



Selected Orthographic and Phonetic Issues in Silesian Translations of World Literary Classics (A Textual Analysis)*

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ABSTRACT: This study examines orthographic and phonetic variation in contemporary translations of world literature into Silesian. The study is purely textological in character and does not involve the analysis of authentic spoken data. The analysis of orthographic features in the authorial idiolects of Silesian translators was carried out using a custom-designed matrix for the evaluating of several dozen selected features. The structure and layout of the matrix were based on a preliminary, original analysis of the linguistic form of contemporary Silesian translations. The matrix includes the verification of several dozen orthographic and phonetic features, including graphemic system, conjoined vs. separate spelling conventions, spelling of internationalisms and German loanwords, intraword assimilation and palatalisation, ellipses and contractions, spelling of other phonetic combinations. The analysis identifies practices involving self-correction in individual idiolects, as well as inconsistent and unclear forms employed by different translators. A comparative study of seven idiolects (Z. Kadłubek,

M. Syniawa, J. Ciurlok, G. Kulik, M. Melon, R. Szyma, G. Buchalik) also revealed divergences between them. Phonetic differences were found to arise largely from the influence of local dialects on each writer's idiolect. This is evident in the idiolect of Buchalik from Żory, who uses forms characteristic of the dialectal belt stretching from Rybnik through Żory to Pszczyna (e.g. *ślōchać*, *tlōmaczyć*; and reduction of final *-e* in forms such as *życi*, *czytani*). On the other hand, some translators consciously preferred forms most widely used in Silesian writing, and borrowed conventions from other idiolects. These include, in particular, Syniawa, Kulik, Melon, and Szyma, whose idiolects showed a high degree of convergence. Taken as a whole, however, the evidence supports the conclusion that the body of shared linguistic features is sufficiently broad to justify speaking of a common orthographic-phonetic foundation in contemporary Silesian translations of world literature. Keywords: Early Middle Ages, Post Construction, Stronghold, Hall Buildings, Archaeological Significance, Dakowy Mokre, Architectural Techniques.

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1. Research Objectives and Methodological Framework

This research analyses the most significant orthographic and phonetic differences in contemporary translations of world literature into the Silesian language¹. It examines the spelling conventions and phonetic features that characterise the idiolects of seven modern Silesian translators. The collected data provide a basis for broader, synthesised conclusions about the current state and development of literary Silesian. Furthermore, the study seeks to determine whether the language used in these translations constitutes a coherent, unified literary standard or rather a diverse array of individual, author-specific written forms².

The study identifies three main types of linguistic variation, the first of which involves orthographic differences that are entirely independent of phonetic structure: they are strictly matters of spelling. Representative examples include forms such as *chciół bych* / *chciółbych*, *wyniōs* / *wyniōśl*, *plyś* / *plyść*, and *dō mie* / *do mie*, all of which correspond to the same phonological realisations³: [x'čoubyx], [vyñōs], [plyś], [dōmie]. This classification is justified by several phonological phenomena: the enclitic behaviour of the particle *-bych-* in forming the conditional mood; the near-universal loss of final [ɯ] after a consonant [Bąk 1974: 70]; the elision of [ć] at the end of infinitives after [s] or [ś] [ibid.: 79–80]; and the raising of the vowel [o] to [ō] before nasal consonants [41]. Since these orthographic variants – such as *chciół bych* / *chciółbych* – cannot be traced back to any actual phonetic distinctions, they must be interpreted as the result of divergent orthographic strategies. The first group (*chciółbych*, *wyniōs*, *plyś*, *dō mie*) adopts a phonetic spelling approach, while the second group (*chciół bych*, *wyniōśl*, *plyść*, *do mie*) favours a morphological spelling strategy⁴.

The second group of analysed forms consists of word pairs whose primary distinctions are phonetic, with their graphic differentiation being secondary.

1 In Polish linguistics, the status of the Silesian language remains disputed: some scholars regard it as a dialect of Polish, while others consider it an independent language. It is worth noting, however, that in 2026 as many as 53 Polish scholars—predominantly linguists, sociolinguists, and literary scholars—expressed their support for a bill granting Silesian the status of a regional language. The open letter was also signed by Professor Katarzyna Kłosińska, Chair of the Polish Language Council (Osadnik 2026).

