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What's cooking in English culinary texts? Insights from genre corpora for cookbook and menu writers and translators

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ABSTRACT

Cookery books are governed by their own laws not only in the choice of vocabulary and fixed expressions, but also grammar and style. Their translations should accordingly not only be linguistically impeccable and technically accurate, but also read as if written by a professional. This article offers new insights into the translation norms and conventions of cookbooks and recipes by discussing how corpus tools can help choose the most appropriate collocation or turn of phrase and validate hypotheses concerning crucial but non-salient choices at the lexical, syntactic, stylistic, spelling and punctuation levels. With the aid of a rich self-compiled corpus of recipes (1 million tokens, <12,000 types) we then describe several features of British and American culinary texts, outline major categories of snares lurking for the translator, discuss key characteristics of English-language recipes, and present numerous concrete examples vindicating the brownie points gained through analyses of recipe websites and cookery software in teaching English for specific purposes and specialised translation from the author's experience of more than a decade.

KEYWORDS

Culinary translation; translating recipes; cookbooks; cookery books; menus; food; specialised corpus; concordancing; collocations and colligations; language for specific purposes (LSP); English for specific purposes (ESP)

1. Food and culture

> Food is perhaps the most distinctive expression of an ethnic group, a culture, or, in modern times, a nation.
>
> (A. Sonnenfeld, Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present, 1999, xvi)

Food constitutes an inextricable part of our lives. More than being a purely biological necessity, it has been claimed to play a central role in many cultures (Counihan and Van Esterik 1997). Roland Barthes went as far as to assert that 'an entire "world" (social environment) is present in and signified by food' (1961/1997, 23), assigning to the latter a 'commemorative' function: when people prepare meals according to the customs prevalent in their society, they can experience the tradition and past of their country, which had been passed from generation to generation ensuring the continuity of culinary customs. Thus by connecting contemporary times with the practices of our ancestors, food can be viewed as a tool helping preserve the culture of a society (just

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like African Americans cultivate their roots and culture through their cooking traditions; Hughes 1980).[1]

Culture determines not only *what*, but also *how* people eat. In his influential work *L'Origine des manières de table* Claude Lévi-Strauss analysed 'how the cooking of a society is a language in which it unconsciously translates its structure' (1968/1997, 35) – in his view, similarly to language, cooking is a society's means of self-expression, and 'in any cuisine, nothing is simply cooked, but must be cooked in one fashion or another' (1968/1997, 29).

Another part of culture is the norms pertaining to the sequence and constituent parts of meals (Douglas 1975); the type of meal and the food served may be reflections of the social links between the diners. The culinary codes operating in a society can also determine the relative significance of the different functions of food; for instance, in Japan its appearance is no less important than the taste (Allison 1991), much in line with Goethe's famous saying that 'the meal should please the eye first and then the stomach.[2]' These cultural influences also blend with food doctrines practised by religious groups.

Thus the food of a nation together with its eating habits and norms together constitute a signature of its culture.

2. Globalisation and the spread of culinary knowledge

In recent years, the spread of knowledge about different gastronomic traditions is being propelled by – and the demand for recipes increasing due to – tourism, commerce, business contacts, the media, advertising, technological development, and other now much easier information exchanges stimulated by globalisation, with previously isolated cultures coming into increasingly frequent contact with one another. The *Encyclopedia of Globalization* contains the bold assertion that cultural globalisation was actually *started* by a desire for distinct foods (2007, 258*f.*), resulting less in the elimination of differences as in liberating them from being constrained to one place (Cowen 2002) – after all, this trend is reflected not only in the propagation of brands and fast food chains, but also the promotion of local cuisines and ethnic ingredients deemed healthy or hip. Globalisation has also brought about the emergence of fusion cuisine, which combines ingredients and techniques from formerly geographically or historically distinct gastronomies, as well as helped propel the demand for wholesome foods and organic produce. The exchange, circulation and dispersion of commodities and ideas across cultures thus embraces ways of preparing and serving food, as well as cookery products ranging from ingredients to cooking and eating utensils.

Food is one of the most universal and enjoyable things we can easily share with others (religious and dietary restrictions notwithstanding), and a return to the kitchen has been advocated by such food gurus and television personalities as Jamie Oliver, Michael Pollan, *New York Times*'s Mark Bittman, and Rachael Ray (Bowen, Elliott, and Brenton 2014, 21).[3] Today's frequent intercultural contacts, migration and media bridge earlier cultural gaps and carry recipes across in all directions more than ever before, increasing the demand for the translation of cookbooks and menus. Weblogs and other websites allow food aficionados to share and exchange recipes over large distances. A significant role in the spread of knowledge about new gastronomic traditions,

promotion of foreign cuisines, and setting of new trends has been played by the launching of all-cookery television channels such as *Food Network, UKTV Food*, or *Kuchnia.tv* in Poland, which teach the preparation of exotic dishes via the screen and websites, as well as by the popularity of culinary travel programmes, reality shows and competitions aired on public channels such as *MasterChef, Top Chef, Come Dine with Me* or *The Great British Bake Off*, enticing the viewers to bring the new flavours to their tables. The shows, chiefly Anglosphere imports, have in turn provoked interest in cookbooks penned by chef celebrities from the Isles, across the Atlantic, and other corners of the globe, and in the growing number of cookery magazines.

In turn, owing to the influx of Poles to the British Isles, which, according to David Coleman, Professor of Demography at Oxford University (quoted in Foggo and Habershon 2006), is comparable only with the arrival of the French Huguenots in the wake of the 1685 revocation of the edict of Nantes, a new trendiness has been observed there of Polish cuisine, with celebrity chefs such as Nigella Lawson and Jamie Oliver acquainting themselves with its recipes. Consequently, expanding-circle (cf. Kachru 1986) publishers attempt going ahead with international distribution, venturing into new markets with anglicised versions of their culinary bestsellers.

