Approximation in Translation: Recipe (Pseudo-)Partitives in *30-Minute Meals* (Romanian vs. English)

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Abstract: The present paper considers the issue of (pseudo-)partitives as used in English culinary texts and contrasts them with their Romanian translation. Based on a corpus made of 50 recipes included in Jamie Oliver's *30-Minute Meals* (2010) and its only Romanian version to date (*i.e. Gătește în 30 de minute cu Jamie*, signed by Andreea-Rosemarie Lutic, 2012), our analysis is aimed at the solutions the Romanian translator finds for one of the most common challenges posed by a cookery text (*i.e.* imprecision). Compelled by translation ethics, translation universals as well as by common sense to produce a more explicit text than the original, the translator deals with one particular situation at a time rather than apply an over-all coherent strategy.
Keywords: *food writing, culinary terminology, (pseudo)partitives, translation, equivalence, approximation.*

A dish of polemics stood peacefully upon the dresser.
Here lay an ovenful of the latest ethics –
there a kettle of dudecimo *mélanges*.
[E. A. Poe, *Bon-Bon*]

Introduction. The Recipe as Text Type

Food writing has grown quite popular in the past quarter century. Irrespective of the shape it takes (*i.e.* cookbook, food magazine, restaurant review, food blog, culinary memoir etc.), it seems to owe its prominence less and less to its primary, practical, domestic, ultimately prosaic purpose, and more to (meta)narrative and style. The cultural significance of food writing has also been increasingly noted and the genre is currently perceived as closer to the literary than the non-literary:

> Food writing is a literary activity, built upon words, sentences and paragraphs rather than flour, butter and eggs. It may refer to the kitchen and the dining room, but it is forged in the library and the study… You can

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> appreciate its delicious qualities without feeling the least need to pick up a wooden spoon and have a go yourself. [Hughes, 2010: q. in Brien, 2014: n.p.].

Whether we call it *gastronomic literature*, *culinary literature*, *food literature* or simply *food writing*, we cannot elude the fact that we are dealing with a distinctive text type. "A fairly recent addition to the instrumentarium of synchronic and historical linguistics" [Görlach, 2004: 121], the text type "is said to have a direct consequence for the kind of semantic, syntactic and stylistic features used and for the way texts are structured, both in their original form and in the translation" [Hatim, 2009: 41], which makes it essential in an analysis such as ours, which relies on a comparison between an English culinary text (*i.e.* Jamie Oliver's *30-Minute Meals*, 2010) and its Romanian translation (*i.e. Gătește în 30 de minute cu Jamie*, 2012). Equivalence, in this case, is, as shown by Reiss (1977, 1981 etc.), always dependent upon the text type or the communicative situation. Thus, informative texts, aimed primarily at transmitting information, should be translated so as to maintain the invariability of the content, which is often achieved by explicating what in the "original" or "source" text is implicitly conveyed. Expressive texts, on the other hand, being primarily form-focused and fulfilling a chiefly aesthetic function, should be translated, according to Reiss, by "identification" (meaning that translators need to identify with the artistic and creative intention of the author of the source text and try to focus on form, language and above all on the intended effect of these elements). Finally, for operative texts, which are aimed at making an appeal to the text receiver, the recommended mode is "adaptation" (meaning the persuasive language of the original can and should be adapted so as to trigger the same perlocutionary effect intended by the author).

Like most texts nowadays, the cookery text is essentially a hybrid, as it often possesses a number of important expressive elements which complete and complicate its basic informative and instructive function. Nevertheless, the most sophisticated culinary text and the simplest of recipes are at heart nothing but a mixture of details devised with a view to eliciting a desired response in either the reader or viewer. What they share is a basic function (*i.e.* the instruction on how to prepare a given dish) which "has remained stable over the centuries – however much ingredients, utensils and the people involved in the process may have changed" [Görlach, 2004: 123].

Structurally, a prototypical recipe consists of two main, time-sanctioned parts: an ingredient list and a set of instructions which rely on the ingredients enumerated beforehand. Each new instruction logically and chronologically follows the previous, feeding and building on it. Going deeper into its morphology, Manfred Görlach identifies and lists eight main features:

1) form of the heading
2) full sentences or telegram style
3) use of imperative or other verbal forms
4) use of possessive pronouns with ingredients and implements

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5) deletion of objects
6) temporal sequence, and possible adverbs used
7) complexity of sentences
8) marked use of loanwords and of genteel diction [Görlach, 2004: 125].

