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## ***Time for Tea* – An Examination of Problems Associated with the Translation of English Mealtime Terms**

✦ **Кључне речи:**  
*mealtimes, time, social self perception, stylization.*

Рад представља покушај да се анализира питање превођења енглеских кулинарских термина на стране језике. Аутор указује на сложеност проблема, наводи неправилна решења у страним језицима (укључујући ту и пољски језик) настала превођењем чак и једноставнијих енглеских термина типа *lunch, tea, dinner, supper*.

William Struck and E. B. White in their *Elements of Style* have formulated the following: "A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all of his sentences short or that he avoid detail ... but that every word tell."

Style in the lay world is often associated with the way in which a given person decides to present himself. If manners make the man, then style in terms of a self formulation in relation to one's inner perception of oneself determines the reception one experiences,

as equally the reception one expects, or at least hopes for. Most of the things we do depend on a element of stylistic expectation. We expect things to live up to a certain 'inner' standard. It is no wonder therefore than 'style' in the 'common' understanding has connotations of not simply 'a manner of doing something' (NODE) but more 'a manner of doing something well', something associated with elegance and sophistication. This being very much the association when it comes to food and eating. The perception of what constitutes a *good* meal, restaurant, or national cuisine is something based on the way in which the said lives up to notions of *style, stylish, and stylized*. Though the above appears

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to be divergent from the linguistic notion of *stylistics*, when seen in relation to the *perception* of language and through it peoples and their behaviour it constitutes an interesting appraisal of the way in which a perception of oneself, one's behaviour and consequently one's world can affect the way in which a *different* world is construed.

Let us take a simple catering example. As Elizabeth David in *French Provincial Cooking* writes:

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When Curnonsky [...] describes the four distinct types of French cookery '*La Haute Cuisine, la cuisine Bourgeoise, la cuisine Régionale, et la cuisine Improvisée*' he might perhaps also have mentioned that other well-known branch of French cooking, *la cuisine À LA française*, or French food as understood and cooked by foreigners all over the world. (David: 15)

One could equally talk about the perception of English food, and here especially the perception of English cookery terms and mealtimes in the perception of the world. Curnonsky was prone to repeat that good cooking was achieved when 'ingredients taste of what they are'. One could apply the same to concepts of style and translation by saying that a good translation is one that captures the style of the original and not one that merely finds functional equivalents yet at the same time modifies the meaning and ultimately creates something that resembles but fundamentally tastes different. Elizabeth David again:

There is one factor, though, that has to be remembered. A country's national food appears completely authentic only *in* that country. It is a curious fact that French dishes cooked by a Pole or a Chinaman in France are liable to seem more genuinely French than the same

dishes cooked by a French cook in England, Germany, Italy, Poland or New York. The climate, the soil, the ingredients, the saucepans, the stove, even the way of arranging the food upon the serving dish, of folding the napkins and setting the table, as well as the French attitude of mind towards food, and the smell of their kitchens while they are cooking, all play their parts (David: 15)

The translator of literature is often confronted with the seemingly mundane problem of translating the blatantly obvious. Enough to say that translation in most of its aspects is not quite the intellectual flight of fancy that it appears to those who do not undertake the said on a regular basis. Translation is, in a word, an extremely prosaic task that involves the rendering of the apparently obvious from one language to another. And so the matter appears to be in relation to the translation of mealtimes from English to Polish. We all eat, and given a basic physiological necessity, we all eat at the same time(s). Which leaves the translator no more difficulty than the obvious cross-referencing of times and terms: *breakfast* – *śniadanie*; *lunch* – *obiad*; and *dinner* – *kolacja*. If this was the case the frightening mistakes that we encompass within the pages of translated English literature would not occur. To reword Oscar Wilde from *Dinner and Dishes* 'The real difficulty, however, that we all have to face in life, is not so much the science of cookery, as the stupidity of cooks,' what we all have to face in life is not so much the science of how to translate, as the cultural ignorance of sizeable numbers of translators. Something that is not merely a question of a translational lapse, but more a question of ignorance in conveying to the reader something that is essential to the

mood, style and intensity of the original language.

