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ATTEMPTING TO PRESERVE A NON-BINARY CHARACTER IN POLISH: A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF POLISH TRANSLATIONS OF AUDIOVISUAL CONTENT PROMOTING *MONSTER HIGH* DOLL FRANCHISE

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List of Abbreviations

SL   source language

ST   source text

TL   target language

TT   target text

Introduction

Ever since gender as a social construct which is related to but independent from sex was first studied, voices have been raised rejecting the idea that a person can only be either male or female and raising the arguments that – contrary to the commonly cultivated belief – gender is not binary in its nature. In recent years, the awareness of non-binary gender identities has become more widespread, as more countries have begun to recognise non-binary and third gender identities in their legislatures, and as non-binary people have begun to be featured in various types of media more often. The increased visibility of non-binary identities in various forms of media creates an opportunity to observe and analyse the ways in which gender interacts with language, often resulting in the creation of novel linguistic forms and the modification of the use of those which already exist. The English language allows for a relatively free gender-neutral and non-binary expression, as, in English, gender is realised primarily through pronouns, nouns, and honorific expressions; however, because Polish is a language in which grammatical gender is prevalent, as it influences the inflexion of various high frequency parts of speech on top of those already mentioned, including finite verbs, participles, adjectives, and numerals, translating non-binary identities from English into Polish can pose a significant challenge to the translators, as, in Polish, gender-neutral and non-binary expression may prove difficult to achieve, which is precisely why this study was created. The aim of this paper is to explore and analyse different translation strategies applied in the process of translation of a non-binary character who uses 'they/them' pronouns from English into Polish.

The theoretical part of this paper consists of two chapters. The first theoretical chapter deals with the topic of translation and the notions of equivalence and untranslatability. It provides a brief account on audiovisual translation, focusing mainly on dubbing. Moreover, it addresses the issue of ideological and linguistic censorship present in translations of content aimed at children. The second chapter is divided into two main subchapters, the first of which delves into the notion of gender understood as a social construct, independent from sex, which is not binary in its nature but, rather, is a spectrum of different identities. The second subchapter of the second chapter discusses gender in the linguistic sense, as represented in English and Polish language systems, respectively, as well as gender-neutral and non-binary linguistic expression in both of these languages.

The third, methodological chapter, is devoted to data analysis. The materials used in this study are two parallel corpora consisting of chosen dialogue lines extracted from two

kinds of audiovisual media which promote the third generation of Mattel's fashion doll franchise *Monster High* – i.e. a full length live-action film titled *Monster High: The Movie* and an animated TV series titled *Monster High* – and their Polish dubbing. A contrastive analysis is conducted in order to establish what translation strategies and techniques were applied in the process of translating a non-binary character, Frankie Stein, who uses singular 'they/them' pronouns, from English into Polish. All the observed techniques are listed and analysed based on examples extracted from the source material according to the initially specified criteria, with the inclusion of suggestions regarding other possible solutions which could be applied in the process of translation. The results are then discussed, after which the limitations of the study conducted are listed. Lastly, areas for further research are mentioned as the currently present research gap surrounding the topic of translating non-binary identities from English into Polish is acknowledged, and final conclusions regarding the study conducted are drawn.

1. Brief Introduction to Translation

The simple definition stipulated by Wojtasiewicz (2007: 18) describes translation as a process of reformulation of an utterance originally expressed in the source language (SL) through linguistic means of the target language (TL) in order to produce the TL counterpart of that thought. His thought is similar to that of Newmark (1988: 5), according to whom translation is the "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text." One could, therefore, say that the aim of translation is to convey the message coded by the author of the source text (ST) in the SL by utilising linguistic means of the TL in the target text (TT).

During the process of translation, the translator has to decide what linguistic means of the TL should be applied in order to express the sense of the ST in the TL as closely as possible. Sometimes, it may prove enough to use textual equivalents, which Catford (1965: 27) describes as linguistic TL units considered equivalent to their corresponding SL units or, putting it simply, TL words and phrases which have the same meanings as their corresponding SL words and phrases. Even more direct translations may utilise formal correspondents, defined by Catford (1965: 27) as "any TL category (unit, class, structure, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the 'same' place in the 'economy' of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL," basically meaning that, for example, if a noun occupies a certain spot in the SL sentence, its TL equivalent will occupy the same spot in the TL sentence, preserving the order of the linguistic units from the ST in the TT. It is sometimes the case, however, that – for a variety of reasons – the translator has to modify some of the linguistic units or the syntactic structures they may be a part of, in order to produce a particular outcome, by performing category shifts (translation shifts) – operations which stand in opposition to formal correspondence (Catford, 1965: 76). According to Catford (1965: 76–79), the types of category shifts include structure shifts, which are changes in the order of the linguistic units in the TL phrase or clause compared to its corresponding SL phrase or clause, class shifts, which occur when the class of a SL linguistic unit is different than that of its TL equivalent, unit shifts (also called 'rank changes'), which occur when a SL unit (e.g. a phrase) is of a different rank than its TL equivalent (e.g. a clause), and intra-system shifts, which occur when "SL and TL possess systems which approximately correspond formally as to their constitution, but when translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system" (e.g. differing numbers or articles).

Though not formally corresponding to the SL phrase, a TL phrase in which translation shifts were employed can still be equivalent to it, as long as the sense present in the ST is preserved.

As it is reported by Wojtasiewicz (2007: 17), accuracy seems to be the quality most often demanded and discussed in regard to translation; however, the need for accuracy is often claimed to stand in conflict with the task of preserving aesthetic aspects of the ST, which the translator is also expected to perform. Newmark (1988: 5) lists other obstacles which a translator may encounter during the process of translation, namely having to choose "between sound and sense, emphasis (word order) and naturalness (grammar), the figurative and the literal, neatness and comprehensiveness, concision and accuracy." Thus, the translator has to compromise between, for example, attempting to convey the lexical sense of the ST and adhering to its style and linguistic conventions of the target language (TL) in order to produce a high-quality translation which is not only accurate to the original but is comprehensible and appeals to the target reader.

Arguably the most significant factor which may potentially undermine the accuracy of a translation is the untranslatability of certain lexical items or structural features (Wojtasiewicz, 2007: 30), which may cause the translator to alter, obfuscate or entirely erase the meaning originally intended by the author of the ST. Newmark (1988: 17) defines untranslatable words as those which "have no ready one-to-one equivalent in the target language", particularly descriptive verbs and "words relating to the mind, that have no cognates in the TL", and "whose meaning cannot be rendered literally and precisely by another word" (Newmark, 1988: 70); he argues, however, against the idea that one cannot express the so-called 'untranslatable' words present in the ST through the linguistic means available in the TL at all as he believes that their meanings can be rendered through the use of, for example, descriptive equivalents (Newmark, 1988: 70) because "it is the translator's job to translate, to explain" (Newmark, 1988: 82).

1.1. Audiovisual Translation

As defined by Pérez González (2011: 13), "audiovisual translation is a branch of translation studies concerned with the transfer of multimodal and multimedial texts into another language and/or culture", such texts being those which combine several modes of expression such as, for example, language, image, and music, together. The most widespread and most commonly encountered forms of audiovisual translation include subtitling and dubbing (Pérez González, 2011: 13), the latter being the one which this paper will be particularly focused on. During

interlingual subtitling the ST itself is left intact and the translation happens on the level of the linguistic content alone, being featured in the form of lines of written text in the TL displayed on top of the visual content and timed with their correlating batches of spoken or sung content (Pérez González, 2011: 14). In dubbing, on the other hand, the original audio track containing linguistic content is replaced with a newly recorded one in which dubbing actors re-enact the narration and dialogues from the ST in the TL, while also trying to "recreate the dynamics of the original, particularly in terms of delivery pace and lip movements" (Pérez González, 2011: 17), which may also involve replicating intonation, speech mannerisms, and emotions in the case of films and the rhythm and melody in the case of songs, so that the final product feels natural and convincing to the target recipient. Because dubbed content does not require the recipient to split attention between the audiovisual content they are watching and listening to and the translation in the form of subtitles, nor does it require of the recipient the ability to read, dubbing, though more expensive and time-consuming than subtitling, appears to be the most convenient and effective mode of translating audiovisual content targeted at children, such as, for example, animated films, cartoons, and songs featuring visuals (Pérez González, 2011: 17-18).

1.2. Censorship in Translating for Children

Content directed at children, such as children's literature, plays a rather significant role in shaping the worldview of a young, suggestible recipient, which is why it tends to be utilised as a didactic tool and a source of knowledge about the world, as well as a means of indoctrination and propaganda, imposing certain norms or beliefs upon the child (Biały, 2014: 173-174). Because of how strongly such texts can influence the young audience, they may become subject to censorship by translators, who, when tasked with translating a work into another language, may want to domesticate it and adapt it by manipulating its content for it to better fit the target culture and its ideologies and norms (Biały, 2014: 175-176).

It may happen that the alterations made to the text during the process of translation are not specifically aimed at imposing a certain worldview on the recipient but are simply an attempt to make the process of translation more convenient for the translator or to make the text more comprehensible to the target recipient (Biały, 2014: 176). It can be argued that such changes are still a form of censorship as they prevent the recipient from experiencing some of the content which was originally present in the ST and was later deleted or altered and deprive them of a means to learn more about the world. According to O'Sullivan (2019:

18), "many translated texts underestimate child readers, wanting to 'protect' them from being over-challenged by elements they may not (yet) understand", which may be exercised through the eradication of elements foreign and potentially unknown and incomprehensible to the target recipient. According to him, translating children's literature is therefore a "balancing act [...] between adapting foreign elements to the child reader's level of comprehension, and preserving the differences that constitute a translated foreign text's potential for enrichment of the target culture" (O'Sullivan, 2019: 18-19).

Rhee (2018) argues that censorship, both linguistic and ideological, "has no place in a modern day school system" which, according to her, should be based on the freedom of speech and promote open-mindedness practised through discourse grounded in non-judgmental and unprejudiced curiosity about foreign concepts and those who express them:

> Freedom of speech should not only be about letting people express themselves openly, but should also include being allowed to take part in any form of discourse you wish to converse in without being judged for the language being used or the topics being discussed. [...] When using a word or discussing an idea, we must be able to understand the context and history from which the word or idea has been developed to comprehend the true value of what we're saying and how it will affect the people around us. Understanding the history of a word or an idea has significance, as people will no longer judge the speaker negatively due to their newfound understanding of what they are saying. (Rhee, 2018)

In other words, censorship of certain words or concepts deprives people of being able to develop a proper, deeper understanding and openness which is necessary in order to engage in healthy and insightful discourse, in which all sides feel included, seen, and respected.

2. Multidimensionality of Gender

For millennia humans have perceived members of their kind through the prism of sex and gender, both of which have come to be largely understood as synonymous and operating within a strict dichotomy of 'male' and 'female.' The views on this matter have since changed, and, throughout the years, the notions of sex and gender have been revisited and redefined. In the following chapters gender shall be explored in both the social and the linguistic contexts, with the main focus on questioning the assumption that gender is binary in its nature. Furthermore, the linguistic realisations of gender shall be discussed with a particular emphasis on gender-neutral linguistic expression and its significance, especially for those people who do not fit the categories of 'male' and 'female.'

2.1. Gender as a Social Construct

Though related to each other and intersecting on various planes, the terms 'sex,' 'gender,' 'gender identity' all describe entirely different concepts, all of which shall be defined in the following chapter for the reader to gain a better understanding of the main subject of this paper. One of the most prominent figures in the field of gender studies is Judith Butler, who has explored the aforementioned concepts in their[1] work *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, titled quite aptly considering how complex of a phenomenon gender is. In Butler's (1999: 10) understanding, "gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes." It is, therefore, a set of expectations imposed upon a person at birth and reinforced throughout their entire life based on their sex. Sex, on the other hand, refers to the "biological indicators of male and female, [...] such as in sex chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, and nonambiguous internal and external genitalia" (American Psychiatric Association, 2022a: 512). Sex assignment, also known as gender assignment, usually happens at birth based on the appearance of a newborn's external reproductive organs (American Psychiatric Association, 2022b); by this logic, a newborn with a penis will receive the label of 'male,' and one with a vagina – that of 'female' in terms of both sex and gender[2].

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[1] Butler has described themself as non-binary (Kian, 2019) and has expressed their preference for being referred to by 'they/them' pronouns over 'she/her' (Fischer, 2020). Although numerous publications (mainly those published before 2019) refer to them by 'she/her' pronouns, for the sake of the consistency of this paper, as well as out of respect for Butler's personal preference, 'they/them' pronouns shall be used when referring to them in this paper.

[2] In most cases, the external reproductive organs unambiguously indicate the binary sex of a newborn but it may occur that they do not align with the normative ideas of 'male' or 'female,' the phenomenon of which has become known as intersexuality (UN Office for the Commissioner of Human Rights, n.d.). Though this paper shall focus primarily on the non-binary nature of gender in particular, it must be emphasised that sex should not be construed as entirely binary, either.

Though this categorisation is based purely on physical characteristics, people have long imagined sex and gender to be one and the same, both of them seemingly operating within the binary values of 'male' and 'female'; this view, however, has since changed, and, as of now, society has become increasingly accustomed to the idea that sex and gender are two separate notions.

As further proposed by Butler (1999: 179, 180), yet separate from gender is gender identity, which is a non-fixed, fluid matter projected to society through physical appearance and performance of various acts repeated throughout life as an approximate embodiment of gender norms which stand at the core of one's gender identity. That basically means that gender identity is the gender that one 'performs' and identifies with, regardless of their sex and the gender society assumes them to be based on their sex. This idea of gender performativity appears to be the central principle in Butler's view on gender.

Although, nowadays, sex describes the set of reproductive features one is born with, whilst gender identity stands for how one feels, presents oneself to the society and functions within it, independently of their sex, the perception that sex and gender are one thing or, at least, two heavily interconnected ones is still very much deeply rooted in society, and, thus, with the sex assigned to a newborn, gender is assigned to them, as well. With gender assignment, a set of expectations is placed upon the person, and, thence, from a very young age, the bearer of the label 'male' is expected to conform to masculine norms and one labelled as 'female' – to feminine norms. In the interview with Gleeson (2021), Butler stresses that, though already assigned at birth once, the reassignment of gender continues throughout the individual's entire life in the form of gender norms imposed on them by society. From there stems the idea of compulsory gender conformity, which goes hand in hand with Butler's theory of gender performativity; however, gender has since evolved into a more complex phenomenon, slowly rejecting the idea of compulsory gender conformity.

Matsuno et al. (n.d.: 1) from the APA Division for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity advocate that people do not assume another person's gender and preferred pronouns from their appearance and general presentation alone to minimise the risk of misgendering, described by Misiek (2020: 166) as "an act of referring to a person with incorrect gendered pronouns or other gendered terms." That is because, as society is constantly changing in various aspects, more and more people seem to opt out of conforming to traditional gender norms and, therefore, might, for example, alter their physical appearance in a way that could come across as either androgynous or aligning with

traditionally understood gender norms of the opposite gender, which might make it difficult to correctly 'assess' their gender identity.