2 The author is aware that the study of phonetic phenomena in literary texts is very often only indirect in nature. However, the verification of all the phonetic phenomena discussed on the basis of authentic spoken data falls outside the scope of this article.

3 As defined by Roman Laskowski, a *phonological word* is a sequence of phonemes bounded by pauses and containing at least one stressed syllable, whereas an *orthographic word* refers to a segment of text between two spaces [Grzegorzczkova, Laskowski, Wróbel 1998: 38].

4 A fuller account of the main types of orthography, including phonetic and morphological spelling, is provided in Jaroszewicz [2004: 79–80].

Six such examples include *dugi* / *dlōgi*, *zajś* / *zaś*, and *pełny* / *połny*, which represent six distinct phonetic forms: [dug'i], [dʌ̀òg'i], [zajś], [zaś], [pou̯ny], and [peu̯ny]. In these cases, the phonetic nature of the differentiation is evident from the fact that the graphic distinction between the six written forms invariably corresponds to differences in their six phonetic realisations. It is important to note that the differences in spelling generally do not result from optional phonetic assimilation, but instead mirror systematic phonological oppositions that are demarcated by isoglosses across the dialectal map of Upper Silesia.

However, in some instances, it is not possible to determine with certainty whether spelling differences stem from a dominant orthographic convention (morphological or phonetic spelling) or from actual, perceptible phonetic differences, as is the case in pairs such as *dugi* / *dlōgi*, *zajś* / *zaś*, and *pełny* / *połny*. This ambiguity mainly concerns written forms that correspond to phonological words containing assimilations or phonemes and phoneme clusters that are unstable and subject to variation even within individual Silesian dialects. Examples include pairs such as *durch* / *durś*, *pojakimu* / *pojakiymu* / *pojakymu*, and *szczoda* / *strzoda*, which can represent either three phonological words – e.g., [durś], [pojak'imu], [stšev'iki] – or as many as ten phonetic realisations: [durx], [durx'], [durś], [pojak'imu], [pojak'ymu], [pojakymu], [stšoda], [ščoda], [ščoda], [stržoda] (ibid.: 72, 80–81, 87–88).

The absence of a one-to-one correspondence between graphic and phonetic forms in cases like *durch* / *durś*, *pojakymu* / *pojakiymu*, and *strzoda* / *szczoda* – combined with the fact that a form like *durch* can represent both a morphologically motivated rendering of [durś] or [durx'] (analogous to [vyńòs] → *wyniòsł*), and most economical graphic representation of [durx] (as in [dug'i] → *dugi*) – suggests that this type of variation is best described as phonetic-orthographic⁵.

2. Selected Linguistic Material

The linguistic material analysed in this study comprises approximately 216 000 word forms. It is drawn from the complete texts of nine literary translations – prose, poetry, and drama – of world literature into the Silesian language, produced by seven Silesian translators:

- 5 Contemporary Silesian orthography is based on Polish orthography, modified with several additional characters, including ô, õ, and ă, ȳ, ȳ. At present, it has already been largely codified. The process of standardizing Silesian orthography began in 2010 with the publication of *Gõrnoślõnski ślabikõrz* [Adamus et al. 2010]. In 2022, the first scholarly rules of Silesian orthography were published – *Zasady Pisowni Języka Ślãskiego* [Jaroszewicz 2022a]. The vast majority of Silesian-language texts are produced in accordance with the principles described in both works from 2010 and 2022.

1. *Prōmytojs przibity* [Prometheus Bound] by Aeschylus (trans. Zbigniew Kadłubek),
2. *Wiersze i śpiywki. Spōmnijcie se Tamowā klaczkā* [Poems and Songs. Remember Tam o' Shanter's Mare] by Robert Burns (trans. Mirosław Syniawa),
3. *Aforyzmy* [Aphorisms] by Franz Kafka (trans. Jerzy Ciurlok),
4. *Mały Princ* [The Little Prince] by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (trans. Grzegorz Kulik),
5. *We Muminkowyyj Dolinie* [In the Moomin Valley] by Tove Jansson (trans. Marcin Melon),
6. *Dante i inksi i jeszcze inksi* [Dante and Others and Yet More Others] by various authors (trans. Mirosław Syniawa),
7. *Pippi Långstrump* [Pippi Longstocking] by Astrid Lindgren (trans. Rafał Szyma),
8. *Mikołojek* René Goscinny'ego [Little Nicholas] by René Goscinny (trans. Grzegorz Buchalik),
9. *Hobit abo tam i nazōd* [The Hobbit, or There and Back Again] by J.R.R. Tolkien (trans. Grzegorz Kulik).