Food vocabulary in any language is largely nominal, especially in the ingredient list, while verbs usually dominate the set of instructions. Many culturally-imbued terms are usually transferred from one language into another, but this does not make translation any easier. The English language, for example, has been likened to a "voracious sponge [...] which sucked into itself over the past millenium the riches of the world's gastronomic vocabulary" [Ayto, 2012: 7] (*e.g.* remote Indo-European terms like *apple, dough, salt, mead, meat, milk, nut*; Old English terms: *loaf, honey, ale, beer, garlic, leek*; Viking terms: *cake, steak*; Indian import: *chutney, curry, punch* and then the 11th, then 18th and 19th French influx: *aspic, soufflé, vol-au-vent* etc.). The Romanian culinary vocabulary, in exchange, has been somewhat conservative by comparison, although it does bear the traces of the French haute cuisine and of Italian and American cooking, alongside Latin-based, Turkish or Hungarian terms [see Hăisan, 2017].

If food language has so far been dealt with in numerous studies, less has been written on this topic from a traductological point of view. The papers we consulted [Epstein, 2009; Köhler, 2011; Hoțu, 2011; Corduș, 2016], however, do offer a variety of classifications of the difficulties of translating food language, along with an implicit acknowledgment of the hardships of theorising and finding solutions for such difficulties.

If, largely speaking, translation problems can be divided into pragmatic, cultural, linguistic, text-specific [see Nord, 2005], in the case of recipes, B. J. Epstein [2009] highlights the availability of ingredients, the different cuts of meat, measurements, and the kitchen equipment (implements, pots and pans) among the most problematic aspects. She also suggests two possible solutions in translation, when it comes to measurements: either keeping the original measurements and providing a conversion table at the end of the book or changing the measurements into the system used in the target language either by *complete replacement* or by *replacement and retention* (*i.e.* indicating the shifted measurements in the recipe, but also keeping the original in parenthesis).

Measurements and the expression of quantity in recipes as a major translation difficulty is what we are going to deal with in the present paper, starting from a case in point (namely the 50 recipes included in Jamie Oliver's *30-Minute Meals* and their Romanian translation).

In the comparative analysis we use inverted commas for both larger samples of the original text and examples from the target text. Back-translation (Romanian-English) is usually provided between brackets. Italics will be used for emphasis. For translation techniques, we will occasionally employ the classic

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terminology imposed by Vinay-Darbelnet [1959] (*e.g.* literal translation, equivalence, adaptation, borrowing etc.).

The Corpus

Two editions will be used in our comparative analysis (selected out of many based on criteria like relevance, pertinence and statistics[1]): *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals* (London, Penguin, Michael Joseph, 2010) and *Gătește în 30 de minute cu Jamie* (București, Curtea Veche, translation by Andreea-Rosemarie Lutic).

Jamie's 30-Minute Meals is one of over two dozen cookbooks authored by British chef and restaurateur Jamie Oliver. Published ten years after *The Naked Chef* international bestseller, this, too, was an instant success, and this, too, is actually the result of a TV programme focused on home-cooked meals (a Channel 4 series of 40 episodes aired during October-December 2010).

What the book does with its 50 meal ideas (coherently organised into thematic subchapters) is encourage the amateur cook to be organised and focused in the kitchen, by offering key ingredients in obtaining a complete three-course meal in the same amount of time normally spent making but one dish. Lavishly illustrated, the volume is not only practical, but also immensely attractive. The Romanian edition, published two years after the original, reproduces the layout and the illustrations precisely.

Oliver's distinctive style is at its best in *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals*: flamboyant, highly colloquial, he generously offers suggestions on how to keep certain ingredients in the pantry or how to grow herbs on the window-sill, and he manages to do so without digressing unnecessarily from the original plan. The essence of his signature style lies in the fact that he succeeds in conveying a lot of useful information, with charming finesse, by means of an informal register and a relaxed, carefree, though enthusiastic tone. The culinary jargon is generally kept to a minimum. Instead, the use of familiar language makes the cooking look easy:

> The use of positive and informal language such as "good squeeze", "nice and fine" and "nice chunky" suggests that the recipe is easy and bound to be a success. Informal and unspecified expressions like "throw it into the food processor" and "a handful of" make the preparation seem hassle-free. [Kerseboom, 2010: 43-44]

There is constance reference in the text to himself ("I use", "I throw", "I add" etc.) as well as to his family (as a matter of fact, one of the recipes, entitled *Pregnant Jules's Pasta*, was seemingly inspired by his wife's preferences during pregnancy). This unbridled subjectivity of the language and the highly explicit narrator go hand in hand with a preoccupation for the conative side, as

[1] We are here referring specifically to the number of (pseudo-)partitives, which is significant in the English version we chose out of many other cookbooks (whether authored by Jamie Oliver or not).