People's rising interest in novelty in turn drives a demand for exotic products, and is used by importers and manufacturers who then try to fill the new niche in the market, with growing chains of stores dealing in ethnic ingredients and other foreign commodities. The increasing trend of dining out and its epiphenomena such as food trucks further accelerate this diffusion. Cooking has become so trendy that a new term – gastrosexuals – has been coined for those who cook with pleasure to seduce their significant others.

All these developments have created the exigency for skilled translators in the culinary field. Globalisation has naturally contributed to the enrichment of language, with the names of new ingredients, dishes and cooking techniques continually entering the lexicon. But there are always terminological lacunae where novel terms do not yet have (established) equivalents. Also, just as cultural differences in general often find their reflection in language, so do differences in culinary habits. Translating cookery books does not merely call for a language expert; they are governed by their own laws not only in the choice of vocabulary and fixed expressions, but also grammar and style, and require specialised knowledge of the culinary arts in both source and target cultures (see e.g. Colina 1997; Tagnin and Teixeira 2004; Teixeira 2004, 2008). Their translation should accordingly not only be linguistically impeccable, workable and technically accurate (i.e. work as intended), but also read fluently and sound as if written by a pro.

Since the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 the number of migrant workers from the new accession countries soared. The HoReCa sector (hotel, restaurant and catering industry) has been one of the most deeply affected, with tens of thousands of chefs, cooks, confectioners, waiters, bartenders, and other staff in Central and Eastern Europe casting off their caps and aprons and heading for Western destinations, the UK and Ireland becoming particularly popular. Together with the growing trend in the Polish – both foreign- and domestic-capital – hotel and restaurant industry to hire head kitchen and pastry chefs from abroad, this has resulted in rocketing demand for dedicated language training in catering colleges and private language teaching institutions, posing a fresh challenge for administrators and teachers, most of whom have had little prior contact with the highly-specialised domain.

How can the professions – translation and HoReCa – be assisted in the face of the new demands? Specialised dictionaries, Wikipedia, authoritative reference volumes and recipe vortals are invaluable tools for checking unknown lexis (jargon pertaining to raw materials, seasonings and condiments, processing and cooking techniques, and equipment). Cookery websites and software additionally help choose the most appropriate and universally acknowledged collocation or turn of phrase from among two or more superficially synonymous ones, validate hypotheses concerning crucial but non-salient grammatical choices (such as the presence or absence of articles in a given turn of phrase, or the preference for singular or plural form) and spelling and punctuation conventions. Holding hundreds of thousands of edited recipes, these judiciously selected resources are a mine of knowledge – particularly stand-alone software recipes, organised into cookbooks which are stored on the hard disk/solid-state drive as text files, and susceptible to instantaneous thorough analysis with corpus analysis software such as AntConc or WordSmith Tools. This article exposes the snares lurking for the unsuspecting translator, discusses the key characteristics of English-language recipes, and presents several concrete examples vindicating the speed and utility of falling back on recipe vortals and cookery software – though in ways somewhat remote from the ones envisaged by their creators – from the author's practice of more than a decade. It is hoped that this article will benefit translators of cookbooks, cookery shows, and restaurant menus, translator trainers, as well as all persons dealing with language for special purposes (LSP) – in this particular case, culinary lingo.

3. Translation *into* and *from* the L_2

The current article can benefit professionals translating both *from* and *into* their L_2. One reviewer correctly observes that 'if the translators … are non-native speakers of English who translate cookbooks into their native languages, they would probably need a compendium of culinary conventions [i.e. parallel corpora] in these other languages too'. This article focuses on the norms and conventions of English culinary texts, without distinguishing whether the addressee is going to be a native or non-native user of the language (cf. Paradowski 2009).

Indeed, in the age of English acting as a lingua franca (cf. Paradowski 2013), an increasing share of culinary texts are being translated into this language by its *non*-native users. The reality of the twenty-first century, where balanced bilinguals are very rare to find (cf. e.g. McAlester 1992; Paradowski and Bator 2016), observations of translation trainers (cf. Pokorn 2009; Paradowski 2017), and everyday practice, as evidenced for instance by the career paths of the graduates of the author's translator training institute (a member of EMCI, EMT and CIUTI), belie the orthodox assumption deep-rooted in Western cultures since the rise of nation-states and Martin Luther[4] (cf. Posey 2009, 89) that all translators work into their first languages (see e.g. Newmark 1988, 3). Already in the last century Campbell (1998) argued that while 'the majority of writing on translation tacitly implies that translation is done into one's first language' (cf. also Zahedi 2013, 12), this is no longer the case, and that in many situations and parts of the world – such as, but not restricted to, post-colonial societies and countries characterised by high immigration – translation into the L_2 has always been an inevitable, common and accepted practice (Zahedi 2013; vide also Pokorn 2005). In fact, in some

circumstances such a translation direction has been argued to be preferable, for instance where the supply of skilled foreigners does not match the demand (particularly common in the case of translations into English, due to the relative lack of interest in high-level foreign language learning in the UK and US; Barbour 2004), in the case of minority languages (cf. e.g. Roux-Faucard 2005), where it is more imperative that the translator know the subject matter than the idiom, where accuracy is more important than felicity of style (cf. e.g. Ahlsvad 1978; Lise 1997), where of import are cultural competence and a high metalinguistic awareness of the target language (cf. Posey 2009), or where the translation is aimed at broader international rather than native-speaker consumption (Hasegawa 2012, 19; Paradowski 2013, 318). Campbell also made the case that second-language users and native speakers alike both have to and are able to acquire high-level textual skills – the ability to produce 'stylistically authentic texts' (1998, 2), and proper training can indeed produce competent non-native translators. Since the publication of Campbell's influential volume several other researchers, translation trainers and practitioners have vindicated the validity and inevitability of 'inverse translation' (e.g. Bretthauer 2000; Pokorn 2000a, 2005, 2009; Adab 2005; Rogers 2005; Thelen 2005), some contending a scarcity of scientific evidence for linguistic or cultural superiority of translation into the L_1 (Pokorn 2000b).