It is important to emphasise that, according to the translators, all of these works are based on the original source texts. These are not adaptations or indirect translations, but full-fledged literary translations. Accordingly, the analysed corpus includes Silesian translations from English, Swedish, French, German, and even Classical Greek. One particularly noteworthy entry is the anthology *Dante i inksi i jeszcze inksi*, which contains Mirosław Syniawa's translations from a wide range of languages, including Latin, Provençal, Russian, as well as Classical Chinese and Vedic Sanskrit. Because this study is limited to direct translations, numerous Silesian translations based on Polish versions – such as the *New Testament* (2017), *Saint-Exupéry de* (2023), and *Szołtysek* (2002) – were excluded from the analysis.

The selection of works included in the study was intended to provide a representative overview of the output of contemporary Silesian translators who have introduced Silesian readers to major works widely regarded as classics of world literature. For this reason, the analysis does not take into account Silesian translations of works that, while unquestionably of literary value, cannot be easily classified as timeless or classics. Acknowledging the inherent subjectivity of such a decision, the list presented above leaves out Silesian translations of works by Petro Murjanka [2022] and Tomasz Kamusella [2019]. To avoid overrepresentation of specific idiolects, the corpus includes only two selected

translations each by Grzegorz Kulik and Mirosław Syniawa, omitting their other translations (e.g., Dickens 2017; Milne 2020; Hauptmann 2024).

3. Orthographic and Phonetic Patterns Matrix

The analysis of orthographic features in the authorial idiolects of Silesian translators was carried out using a custom-designed matrix for evaluating several dozen selected features. The structure and layout of the matrix were based on a preliminary, original analysis of the linguistic form of contemporary Silesian translations. Also helpful were insights and conclusions drawn from *Zasady Pisowni Języka Śląskiego* [Principles of Silesian Orthography] [Jaroszewicz 2022a], as well as findings from earlier pilot studies on the linguistic structure and orthography of modern literary Silesian [Jaroszewicz 2020, 2022b]. Naturally, the analysis also drew on seminal dialectological research into phonetic variation within Silesian dialects, particularly those by Zaręba [1969–1996] and Bąk [1974]. The matrix enabled an assessment of the following sets of orthographic and phonetic features:

1. graphemic system (e.g., *ptōk* / *ptok*, *wysokō* / *wysko*, *rynkā* / *rynka*),
2. conjoined vs. separate spelling conventions:
 - a) past tense constructions (*widzioł żech* / *widziołżech*),
 - b) conditional mood constructions (*chcioł byś* / *chciołbyś*),
3. spelling of internationalisms and German loanwords:
 - a) final syllables: *-yjō* / *-jō*, *-ijō* / *-jō* (e.g., *policyjō* / *policjō*, *agōnijō* / *agōnjō*),
 - b) final consonant clusters: *-ich*, *-ig*, *-ik*, *-iś* (e.g., *fertig* / *fertich* / *fertyk* / *fertiś*),
 - c) initial clusters: *ge-*, *gy-* (e.g., *gerycht* / *gyrycht*),
 - d) vowel sequences such as *-au-*, *-eu-*, *-ou-*, *-ai-*, *-ei-* (e.g., *krauza* / *krałza*, *archaiczność* / *archajiczność*),
4. intraword assimilation and palatalisation:
 - a) forms with nasal vowels before palatal consonants (e.g., *agyncie* / *agyńcie*, *gynś* / *gynś*),
 - b) forms with clusters such as *-trz-*, *-strz-*, *-drz-*, *-zdrz-* (e.g., *szczewiki* / *strzewiki*, *zdrzadło* / *żdżadło*),
 - c) stress groups with *do*, *po*, *przed* followed by a nasal consonant (e.g., *do nij* / *dō nij*),
 - d) anticipatory palatalisation (e.g., *zaś* / *zajś*, *coś* / *cojś*),