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seen in the many imperatives, conditionals and second-person pronouns ("Transfer everything...", "You will need...", "If you...", "You can..." etc.). All of these strategies are bound to "narrow the distance between the user of the text and its narrator" [Kerseboom, 2010: 28].

Oliver is also known for occasionally disregarding structure conventions (he, for example, sometimes goes straight to the instructions, without introducing the ingredients first). While this does not apply to *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals*, the tendency to use vague quantities remains a hallmark in this text, too. "2 or 3 tomatoes", "some onions", "a couple of potatoes", "a handful of parsley", "a good squeeze of lemon" etc. are but a few examples of unclear measurements Oliver likes to use. Faced with this inaccuracy, the translator must come up with an appropriate (be it approximate) quantity and direction for the list of ingredients, thus inevitably interfering, adding information, being more (or less) specific.

On (Pseudo-)Partitives

Partitive constructions can indicate partition in respect of quality (*e.g. a kind of paper*) as well as in respect of quantity (*e.g. a piece of paper*). Very useful and very commonly used in mass noun reclassification (*e.g.* an uncountable noun like *coffee* can be used with a countable meaning thanks to a partitive like *a cup of*), partitives can be used in a variety of situations.

Structurally, they are usually count nouns (mostly in the singular, but plural is also possible) followed by an *of*-phrase (*e.g. a pile of books; piles of books*).

Terminologically, many linguists [*e.g.* Selkirk, 1977; Jackendoff, 1977; Koptjevskaya-Tamm, 2001 etc.] choose to differentiate between *proper partitives* (*e.g. a bottle of that rosé wine; a glass of my favourite sparkling water; a pile of John's books; a pound of those apricots*) and *pseudo-partitives* (*e.g. a bottle of wine; a glass of sparkling water; a pile of books; a pound of apricots*). Unlike proper partitives, which refer to a part or a subset of a definite superset, pseudo-partitives express an amount or quantity of some indefinite substance.

Depending on the type of the first noun, these constructions (quantity partitives especially) can be classified into several semantic categories[2]:

- measure-noun constructions (*e.g. a litre of milk; a pint of beer*)
- container-noun constructions (*e.g. a cup of coffee; a box of matches*)
- part-noun constructions (*e.g. a piece of cake; a slice of bread*)
- collection-noun constructions (for count nouns: *e.g. a group of boys; a herd of elephants*)
- quantifier-noun constructions (which can be based on abstract quantity nouns, such as *a number of people* or *a large amount of fruit*, on quantums, such as *a lump of sugar* or a *drop of water*, and forms, such as *a pile of sand* or *a bouquet of flowers*).

[2] *Cf.* Hăisan [2019] and Keizer [2007], for the last category.

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Unlike quality partition, which is usually expressed by *a kind / sort / type of*, quantity partition can rely on a variety of partitives. Some of them are very general, in that they can be used with most non-count nouns (*e.g. a piece of; an article of; an item of; a bit of*), while others are more specific**,** and can be used with only a limited category of nouns (*e.g. a blade of grass; a speck of dust; a gaggle of geese*). Others, still, constitute a special category of group / collective partitives (*e.g. a flock / flocks of birds / sheep / tourists; a lot / lots of fun / money / people / space*).

By far the most common partitive is obvisously *a piece of*, which can be used with both concrete and abstract nouns (*e.g. a piece of avocado / chalk / chocolate / coal / information / news / work*).

Manoliu [2007, 2012] applies syntactic, semantic and collocative criteria to describe partitives in terms of two opposite paradigms: *the paucal partitive paradigm* and *the multal partitive paradigm*. Thus,

> [w]hile the members of the paucal paradigm denote (very) low / little / infinitesimal values of the collocate (a *fleck / speck of* [*dust*]), the members of the multal paradigm denote values within a range from high to the highest of their collocate on the intensification cline. [Manoliu, 2012: 228-229]

Thus, paucal partitives include, besides *a bit of* and *a piece of*, specific expressions like *a ball of* (*wool / thread / meat / snow*), *a crumb of* (*bread / cake / biscuits*), *a dash of* (*cocoa / soda / humour*), *a drop of* (*rain / sauce*) etc., with some used exclusively in negative contexts (*e.g. not a iota of difference; not a shred of evidence*).

