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Forms of address and (im)politeness: A corpus-assisted study of Polish professional and non-professional subtitles

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to analyse how the English form of address *you* is translated into Polish in subtitles. The investigation is embedded in the framework of (im)politeness theory. The data used for the study comprise two types of non-professional renderings: amateur subtitles (fansubbing) and subtitles written by sophomore students of English Philology. The study proves that fansubbers' subtitles have a tendency to foreignise translation by ignoring the Polish sociocultural norms of terms of address, thus making it sound less polite and marked, while students' translations show a tendency to make the original dialogue more familiar to the target (secondary) audience, and make it more acceptable and polite.

Keywords

Polish forms of address, subtitles, corpus, non-professional translation, discursive approach, (im)politeness

Formy adresatywne i (nie)grzeczność: Analiza korpusowa polskich profesjonalnych i nieprofesjonalnych napisów filmowych

Abstrakt

Celem artykułu jest porównanie dwóch wersji tłumaczenia nieprofesjonalnego (napisów do filmów) pod względem stopnia ich (nie)grzeczności. Analizie poddano tłumaczenia amatorskie (tzw. fansubbings) oraz tłumaczenia studentów anglistyki. Badanie wskazuje, że tłumaczenia amatorskie brzmią mniej grzecznie niż przekłady studenckie. Różnica ta wynika m.in. z faktu, że studenci uwzględniają normy i konwencje grzeczności wyrażane przez formy adresatywne w języku polskim, podczas gdy amatorzy starają się, aby tłumaczenie pozostało bliskie oryginałowi, a tym samym przenoszą zwyczaje używania form adresatywnych z języka angielskiego (odmiany amerykańskiej) na grunt języka polskiego.

Słowa kluczowe

polskie formy adresatywne, napisy filmowe, korpus, tłumaczenie nieprofesjonalne, podejście dyskursywne, (nie)grzeczność

1. Introduction

The paper aims to analyse the occurrences of select polite and impolite forms of address in Polish subtitles written by two groups of non-professional translators: students and fansubbers. The two non-professional versions are also compared to the professional subtitles. As the study is embedded in the theoretical framework of im/politeness theories, some of the theoretical controversies and methodological problems are discussed in section 2. The paper deals with translations of forms of address from English into Polish; hence the Polish system of address terms is presented in section 3. The theoretical part is followed by section 4., which is entirely devoted to the presen-

tation of research aims and assumptions (section 4.1.), material and methods (section 4.2.), and the analysis of the data (section 4.3.). Discussion of the results is combined with conclusions in section 5.

2. (Im)politeness, discursive practices and address forms

The theory of politeness has gone a long way from universal and objective approaches to politeness viewed in the context of an ideal interlocutor (Brown and Levinson 1987 [1978]), with the early developments offered by Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983), to subjective forms propounded much later by the discursive approach,[1] in particular by the internal (the user's) level of interaction analysis (Watts et al. 1992, Watts 2003, 2005, Mills 2003), where the interactants' perspective is central to analysis, to finally gravitate towards a more balanced approach, deployed primarily in *im*politeness studies, which subsumes both the internal (the user's) and the external (the observer's) stands. The mixed approach is enacted, *inter alia*, by the socio-pragmatic approach (Culpeper 2011), which is akin to the observer's view, and the socio-interactional approach (Haugh 2015), which shows closer affinities with the user's perspective. Built on the premises of politeness studies and as a reaction to the view that incivility is only a failure in being polite, and thus it is mainly unintentional and accidental, impoliteness theory is marked for its intentionality,[2] internal diversity, and elusiveness of key

[1] One of the main claims of the discursive approach, yet not the only one, is that (im)politeness cannot be assumed to reside in linguistic forms. Watts (2002: 172), for example, stresses that "no linguistic expression can be automatically considered an example of politeness". This view is in tune with what was earlier expressed by Fraser and Nolen (1981: 96) who noted that "no sentence is inherently polite or impolite" and that "it is not expressions themselves but the conditions under which they are used that determines the judgement of politeness".

[2] Impoliteness was seen as intentional action in the early publications, mainly by Bousfield (2008). In more recent accounts, most scholars assume that impoliteness may be either intentional or non-intentional (e.g., Culpeper 2011, Terkourafi 2005).

terms and methodology. The multitude of theoretical approaches to verbal impoliteness makes it impossible to talk about a single impoliteness theory; any analysis follows a select school of research and the tenets thereof.

(Im)politeness is widely discussed in pragmatics, yet it is relatively rare and novel in the context of addresses.[3] The discursive approach to (im)politeness has struck a chord with Clyne et al. (2009: 25), who draws on Watts (2003), and Vismans (2019), who relies in turn on Clyne et al. (2009). Both publications champion the presumption of discursive practices and rightly see the meaning of address terms emerging from meaning negotiation conducted by the interactants themselves through a "discursive struggle" (Watts 2003: 9) rather than from static, pre-existing semantic meaning. As Clyne et al. (2009: 25) put it: "address practices are relative and open to discursive negotiation". In Clyne et al.'s (2009: 25) line of reasoning, the margin of negotiation is limited, as "individuals enter into any interaction with a set of at least partly shared assumptions about what is appropriate behaviour in the situation at hand, based on their knowledge about the world, their partly shared histories and cultural experiences, i.e., a (partly) shared background context". These assumptions can be validated by "examining actual interactions" on the one hand, and on the other "by asking people about their experiences and views on address practices, as members of particular speech communities or social networks" (Clyne et al. 2009: 25). Suggestions like these are in general compatible with what is sanctioned by the methods of discursive analysis, in particular by Watts et al. (1992), Watts (2003) and Mills (2003); however, the methods are not unproblematic, as will be demonstrated below.

[3] Whilst Zwicky (1974: 787) distinguished calls (whose aim is to catch attention, occurring in sentence-initial position) and addresses (whose position is other than sentence-initial) as two subtypes of vocatives, the terms addresses, terms or forms of address used here will encompass both calls and addresses in Zwicky's sense. As Zwicky admits himself, the function of address is more general than calls and "all addresses are usable as calls" (1974: 791).