- e) softening of velar consonants [k], [g] within a morpheme (e.g., *kiecka* / *kecka*, *fligier* / *fliger*),
 - f) softening of [k], [g] at morpheme boundaries (e.g., *drugie* / *druge*, *kar-kiym* / *karkym*),
 - g) palatalisation of prefixal [s], [z] before [l] (e.g., *slecieć* / *ślecieć*),
 - h) palatalisation in stress groups (e.g., *z nim* / *ś nim*),
5. ellipses and contractions:
- a) infinitive endings (e.g., *iś* / *iść*, *włyż* / *włyźć*),
 - b) endings of abstract nouns (e.g., *prziszłość* / *prziszłość*, *złość* / *złość*),
 - c) endings of comparative adverbs (e.g., *wiyncy* / *wiyncyj*, *dali* / *dali*),
 - d) endings of indeclinable forms (e.g., *fes* / *fest*, *doś* / *dość*),
 - e) past tense verb endings (e.g., *zjöd* / *zjödł*, *plöt* / *plötł*),
 - f) intraword vowel groups -*ło*- / -*o*- (e.g., *chłop* / *chop*),
 - g) vowel group variants -*lu*-, -*lō*-, -*u*- (e.g., *długi* / *dugi* / *dłōgi*),
 - h) geminated consonants (e.g., *szklany* / *szklanny*, *trol* / *troll*),
 - i) initial forms of the modifier *ino* (e.g., *yno* / *jyno* / *ino*),
 - j) initial forms of the pronoun *kto* (e.g., *kto* / *fto* / *gdo* / *chto*),
6. spelling of other phonetic combinations:
- a) *mazuration* (replacement of postalveolar fricatives and affricates with their alveolar counterparts, e.g., *czas* / *cas*),
 - b) *jabłonkowanie* (palatalisation of postalveolar consonants: *czas* / *cias*),
 - c) vowel groups -*oł*- / -*eł*- within words (e.g., *pełny* / *połna*, *wełny* / *wołna*),
 - d) phonological evolution of historical nasal vowels (e.g., *ranka* / *rynka*),
 - e) articulatory strengthening of [z] (e.g., *zwonić* / *dzwonić*, *fandzōla* / *fanzōla*).

A number of orthographic and phonetic phenomena were deliberately omitted from the study, either because they occurred in only a small set of forms or were observed solely in individual idiolects. These include, for instance, the spelling of initial *ajn*- / *ań*- in German loanwords (e.g., *ajnfach* / *ańfach*), the alternation of -*szi*- / -*szy*- in forms such as *maszina* / *maszynna*, the variant endings -*tag* / -*tak* (e.g., *geltag*, *geltak*), and the voicing of the prefix *s*- before sonorant consonants, as in *smōwić* / *zmōwić*. Although these features fell outside the scope of the present analysis, they should be considered in future studies based on a larger and more diverse linguistic corpus. It is also worth noting that the widespread use of diacritic graphemes Ô, Ö, Õ, and Ã by Silesian authors makes it impossible to reliably assess several important phonetic features, such as the

optional labialisation of word-initial [o], the potential diphthongisation of historical [á] – a feature found mainly in western Upper Silesia, and the nasalisation of final vowels [a], [ɔ].

4. Orthographic and Phonetic Patterns in Selected Literary Idiolects

The analysis allowed for a relatively detailed description of the orthographic and phonetic patterns found in the translations of the seven Silesian translators mentioned earlier. Below is a concise summary of the most distinctive features and idiolectal traits of each author. A defining feature of Zbigniew Kadłubek's literary idiolect is a distinctive spelling system that introduces three new graphemes: *Ō*, *Ô*, and *Ŏ*. Another notable characteristic is his consistent use of fused spelling, analogous to conventions accepted in standard Polish, in both past tense forms (*zgrzyszyłżech*, *stanylimy*) and conditional mood forms (*radowałabyś sie*, *miotłby*).