Because gender is fundamentally a social construct, gender studies are not only concerned with gender as such but place it in the broader social context. As described by Bassi (2019: 204), "gender studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines gender as a cultural and social construction [...] alongside other vectors of power such as sexuality, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, ability and linguistic identity." That suggests that the understanding of one's gender may partially depend on the social, national and ethnic backgrounds they grew up in, additionally influenced by other factors which may contribute to the formation of one's sense of self-identity, such as disability or sexual orientation.

2.1.1. Transgender Umbrella and Non-Binary Gender Identities

As previously mentioned, gender is a non-fixed, fluid matter independent of sex. After queer studies emerged as a branch overlapping with gender studies, scholars exploring the notions of gender and gender binary began to advocate for people whose gender identity is different from the gender society expects them to perform. That is because, as one's understanding of their sex and gender grows, later in life, they might begin to identify with a gender different from that which had been assigned to them at birth based on their sex. This phenomenon has become known as transgenderism. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2022a: 512), a transgender individual is one whose gender identity is not the same as the gender assigned to them at birth, and, on the other hand, a cisgender individual is one "whose gender expression is congruent with their birth-assigned gender." In other words, a transgender person identifies with a gender which does not align with their sex, while a cisgender person is one whose gender identity and the way they perform it directly reflect their sex. Though some transgender people fall on the binary axis of 'female-to-male (FTM)' and 'male-to-female (MTF),' for others, it is not the case.

Scholars specialising in gender studies, such as Butler (1999: 10), criticise the binary gender system, implying that there should exist another category beyond just 'male' and 'female.' Though, primarily, this postulate seemed to focus predominantly on binary transgender identities (i.e. trans male and trans female), the gender spectrum has since expanded to include gender identities which do not align strictly with either of the two conventionally recognised genders, those being male and female, as well. As described by Hansen and Żółtak (2022: 2027) and Misiek (2020: 165), 'non-binary' (spelled also

as 'nonbinary') is an umbrella term which encompasses all those gender identities that fall (or fluctuate) somewhere in between male and female or outside of the gender spectrum entirely. It is worth noting that, despite, in theory, fitting the definition of being transgender as identifying with a different gender than that assigned to one at birth, not all non-binary people choose to associate themselves with the 'transgender' label, as reflected in some unofficial gender censuses (Lodge, 2023; Vos and Misiek, 2023). The term 'non-binary' is often used synonymously with the word 'genderqueer' (Misiek, 2020: 169). Furthermore, transgender and non-binary people are considered a part of LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) community (Matsuno et al., n.d.: 1).

According to niebinarnosc.pl (n.d.), non-binary people may experience their gender as one which only partially aligns with the binary labels of male (e.g. demiboy) or female (e.g. demigirl), one which compromises feelings of both masculinity and femininity (e.g. bigender), one which is not fixed but fluctuates in intensity or positioning on the masculine-feminine axis and beyond it (e.g. genderfluid, boyflux, girlflux), or one which cannot be defined in terms of masculinity or femininity whatsoever (e.g. agender). It must be emphasised, however, that each non-binary person may have a different experience and understanding of their own gender identity (Dembroff, 2020: 6). Thus, the aforementioned and, admittedly, rather vague descriptions are only general ideas which are by no means exhaustive and should not be construed as such.

Non-binary people, just like men and women, might present either in an androgynous way or that which could come across as traditionally feminine or masculine, as well, with which comes a greater risk of accidental misgendering of a person whose gender and preferred pronouns are not known. Furthermore, many non-binary people experience discrimination and misgendering (both intentional and unintentional) because other members of society often expect them to either express their non-binary gender identity through androgynous physical appearance and clothing (Dembroff, 2020: 6) or to conform to the binary gender assigned to them at birth (Nadal et al., 2016: 501).

Transgender and non-binary individuals may choose to undergo a process of social, legal, and medical gender reassignment which can include a social transition, a change of one's gender expression, a change of name and sex marker in official documents or undergoing gender-affirming medical procedures such as hormone reassignment therapy and surgical operations (American Psychiatric Association, 2022a), all of which constitute a gender reassignment in the literal meaning; however, the discovery and assertion of one's gender identity can already be understood as a form of metaphorical gender reassignment

through self-definition (Gleeson, 2021) against the societal expectations imposed upon the individual based on their presumed gender, regardless of whether they have the will to undergo medical or legal procedures in order to make their gender-reassignment official.

It is estimated that there are approximately 1.2 million people aged 18-60 years old in the United States, and approximately 200 thousand professionally active people in Poland, who identify as non-binary (Meyer and Wilson, 2021; Nowe Motywacje, 2022), which gives them the status of a gender minority. The estimations may prove to be imprecise, since Poland does not acknowledge non-binary identities in its legislature at all, and, despite there being a federal law in the United States which allows a non-binary gender marker (taking the form of an 'X' instead of 'M' for 'male' or 'F' for 'female') on passports nationwide, the laws regarding the legal recognition of non-binary individuals vary by state (Equaldex, 2024b) and, currently, non-binary gender identity is recognised by the legislative systems of only 26 American states (Equaldex, 2024a); however, the number of countries in the world which allow the 'X' gender marker in their legislatures has risen from just one in 2012 to 18 in 2024 (Equaldex, 2024a) and it is only fair to assume that this rising trend will likely continue as the awareness and knowledge about non-binary identities becomes more widespread and they are more widely acknowledged and accepted. Despite the significant rise in awareness about non-binary identities in the past two decades, non-binary people are still subject to frequent discrimination and ostracisation on the basis of their non-heteronormative gender identity, which can take the form of, but is not limited to, interpersonal, workplace, healthcare or religious discrimination, misgendering, familial rejection, verbal harassment, as well as physical and sexual violence (Kachen et al., 2021: 2, 4; Bulska et al., 2021: 106, 109, 134, 274, 329–330), resulting in a relatively high minority stress index and psychological distress (Kachen et al., 2021: 6; Bulska et al., 2021: 85, 97), as well as identity concealment in order to avoid potential discrimination (Bulska et al., 2021: 48, 52, 180).

2.2. Gender Manifestations in Language

Just like every other existing concept, gender, too, can be expressed through language. Gender can have different linguistic realisations, manifesting in various ways depending on the language system used. Despite being a powerful tool, constantly adjusting in the face of changes in the world so that its users can describe the reality that surrounds them, language also has some limitations that might make it difficult to express one's experience precisely. The following chapters will focus on gender understood not only as a social construct but also

as a linguistic feature which is intertwined with – but independent of – the previously mentioned socially constructed gender, as well as the restrictions of linguistic systems regarding verbal gender expression. For the purpose of this paper, the attention shall be directed towards the different realisations of gender from a linguistic point of view in the English and the Polish spoken language in particular, as well as the influence that language users have on language (and vice versa), putting an emphasis on non-binary and gender-neutral expression in these two languages.

2.2.1. Gender in the English Language

English is a language with natural gender, which is understood as "a biological property of animate referents of words" (Farrugia, 2018). Additionally, according to Corbett (1991: 9), a natural gender language system is that in which, "given the meaning of a noun, its gender can be predicted without reference to its form", meaning that, for example, if it can be concluded, either from the semantic meaning or the context, that a noun denotes a male entity, it is of masculine gender, as natural gender "corresponds to a real-world distinction of sex" (Corbett, 1991: 1). Thus, the English language recognises three primary genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. Some sources, however, describe the existence of a fourth, common gender in English, present in nouns which can apply to both male and female referents without changing form ('Common gender,' n.d.).

The English language recognises eight primary personal pronouns, five in singular and three in plural (see Table 1). The singular and the plural 'you' are both grammatically plural since they come into syntactic relations with plural inflected verbs. The only pronouns which have gender encoded into them by default are 3. person singular pronouns 'he,' 'she,' and 'it,' denoting referents of masculine, feminine, and neuter gender, respectively.

	singular	plural
1.	I	we
2.	you	you
3.	he	they
	she	
	it	

Table 1. Personal pronouns in English

The rest of the pronouns, those being 'I,' 'you,' 'we,' and 'they,' are technically gender-neutral as they can replace nouns of any natural gender. Because gender does not affect the inflexional endings in parts of speech a noun comes into syntactic relations with, the gender of a given noun is then, if applicable, only reflected in the 3. person singular personal pronoun it assumes.

Gender, as a property which reflects the sex of the referent, is also encoded into honorific forms of address. As enumerated by Lubecka (1993: 80), the titles 'Mr,' 'Mrs/Ms,' 'Miss,' 'Sir,' 'Madame/Madam' (colloquialized to 'Ma'am'), and 'Lady' constitute a group of the most commonly used English honorifics, out of which 'Mr' and 'Sir' concern male addressees and the rest of them – female. According to Lubecka (1993: 74–75), the abbreviated titles 'Mr' and 'Mrs' are almost always followed by the addressee's name, whilst their colloquial counterparts 'Mister' and 'Missis/Missus' always stand on their own; on the other hand, the titles 'Miss,' 'Sir,' 'Madam,' and 'Lady' can either stand on their own, performing the function of a vocative, or be followed by a name to form a compound honorific expression. Yuryeva (2018: 690–691) stresses, however, that the titles 'Lady' and 'Madam' are not commonly used in American English, further noticing that the frequency at which honorific titles are used in everyday communication in general has declined in the recent years; as a result, honorific expressions in American English are now mostly reserved for official settings and situations in which one aims to attract someone else's attention or addresses someone whose name they do not know.

In order to better reflect the female gender of the referent, feminine forms have been derived from masculine English nouns mainly denoting occupations or performed functions through the use of gender-marking suffixes '-ette,' '-ess,' '-enne,' '-ine,' and '-woman,' producing a rather large number of feminine nouns as a result, as examined by Patil (2015). Despite the abundance of both masculine and feminine forms in the English language, in recent years, it has quite noticeably continued to lean closer towards gender-fairness and elimination of the male bias whose presence is marked, for example, by suffixes '-man' or '-master' appearing in job titles. Cetnarowska (2023: 63) explains the motivations behind this process, saying that "the unjustified use of English job titles containing the morpheme '-man' or '-master' [...] implies that male employees are the norm, hence females are excluded." In case of such titles, gender-inclusivity can be achieved through, for example, clipping the gendered suffixes or replacing them with the gender-neutral morpheme '-person' which is free from the masculine bias (Cetnarowska, 2023: 63). Moreover, because some job titles ending in the feminine suffix '-ess' have been deemed "old fashioned"

and "undesirable", in order to indicate the female gender of the referent, names of professions may instead be preceded by the adjective 'female,' suffixed with the morpheme '-woman' or followed by a word such as 'woman,' 'lady' or 'girl' (Cetnarowska, 2023: 64).

2.2.2. Gender in the Polish Language

Polish is a language which, apart from having natural gender, is ruled by grammatical gender, which means that gender, as a feature, is an invariable and intrinsic marker encoded into every single noun (Wróbel, 2001: 90). It determines the syntactic relations between the noun and the other parts of speech, such as adjectives, numerals, and verbs, all of which are subject to inflexion influenced by the gender of the noun (Wróbel, 2001: 90). Contrary to natural gender, which is present in English, grammatical gender has little to do with the subject's sex, as markers of 'masculine' and 'feminine' can apply to people just as well as to animals or inanimate objects. In Polish, gender is expressed primarily through inflexional endings of parts of speech such as verbs, participles, adjectives, and numerals.

Polish recognises three primary grammatical genders, namely: masculine, feminine, and neuter; however, because of the differing inflexional endings of masculine nouns in, for example, the accusative, two additional subgenders can be distinguished, those being masculine animate and masculine inanimate (Wróbel, 2001: 258). Furthermore, Polish assumes two genders in plural: masculine personal and non-masculine personal (Wróbel, 2001: 258); however, some linguists are of the belief that masculine personal gender exists in singular as well, the argumentation behind it being that not all masculine animate nouns pluralise in the same way (Andrejewicz, 2002: 24). Masculine animate nouns which depict male human referents adopt the masculine personal gender when pluralised, whilst those that depict animals become non-masculine personal when plural, being simultaneously grouped together with plural forms of masculine inanimate nouns and adopting their noun-to-adjective and noun-to-verb agreements; thus, some choose to divide the masculine gender into, for example, masculine personal and masculine non-personal (Corbett, 1991: 284) or masculine animate into masculine personal and masculine animal (Wertz, 1977: 50). Still others propose distinctions into as many as seven genders, with Wertz's (1977: 63) model recognising four genders in singular (masculine animate, masculine inanimate, feminine, and neuter) and three in plural (masculine personal, impersonal, and devirilised), and assuming that "each noun which has both singular and plural forms belongs to two genders, one singular and one plural" (Wertz, 1977: 62). Ultimately, the views on the matter

of how many grammatical genders the Polish language has are quite mixed and inconclusive as they vary between linguists; for the purpose of simplification, however, in this paper, Polish grammatical gender system of five genders which apply only to human referents shall be adopted, the genders being as follows: singular masculine, singular feminine, singular neuter, plural masculine personal, and plural non-masculine personal, although masculine animal and masculine inanimate shall be mentioned, as well.

In Polish, there are, primarily, nine personal pronouns through which the aforementioned features are expressed, five of which are singular, and four – plural (see Table 2). It is worth noticing that, whilst the English 3. person plural pronoun 'they' is, in its nature, gender-neutral, i.e. can refer to a group of male or female persons or one comprised of people of different genders, as well as to groups of animals and things, in Polish, 3. person plural can be realised through two different and non-interchangeable pronouns: 'oni' and 'one.' The differentiating factor between them is the grammatical gender of the nouns they replace which, in plural, can be categorised as either masculine personal ('oni') or non-masculine personal ('one'). Whilst the pronoun 'oni' applies, primarily, to those subjects which are also masculine in singular, the pronoun 'one' allows for a broader usage, embracing the subjects which are feminine or neuter in singular; however, despite being of masculine personal gender, the name of which suggests a rather obvious masculine connotation, the pronoun 'oni' can also refer to groups comprising persons of different sexes or genders, provided that at least one of them is male; the same rule applies to the two remaining Polish plural pronouns, those being 'my' ('we') and 'wy' ('you' – plural) which, like 1. and 2. person singular, though technically gender-neutral, must be assigned a grammatical gender based on the natural gender of their referents, becoming either masculine personal or non-masculine personal depending on whether any member of the collective referent is male or not, which is then reflected in inflexional endings of parts of speech connected to them through syntactic relations (Wróbel, 2001; 252).

	singular	plural
1.	ja	my
2.	ty	wy
3.	on	oni
	ona	one
	ono	

Table 2. Personal pronouns in Polish

Grammatical gender present in the Polish language influences the inflexion of certain parts of speech, among which are verbs and participles. Though grammatical gender does not affect the inflexional patterns of the present tense and the perfective future tense verbs – effectively meaning that the present tense and the perfective future verb forms are gender-neutral, and, thus, universal to each of the grammatical genders – past verb forms take inflexional endings which vary depending on the grammatical gender of the referent (see Table 3). In addition to past verb forms, future imperfective verb phrases, which are created by the use of the future tense form of the verb 'być' ['to be'] joined by the past tense 3. person verb form, and subjunctive forms, which are created by adding the morpheme '-by' to the past tense suffix, take gendered inflexional endings, as well (Wróbel, 2001; 148–149).

	singular			plural	
	masculine	feminine	neuter	masc. personal	non-masc. personal
1.	-łem	-łam	-łom	-liśmy	-łyśmy
2.	-łeś	-łaś	-łoś	-liście	-łyście
3.	-ł	-ła	-ło	-li	-ły

Table 3. Gendered inflexional past tense verb endings in Polish (Wróbel, 2001: 148)

The primary suffixes applied to adjectives in nominative include the masculine '-y,' the feminine '-a,' the neuter '-e,' the plural masculine personal '(rz)-y' or '-i' (which results in the replacement of the preceding hard consonant with its soft counterpart), and the plural non-masculine personal '-e' (Wróbel, 2001: 127); active adjectival participles are then created by adding the morpheme '-ąc,' and passive adjectival participles – by adding the morpheme '-on' or, in the case of plural masculine, '-en,' before the gendered adjective suffixes, assuming the same declension patterns (Szkoła Języka i Kultury Polskiej UŚ, 2021).