The discursive approach to (im)politeness (LPRG 2011), which represents the second wave in (im)politeness theories[4] and is also known as impoliteness1, first-order politeness or emic (im)politeness,[5] i.e., one which takes an internal view (the user's view), is promoted *inter alia* by Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992), Eelen (2001: 252), Watts (2003, 2005), Locher (2004), Mills (2003, 2011), Locher and Watts (2005), and Geyer (2008). It criticises the etic view (the second-order politeness, impoliteness2, the external analyst's view), i.e., the metalinguistic evaluation conceived of by an external observer, as it "inevitably reproduces the researcher's own preconceptions" (Geyer 2008: 11). While the discursive approach has some undeniable contribution to the development of im/politeness studies, e.g., drawing researchers' attention to laymens' evaluations, focusing on long stretches of discourse that are above speech acts[6] level, drifting away from universal, pre-conceptual norms and top-down analyses, centring on hearer's perspective, embedding it within the context of a Community of Practice (CoP)[7], etc., it has some severe limitations, particularly as regards its methodology. Kádár and Haugh (2013: 40) voice a concern that the first-order impoliteness favours, in fact, the analytical perspective of a researcher while trying to conceptualise the im/politeness of

[4] The first wave is the Brown and Levinson's (1987[1978]) theory of politeness as well as publications preceding it, i.e., Searle (1969), Lakoff (1973), Grice (1975), Leech (1983) (see Grainger 2011: 169–172, Culpeper 2011: 397, Bączkowska 2013).

[5] These terms do not stand for exactly the same concepts, but their meanings considerably overlap. The terms emic and etic were first proposed by Pike (1954) and they originally come from the terms phonemic and phonetic. First- vs second-order politeness, in turn, are terms originally used by Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992) and popularised by Eelen (2001), Watts (2003) and Grainger (2011).

[6] Werkhofer (2005: 171) even holds that politeness may be built up over several turns and thus it runs counter to what he calls the "mentalistic approach" focusing on what the hearer is thinking about (the "within the head" approach).

[7] This term was proposed by Wenger (1988) who defines Community of Practice as a group of people with mutual engagement (doing things together) in a joint enterprise (a negotiated action with mutual accountability) who share repertoire (concepts, tools, styles, historical events, etc.) (Wegner 1988: 73). In earlier studies, the term *speech community* was preferred (see e.g., Lyons 1970, Labov 1972).

the lay interactants. Thus, the first-order impoliteness (i.e., the Wattsian discursive approach) is criticised for precisely the same problem as the second-order impoliteness. In order to understand the problematic methodology of the first-order impoliteness, which started the so-called discursive turn, it will now be elaborated in more detail.

In essence, the "discursive turn" (Kádár and Haugh 2013: 6, van der Bom and Mills 2015: 181) assumes that the (negotiated) meanings are affordable to the interactants (laypersons) but not to the observers. Thus, an analyst (researcher) has no or, at best, minute access to the interlocutors' understanding, perception and experiences of the negotiated meaning (Watts et al. 1992, Watts 2005, Locher and Watts 2005, Mills 2003). Admittedly, the situated interaction, i.e., ongoing in real time and seen from the participant's perspective, is the only legitimate source of information for a study of interaction (for criticism of this view, see Terkourafi 2005: 241). The cornerstone of the discursive approach is ventured by Mills as follows: "the focus is on what the language used means to the participants, including both speaker and hearer, whether the participants themselves classify the utterances as polite or impolite, how they come to make those judgements, and what information and cues inform those decisions about whether someone has been polite and impolite." (Mills 2003: 5). The discursive approach draws on the claim that im/politeness "emerges at a discourse level, over stretches of talk and across communities of speakers and hearers" (Mills 2003: 70). It arises out of instances of interaction, and thus, it is dynamic, praxis-embedded, and open to adaptation with a particular group (Watts 2005: xviii). It is interactant-informed and individual-oriented, and it instantiates social interaction, where social or CoP norms play a role. As a result, they are post-modern, as opposed to the so-called modernist take that abstracts interaction away from its participants (Watts 2005: xlii). The interactants' perspective (the lay concept) is of vital importance, and Watts (2005: xxi) argues that it is the laypersons' conceptualisations which should be the bedrock of a postmodernist approach (rather than the theoretical con-

structs of some observer-expert). Thus, the aim of politeness research should be to "locate possible realisations of polite or impolite behavior" on the one hand and to assess "how the members themselves may have evaluated that behavior" (Watts 2003: 19–20) on the other. Accordingly, it is not the linguistic expressions chosen by participants that a researcher should focus on but the process of arriving at participants' evaluations of the language utilised in interaction (see Kecskes 2017: 11). As can be seen, (im)politeness theory has shifted from pragmatic analyses (as practised by the first wave of politeness studies, represented by *inter alia* Brown and Levinson (1987[1978]) and Leech (1983), to a social stand promoted by the discursive approach, and from a theory-driven to data-driven methodology.

Mills (2003) takes a less firm stand on discursive practices than Watts as, while she does emphasise on many occasions that participants are the source of the emerging meaning and not the researcher, and thus ascribes the notion 'discursive' to (im)politeness1, she does not seem to entirely disallow the external perspective inherent in (im)politeness2: "discursive approaches *tend* to focus on first-order evaluations (Mills 2017: 15, emphasis mine), which suggests that for Mills the notion discursive, while primarily emic, is also to some extent etic. Mills (2003: 82) resorts to the idea of meta-discourse levels of analysis proposed by Taylor (1992), i.e., the intellectual meta-discourse and the practical meta-discourse. Mills holds that unlike the intellectual meta-discourse, which is the "theoretical analysis and thought", the practical meta-discourse applies to the discursive approach, which is "the thinking about what has been said previously in terms of the impact it makes on our relationships." Thus, some meta-analysis is permitted by Mills (2003), which is still conducted at the level of participants' conceptualisations but is realised through *post-hoc* reporting and evaluations. The practical meta-discourse is not an internal perspective through and through, but it is not an external one either, as the latter is typically associated with the non-participant's perspective.

Furthermore, in the introduction to the book devoted to discursive approaches to politeness (LPRG 2011: 5), she makes a disclaimer in the footnote from which it transpires that the book couches studies which inscribe in the discursive approach to varying degrees, that the discursive approach is methodologically heterogeneous, and "a wide range of approaches can come within its ambit". The term discursive approach should thus "be seen as an umbrella term for a fusion of theoretical and methodological strands" (van der Bom and Mills 2015: 181). By so doing, she actually opens the possibility of an extended understanding of the term discursive, originally ascribed to (im)politeness1 only, and encourages other approaches diverting from impoliteness1, possibly also those encompassing impoliteness2, at least to some degree. In her later publication, Mills (2017: 17) expounds her "modified discursive approach", which she dubs the discursive-materialistic approach[8]. Mills (2017: 17) maintains that this new version belongs to the third-wave approach (the emic-etic one). Haugh and Culpeper (2018) also include this modified version in the third-wave approaches, yet they see it as the closest one to the user's perspective (i.e., strongly emic-oriented). It seems that the originally somewhat radical stand represented by the discursive approach (particularly epitomised by Watts' argumentation) has evolved and relaxed conceptually. However, as shown below, it still does not cope well with adjusting the more flexible definitional framework to the invariably rigid methodological requirements.