An inability to convey accurately the style of the original goes both ways. It is not merely the French-like dishes served in so-called French-style restaurants the world over, it is equally the functional equivalents or notions of English food perceived by, for example, the French:

A *rosbif* in Paris is not English roast beef; what the French eat and drink at *le goûter* would puzzle and infuriate an English nanny invited to tea. In France it is mildly surprising to find that any cooked ham goes by the name of *jambon d'York*, and that, all unbeknown to us, one of the most highly esteemed English cheeses is called *le Chester* (David: 15–16)

Food, style and language (or linguistics) are curiously mixed for they constitute our sensual perception of the world around us. We choose words to fit (or not) the occasion, we dress, decorate and discern in relation to style, and we serve, savour and sample food in relation to our perceptions of what lies around us and the expectations of those surroundings. That we can never totally recreate the style of another country is surely understood, but we can make good approximations which maintain the essence of the original yet in no way pretends to be that original.

To exercise our common sense in selecting what is within our powers... and to learn how to make them our own (within limits, of course – you can't cook up a sole and a piece of hake and a couple of tomatoes and call it a *bouillabaisse*) (David: 16)

Before we examine the crux of the work i.e. the misconception concerning the concept of English mealtime terms, let us examine a very simple example of conveying

meaning. There is, they say, nothing as simple as eggs.

#### ŒUFS MOLLET

There seems to be no really adequate translation of the word *mollet* in this context. Soft eggs mean to us [the English – G.T.] soft-boiled breakfast eggs; 'tender eggs,' as I have seen them translated, is explanatory enough but somehow sounds odd. Perhaps it is best just to leave them in the French. They are cooked in boiling water until they are of a consistency midway between a soft-boiled and a hard-boiled egg; that is to say the whites are quite set, the yolks still just runny.

In examining the translation of 'mealtime' terms into Polish we will look at whether the approach to *mollet* outlined above should not be adopted. In the way that food has a style which links is firmly to a given geographical setting then equally the terms used to refer to mealtimes conjure up a very specific stylized ritual which though possibly taking place at the same clock time as an eating process somewhere else is not necessarily the same thing at all. The English qualifier 'continental' in reference to breakfast being a case in point.

Let us have a look at basics and explore the various terms in English and their dictionary/cultural connotations and associations.

#### Breakfast:

- (1) a meal eaten in the morning, the first of the day [The New Oxford Dictionary of English (NODE)]
- (2) The first meal of the day, esp. when taken in the morning... (New Penguin English Dictionary)
- (3) the first meal of the day, esp. when taken in the morning, or the food prepared for

or eaten at this meal (New Penguin English Dictionary – electronic version)

(4) First meal of the day – see also Continental Breakfast, English Breakfast (Longman Handy Learner's Dictionary) Continental breakfast – light breakfast us. of bread butter, jam and coffee English breakfast – a breakfast of esp. bacon and eggs, toast and marmalade

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(5) The first meal in the day (Concise English Dictionary Tophi)

(6) The first meal of the day, which literally breaks the fast of the night (Larousse *Gastronomique*)

(7) The first meal of the day is *breakfast*. The traditional *full English breakfast* served in many British hotels may include fruit juice, cereal, bacon and eggs, often with sausages and tomatoes, toast and marmalade, and tea or coffee. Few people have time to prepare a cooked breakfast at home and most have only cereal or muesli (*AmE* granola) and/or toast with tea or coffee. Others buy coffee and a pastry on their way to work. (Oxford Guide to British and American Culture)

Of interest is the British concept of the 'all-day breakfast', something very popular in small cafes and supermarket restaurants. This being the same as 'breakfast served all day'. What, though, is of interest is that the all-day breakfast is the stylized equivalent of the traditional breakfast associated with the English. Although no statistics are at hand it would be far from an exaggeration to say that a lot of people now eat breakfast for lunch, or even tea (in the meaning of definitions 2, 5 and 6).

Of the five definitions *Larousse* as an encyclopaedia goes on to expand:

Before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, breakfast was taken very early in the morning and consisted of cold meat, beer, pâté, and cheese. In Victorian

England, it consisted of a fairly prolonged family meal of ham, galantine, omelette, ox tongue, kedgeree, or even roast partridge, followed by fruit, honey, and biscuits, and served with tea. Today the English breakfast survives largely in hotels or at weekends in homes. Fruit juice or cereal, such as porridge or cornflakes, is followed by eggs and bacon, grilled (broiled) tomatoes and sausages, or sometimes kippers (grilled or poached). The meal is rounded off with toast and marmalade and served with tea or coffee. ... Much more common now is cereal followed by tea or coffee with toast and marmalade or alternatively the so-called continental breakfast, consumed in France, Switzerland, and elsewhere (see *petit déjeuner*)

#### **Petit déjeuner**

The first meal of the day in France. The French, or continental, breakfast typically consists of a cup of tea, coffee, café au lait, or hot chocolate, with buttered croissants, bread, or *biscottes* spread with jam or honey. It is very small compared with the traditional English breakfast, or even with the German or Scandinavian breakfast, which may include boiled eggs, cheeses and sausages, compotes, and fruit juices.