The Polish language has a complex system of numerals, whose declension patterns and syntax, too, differ depending largely on the grammatical gender of the nouns which they modify. Cardinal numerals are standardly used to describe individuals and groups of items of the same grammatical gender and people of the same sex, with a noticeable distinction between the masculine personal gender and the other grammatical genders, as the numerals from 3 upwards only distinguish between masculine personal and non-masculine personal genders (see Table 4). Interestingly, for each of the numerals from 2 to 4, the masculine personal gender assumes two different forms, one of which takes nouns in nominative

and masculine personal inflected verbs, e.g. 'dwaj/trzej/czterej chłopcy byli' ('two/three/four boys were'), whilst the other takes nouns in genitive and neuter inflected verbs, continuing this trend for the higher numerals, e.g. 'dwu (or dwóch)/trzech/czterech/pięciu… chłopców było' ('two/three/four/five… boys were'). As for the feminine and neuter genders, they only assume their own separate forms in singular and dual, i.e. for the cardinal numerals 1 and 2, taking nouns in nominative along with feminine or neuter inflected verbs for the numeral 1, respectively, and non-masculine personal inflected verbs for the numeral 2; for the higher numerals, the feminine and neuter genders are grouped together under the non-masculine gender, assuming the same forms for both feminine and neuter referents and taking non-masculine personal inflected verbs.

	masculine	feminine	neuter	non-masc. personal
1	jeden	jedna	jedno	-
2	dwaj, dwu/dwóch	dwie	dwa	-
3	trzej, trzech	-	-	trzy
4	czterej, czterech	-	-	cztery
5	pięciu	-	-	pięć

Table 4. Nominative forms of Polish cardinal numerals from 1 to 5 (Wróbel, 2001: 131–132)

Another type of numerals are collective numerals which, when applied to human referents, may describe people of different sexes, typically children, grouped together (Polska na wynos, 2023a; Markiewicz, 2021: 101). Because they are used in reference to groups of people mixed in terms of gender – similarly to the 3. person plural masculine personal pronoun 'oni' – collective numerals can be considered, technically, gender-neutral (Markiewicz, 2021: 100); unlike the pronoun 'oni,' however, they take singular neuter inflected verbs instead of plural masculine personal. Some studies suggest that, due to their rather complex syntax and inflexional patterns (see Table 5) which tend to challenge the Polish language speakers, the usage of collective numerals in Polish has decreased, in place of which cardinal numerals, numerical nouns, and analytical constructions (e.g. 'dwie pary [two pairs]' instead of 'dwoje [two – collective]') are often employed, instead (Markiewicz, 2021: 102, 107–108).

	Nom	Gen	Dat	Acc	Inst	Loc	Voc
2	dwoje	dwojga	dwojgu	dwoje	dwojgiem	dwojgu	dwoje
3	troje	trojga	trojgu	troje	trojgiem	trojgu	troje
4	czworo	czworga	czworgu	czworo	czworgiem	czworgu	czworo
5	pięcioro	pięciorga	pięciorgu	pięcioro	pięciorgiem	pięciorgu	pięcioro

Table 5. Declension of Polish collective numerals from 2 to 5 (Polska na wynos, 2023a)

Numerical nouns, on the other hand, are formed by the addition of the suffix '-ka' to the nominative of a numeral, creating nouns such as 'dwójka,' 'trójka,' etc., which can be used either in place of regular numerals or as independent nouns (Rittner, 2023). They assume feminine grammatical gender and, when used to refer to groups of people, always take nouns in genitive and feminine inflected verbs, regardless of the grammatical gender of the following nouns or the sex or sexes of their referents (Rittner, 2023). It t appears that in modern Polish, especially in casual speech, numerical nouns tend to be used instead of collective numerals, whose syntax is, arguably, more complex and, thus, more difficult (Markiewicz, 2021: 102; Rittner, 2024; Polski na wynos, 2023b).

Another way in which gender is manifested in the Polish language is through honorific expressions. Honorifics, as a form of expressing politeness and respect towards a particular referent, are very prevalent in Polish, as they are the expected forms of addressing the recipient in a variety of situations, determined by factors such as one's relation to the recipient, their age or status, the formality level of the setting (Steve, 2024). As listed by Steve (2024), amongst the most commonly used Polish honorifics there are 'Pan' ('Mr'), 'Pani' ('Mrs/Ms'), 'Panowie' (plural of 'Mr'), 'Panie' (plural of 'Mrs/Ms'), and 'Państwo' (used to address either married couples or groups comprising people of different genders). The titles 'Pan' and 'Pani' can, but do not have to, take other lexical items such as professional or academic titles or first or last names or their referent, forming compound honorific expressions (Lubecka, 1993: 74). Additionally, phrases such as 'Proszę Pana,' 'Proszę Pani,' and 'Proszę Państwa' correspond to the vocatives 'Sir,' 'Madam,' and 'Ladies and Gentlemen,' respectively. Usually, singular honorifics in vocative are accompanied by verbs with 3. person inflexional endings, as opposed to plural ones, which usually agree with 2. person inflected verbs when in vocative (Steve, 2024).

Throughout the years, the ways in which the gender of female referents in particular is reflected in the Polish vocabulary and grammar have undergone multiple changes. Feminine forms of nouns such as professional and academic titles and names of performed functions have existed in the Polish language for at least a couple of centuries, as evidenced in Polish dictionaries dating to the early 19th century (Krysiak, 2016: 85). According to Wtorkowska (2020: 65) and Krysiak (2016: 84), feminine forms are generally considered to be direct derivatives of masculine forms derived most often by the use of gender-marking suffixes '-a,' '-ka,' '-ini/-yni,' and '-ica'; nevertheless, in the 19th century, feminine forms used to be listed in dictionaries as separate lemmas, which placed them in an equal position with their masculine counterparts (Krysiak, 2016: 85–86). At the turn of the 20th and 21st century, however, this tendency noticeably decreased as masculine names have gradually begun to be treated as generic, thus eliminating the need for the masculine-feminine distinction in the aforementioned nouns (Krysiak, 2016: 87); instead, masculine forms would be left unchanged, but their grammatical gender would shift to feminine, thus resulting in feminine inflection of the parts of speech they would come into syntagmatic relations with, and they would sometimes be preceded by the noun 'Pani' ('Mrs/Ms') to further clarify the female gender of their referent especially in the case of the professions which are generally occupied by men (Wtorkowska, 2020: 66). Though the derived feminine forms appear to have been quite commonly used in the past, they seem to be now often regarded as 'newspeak,' meeting with the disapproval of some Polish native speakers (Cetnarowska, 2023: 64); however, names of jobs which are traditionally perceived as feminine continue to be expressed through derived feminine forms (Krysiak, 2016: 89).

2.2.3. Gender-Neutral and Non-Binary Language

LGBTQ+ activist groups such as Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego advocate for the use of gender-neutral language to promote equality and allow for a linguistic gender expression more inclusive of people who do not fit the gender binary (Vos, 2021). Because gender-neutral and non-binary language are still relatively recent areas in linguistics, they give room for experimentation with the usage of various existing linguistic forms and their modification, as well as creation of novel forms in order to better accommodate the needs of non-binary people and enable them to express their gender identity with more accuracy. Because a great number of such linguistic innovations has already been proposed as experimentative implementations to language and, as one may predict, is likely to continue

to grow in the future, it is difficult to keep track of all suggested changes; therefore, this paper will highlight and discuss only a selection of the most common gender-neutral and non-binary linguistic solutions in English and Polish.

2.2.3.1. Singular 'they'

Before discussing the non-binary usage of singular 'they,' first, a distinction must be made between generic singular 'they' and specific singular 'they.' According to the Oxford English Dictionary, whilst generic 'they' refers to a person whose gender is unknown or unimportant in a given context ('They, pron., sense I.2.b,' 2023), specific 'they' is a pronoun which some, predominantly non-binary, people prefer to be addressed by ('They, Pron., Sense I.2.c,' 2023). Thus, what distinguishes specific 'they' from generic 'they' is the fact that the gender identity of its referent is known. Importantly, generic 'they' dates back to as far as the 15th century, meaning it has been in use since the Middle English period ('They, pron., sense I.2.b,' 2023). Despite the pronoun 'they' only gaining its specific function in the 21st century ('They, Pron., Sense I.2.c,' 2023), it is evident that its grammatically singular form is, in fact, not a novel invention but has already existed and served a gender-neutral purpose for centuries.

According to the Gender Census 2023 (Lodge, 2023) and Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023 (Vos and Misiek, 2023), the highest percentage (74.5% and 82% of the respondents, respectively) of non-binary people declare singular 'they' as their preferred pronoun; however, the results of a questionnaire conducted among the respondents of Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023 regarding their preferred Polish pronouns do not reflect the data collected about their preferred English pronouns. Whilst a total of 82.0% of the respondents answered that at least one of their preferred pronouns was singular 'they,' only a total of 19.8% of them described any of the Polish 3. person plural pronouns (including not only the standard masculine personal and non-masculine personal options but innovative forms such as plural neuter which shall be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.2.3.2.) as their pronouns of choice (Vos and Misiek, 2023). One of the possible reasons for that might be the fact that whilst 'they' is, in its essence, a gender-neutral term which can be used in both singular and plural (i.e. it can refer to a person or group of people of any gender or genders), the same cannot be said about 3. person plural pronouns in Polish.

Due to the presence of grammatical gender, it can be argued that, in Polish, there are no nouns or pronouns which can be described as truly gender-neutral from the linguistic

standpoint. During the process of translating singular 'they,' whether generic or specific, an issue arises: whilst, in English, the pronoun 'they' can be used when referring to both a singular or a plural subject of any gender or genders, resembling singular and plural 'you' in this manner, the same rule does not apply to 3. person plural pronouns in Polish. Though during the post-war times of communist Poland there used to exist the so-called 'solidarity pronoun' 'wy' (2. person plural masculine personal) which was used in reference to a singular subject, regardless of whether its referent was male or female, it appears now to be largely a relic of the past and, in the present day, rarely finds practical usage (Tuszynska, 1982); thus, it can be said that, though grammatically of masculine personal gender, the pronoun 'wy' once used to be a gender-neutral pronoun in the semantic sense. The pronouns 'oni' (3. person plural masculine personal) and 'one' (3. person plural non-masculine personal), however, have not typically been used in reference to a singular specific subject, which may be one of the factors contributing to a significantly lower popularity of those pronouns among non-binary people.

Another thing to be considered is the fact that neither 'oni' nor 'one' are truly gender-neutral in their nature, since they are both primarily determined by the presence (or absence) of a masculine element, thus the names 'masculine personal' and 'non-masculine personal.' Therefore, as both feminine and neuter genders do not constitute masculine gender, they are grouped together in plural as non-masculine personal gender.

Since the pronoun 'they' is primarily associated with the plural number, the need has arisen for its slight modification to better suit the usage when in reference to non-binary people. What that change assumes is that, despite still taking plural forms of verbs, the pronoun 'they' can behave like a singular pronoun in its reflexive form; that basically means that it is allowed to replace the plural reflexive suffix '-selves,' which is normally applied to plural 'they' to form the reflexive pronoun 'themselves,' with the singular '-self' to indicate singularity of its referent, making this particular variant of singular 'they' resemble singular 'you' in this sense. Whilst the Gender Census 2023 only features the 'they/them/themself' variant of the pronoun 'they' as an option (Lodge, 2023), Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023 includes both the 'they/themself' and the 'they/themselves' variants, suggesting that the choice of the singular or plural forms depends on personal preference, as reflected in the data; interestingly enough, although it seems that a significant number of Polish non-binary people (63.3%), too, have adopted the grammatically singular 'they,' still there are some (39.4%) who declare the grammatically plural version of the semantically singular 'they' to be their pronoun of choice (Vos and Misiek, 2023).

2.2.3.2. Neuter Pronouns

The use of neuter gender in Polish in 1. and 2. person singular dates back to Adamowicz (1796: 89) and Jakubowicz (1823: 197), who both list the full neuter declension and conjugation alongside masculine and feminine ones, suggesting that those three genders are grammatically equal and neither of them should be considered 'weak' from the linguistic standpoint. Though in recent years it has been a subject of debate whether, in Polish, such 'neutering' of the 1. and 2. person singular is grammatically and semantically correct, Rada Języka Polskiego (2003) has confirmed that neuter inflexion in such cases is, in fact, allowed, noticing that there is no rule which would outwardly forbid Polish language users from performing such a grammatical operation. They note, however, that such inflexion is rather unusual and describe it as only potential, expressing doubt regarding whether there even exists a referent to whom those neuter inflexional endings could apply in 1. and 2. person singular apart from certain fairy tale characters of neuter gender (Rada Języka Polskiego, 2003); the same view is shared by Nagórko (1996: 114) who, despite including 1. and 2. person inflexional endings in her exemplary tables on verb conjugation, explains that those forms are only relevant in fairy tales. Wróbel (2001: 142), too, is of the opinion that neuter verbal inflexion of 1. and 2. person singular is only hypothetical, directly stating that such declension does not apply in standard communication and listing neuter forms of all conjugated verbs for 1. and 2. person singular, which were used as examples, in parentheses, unlike in any other case where the inflected forms are written in plain text. However, as the reality surrounding gender in the social context and how it is understood has since changed, it seems that the neuter pronoun 'ono' has gained some real-world users.

