grać dobrze) oraz wystarczająco wodoodporna, żeby mógł spędzać dowolną ilość czasu w głębinach morskich, nawet do tysiąca stóp, bez żadnych negatywnych skutków. Oczywiście nie chodził nigdy popływać – był na to zbyt zajęty. [...].

Tymczasem siły przyrody na Vogsferze pracowały nadliczbowo, usilnie starając się nadrobić swoją wcześniejszą gafę. Stworzyły iskrzące się od klejnotów kraby zatapiające, które Vagonowie zjadali, rozbijając ich pancerze żelaznymi młotkami; wysokie, strzeliste drzewa o zapierającej dech w piersiach wiotkości i kolorze, które Vagonowie wycinali, aby rozpałać z nich ogień do pieczenia mięsa krabów; [...] (TB 53–54).

c)

Widok prostetnika Vagona Jeltz nie był przyjemny nawet dla innych Vagonów. Wysoko osadzony nochał wystawał nad małe świńskie czołko. Ciemnozieloną, gumowatą skórę miał wystarczająco grubą, by radzić sobie, i to nieźle, w rozgrywkach personalnych w vogońskiej administracji państwowej i wystarczająco wodoszczelną, by bez przykrych skutków móc przeżyć dowolnie długo na głębokości do trzystu metrów.

Oczywiście nigdy nie pływał. Nie pozwalał mu na to wypełniony po brzegi terminarz. [...]

W tym czasie siły przyrody pracowały na planecie Vagosfera w nadgodzinach, aby nadrobić wcześniejsze gąfy. Wydały na świat szybkie, lśniące jak klejnoty raki, które w Vagoni zżerali, rozłupując ich skorupy kowalskimi młotami. Wytworzyły wysokie, oddychające drzewa o zapierających dech w piersiach, smukłości i kolorze, które Vagoni ścinali, żeby opalać w ogniu racze mięso (TW 56–57).

3.1. Prominence

Passage 1 describes the invented world of space. The beginning of the English extract features the focal point which is *The Encyklopedia Galactica*: “the Encyclopedia Galactica has to say about alcohol” (OA 17). This suggests that this book is an influential source in the world depicted. This is reproduced in translation b): “Encyklopedia Galactica” mówi na temat alkoholu” (TB 25). However, translation c) reads: “W [in] *Encyclopaedia Galactica* można przeczytać o alkoholu, że” (TW 28). Thus, the book is a landmark. The non-personal verb form *można* [one can / it is possible] does not reveal who can broaden their knowledge. Here the profiled element is the ability to do so and the implicit trajector is any reader of this book.

We can further read about “its intoxicating effect on certain carbon-based life forms” (OA 17). The profile in this expression is the *effect* of drinking, and a similar construal is found in Banaszak’s translation, informing about “odurzający efekt, jaki wywiera on na pewne formy życia” (TB 25). We can say that the focal point in both texts is the same. Yet, Wieczorek’s construal is different: “działa trująco na określone bioformy zbudowane na bazie węgla” (TW 28). There is no noun used as a subject in this sentence. But it is explicit that the agent of the verb *działa* (“[it] works”) is the drink and thus the drink is the trajector in this rendering. The very same change (*effect* – *efekt* – *działa*, respectively) can be found further on the same pages. This time the name of a specific drink is the primary focus in Wieczorek’s rendering, while in the source text and the other translation the name of the drink is a landmark. The differences may be motivated by the fact that Wieczorek bears a Polish reader in mind and wants to provide them with a more friendly text, providing for their reading preferences and habits, regardless of the construal changes resulting from it.

This pattern is repeated many times: Banaszak copies the phrases and the structure of the original text and even though her Polish sentences are correct and equivalent with respect to the construal, they leave us with the notion that in terms of style they do not go in line with average Polish readers’ expectations resulting from their reading experience. This is the case of the extract in which the reader is informed of the content of the book – in the source text in a generally casual but a semi-formal, thus humorous paragraph, following the style often used by guides or announcers. The English version twice features the phrase “it says”: “*The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* also mentions alcohol. It says that the best drink in existence is the Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster,” “It says that the effect of a [...]” (OA 17). Obviously, the trajector, consistently, is the guidebook. This allows

the reader of the novel to focus on this unusual book and use all their cognitive abilities to visualize its curious interaction with its reader. This is reconstructed in Banaszak's version, though she once replaces "it says" – *mówi*, with *informuje* ("[it] informs") (TB 25). The use of bare verbs, although still clearly referring to the book, leaves us with the impression that this reading experience is too formal. This was probably why Wieczorek resolved to use the non-personal verb *napisano* ("[they] wrote/ [it was] written") (TW 28). The guidebook is no longer the focal point of the sentence, the process of writing is profiled here, but the use of the aforementioned form of the verb makes the reader activate the cognitive domain: getting to know something unexpectedly interesting about unusual objects/matters from a knowledgeable person. This way the entire paragraph may be interpreted similarly to the original.

