

Translation of Politically Correct Terms and its Reception by Polish Speakers

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Abstract

The article seeks to answer the question of how politically correct terms are perceived by the speakers of Polish. The main focus of analysis is the book Politically Correct Bedtime Stories by James Finn Garner and its Polish translation. The book is a parody of the language of political correctness and, even though it follows the rules of such discourse, its main aim is to mock it. The analysis gives an insight into how meaning is created in both the source and target expressions found in the book. This word-formation and etymological investigation is complemented with the results of an on-line survey submitted by Polish speakers in which they were asked to assess the degree of political correctness of the terms. The analysis clearly indicates that, although the meaning of the Polish terms is mostly equivalent to its source expression, which is corroborated by participants' answers, the terms often explicitly state what the author intended to hide. Hence, participants' perception of the expressions being politically correct and equivalence level were relatively low.

Keywords: political correctness, translation, reception.

Streszczenie

Tłumaczenie politycznie poprawnych określeń i ich odbiór przez osoby polskojęzyczne

Artykuł jest próbą odpowiedzi na pytanie, w jaki sposób określenia politycznie poprawne odbierane są przez osoby polskojęzyczne. Głównymi przedmiotami analizy są książka „Politycznie poprawne bajki na dobranoc” autorstwa Jamesa Finna Garnera i jej polski przekład. Książka jest parodią języka poprawności politycznej i chociaż przestrzega ona zasad tego dyskursu, jej głównym celem jest naśmiewanie się z niego. Przeprowadzona analiza pozwala zrozumieć, jak tworzone jest znaczenie określeń zarówno w tekście oryginalnym, jak i w tekście przekładu. Brane pod uwagę słowotwórstwo i etymologia uzupełnione zostały wynikami ankiety przeprowadzonej online na osobach polskojęzycznych, w której proszeni byli o określenie stopnia poprawności politycznej dla wybranych określeń. Analiza w jasny sposób wskazuje, że chociaż znaczenie polskich określeń jest zazwyczaj zbliżone do oryginalnego, co potwierdzone zostało przez biorących udział w ankiecie, to jednak określenia te wyraźnie zwracają uwagę na to, czego autor chciał uniknąć. Z tego powodu badani oceniali je dość nisko

pod względem poprawności politycznej w przeciwieństwie do stopnia oddania znaczenia zwrotu angielskiego.

Słowa kluczowe: polityczna poprawność, tłumaczenie, odbiór

1. Introduction

The following article offers a short summary of how political correctness (PC) evolved in the United States and in Poland, focusing on how it shaped the language of both countries. As a reaction to the linguistic changes resulting from political correctness, James Finn Garner published his *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories*, which he used to mock such discourse. The book and its Polish translation are the main focus of the present analysis.

One of the concerns of political correctness is how people and the world are perceived so that a language as inclusive and free of prejudices as possible could be proposed to refer to them. But how are actually political correctness and politically correct terms themselves perceived by Polish speakers? The answer to this question can be found in the second part of this article. Ten pairs of terms selected from the book and its translation will be commented on in order to show how meaning is created and explain implications the terms may bring. The analysis is complemented with the results of an on-line perception survey.

2. Overview of the history of PC in the US and Poland

Although the term ‘political correctness’ dates back to Justice James Wilson’s 1793 speech in which he defended the good of the individual against the good of the state¹, the earliest reference to it in the shape it is known nowadays was made by Toni Cade Bambara in her 1970 book *The Black Woman: An Anthology* (Kacprzak 2012: 19), in which she explains that political correctness and male chauvinism do not go hand in hand. Nonetheless, it was in the 1980s when political correctness started to influence the language with words and expressions being introduced in order to replace those perceived as discriminatory or offensive (Kacprzak 2012: 23). The language of political correctness is “unfamiliar and abstract, using high register classical elements to an unusual degree and comparatively few native Anglo-Saxon terms” (Hughes 2009: 13-14). Hughes distinguishes five main characteristics of PC:

- foreignisation

¹ <http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=2&invol=419> DOA: 30 May 2019.