The *Petit déjeuner* used to be more substantial. Known simply as *déjeuner* (meaning literally 'to break the fast'), it consisted of a bowl of soup sometimes accompanied by wine and meat (for the men). The main meal (*dîner*) was taken at midday. At the time of the revolution, however, it became customary to eat *dîner* at the end of the afternoon, when the business of the day was completed, and a second 'breakfast' was needed to bridge the gap between the two meals. So

the midday meal became known as *déjeuner* and a smaller *petit déjeuner* was consumed first thing in the morning.

While Hutchinson's *The Encyclopedia of Britain* defines the term as:

British culinary institution, nowadays more frequently enjoyed in its traditional form on a weekly, rather than a daily basis. W. Somerset Maugham said that 'To eat well in England, you should have breakfast three times a day'. Changing lifestyles mean orange juice, cereals and toast, plus the occasional croissant, have largely replaced eggs and bacon as the morning meal, but a 'full cooked breakfast' is still often found in hotels and guest houses.

Breakfast literally means the meal that 'breaks the fast of the night'. Saxons started the day's work with ale, cold pork, and coarse dark bread; in the Middle Ages the rich ate boiled beef, mutton and salt herring and wine, while the poor subsisted on bread, salt pork, and fish on Fridays. This was much the pattern for the next 500 years. In Scotland, oatmeal boiled with water became the staple morning food; along with marmalade and kippers. Scotch porridge is now an integral part of the British breakfast repertoire.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, tea and coffee began to be replace the 'morning draught'; by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Edwardians had turned breakfast into an art form. In its heyday, the classic breakfast line-up, served on silver dishes on a hotplate, included eggs boiled, scrambled or fried, bacon, ham, devilled kidneys, sausages, mushrooms, smoked fish, kedgeree, cold meats and game, rolls, and conserves. Such breakfasts were only serves in af-

fluent houses with plenty of servants – the poor had to make do with stale bread and watery gruel. (Hutchinson 1999: 109)

Polish gives us the terms:

(1) *śniadanie* – to pierwszy posiłek w ciągu dnia.

(2) *Drugie śniadanie* – to posiłek, zwykle zimny, spożywany między śniadaniem a obiadem.

(3) *śniadanie* (Komputerowy Słownik Języka Polskiego) posiłek ranny, przedpołudniowy. Pierwsze, drugie śniadanie. Śniadanie wystawne, obfite, skromne. Przyrządzać, zrobić śniadanie. Jeść jajka na śniadanie. Prosić kogoś na śniadanie.

(4) *śniadanko* (КСЈР) zdr. od śniadanie. Smakowite śniadanko.

(5) *podbiadek* (КСЈР) "posiłek między śniadaniem a obiadem; drugie śniadanie".

### Elevenes

(1) a short break for light refreshments, usually with tea or coffee, taken about eleven o'clock in the morning (NODE).

(2) Light refreshment taken in the middle of the morning (treated as sing. or pl) light refreshment taken in the middle of the morning (Penguin – electronic) *What was left for me? Elevenes in the garden, The Times over my [...] face, pension at the end of the month and not a damned thing I wanted to buy with it* (David Marcus).

(3) Many people also eat snacks between meals. Most have tea or coffee at mid-morning, often called *coffee time* or the *coffee break*. In Britain this is sometimes called *elevenes* (Oxford Guide to British and American Culture).

### Brunch

(1) a late morning meal eaten instead of breakfast and lunch (NODE).

(2) A meal, usu. taken in the middle of the morning that combines a late breakfast and an early lunch (Penguin).

(3) a meal, usu. taken in the middle of the morning, that combines a late breakfast and an early lunch (Penguin – electronic).