4. Components of language for specific purposes (LSP)

Translating specialised and technical texts requires two kinds of knowledge. Firstly, familiarity with the *minilect* – restricted form of practically-oriented technolects used by a limited circle of specialists and/or linked to a limited field (Nordman 1996, 556), encompassing jargon, strictly formalised syntax, discourse conventions, and special mode of expression. Recipes are one of the few genres with the typography, layout, and superordinate macrostructure so conventionalised, interculturally stereotyped and easily recognisable that the text type can be identified even by a total linguistic dilettante (Nordman 1996, 558). As such, they fall under Nord's umbrella of *instrumental translation*, produced when the target text is supposed to 'achieve the same range of functions as an original text' (1997, 50), as opposed to *documentary translation*, where the target text receiver is well aware that they are dealing with a translation.

The second type of requisite knowledge is what can be called 'encyclopaedic' knowledge and experience, especially in the domain of *culture-bound items* (phenomena that are characteristic of only one culture, or better known in the culture from which they stem; Hejwowski 2004, 128); in the case in point embracing foodstuffs specific for particular cuisines, names of dishes traditional to a country, and terms describing cooking utensils, appliances, cutlery and crockery unknown in the target culture, among others. In the words of David Crystal, '[t]ranslators [must] have a thorough understanding of the field of knowledge covered by the source text, and of any social, cultural, or emotional connotations that need to be specified in the target language if the intended effect is to be conveyed' (1987, 344).

This difficulty of translation lying primarily not in the structural differences between languages, but in the technical terms and erudite allusions that belong to the sphere of cultural traditions was pointed out already by Wojtasiewicz: 'certain words or groups of words do not evoke in the users of the target language such reactions as they do in the

users of the original language' (1957, 124). Notably among these he mentioned the names of different dishes and beverages (e.g. *bliny* [blini], *curry, knedle* [knödel], *pudding, kisiel* or *kumys* [kumis]), as one of the loci of trouble given the local nature of the conditions in which the terms arose.

A more recent development concerns cookbooks penned by celebrities or celebrity chefs such as Nigella Lawson, Jamie Oliver or Gordon Ramsey. These habitually contain comments and anecdotes, refer to the habits, personal experiences, and reminiscences of the authors, reflect their speech style with which the readers are probably already familiar from television. These books thus lie somewhere in-between technical texts and literature, and are a mixed type of informative and expressive text. Unlike more conventional, often multi-author collections of recipes which are generally adapted by the translator to the expectations of the readers, the more personal parts of text require different handling—the expectation typically being to preserve the original style and structure as a trademark of the author (the 'rule of loyalty')—and fall beyond the scope of this article.[5]

5. Encyclopaedic knowledge: fauna and flora

Accurate translation of kitchen-related terms obviously requires in-depth familiarity with the ingredients and condiments used. Two-word names are generally deceitful in that the frequent temptation is to go about them word-for-word. This will not, however, take one a long way – take 'sea urchin', 'red snapper', 'John Dory', or 'navel oranges' as examples. Here, one prudent and typically failsafe tactic is to look up the relevant animal species, fruit or vegetable in a specialised dictionary, or – given the necessary caution – in the target language version of Wikipedia. This may sensitise the translator to many intricacies even when the original term appears fairly unproblematic: the head nouns in Polish 'melon miodowy', 'pomidorki koktajlowe', 'czekolada deserowa', 'tłuste mleko' or 'jogurt naturalny' will not take as their modifiers the words 'honey', 'cocktail', 'dessert', 'fat' or 'natural', but 'honeydew [melon]', 'cherry [tomatoes]', 'dark [chocolate]', 'whole [milk]' and 'plain [yoghurt]'. Going in the opposite direction, 'brown sugar' does not so much specify the colour of the sweetener (which can be obtained in the unrefined beet sugar variety), but the raw material – sugar cane; similarly, 'brown stock' refers to demi-glace-type beef-based stock, while 'white stock' to broth cooked on chicken bones and white *mirepoix*; 'leaf lettuce' refers to 'sałata listkowa', not 'liściasta'.

Yet, dictionaries and even Wikipedia will not account for all the cases out there – and even where they do, they rarely provide information on the actual usage of the terms in gastronomic discourse. 'Shrimp' and 'prawn' may refer to the same crustacean, but are not interchangeable both ways, and a king's ransom to whoever can explain the difference without having examined corpus data.