- compound and complex words (suffixes such as *neo-*, *eco-* or *-impaired* and *-friendly*)
- neologisms, understood both as semantic shifts and new coinages (e.g.: *wommon*, *herstory*)
- different levels of opacity: from transparent (*chairperson*, *disorder*) to completely obscure (*glass ceiling*, *consenting adult*)
- creativeness and humorous effect (Hughes 2009: 108-111).

In the 1990s, PC reached its apotheosis and became present in every-day media. In *The New York Times*, Richard Bernstein wrote that PC had spread all over society and was no longer limited to political issues. He criticised the impact it had on the press and on every-day life of American citizens. He argued that everything had to be subjected to political correctness' approval: from university curricula to "biodegradable garbage bags" (Bernstein 1990).

The 1990s was also the time when political correctness appeared in Poland. According to Witek and Żmigrodzki (2003: 5), the term appeared in the Polish political and media discourse just after the Round Table Talks in 1989. However, they also state that its real beginning was in 1995 when Cejrowski's TV programme² was banned from the Polish public television because it had become inconvenient (Witek, Żmigrodzki 2003: 30). Kacprzak (2012: 25), on the other hand, indicates that its beginning was in 1992 when *Gazeta Wyborcza*, a Polish daily, published a series of articles concerning PC. No matter the exact year, the corpus of the Polish language indeed does not include examples of those expressions used earlier than in the 1990s³.

The influence of PC on language can also be seen in Poland. According to some authors (Handke 1994: 21; Paprzycka 2008: 121), in the Polish society there is no gender equality, which demonstrates itself in the language, for example female profession names are typically derived from masculine forms. As Handke indicates (1994: 25), it was only in the second half of the 20th century that the process of changing the state of affairs gained momentum (1994: 25). Undoubtedly, this is inextricably connected with the emergence and development of feminist movements. An example of the ongoing change is *ministra*, a feminine form of *minister*, introduced by Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka (Karwatowska, Szpyra-Kozłowska 2010: 277). The Council for the Polish Language in its 2012 statement⁴ emphasises that the word-formation process consisting in adding the suffix *-a* to the male form is not typically used in Polish to

² As stated on the programme anchor's website, *WC Kwadrans* was controversial and unapologetic and it spared nobody (www.cerjowski.com/telewizja Date: 30 May 2019).

³ <http://nkjp.pl> Date: 30 May 2019.

⁴ http://www.rjp.pan.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1359:stanowisko-rady-jzyka-polskiego-w-sprawie-eskich-form-nazw-zawodow-i-tytuow&catid=109&Itemid=81 Date: 8 December 2019

create female names. Nevertheless, the Council claims that the Polish language has other resources (e.g. the suffix *-ka*) to satisfy the need for such terms and urges to use them at one's discretion, which is reiterated in its latest statement from 2019⁵. However, as Dąbrowska argues (2008: 69), feminine forms frequently have a humorous effect or are deemed pejorative or depreciatory, even among women, since the aforementioned suffix *-ka* is applied when creating diminutive and colloquial names. A change can also be seen in vocabulary used to describing people with disabilities. Some words, e.g.: *imbecyl* 'moron', *debil* 'retard' or *inwalida* 'invalid', once applied for medical conditions (Dubisz 2008: 561, 1194, 1238), are now considered politically incorrect and pejorative as they are widely used in non-medical contexts to offend people who did not suffer from these conditions.

The concept of political correctness is widespread, especially in the US and Poland. It has also played an important role in the linguistic change influencing the way people speak and, more significantly, contributing to the development of discourse of inclusion and equity.

3. *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* by J. F. Garner

Over the course of years, PC has gained both its advocates and opponents; it has also attracted artists who draw inspiration from it for their works of art, as in the case of James Finn Garner's *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories*. The book was published in 1994 and was subsequently translated into 20 languages, including Polish. The Polish version was published in 1997 by Zysk i S-ka publishing house as *Politycznie poprawne bajki na dobranoc*.