Mirosław Syniawa's orthography stands apart from those of the other translators in three ways: 1) his consistent use of full *ślōbikōrz* spelling⁶, incorporating the complete set of *ślōbikōrz* graphemes (*Ō*, *Ô*, *Ŏ*, *Ă*, *Ŏ̃*) as in *dōmōw*, *czekō*, *ōd*, *bydā*, *całō*; 2) his marking of anticipatory palatalisation in forms such as *zajś*, *cojś*; and 3) his retention of the original phonetic form *jyno* for the emphatic modifier, which is uniformly replaced by *yno* or *ino* in the texts of all other Silesian translators

Jerzy Ciurlok's idiolect, like that of Kadłubek, makes use of a hybrid orthography, employing four original characters: *Ō*, *Ô*, *Ŏ*, *Ă* (with *Ŏ̃* absent). More striking than the original set of characters, however, is the sheer number of inconsistencies and puzzling orthographic choices that Ciurlok implements⁷. Grzegorz Kulik's translations, both orthographically and phonetically, do not stand out for originality, and his idiolect is fairly close to the conventions used

6 The expression *ślābikōrz orthography* denotes the spelling rules presented in *Gōrnoślōnski ślābikōrz* [Adamus et al. 2010]. This writing system is distinguished by the introduction of five new graphemes – *ō*, *ô*, *ŏ*, *ă*, *ŏ̃* – or, in a simplified version, two: *ō* and *ô* [see further Jaroszewicz 2022b].

7 His translation includes dozens of examples in which graphemes appear in positions inconsistent with the phonetic system of Silesian and the principles of *ślābikōrz* orthography (e.g. *bādzie*, *ludziā*, *možnō*, *umarcio*, *dōwo* instead of *byndzie* / *bandzie*, *ludziōm*, *možno*, *umarciō*, *dōwō*). Importantly, such inconsistencies and opaque choices occur in most (!) of the lexical categories studied. They include, for example, inconsistent marking of nasal [n] palatalisation (*miynsie* but *napoczyńciym*), variation in the cluster *strz* (*strzimać* but *szczimać*), elision of final clusters (*smiałość* but *pragliwoś*), contractions of *nie* and *cie* (*miłowanie* but *radowani*), palatalisation of velars before [e] (*kepske* but *kielich*), and elisions in medial clusters (*gowa* but *człowiuk*), among others.

by Syniawa, Melon, and Szyma. Orthographic details that merit attention in Kulik's idiolect include the consistent notation of the initial cluster *gy-* in German loanwords (*gyburstag*, *gylynder*, *gynau*, *gyszynk*, *gyszichta*) and the variable rendering of the palatalisation of the prefixal [s] before the sonorant [l] (*ślatowały*, *ślatowoł*, *śleciała* alongside *slatować*, *slatowoł*, *slatujōm*).

The only original feature to be found in Marcin Melon's idiolect is his consistent notation of the final *-iś* in characteristic Germanisms, such as: *richtiś*, *ajntliś*, *fertiś*, *ōnmyjgliś*, *durś*, *yntliś*. Other writers render such forms exclusively with the ending *-ich* (*richtich*, *fertich*), and less often *-ig* (*richtig*, *fertig*). Grzegorz Buchalik's idiolect does not display any notable orthographic features, yet it is distinguished by two significant phonetic qualities. First, he avoids the common elision of [u] in the cluster *-lu-*, and replaces it instead with the notation *lō-* (*ślōcha*, *dlōgość*, *tlōmacza*). Second – in contrast to the other translators – he invariably records the optional reduction of the final vowel [e], producing forms such as *życi*, *popołedni*, *wszyjski* and *taki* (in place of the expected *życie*, *popołednie*, *wszyjskie* and *takie*).

The orthographic system employed by Rafał Szyma is, both in orthographic and phonetic terms, a synthesis of the choices most commonly made by other authors. The only significant original feature in his idiolect is the marking of the palatalisation of the velar consonants [k], [g] through [e] – as seen in forms such as *kiej*, *wyżgiernie*, *cołkie*, *dugie*.

5. Textual Representation of Phonetic and Orthographic Patterns

Having identified the main distinguishing properties of the individual idiolects, we may now consider how specific phonetic and orthographic traits are implemented. These may be classified into four main groups.