According to Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023 (Vos and Misiek, 2023), 48.0% of Polish-speaking non-binary people prefer being referred to by normative Polish neuter forms; moreover, other linguistic changes began to arise because of the increased usage of the neuter forms in 1. and 2. person singular. Though not officially recognised as of this moment, non-standard forms of neuter declension have emerged so as to create more grammatical variety and allow non-binary Polish language users more freedom of expression. The official rules of neuter declension in Polish assume that the neuter pronoun 'ono' takes the same forms as the masculine pronoun 'on' in genitive, dative, instrumental, and locative (see Table 6), which might carry masculine connotations to the supposedly gender-neutral pronoun 'ono.' In order to accommodate those non-binary people who may feel

uncomfortable being addressed to by the pronoun 'ono' because of the previously mentioned binary masculine connotations etched into its standard declension, a few alternative ways of declining this pronoun have been proposed.

	on	ono
Nom	on	ono
Gen	jego, niego, go	jego, niego, go
Dat	jemu, niemu, mu	jemu, niemu, mu
Acc	jego, niego	je, nie
Inst	nim	nim
Loc	nim	nim

Table 6. Normative declensions of Polish pronouns 'on' and 'ono' (Wróbel, 2001: 121)

To avoid the necessity of using the masculine forms present in the normative declension of the pronoun 'ono' (often shortened to 'ono/jego,' since such format distinguishes it from other forms of its declension based on the genitive featured after the slash), multiple modified variants of the pronoun have been put forward as alternatives (see Table 7).

	ono/jej	ono/jejgo	ono/jeno	ono/ich
Nom	ono	ono	ono	ono
Gen	jej, niej	jejgo, niejgo	no, jeno, nieno	ich, nich
Dat	jej, niej	jejmu, niejmu	nu, jenu, nienu	im, nim
Acc	je, nie	jągo, niągo	je, nie	je, nie
Inst	nią	niąnim	niem	nimi
Loc	niej	niejnim	niem	nich

Table 7. Some of the alternative declensions of Polish pronoun 'ono' (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego. n.d.b., n.d.d, n.d.e, n.d.f)

The first of the proposed variants (preferred by 13.3% of non-binary Polish language users [Vos and Misiek, 2023]), having the form of 'ono/jej,' appears to be a direct counterpart to the normative 'ono/jego' declension, as it adopts feminine forms in place of masculine ones in genitive, dative, instrumental, and locative (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.d),

thus still leaving the pronoun 'half-binary' in the grammatical sense. Since feminine forms may not appeal to all non-binary Polish language users as they are borrowed directly from the declension of the 3. person singular feminine pronoun 'ona,' carrying the feminine connotations into this variant of the pronoun 'ono,' another solution has been proposed in the form of merging all corresponding standard masculine and feminine inflected forms together, which has resulted in the creation of neological inflected forms. What that basically means is that whilst, for example, genitive of the 3. person singular masculine pronoun 'on' takes the form 'jego,' and that of the 3. person singular feminine 'ona' – 'jej,' the neological form resulting from merging them together would be 'jejgo,' and for that reason this kind of declension can be called 'ono/jejgo' in short (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.e). Interestingly, these merged forms under the neuter declension are significantly less popular than the feminine ones, as they are preferred by only 5.8% non-binary Polish language users (Vos and Misiek, 2023). Still different forms of neological neuter declension have been created, 'ono/jeno' being one of them. It features, as it seems, masculine inflected forms modified in spelling to serve a gender-neutral purpose, thus, replacing the genitive masculine forms 'go,' 'jego,' and 'niego' with 'no,' 'jeno,' and 'nieno,' as well as the dative 'mu,' 'jemu,' and 'niemu' with 'nu,' 'jenu,' and 'nienu,' accordingly, whereas the instrumental and locative masculine form 'nim' gains an extra vowel becoming 'niem,' instead (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.f). This variant of the 'ono' pronoun surpasses the 'ono/jej' declension in popularity, being the preferred pronoun of 15.4% of non-binary Polish language users. The fourth alternative way of declining the neuter pronoun 'ono,' declared by 13.8% of non-binary Polish language users (Vos and Misiek, 2023), features plural forms in place of masculine ones (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.b), likely aiming to rid the pronoun 'ono' of any binary undertones present, in one way or another, in the declensions previously described, doing so quite successfully, as plural masculine personal and non-masculine personal inflected forms do not differ between one another but for accusative in which masculine personal takes the forms 'ich' and 'nich,' and non-masculine personal – 'je' and 'nie'; however, since the normative neuter declension, too, assumes the forms 'je' and 'nie' in accusative, the question of gender neutrality and the grouping of feminine and neuter genders together in plural remains.

In plural, neuter gender becomes fused with pluralised masculine animal, masculine inanimate and feminine genders under the non-masculine personal label, which results in the unification of the inflexional endings of the parts of speech all non-masculine personal nouns come into syntactic relations with, regardless of the gender they assume in singular.

To make the neuter gender a category distinct from and independent of the aforementioned genders, alternative pronouns has been proposed into the Polish plural, one of them being a borrowing from other Slavic languages such as Croatian, Czech and Slovenian, taking the form of 'ona' and being the direct plural counterpart of the neuter pronoun 'ono,' assuming the neological inflexional verb endings '-łośmy' and '-łoście' for the 1. and 2. person plural (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.a) instead of the non-masculine personal endings '-łyśmy' and '-łyście' (Table 8). It must be emphasised that, despite being homonymous, the plural neuter pronoun 'ona' and the singular feminine pronoun 'ona' are two distinct pronouns which should not be confused with one another. According to Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023 (Vos and Misiek, 2023) the plural neuter 'ona' is the preferred pronoun of 6.8% of Polish non-binary language users, being the most popular among the neological Polish neuter plural pronouns; Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego (n.d.a) emphasises, however, that the pronoun itself, as well as the inflexional endings it assumes, is gender-neutral and, thus, does not only apply to non-binary people but can, in fact, be used also when addressing groups of people of any gender or genders.

	non-masc. personal	plural neuter
1.	byłyśmy	byłośmy
2.	byłyście	byłoście
3.	były	były

Table 8. Non-masculine personal and plural neuter conjugation of the verb 'być' ('to be') (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.a)

Vos and Misiek (2023) report that, as of this moment, around 4.2% of non-binary Polish language speakers declare that they use neuter plural forms in speech; however, it is worth noting that whilst masculine personal forms surpass neuter forms in popularity by a rather large margin (declared by 16.6% of the respondents), non-masculine forms surpass them only slightly (declared by 5.4% of the respondents).

As evidenced by both the Gender Census 2023 (Lodge, 2023) and Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023 (Vos and Misiek, 2023), the English neuter pronoun 'it' (declared by 19.4% and 15.2% of the respondents, respectively, as their preferred pronoun) is a significantly less common choice among non-binary people than singular 'they'; moreover, the binary pronouns 'he' and 'she' surpass the pronoun 'it' in popularity in both censuses, suggesting that non-binary people are more discouraged from using English neuter forms than submitting

to the linguistic binary. Upon closer examination, a few possible reasons for this phenomenon come to light, providing important insight as to why the pronoun 'it' is not as popular among non-binary people as singular 'they.'

It can be said that, in the grammatical sense, both singular 'they' and 'it' are technically gender-neutral, i.e. they do not assume the gender of their referent as either male or female; however, whilst 'they' is commonly used in reference to people, whether in singular or in plural, 'it' is primarily associated with descriptions of things, animals, and children ('it, pron., sense I.1.a.i,' 2023). That association may cause the pronoun 'it' to sound both dehumanising and infantilising when applied to adult individuals (Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego, n.d.c). In fact, neuter pronouns in various languages, including English and Polish, have a history of being used as a means to mock, degrade, dehumanise, or antagonise their referent ('it, pron., sense I.1.a.iii,' 2023; Knoblock, n.d.), 'othering' their referent and implying that they are less than human and do not deserve to be perceived as equal to the rest of the society. The stigma around the use of neuter pronouns when referring to people, which the aforementioned practice has created and reinforced, might be one of the reasons why such pronouns are not, as of this moment, more popular amongst non-binary people, however, it has been emphasised by Kolektyw Rada Języka Neutralnego (n.d.c) that the increased usage of neuter forms might result in their normalisation and, with time, they might lose those degrading connotations which are currently associated with them.

Still another problem arises from the Polish name of the neuter gender itself, that is, 'rodzaj nijaki.' Though originally intended to mean 'neither' ('nijaki – 2. żaden,' n.d.) or 'of neither gender' (Jakubowicz, 1823: 39), the term 'nijaki,' now used colloquially, is synonymous with adjectives such as 'dull,' 'bland' and 'lacklustre' among others, all connected with the meanings of being indistinctive and plain ('nijaki – 1. bezbarwny,' n.d.). That is why Vos (2022) calls for the replacement of the word 'nijaki' with the inoffensive option 'neutralny' ('neutral') when it comes to grammatical gender to embrace those whose gender identities do not fit the binary without having them feel as if those, rather unflattering, connotations that come with the word 'nijaki' invalidate their gender experience in any way.

Whilst 'they' can be used generically when the gender and preferred pronouns of its referent are not known, 'ono,' as of this moment, does not have a universally recognised generic function which would make the pronoun gender-neutral and, therefore, applicable to persons of any gender or genders; because of this current lack of the generic function, it can be questioned whether the pronoun 'ono,' though, in theory, not assuming the gender

of its referent, can be described as truly gender-neutral. However, efforts have been made to introduce generic 'ono' and the generic plural neuter pronoun 'ona' (not to be confused with 3. person singular feminine 'ona') into the Polish language with the aim of making the said pronouns applicable not only in reference to non-binary people, but people whose gender and preferred pronouns are not known in general, as well as groups of people which may comprise people of different genders, in hopes of making both 'ono' and its plural 'ona' as inclusive as singular and plural 'they' (Vos, 2021).

2.2.3.3. Honorifics

To promote more inclusive and universal gender expression as well as offer non-binary people another choice beyond just the binary 'Mr' and 'Miss/Mrs/Ms' titles, a gender-neutral option 'Mx' (usually pronounced /məks/ or /mɪks/) has been introduced into the English language ('Mx,' n.d.). At first, it was proposed that the newly coined 'Mx' be used in place of the binary titles so as to simplify communication and have it be a, hypothetically, uniform way of addressing both men and women (Kite, 1977: 16) but, as evidenced by Lodge (2023), it has recently been adopted by non-binary people, becoming the most popular title of choice (18.7% of the respondents) amongst those of them who have declared having a preference for being referred to by any honorific in particular. As time went by, more gender-neutral titles have been created, including 'Ind' ('individual'), 'Mre' ('mystery'), 'Pr' ('person'), 'M,' 'Misc' ('miscellaneous'), 'Msr' ('Miss' and 'Sir' combined), 'Myr,' 'Sai,' and 'Ser' (Mowbray, 2017), among others; however, they appear not to be as popular as 'Mx' among non-binary people, as they are not visibly reflected in the Gender Census 2023 but for 'Ind' which accounts for the preference of 9.4% of the respondents (Lodge, 2023).

According to *Wielki słownik języka polskiego PAN* ('państwo – 3. szanowni,' n.d.) and *Słownik gramatyczny języka polskiego* (Woliński et al., 2020), 'Państwo,' meaning 'Mr and Mrs,' is a plurale tantum, i.e. a plural word which does not have a singular counterpart and only takes plural forms of verbs and adjectives; therefore, since, as an honorific, it usually applies to married couples and groups of people of different genders, in theory, it should not apply to individual persons; in actuality, however, some non-binary people have adopted 'Państwo' as their title of choice. What might come as even more of a surprise, as reflected in Vos and Misiek (2023), though some non-binary people, in fact, prefer being referred to as 'Państwo' accompanied by 3. person plural masculine

personal inflexional endings (29.9% of the respondents), others treat it as if it were a singular pronoun and use it with 3. person singular neuter inflexional endings (32.5%).

Niebinarny Spis Powszechny (Vos and Misiek, 2023) has also shown that the majority of Polish non-binary people have a preference for being referred to with no particular honorifics but, instead, prefer to be addressed with 2. person singular inflexional endings (66.5% of the respondents); this finding corresponds to the results of the Gender Census 2023 where the largest group of the respondents (40.5%) declared having the same preference (Lodge: 2023).

2.2.3.4. Avoidance of Gendered Forms

Another solution to express gender neutrality is to avoid gendered forms altogether, which can be done in a variety of ways; for example, in Polish, one may opt for noun phrases consisting of the noun 'person' modified by either an adjectival or another noun phrase phrase describing a particular quality of its referent (Hansen and Żółtak, 2022: 2028). This strategy allows the speaker to refer not only to someone whose gender is not relevant in a given context, but also to that whom they do not know without having to guess the 3. person pronoun that particular person uses and, thus, without the risk of accidentally misgendering them, as well as to refer to non-binary people with respect for their identity, refraining from labelling them as 'a girl/woman' or 'a boy/man.' Vos and Misiek (2023) list those phrases under the name 'osobatywy' (which can be roughly translated into English as 'person forms' or 'personatives'). The potential issue, however, lies in the fact that the Polish word 'osoba' ('person') itself is, grammatically, of feminine gender, thus imposing feminine inflexional endings on the parts of speech it comes into syntactic relations with, which may attach some feminine connotations to this seemingly gender-neutral noun. Though the word 'osoba' is, semantically speaking, gender-neutral, it does not resolve the issue of which 2. person singular inflexional endings one should use when addressing a person whose pronoun preferences they do not know since, as it has been already discussed, there is no grammatical gender which could be applied universally to all subjects regardless of their gender identity. Nevertheless, Vos and Misiek (2023) report that as many as 67.5% of Polish non-binary people prefer to be referred to by person forms.

The problematic case of gendered inflexional endings in Polish, however, could be resolved by their complete (or near-complete) avoidance, as it is reflected in Niebinarny Spis Powszechny 2023, where Vos and Misiek (2023) found that even as many as 56.9%

of non-binary Polish speakers prefer to avoid gendered forms when possible. This can be done by, for instance, replacing active past tense verbs with present tense verbs, as proposed by Caban (2020: 7–8) and Misiek (2020: 167). Since 1. person singular verbs stay gender-neutral in the present tense, as opposed to the past tense which imposes gendered inflexional endings on them, the speaker may choose to describe their past actions with present tense verbs accompanied by appropriate adverbs of time to signify that the action took place in the past.

Grammatical gender neutrality in Polish can be achieved further by replacing active past tense verbs with passive voice to describe one's past actions or states by stressing the activity done over the subject, as if the action described was done to them rather than by them. The verb in passive is then accompanied by the dative of the 1. person singular pronoun 'mi,' which may be then followed by the reflexive pronoun 'się'; however, Hansen and Żółtak (2022: 2028) emphasise that not only is passive voice quite uncommon in spoken discourse, but, even moreso, this particular mode in which non-binary people use passive voice can come across as strange and unnatural to the general public. In fact, Hansen and Żółtak (2022: 2031) found that texts which utilise this kind of gender-neutral passive voice, though more inclusive, appear less comprehensible to an ordinary person than those written in gendered active voice.