As O'Conner (1994: 3) writes, *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* is Garner's mocking response to the language of PC and an attempt to let the American children get familiar with the revised versions of some classic fables. Garner himself states that he finds it improbable that a child will discriminate against anybody because they were told the story of *Snow White* (O'Conner 1994: 3). He also states that "[we]'re debasing the idea of sexual or racial equality and wasting credibility trying to get people to eliminate certain ways of saying things. [We]'re not converting them, [we]'re annoying them" (O'Conner 1994: 3). Therefore, Garner's words show that his book can, and should, be perceived as a parody of political correctness.

Let us consider some of the book's supposedly politically correct expressions in the original and the translation which showcase a selection of word-formation processes common for such

⁵ http://www.rjp.pan.pl/?fbclid=IwAR3r_2sssMwXHH2qmVdAUCV-hPc6EAXGOjDz_64Lhm5fQL9xp2i7aJ6HsNs Date: 8 December 2019

discourse. A common practice is using such quasi-affixes as *-impaired* or standalone words like *abled* and *gifted*, which creates the feeling of obscurity and complexity and therefore names a feature in a less direct way. Some of the examples are: *differently abled* (translated as ‘niedorozwinięty umysłowo’, backtranslation: ‘mentally retarded’), *chronologically gifted* (‘w podeszłym wieku’, backtranslation: ‘elderly’), *differently statured* (‘o niezwykłej posturze’ – ‘of extraordinary posture’), *decorum-impaired* (‘pozbawiony poczucia przyzwoitości’ – ‘deprived of sense of decency’).

In turn, in *woodsperson* (‘osobnik zatrudniony w lasach państwowych’ – ‘individual employed in national forests’), Garner resorts to the procedure of replacing such gender-indicative words as *man*, *father* or *mother*, whereas the translator opts for a circumlocutionary phrase. Garner himself also uses circumlocutionary phrases, e.g.: *equine companion* (‘rączy towarzysz’ – ‘fleet companion’), using words of non-English origin.

Yet another technique is used to name types of discrimination and lifestyles: *lookism* (omitted in Polish) or *cross-dressing tendencies* (‘naturystyczny styl życia’ – ‘naturistic lifestyle’). While nouns ending in *-ism* typically denote phenomena and it is hard to argue that such a name can be politically incorrect *per se*, the innovativeness of the last term is questionable as *cross-dressing* itself was a term already used at that time by some communities and juxtaposed with the word *tendencies* may have negative connotations. In contrast, its translation appears more politically correct than the original. Indeed, the perception of what seems politically correct and what does not was the very question that led to carrying out the survey discussed in the following part of the article.

4. Analysis

The terms chosen for this study will be analysed two-foldedly in order to provide a deeper insight into their meaning, translation and perception. Firstly, the meaning of source expressions and their Polish equivalents shall be commented on taking into account etymology, word-formation processes and/or possible implications for perception they may bring. Secondly, the commentaries will be complemented with the results of a perception survey submitted by a group of Polish native speakers. The terms selected for the survey showcase different word-formation processes applied by both the author and the translator and present different degrees of political correctness.

4.1. Survey

An on-line survey on political correctness in translation was provided for the members of several Facebook groups for students of the University of Warsaw. The survey consisted of single-answer questions, multiple-choice ones, Likert-type scales and open questions (a full list of questions is included in the Appendix). Respondents provided information about their age, gender, English proficiency (although only responses by participants with English proficiency at the level C1 or higher were accepted since knowledge of English was crucial for understanding the terms) and the perception of equivalency of English-Polish PC terms, to which comments could be added. At the very end of the survey, participants were asked to provide an explanation of what PC is for them and what their attitude towards it was.