The first one consists of twelve features consistently observed by all Silesian authors. Foremost among these is the use of the *ślabikorz* orthography, which in turn entails compliance with several other important conventions emblematic of this system⁸. In addition to the *ślabikorz* spelling, one should mention the narrow realisation of former nasal vowels in medial position (e.g. *rynka*,

8 This refers to the use of digraphs typical of Polish, such as *SZ*, *CH*, *RZ*, *CI*, *SI*, *NI* (*czułō*, *chrobōk*, *rzyka*, *ciyc*, *siykać*, *kōnie*, etc.); the favouring of morphological spelling, particularly at morphemic boundaries (*ōdpedzieć*, *mōzg*, as opposed to *ōtpedzieć*, *mōsk*); the omission of the graphemes *Ą* and *Ę*, which are redundant from the standpoint of Silesian phonetics (*sōm*, *ida*, rather than *sq*, *idę*); the introduction of the grapheme *Ô* to denote optionally labialised initial [o] (*ôko* instead of *loko*, *oko*), and *Ō* to render the raised [õ] (*rōža* rather than *róža*, *roža*); and the consistent representation of the raising of [e] > [y] and [o] > [õ] before nasal consonants (*kōń*, *dōm* as opposed to *koń*, *dom*, *kuń*, *dum*).

gymba, not *ranka*, *gamba*); the absence of *mazuration* and *jabłonkowanie* forms (e.g. *czas* rather than *cas*, *cias*); the final clusters -*yjō*, -*ijō* (*policyjo*, *agōnijo* rather than *policjo*, *agōnio*); morphological forms with -*trz-*, -*strz-*, -*drz-*, -*zdrz-* (*strzewiki*, *zdrzadło*, *trzyć*, *drzewo* rather than *szczewiki*, *żdżadło*); the use of elliptical infinitives (*iś*, *znojś*, *włyż* rather than *iść*, *znojść*); and shortened past tense forms (*krōd*, *wlōz* rather than *krōdł*, *wlōzł*), accompanied by full, non-elliptical noun forms (*prziszłość*, *całość*, *wdziynczność* rather than *prziszłoś*, *całoś*). All the works also share the use of comparatives without final ellipsis (*wiyncyj*, *dali*, *mynij* rather than *wiyncy*, *dali*); the avoidance of intrusive consonants in vowel sequences in loanwords (*krauza*, *toast*, *europaeski*, *archaiczność* rather than *kralza*, *tolast*); the unaltered initial pronoun *kto* (rather than *gdo*, *chto*, *fto*); and the absence of reinforced articulation in forms such as *zwonić*, *rozynka* (rather than *dzwonić*, *dzbōnek*)⁹.

The second group encompasses widely accepted orthographic qualities, rejected consistently only by a few authors. Ten such features may be noted: the separate spelling of past tense forms (*czytōł żech*; joined in Kadłubek); the heterogeneous notation of forms with initial *ge-*, *gy-* (*gynau*, *geszynk*; levelled to *gy-* in Kulik); non-elliptical gerund endings (*śpiywanie*, *życie*; contraction to -*ni*, -*ci* in Buchalik); reduction of medial -*lu-* groups (*suchać*, *tumacz*; transformed to -*lō-* in Buchalik); the absence of anticipated palatalisation in forms such as *zaś*, *coś* (palatalisation recorded in Syniawa); frequent use of consonant geminates (*troll*, *fōntanna*, *szklanna*; Kulik omits doubling in noun forms); the hard quality of velars [k], [g] within stems (softened in Szyma, e.g. *kiecka*, *ōgiyń*); conjoined spelling of conditional forms (*chciołbych*; consistently separated in Syniawa); the recording of palatalisation of prefix [s] before [l] (*ślecieć*, *ślatować*; alternating in Kulik, e.g. *ślatowoł* but *ślatujōm*); and the preposition *ś* before [ń] in stress groups (*ś nim*, *ś nimi*; *s nimi*, *s nim* in Kadłubek).

The third group of features comprises those orthographic conventions that most clearly differentiate the majority of the idiolects. Six issues are particularly noteworthy, the most significant of which is the choice of graphemic system. The largest group of translators (Szyma, Buchalik, Melon) favours the use of only two new graphemes (Ō, Ô). Others adopt more individualised strategies: Syniawa consistently uses the full set of five Silesian graphemes (Ō, Ō, Ô, Ō, Ā); Ciurlok employs four (Ō, Ô, Ō, Ā); Kadłubek three (Ō, Ô, Ō); while Kulik alternates between five (Ō, Ō, Ô, Ō, Ā) in one work and two (Ō, Ô) in another¹⁰.