The multal paradigm, in exchange, focuses on multitude (*e.g. an army / bunch / crowd / crew / flock / swarm of participants*), with some often acquiring a hyperbolic meaning (*e.g. a flood of news; a storm of anger*).

The quotation from E. A. Poe's *Bon-Bon* which we employed as a motto ("A dish of polemics stood peacefully upon the dresser. Here lay an ovenful of the latest ethics – there a kettle of dudecimo *mélanges*.") contains three quantity (pseudo-)partitives which testify to the author's creativity when it comes to the culinary-philosophical realm he attempts to describe. *A dish of* and *a kettle of* point to quantity but also to the container, whereas *an ovenful* points not to the receptacle as such but to the amount it might contain. This type of partitive (*a cupful of, a handful of, a spoonful of*) is quite common in the cooking jargon in general and in Jamie Oliver's in particular, only that Oliver also uses various modifiers to intensify the respective partitives (*e.g. a good handful of*), which further complicates the translator's job.

(Pseudo-)Partitives in Translation

In Table 1 below we made an inventory of the nouns most often used in *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals* as part of partitive phrases meant to express quantity. We further classified and subclassified them, by distinguishing between (pseudo-)partitive phrases based on nouns which denote a specific container (which may or may not be accompanied by a specific measure expressed in grams,

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milligrams or milliliters, and which may come as package or tableware), an ingredient having an inherent definite shape (*e.g. clove, stick*) or being processed as such (*e.g. bar, loaf*), nouns expressing a part of the whole (*e.g. slice*) and nouns pointing to an indefinite amount (which may suggest a collection or a quantity of liquid or solid matter). To these, we might add *chunk*, as in "200g *chunk* of white crispy bread" (which expresses a large part of the whole, but it is unclear how large a part, therefore it is midway between Part and Indefinite Amount) and *nest*, as in "1 nest [of egg noodles] per person" (which does have discreet boundaries, but at the same time the amount is imprecise).

Table 1. Expression of Quantity in *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals*

Specific Container ± Measure		**Ingredient with Discrete Boundaries**	**Part**	**Indefinite Amount**	
package	***tableware***			***collective***	***(semi-)fluid / solid***
pack, packet, pot, punnet, tub	*dessertspoon, tablespoon, ladle, mug*	*bar, clove, head, sprig, stick, vine*	*rashers, slices*	*bunch, hand, handful*	*dollop, drizzle, knob, lug, pinch, splash, swig*

We will now look into the way the translator dealt with these (pseudo-)partitives in translation. Unlike the other items included in the tables below, the partitives referring to package are listed in reverse alphabetical order. The reason we listed *tub* first has to do with its recurrence in the source text as well as with the inconsistent translation strategy in the target text, varying from omission (we can see in the first three examples that the translator circumvents this term) to substitution (the last two examples with *tub* containing a more neutral "pachete" [packets] and a rather misleading – quantity-wise, at least – "porţie"). Before looking into the cultural particulars of the matter (*i.e.* the usual kind of container for cottage cheese on the Romanian market, which is a pot or a plastic box), we first need to consider the denotation of *tub* in English. According to the online Cambridge Dictionary, a tub is either "a large, round container with a flat base and an open top" or "a small plastic container with a lid, used for storing food". The vacillation between *large* and *small* is probably what led the translator to bypass the term altogether, when "cutie" [box, case, carton, pack] might have safely covered both the tub of icecream and the tub of cottage cheese.