In English, since gender does not influence the inflexion of the parts of speech which a noun agrees with, it is predominantly expressed through 3. person singular pronouns (Misiek, 2020: 166). Thus, because 3. person singular pronouns appear quite frequently in any type of discourse, their misuse might cause transgender and non-binary people potential discomfort; however, as it appears, some genderqueer people do not feel inclined towards the use of any pronoun in particular. According to Lodge (2023), 13.2% of English-speaking non-binary people either try to avoid being referred to by the use of personal pronouns altogether or prefer to have their name used in place of pronouns. While this strategy, too, might potentially obfuscate the message due to the repetition of nouns, it does, nevertheless, allow for more gender-neutral expression.

2.2.4. Gender Ambiguity and Non-Binary Genders in Translation

As mentioned before, gender assignment does not happen just a single time but repeatedly throughout the entirety of an individual's life. Thus, when translating from a less gendered language to a heavily gendered one, the translator often becomes the decisive person whose

responsibility is, precisely, to assign (or reassign) a gender to a gender-ambiguous subject present in the ST. It may happen that, in a given English text, a subject's gender is either not revealed at all or is directly stated to be non-binary, which can pose a difficulty for the translator who then, in order to translate the text into Polish, has to choose between trying to adopt gender-neutral forms as to preserve the original gender ambiguity or non-binary gender of the subject, and imposing one of the binary grammatical genders upon the said subject (Misiek, 2020). The accuracy of such translation seems to be of significance, since "the translator, like the reader, concretizes the intention of the Author" (Pantuchowicz, 2018: 133); thus, regardless of the potential difficulties and barriers imposed by the language system of the target audience, it can be argued that the translation should, nevertheless, remain faithful to the original thought behind the ST, without "avoiding the complexities and diversities of gender issues, however controversial they may be" (Pantuchowicz, 2018: 135).

Grammar plays a significant role in the process of translation, as applying grammatical structures corresponding to those used in the ST seems not to be just a formal operation but, in some cases, a conscious and carefully considered choice, since grammar can be a carrier of meaning and it can either enrich or reduce the amount of information present in the TT when compared to the ST (Wojtasiewicz, 2007: 31–32; Ferens, 2022: 120, 122). According to Wojtasiewicz (2007: 33), a language deficient in structural features is one which lacks a certain linguistic feature, such as a certain grammatical structure, which exists in another language; however, it can only be described as such when analysed with regard to a specific linguistic device, as one language can be deficient in some structural features when compared to another language, but richer in some other ones. He suggests that, while it might not be possible to exactly replicate a certain structural feature present in the ST when translating from one language to another, different linguistic features which already exist in the TL can be applied to preserve and express the same sense in an attempt to bridge the structural gap between the SL and the TL (Wojtasiewicz, 2007: 34). It is argued by Pieciul-Karmińska (2019: 129) that, by employing linguistic creativity in the process of translation between languages and taking the risk of bypassing or modifying the rules which govern the TL, it might be possible to "preserve something from the source linguistic worldview and thus enrich the target worldview" as a result, since translation, being a "meeting point" for various cultures, "introduces new thought systems that would not have had a chance to exist in the TL unless it is endowed with adequate linguistic means." This can be seen particularly in the cases of texts where the subject of translation is either ambiguous in terms of gender or

non-binary, which can happen to be an obstacle that translators will have to face during the process of translation.

It can be argued that submitting to potential seeming restrictions of the language system a text is translated into, which results in the alteration or eradication of some information present in the ST, whether intentional or not, is a form of linguistic censorship. Pieciul-Karmińska (2019: 126–127) illustrates this phenomenon on the example of 'das Sams,' the titular character from E.T.A. Hoffmann's fairy tale *Das fremde Kind* ('The Strange Child') and Paul Maar's children's book series, whose gender neutrality and supposed genderlessness encoded in its source language, that being German, in both grammar, as it is referred to by the neuter determiner 'das' and the neuter pronoun 'es,' and in the content of the tale, since the sex of 'das Sams' is not specified but implied as neither male nor female, were lost in the Polish translations which she discusses, where masculine grammatical gender was adopted in place of neuter and the neuter name 'das Sams' was changed into masculine 'Sobek.' She offers her own account on the matter, suggesting applying neuter inflexional endings and giving the character the neuter name 'Sobotko' in the Polish translation as an alternative solution which, according to her, could possibly be more accurate to the ST as it would better reflect the neutral aspect encoded into the character of 'das Sams' (Pieciul-Karmińska, 2019: 127). As the genderless and universal aspect of the neuter gender present in the tale about 'das Sams' was lost in translation from German to Polish, it seems that a part of the German linguistic worldview, treating its neuter gender as gender-neutral and universal, was lost with it, seemingly making way to the Polish androcentric thought manifested, in this case, through the assignment of masculine gender to the character. Pieciul-Karmińska (2019: 129) suggests that the Polish language is deficient when compared to, in this case, German in the sense that it has no linguistic means of conveying gender neutrality effectively, as it seems that the Polish masculine gender, though at times used generically, is not truly universal and, thus, does not serve the same purpose as the German neuter gender does. The gender-neutral aspect of the neuter gender in German is particularly noticeable in fairy tales, where numerous characters are referred to with the neuter determiner 'das' regardless of their sex to signify their universality and allow the readers of any genders to relate to them (Pieciul-Karmińska, 2019: 121).

Compared to the previously discussed example where a semantically gender-ambiguous subject is directly referred to by the use of neuter pronouns and determiners in the ST, therefore having an assigned grammatical gender, there are also cases in which the subject of translation is assigned neither a semantic nor a grammatical

gender. Such an instance is discussed by Ferens (2022) who proposes and analyses her own translation of the novel titled *Written on the Body* where the name, age, and gender of the narrator are not revealed throughout the entirety of the novel, since neither verb nor adjective endings in English distinguish between genders, which presents a challenge to Polish translators who have to either assign a binary gender to the narrator, modify the conventional Polish grammatical rules to employ some form of non-binary expression or navigate the translation in a way in which no gendered forms would be used with regard to the narrator. She mentions that in the already existing translation performed by Hanna Mizerska, in the end, feminine inflexional endings were applied because the author herself did not consent to the use of masculine forms in the translation (Ferens, 2022: 122), thus enriching the text with the information about the narrator's gender, which was not present in the ST. Ferens (2022: 24–25), however, decides to avoid gendered forms altogether by performing translation shifts, using non-personal and passive forms or changing past tense constructions into present tense constructions in an attempt to avoid gendered inflexional endings in order to preserve the gender-neutrality and universality of the character intended by the author; as a result of that, in some cases the main focus of the sentence and the dynamics of the situation change, sometimes even pushing the person of the narrator to the background in order to express, for example, some kind of action performed by them in the past without using gendered verb endings, where the action itself performed becomes the subject and, thus, main focus of the sentence.

The issue presents itself yet differently when a text no longer describes just a gender-ambiguous subject but a person of non-binary gender identity. Jędros (2022) puts forward an analysis of her own attempt to translate a fragment of *I Wish You All the Best* written by Mason Deaver, a novel which features a non-binary character, Ben, who uses 'they/them' pronouns, into Polish, and provides reasoning for the choices made by her during the translation process where she decided to assign plural pronouns along with plural masculine personal inflexional endings to the said character. While she acknowledges that the semantically singular variants of 'my,' 'wy' and 'oni' may be understood by some people as honorifics or as solidarity pronouns, particularly by those raised in the post-war communist Poland, she argues that these pronouns have lost such connotations and that the youngest generations have already begun to associate their singular use with non-binary people (Jędros, 2022: 139–140). Interestingly, she applied plural forms consequently, that is not only in 3., but 1. and 2. person, as well (Jędros, 2022: 140), regardless of whether such an intervention was necessary to avoid binary masculine or feminine inflexional endings such

as, for example, in cases where 1. and 2. person singular present tense could easily be used since such verb endings would not indicate the referent's gender; she decided, however, to make an exception from this rule and translate the sentence *I am nonbinary* by using a 1. person singular person form in the corresponding sentence *jestem osobą niebinarną* ('I am a non-binary person'), since it seems that this wording is the most commonly used by Polish-speaking non-binary people during their coming out – that is, when they reveal their non-heteronormative gender identity to others (Jędros, 2022: 142). Furthermore, where it was her intention to hide Ben's gender identity before it had been openly revealed in the novel, she employed techniques such as changing the subject of the sentence or purposeful omission of verbs (Jędros, 2022: 140–141). Interestingly, Artur Łuksza, who is the author of the official published Polish translation of the novel, takes a different approach than Jędros and decides to use 'ono/jeno' pronouns (declension as in Table 7) in place of 'they/them,' along with neuter inflexional verb and adjective endings. In the preface to the book Łuksza expresses his motivation behind the choice of pronouns for the character as one grounded in the hope that the use of novel gender-neutral forms by the users of the Polish language will result in the evolution of the language towards inclusivity and higher awareness of gender non-binary (Deaver, 2022: 8).

3. Analysis of Techniques Applied in Polish Translations of *Monster High* Content

The following subchapters are dedicated to the contrastive analysis of Polish translations of a non-binary character, based on chosen dubbed dialogue lines from two types of audiovisual promotional *Monster High* content and their Polish adaptations. The study was motivated by the existence of a research gap around the topic of translating non-binary language from English into Polish, which is likely partly due to the apparent under-representation of non-binary identities in English literature and media, a case even more noticeable in Polish, which, unlike English, is a heavily gendered language due to the presence of grammatical gender, which can pose a difficulty to translators who are to translate a non-binary character into Polish. The research was conducted with the aim of determining what translation strategies and techniques were employed in the process of translating the non-binary character present in the ST and the language used in reference to them, whether and how these techniques differed from one another, as well as exploring other possible solutions to translating the character from English into Polish.

3.1. Materials Used

Monster High is an American doll franchise created by Garrett Sander and owned by Mattel, which launched its first generation in 2010, the second one in 2018, and, the most recent, third one in 2020. It is promoted largely through audiovisual content targeted at children and young teens, such as full-length films, cartoon series, songs, and games, as well as physical media like books and magazines, all centred around a fictional high school attended by teenage characters, whose names and designs were inspired by monsters and mythical creatures present in literature, pop culture, mythology, and folklore. The main premise of *Monster High* is to celebrate diversity and promote inclusivity and acceptance, which is likely one of the reasons why one of the main characters, Frankie Stein (inspired by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*), though originally female, was reimagined as non-binary and assigned 'they/them' pronouns in the third generation of the franchise. Other central characters of *Monster High* franchise include Clawdeen Wolf, a half-werewolf, half-human girl, and Draculaura, the daughter of Dracula, the famous vampire character from Bram Stoker's novel of the same name. The stories taking place in *Monster High* universe usually centre around Frankie, Clawdeen, and Draculaura, as a trio of friends, and their adventures in the titular Monster High.

One of the promotional media for the third generation of *Monster High* dolls is a full-length live-action musical fantasy film titled *Monster High: The Movie*, directed by Todd Holland, written by Jenny Jaffe, Greg Erb, and Jason Oremland; it was produced in Canada and the United States by Mattel Television, Brightlight Pictures, and Nickelodeon Productions, and released on October 6th, 2022, on Paramount+ and Nickelodeon (later also available on other platforms, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Apple TV). Its dubbed Polish version, realised by HIVENTY Poland, with dialogues translated by Aleksandra Dziewit, premiered on March 12th, 2023, on Nickelodeon Polska and TeenNick. *Monster High: The Movie* received four awards, the most notable of which was a Children's & Family Emmy Award 2023 in the category 'Outstanding Choreography,' awarding the work done by the film's choreographer Heather Laura Gray. Moreover, Lilah Fitzgerald was awarded with a Young Artist Award 2023 in the category 'Best Performance in a TV Movie: Teen Artist' for her role in the film as the zombie side character, Ghoulia Yelps. The film also received two Leo Awards 2023 in the categories 'Best Hairstyling in a Television Movie' and 'Best Make-Up in a Television Movie,' a nomination for a Kid's Choice Blimp Award 2023 in the category 'Favorite Movie,' and nine other nominations for its cinematography, casting, costume designs, sound design, and original soundtrack, among others. The film was later followed by a sequel titled *Monster High 2*, which was released on October 5th, 2023, on Nickelodeon and Paramount+.

An animated fantasy comedy TV series titled *Monster High* was developed by Shea Fontana and produced by Mattel Television, Xentrix Studios, and Nickelodeon Animation Studio, as another piece of content promoting the third generation of the franchise. Its American premiere took place on Nickelodeon alongside the film on October 6th, 2022, with its dubbed Polish version, realised by HIVENTY Poland, with dialogues translated by Magdalena Dwojak, premiering on April 1st, 2023, on Nickelodeon Polska and Nicktoons. The series later became available on other platforms, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video. The first season consists of 26 episodes, each around 20 minutes long, the majority of which is split into two sub-episodes each. The series received a nomination for a Blimp Award in the category 'Favorite Cartoon' during Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards 2024, as well as a nomination for a GLAAD Media Award in the category 'Outstanding Children's Programming' during 35th Annual GLAAD Media Awards 2024, an award ceremony hosted by Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation to honour various media figures for LGBTQ+ inclusivity and representation in the media. The second season of the series premiered on March 11th, 2024, on Nickelodeon and Paramount+.

3.2. Data Analysis

Polish translations in the form of dubbed dialogue lines from the first live-action film and the first season of the animated TV series promoting the third generation of *Monster High* were the subject of the analysis. The film was analysed in its full length (~92 minutes); in the case of the TV series, only the first four episodes (seven sub-episodes in total) were analysed, so as to roughly match the duration of the film (~80 minutes in total). The analysis was conducted with the primary aim to determine what strategies were employed in the process of translating the non-binary character into Polish, making this study product-oriented qualitative secondary data research. Two parallel corpora were created out of the data gathered through the process of non-probability sampling, based on the following criteria:

(a) the SL phrase contains any of the gender signifiers discussed in the subchapters of chapter 2.2.3 with regards to Frankie Stein;

(b) the TL phrase contains any of the gender signifiers discussed in the subchapters of chapter 2.2.3. with regards to Frankie Stein;

(c) the TL phrase contains any of the gender signifiers discussed in chapter 2.2.2. with regards to Frankie Stein; or

(d) the direct translation of the SL phrase would likely contain one or more gender signifiers discussed in chapter 2.2.2. with regards to Frankie Stein.