The issue of prominence is often brought about because of using English structures which do not have corresponding ones in Polish. That would be the case of a causative form. In the extract: "like having your brains smashed out" (OA 17) the profiled element is experiencing suffering caused by unknown, and not referred to, even in a form of a landmark, agent. This time both translators had to make changes in terms of the construal. Banaszak chooses *jako zmiżdżenie* ("as smashing") and therefore the action of smashing is profiled, and thus someone's movement is activated as the cognitive domain rather than an event in which the primary focus is the person experiencing the sensation, that is the drinker. Wieczorek changes the construal more drastically, as he introduces the agent *ktoś* ("somebody") as the trajector: "jakby ktoś wytlukiwał" (TW 28). It may unnecessarily divert the reader's focus from the drinker, but this expression is correct and natural in the Polish language and activates the conceptual domain: the attacker harms the victim. Therefore, we could say that such change in construal provides for the preferences of the expected target readers.

Interesting construal differences can be also observed in Passage 2: "Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz was not a pleasant sight, even for other Vogons" (OA 39). The first sentence features *Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz* as the trajector. So does Banaszak's rendering: "Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz nie był miłym widokiem" (TB 53). Following the pattern described above, Wieczorek construes the scene differently in his translation, making *widok* ("sight") the primary focus: "Widok prostetnika Vogona Jeltz nie był przyjemny" (TW 56). Another example of similar practices taken from Passage 2 can be the extract: "His dark green rubbery skin was" (OA 39). Banaszak maintains *skin* as the focal point: "Jego [...] ciemnozielona, przypominająca gumę skóra była" (TB 53), while Wieczorek indirectly introduces the Vogon as the trajector:

“Ciemnozieloną gumowatą skórę miał” (TW 56). However, we can observe here an example of experiential iconicity, as the repulsiveness of the skin is presented first in the sentence – according to the way the observer would experience the scene.

In Passage 2 we can also notice one more example of Wieczorek’s practice of changing some dimension of construal. This concerns the description of Vogon’s nose: “His highly domed nose rose high above a small piggy forehead” (OA 39). This time both translations provide *nos* (“nose”) as the profiled element, but while Banaszak copies the original construal: “Jego wysoko sklepiony nos wyrastał znacznie” (TB 53), Wieczorek removes the clear base *jego* (“his”), at the same time using the augmentative: “Wysoko osadzony nochal wyrastał” (TW 56). Using diminutives and augmentatives suggests a greater involvement of the speaker into the scene, thus results in objectification (cf. Tabakowska 2001: 131–141).

Finally, one more extract from Passage 2 illustrates that sometimes Banaszak introduces more modified construal, that is a different profile. The original sentence: “His busy schedule would not allow it” (OA 39) is rendered by her as: “był na to zbyt zajęty” (“he was too busy for that”) (TB 53). Instead of the thing *schedule* being the trajector in the profiled relation of *allowing*, the Vogon becomes one. The original trajector in the relation of *allowing* is profiled in Wieczorek’s version: “Nie pozwalał mu na to wypełniony po brzeg terminarz” (“Filled till the edges diary did not allow him for that”) (TW 56). In this sentence we can also observe experiential iconicity, as Wieczorek takes advantage of the Polish syntax rules and places the verb *nie pozwalał* (“did not allow”) first in the sentence, following the natural order of accepting the fact that there does exist an obstacle preventing Vogon from going swimming before identifying what this obstacle is.

3.2. Specificity

The level of specificity concerns details included in presenting a scene and can be described as a level of precision and detail at which a specific situation is characterized. Expressions can be arranged in hierarchies, where each expression is schematic with respect to those that follow. It may refer to hyponyms and hypernyms. The differences in specificity versus schematicity are easily observed in the choice of lexemes which are taken from the different levels of these hierarchies.