The participants were asked to express their opinion on 10 pairs of expressions with one of them being the original English phrase, while the second was a Polish phrase used in the same part of the text as its equivalent. First, they were asked to assess the extent to which the word would fall into the category of being politically correct. Those were 7-point Likert-type scales with “1” having the meaning of “Completely politically incorrect”, and, analogically, “7” for “Completely politically correct”. These questions are going to be referred to as the “PC perception scale” hereafter. Means and standard deviations will be provided for each Polish term, as well as more detailed data in some cases. The participants were asked whether the Polish expression transmits the meaning of its English counterpart well, henceforth referred to as “Meaning equivalency ratio (MER)”. The options to mark were “Yes”, “No” and “I don’t know”. The questions were worded in this manner in order to encompass as much information about perception as possible since the expressions not only may have transmitted political correctness, but also other emotions (funniness, arrogance, etc.).

4.2. Participants

19 people submitted their responses in the survey. Although primarily they were expected to be (ex)students of the University of Warsaw, their actual status was not checked at any point in the survey. Table 2 offers a summary of participants’ data:

Table 1. Summary of participants’ data

Gender	Participants	Proficiency	Participants	Age	Participants
Female	16	C1	9	19-24	12

Male	3	C2	10	25-27	7
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Out of the total number of participants, nine respondents considered themselves advocates of political correctness, only two of them utterly opposed it and three people refrained from taking either side (“I have no opinion”). The remaining respondents had mixed feelings about it. Some of them considered themselves only partially its advocates (3 people) or opponents (1 person). There was also an opinion of a PC advocate who did not like its current shape and how it is used as a political weapon (1 person).

All respondents understand PC quite similarly. It was generally defined as a way of avoiding discrimination against any group of people because of their ethnicity, beliefs, disabilities, sexual orientation, race, etc. It is expressed linguistically by using euphemisms and neutral expressions that focus on people themselves regardless of their appearance, character, or social standing. However, some respondents mentioned that such discourse may mar the reality or that the term was distorted by the media as it used to refer to being in line with current political line, whereas now it is used to express social sensitivity that extols minorities regardless of their merits.

5. Analysis of the terms and results of the survey

5.1. Idioms

5.1.1. *as optically challenged as a bat*

This is Garner’s (1994: 3) variation of a popular English idiom *as blind as a bat*. Since from a politically correct point of view, it is unacceptable to use such word as *blind*, Garner decides to replace it with a circumlocutionary phrase. The translator, however, seems not to follow the game and renders it into the most obvious Polish one: *ślepy jak kret* (‘blind as a mole’), which is the recognised equivalent of the English *as blind as a bat*, not the term actually used in the text. What is more, the word *ślepy* belongs to different register, it is informal and rude. Although, as explained by Kolbusz-Buda (2014: 17), idioms are fixed elements of language and if changed, they may become unintelligible, poetic license in a literary text (and translation) may justify the fact of interfering with it.

Red Riding Hood said, ‘Oh, I forgot you are as optically challenged as a bat. Grandma, what big eyes you have!’ (Garner 1994: 3)⁶ Och, zapomniałam, że jesteś ślepa jak kret. Babciu, jakie masz wielkie oczy! – wykrzyknęła Czerwony Kapturek (Garner [1994]1997: 11).

The mean value of the PC perception scale for Polish was M=3.21 (SD=1.51). Interestingly, in the case of MER, the votes split almost equally (YES=10, NO=8). One person gave a mixed answer explaining that while the denotation was correct, connotation was not quite as correct.

5.1.2. *differently visaged enough to stop a clock*

It was especially unrealistic in their case, as they were differently visaged enough to stop a clock (32). Okazały w ten sposób szczególny brak realizmu, ponieważ obie były brzydkie jak noc (39).

This time Garner plays with another fixed expression, namely, *homely enough to stop a clock*, used when referring to a person of limited physical attractiveness. This notion of ugliness is expressed with the phrase *differently visaged*. The translator, however, uses a recognised equivalent of the excluded politically incorrect idiom, namely, *brzydki jak noc* (‘ugly as night’), saying exactly what Garner tries to obscure. The mean value on the PC perception scale for Polish was M=2.53 (SD=1.43) and as much as 63% of the respondents thought it transmits the meaning behind the English term.