The initial popularity garnered by the discursive approach was dented by its critique, particularly by the new approaches to im/politeness collectively called the third wave of im/politeness research (Terkourafi 2005, Locher 2006, Spencer-Oatey 2008, Garcés-Conejos Blitvich 2010, Kádár and Haugh 2013). These are approaches to im/politeness, which assume an intersection of the internal (emic) and external (etic, impoliteness2 or second-order politeness) perspectives, i.e., the interactants'

[8] In this version, she takes into account ideological and class-based divisions and analyses how they influence the interaction style of an individual (Mills 2017: 19-20).

and the researcher's take. The mid-way stand, dubbed 'interactional approach' by Grainger (2011), 'integrative pragmatics' by Culpeper and Haugh (2014: 266) or 'pragmatic-discursive approach' by Félix-Brasdefer (2015), is represented by a number of (im)politeness researchers, such as Haugh (2007), Culpeper (2011), Grainger (2011), Kádár and Haugh (2013), Culpeper and Haugh (2014), Félix-Brasdefer (2015). The perspective combining the emic (the user-participant) core approach, dubbed discursive by Watts and Mills *sensu stricto*, with the etic (the observer-analyst) perspective considerably drifts away from the original concept of discursiveness as proposed in particular by Watts et al. (1992), Watts (2005), and to some extent also by Mills (2003, for discussion, see below).

The original term discursive approach, rapidly gaining popularity, is, all too often, overused and overinterpreted or even misinterpreted (van der Bom and Mills 2015: 180). It relies on the internal real-time evaluations by interactants themselves rather than *post-factum* measures. The definition of the discursive approach is stated by van der Bom and Mills (2015: 181): "the discursive approach is not simply a critique, but constitutes a mode of analysis itself"; thus, it should necessarily entail its methodology of the inner perspective. Hence audio-recording, interviews, role plays, focus groups and questionnaires for participants are adopted to elicit the inner perspective (Mills 2003: 45, van der Hom and Mills 2015: 188). However, for these elicitation methods, Mills was criticised by Terkourafi (2005). According to Terkourafi, administrating questionnaires and interviews is, in fact, resorting to *post-factum* measures. Kádár (2013: 117) also expresses critical thoughts on such elicitation methods. He claims that the subjective perspective reported by an interactant involves a retrospective narrative and thus is no longer a direct account of the inner perspective but of a story seen as if from the outside. Kádár (2013: 171) notes that "even those who originally participated in an interaction become semi-observers when they narrate and reflect on an event retrospectively". Moreover, when they report on an interaction, they may intentionally bias their account, making it more euphemistic if they

are aware that their abusive verbal behaviour is morally unacceptable. This is also frequently the case of other participants' accounts, who do not take active participation in an interaction, the so-called "onlookers" (Kádár 2013: 172). The *post-hoc* methods employed to elicit the participants' views thus do not seem to do justice to the first-order impoliteness approach. In fact, Mills (2003: 45) herself admits that in the case of *post-hoc* reporting, "it is getting no nearer in essence to what really went on, as it is simply another text, (…) only this time with the analyst". Put differently, the participant also has the status of the analyst for Mills. As most scholars (for details see, e.g., Kádár and Haugh 2013: 87) identify the analyst with the external perspective associated with second-order impoliteness (the researcher or a non-participating analyst), rather than the (meta-) participant's retrospective accounts, the mixed (third-wave) approaches that permit internal and external assessments are not aligned with the discursive approach built on impoliteness1 (and analyst-participant) only. In fact, they are often critical of it (cf. e.g., Terkourafi's frame-based approach 2005, Culpeper's socio-pragmatic approach 2011, Haugh's interactional approach 2014, etc.). Mill's 'analyst', who resorts to (Taylor's) 'practical meta-discourse' while reporting on an interaction s/he participated in, is an external participant (called etic by Kádár and Haugh, 2013: 87) but only on the first-order impoliteness level as s/he has not the status of an external observer (like the research or even the layperson do).

Given the theory of discursive practices, as promoted by *inter alia* Watts et al. (1992), Locher (2004), Watts (2005), and Mills (2003), and its convincing criticism, a description of any film discourse translation in relation to (im)politeness is never an instantiation of solely first-order impoliteness analysis. Firstly, the researcher describing a translated version focuses on the decisions taken by the translators. The rendition of the original dialogue lists already forms the external analyst's perspective. Additionally, the researcher's perspective is mapped onto the translator's perspective, and thus the external perspective occurs twice inasmuch as both measures are *post-factum*, meta-

linguistic, and filtered through the interpretations of the analyst-translator and analyst-researcher. Secondly, what the analyst-translator and analyst-researcher have access to is only the actors' lines, which are not naturally occurring data but a constructed dialogue, an "artistic verisimilitude" (Lakoff and Tannen 1979: 581). Therefore, one cannot talk about genuine discursive struggle or (im)politeness negotiation. All the lines actors utter are previously written specifically for the purpose of a film by (a) scriptwriter(s), then learnt by heart by actors, and next filmed, often after a number of rehearsals and trials. The whole process is pre-planned and highly controlled and the language is often multiple-authored, less spontaneous than in natural speech and simplified, mainly prosodically and syntactically (Bednarek 2019, Bączkowska 2022b). Even if we consider film discourse to be a convincing imitation of natural discourse, and expand the notion of the emic level to encompass it, the analysis can, at best, be emic-etic.

Considering the definition of the notion *emic* originally proposed by Pike (1954) and further expounded especially by the third wave of (im)politeness theorists, to which this paper adheres, particularly by Kádár and Haugh (2013: 94–96), some degree of the emic element is also present in this analysis. In line with these authors, the emic level is understood as underlying expectancies regarding evaluations of what is conceptualised[9] as socially (in)appropriate by the insiders across a CoP, which stem from institutionalised norms (see also Eelen 2001: 76). As a result, the analysis proposed in this paper is primarily an etic one, certainly on the methodological level, yet, on the emic level, it makes reference to social and cultural conventions relevant to the system of behaviour of insiders, which define (im)polite behaviour and allow participants (and viewers) to

[9] The user conceptualisation of social norms of moral behaviour forms the first-order (im)politeness perspective, while their interpretation (i.e. their understanding based on actual realisations in an interaction) by an observer belongs to the second-order (im)politeness perspective (Kádár and Haugh 2013: 104).

build some expectancies of moral verbal behaviour (see Kádár and Haugh 2013: 94–96).

On a more practical note, politeness can be expressed by choosing relevant addresses or through lexical choices that are evaluated as polite in a particular language or a speech community, i.e., ones that encode social distance and respect (titles, formal forms). Along with these, diminutives and hypocoristic forms may also encode politeness if utilised among interactants already on informal terms. On the other hand, impoliteness or the wish to offend a target may be signalled by resorting to terms of address indicative of close relations when they address interactants one has only formal relationships with, i.e., by breaching social distance, or, even worse, by deploying offensive address terms, especially those deriving from pejorative and emotion-laden nouns or adjectives (e.g., *thicko*, *fatty*, *pig*, etc.).