6. Moving beyond the word

In the previous section we highlighted the need to pay close attention when translating complements and adjuncts. However, head nouns are no less deceptive, with the result that while in some cases verbatim word-for-word translation (also known as literal or syntagmatic; Vinay and Darbelnet 1958; Hejwowski 2004, 95, respectively) may be

comprehended, in others it will only be met with blank stares. As Pawley and Syder wrote in their seminal paper:

> … native speakers of English do not exercise the creative potential of syntactic rules to anything like their full extent … if they did so they would not be accepted as exhibiting nativelike control of the language. The fact is that only a small proportion of the total set of grammatical sentences are nativelike in form – in the sense of being readily acceptable to native informants as ordinary, natural forms of expression. (1983, 193)

Thus, for instance, while 'cornflour' will be correctly understood both in the UK and US to mean 'cornstarch' (note the spelling as one word), 'potato flour' ('mąka ziemniaczana' or 'potato starch') repeatedly puzzles. Condiments are a kingdom of idiosyncrasy: the English equivalent of 'przyprawa do piernika' focuses on the fact that it contains more than one ingredient – 'gingerbread mix' or 'mixed spice' (where the combination of ingredients is far from arbitrary), but 'przyprawa pięć smaków', 'curry' and 'chilli' concentrate more on the granular form: 'five-spice powder', 'curry powder' and 'chilli powder' (the last also to distinguish it from fresh chilli). While most Polish housewives are familiar with 'kasza perłowa' (without the need to specify the cereal), the English equivalent – 'pearl barley' – places more emphasis on the grain Unjustified calques may also lead to such inept translations as that of 'margaryna Palma', where the modifier is a brand name, as 'palm margarine' in the English rendition of Nowakowski's *Raport o stanie wojennym* (Hejwowski 2004, 140).

The discrepancies in naming (and conceptualisation) extend beyond food stuffs to accessories and utensils. Terms such as 'deska do krojenia', 'blat', 'kratka piekarnika', 'płytka', 'papilotki', or 'folia spożywcza' call for collocates that, without the accompanying contextual information, may at first glance seem semantically remote: 'worktop saver', 'work surface', 'grill rack', 'heat diffuser', 'muffin papers', or 'plastic wrap/clingfilm'. In such cases of doubt concerning the meaning of a particular expression, deciphering the meanings of unknown items is frequently possible with the help of Google Images.

7. Intralinguistic discrepancies

Terms are not equivalent even within the Anglosphere. The same ingredients often go by different names on the two sides of the Atlantic.[6] Many are relatively obvious and pose little threat: British English (BrE) 'beetroot' is American English (AmE) 'beet', 'cutlet' is 'chop', 'aubergine' and 'eggplant', 'courgette' and 'zucchini', 'swede' and 'yellow turnip', 'jacket potato' and 'baked potato', 'sponge fingers' and 'ladyfingers', or 'liver sausage' and 'liverwurst' are easily understood in both countries, as are 'greaseproof paper' and 'wax paper'. (Likewise, different Chinese-speaking regions have different names for butter: 黄油 [yellow grease] in mainland China, 牛油 [cow grease] in Hong Kong, and 奶油 [milk grease] in Taiwan; Yue 2014).

Somewhat less evidently, English 'broad beans' equal American 'fava beans', BrE 'brown bread' is AmE 'wholemeal bread', 'porridge' is 'cooked oatmeal', 'candyfloss' is 'cotton candy'. There exist more ticklish complications and terminological conundrums. A BrE 'biscuit' will be an AmE 'cookie' (if sweet) or 'cracker' (if savoury). While 'fairy cakes' and 'cupcakes' are similar (although the finishing touches differ), 'English muffins' are non-existent in England, where their closest cultural equivalent is a

'crumpet'. BrE 'chicory' is AmE 'endive' while 'endive' is 'chicory'. UK 'rump steak' is known as US 'sirloin', while BrE 'sirloin' usually denotes 'porterhouse steak'. BrE 'Marrow' can be bone tissue or a type of AmE 'squash', but BrE 'squash' stands for concentrated juice drink. 'Corn' does not refer exclusively to 'maize'. BrE 'crisps' are AmE 'potato chips', but the elongated crispy '(French) fries' shoved into a bag or cardboard box at a McDonald's, Burger King, or KFC are entirely different from the much thicker and slightly soggy slab-cut 'chips' sold with battered fish over the counter in pubs and chippies throughout the Commonwealth (whose closest equivalent on American soil is 'steak fries'), or, for that matter, from the dry and extra thin '(pommes) frites' served in restaurants along the Seine atop a cut of red meat with wine sauce. Even within one country, in roadside diners along Route 66, ordering 'regular fries' will get one 'French fries', while 'chili cheese fries' mean twice-fried, but unsalted potato wedges served as a stand-alone appetiser with an assortment of dips (Cooper 2008). And, if one got their fingers greasy, they should beware of confusing a 'serviette' with a 'tissue' when in the Western Hemisphere.

8. L'embarras du choix

So far, we have been discussing terms which have unique recognised equivalents in another language. This is not a universal scenario, and many times different dictionaries, Wikipedia, and recipe books will be using more than one term to refer to the same referent. Then, the translator may wish to make informed, usage-based choices – especially if the end-result is to be consistent and intended for a particular target audience (e.g. the American or Canadian publishing market). One option is the Internet, but it is typically difficult to find sizeable enough collections of texts that have been reliably edited for style, clarity, and uniformity. To our aid come corpora of texts that have not been designed with the aim of computational analysis in mind, such as MasterCook, English-language cookery software which lends itself to effortless transformation into an LSP corpus and subsequent profitable exploration. The edition used in the current project came in the form of 17 stand-alone cookbooks, containing over 1 million word tokens and nearly 12,000 word types. The files, though bearing a dedicated extension, are simple ASCII text files, uncluttered by metatags or other unnecessary code, and hence amenable to the same search, sort and count operations as regular untagged textual databases. The thus compiled corpus was subsequently interrogated with WordSmith Tools software in order to extract the relative frequencies of the words and n-grams of interest, their concordance patterns and collocates (KWIC; e.g. in the search for collocations and colligations).