5.2. Adjectives

5.2.1. *cerebrally constrained*

Let us consider an example of an adjectival phrase. *Cerebrally constrained* should be understood as a reference to one being of not great intelligence. Although the words used describe the issue instead of naming it in a straightforward way and are of Latin origin in order to appear more sophisticated, it takes a lot of effort to appreciate the political correctness of the English term.

The prince’s best friend, who was a large if cerebrally constrained duke, stopped him halfway across the dance floor and insisted that he was going to have Cinderella (35). Najlepszy przyjaciel królewicza, całkiem postawny, choć ograniczony umysłowo książę, zastąpił mu drogę na środku sali i dowodził, że to on będzie miał Kopciuszka (42).

⁶ In this section, all quotes in English comes from Garner (1994), and in Polish from Garner ([1994]1997), unless otherwise stated. Hereafter, only page numbers shall be included.

The Polish term, *ograniczony umysłowo* ('mentally retarded'), was not granted a high PC status on the PC perception scale: $M=3.21$ ($SD=1.73$). The opinions on MER were almost divided in half with 9 respondents marking 'Yes', 8 – 'No' and 1 not giving an answer.

5.2.2. *wisdom-challenged*

As you might expect, a lifetime of belief in the absolute legitimacy of the monarchy and in the inherent superiority of males had turned the emperor into a vain and wisdom-challenged tyrant (6).

Jak można się było spodziewać, niezmacone przekonanie o niepodważalności zasadności władzy monarszej i naturalnej wyższości rodzaju męskiego zmieniło cesarza w próżnego i chorego na umyśle tyrana (13).

As in the previous example, rendering *wisdom-challenged* as *chory na umyśle* ('sick in the head') does not comply with author's intentions – a view supported by the results of the survey. The mean value for the PC perception was $M=2$ ($SD=1.34$) for Polish. Moreover, *chory na umyśle* refers to the state of being mentally ill rather than to not being particularly wise. In an English language dictionary "wisdom" is explained as knowledge or erudition (Simpson, Weiner 1989: 421-422), therefore a wisdom-challenged person is not someone who is mentally ill. There may be many reasons for which the Emperor is described with that adjective in English, e.g. his ignorance, but in no sense is he mentally ill, which leads to the conclusion that the meanings of both expressions do not correspond with each other (only 1 person marked 'Yes' on MER).

5.2.3. *kindness-impaired*

Now, this witch was very kindness-impaired (24).

Owa czarownica cierpiała na dotkliwy brak dobrych manier (32).

The phrase *kindness-impaired* is translated as *dotkliwy brak dobrych manier* ('severe lack of good manners') and further emphasised with the verb *cierpieć* ('suffer from'). A kindness-impaired person is one who is rude to others as a result of the lack of good manners. Therefore, we deal with a rendition of the implicature the term has. The meaning of impairedness is expressed in two ways. Firstly, by the verb *cierpieć*, which encodes the idea of suffering from a medical condition. Secondly, the adjective *dotkliwy* ('severe') emphasises the degree of suffering. It seems that the respondents perceived the Polish term to be rather politically correct: $M=4.89$ ($SD=1.52$). However, the opinion whether the Polish term conveys the meaning of the

English one correctly was less favourable. Slightly more than 52% of the respondents marked ‘Yes’ on MER.

5.2.4. *vertically challenged*

When she awoke several hours later, she saw the faces of seven bearded, vertically challenged men surrounding the bed (46).

Kiedy obudziła się parę godzin później, ujrzała siedem brodatych twarzy należących do mężczyźni mizernej postury, którzy otoczyli jej łóżko (52).

The above example comes from *Snow White* and it is a modern moniker for the seven dwarfs. In Garner’s version *vertically* refers to height and *challenged* to being deprived of it. Hence, the Polish translator resolves to render it here as (*mężczyźni mizernej postury* ‘men of lousy posture’), where *mizerny* (‘lousy’) is a translational counterpart of *challenged*. Actually, the word *postura* encompasses more than height and could also be used to include weight and constitution. Although dwarfs are not tall, cinematography and literature fails to depict them as especially thin, hence the image the translation conveys might alter the one intended in the original, a view that finds its justification in MER since only 2 respondents perceived the pair as matching in meaning. The results on the PC perception scale for Polish was $M=3.68$ ($SD=1.22$).