In Passage 1 Adams uses the passive verb “formed by” and Banaszak renders it with its translation: *otrzymywana*, while Wieczorek construes a more schematic situation, as the participle *powstająca* refers to any processes, imposed by an agent

as well as spontaneous. This is followed by a sentence in which we can read about “its intoxicating effect on certain carbon-based life forms” (OA 17). In Banaszak’s version we find: “odurzający efekt, jaki wywiera on na pewne formy życia” (TB 25). Apart from adding a subordinate, we can observe that on the one hand the same level of specificity was used in describing the effect: *odurzający* (“intoxicating”), on the other, though, the description of *formy życia* (“life forms”) is more schematic, as it is deprived of the translation of the attribute “carbon-based.” This attribute – *na bazie węgla* (“on the basis of carbon”) – is present in Wieczorek’s rendering: “działa trująco na określone bioformy zbudowane na bazie węgla” (TW 28). However, the description of the effect is more specific. *Trująco* is derived from the verb *truć* (“to poison”) and this could be regarded as the translator’s failure, considering the effect of drinking alcohol that is part of our common knowledge (we do not die right after drinking), if the world depicted were not invented.

Furthermore, the aforementioned nose in Passage 2 is originally described with the verb with two adverbs: “rose high above” (OA 39). The level of specificity found in Banaszak’s version: “wyrastał znacznie” (TB 53) is equivalent if we recognize the semantic contribution of the prefix *wy-* in Polish, modifying the verb *rosnąć*, though the construals are different in directionality of the movement: upward in the English version and outward, augmented by the adverb *znacznie* in the Polish one. Wieczorek’s version is even more schematic, as we read in his rendering: “wystawał” (“protruded”) (TB 56). Additionally, the expression used by him evokes a static concept, while the other two evoke movement. Yet, his *nochal* is more specific than a *nose*.

In another example from Passage 2 “busy schedule” (OA 39) is rendered in Wieczorek’s version with a more specific expression “wypełniony po brzegi” (“filled till the edges”) (TW 56). Furthermore, “a small piggy forehead” (OA 39) is translated as “małe świńskie czoło” (“a small piggy forehead”) (TB 53) by Banaszak and “małe świńskie czółko” (“a small piggy little forehead”) (TW 56) by Wieczorek, who once more chooses a more specific, this time a diminutive expression³.

Apparently, unlike in the case of prominence, there is no clear tendency in the ways the two translators deal with the level of specificity. It seems to be rooted more in their personal preferences of expressing concepts rather than a deliberate attempt at seeking equivalence in terms of this dimension of construal. However,

³ Tabakowska claims that a diminutive form can be an instance of objectification (cf. Tabakowska 2001: 131–141).

the two Polish versions feature many more instances of different approaches of the translators in this regard.

While in the original text (Passage 2) we read about crabs, “the Vogons ate” (OA 40), which is rendered as *zjadali* (“ate”) (TB 54) by Banaszak, Wieczorek rises the level of specificity by the lexeme *zżerali* (“devoured”) (TW 58). “Sea depths” (OA 39) are translated by Banaszak as *głębiny morskie* (“sea depths”) (TB 53), whereas Wieczorek this time uses a more schematic noun *głębokość* (“depth”) (TW 56), evoking only a cognitive domain of measurement, instead the one of the place, which in consequence allows us to access many complex cognitive domains, involving tales of sirens and pirates.

More examples can illustrate the lack of consistence in translations in terms of specificity level, such as: “ugly and unfortunated mistake” (OA 39), “nieprzyjemną i godną pożałowania pomyłką” (“an unpleasant and regrettable mistake/error”) (TB 53), “szkaradny i nieszcześnie błąd” (“hideous and unfortunate error/mistake”) (TW 56). If we were to arrange expressions in elaborative hierarchies, they could be ordered as follows:

- *nieprzyjemna* (“unpleasant”) → *ugly* → *szkaradny* (“hideous”),
- *unfortunated/nieszcześnie* → *godna pożałowania* (“regrettable”).

Finally let us have a look at a short Passage 3, illustrating different specificity level, combined with a difference in reference:

- a) “a small match flared nervously” (OA 40),
- b) “zapaliła się nerwowo zapałka” (“a match lit nervously”) (TB 55),
- c) “nerwowo migotał płomyk zapałki” (“a match flame flickered nervously”) (TW 58).

In Wieczorek’s rendering the constructional head is *płomyk* (“flame”) profiled on the base of the whole expression, while in the other two, one focuses on the *match*. Additionally, the verbs *migotać* (“flicker”) and *flare* are more specific, compared to *zapalić się* (“light”). However, if we compare the three verbs according to the intensity of light, we will have the following hierarchy:

flare > *zapalić się* (“light”) > *migotać* (“flicker”).