Table 2. Specific Container ± Measure (English vs. Romanian)

Specific Container ± Measure		
English	**Romanian**	**Back-Translation**
1x125g *tub* of bocconcini di mozzarella	125g de brânză bocconcini	[125g bocconcini cheese]
1x250g *tub* of crème	250g crème fraîche	[250g crème fraîche]

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fraîche		
1x500ml *tub* of good-quality vanilla icecream	500g înghețată de vanilie de bună calitate	[500g good-quality vanilla iceacream]
a *small tub* of good-quality vanilla icecream	o porție mică de înghețată de vanilie, de calitate bună	[a small helping of vanilla icecream, of good quality]
2x250g *tubs* of cottage cheese	2 pachete de brânză de vaci a câte 250g	[2 packets of cottage cheese of 250 g each]
1 *punnet* of raspberries / cress	o caserolă de zmeură / năsturel	[a disposable plastic food container full of raspberries / cress]
1x250g *pot* of natural yoghurt	250g iaurt natural	[250g natural yoghurt]
½ 500g *pot* of Rachel's Organic Greek-style coconut yoghurt	½ borcan 500g iaurt grecesc cu nucă de cocos de la Rachel's Organic	[half a jar of 500g yoghurt with coconut from Rachel's Organic]
1 *packet* of alfalfa sprouts	o caserolă de lăstari de lucernă	[a disposable plastic food container full of alfalfa sprouts]
2x250g *packs* of fresh lasagne sheets	2 pachete de foi proaspete de lasagna a câte 250g	[2 packs of fresh lasagne sheets of 250g each]
1-2 *dessertspoons* mint sauce	2-3 linguriţe sos de mentă	[2-3 teaspoons mint sauce]
1 heaped *tablespoon* capers	o lingură cu vârf de capere	[one heaped (table)spoon capers]
a *ladle* or two of the cooking water	un polonic sau două din apa în care au fiert [pastele]	[a ladle or two of the water in which the pasta has been boiled]
1 *mug* of self-raising flour	1 ½ căni făină cu agent de creştere	[1½ mug of self-raising flower]
½ *mug* of tepid water	1 cană apă călduță	[1 mug of tepid water]
1 *mug* of basmati rice	1 cană de basmati	[1 mug of basmati]

Punnet is rendered into Romanian by a foreseeable "caserolă" (which is again to be found in the translation of "1 *packet* of alfalfa sprouts"), *pack*, in "pack of fresh lasagne sheets", is an obvious "pachet", while *pot*, in "pot of yoghurt" is either omitted or replaced by "borcan", though the actual Rachel's Organic Greek-style coconut yoghurt comes in large pots.

Tableware is represented by *dessertspoon*, *tablespoon*, *ladle* and *mug*. The translator needs to find a correspondence between the spoon measures in the

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two cultures, as in Romanian there is no clear distinction between the types of spoons except on account of their size. We thus distinguish between *lingură* [spoon] – a 15 to 25 (if heaped) ml container – and *linguriță* [small spoon] – a 5 to 10 (if heaped) ml container), while in English we have teaspoons (5ml), dessertspoons (10ml) and dessertspoons (15ml). As a result, "1-2 *dessertspoons* mint sauce" (10-20ml) is rendered by "2-3 linguriţe sos de mentă" (10-15ml). "1 heaped *tablespoon* capers", on the other hand, is transposed by reference to the larger tablespoon ("o lingură cu vârf de capere"), which is less problematic. "A *ladle* or two of the cooking water" illustrates not so much the inconsistency of the target text as one of the many vague quantities in the source text the translator needs to deal with, whereas *mug* is, again, approximated by "cană" [cup] in Romanian, but in an unexpected ratio, in which 1 mug and half a mug are both equal to 1 "cană", with 1 mug also being equated with 1 mug and a half:

1 mug ⟶ 1 ½ căni
1 mug ⟶ 1 cană
½ mug ⟶ 1 cană

Even if we are talking about three different types of ingredients (*i.e.* water, flour, rice) that require a mug as a measure, adapting the measuring unit is not advisable in translating a text that is already full of vague quantities.

The next table introduces ingredients having an inherent definite shape or being processed as such. Partitives containing *cloves* or *sprigs* are generally treated consistently (their time-sanctioned counterparts in Romanian being "căței" and "fire", respectively). The translation of *stick* in Romanian heavily depends on the collocation, which leads to a different meaning. Thus, we have "tulpină" [stalk] for celery and "baton" [bar, roll] for cinnamon. "Bar of chocolate" is not always translated by its direct counterpart (*i.e.* "tabletă de ciocolată"), the translator choosing to omit *bar* if the dose (usually 100g) is indicated. "Head" is equally avoided at times, so that for "1 large *head* of broccoli" we have a good literal translation (*i.e.* "o căpăţână mare de broccoli"), whereas for "1 large *head* of cauliflower" we have simply "o conopidă mare" [a large cauliflower] – a wise decision, as in Romanian we rarely, if ever, employ such a partitive in relation to cauliflowers. *Vines* in "4 *vines* of cherry tomatoes" is rendered by "răsurele" [twigs], which is not a bad choice in itself, only that the translator used a more natural term – "rug" – as well, elsewhere in the book, to refer to one and the same entity.