5.2.5. *economically disadvantaged*

Let us now consider two different instances of the rendition of the phrase *economically disadvantaged*. The first of them appears in *Rumpelstiltskin*:

Long ago in a kingdom far away, there lived a miller who was very economically disadvantaged (13).

Dawno temu w dalekim królestwie mieszkał pewien młynarz, który pozostawał w wielce niekorzystnej sytuacji ekonomicznej (21).

The term ‘w wielce niekorzystnej sytuacji ekonomicznej’ (‘in highly disadvantageous economic situation’) preserves its main characteristic, namely, political correctness. This view is corroborated in the survey since the PC perception mean is $M=6.05$ ($SD=1.31$) and MER 11 (‘Yes’) to 8 (‘No’). Quite the opposite is the case when the term appears juxtaposed with a translation from the story of Rapunzel:

There once lived an economically disadvantaged tinker and his wife (23). Żył sobie raz upośledzony ekonomicznie druciarz i jego żona (31).

In the Polish language the word *upośledzony* ('handicapped') is irrevocably associated with disability; it transmits the idea of something, and especially someone, not being in their full power to perform certain actions. Therefore, using this particular word in a politically correct context may appear perplexing. The mean value on the PC perception scale for Polish is as low as 1.89 (SD=0.91).

5.3. Nouns

5.3.1. *fairy godperson*

This expression is obviously a gender-neutral counterpart of *fairy godmother*, especially since it turns out that the new Cinderella's fairy godmother is actually a fairy godfather. Such a practice is commonly used for obtaining politically correct names for professions, e.g.: chairperson, spokesperson, sportsperson. However, since there is probably no fairy tale with such a twist in its plot, the Polish language has not had yet a chance to establish a good translation for the term *fairy godperson*. The translator, then, replaces it with a recognised equivalent and adjusts the inflectional form so that it can be clear it is a man:

Hello, Cinderella, I am your fairy godperson, or individual deity proxy, if you prefer (32). Witaj, Kopciuszku, jestem twoim dobrym wróżkiem albo osobistym pośrednikiem opatrzości – jak wolisz (39-40).

Although English is highly prone to such replacement of gender-specific words and they are easily incorporated into the language, in Polish the matter is much more complicated. The translator uses a non-existent word *wróżek*, whereas there is a masculine counterpart of the word *wróżka* ('fairy'), namely *wróż*, although its register is higher and it does not evoke any fairytale-like origins. What is more, it is not widely spread. In the corpus of the Polish language it appears only 40 times⁷; however, it is homonymous with a Polish surname and one of the imperative forms of the verb *wróżyc* ('to augur'). Therefore, the frequency of the noun *wróż* is relatively low. On the other hand, *wróżek* could be perceived as being between the feminine and masculine, hence approaching gender-neutrality, and it preserves the fairytaleness of the text.

⁷ <http://nkjp.pl> Date: 30 May 2019.

The Polish term is considered relatively politically correct: $M=4.16$ ($SD=1.81$), but only as few as 3 respondents considered it equivalent to the English one in meaning (Chart 1). The main problem seems to be the lack of gender obscurity in the case of Polish.