3.3. Perspective

Perspective can be defined as the viewing arrangement, determining the vantage point in the scene and the involvement of the conceptualizer. It also refers to the direction of mental scanning and what it covers.

The issues of objectivity and iconicity have already been mentioned in this paper. Researchers illustrate the former with the use of diminutive or augmentative forms (cf. Tabakowska 2001: 131–141). As the Polish language offers a wider selection of such forms, the Polish renderings can feature a speaker who seems to be part of the scene, while the English equivalent can be subjectified. The instances from Passage 2 mentioned above appear in Wiczorek's version: *czołko* (TW 56) and *nochal* (TW 56).

Objectivity was again observed in Passage 2: “Ciemnozieloną gumowatą skórę miał [...]” (TW 56). The ugly skin is the first thing an observer would notice.

A very clear example of experiential iconicity can be found in Passage 3:

- “a small match **flared**⁴ nervously” (OA 40),
- “**zapaliła** się nerwowo zapałka” (“a match **lit** nervously”) (TB 55),
- “nerwowo **migotał** płomyk zapałki” (“a match flame **flickered** nervously”) (TW 58).

Because the Polish language is not strict with regard to the order of the sentence components, both Polish translators resigned from following the original order and, instead of the agent, they focused on the action of brightening the view. This is because, when someone stays in the darkness, it is natural to notice the light first, and later – the source of it.

Following Feret (2017), we can also study the perspective by comparing the way and the order in which the information is revealed, namely whether the information was revealed in one sentence or in more changes the perspective. The former can be interpreted as a summary view. The reader has an impression of receiving the pieces of information holistically. When we receive the pieces of information as separate sentences – scenes, a sequential view is the case.

The original text features two sentences at the beginning of Passage 1: “Here's what the *Encyclopedia Galactica* has to say about alcohol. It says that alcohol is” (OA 17). Therefore, this is the case of a sequential view. We focus first on the book and later on alcohol. This can be interpreted as employing the reference point ability – while the mental path is discrete, we are directed to the book first, only to be attracted to the issue of alcohol. This scanning is recreated in Banaszak's rendering, whereas Wiczorek proposes the summary view: “W *Encyclodaedia Galactica* można przeczytać o alkoholu, że jest to” (“In *Encyclopedia Galactica* one can read about alcohol that”) (TW 28).

⁴ All the highlights in bold in quotes are added.

In the analyzed texts we also observe instances of different viewing order. One presented below, comes from Passage 2 and features corresponding expressions inserted in a different part of the sentence:

- [...] was thick enough for him to play the game of Vogon Civil Service politics, **and play it well**, and waterproof enough [...] (OA 39),
- [...] była wystarczająco gruba, aby mógł grać w grę nazywaną “Vogońską polityką administracyjną” (**i to grać dobrze**) oraz wystarczająco wodoodporna [...] (TB 53),
- [...] miał wystarczająco grubą, by radzić sobie, **i to nieźle**, w rozgrywkach personalnych w vogońskiej administracji państwowej i wystraszająco wodoodporna [...] (TW 56).

In this case Wiczorek changes the construal, by placing the commentary expression *i to nieźle* (“and not too bad”) earlier in the sequence. Revealing this information before the other makes it seem more important for the viewer. Therefore, in Wiczorek’s construal the character’s outstanding skill is what attracts our attention more and the area in which he shows his talent is perceived as secondary. We could say that the vantage point in the original and Banaszak’s versions is closer to the game being played, and in Wiczorek’s rendering it is linked with the character’s abilities.

Additionally, Passage 4, in which it is difficult to detect any consistency with respect to the original viewing order, presents just one of the many more instances of this aspect:

a)

He was the way he was because **billions of years ago (1)⁵** when the Vogons had **first crawled (2)** out of the **sluggish primeval (3)** seas of Vogsphere, and had lain **panting (4a) and heaving (4b)** on the planet’s virgin shores... **when (5)** the first rays of the **bright (6a) young (6b)** Vogsol sun had shone **across them (7) that morning (8)** [...] (OA 39).

b)

Był, jaki był, ponieważ **biliony lat temu (1)**, gdy Vagonowie po raz pierwszy **wypelzli (2)** z **pradawnych, leniwych (3)** mórz Vogsfery i legli, **sapiąc (4a) i ciężko dysząc (4b)** na dziewiczych brzegach planety, **gdy (5) owego ranka (8)** padły **na nich (7)** pierwsze promienie **młodego (6b), jasnego (6a)**, vogońskiego słońca [...] (TB 53).