Table 3. Ingredient with Discrete Boundaries (English vs. Romanian)

Ingredient with Discrete Boundaries		
English	**Romanian**	**Back-Translation**
1x100g *bar* of dark	100g ciocolată neagră	[100g dark chooclate]

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chocolate		
2x100g *bars* of good-quality dark chocolate	2 tablete de 100g de ciocolată neagră	[2 bars of dark chocolate of 100g each]
3 *cloves* of garlic	3 căței de usturoi	[3 cloves of garlic]
1 large *head* of broccoli	o căpăţână mare de broccoli	[one large head of broccoli]
1 large *head* of cauliflower	o conopidă mare	[a large cauliflower]
3 large *sprigs* of fresh mint / a few *sprigs* of fresh rosemary / a couple of *sprigs* of fresh mint / a few *sprigs* of fresh mint	3 fire mari de mentă proaspătă / câteva fire de rozmarin proaspăt / câteva fire de mentă proaspătă	[3 large sprigs of fresh mint / a few sprigs of fresh rosemary / a few sprigs of fresh mint]
1 *stick* of celery	o tulpină de ţelină	[one celery stalk]
1 *stick* of cinnamon	1 baton de scorţişoară	[1 cinnamon bar / roll]
4 *vines* of cherry tomatoes	4 rămurele cu tomate cherry	[4 twigs with cherry tomatoes]

Even if all partitives refer by definition to a part of the whole, there are several phrases in our corpus which denote a specific shape of a particular part of the whole. They are *slice* and a specific type of slice, namely the *rasher* (thin plate piece of bacon), both of which are rendered, as expected, by the more general "felie" [slice].

Table 4. Given Part of a Whole (English vs. Romanian)

Part		
English	**Romanian**	**Back-Translation**
8 *rashers* of pancetta / 4 *rashers* of smoked streaky bacon	8 felii de pancetta / 4 felii bacon afumat (striat)	[8 slices of pancetta / 4 slices of smoked / streaky) bacon]
4 thick *slices* of country bread	4 felii groase de pâine ţărănească	[4 thick slices of peasant bread]

But not all culinary expressions have direct counterparts, as set phrases, in Romanian. What is more, Oliver's linguistic creativity poses an additional challenge which hinders the use of equivalence. For example, whenever he uses "a handful (or two) of" or "a bunch of", he tends to intensify the already vague quantity by adding a modifier like "small", "big", "large", "good" etc. We consider "o mână bună" and "o mână zdravănă" good solutions for "a good / large handful of...", which sound as colloquial as Oliver's text but at the same at

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time as natural as a target text should read. The opposition "o mână mare" / "o mână mică" is perhaps less fortunate in terms of style, but it manages to convey, at least in part, the message about quantity.

Table 5. Indefinite Amount (English vs. Romanian)

Indefinite Amount		
English	**Romanian**	**Back-Translation**
a small *bunch* of fresh basil / a small *bunch* of fresh tarragon	o legătură mică de busuioc proaspăt / o legătură mică de tarhon proaspăt	[a small *bunch* of fresh basil / a small *bunch* of fresh tarragon]
a big *handful* or two of grated Parmesan	o mână sau două de parmezan ras	[a handful or two of grated Parmesan]
a large *handful* of red, green or mixed grapes / a large *handful* of whole or halved grapes	o mână mare de struguri roşii, albi sau de ambele feluri / o mână zdravănă de boabe de struguri, întregi sau tăiate în două	[a big handful of grapes, red, white or both / a healthy hand of grapes, either whole or cut in half]
2 good *handfuls* of ice	2 mâini bune de gheaţă	[2 good hands of ice]
a small *handful* of fresh Greek basil / a small *hand* of capers, drained	o mână mică de busuioc proaspăt grecesc / o mână mică de capere scurse	[a small hand of fresh Greek basil / a small hand of drained capers]
a few *dollops* of crème fraîche	câteva linguri de crème fraîche	[a few (table)spoons of crème fraîche]
a good *drizzle* of olive oil	o lingură de ulei de măsline	[a (table)spoon of olive oil]
a good *drizzle* of extra virgin oil	nişte ulei de măsline extravirgin	[some extravirgin olive oil]
a large *knob* of butter / 2 small *knobs* of butter	o bucată de unt / 2 bucăţele mici de unt	[a piece of butter / small pieces of butter]
a *lug* of extravirgin oil / a good *lug* of extravirgin oil	ulei de măsline extravirgin / 1-2 linguri de ulei de măsline extravirgin	[extravirgin olive oil / 1-2 (table)spoons of extravirgin olive oil]
a good *pinch* of salt / a *pinch* of salt	un praf generos de sare / un praf de sare	[approx. a (generous) pinch of powder salt]
a *splash* of water from the kettle / a s*plash* of brandy / a *splash* of boiled water / a s*plash* of Port	puţină apă din ibric / puţin coniac / puţină apă clocotită / puţin vin de Porto	[a little water from the kettle / a little brandy / a little boiling water / a little Port wine]