3. Forms of address in Polish

The widely known and often criticised (e.g., Slobin 1963; Stone 1977: 491–493; Braun 1988; Hill 2014) division of languages into those using the formal (*V*, from Latin *vos*) versus the informal (*T*, from Latin *tu*) addresses proposed by Brown and Gilman (1960), applies to Polish only partially (Bączkowska 2019, Bączkowska 2022a). As will be shown below, in Polish, the forms of address comprise not only *V*, *T*, but also *P* (*pan*), and even occasionally *O* (*oni*) (Bączkowska 2019 and references therein).

***Tu* (*T*).** The informal *T* address may be realised by the Polish *ty* ("you"), yet other forms are equally frequent (or even more frequent) as Polish is a pro-drop language. For example, verbal addresses (Rusiecki 2008) are allowed wherein verb endings coding the 2nd person singular take over the function of *T* marking (mostly *-esz*, e.g., *piszesz* meaning "you write/are writing", example 1). Another option is resorting to verbless constructions (example 2). The use of *ty* ("you") is, in fact, burdened with some axiological charge, either positive (example 3) or negative (exam-

ple 4, 5), or is typical of slang (example 5), and then it remains relatively neutral.

(1) *Co rob**isz**?* ("What are **you** doing?")
(2) *Ty(Pani) z Polski?* ("You [+informal/(formal), +sing.] Ø from Poland?")
(3) *Nie jestem przystojny, ale ty jesteś.* ["I'm not handsome but you are"]
(4) *Ej, ty, uważaj co mówisz.* ["Hey, you, watch out what you are saying"]
(5) *Na litość boską, co ty tam robisz?* ("For God's sake, what are you doing there?")
(6) *Ty, masz fajki?* ("You [+voc.], do you have ciggies?")

***Vos* (*V*).** Whilst the *V* option is practically unused in contemporary Polish, it must be mentioned that it was present in the past, specifically from the middle of the 18th century till the first world war, and later when it was unsuccessfully reintroduced in the communist times in official language following the words *obywatelu* ("citizen" in the vocative) and *towarzyszu* ("comrade" in the vocative) (example 7; Stone 1977: 493, Łaziński 2006: 441–3, Huszcza 2006: 11). There are also contexts wherein the official *V* equivalent is intertwined in a sentence with unofficial 3rd person plural (example 8) or, less seldom, with 3rd person singular (example 9). Both cases create a sense of strong impoliteness encoded by the singular form. The contexts deploying *V* sound old-fashioned, and, as mentioned above, they are no longer, or very rarely, used in contemporary Polish. They are, however, common in some other Slavic languages, such as Russian or Bulgarian (Sosnowski 2015: 323).

(7) *Towarzyszu, dokąd idzie**cie**?* ("Comrade, where are **you** [2nd pers. pl.] going?")
(8) *Czy wyście to napis**ali**?* ("Did you [2nd pers. pl.] write [3rd pers. pl.] it?") (after Stone 1977: 493)
(9) *Czy wyście to napisał?* ("Did you [2nd pers. pl.] write [2nd pers. sing.] it?) (after Stone 1977: 493)

Both *V* addresses discussed above and *O* addresses mentioned below substantiate *pluralis maiestaticus* (Sikora 1993), wherein an addressee is invoked by words in plural, either in the 2nd person (*V*) or 3rd person (*O*).

***Oni* (*O*).** The form that Stone (1977) calls *O* (from Polish *oni* meaning "they") encodes *oni/one* ("they" + masculine and "they" + feminine), i.e., the 3rd person plural when addressing 2nd person singular. The *O* form is not widely used today in Polish (Zaręba 1974: 378–388), except for some humorous contexts (especially when talking to children, example 10). The *O* addresses have been noted in Czech (Kretzenbacher et al. 2013), where it is still used today (originally a calque of the German *Sie*).

(10) *Gdzie* ***są*** *moje małe* ***córeczki****?* ["Where are [3rd pers. pl.] my little daughters [+plural, +diminutive]?]

***Pan* (*P*)**. The form *P* stands for *pan* (masculine singular, example 11), *pani* (feminine singular, example 12) or *Państwo* (plural), which is a formal address. Originally a noun meaning a Polish landowner, landlord, or a superior person (Klemensiewicz 1946: 34–35), which appeared already in the 13th century (Łaziński 2006: 23), *pan* has changed its status into a pronoun (Klemensiewicz 1946, Pisarkowa 1979: 6–7, Stone 1981, Sikora 1993: 300, Huszcza 2006: 97). The form *pan* replaced the *V* form, which started to be phased out by *pan* in the language of the gentry in the second half of the 16th and the 17th century and became popular in urban areas in the 19th century. The *V* address was gradually ousted and marginalised, frequently utilised only in contacts between the middle class and people of lower social status, typically addressing servants (Sikora 1993). This shift lasted until 1945, yet in a rural context, it was still noted in the '70s (at least in the south of Poland), where it was a sign of respect towards the addressee (Sikora 1993: 299–303). The *P* form is typically deployed in Polish with the first name (example 12), and it is considered impolite when patterns with

the surname, for example, *Panie Kowalski* (example 13; Miodek 1991). Interestingly, *pan/i* can also be intertwined with the first name, which in Polish marks informal/intimate relationships or shortening social distance (example 14) with polite overtones or with the verb ending of 2nd person singular to mark informality (Sikora 1993: 300) and an impolite tone of disrespect (Łaziński 2006) typical of colloquial Polish (Sikora 1993: 300) (example 15). Finally, *pan/i* may co-occur with *proszę* ("please") to form the phrase *proszę pana/pani,* which is a polite and formal form of address that disallows co-occurrence with first or last name and thus makes it sound less personal (example 16).

(11) *Gdzie pan mieszka?* ["Where do you [+formal, +singular] live [3rd pers. sing.]?"]
(12) *Pani Mario, proszę do mnie jutro zadzwonić.* ("Marry [+formal, +sing.], please call me tomorrow.")
(13) *Pani Kowalska, proszę do mnie jutro zadzwonić*. ("Mrs Kowalska [+formal, +sing.], please call me tomorrow.")
(14) *Marysiu, zrobi mi pani kawę?* ("Marry [+diminutive], will you [+formal] make coffee for me?)
(15) *Masz pan zapałki?* ("Do you [+formal, +sing.] have [+2nd pers. sing, +informal] matches?)
(16) *Proszę pani, proszę do mnie zadzwonić jutro*. ("(Dear) madam [+polite], please call me tomorrow.")