This revealed that 'arugula' (240 hits) appears much more often than 'rocket' (2), and 'garnish' (3652) more than 'decorate' (208). Also, while dictionaries may list 'powder sugar' and 'icing sugar' among their entries, these terms only sporadically (18 and eight times, respectively) occur in the corpus; instead, 'confectioner's sugar' (89) is most commonly used. The corpus may also help resolve spelling dilemmas: 'fillet' (339), 'yogurt' (1386), 'gelatin' (647) and 'aluminum' (479) (rather than 'filet' [48], 'yoghurt' [0], 'gelatine' [5], or 'aluminium' [2] – in this particular collection of American English texts).

9. Unit names

The compilation of a corpus of authentic LSP texts becomes even handier where proper collocations must be used. For instance, the form and unit names in which plants and other ingredients are used to culinary ends can be quite testing. 'Asparagus spears', 'parsley sprigs' and 'desiccated coconut' may not boast sufficient input frequency in everyday discourse to render them readily available to a second-language user during a translation or interpreting task, but these are the terms the translator will want to employ (rather than, say, 'coconut shreds'). Even on the very confined plot of spices the translator often has to ponder on the character of the seed in question: after all, 'juniper berries' do not look very much different from 'black peppercorns' (note the spelling as one word), nor, when crushed, from 'cardamom seeds' (which sit in pods). Likewise, one can enclose stuffing in 'rice paper sheets' or 'rice paper wrappers', but only 'won ton wrappers'.

10. Pre-processed ingredients

Collocational competence is also requisite in the ingredient list when mention is made of already pre-processed ones. Hence, while in our database 'roasted pepper' features 44 times, 'baked pepper' is virtually non-existent, although no dictionary includes such information. Likewise, one comes across 'sesame seeds – toasted' and 'cashews – roasted', but not the other way round. 'Cracked black pepper' behaves quite differently from 'crushed green peppercorns', despite the fact that the same plant is concerned. Some collocations, e.g. certain trinomials, are frequent enough to be learnt by rote and subsequently recycled, such as 'avocado – peeled, pitted and diced'.

More contextualised collocations help resolve problems where more than one translational equivalent exists for a Polish term, but where they are not interchangeable. For instance, 'odstawić' can mean 'set aside (to cool)' or 'let stand (for 10 minutes)'; 'ubić' should be translated as 'beat' when dealing with egg whites, and 'whip' when cream is concerned.

11. Prepositions

Terminological acumen is one thing. The knowledge provided by wisely compiled corpora of specialised texts extends beyond the realm of encyclopaedic and lexical knowledge to grammar as well. One area that is responsible for a sizeable proportion of errors in learner language, chiefly owing to interference from the mother tongue, and consequently leaves a trace in translation attempts, is that of prepositions (Paradowski 2002). Reference to a language corpus quickly helps in the case of such often problematic examples as the following:[7]

zest *of* 1 orange/rind *of* 3 limes
adjust oven rack *to* medium position
add butter and grated parmesan *towards* the end
cut *into* 1″-rounds *vs* cut *in* half
fry tomatoes with shallot *in* butter, blend
turning occasionally, until evenly browned *on* both sides

place pear purée *in* saucepan and simmer, stirring occasionally, until reduced *by* half, Ø about 20 minutes
pour brandy *over* top and ignite
rub garlic all *over* pork tenderloins, pat the salt mixture *over* pork, coating generously.

12. Determiners and ellipsis

Another notorious and often cursed area for many learners of English that tends to spill over into translations is that of articles, usage whereof, despite their high frequency and early exposure, constitutes a great conceptual difficulty, primarily owing to the absence of these functors in many L_2-ers' mother tongues (Paradowski 2007, 157). Translating culinary texts presents a compounded problem here, for the genre tends to obey rules of article usage quite unlike those imparted in even university-level textbooks of general English. In the context of the kitchen, the most common article is the zero one – once the ingredients have been provided, and given the relative universality of kitchens being equipped with a customary set of utensils and appliances, definiteness ceases to be an issue and the resultant need to encode it by means of the definite or indefinite article becomes obviated.[8] Hence, typical cookbook concordance lines spat out from our corpus return:

transfer Ø turkey to Ø cutting board
press Ø through Ø sieve to remove Ø seeds
soak Ø rice paper sheets one by one and pat Ø dry. When Ø soft, arrange Ø feta, cheese and watermelon …
in Ø heavy nonstick skillet, heat 1 tbsp Ø oil over moderate heat until Ø hot but not smoking, then add Ø cakes, turning Ø over once, until Ø browned and heated through, about 8 minutes total.

Textual ellipsis in recipes is a more widespread phenomenon, extending beyond determiners to prepositions and nominal phrases; cf. '1 tsp Ø allspice', '2 cups Ø orange juice' (but: 'pinch *of* nutmeg', as here the measure is less precise and not pre-modified by a cardinal numeral), or 'cover and refrigerate Ø Ø at least 4 hrs or overnight, turning Ø fish occasionally', where three different grammatical categories have been left out (cf. Culy 1996 for a discussion of how in this genre zero anaphora have over time replaced overt pronouns). While no textbook mentions these things, a corpus will in a few seconds.