(4) It is common for Americans to eat breakfast in a restaurant. On Saturday and Sunday many people eat *brunch* late in the morning. This consists of both breakfast and lunch dishes, including pancakes and waffles (= types of cooked batter) that are eaten with butter and maple syrup. (Oxford Guide to British and American Culture) A meal originating in America, being a combination of breakfast and lunch. This type of meal is commonly eaten on Sundays, when parents, children, and sometimes friends gather round the table in a relaxed atmosphere between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The menu combines traditional English breakfast items with those of a cold meal: cereals, bacon, and fried or scrambled eggs, salads of fruit and green vegetables, pancakes with jam or maple syrup, fruit juice, tea, and coffee. Pies and cold meats may also be served. There is often a home-made fruit loaf (called a 'coffee-cake'), corn bread, or French toast (slices of bread dipped in beaten egg, then fried and sugared). (Larousse)

#### Tiffin

(1) a meal or snack taken at midday or in the middle of the morning, esp by the British in India.

(2) ety prob alteration of *tiffing* verbal noun from obsolete *tiff* to eat or drink between meals, of unknown origin (Penguin – electronic).

#### Lunch

(1) a meal eaten in the middle of the day, typically one that is lighter or less formal than an evening meal (NODE).

(2) a midday meal (Penguin).

(3) meal eaten at about midday (Longman Handy Learner's Dictionary).

(4) a slight repast between breakfast and dinner (Concise English Dictionary Tophi).

(5) *Lunch* which is eaten any time after midday, is the main meal of the day for some British people, though people out at work may have only \*sandwiches. Some people also refer to the midday meal as *dinner*. Most workers are allowed about an hour off for it, called the *lunch hour*, and many also go shopping. Many schools offer a cooked lunch (*school lunch* or *school dinner*), though some students take a *packed lunch* of sandwiches, fruit etc. *Sunday lunch* is special and is, for many families, the biggest meal of the week, consisting typically of roast meat and vegetables and a sweet course. In the US lunch is usually a quick meal, eaten around midday. Many workers have a half-hour break for lunch, and buy a sandwich near their place of work. Business people may sometimes eat a larger lunch and use the time to discuss business.

#### Luncheon

(1) a formal lunch or a formal word for lunch (NODE) formal = lunch (Penguin).

(2) The midday meal in many English-speaking countries. The midday meal in many English-speaking countries. It is lighter than its continental counterpart because of the British tradition of eating a filling breakfast. Lunch typically includes cold meats, pies, sausage rolls, eggs, a variety of salads, and sandwiches. The word was introduced into France in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and is used for a cold buffet served at a reception where a large number of guests have to be catered for, often standing up. In addition to canapés, a lunch of this type consists of cheeses, fruit, petits fours, chilled pudding, and a few larger dishes, such as *chaud-froid*

of chicken, fish in aspic, and cold hams. (Larousse)

Polish gives us:

- (1) *obiad, obiadek* (КСЈР) obiad “najobfitszy, gorący posiłek spożywany najczęściej w środku dnia.” Skromny, smaczny, postny, wystawny obiad. Obiad z trzech dań. Gotować, przyrządzać obiad. Podać, zjeść obiad. Zaprosić kogoś na obiad. Czekać na kogoś z obiadem. Proszony obiad «obiad, na który jest się zaproszonym lub zaprasza się kogoś» hist. Obiady czwartkowe “cotygodniowe obiady wydawane przez króla Stanisława Augusta, mające charakter zebrań naukowo-literackich.” Musztarda po obiedzie “rzecz spóźniona, za późno przekazana, podana.” Wydać obiad “zaprosić gości na wystawny obiad.”
- (2) *obiadek* (КСЈР) zdr. od obiad Dobry, smaczny obiadek.
- (3) *lunch* (КСЈР) “posiłek spożywany w krajach anglosaskich w porze południowej.” Pora lunchu. Szykować, zjeść lunch. Zaprosić kogoś na lunch. (ang.)
- (4) *obiadokolacja* (КСЈР) pot. “obiad spożywany w porze kolacji”.

### Tea

- (1) *Chiefly British*. A light afternoon meal consisting typically of tea to drink, sandwiches, and cakes.
- (2) *Brit.* a cooked evening meal.
- (3) W. Indian breakfast, typically consisting of a hot drink and bread (NODE).
- (4) Refreshments, usu including tea with sandwiches, cakes, or biscuits, served in the late afternoon. (Penguin).
- (5) A late-afternoon or early-evening meal (Penguin).
- (6) The food prepared for a late-afternoon or early-evening meal: *Your tea's on the table* (Penguin).