Taken together, the Polish terms of address, theoretically, may take one of the four forms: *V*, *T*, *P*, *O*. However, the *V* form is old fashioned, and the *O* form is uncommon; thus, the most typical forms of address in Polish are *T* for informal terms and *P* for formal.

4. Research assumptions and results

4.1. Preliminary assumptions and research aims

The addresses presented here were analysed only in the context of dialogues (dilogues or polylogues, Kerbrat-Orechioni 2004) when address terms were directed towards ratified (Goffman

1981) addressees; thus, addresses directed to overhearers and eavesdroppers were ignored. Furthermore, the analysis describes translators' choices; this necessarily entails the researcher's interpretation of translators' interpretations. Accordingly, the study primarily investigates (im)politeness2, viz., the external perspective. The analysis at both levels (the researcher's and the translators') is *post-factum* and relies, on the one hand, on some theoretical frameworks of how (im)politeness should be expressed in Polish, allowing for the Polish-specific linguistic and sociocultural (im/politeness) norms, and on the other, on how translation should proceed (in particular which translation and/or subtitling strategies/techniques to employ).

The study presented in what follows revolves around several issues regarding the translation of various forms of address across English and Polish, which are embedded in the more general aspect of (im)politeness. The main research question is which subtitling version, the amateurs' or the students', is more polite and which is more impolite. This will be checked by making reference to the conventions of Polish addresses (discussed in Section 3). The two non-professional renditions will also be compared with the Polish professional subtitling version to answer the question which non-professional version is closer to the professional one. Since the professional version will be a reference point, it will also be checked whether it is marked for politeness embedded in the Polish culture- and language-specificity. Some references will occasionally be made to the original version to determine whether any cultural or linguistic transfer from the film's original language can be observed. Addresses in the context of (im)politeness will be analysed on the basis of (i) the Polish form of polite address *proszę pana* ("Sir") (section 4.1.1), (ii) the use of marked *ty* ("you") encoding a positive or a negative axiological charge (section 4.1.2), (iii) the expressions of endearment (4.1.3), and (iv) the deployment of the formal address *pan/i* vs the informal first name (FN), and the formal *pan/i* vs the formal first name plus last name (FN+LN) (section 4.1.4).

4.2. Material and methods

The corpus the study is based on is ca. 25 thousand words in size, and it consists of two subcorpora: non-professional subtitles produced by sophomore students of English philology (2nd year students of MA studies), and amateur subtitles retrieved from the web (www.napisy.info). Both translations are non-professional, yet the students have a wide background in cultural studies, linguistics and translation theory, which they receive in the course of their university studies, whereas amateurs usually do not have such a theoretical background but often have a great deal of practical experience in film translation. The students' translations constitute a part of the Learner Corpus of Subtitles project (the LeCoS project) conducted between the years 2010 and 2015, which overall involved over one hundred students and is ca. 100,000 tokens in size (Bączkowska 2015a, 2015b, 2016, 2019, 2022).

On the other hand, the amateur translations are written by fansubbers, most probably by the HATAK group, presumably the oldest and best-known Polish fansubbing group. Fansubbing is a consumer-driven activity of subtitling by fans for other fans. Initially, it arose in the Japanese anime subculture in the US, where anime films were considered inappropriate content-wise (containing sexual and violent overtones) and ultimately banned from the US film market. Consequently, informal communities of amateur subtitlers started to be formed in the '80s (O'Hagan 2009). Fansubbing is usually conducted by fan-based communities consisting of people, either loosely gathered with *ad-hoc* norms or well-defined groups with workflow, internal protocols and subtitling guidelines, who are usually without formal training in subtitling, work without pecuniary remuneration using unauthorised copies of films and, more often, TV series, and frequently breaching authorship rights (see Massida 2020 for more details).

The HATAK group declares on their website (grupahatak.pl) that they provide translations where, unlike in the case of voice-over, nothing important is omitted in their subtitles. This appro-

ach contradicts the general rules of subtitling, particularly the prescription of text reduction by around 30 % – 40 % in subtitles (Tomaszkiewicz 2006: 113). The realisation of the assumption expressed by the HATAK group on their website is visible in the data at hand, wherein the reduction of the original text is relatively small and amounts to around 14 %, which compared to the students' versions (ca. 30 %), and the professional subtitler (ca. 40 %) is relatively low.

The LeCoS (Le) subcorpus used for this analysis consists of three independent translations of the film *What Women Want* (aired in 2000, directed by Nancy Meyer) and three amateurs' renderings (Fansubs) downloaded from the web. The students had a training session on how to subtitle in line with the generally accepted subtitling rules (e.g., considering the so-called time and space constraints), along with a series of lectures on translation and subtitling strategies. They used the free online Subtitle Workshop software (v. 6.0; http://subworkshop.sourceforge.net/) to write their subtitles, which was installed prior to the subtitling sessions in the university computer lab. At the time of the corpus collection, only three fansubbers' versions of this particular film were available, so to balance the corpus, three students' translations were randomly selected for the present study. Altogether, six full versions of the subtitles were collected. The non-professional versions, the professional translation retrieved from the DVD version, and the original dialogues were all stored on the Sketch Engine (https://www.sketchengine.eu), a commercial corpus management system. All data were retrieved from the corpora automatically with the use of the CQL[10] that allows batch retrieval, i.e., categories of data, such as all instances of verbs in the second person singular or all forms of the *P* address (regarding declinations, plurality, gender).

The lexical level of analysis of the translations is enriched by the examination of contexts, both at the speech act level and

[10] Corpus Query Language is partially based on regex and allows extracting classes of words or phrases based on, *inter alia*, PoS tags (for more details, see Bączkowska 2020).

beyond it, to secure precision in the study at hand. Thus, the investigation presented here subscribes to the context-dependent evaluations of translations. Each context containing a form of address was copied to an Excel spreadsheet and tagged for endearment (politeness), positive vs negative marked *ty* (politeness, impoliteness), and for the use of *pan/i*. Larger contexts were found in the film and carefully rehearsed to gain further contextual clues, including nonverbal ones.

4.3. Research results

4.3.1. *Proszę pana* and P+LN

In Polish, politeness can be achieved by leveraging the address *proszę pana* (lit. "I please you, sir"). In the LeCoS data, this address has 9 occurrences (1 in Le1[11], 5 in Le2 and 3 in Le3), while in the fansubbers' 3, and it was only applied by one person (Fa2) (Figure 1). This speaks for more polite forms in the students' translation in our data than the amateurs' subtitles under study.