9 Although the division into groups may be partially disrupted by inconsistencies or editorial oversights (see point 6), this does not affect its overall correctness.

10 The popularity of the narrowest set of new graphemes (ō, ô) can of course be explained by its simplicity. It should be emphasised that correct use of the full set of five graphemes (ō, ô,

Next point of divergence concerns the endings of a distinctive group of Germanisms such as *rychtig* / *rychtiś* / *rychtig*, which are rendered either with *-ig* (Syniawa, Ciurlok), *-ich* (Buchalik, Kadłubek, Kulik, Szyma), or *-iś* (Melon). Variation also occurs in the initial form of the modifier *yno*, spelled *yno* (Buchalik, Ciurlok, Kadłubek), *ino* (Kulik, Szyma, Melon), or *jyno* (Syniawa). Further differentiation is seen in the treatment of palatalised [n] before soft consonants, producing forms such as *agyncie*, *blōndzić* (Buchalik, Melon) or *agyńcie*, *blōndzić* (Kulik, Kadłubek, Szyma). Similar variation is found in the conditional mood: some translators prefer the separate form (*chcioł bych* – Syniawa, Ciurlok), while others opt for the fused one (*chciołbych* – Szyma, Buchalik, Melon, Kadłubek). A final major difference is found in the notation of velar consonants [k], [g] at morpheme boundaries. Some translators represent palatalised variants (*zwōnkiym*, *karkiyim*, *szeranczkiym* – Buchalik, Melon, Szyma), while others employ depalatalised forms (*brzegym*, *karkym*, *szeranczkym* – Kadłubek, Syniawa, Kulik).

The fourth and smallest group includes particularly unstable orthographic features, which are spelled inconsistently even within individual idiolects. These include the spelling of ellipses in indeclinables (*fest*, *zarōz*, *dość* versus *fes*, *zara*, *doś*), the spelling of prepositional phrases (variants *dō* / *do*, *pō* / *po*), and forms containing the clusters *-oł-* / *-eł-* (*pełny* / *połny*, *welna* / *wołna*). In such cases, alternating between divergent forms is a frequent practice. For instance, Buchalik uses *teroz*, *fest*, *zaroz* alongside *doś*, *tera*, *zaro*; Syniawa adopts *dō niego*, *dō myszy* as well as *do myszy*, *do nōs*; while Kulik employs *połno*, *pudołko* alongside *zdrzōdelka*, *światelka*.

6. Conclusions

An analysis of the individual idiolects of Silesian translators, together with their approaches to orthographic and phonetic features, allows several general conclusions to be drawn.

It is beyond doubt that each of the idiolects examined contains inconsistencies and, at times, rather opaque decisions. Even a cursory reading of the texts reveals word pairs such as *cołkim* and *cołkiym* (Szyma), *slatujōm* and *ślatowały* (Kulik), *słyż* and *złyż* (Kadłubek), *dō niego* and *do naszyj* (Buchalik), *sjechały* and *zjeżdzyła* (Syniawa), or *cześć* and *sześ* (Melon). The extent of these

ô, ǫ, ȧ)—which makes it possible to represent graphically the phonetic distinctiveness of the western and eastern parts of Upper Silesia—is relatively difficult to master for users from the eastern Upper Silesian area. This is because neither diphthongs nor secondary nasals occur there; hence the differentiation of the graphemes *o* / *ǫ* / *ȧ* as well as *a* / *ȧ* loses its phonetic justification.

irregularities varies: in most cases they are relatively minor and may be attributed to weak editorial oversight – or, in some instances, to a complete absence of proofreading. Naturally, the unsatisfactory editorial scrutiny is partly explained by the fact that the first normative codification of Silesian orthography appeared only in 2022 [Jaroszewicz 2022a]. Before then, writers had access only to a few handbooks and dictionaries [Adamus et al. 2010; Kallus 2015; Syniawa 2010], none of which set out the rules of Silesian spelling in a structured, explicit, or comprehensive manner.