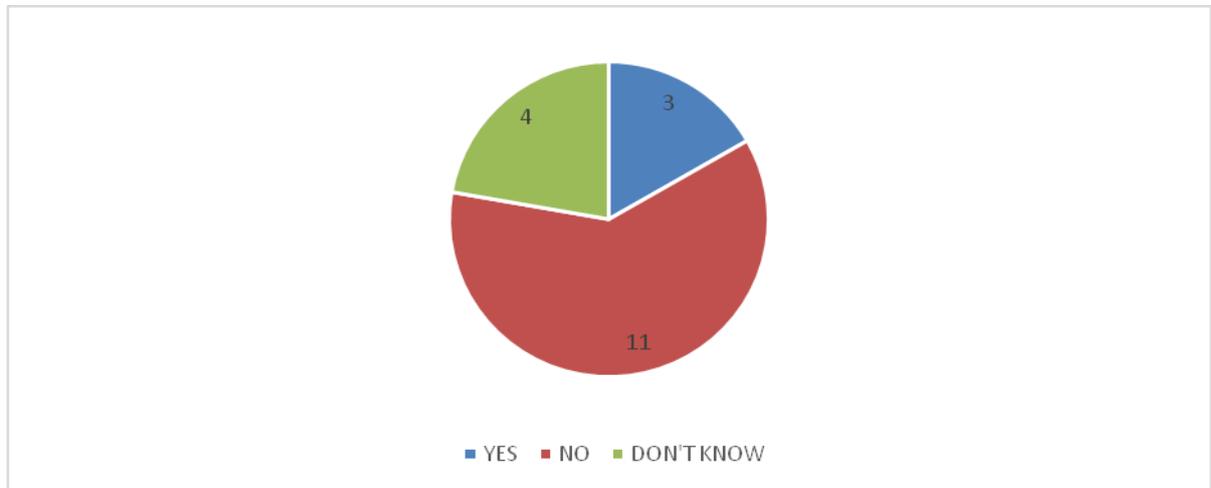


Chart 1. MER of *fairy godperson*

5.3.2. *personal unpaid labourer*

The last expression analysed in the survey was *personal unpaid labourer*, which was rendered into Polish as *darmowa służąca* ('unpaid servant'). Once again, although the Polish says exactly what the English is implicitly conveying, it does so with not quite the same linguistic means since *służąca* means 'servant' or 'maid'. As for the PC perception, the mean for Polish is as low as $M=2.05$ ($SD=1.36$) and as much as 63% of the answers were "NO" on MER.

<p>Cinderella's mother-of-step treated her very cruelly, and her sisters-of-step made her work very hard, as if she were their own personal unpaid labourer (31).</p>	<p>Macocha bardzo źle traktowała Kopciuszka, a przyrodnie siostry zmuszały ją do pracy nad siły, jakby była ich darmową służącą (38).</p>
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On the one hand, the English version does not use words that would straightforwardly refer to being one's servant, especially, an unpaid one, which may be understood as a paraphrase of the word slave. As slavery is generally perceived negatively, calling someone that name may indeed result in that person being offended, thus Garner's intention to replace that denomination. On the other hand, in Polish, the translator explicitly calls the persona servant, a term that may not have the same emotional charge, but still refers to one person being inferior to another, at least in terms of status. What is more, common representation of servants in fairy tales is that of being mistreated, hence, the Polish term does not contribute to a change of attitude.

5.4. General perception of the terms

The final task that the respondents were asked to perform was to think of all the English and Polish terms as of two separate groups and state what their overall perception and feelings were. They were provided example answers but were free to add their own should they feel the need. Table 3 offers a summary of the emotions that the terms evoked in the respondents. They were allowed to mark as many answers as they wished; therefore, the numbers do not sum up to the total number of respondents.

Table 2. Emotions evoked by the terms

	English	Polish
<i>I felt amused by them</i>	14	8
<i>I find them ironic</i>	14	7
<i>I think they were polite</i>	2	0
<i>They served their role as PC terms</i>	3	0
<i>They made me feel embarrassed</i>	4	7

Given the author truly wanted to create a pastiche of political correctness that is both ironic and entertaining, then, judging by the results presented above, the aim was achieved. The terms were not deemed to be of PC status but, after all, they were only supposed to imitate it. On the other hand, visibly fewer respondents felt amused by the expressions in Polish, with even fewer people feeling they were ironic. Moreover, there were more respondents who felt that the Polish translation provoked embarrassment and absolutely no one considered them polite (although there was one person who claimed they were just neutral).