,580 --> 00:07:41,875 Tak. Dziękuję Ci! 115 00:07:41,917 --> 00:07:44,628 Proszę Pana , to było inspirujące 116 00:07:44,712 --> 00:07:46,630 Wiem 117 00:07:48,
:30,817 - Ale płuca... 74 00:05:30,900 --> 00:05:34,738 - Wspaniałego dnia, proszę Pana . - Wzajemnie. 75 00:05:37,365 --> 00:05:40,202 Spocznij. 76 00:05:54,467
--> 00:07:41,875 To randka. Dziękuje. 115 00:07:41,917 --> 00:07:44,628 Proszę Pana , To było inspirujące. 116 00:07:44,712 --> 00:07:46,630 Wiem. 117 00:07:48
31:21,371 Ja ? Nic. 488 00:31:21,455 --> 00:31:25,709 - Jesteś pewna ? - Tak, proszę Pana . 489 00:31:29,297 --> 00:31:31,215 Wiesz co ? Chyba się dzisiaj przejdę. 490
--> 00:31:34,552 - Trochę świeżego powietrza dobrze mi zrobi. - Miłego dnia, proszę Pana ... 491 00:31:34,636 --> 00:31:38,598 Ze swoim świetnym tyłeczkiem
- Uważaj jak chodzisz. 494 00:31:44,605 --> 00:31:46,857 - Wszystko dobrze, proszę Pana ? - Dobrze. Nic mi nie jest. 495 00:31:53,031 --> 00:31:56,701 Czy wyłączyłam
05:30,817 - Niezły gwizdek. 74 00:05:30,900 --> 00:05:34,738 - Miłego dnia, proszę pana . - Nawzajem.. 75 00:05:37,365 --> 00:05:40,202 Spokojnie . 76 00:05:54,467
--> 00:07:41,875 Tak, randka. Dzięki. 115 00:07:41,917 --> 00:07:44,628 Proszę pana , to było świetne. 116 00:07:44,712 --> 00:07:46,630 Wiem . 117 00:07:48,341
620 Dzień dobry dziewczęta. 155 00:09:32,704 --> 00:09:34,914 Dzień dobry, proszę pana . 156 00:09:34,998 --> 00:09:37,959 Hej, czy ktoś wie dlaczego zebranie
:31,299 --> 00:31:34,552 - Potrzebuję świeżego powietrza. - Udanego dnia, proszę pana 491 00:31:34,636 --> 00:31:38,598 Z takim tyłeczkiem ! 492 00:31:38,682 -->

Figure 1
Concordances with the Polish formal address
proszę pana in students' subtitles

In the fansubbing corpus, an interesting example of the use of *pan* ("sir") is illustrated by example 17, wherein the formality of address is encoded twice: first by the address *pan* (+genitive, +possessive) and then by *pan* +LN (+vocative). Other renditions involved either the possessive form of *pan* or the vocative form (in the nominative case). Using CQL formula (with the distance

[11] "Le" stands for learner's translation while "Fa" for fansubbing rendering.

between *pan* and LN up to 20 words in between), however, allowed me to tease out only one example with double formality encoding in the Fansubbing corpus as well as in the LeCoS data and the professional subtitles. Strong formality and politeness are thus uncommon in the data at hand. As noticed by Bączkowska (2022: 86), however, the address consisting of *pan*+LN (without the double repetition of *pan* as mentioned above) is relatively common in both non-professional versions (with a slightly higher result for fansubbers).

(17) **Pańskie** [+3rd per. sg., +formal, +possessive] włosy wyglądają dzisiaj naprawdę dobrze, **panie Marshall** [+3rd per. sg. + LN, +formal]. [Fa2-00:35:03] ("Your hair looks really nice today, Mr Marshall")

4.3.2. Marked *ty*

As Polish is a pro-drop language, the pronoun in the nominative is habitually omitted. When it is purposefully used, it has an emphatic function. The number of occurrences of the pronoun *ty* ("you") in the nominative is illustrated in Figure 2.

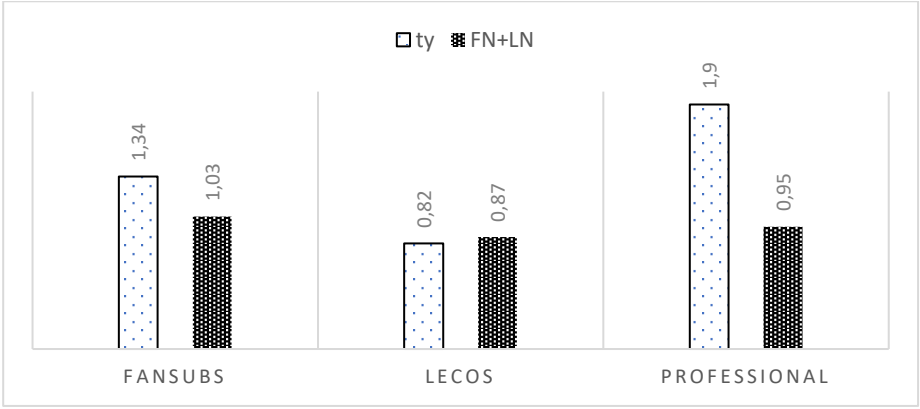

Figure 2
The incidence of *ty* versus FN+LN against all words in the three subcorpora

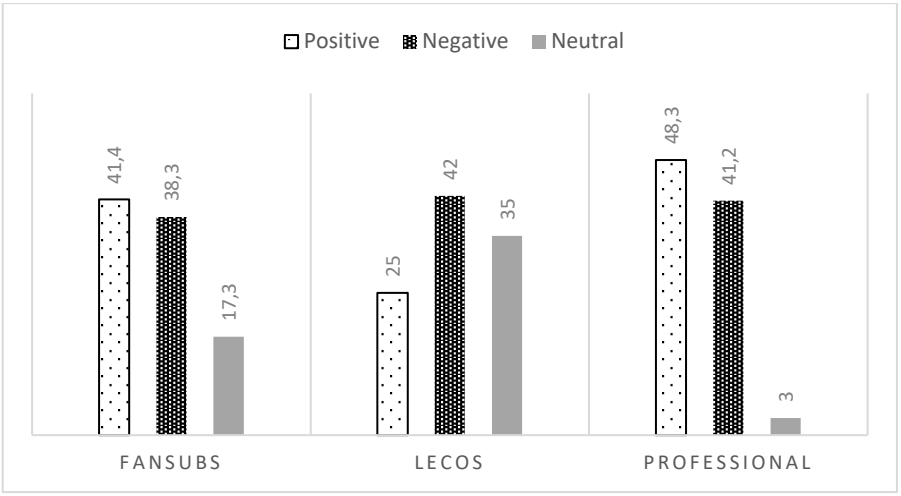

Figure 3
The axiological charge of *ty*

Marked *ty* is deployed much more often by amateur subtitlers than by student subtitlers. Students tend to omit *ty* altogether or to resort to FN+LN. Almost all the instances in the learner corpus contain this form of address with the capital letter (*Ty*), which is a very polite form. Interestingly, students' renditions of *you* into marked *ty/Ty* appear primarily in negative contexts to criticise or express irony (Figure 3). Impoliteness is thus more often expressed by dint of marked *ty* in LeCoS data and professional translation. On the other hand, fansubbers and the professional translator resorted to *ty* also (in fact, most often) to encode positive contexts, and, in this respect, the amateurs' rendering bears more similarity to the professional translation. A Chi-square test shows that the differences among the two non-professional and the professional subtitles in terms of axiological charge are statistically significant (x2 (2, N = 159) = 11.28, $p < .05$).