A corpus may also help where more than one article option is technically possible. For instance, the dictionary *Wielki Słownik Angielsko-Polski PWN-Oxford* tells the reader that the collocation for 'doprowadzić do wrzenia' is 'bring to the boil' (2004, 124). However, a brief look at the collocation list in our collection reveals a relative paucity this combination (11 occurrences), and a preference for 'a' (2273) over the zero article (292). This does not mean that the construction provided in the printed dictionary is ill-formed; no, it is attested in the British National Corpus (where in the 'bring to _ boil' construction a preference can be observed for 'the' over the zero article – 137 vs seven occurrences – and no instance can be found of the indefinite one), and likewise in the *Larousse*

Gastronomique (2009). What it does tell us is that in this edited selection of American recipes, the most common is the construction with the indefinite article – hence, if the text translated is intended with the US audience in mind, 'a' may be a safe choice (while 'the' may work better for the UK market).

13. Compression of information; pre- vs post-modification

Culinary texts also usefully illustrate the relative terseness of the English language, not only in terms of average word length and scarcity of inflectional suffixes, but also the tendency to package and compress information, frequently using single-word terms that need more than one lexeme in other languages. The most frequent compressors of information are verbs, in particular passive participles, as in 'chicken breasts – *skinned* and boned', 'shrimp – peeled and *deveined*' (cf. 'obrane ze skóry i odfiletowane', 'pozbawione jelita'), '*beer-battered* fish' ('w piwnej panierce'), 'stir-fried' ('smażone w woku'), '*curried* egg sandwiches', or 'reduce, *sieve* and add chopped cilantro' ('przetrzyj przez sito'). A short phrase can express several subsequent steps, as in 'transfer to wax paper-lined tray'. The ability of the English language to stack prenominal adjuncts and easily manipulate their grammatical categories further contributes to concision and condensation of information: 'bake in preheated 350ºF oven' instead of 'piec w piekarniku nagrzanym do 175ºC'. Also, the ability to form compound words, so typical of other West-Germanic languages, can contribute to stylistic elegance: 'simmer yucca in salted boiling water until *fork-tender*, 30 to 35 minutes'.

Notable due to this feature of the English language is the possibility to further avoid the use of prepositions, which typically surface in the Polish equivalents, with the result that (despite both being left-headed languages) in place of Polish post-modification, English favours pre-modification; consider 'boneless pork loin', 'oriental-style', or 'crayfish won-ton' (vs 'polędwiczka wieprzowa bez kości', 'w stylu orientalnym', 'won-ton z krewetką/krewetkami').

14. Information load

Yet, this renouncement of some lexical items and the compression of information do not have to communicate less; at times, quite the opposite. This is most frequent in the case of verbs, which apart from the core meaning often convey additional information on the circumstances of the activity, the manner in which it is to be performed, or the tool to be used:[9] '*pat* dry with paper towels', '*return* tofu to skillet', '*spoon* cucumber relish alongside'.

15. Grammatical category shift

As we have observed, idiomatic, target-like output of the translation process requires competent employment of appropriate jargon and collocations. This also entails familiarity with other conventions of the discipline, including expression of certain information using different grammatical categories (parts of speech) than in the source language. Examine the following concordance lines:

6-ounce can white tuna packed in water – *drained* ('bez zalewy')

working in batches, fry … ('partiami')
coat soufflé dishes or custard cups with walnut mixture, *knocking out* excess//generously butter and flour springform pan, *tapping out* any excess flour('wytrzepać nadmiar …')
makes/yields about 50 crostini ('na ok. 50 grzanek')

Notable also is the fact that while in Polish the animals whose meat is being served are typically denoted with an adjective (e.g. 'kotlet schabowy', 'udziec jagnięcy'), English uses a nominal modifier, not in the Saxon genitive, but a periphrastic prepositional phrase:

> Animals are rendered being-less not only by technology, but by innocuous phrases … After being butchered, fragmented body parts must be renamed to obscure the fact that these were once animals. After death, cows become roast beef, steak, hamburger; pigs become pork, bacon, sausage. Since objects are possessions they cannot have possessions; thus, we say 'leg of lamb' not a 'lamb's leg.' (Adams 1990, 47*f.*)

16. Composition and information structure

The competence of a culinary translator does not end with encyclopaedic knowledge, lexical fluency, and familiarity with the grammatical conventions of cookery texts. Another level of expertise relates to the relatively stable principles of composition and information structure, with much higher homogeneity and considerably less variation than licensed in other genres. This concerns both the micro-level of word order in isolated phrases, where it may differ between languages (cf. 'czerwone wytrawne wino' vs 'dry red wine',[10] '… ugotowanych ziemniaków' vs '… potatoes – boiled', or 'czerwona cebula pokrojona w cienkie plasterki' – 'red onion – sliced thin/thinly sliced'), and the discourse level of entire sentences, where in English it is typical to begin with the utensil or kitchenware in which the dish is to be prepared, rather than – as is the Polish wont – with the key ingredients and demoting the appliance until the end of the sentence:

In food processor, pulse flour, salt and 1 tablespoon sugar to combine
In large nonstick skillet, brown ground beef over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until no longer pink

On a macroscale, conventionalised English-language recipes invariably begin with a presentation of the ingredients, typically including the preliminary preparation stages ('¼ cup fresh parsley – chopped'), followed by the instructions. Demoting the ingredients until the discussion of the preparation is relatively uncommon. Also, a much higher degree of consistent conformity can be observed in English-language (especially North American) cookbooks between the sequence in which the ingredients are listed and the order in which they appear in the instruction, to the extent that, where a given mass foodstuff is used at different stages of the process, the appropriate information is nearly invariably indicated in the list of ingredients (e.g. '2 tbsp olive oil – divided'). In recipes published over the Vistula, other scenarios are possible: ingredients may be presented in order of importance; with the key constituent coming first; in order of appearance in the texts, or they

may be listed in an apparently arbitrary sequence. Also, in Poland lists of ingredients are meant to prepare a shopping list, so additional notes at this stage may seem superfluous.