By applying these criteria, a collection of phrases which contained (or would likely contain, if translated directly) any of the previously discussed gender indicators, either in English or in Polish, was extracted and transcribed, forming two parallel corpora – one for the film and one for the TV series (see Appendix A and Appendix B) – which contained SL utterances and their corresponding TL equivalents, and which serve as the data sample for this analysis. For the sake of convenience, only the most representative examples demonstrating different approaches to translating the non-binary character present in the source were selected from the corpora to be further analysed, as to avoid repetition and superfluity. Additionally, some alternative solutions discussed in chapter 2.2.3 were brought forward, where applicable, as to explore other possibilities of translating the character in question, whilst being particularly mindful of their non-binary gender identity and its reflection in the language. Upon

preliminary analysis, the translation techniques used were categorised into: I. neuter forms, II. person forms, III. feminine and plural non-masculine personal forms, IV. plural masculine personal forms, and V. omission of gendered forms, and the examples shall be analysed in this order.

I. Neuter forms

(1a) *I'm fifteen days old and **my pronouns are 'they/them'**!*
(1b) *Mam piętnaście dni i **jestem niebinarne**.*

('The Monstering,' 2022: 7:40–7:43; 'Potworzastość [The Monstering],' 2023: 7:40–7:43)

The first utterance to be analysed is one which marks Frankie's first appearance, as well as the very moment they reveal their gender identity and preferred pronouns, in the TV series. Here, translation shift occurred, by which the SL clause *my pronouns are they/them,* the subject of which are *pronouns*, took a different subject in the TT, that being Frankie themself, shifting the attention from Frankie's preferred pronouns to their gender-identity in the sentence *jestem niebinarne* ('I am non-binary'). It is worth noticing that even though in the TT Frankie does not directly state what their preferred pronouns are, adjective *niebinarne* ('non-binary') contains in itself the neuter inflexional ending *-e*, indicating that Frankie's preferred pronoun is the Polish neuter pronoun *ono*; therefore, in the Polish version it is not only explicitly stated that Frankie is non-binary, but also that Frankie uses neuter grammatical gender when referring to themself, meaning that the Polish translation of this particular utterance contains in itself two pieces of information regarding Frankie's gender, while the TT contains just one. Additionally, taking into consideration that Frankie's preferred pronoun is the neuter pronoun *ono*, which can be deduced knowing they use neuter grammatical inflexional endings when referring to themself, if the TL phrase were to display formal correspondence to the phrase *my pronouns are they/them*, depending on Frankie's preferred declension variant, it could have been alternatively translated as, for example – if a neological neuter declension were to be applied – *moje zaimki to ono/jeno* ('my pronouns are it/its') or, less literally, *używam zaimków ono/jeno* ('I use it/its pronouns').

(2a) ***Got lost** last week on my way to the creepeteria and **found** all sorts of secret stuff.*
(2b) *Kiedyś **zgubiłom się** idąc do upiornej kawiarni i **odkryłom** mnóstwo tajemnic.*

('Food Fight,' 2022: 04:09–04:14; 'Walka na jedzenie [Food Fight],' 2023: 04:09–04:14)

Here, the translation is rather direct, as both of the 1. person past tense active verbs present in the SL sentence were translated into the TL as 1. person past tense active verbs, as well. No shifts occurred, as the clause *[I] got lost* was translated as *zgubiłom się*, and the clause *[I] found* was translated as *odkryłom*, both verbs taking the past neuter inflexional ending *-łom*. Translating this sentence in a way which would not signify the speaker's gender but which would sound natural and, at the same time, the dubbing of which would roughly fit the length of the utterance, would likely pose a difficulty, which may be the reason why the translators decided to translate the verbs present in this utterance directly.

(3a) ***I'm feeling** all… feelings-y. Like **there are little electric bolts** in my stomach.*

(3b) ***Poczułom się**… bardzo dziwnie, jakbym **miało ładunki prądu** w brzuchu.*

('Portrait of a Monster,' 2022: 13:57–14:01; 'Portret potwora [Portrait of a Monster],' 2023: 13:57–14:01)

In this example, the present tense was replaced with past tense, as the present tense phrase *I'm feeling* was expressed in the TL in the past tense as *poczułom się* ('[I] felt'), resulting in the use of neuter verb inflexion. Interestingly, it did not seem necessary to perform such a shift, when analysed as-is, since the present tense phrase *I'm feeling* could have been easily translated as the present tense phrase *czuję się*, which, by addition, would be entirely gender-neutral. What follows is the construction *jakbym miało ładunki prądu w brzuchu*, which roughly translates to 'like I had electric charges in my stomach' and includes the neuter past subjunctive *miało* ('had') in the construction *jakbym miało* ('like [I] had'). The subject of the sentence was changed from *electric bolts* to the covert *[ja]* ('I') in the TL, resulting in the use of the neuter inflected past subjunctive; however, if the SL phrase were to be translated with a structure shift but without the change of the subject, the TL phrase could have taken the form of *jakby w moim brzuchu były ładunki elektryczne*, which does not contain any gendered forms. Nevertheless, the translators decided to employ past neuter inflexion in the entire sentence, instead, which, as one may wonder, could have been a decision undertaken in order to preserve the length of the original SL sentence, or one made for purely stylistic reasons; another possible explanation is that this shift was performed for extralinguistic reasons, with the intention of normalising the use of neuter inflexion in Polish.

II.   Person forms

(4a) *I'm Frankie, **pronouns 'they/them'** […].*
(4b) *Jestem Frankie, **osoba niebinarna** […].*

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(*Monster High: The Movie*, 2022: 0:13:08–0:13:10; *Monster High: Film* [*Monster High: The Movie*], 2024: 0:13:08–0:13:10)

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This utterance takes place during Frankie's first appearance in the film when they introduce themself to Clawdeen, stating their gender identity and preferred pronouns. The noun phrase *pronouns 'they/them,'* implicitly meaning *[my] pronouns [are] 'they/them,'* was replaced in the Polish dubbing with the noun phrase *osoba niebinarna* ('a non-binary person'). Though not formally correspondent to the SL phrase, the TL phrase *osoba niebinarna* does, nevertheless, relate to the fact they do not use either of the binary pronouns 'he' or 'she' but 'they,' which is the pronoun most commonly used among non-binary people; moreover, since the sentence 'jestem osobą niebinarną' ('I am a non-binary person') is the most common way of coming out in Polish, as mentioned in chapter 2.2.4, using the phrase *osoba niebinarna* here fits the context of the utterance. It also results in the shift of the focus from Frankie's preferred pronouns to their non-binary gender identity in the TL; here, however, because of that, it is not yet known what pronouns Frankie uses and what grammatical gender applies to them in the TL.

III.   Feminine and plural non-masculine personal forms

(5a) ***You know** that whole strong emotion fight or flight thing?*
(5b) ***Słyszałaś** kiedyś o reakcji 'walka lub ucieczka'?*

<div align="right">

(*Monster High: The Movie*, 2022: 0:36:36–0:36:38; *Monster High: Film*, 2023: 0:36:36–0:36:38)

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This utterance marks the first time that Frankie is assigned a grammatical gender in the Polish translation of the film. Here, a translation shift occurred where the present tense phrase *you know* was replaced with a past tense feminine inflected verb *słyszałaś* ('[you] heard') in Polish, causing the question to take the form of 'have you ever heard of the 'fight or flight' response' as a result. Because English does not have grammatical gender, the SL present simple tense phrase *you know* is, in itself, gender-neutral; the corresponding TL past tense phrase – *słyszałaś* – however, contains in itself the feminine inflexional ending *-aś*.

Alternatively, if the original gender neutrality were to be preserved, a present tense phrase which would not mark a grammatical gender – for example, *wiesz czym jest reakcja 'walka lub ucieczka?'* ('[do you] know what the 'fight or flight' response is?') – could have been used, instead.

(6a) ***I found** mayonnaise!*

(6b) ***Znalazłam** majonez!*

<div align="right">

(*Monster High: The Movie*, 2022: 0:55:11–0:55:13; *Monster High: Film* [*Monster High: The Movie*], 2023: 0:55:11–0:55:13)

</div>

In this example, the translation is quite direct and no translation shifts occurred. Because of that, the TL sentence, despite being nearly formally correspondent to the SL sentence, contains the past tense feminine inflected verb *znalazłam* ('[I] found'), this time uttered by Frankie themself. Some gender-neutral alternatives may be brought forward, such as, for example, *mam majonez* ('I have got mayonnaise'), which utilises the present tense instead of the past tense, or *udało mi się znaleźć majonez* ('I managed to find mayonnaise'), in which the impersonal passive reflexive construction *udało mi się* ('I managed' – passive) is employed; however, it would likely be difficult to fit the latter option in dubbing, as it is significantly longer than the SL sentence.

(7a) *Frankie, **you** literally know my deepest, darkest secret.*

(7b) *Frankie, **ty jedna** znasz najmroczniejszy z moich sekretów.*

<div align="right">

(*Monster High: The Movie*, 2022: 0:39:27–0:39:31; *Monster High: Film* [*Monster High: The Movie*], 2023: 0:39:27–0:39:31)

</div>

Here, the feminine cardinal numeral *jedna* ('one') was used with reference to Frankie in the TL sentence which roughly translates to 'you are the only one who knows my darkest secret,' once again marking their gender as feminine. If grammatical gender neutrality were to be preserved, a construction such as *tylko ty znasz* ('only you know') could have been used, instead, as to still emphasise that Frankie is the one and only person to know Clawdeen's secret, but without the necessity to use a gendered form.

(8a) *And you **two** [...] **you should** be ashamed [...]*

(8b) *A wy **dwie** [...] **powinnyście** się wstydzić [...]*

In this example, the feminine numeral *dwie* ('two') was used with reference to Frankie and Draculaura as a group of two in the phrase in vocative *wy dwie* ('you two'), followed by a plural non-masculine personal inflected verb *powinnyście* ('you should'). It is worth noticing that the numeral used is of strictly feminine gender, referring to a group of two subjects of which both are of feminine gender. It can be argued whether the collective numeral *dwoje* along with plural masculine personal inflected verb *powinniście* ('you should') should have been used, instead, as it is used with reference to groups in which there are two people of different genders, which is usually based on the binary gender distinction of male–female. Another solution would be to simply omit the numeral entirely; however, this would still leave it to question which grammatical gender should be applied in the verb inflexion that follows. Alternatively, the gender-neutral numerical noun *dwójka* could find its usage in a sentence like *wasza dwójka powinna się wstydzić* ('the two of you should be ashamed'), which would not hint at the gender of either of the referents.

(9a) *So, tomorrow Bloodgood hits the lavatory at 9:17, **we** sneak in and shave the mug.*

(9b) *Dobra, to jutro ona idzie do łazienki o 9:17, a **my trzy** – do gabinetu.*

In (8), a cardinal numeral was present in the ST, and its TL equivalent was included in the TT, as well. Here, however, despite the absence of any numerals in the SL sentence, the non-masculine personal cardinal numeral *trzy* ('three') was added in translation, since the context indicates that the word *we* refers to Frankie, Clawdeen, and Draculaura, as a group of three. By the addition of the cardinal numeral *trzy*, the subject of the sentence was concretised; however, as a result of this, non-masculine personal gender was, once again, assigned to a group which Frankie is a member of, as evidenced by the numeral. To keep the utterance gender-neutral, the numeral could have simply not been added in translation, or it could have been expressed as the numerical noun *trójka* in phrases such as *nasza trójka* or *my we trójkę*, both meaning 'the three of us'.

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(10a) *Wait, **what are you doing here?***

(10b) *A **wy skąd się tu wzięłyście?***

The TL question *a wy skąd się tu wzięłyście* uttered by Draculaura translates roughly to 'and how have you got here?' Though it is not equivalent to the SL question in terms of semantics, pragmatically, it expresses the same sense of surprise which came with the sudden realisation of Frankie's and Clawdeen's presence. Plural non-masculine gender was applied, as evidenced by the inflexional ending *-łyście* in the past tense reflexive verb *wzięłyście [się]*. Alternatively, the neological, plural neuter inflexional ending *-łoście* in the reflexive verb *wzięłoście [się]* could have been used as a form of gender-neutral expression. However, if the SL question were to be translated more directly, and if the present tense were to be preserved, it could have taken the form of *co wy tu robicie* ('what are you doing here'), which would not include any gendered forms.

(11a) *I'm really grateful for what **you did** tonight [...].*

(11b) *Tak jestem wdzięczna za to, co **zrobiłyście** [...].*

As it has already been established in I., in the Polish translation of the TV series, Frankie was assigned neuter grammatical gender, as reflected in neuter inflexional endings of the parts of speech which refer to them. In this example, Draculaura addresses Frankie and Clawdeen as a group of two, using the past tense plural non-masculine inflected verb *zrobiłyście* ('you did'). Though it can be argued that plural non-masculine gender has a rather feminine connotation, both feminine and neuter subjects standardly assume non-masculine gender when pluralised; thus, logically, non-masculine gender can also apply to the group which consists of Frankie, who uses neuter forms, and Clawdeen, who uses feminine forms. Alternatively, because Frankie is non-binary and Clawdeen is female, the plural masculine personal form *zrobiliście* ('you did') could, then, potentially, be applied in reference to them, as well, since plural masculine personal gender can be used when referring to groups diverse

in terms of sex or gender. Another possible solution, as mentioned in (10), would be to apply neological, plural neuter inflexion to the verb, which would then take the form of *zrobiłoście*.

(12a)   *We're **friends**, remember?*
(12b)   *Jesteśmy **przyjaciółkami**.*

(*Monster High: The Movie*, 2022: 1:06:24–1:06:26; *Monster High: Film* [*Monster High: The Movie*], 2023: 1:06:24–1:06:26)

This sentence is uttered by Draculaura to Clawdeen, where it is known from the context that by the word *friends* she is referring to herself, Frankie, and Clawdeen, as a group of three. Near formal correspondence was established between the clauses *we're friends* and *jesteśmy przyjaciółkami*; however, the TL equivalent of the SL word *friends*, i.e. *przyjaciółki*, being the plural form of *przyjaciółka* ('friend' – feminine), is usually used reference to at least two female subjects. It is possible to perform a unit shift here and change the clause *jesteśmy przyjaciółkami* into the reflexive expression *przyjaźnimy się*, which is entirely gender-neutral.

IV.   Plural masculine personal forms

(13a)   *I'm not leaving my **friends** again.*
(13b)   *Nie opuszczę znów **przyjaciół**.*

('Part of the Pack,' 2022: 20:53–20:54; 'Część watahy [Part of the Pack],' 2023: 20:53–20:54)

In (12), the English noun *friends* was translated into Polish as *przyjaciółki*, which, quite noticeably, carries a rather feminine connotation, as it typically refers to female subjects; here, however, its masculine personal counterpart, i.e. *przyjaciele* (taking the form *przyjaciół* in genitive), was used with reference to Frankie and Draculaura, as uttered by Clawdeen. Likely due to the mentioned feminine connotation carried by the grammatically non-masculine personal noun *przyjaciółki* which usually describes female referents, the grammatically masculine personal noun *przyjaciele* was applied, instead, as it can be used when referring to a group of people mixed in terms of sex or gender. Considering that Frankie is non-binary, and Draculaura is female, the masculine personal form *przyjaciele* can, thus, theoretically, apply to them as a group of two people whose gender identities differ; however, it can be argued whether to use masculine personal forms in such a case, since – because

neither of the people the group consists of are male, nor do they use masculine pronouns – there is no masculine element in the group in question.