In a few instances, however (most notably in Ciurlök), the orthographic and grammatical disorder is so glaring that it raises the question of whether the author had mastered the technique of writing in Silesian to a sufficient degree (see note 5). Elsewhere, the lack of orthographic consistency may be regarded as a deliberate attempt to standardise the spelling of certain words in an exceptional, non-systemic graphical form. A case in point is the widely used form *dzioucha*, whose spelling with the sequence *-ou-* contradicts both the pronunciation of that vowel and the spelling of analogous forms such as *wołna*, *połny*, *widołka*, or *małpica*.

Situating the individual idiolects against the background of the whole corpus reveals that some translators consciously preferred forms most widely used in Silesian writing, and borrowed conventions from other idiolects. These include, in particular, Syniawa, Kulik, Melon, and Szyma, whose idiolects showed a high degree of convergence and relatively few original linguistic features. This may be taken as an indication of a conscious attempt to stabilise the norms of the Silesian literary language.

Among the other translators, it is easy to identify figures – such as Buchalik and Kadłubek – who often employed their own distinctive orthographic and phonetic practices. These divergences may have been due to the idiolect being more heavily coloured by dialectal features of the translator's local community. This is evident in the idiolect of Buchalik of Żory, who uses forms characteristic of the dialectal belt stretching from Rybnik through Żory to Pszczyna (e.g. *ślōchać*, *tlōmaczyć*; and reduction of final *-e* in forms such as *życi*, *czytani*). Kadłubek, for his part, consistently uses fused spellings for past tense and conditional forms, which suggests a degree of orthographic conservatism and a desire to maintain closer ties between Silesian and Polish orthography.

In the case of idiolects represented by two translations, one can observe instances of selfcorrection in the orthographic choices. These usually consist in adopting forms consistent with morphological spelling. For example, in *Mały Princ*, translated by Kulik, the orthography introduces only two new graphemes (Ō, Ô) and employs the joined spelling of conditional forms (*chciołbych*,

miolbych). In *Hobit abo tam i nazōd*, however, Kulik makes use of the full range of new Silesian graphemes (Ō, Ô, Ŏ, Õ, Ñ) and applies the separated spelling of conditional forms (*chciol bych, mog bych*). Syniawa, meanwhile, in *Wyrsze i śpiywki*, marks the palatalisation of the nasal [n] before soft consonants (*pamiyńci, trzyńsie, chyńć*), whereas in *Dantem i inkszych* he no longer represents this assimilation orthographically (*agyncie, błōndzić, chynci*). Significantly – parallel to Kulik – Syniawa uses the joined form of the conditional (*musiolbych, chciolbys*) in his first translation, but adopts the separated form in his second (*mōg bych, robiōł bys*). It may be assumed that such selfcorrections also occur in the work of other authors, yet when an idiolect is represented by a single text it is impossible to verify this hypothesis.

In concluding this study, one may attempt to answer whether – in terms of orthography and phonetics – the language of Silesian translations of world literature constitutes a coherent whole, or whether it is better described as a heterogeneous body of diverse, authorspecific written realisations. Bearing in mind the inherent relativity of such judgements, and taking into account that the wide range of variation may be interpreted both as evidence of homogeneity and of heterogeneity of the linguistic material [cf. Jaroszewicz 2019: 29], it seems justified to recognise the existence of a single Silesian orthography founded on a relatively uniform phonetic basis. Such a position is warranted above all by the fact that in almost all important respects the idiolects studied display a high degree of convergence, while existing differences tend to concentrate in areas of secondary orthographic importance. In terms of orthography, the crucial factor – common to all authors – is the adoption of the *ślabikorz* script as the normative writing system and the preference for morphological spelling; in the domain of phonetics, the unifying features include the consistent rejection of mazuration, jabłonkowanie, and the wide distribution of the historical nasal vowels. The thesis of orthographic homogeneity is also supported by the fact that a significant portion of the orthographic differences identified in this study (*suchać / słōchać; czytani / czytanie; pełny / połny*) are, according to *Zasady Pisowni Języka Śląskiego* [Principles of Silesian Orthography] [Jaroszewicz 2022a], normatively acceptable doublets.

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