A light meal in the afternoon, at which sandwiches, pastries, cakes, etc., are served with tea. A rather more substantial meal is high tea (or meat tea), which is particularly taken in the north of England, where the evening meal is replaced by tea served with cold meat, fish, salads, etc., as well as buttered rolls, toast, cakes, etc.

Afternoon tea taken at five o'clock was launched by the Duchess of Bedford in about 1830 (at that time lunch was served quite early and dinner was served quite late). It provided an opportunity to display tea services made of porcelain or silver plate, to create recipes for cakes, biscuits (cookies), etc., and to lay down rules of etiquette associated with the occasion (the correct way in which to hold the cup, put down the spoon, etc.). An English tea sometimes includes savoury canapés but the most common items are bread-and-butter, scones, muffins, crumpets, buns, cakes, biscuits, gingerbread, and shortbread, with jams and jellies, lemon curd, etc.

On the Continent, tea was adopted during the period of Anglomania at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially in towns. It was also served as a kind of buffet during balls and soirées. “A prefect was reproached for bribing the electors of his *departement* by inviting them to dine at his sumptuous table. He announced that henceforth he would confine himself to offering tea.... The precious infusion with a dash of cream was served on magnificent trays with small dry crispy pastries. The country electors...could not understand people liking this insipid beverage, which, to them, was like hot water. The prefect's secretary discreetly led them to the back of the room. There, sideboards had been arranged, suitably decked with cold items, capable of satisfying the heartiest of appetites. They found pâtés, fish, galantines, and venison, with wines to match. And so these

worthy folk then understood what tea was. In France, tea is the supper of the salons.” (Eugène Briffault, *Paris à table*) (Larousse).

Tea (ref.3) [U] (in Britain) the word used by some older people to refer to their main evening meal. It usually consists of cooked food and is eaten early in the evening, when the family arrives home from work, school etc.: *What’s for tea tonight, mum?*

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An early evening meal, usually with a cooked dish and bread and butter. It used to be associated with the \*upper classes but is now popular among ordinary people, especially in northern England and Scotland, and is often referred to simply as *tea*. The meal may not include the actual drinking of tea.

In the afternoon most British people have a *tea break*. Some hotels serve afternoon tea (cf. the concept of morning coffee) which consists of tea or coffee and a choice of sandwiches and cakes. When on holiday/vacation people sometimes have a \*cream tea of scones, jam and cream. [Oxford Guide to British and American Culture 1999 (OUP)].

Polish gives us:

(1) *herbata* (к S J P) skromne przyjęcie popołudniowe lub wieczorne. Proszona herbata. Urządzać herbaty. Zaprosić kogoś na herbatę.

(2) *Podwieczorek* (к S J P) posiłek w porze przedwieczornej, między obiadem a kolacją, połączony czasem z zebraniem towarzyskim Skromny, suty podwieczorek. Podwieczorek złożony z kawy i kanapek. Zjeść podwieczorek.

(3) *Fajf* (к S J P) przyjęcie popołudniowe. Urządzać fajf. Zaprosić przyjaciół na fajf. (z ang.)

(4) *kolacja* (к S J P) wieczorny posiłek; także: wieczorne przyjęcie z większą ilością dań i napojów alkoholowych, urządzone w restauracji, rzadziej w domu prywatnym Gorąca, zimna kolacja. Suta, wystawna, huczna ko-

lacja. Proszona kolacja. Wyprawić kolację. Zaprosić kogoś na kolację. Pójść z kimś na kolację.

### Dinner

(1) The main meal of the day for most people is the evening meal, called *supper*, tea or dinner. It is usually a cooked meal with meat or fish or a salad, followed by a sweet course. Some people have a *tv supper*, eaten on their knee while watching television. In Britain Supper is the principal meal of the day taken either in the evening or at midday [Oxford Guide to British and American Culture 1999 (OUP)].

(2) a formal evening meal or banquet.

(3) *dinner* (Penguin electronic) the principal meal of the day taken either in the evening or at midday a formal evening meal or banquet ety Middle English diner from Old French: see *dine*.

(4) *dine* (Penguin electronic) to eat dinner *One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well* Virginia Woolf to entertain (somebody) to dinner They wined and dined us splendidly dine off/on/upon to eat (something) as one’s meal, esp dinner.

### Supper

(1) An evening meal, typically a light or informal one: *we had a delicious cold supper*.

(2) (Scottish) a meal consisting of the specified food with chips: *a fish supper* (NODE).

(3) an evening meal or snack, esp a light or informal meal served when the main meal of the day has been eaten at midday.