Additionally, English-language readers expect orderly paragraphing, where a Polish source may be more of a run-on text. Some cookbooks additionally follow the trend of numbering the preparation steps.

Just as recipes are governed by such textual conventions, so are restaurant menus. Appendix 1 presents the principles of menu writing which are expected good practice in the Anglo-Saxon world.

17. Level of formality and impersonal constructions

Last, but not least, the translator ought to be aware of the inter-linguistic differences in the verb forms used to provide instructions, the register, and formal constructions used. For instance, directions in English-language cookbooks use the imperative and impersonal forms: '*season* with salt and pepper, *if desired*', while the tendency to compress information favours doing without the verbal form altogether: '*For sauce*, mix all ingredients except … . In Polish it has been customary to use imperatives (and, in older texts, the second-person future declarative), but another visible trend has been to use the infinitive or other impersonal constructions (with some scholars explicitly encouraging this in order to avoid shortening of the distance between author and reader, which in Polish seems not a welcome author–reader interaction, especially with the older generations; Jankowiak 2010, 31).

18. Coda

We have overviewed a selection of the most characteristic features of cookbook English, its specialised taxonomy and professional nomenclature, syntactic and stylistic conventions, and discoursal features (for more properties, see Paradowski 2010). Their combined contribution to a stereotyped, conventionalised text makes the end-result predictable, more directly available to, and easier for the initiated addressee 'to act on the instructions promptly and undisturbed by peripheral effects' (Nordman 1996, 564). A translation should be similarly transparent for the audience. The translator's output ought thus to be accurate, but at once idiomatic, native-like, and uniform, meeting the genre-related expectations of the audience rather than sticking rigidly to the convention of the source text. A novice to the field should check on every new term and not take it for granted. Where available, s/he may fall back on dictionaries and the target-language versions of relevant entries on Wikipedia, as well as consult other secondary references, but beyond the word level acquaintance with the genre becomes indispensable. Given that accurate technical translation is not always available in dictionaries, corpus analysis of judiciously compiled reference material becomes vital to gain insight into both the specific textual conventions, and the phrasal building blocks which can be borrowed intact, for both novice and more experienced translators as well as proofreaders and editors of the end-product. In some cases, the translator may even back her-/himself up with a reverse approach: where a recipe to be rendered in the foreign language closely mirrors one already in the corpus, s/he can take the latter as model scaffolding and fill it out with the necessary detail. In either case, as in dealing with any other consumer-oriented how-to type of text, the translator should be an expert in the given

field, possess relevant factual and cultural information and know what s/he is talking about. The ideal successful translator of cookery books and television shows ought to be not only theoretically familiar with the specialised language, but also *au fait* with the kitchen environment and techniques, at home among pots and pans, knowing how the ingredients and kitchen tools are used and can be substituted, and possessing an understanding of differences in the culinary art and a feel for cooking so that the translated recipes will work as originally intended (Samuelsson-Brown 2004, 82) and their final outcome will not turn out to be a fiasco from the point of view of taste (Nordman 1996, 565). While there is no universal method of dealing with culture-bound and other problematic items, the guiding principle should be that of functionality: facilitating an understanding and the preparation of the recipe. In line with Skopos theory stating that

> [e]ach text is produced for a purpose, and should thus serve this purpose. Speak/write/translate/interpret so that your text/translation/interpretation functions in the situation and among the audience for whom it has been intended and in the way it should function. (Vermeer 1989, 20).[11]

Such a functionalist approach in translation means that rather than merely provide similar impressions for the source and target text readers (as in equivalence-based approaches; e.g. Wojtasiewicz 1957), or foreignise the text in order to render it more understandable to the end audience, as in Nida's (1964) dynamic equivalence theory, the text should be 'functionally communicative' for the receiver (Holz-Mänttäri 1984). Repeatability, so frowned upon in many other spheres of life, in the gastronomic realm is one of the preached and desired principles (which is why many among even the top chefs rely on semi-prepared products). If the translator feels insecure (but for some reason had undertaken the task), the text may be consulted with a professional (consulted not edited, as then the danger exists of the chef spoiling the transcript by unwarrantedly allowing her/his idiosyncratic style to dominate the text). The value of practice can never be underrated. Unlike many other areas of specialty, the advantage in translating culinary art is that the outcome can be tested in practice with relative ease.

Notes

1. Preliminary results of the reported research were presented at the 10th Teaching and Language Corpora conference, University of Warsaw, July 2012, engcorpora 2015: English Linguistics and Corpora: Research Issues and Language Teaching Innovations, Université Paris Est Créteil Val-de-Marne, April 2015, and Corpus Linguistics Fest (CLiF), Indiana University Bloomington, June 2016. Further characteristics of the recipe genre are discussed in Paradowski (2010).
2. 'Das Essen soll zuerst das Auge erfreuen und dann den Magen.'
3. Though as Bowen, Elliott, and Brenton (2014) rightly point out, while one might argue that 'home-cooked meals have become the hallmark of good mothering, stable families, and the ideal of the healthy, productive citizen' (21), for many especially low-income families this alluring depiction of cooking is elitist (DeVault 1991; Guthman 2007) and romanticised if not utopian, ignoring the time pressures, financial constraints (Alkon et al. 2013) and feeding challenges that many mothers have to grapple with.
4. This had not always been the case, as most translations in Europe in the Christian era were into Latin (Posey 2009, 89).