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a good *swig* of brandy	o porţie zdravănă de coniac	[a healthy helping of brandy]

"Dollop" (a small amount of something soft, especially food) is also difficult to fully render into Romanian by means of just one word, which is why the translator chooses "linguri" [(table)spoons] to replace both "dollop" and "drizzle", equally hard to transpose. "Nişte" [some] is sometimes used whenever partitives are difficult to approximate (*e.g.* "a good *drizzle* of extra virgin oil" becomes, in Romanian, an inexact "nişte ulei de măsline extravirgin" [some extravirgin oilve oil]). Omission is again resorted to in the case of *lug*: "a lug of extra virgin oil", which suggests a moderate quantity, is simply "ulei de măsline extravirgin", with absolutely no quantifier. On the other hand, "a good *lug* of extravirgin oil" is rendered by "1-2 linguri de ulei de măsline extravirgin" [1-2 (table)spoons of extravirgin olive oil]. Occasionally. the translator manages to infuse the text with a jocular, personal style (*e.g.* "a good swig of brandy" / "o porţie zdravănă de coniac"; "a good pinch of salt" / "un praf generos de sare").

"A splash of" is yet another difficult (pseudo-)partitive to translate, if only for its onomatopoeic quality, therefore the translator omits it and replaces it with "puţin(ă)" [a little]. As for "knob of butter", it is too hastily dismissed by the use of "bucată / bucăţică" [(small) pieces], which may lead to a confusion with the entire block of butter. Again, there is never a one-to-one correspondence between different culinary terms, which inevitably leads one to approximation, although quantities are usually of utmost importance in a recipe. The opposite is also true, meaning that sometimes Romanian has a more specialised term or a partitive where English has a simple hypernym or a plural form which accomodates borrowings. For "2 large red chicory", for example, the translator used "2 bucăţi mari de radicchio" [2 large pieces of red chicory]. For "2 ripe mangoes", she used "2 bucăţi de mango bine coapte" [2 pieces of mango, nice and ripe], because in Romanian this noun does not yet have a plural form. However, "bucăţi" is a misleading term, since it may point to a true partition (*i.e.* a piece of a given mango), when in fact we are talking about a fruit ("2 fructe mango"). "2 leeks", on the other hand, is rendered by "2 fire de praz" because this is the way this vegetable is conceptualised by Romanians, as a series of stalks, as divisible rather than as a coherent whole.

Conclusion

Approximation seems to characterize not only Jamie Oliver's *30-Minute Meals* (famous, like all his other books, for the lack of strictness regarding the quantities used in the recipes), but also Andreea-Rosemarie Lutic's translation of Oliver's text. While it is true that, if the author approximates, so must the translator, our analysis shows that Lutic further increases the fuzziness of the original, which somehow overshadows the other features of an otherwise successful translation.

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There is no over-all coherent strategy applied to this text in translation. The translator chose to deal with each particular situation at a time, which led to unequal explicitness. *Complete replacement*, in Epstein's 2009 words, is often resorted to. From a cohesive point of view, the translator is always eager to make things clear (*e.g.* "add a ladle or two of the cooking water" is rendered by "un polonic sau două din apa în care au fiert pastele" [a ladle or two of the water in which the pasta has been boiled]), but from the point of view of the quantities expressed by means of various (pseudo-)partitives, Lutic's text is at times more imprecise than Oliver's, which may puzzle the readers intent upon trying the recipes.

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