(4) a fund-raising social affair featuring a supper (Penguin electronic) *a church supper* sing for one’s supper - to do something in return for food, etc supperless ety Middle English from Old French souper from souper, to sup - to eat one’s evening meal from *soup*.

Now given the definitions, shades of meaning and explanations given above one would

expect that it would not constitute too great a task to find neat cultural and stylistic equivalents to translate English mealtimes into Polish. Let us examine a selection of example from the highbrow to the humorous.

There is no mystery in any of them. They ride in the Park in the morning, and chatter at tea-parties in the afternoon. (The Picture of Dorian Gray p. 37)

Rano wyjeżdżają do parku, a po południu paplają przy herbacie. (Portret Doriana Graya str. 55 Przełożyła Maria Feldmanowa *Siedmioróg* Wrocław 2001)

Here the notion of tea appears to cause no problems. This being all the more the case given that a time marker excludes allusions to any of the other nuances the word could convey. Lunch, a word so often translated wrongly these days as *obiad* (though there is a justification for this seeing that lunch is associated with noon and not twelve o'clock taken from the Old English *nōn* ninth hour from sunrise, orig about 3pm, from late Latin *nona* from *nona hora* ninth hour, from *nonus* meaning ninth and something associated with the service of *None* or *Nones* with the meal becoming earlier as the service was held earlier) in the following quote from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* starts to allude to the all-day breakfast mentioned above:

'My dear Harry, we either lunch or sup together every day, and I have been to the Opera with you several times,' said Dorian, (The Picture of Dorian Gray p. 39)

— Mój drogi Harry, przecież codziennie jadamy razem śniadanie albo kolację. Kilka razy byłem z tobą w operze — rzekł Dorian Gray. (Portret Doriana Graya str. 57 Przełożyła Maria Feldmanowa *Siedmioróg* Wrocław 2001)

Obviously given changes in eating habits one may suppose that *śniadanie* was a meal

eaten at a later hour than the definitions suggested here. Though one wonders whether the style of the original has been maintained. For Lunch, in smart social circles of the turn of the century was definitely a midday meal, though possibly the first to be eaten of the day hence the justification of referring to meanings as *posiłek przedpołudniowy*.

'You can dine with me tonight, Dorian, can't you?' (The Picture of Dorian Gray p. 39)

— Dorianie, wszak możesz zjeść dziś ze mną kolację? (Portret Doriana Graya str. 57 Przełożyła Maria Feldmanowa *Siedmioróg* Wrocław 2001)

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'Half-past six! What an hour! It will be like having a meat-tea, or reading an English novel. It must be seven. No gentleman dines before seven.' (The Picture of Dorian Gray p. 40)

— O wpół do siódmej! Co za pora! To jakby herbata z zimnym mięsiwem albo czytanie angielskich powieści. Najwcześniejszej już o siódmej. Żaden dżentelmen nie jada przed siódmą. (Portret Doriana Graya str. 58 Przełożyła Maria Feldmanowa *Siedmioróg* Wrocław 2001)

In a way similar to the old saying that men sweat, gentlemen perspire and ladies simply glow, there has always been a stylized qualitative difference in the usage of the terms *lunch*, *tea*, and *dinner*. This best being illustrated by the second of the two quotes above. Wilde's use of the terms meat-tea and the idea of dining before seven harks back to the notion that children, and the working classes, take breakfast, dinner and tea, while those who are their senior, or social superiors, eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. The fact that Maria Feldmanowa chooses to avoid the term *kolacja* as a functional equivalent for 'to dine' in the second of the two

quotes is, possibly, an astute recognition of the importance and weight of 'to dine'. Problems arise, however, with the understanding of 'tea', 'high tea' and 'meat-tea'. One merely has to look at the short stock of dictionary material provided above to realize that there exists in English the notion of tea as a *meal*. This maybe hot or cold, elegant or simple, eaten at home or in the case of the ubiquitous fish and chips eaten on a park bench. That Ms Feldmanowa fails to understand the style of who is speaking and in what way they perceive themselves in relation to their social station is not an isolated case. The poor grasp of tea appears everywhere. As if the notion of the drink must be somehow conveyed. One does not have to drink tea at tea. One wonders how the famous last line of *The Old Vicarage, Granchester* by Rupert Brooke would be translated:

[...] ... Oh! Yet  
Stands the Church clock at ten to three  
And is there honey still for tea?