⁵ The numbers are added.

c)

Był, jaki był, ponieważ kiedy Vogoni, **sapiać (4a)**, **wypelzli (2) przed bilionami lat (1)** z **ospałych praoceanów (3)** Vogosfery i **dyszac (4b)**, zalegli na dziewiczych wybrzeżach planety... **owego poranka (8)**, **gdy (5)** pierwsze promienie **jasnego (6a) młodego (6b)** słońca o nazwie Vogsol oświeciły **Vogonów (7)** [...] (TW 56).

As far as it has been presented, it is hard to determine which translator offered more equivalence to the original in terms of perspective. The changes in the construal seem to be randomly introduced to the translated texts, not attributed to one rendering.

4. Conclusion

The study of different dimensions of construal seemed promising with respect to revealing general characterization of the translator's approach. Yet, the conclusions in this case are not fully satisfying. Apparently, the issue of the dimensions of construal is not deliberately taken into account by the translators in making their choices. As regards prominence, it was obvious that Wieczorek appeared more individual – profiling and focal point in his rendering do not copy the original construal. However, we cannot determine that in terms of the other two dimensions. Therefore, we must assume that the discrepancies may be the result of the translators' personal preferences concerning the way a narrative is produced.

Obviously, the analysis was carried out on the basis of four extracts, chosen with care to be representative, yet the further study of the whole novel is not unlikely to alter this picture. All in all, the above study has fulfilled its goal, illustrating various dimensions of construal and listing differences between the three texts in terms of construal.

Bibliography

- Adams, D. (1992), *Przewodnik. Autostopem przez galaktykę*. Trans. Banaszak, A. Poznań: Faktor.
- Adams, D. (2005), *Autostopem przez galaktykę*. Trans. Wieczorek, P. Warszawa: Albatros.
- Adams, D. (2009), *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. London: Pan Books.
- Feret, M.Z. (2017), *Dimensions of Imagery. Translation Analysis on the Example of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. *Respectus Philologicus* 31/36: 122–133. DOI: 10.15388/RESPECTUS.2017.31.36.12.
- Langacker, R.W. (1986), *An Introduction to Cognitive Grammar*. *Cognitive Science* 10: 1–40. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1207/s15516709cog1001_1.
- Langacker, R.W. (1987), *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, v. 1: *Theoretical Perspectives*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

- Langacker, R.W. (1991), *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, v. 2: *Descriptive Application*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Langacker, R.W. (1993), *Universals of Construal*. Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society 19: 447–463. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3765/bls.v19i1.1532>.
- Langacker, R.W. (2005), *Wykłady z gramatyki kognitywnej*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.
- Langacker, R.W. (2008), *Cognitive Grammar: A Basic Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Langacker, R.W. (2019), *Construal*. In: Dąbrowska, E./Divjak, D. (eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics – Foundations of Language*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton: 140–166.
- Tabakowska, E. (1990), *Językoznawstwo kognitywne a poetyka przekładu*. Teksty_Drugie_teoria_literatury_krytyka_interpretacja-r1990-t-n3-s97-114.pdf (muzhp.pl) [accessed: 15.10.2023].
- Tabakowska, E. (1999), *O przekładzie na przykładzie*. Kraków: Znak.
- Tabakowska, E. (2001), *Językoznawstwo kognitywne a poetyka przekładu*. Kraków: Universitas.
- Tabakowska, E. (2002), *Bariery kulturowe są zbudowane z gramatyki*. In: Lewicki, W.R. (ed.), *Przekład – język – kultura*. Lublin: UMCS: 25–34.
- Tabakowska, E. (2009), *Tłumacząc się z tłumaczenia*. Kraków: Znak.
- Tabakowska, E. (2014), *Teaching Translation: Can Cognitive Grammar Be of Any Use?* <https://www.intralinea.org/specials/article/2083> [accessed: 15.10.2023].
- Taylor, J.R. (2002), *Cognitive Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dictionaries

- CDO – *Cambridge Dictionary Online*. <http://dictionary.cambridge.org> [accessed: 15.10.2023].
- CCED – *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary*. <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/> [accessed: 15.10.2023].
- MWO – *Merriam-Webster Online*. <http://www.merriam-webster.com> [accessed: 15.10.2023].
- OED – *Oxford English Dictionary*. <http://www.oed.com/> [accessed: 15.10.2023].
- SJP – *Słownik języka polskiego PWN*. <http://sjp.pwn.pl> [accessed: 15.10.2023].