5. The problem of the linguacultural differences between the source and the target was noted as early as in 1813 by Franz Schleiermacher in his work *Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens* (as cited in Lefevere 1992, 149), where he talked about two pathways the translator can follow: "Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him. Or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him." This latter approach means an attempt to recreate the same relation between the reader and the translated text as that which takes place between readers of the original, naturalising that which might feel 'foreign'.
6. This also holds for other languages, e.g. Canadian French has a somewhat different set of food-related terms than that used in l'Hexagone.
7. Phrasal examples provided throughout come from the aforementioned corpus of MasterCook Deluxe and similar assembled American English recipes.
8. Recipes written in a more narrative style and preceded by a discussion and/or interspersed with the author's digressions, however, naturally tend to approximate the general-English conventions of article usage.
9. As befits a 'satellite-framed' language (leaving aside the problems with Talmy's original (1985, 1991) typology).
10. Œnological nomenclature merits a stand-alone discussion in its own right.
11. '… jeder Text zu einem Gebrauch verfaßt wird … er also auch in diesem Gebrauch funktionieren soll: Rede/schreib/übersetz/dolmetsch so, daß dein Text/deine Übersetzung/Verdolmetschung da funktioniert, wo sie eingesetzt werden soll, und bei denen, für die sie eingesetzt werden soll, und so, wie sie es tun soll. Ich nenne das eine „Skopos" Regel.'
12. http://www.fooduniversity.com/foodu/food_c/menu_planning/Writing.htm.

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Software

MasterCook Deluxe. "Software". Available at ValuSoft website http://www.mastercook.com/.
WordSmith Tools 7.0. "Lexical Analysis Software." Available from Mike Scott's website http://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/downloads/.

Appendix 1. A few notes on menu writing [supplementary online material]

The average person makes more than 200 decisions about food every day, many of them unconsciously, including the choices made from reading menus.

—Brian Wansink (2010) *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think*

This section provides some principles and guidelines concerning the construction and writing of restaurant menus. Bills of fare should not only communicate to patrons what they can expect and how much they will have to pay, they also demonstrate the establishment's concept, style and quality.

Section progression in menus tends to be rather universal: dishes are generally listed by courses in the order in which they are eaten: appetisers, entrées (in the order: main consequence, starchy or staple item, vegetable, salad, bread), desserts, and beverages, with the prescription that cold and hot dishes be best listed separately. Often, dessert, specials and seasonal menus appear as clip-ons or separate inserts.

A menu is not a novel, it should be kept short. Item description ought to be precise and explanatory, vivid and enticing, but not overly poetic. The rule of thumb is the simpler, the better; flowery style, hyperbole, and emotional expressions ought to be avoided, and the number of adverbs and adjectives maximally restricted. The longest descriptions can normally be found in casual-dining bills of fare, while menus in fast-food chains minimal, and those in fine dining establishments in-between the two extremes, as upscale dining typically mentions key ingredients, points of origin, brand, quality representations, and the preparation method. There are several reasons for this level of detail: it is expected by many diners (e.g. Americans), it helps cater for patrons with allergies, and helps convince the reader that the dish cannot be easily replicated.

The style will be determined by the restaurant and customer profile (also in terms of page size, fonts, colours and use of photographs). Menus in restaurants run by celebrities will try to picture the chef and channel their style; e.g. Jamie Oliver likes to use words such as *chuck, dollop*, or

wodge, Nigella Lawson is more likely to say *exquisite, rambunctious* and *naughty*, while Gordon Ramsay's statements are short, sharp and straightforward (Matthews 2012). Formality has to be matched to the occasion; expressions such as 'A little something to whet the taste buds', 'Bigger plates for the heartier appetite', or 'For those with a sweet tooth' appear childish outside the context of a family restaurant (Majumdar, n.d.), where an easy-to-understand style is the norm, in comparison with e.g. a French bistro, where one can expect to find more sophisticated jargon. Foreign cuisines have made us expect authentic ethnic names, but an overabundance of hard-to-pronounce, intimidating jargon and imported phrases may daunt and alienate the anxious diner; after all, a restaurant is not a game show (thus for instance in the case of Indian restaurants one may decide to keep only the most recognisable words, such as *masala, paneer, tandoori* and *tikka*; Kershaw 2009). In either case, languages ought never to be mixed within one phrase (instead of 'chicken à l'estragon' simply say 'tarragon chicken').[12]

Another aspect to consider is the layout. Haute cuisine establishments typically choose a single column and wide margins for simple, elegant appeal. The same holds for limited-selection menus, such as daily specials or Happy Hour. Family-oriented restaurants offering countless options and many choices of kids' fare, pubs, and cafés do well with multiple columns on the front and back (of often tabloid-size menus) to fit everything in one place. To set off a column or category and draw the reader's eye increased negative space (white or empty space) can be used. In general, all columns should contain roughly similar amounts of text. In order to achieve this it may be necessary to rearrange the sections or break them up differently; this will assure the customers that they have choice. For instance, categories that contain only one or two items each may be combined, e.g. by placing both soups and salads under 'Starters'; conversely, categories that are overly dense can be broken up into subcategories. For vegan, dairy free, kosher, halal, spicy dishes, etc. simple, aesthetic symbols can be used to avoid repeating the information in writing.

Finally, to dot one's *i*s and cross one's *t*s, the menu should be proofread and spell-checked, with special attention paid to exotic terms and foreign phrases, as misspellings may suggest a similar negligence in the kitchen. It is also advisable to ensure that capitalisations and punctuation are consistent, all articles, prepositions and conjunctions are in lowercase, and the currency symbol has preferably been removed, as patrons have been found to spend more when it is absent (Yang, Kimes, and Sessarego 2009).