That dinner is the midday meal for the young can be illustrated by *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

'For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half-past one, time for dinner!' (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: 84)

...

— Na przykład byłaby dziewiąta rano, czas na rozpoczęcie lekcji: a ty byś mu tylko szepnęła słówko I w mig wskazówki się kręca! Wpół do drugiej, obiad! (Stiller str. 147)

...

— Na przykład, przyjmij, że jest dziewiąta rano, czas rozpoczęcia lekcji: wystarczy, że szepniesz tylko Czasowi, czego sobie życzysz, a oto godziny prze-

latują w mgnieniu oka! Pół do drugiej, czas na obiad! (Słomczyński str. 60)

What Alice and her companions are in fact eating at the tea party is something more substantial than a mere cup of tea. Here, especially as one should view the timing of the meal, six o'clock, as a prelude to the preparations needed to put the children to bed, one wonders why the notion of *kolacje* did not strike the translators. For this is high-tea, the meat-tea that Wilde refers to.

'And ever since that,' the Hatter went on in a mournful tone, 'he won't do a thing I ask! It's always six o'clock now.'

A bright idea came into Alice's head. 'Is that the reason so many tea-things are put out here?' she asked.

'Yes, that's it,' said the Hatter with a sigh: 'it's always tea-time, and we've no time to wash the things between whiles.' (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: 86)

...

— I od tej pory — ciągnął grobowym tonem Kapelusznik — Czas jest dla mnie palcem nie kiwnie! Jest ciągle szósta.'

Alicja doznała raptem olśnienia.

— Więc dlatego tu stoi takie mnóstwo rzeczy do herbaty?' spytała.

— Otóż to! — powiedział z westchnieniem Kapelusznik. — Jest bez przerwy czas herbatki: i nawet nie mamy czasu pozmywać.' (Stiller str. 149)

...

— I od tej pory — dokończył grobowym głosem Kapelusznik — nie chce on zrobić niczego, o co go proszę! Wciąż jest szósta po południu.

Alicji rozjaśniło to nagle w głowie.

— I to jest powód, dla którego stoi tu zastawa do herbaty? — zapytała.

— Tak jest — powiedział Kapelusznik z westchnieniem — zawsze jest czas

picia herbaty, a nigdy nie ma czasu, żeby zmyć naczynia. (Słomczyński str. 61)

A more up-to-date example of the confusion that the notion of tea appears to have on the average translator can be illustrated by the following extract from *Kes*. Here the *style* of the whole book is an attempt to create a stylized account of a northern working class lad complete with the graphic representation of 'stylized northern speak'. Below is an extract (complete with orthographic mistakes) from a school composition he (Billy Casper) wrote:

when I got home my muther saide I not gowing to work eny more and we all had chips beans for awur tea then we got redy and we all went to the picturs and we went up stairs and had Ice cream at the intervells and then we all went home and had fish and chips for awur super and then we went to bed. (Kes p. 73)

Kiedy wróciłem do domu mama powiedziała że nie będę pracować I mieliśmy dobre żeczy do herbaty a potem poszliśmy do kina, a ja w przerwie dostałem lody a potem wruciliśmy do domu zjedliśmy dobrą kolację I poszliśmy spać. (Kes str. 71)

Here we have the working class notion of tea as the meal eaten after a hard day's work. In the original we are given stereotypical notions of working class fare – chips and baked bean (in tomato sauce) and later the fish and chip supper here used in the Northern English/ Scottish notion of a specified food with chips. Here we have to perceive ourselves as a) young and b) working class and c) from the north of England. Not quite the same as saying we had 'a good supper' which, even allowing for orthographic compensations, has the style to it of the middle classes and therefore loses its point. Tea is for children, something conveyed by Kipling in the *Just So Stories*:

They had a beautiful time in the 'scclusively speckly-sickly shadows of the forest, while the Leopard and the Ethiopian ran about all over the 'scclusively grayish-yellowish-reddish High Veldt outside, wondering where their breakfasts and their dinners and their teas had gone.' (*How the Leopard Got His Spots Just So Stories* Kipling p. 26)

Żyły sobie przewybornie pośród wyłącznie plamistych, barwistych cieni leśnych. Tymczasem Lampart i Etiopijczyk uganiali się po wyłącznie szarawej, żółtawej, brunatnej Wyżynie i dziwili się, gdzie się podziały ich obiady, śniadania i podwieczorki. (*Jak Lampart Dostał Plam na Skórze* str. 38)

...