It can be observed that marked *ty* occurs more seldom in the non-professional translations where the number of first name addresses (mostly *Nick* and *Darcy*, the two main characters) is high. The data were also searched for contexts where *ty* and *Nick* occurred in one utterance, yet no instances were found.

This lends support to the tentative observation that whenever there was emphatic *ty* occurring in the nominative, the first name was not present in the same utterance. Some examples from the fansubbers' corpus are shown below (examples 18–21).

(18) *I co* ***ty*** *wi****esz*** *o związkach?* ("And what do **you** know about relationships?") [Fa1-01:20:03]
(19) *Co* ***ty*** *robisz? Musimy iść.* ("What are **you** doing? We have to go.") [Fa1-00:34:34]
(20) ***Ty*** *mówisz po wenusjańsku* ("**You** speak Venusian") [Fa1-00:49:48]
(21) *Chcę, żebyś* ***ty*** *to wziął.* ("I want **you** to take it") [Fa1-01:39:57]

4.3.3. Endearment – hypocoristic forms

Endearments are types of forms of address that "mark a bond of closeness and affection" (Biber et al. 1999: 1110). They play a unique role in maintaining and reinforcing relationships, "usually marking a bond of closeness and affection between close family members, sexual partners, and other 'favourite' people" (Biber et al. 1999: 1110).

In the original dialogue, one endearment addressee is used, which is *honey* (11 times, once also *hon*). The address *sweetie* also appears but only once, and it is reserved for the context with Nick, the father, talking to his teenage daughter (Alex). On the other hand, *honey* is employed more often with adult addressees, mostly Nick's lover Lola, Nick's cleaning lady talking (thinking, in fact) to herself addressing Nick, but also when Nick or his ex-wife (Gigi) addresses Alex. Interestingly enough, in the Polish amateur subtitles, two address terms are observable, *skarbie* ("baby", lit. "treasure", +voc., 23 times) and *kochanie* ("honey", +voc., 11 times), which occur equally often. *Skarbie* is essentially present when Nick talks to Lola, while *kochanie* is reserved for all the other contexts (talks between adults, a talk between Nick and his daughter Alex, and between Alex and her mother, Gigi). In the students' translations, on the other hand, there are six options: *laleczko* ("dolly" +dim., +voc., once), *słonko*

("sun" +dim., +voc., twice), *skarbie* ("lit. treasure",+voc., 20 times), and *kochanie* ("honey" +voc., 28 times), *moja najdroższa* ("my dearest + voc.", once), *różyczko* ("rose" +dim., +voc., once). Even when Nick makes a jibe at Alex about her being slightly chubby by calling her *pumpkin*, non-professional translators rendered it as a polite hypocoristic form of address, except for one student who resorted to *pulpet* [+voc.] ('meatball'), referring in this way to the roundish shape of the teenage (15-year-old) girl. There is a wider variety of hypocoristic forms in the students' translations. The two most common translations of *honey* and *baby* are "kochanie" and "skarbie".

Both types of non-professional translation betray symptoms of overusing hypocoristic forms relative to the professional version, with students' translations being on the top. Thus, in terms of quality (i.e., creative variants) and quantity (Figure 4), the students' translations demonstrate the most intense use of hypocoristic terms of address.

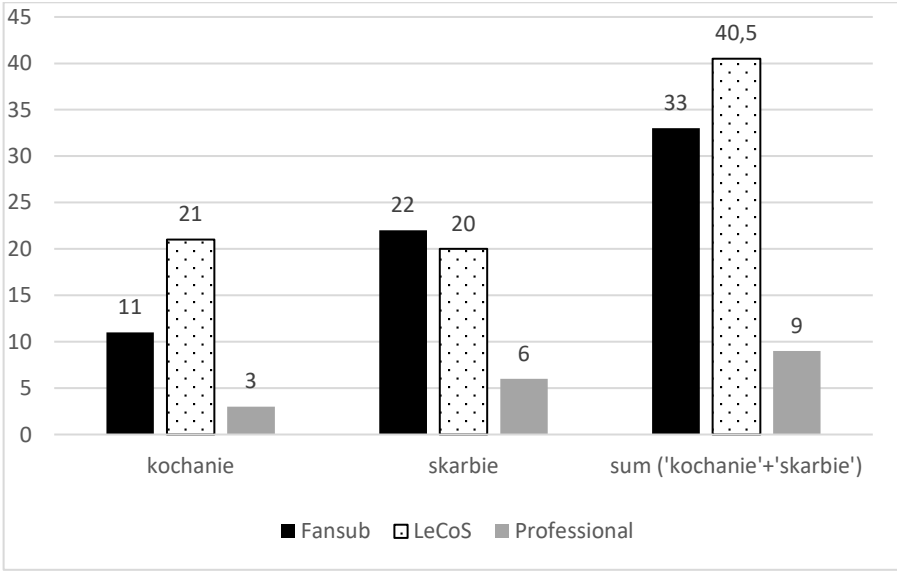

Figure 4
The incidence of the most frequent hypocoristic forms

4.3.4. *Pan/i* vs FL and *pan/i* vs FL+LN

Comparing the occurrence of FN against *pan/i* (Figure 5), it must be noted that the highest incidence of FN is observed in the fansubbing versions. Further to this, while in the students' and professional translations the number of occurrences of FN and *pan/i* is comparable, fansubbers preferred the informal forms of address encoded by first names at the cost of the formal *pan/i*. The tendency of fansubbers towards a more informal style in translation is clearly noticeable. Moreover, the occurrences of *pan/i* versus first names followed by the last name (e.g., *Nick Marshall*) demonstrate that fansubbers opted for the formal address (FL+LN), which sounds awkward in Polish and is a direct translation from American English. Students (as well as the professional translator) went for a more acceptable in Polish and a more polite form *pan/i* (Figure 6). Overall, the amateur version is the least formal of the three translations, with the formal form *pan/i* occurring least often and FN occurring predominantly; the students' version is rather formal, with a high incidence of *pan/i* and a low incidence of first names; professional translation is also formal (high *pan/i* occurrences) and is marked for a high use of names (including *pan* + LN).