V.   Omission of gendered forms

(14a)   *But **you two** have nothing to worry about for your first fearbook pic.*

(14b)   *Na szczęście **wy** nie musicie martwić się o zdjęcie do strasznika.*

('Portrait of a Monster,' 2022: 13:32–13:36; 'Portret potwora [Portrait of a Monster],' 2023: 13:32–13:36)

As analysed in (9), a cardinal numeral was added in translation despite its absence in the ST, becoming a non-masculine personal gender indicator in the TT; here, the opposite can be noticed, as the numeral *two* in the phrase *you two* was omitted in translation, resulting in the corresponding TL phrase being simply *wy* ('you'), which ensured gender-neutral expression. Alternatively, if the information carried by the numeral were to be preserved insome way in the TT, the gender-neutral numerical noun *dwójka* ('two') could have been used in the same way as suggested in (8); the SL clause *you two have nothing to worry about your first fearbook pic* could have, then, been translated into the TL as *wasza dwójka nie musi się martwić o zdjęcie do strasznika* ('the two of you do not need to worry about the picture for the fearbook').

(15a)   ***Mx Stein**, time to pick how you want to look for the photo!*

(15b)   ***Frankie Stein**, najwyższa pora się zdecydować!*

('Portrait of a Monster,' 2022: 16:41–16:46; 'Portret potwora [Portrait of a Monster],' 2023: 16:41–16:46)

In this example, the non-binary English honorific *Mx* was used in the TT by a teacher character when addressing Frankie in a semi-formal setting. Because Polish does not seem have an established honorific expression which would correspond to the English *Mx*, the honorific was entirely omitted in translation and replaced with Frankie's first name, which also serves the purpose of preserving the character's gender neutrality. Another possible solution in this case would be to use the Polish honorific *Państwo* ('Mr and Mrs'), as an alternative to the binary titles *Pan* ('Mr') and *Pani* ('Ms/Mrs'), which would still express some level of formality present in the school setting and the teacher–student exchange taking place.

(16a)   *Finding Frankie's perfect look will put **them** at ease.*

(16b)   *Uspokoi **cię** odkrycie idealnego stroju.*

> ('Portrait of a Monster,' 2022: 14:22–14:25; 'Portret potwora [Portrait of a Monster],' 2023: 14:22–14:25)

The interaction which sets the context for this utterance plays between three characters – Frankie, Draculaura, and Clawdeen. Originally, Draculaura utters this sentence to Clawdeen, talking about Frankie in 3. person by the use of the pronoun *them*. Comparing it to the TL sentence, however, a shift can be noticed, as a result of which Frankie became the recipient of the message, instead of Clawdeen. With this shift, the 3. person accusative pronoun *them* was switched to the 2. person singular accusative pronoun *cię,* which does not mark grammatical gender and, thus, is fully gender-neutral. If such a translation shift had not been employed, however, the translators would have probably had to decide upon the direct translation of the pronoun *them*, which – considering that Frankie was assigned neuter grammatical gender in the context of the entire TV series, as discussed in II. – would have likely taken the form of *je*. The whole utterance could have then been translated as, for example, *odkrycie idealnego stroju dla Frankie je uspokoi.*

(17a)   ***I wrote** a whole speech!*

(17b)   ***Mam** gotową przemowę!*

> ('The Monstering,' 2022: 7:45–7:46; 'Potworzastość [The Monstering],' 2023: 7:45–7:46)

If translated directly to establish formal correspondence, the translation of the sentence *I wrote a whole speech* would have had to include a 1. person singular past perfective form of the verb *pisać* ('write') inflected by grammatical gender. Considering that, in the TV series, as it has already been established, Frankie consequently uses neuter forms, such direct translation would have likely taken the form of *napisałom całą przemowę*; however, here, the translators decided to perform a translation shift and change the past tense phrase to the present tense phrase *mam gotową przemowę* ('I have a speech ready') which does not mark the grammatical gender of the referent and, thus, is entirely gender-neutral.

(18a) *For sure **cursed** like Dr. Blunder.*

(18b) *To **klątwa ciąży** również **na mnie**.*

In this example, the subject of the sentence was shifted from the covert *[I]* into *klątwa* ('the curse'), as the clause *[I am] cursed* was translated as *klątwa ciąży [...] na mnie* ('the curse is upon me'). Because of this, the past participle *cursed* did not have to be translated, as, otherwise, it would likely mean having to choose between its gendered TL equivalents, such as the masculine *przeklęty*, the feminine *przeklęta*, or the neuter *przeklęte*; since the subject was shifted, however, the TL utterance remained entirely gender-neutral regard to Frankie.

(19a) ***I was** just **created** by my parents [...].*

(19b) *Rodzice dopiero co **mnie stworzyli** [...].*

If this utterance were to be translated directly, it would have likely had to include the past tense form of the verb *zostać* (here: 'to become') and the past participle form of the verb *stworzyć* ('to create'), both of which would pose as gender signifiers, since preserving the passive construction present in the ST would necessitate the use of gendered inflexional endings in these two parts of speech. Here, however, the subject of the SL passive construction *I was [...] created* was shifted from *I* to *rodzice* ('parents') in the TL active construction *rodzice [...] mnie stworzyli* ('[my] parents have just created me'), in which Frankie is referred to only by the accusative 1. person singular pronoun *mnie* ('me'), which does not signify the gender of its referent. Considering that, as it has been established in III., Frankie was assigned feminine grammatical gender later in the film, if the original passive construction were to be preserved with the use of the past participle, the above utterance could have, hypothetically, been translated as *dopiero co zostałam stworzona przez moich rodziców*; however, such a translation would most likely be difficult to fit in dubbing, as it is significantly longer than the original utterance, the difference between them being six syllables, which might just be the reason behind the translators' decision to perform a subject shift.

(20a)   ***I was** actually **made** in a lab [...].*

(20b)   ***Mnie złożono** w laboratorium [...].*

It is known from Frankie's previous utterance, as analysed in (17), that they were created – or, rather, assembled – by their parents; here, however, the impersonal construction *mne złożono,* which roughly translates to 'I was assembled' or '[they] assembled me,' was used, which – if the utterance were to be analysed in separation from the context – makes it impossible to know the doer of the action described in this sentence; however, it seems to be the case that the impersonal construction was used here predominantly for the purpose of preserving gender-neutrality with regard to Frankie, as, if a regular passive construction *zostać złożonym* ('to be assembled') were to be employed, instead, it would have had to include gendered forms, due to the use of the past tense; in that case, the translators would have had to choose between differently gendered verb and participle forms, such as the masculine *zostałem złożony*, the feminine *zostałam złożona*, or the neuter *zostałom złożone*.

(21a)   - *We are your new…*

    - *…**roommates**!*

(21b)   - *Będziemy **mieszkać**…*

    - *…**razem**!*

In this example, the SL utterance was reiterated in the TL to express basically the same sense, but with different linguistic tools, the possible reason behind that being that the noun *roommates* – just like the previously mentioned in (12) noun *friends* – has two Polish equivalents, i.e. *współlokatorzy*, which can describe either a group consisting only of male referents, or a group mixed in terms of gender, and *współlokatorki*, which generally applies only to female referents; the TL sentence would have, then, take the form of either *jesteśmy twoimi nowymi współlokatorami*, directly hinting that the group is mixed in terms of gender, or *jesteśmy twoimi nowymi współlokatorkami*, which would carry with itself the implication

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that both of the referents are female; however, such a solution would be difficult to fit in dubbing due to its significant difference in length when compared to the original utterance. In order to avoid the gendered Polish equivalents, an interesting class shift occurred, instead, by which the noun *roommates* was not translated literally, but replaced with the synonymous infinitive verb phrase *mieszkać razem* ('to live together') in the TL sentence *będziemy mieszkać razem* ('we are going to live together'), which resulted in a not only more natural-sounding, but also gender-neutral expression.

3.3. Results

The analysis has shown that the dubbed versions of the film and the TV series display different translation strategies to translating the non-binary character present in the ST. Both of the translation strategies employed were realised by the use of various translation techniques.

The translation of the film, though swiftly avoiding gendered forms for the first approximately one-third of the film by the use of techniques like person forms, impersonal constructions, class shifting, and voice shifting from passive to active combined with subject shifting, nevertheless, seems to gravitate more closely towards using binary feminine forms with regard to Frankie. The feminine grammatical gender assigned to Frankie in the film manifests itself predominantly through the use of feminine inflexional verb endings, as well as cardinal numerals used in reference to them and the groups of two which they are a member of together with either of the other two, female characters. Furthermore, along with the already mentioned feminine gender markers, and as a natural consequence of the feminine gender assignment in singular, non-masculine personal gender is applied in reference to the groups which Frankie is a member of together with the other two, female characters, as reflected in non-masculine personal inflexional verb endings and cardinal numerals. Additionally, a plural form of a feminine noun which generally describes female referents was used in reference to the group of three which Frankie is a member of together with the other two, female characters. Person forms were only used two times throughout the entirety of the film, both times during Frankie's self-introduction as a non-binary person.

In the case of the TV series, a different strategy was applied, the main translation technique being the assignment of the neuter gender to Frankie; however, while noticeably confident in their use of neuter grammatical inflexion of the parts of speech referring to Frankie, the translator seems to have diversified their translation process of the TV series

through applying various other translation techniques, such as omission, class shifting, and tense shifting, as well, by the use of which certain utterances remained gender-neutral. Interestingly, though, tense shifting was used not only when past tense verbs had to be shifted into their present tense forms in order to preserve gender neutrality, but also in the cases where such a shift was not necessary, as the verb used in the ST was already in the present tense and, thus, would remain gender-neutral if translated directly. As a result of such shifts, present tense verbs were shifted into past tense verbs, and neuter inflexional endings were employed. One case of a plural masculine personal noun being used in reference to the group of two which Frankie is a member of together with one other, female character, was recorded.

Additionally, it was established that techniques such as using neological, plural neuter inflexional endings, using numerical nouns instead of cardinal or collective numerals, and performing noun to verb class shifts, as well as voice shifts from active to passive are some of the other possible options.

The findings of this study align with some of the non-binary forms discussed in the literature review; however, not all of those forms were observed in the materials analysed.

3.4. Discussion

Since the Polish language has no established equivalent of the English non-binary singular 'they' pronoun, which is used by Frankie in the ST, there does not exist a rule on how to express it in translation, which gives the translators room for experimentation. As regards the study conducted for the purpose of this paper, the presence of differences in translation strategies employed is likely due to the fact that the dialogues in the film and in the TV series were translated by two different people; the presence of the differences, however, made it possible to explore a broader scope of translation techniques which can be used in the process of translating a non-binary character from English into Polish.

Based on the analysis conducted, it would be easy to assume that person forms did not find much usage in translation, as they were entirely absent from the analysed episodes of the TV series, and only used twice in the film, both times in the form of the noun phrase 'osoba niebinarna (a non-binary person)' in nominative; however, it must be noted that the word 'person' did not occur in the STs at all, and, thus, the context did not require the use of person forms. Nevertheless, despite person forms being absent from the STs, the double occurrence of the noun phrase 'osoba niebinarna' in the dubbed version of the film suggests

that it is, in fact, a technique which can help the translator to bridge the gap between the two languages and to express the character's gender identity through a means available in the Polish language.

Singular neuter inflected parts of speech seem to be the dominant forms used with regard to Frankie in the Polish translation of the TV series, being a strategy quite likely employed with the aim of expressing and underlining Frankie's non-binary gender identity through the use of a means available, but not often utilised, in the TL. Applying neuter forms in the translations of the utterances which reference Frankie, both confidently and consequently, may have been an attempt to normalise – and, perhaps, even introduce – the use of such forms when talking about non-binary people; moreover, because the animated TV series is aimed at children, the use of neuter forms in reference to a non-binary character might have been motivated by the intention to familiarise the young viewers with the idea of being non-binary, and to display that the use of neuter forms when referring to a person is, in fact, possible, and can be done respectfully.

Interestingly, when referred to as a group of two of which Frankie was a member together with a female character, the forms used differed in terms of grammatical gender, as the uses of a plural non-masculine inflected verb (11) and a plural masculine personal noun (13) were recorded, as used on two separate occasions; however, no plural forms were applied to Frankie as an individual, neither in the translation of the TV series nor the film.

It seems apparent that applying neuter grammatical gender in the TV series, instead of masculine or feminine, was a strategy undertaken precisely with the intention of representing and reflecting the character's non-binary gender identity in the language used with regard to them; however, in the translation of the film, Frankie was assigned binary feminine grammatical gender, which might have happened for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the decision regarding which grammatical forms Frankie should use in the Polish version of the film might have been influenced by the fact that Frankie was, in fact, female in the previous iterations of *Monster High* franchise, which only changed in the third generation of the franchise, and their physical appearance (long hair, make-up), as well as some of their clothing and accessories (skirts, hair clips, earrings), arguably, still do lean closer towards the traditionally understood femininity. Secondly, because non-binary people are a minority which tends to be misunderstood and discriminated against, and because it is mainly children who are the target audience of the film, it could also be speculated whether it was a form of ideological censorship; however, the fact that Frankie does, nevertheless, explicitly introduce themself as a non-binary person twice throughout the Polish

version of the film would pose a counter-argument against such a claim. Thirdly, since the film is aimed at children, the use of binary feminine forms might have been a way to make the language used in the film more comprehensible to the young audience. Another possible explanation is that, because the non-binary singular 'they' used in the English version of the film does not have an established Polish equivalent, and because in Polish, grammatical gender influences the inflexion patterns of certain parts of speech, it might have been deemed impossible to express the character's non-binary gender identity through the linguistic means available in the Polish language and, thus, singular 'they' and the gender-neutral English grammar were replaced with binary feminine forms; in this case, it could be argued that the use of feminine forms in place of gender-neutral ones might be considered a form of linguistic censorship, whether intentional or unintentional, which was performed due to the seeming untranslatability stemming from the restrictions imposed by the Polish language system in the form of the presence of grammatical gender. Ultimately, numerous Polish-speaking non-binary people do use feminine forms, which is why their use applied in the translation of the film does not necessarily equal misgendering, and it might as well be perceived as a strategy which challenges the stereotype that all non-binary people must present in an androgynous way and use gender-neutral or non-binary linguistic forms, effectively contributing to the turning away from the stereotypical look of non-binary people in the public view.

It must be emphasised that the aim of this paper was not to judge or criticise any of the translation strategies and techniques employed in the official translations of the material used or the translators who performed them, and its purpose is only to analyse and suggest gender-neutral or non-binary alternatives, where applicable. Wherever such suggestions were put forward, it was with the intention of exploring other possible ways of translating the SL examples as to represent the non-binary gender of the character in question through the language used in reference to them.