6. Conclusion

The study is not without its limitations: its target audience was small and not well-balanced in terms of gender (13 out of 19 participants were women), the survey also consisted only of a limited number of all terms included in the analysed book. What is more, even though the survey gave the participants the chance to assess the English terms on the PC perception scale and provide their general perception of those expressions, the results of the former were not included in the paper. It was caused by the fact that the respondents were not native English speakers

whose opinion on the degree of political correctness could be taken as a point of reference as objectively as when it comes to assessing the terms' Polish translation. Nevertheless, in the vast majority of the examples that were examined, the respondents felt that the Polish equivalents did not quite reflect the original English expressions. Although they did not provide their reasons for such an opinion, the analysis on the basis of etymology and word-formation processes which was applied shows that the translations tend to be either too explicit or draw on the words and implications the author wanted to obscure. They were also considered less funny and less ironic.

It is a common belief that a good translation is one that evokes similar feelings in both the source and the target audiences. Therefore, in order to achieve this, a translator needs to be equipped with a set of tools allowing him or her to decipher those feelings and adequately transmit them into the target language. This is especially true when dealing with political correctness, which already in itself is a sensitive issue, culture-dependent and linguistically demanding due to its not being non-straightforward, drawing on neologisms and an extensive set of other linguistic means of expression.

Appendix

Płeć

- Kobieta
- Mężczyzna
- Other:

Wiek (w pełnych, skończonych latach)

Znajomość języka angielskiego

- Nie znam języka angielskiego
- A1 (początkujący)
- A2 (niższy średnio zaawansowany)
- B1 (średnio zaawansowany)
- B2 (wyższy średnio zaawansowany)
- C1 (zaawansowany)
- C2 (profesjonalny)

Przy każdym ze zwrotów zaznacz na skali ocenę, która według Ciebie najlepiej odzwierciedla, w jakim stopniu zwrot można uznać za poprawny politycznie: cyfra 1 oznacza „całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie”, cyfra 4 – „neutralny”, a cyfra 7 – „całkowicie poprawny politycznie”.

Para 1.

as optically challenged as a bat	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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ślepy jak kret	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Czy polski zwrot w tej parze dobrze oddaje znaczenie zwrotu angielskiego?

- Tak
- Nie
- Nie wiem
- Inne:

Jeśli masz uwagi do tej pary wyrażań, wpisz je poniżej.

Para 2.

differently visaged enough to stop a clock	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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brzydki jak noc	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 3.

cerebrally constrained	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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ograniczone umysłowo	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 4.

wisdom-challenged	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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chory na umyśle	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 5.

kindness- impaired	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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cierpiący na dotkliwy brak dobrych manier	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 6.

vertically challenged	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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mizernej postury	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 7.

economically disadvantaged	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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w wielce niekorzystnej sytuacji ekonomicznej	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 8.

economically disadvantaged	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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upośledzony ekonomicznie	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 9.

fairly godperson	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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dobry wrózek	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Para 10.

personal unpaid labourer	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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darmowa służąca	całkowicie niepoprawny politycznie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	całkowicie poprawny politycznie
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Odnieś się do wszystkich zaprezentowanych angielskich zwrotów i zaznacz odpowiedzi, które najlepiej oddają Twoje odczucia:

- Uważam je za uprzejme
- Spełniają swoją rolę jako zwroty poprawne politycznie
- Uważam je za ironiczne
- Byłem/am nimi rozbawiony/a
- Wzbudziły we mnie agresję
- Wywołały we mnie zażenowanie
- Inne:

Odnieś się do wszystkich zaprezentowanych polskich zwrotów i zaznacz odpowiedzi, które najlepiej oddają Twoje odczucia:

- Byłem/am nimi rozbawiony/a
- Wywołały we mnie zażenowanie
- Wzbudziły we mnie agresję
- Uważam je za ironiczne
- Uważam je za uprzejme
- Spełniają swoją rolę jako zwroty poprawne politycznie
- Inne:

Odpowiedz na poniższe pytania dotyczące poprawności politycznej.

Jak rozumiesz poprawność polityczną?

Czy określiłabyś się/określiłbyś się jako zwolenniczka/zwolennik poprawności politycznej?

- Tak
- Nie
- Nie mam zdania
- Other:

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