A few words are in order regarding the rendering of FL+LN into Polish. While in naturally occurring encounters with participants speaking Polish, the *pan* + LN is perceived as somewhat abrasive and even disparaging (e.g., *panie Kowalski*, Eng.: *Mr Kowalski*), in film translation, it does not strike so much as impolite. The reason might reside in the fact that the more polite version thereof would be a combination of *pan* + FN, that is the use of the first name instead of the last name (e.g., *panie Piotrze*, *Eng.* ? *Mr Peter*), but foreign first names are resistant to vocative cases in Polish (? *panie Nicku*) and with the Polish inflections responsible for the vocative case (*-u*) they sound both funny and untypical. They also sound unnatural and could be perceived as impolite when used in the nominative, i.e., without the Polish inflections (e.g., *pani Kate* or ? *panie Nick*). While deciding what is and what is not a polite form of address and how to translate

addresses, it is thus essential to map them onto the sociocultural expectations and language conventions of the target language. Given these arguments, the Polish translation of *Mr Marshall* as *Panie Marshall* is probably the best option.

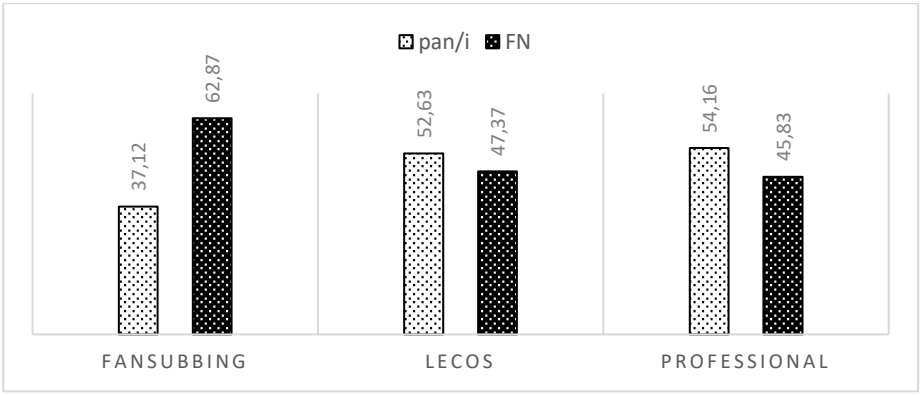

Figure 5
Corrected[12] incidence of *pan/i* versus first names across three subcorpora in percentages

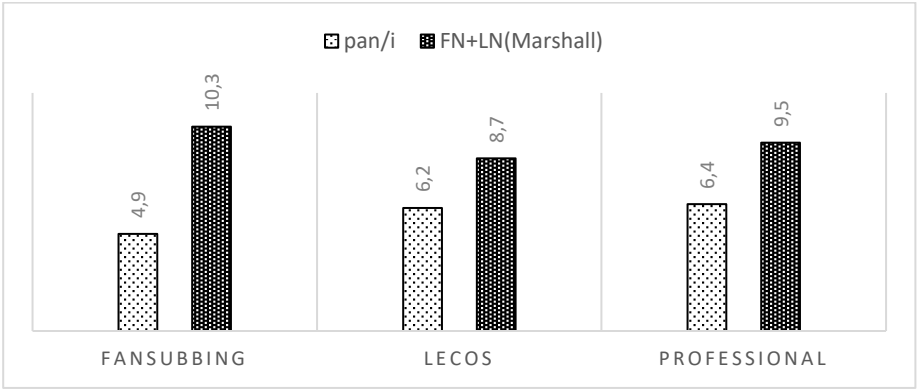

Figure 6
Incidence of *pan/I* versus first names and last name across three subcorpora in percentages

[12] The occurrences are corrected in the sense that the values for non-professional translations are divided by three to make them comparable with the single professional translation.

4. Discussion and conclusions

Given the analysis presented above, a clear picture emerges. The amateurs promote American addresses, regardless of shifts in (im)politeness it entailed when translated into Polish. Following American conventions of addresses, fansubbers resorted to the first name (e.g., "Nick") or the full name (FN+LN, e.g., "Nick Marshall") twice as often as the formal form *pan/i* (e.g., "panie Marshall"). Fansubbers also frequently adhered to the informal *ty* address. The FN and the *T* form employed by amateurs speak for a more informal translation offered by fansubbers. The Polish system of etiquette does not allow using the *T* form with interlocutors one is not on friendly terms with, so the amateurs' renderings are closer to the American culture and far from the Polish terms of address conveying politeness. The amateurs' renderings thus demonstrate a tendency to foreignisation, i.e., adhering to the address system of the source language and culture (American) and not the target language and culture (Polish). This violates the politeness rules in Polish and retains the sense of otherness. Such an approach to subtitling resonates with what Nornes (1999) claims, namely, that by retaining otherness, the subtitler enables the secondary audience (i.e., one from a different country) to experience the foreign. Nornes (1999) calls for norm-defying practices in subtitling and discarding measures that lead to smoothing over the original text and making it softer for the target audience. As observed in another study (Bączkowska 2021), fansubbers who translated the subtitles under investigation seem to adhere to this claim.

On the other hand, students tapped into the formal *pan/i* form more often than the first name, which resembles the professional translation. Compared to amateurs' renderings, they also capitalised on the *P* address instead of the full name or last name address. The form *P*+LN, as already mentioned, is not considered polite in Polish, yet it can be heard in some areas of Poland, mainly rural areas and the old Prussian lands (Miodek 1980: 178, 1991: 34, Huszcza 2006: 107). Whilst it is not a polite form and widely used in Polish, it seems to be a better choice

than using the full name address (e.g., "Nick Marshall"), which in turn is an unusual, odd and generally unacceptable way of addressing people in Polish. The FN+LN form was avoided by the students as much as the informal *ty* address, and if the *T* form was chosen, it conveyed mostly negative overtones. The students seemed to adhere to the rules of the Polish address system to a greater extent than amateurs. Moreover, the hypocoristic addresses are richer and more frequent, which is indicative of a tendency to convey politeness. The address *proszę pana/i*, the polite term of address, occurs in the LeCoS data but only marginally in the fansubbing data, which also speaks for students' tendency to use polite and more formal terms of address.

The obvious limitation of this investigation is the number of translations involved, which spanned three amateur renderings, three students' versions and one professional subtitled DVD version. Therefore, this study should not be generalised to evaluate the nature of subtitling *per se*. However, to the best of my knowledge, studies comparing professional, fansubbing and students' subtitles, focusing on impoliteness, have been scarce; thus, the analysis presented here is a small-scale yet, hopefully, a valuable contribution to the general investigation of both non-professional AVT and impoliteness studies.

Overall, from the analyses presented in this paper, it can be concluded that the students' subtitles appear to be more formal and more polite than those prepared by amateurs inasmuch as the students avail of the Polish system of politeness etiquette more often than the amateurs, who follow the rules for addresses in American English.

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