'For goodness' sake,' said the Leopard at tea-time, 'let us wait till it gets dark. This daylight hunting is a perfect scandal.' (*How the Leopard Got His Spots Just So Stories* Kipling p. 30)

— Przebóg — rzekł Lampart — poczekajmy, aż się ściemni. Polowanie przy świetle dziennym to po prostu wstyd! (*Jak Lampart Dostał Plam na Skórze* str. 40)

...

'Well, calling names won't catch dinner,' said the Ethiopian. (*How the Leopard Got His Spots Just So Stories* Kipling p. 31)

Wszystko to pięknie – przerwał mu Etopijczyk – Ale z wymyślenia nie będzie śniadania. (*Jak Lampart Dostał Plam na Skórze* str. 43)

...

'Let's – oh, *anything*, Daddy, so long as it's you and me,  
And going truly exploring,  
and not being in till tea!

(*How the Leopard Got His Spots Just So Stories* Kipling p. 33)

Wolno – ach, wszystko – dopóki sami  
 jesteś my – dwaj. Tato,  
 Zdążymy odkryć niejedno,  
 wrócić przed samą herbatą!  
 (*Jak Lampart Dostał Plam na Skórze*  
 str. 48)

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It is very important when translating not only to understand the words but to understand what lies behind the words. The fact that mealtime terms are simple does not mean however that their rendition is a straightforward matter. One has to ask oneself *who* the given individual is, as well as *how* they perceive themselves and equally importantly how they are perceived. Given the changing notions of style and manner that allow for archaic and dated usage the process of finding functional equivalents becomes all the more taxing. What is interesting is that Polish has adopted two ‘alien’ notions i.e. the terms *fajf* and *lunch* in recognition of the fact that *podwieczorek*, *kolacje* and *obiad* do not always mean the same. In a sense like Elizabeth David’s eggs (*Œufs Mollet*), maybe terms that have such a stylized sense of time and place should be retained in the original to avoid the possibility of translating the Polish term *obiad* as a very late lunch (for those who eat at 4 p.m.) or a substantial, though early (for tea in Britain has the 5.30–6 p.m. feel to it) tea. Neither option conveying the soup and sizeable main course accompanied by compote and a possible piece of cake for good measure. As William Stearns Davis shows us in *A day in Old Athens*:

We have said very little of eating or drinking during our visit in Athens, for, truth to tell, the citizens try to get through the day with about as little interruption for food and drink as possible. But now, when warehouse and gymnasium alike are left to darkness,

all Athens will break its day of comparative fasting. Roughly speaking, the Greeks anticipate the latter-day “Continental” habits in their meal hours. The custom of Germans and of many Americans in having the heartiest meal at noonday would never appeal to them. The hearty meal is at night, and no one dreams of doing any serious work after it. When it is finished, there may be pleasant discourse or varied amusements, but never real business; and even if there are guests, the average dinner party breaks up early. Early to bed and early to rise, would be a maxim indorsed by the Athenians.

Promptly upon rising, our good citizen has devoured a few morsels of bread sopped in undiluted wine; that has been to him what “coffee and rolls” will be to the Frenchmen – enough to carry him through the morning business, until near to noon he will demand something more satisfying. He then visits home long enough to partake of a substantial *déjeuner* (“ariston,” first breakfast = “akratisma”). He has one or two hot dishes – one may suspect usually warmed over from last night’s dinner – and partakes of some more wine. This “ariston” will be about all he will require until the chief meal of the day – the regular dinner (“*dedpnon*”) which would follow sunset. (Davis: Chapter XVIII *Athenian Cookery and the Symposium*)

The use of standard terms can give a misleading picture of how, when and why people choose a repast. Like Struck and White every word has to *tell*, but tell it as it is not merely an approximation to another reality.

## резюме

### Σ Время чаепития – проблема перевода английских терминов, обозначающих время приема пищи

Статья представляет собой попытку анализа проблем в переводе английских слов, терминов и концепций связанных с едой на иностранные языки. Автор статьи показывает сложность и неправильные представления в переводе даже некоторых «простых» английских терминов как *lunch, tea, dinner, supper* на иностранные языки в том числе и на польский. Статья содержит в себе объяснения стилистических значений этих терминов в английском языке и, на основе разных литературных примеров, показывает как даже именно такие элементарные слова можно являться проблематическими для (польского, но не только) переводчика.

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