3.5. Limitations of the Research

There are certain limitations to the study conducted in this paper, the first of them being that, because the method used was convenience sampling, this study was subject to sampling bias, as the data sample collected for the purpose of this study was sourced from only two texts and their official translations. That is why, despite displaying various different translation techniques, the sample is, nevertheless, not representative of the entire population, which

are all the possible translation techniques which can be applied in the process of translating a non-binary character from English into Polish.

Secondly, because the data to be analysed was sampled manually and the process was not randomised, this study was subject to detection bias, and regardless of how diligently the sampling process was conducted and how precise the criteria it was conducted according to were, it might have happened that some utterances with potential to serve as examples worth analysing were overlooked and not recorded.

Furthermore, the additional suggestions included with the intention to broaden the sample were subjective and did not cover all the possible translation techniques that could have been used in a particular scenario, leaving out some other, perhaps less obvious, choices.

Despite the flaws in the design and execution of the study conducted for the purpose of this paper, the presence of the shortcomings leaves room for future research which may, possibly, fill in the currently existing research gaps in this area of study.

3.6. Areas for Further Research

The analysis presented in this paper is neither exhaustive nor does it provide a definite and universal answer as to how to translate non-binary identities into Polish, since the language used both in reference to non-binary people, as well as by non-binary people themselves, is an individual preference of the non-binary person in question; that is why none of the translation techniques presented in this paper can be classified as either right or wrong, which leaves room for a broad research as to what strategies and techniques other than those presented in this paper can be used in the process of translating a non-binary character from English into Polish. Moreover, the Polish language, like any other language, is in a constant state of flux, and still new forms are coined in order to accommodate Polish-speaking non-binary people, which is why it is not possible to include all the existing forms of non-binary linguistic expression in a single research paper.

As the world progresses towards greater understanding, acceptance, and inclusion of non-binary gender identities, and as the language grows, it is likely that more works featuring non-binary identities will be created and, then, translated from English into Polish. It can be assumed that each of such translations will be a product worth analysing, as they might display yet different approaches to translating non-binary identities from English into Polish, which would prove highly enlightening in the branch of queer translation studies.

Conclusion

As this study was created with the aim of exploring the translation strategies and techniques which can be applied in the process of translating a non-binary character from English into Polish, a qualitative secondary data research was conducted in the form of a contrastive analysis studying the translations of the dialogues sourced from promotional audiovisual *Monster High* content, namely an animated TV series and a full-length live action film, resulting in five main translation techniques being identified.

The translation techniques observed in this study were diverse, some of them differing and some of them overlapping between the two analysed texts. Overall, five major techniques were distinguished in the cases where Frankie was referred to as a single individual, the techniques being: feminine forms, person forms, neuter forms, and omission of gendered forms; in the cases where Frankie was part of a group with one or two female characters, the techniques observed were: plural non-masculine personal forms, plural masculine personal forms, and omission of gendered forms. These findings correspond to some of the linguistic forms used by non-binary people in real life, as discussed in the theoretical part of this paper.

The main difference between the translations of the two texts analysed lies in the translation strategies undertaken and realised by the two translators through the assignment of neuter grammatical gender in the TV series, and feminine grammatical gender in the film, respectively. On the one hand, neuter 1. and 2. person inflexion in Polish used to be deemed only hypothetical, as there used not to be any potential real-life referents it could be applied to; however, as the society has progressed, and as voices of non-binary people have been raised, neuter inflexion has gained users, which, if used in media, may become normalised; the use of neuter inflexion in the translations of content aimed at children may influence the young audiences' view on the matter in particular. On the other hand, though binary grammatical forms tend to be associated mainly with binary men and women, it is evidenced that they are used by non-binary people, as well; binary forms do also occur in the translations of non-binary identities, which may potentially help challenge the stereotypes about non-binary identities.

The study was limited due to the presence of a research gap around the topic of translating non-binary identities from English into Polish, since non-binary people are a minority which is, admittedly, underrepresented, and because the presence of grammatical gender in the Polish language tends to make it difficult to accommodate and fully represent non-binary people through the currently available linguistic means. Because the research

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conducted for the purpose of this paper is not exhaustive, further studies delving into the topic may very likely prove insightful, as new translation techniques may be discovered, which would further contribute to the currently existing research by offering new solutions to the still rather problematic process of translating non-binary identities from English into Polish.

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Appendix A. Dialogue Transcripts – Film (*Monster High: The Movie* [2022], *Monster High: Film* [*Monster High: The Movie*] [2023])

Timestamp	English	Polish
0:13:08–0:13:10	*I'm Frankie, **pronouns they/them**.*	*Jestem Frankie, **osoba niebinarna**.*
0:13:16–0:13:17	***I was** just **created** by my parents [...].*	*Rodzice dopiero co **mnie stworzyli** [...].*
0:13:19–0:13:20	***I was** actually **made** in a lab [...].*	***Mnie złożono** w laboratorium [...].*
0:13:36–0:13:38	***I didn't know** I knew any of that…*	*Skąd **ja wiem** takie rzeczy…?*
0:14:14–0:14:16	- *We are your new…* - *…**roommates**!*	- *Będziemy **mieszkać**…* - *…**razem**!*
0:24:36–0:24:37	*Name's Frankie, **pronouns they/them**.*	*Jestem Frankie, **osoba niebinarna**.*
0:36:36–0:36:38	***You know** that whole strong emotion fight or flight thing?*	***Słyszałaś** kiedyś o reakcji 'walka lub ucieczka'?*
0:39:27–0:39:31	*Frankie, **you** literally know my deepest, darkest secret.*	*Frankie, **ty jedna** znasz najmroczniejszy z moich sekretów.*
0:41:19–0:41:20	*Wait, what **are you doing** here?*	*A wy skąd **się** tu **wzięłyście**?*
0:47:23–0:47:29	*So, tomorrow Bloodgood hits the lavatory at 9:17, **we** sneak in and shave the mug.*	*Dobra, to jutro ona idzie do łazienki o 9:17, a **my trzy** – do gabinetu.*
0:48:03–0:48:04	*You **two** keep watch!*	*To uważajcie!*
0:55:11–0:55:13	***I found** mayonnaise!*	***Znalazłam** majonez!*
1:03:05–1:03:08	*And **you two** [...] **you should** be ashamed [...]*	*A **wy dwie** [...] **powinnyście** się wstydzić [...]*
1:06:16–1:06:17	*How **did you find** me?*	*Jak mnie **znalazłyście**?*

1:06:24–1:06:26	*We're **friends**, remember?*	*Jesteśmy **przyjaciółkami**.*
1:06:26–1:06:29	*We're not **letting you run away** when you need us the most.*	*Nie ma mowy, żebyśmy cię **zostawiły** samą.*
1:06:40–1:06:41	***Look** at me!*	***Widziałyście**?*
1:09:20–1:09:21	***We were both** right.*	***Obie miałyśmy** rację.*

Appendix B. Dialogue Transcripts – TV series (*Monster High* [2022], *Monster High* [*Monster High*] [2023])

Timestamp	English	Polish
Episode 1. 'The Monstering' (2022), 'Potworzastość [The Monstering]' (2023)		
07:40–07:43	*I'm fifteen days old and **my pronouns are them/them**!*	*Mam piętnaście dni i **jestem niebinarne**.*
07:45–07:46	***I wrote** a whole speech!*	***Mam** gotową przemowę!*
Episode 2-1. 'Food Fight' (2022), 'Walka na jedzenie [Food Fight]' (2023)		
04:09–04:14	***Got lost** last week on my way to the creepeteria and **found** all sorts of secret stuff.*	*Kiedyś **zgubiłom się** idąc do upiornej kawiarni i **odkryłom** mnóstwo tajemnic.*
09:15–09:16	*If I **may** address the headmistress [...].*	*Jeśli **mogłobym** się wtrącić [...].*
10:38–10:40	*I'm really grateful for what **you did** tonight [...].*	*Tak jestem wdzięczna za to, co **zrobiłyście** [...].*
Episode 2-2. 'Unfinished Brain-ness' (2022), 'Niedokończone mózgowe sprawy [Unfinished Brain-ness]' (2023)		
11:46–11:51	***I was doing** a brain chart. **It shows** the itty-bitty brain bits that went into my skull-hole.*	***Ja zrobiłom** mapę mózgu i **zawarłom w niej** wszystkie składowe mojego mózgu.*
12:17–12:20	*Mom and dad kept all the records, I just **put** them on a poster.*	*Rodzice to zanotowali, **ja** to tylko **złożyłom**.*
13:31–13:34	*Wow, **I had** a memory. A-And **I was** Dr. Blunder!*	*Wow, **widzę** wspomnienia! **Widzę** wspomnienia Blunder!*
13:44–13:46	*For sure **cursed** like Dr. Blunder.*	*To **klątwa ciąży** również **na mnie**.*

14:04–14:07	**Saw** it get dumped all over some sort of terrifying beast creature.	**Widziałom**, że sporo esencji wylało się na potwora.
14:31–14:33	**Are you sure** the curse isn't to be really good at helping your friends [...]?	A czy **na pewno** klątwa nie polega na pomaganiu przyjaciołom?
14:40–14:42	Oops! **I meant right, not left!**	Ups! **Po prawej, nie lewej!**
15:11–15:13	**I am cursed** to make mistakes?	**Klątwa** popełniania błędów?
14:39–14:40	It wasn't her! **It was me!**	To nie ona, **tylko ja!**
16:09–16:12	**Should** probably sit over there [...].	**Lepiej** usiądę gdzieś tam [...].
18:45–18:47	**I'm not cursed?** Well, then **why'd I make** a bunch of mistakes?	**Mówisz serio?** To czemu wciąż **popełniam** błędy?
19:03–19:06	Guess **I got all in my brains** about the curse and it kept tripping me up.	Myślę, że błędy były wynikiem **wkręcenia sobie** tej całej klątwy.
19:14–19:16	So if **I'm not cursed** to make mistakes [...].	Skoro **nie ma żadnej klątwy** [...].
21:22--21:24	So, **I finished** my brain chart [...].	**Zrobiłom** mapę mózgu [...].

Episode 3-1. 'Case of the Moondays' (2022), 'Przy świetle księżyca [Case of the Moondays]' (2023)		
no examples		
Episode 3-2. 'Portrait of a Monster' (2022), 'Portret potwora [Portrait of a Monster]' (2023)		
12:03–12:04	Frankie, you're **last** [...].	Frankie, **kończysz** [...].
13:32–13:36	But **you two** have nothing to worry about for your first fearbook pic.	Na szczęście **wy** nie musicie martwić się o zdjęcie do strasznika.

13:57–14:01	*I'm feeling all… feelings-y. Like there are little electric bolts in my stomach.*	*Poczułom się… bardzo dziwnie, jakbym miało ładunki prądu w brzuchu.*
14:09–14:11	*I think you might be nervous.*	*Myślę, że się stresujesz.*
14:22–14:25	*Finding Frankie's perfect look will put them at ease.*	*Uspokoi cię odkrycie idealnego stroju.*
14:59–15:00	*I'm more of a pumpernickel fan, myself.*	*Ja tam wolę pumpernikiel.*
15:09–15:14	*That's when I decided..being me was too complicated. Maybe I could be… someone else!*	*Wyglądało na to, że bycie mną jest zbyt skomplikowane. Może lepiej stać się… kimś innym?*
16:41–16:46	*Mx. Stein, time to pick how you want to look for the photo!*	*Frankie Stein, najwyższa pora się zdecydować!*
17:59–18:02	*It's picture day, and I'm so nervous, I'm all zappy.*	*Dziś dzień z fotkami, stresuję się i czuję napięcie.*
18:17–18:19	*But I've been trying to own 'it' all day [...].*	*Próbowałom mieć ten luz cały dzień [...].*
19:21–19:25	*Why couldn't I have just picked a look for my photo and not made things so complicated?*	*Powinnom było wybrać jakąś pozę, a tak wszystko skomplikowałom.*
21:45–21:47	*[...] I took my photo as just plain old me.*	*[...] na zdjęciu jestem po prostu sobą.*
Episode 4-1. 'Witch Hitch' (2022), 'Sekret wiedźmy [Witch Hitch]' (2023)		
03:24–03:27	*Learned that last week when I shared Heath's.*	*Przekonałom się, gdy je wzięłom od Heatha.*
07:40–07:41	*Voted for Draculaura!*	*Mój głos na Dracularuę!*
07:45–07:47	*Ej, które ucho miałom wziąć?*	*Wait, which gargoyle ear did I get?*

07:48–07:50	*If **you didn't get the right one**, the potion won't work.*	*Jeśli **się pomyliłoś**, eliksir nie zadziała.*
08:42–08:43	***I guess the right ear's the oinking one.***	***Wzięłom chrumkające ucho.***
10:24–10:25	***I thought** you did.*	***Myślałom**, że ty wiesz.*
Episode 4-2. 'Part of the Pack' (2022), 'Część watahy [Part of the Pack]' (2023)		
13:00–13:02	*Least, that's what **I read** on the "Top Things Real Friends Do" [...].*	*Przynajmniej tak **widziałom** w "Zasadach przyjaciół."*
20:40–20:42	***Said** it before and I'll say it again.*	*Już to **mówiłom** i teraz powtarzam.*
20:53–20:54	*I'm not leaving my **friends** again.*	*Nie opuszczę znów **przyjaciół**.*
21:11–21:14	*Frankie **found** this while we were going through my dad's articles.*	*Frankie **znalazło** to podczas poszukiwań w zbiorach taty.*
21:51–21:54	*And **she got Frankie and me** flowers for helping out.*	*No i **dostałyśmy z Frankie** w podzięce kwiaty.*
22:00–22:02	***So guess we won't need this.***	***A ja przyniosłom dla ciebie to.***
22:05–22:06	***Should have** done a test!*	***Trzeba było** zrobić test!*

Summary in English

This paper discusses the problematic nature of translating non-binary characters in literary texts from English into Polish, taking into account both linguistic and extralinguistic factors which might make the said process difficult. It presents a contrastive analysis of two types of audiovisual content, namely a film and a TV cartoon series, promoting *Monster High* doll franchise, and their Polish translations, which display different approaches to translating the non-binary character, Frankie Stein, into Polish.

Summary in Polish

Niniejsza praca skoncentrowana jest na omówieniu problematycznej kwestii tłumaczenia postaci niebinarnych obecnych w tekstach literackich z języka angielskiego na polski, z uwzględnieniem zarówno czynników językowych, jak i pozajęzykowych, które mogą przyczynić się do utrudnienia tego procesu. Zawiera ona analizę kontrastywną dwóch rodzajów treści audiowizualnych – filmu oraz serialu animowanego – które promują linię lalek „Monster High," i ich polskich tłumaczeń, w których obrane zostały różne strategie mające na celu przekład postaci niebinarnej, Frankie Stein, na język polski.